

nel, was the chief requirement, and the adjoining spans were arranged, as hereafter stated, to conform to the local circumstances.

The length of the spans of the draw, which was fixed by the Act, was also intended to meet the requirements of the large tows, composed of steamboats and barges, which ply on the Mississippi. But on the Missouri River there are no tows, the rapidity of the current, and the many snags to be found in the stream, rendering the towing of barges hazardous, and having thus far caused the failure of every attempt to introduce them, so that a narrower draw might have answered the requirements of the boats navigating this stream, which are moreover smaller than those running on the Mississippi; yet in view of the extreme swiftness of the current during floods, and of the difficulty of holding a boat at such time perfectly true to her course, this requirement of the law may be deemed a prudent one, and the spans of the draw of the Kansas City bridge were accordingly made each a little over 160 feet in length in the clear.

In 1866, the Kansas City and Cameron Railroad being fully reorganized, with Mr. C. E. Kearney, of Kansas City, as president, obtained additional subscriptions and set about to seek aid and a connection with the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad. A curious accident, which occurred in connection with this road, showed on how slender a thread sometimes hangs the fate of infant projects and communities. Even before the war, a strong rivalry existed between Kansas City and Leavenworth, the latter city being located on the same bank some 25 miles up the river. Both had begun railroads to Cameron, both had temporarily abandoned their enterprise during the war, and both sought the aid of the Eastern capitalists controlling the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, to revive them. Leavenworth, which had enjoyed a large and prosperous trade during the war, in consequence of being near an important military post and fort, was earliest in the field, and when Kansas City heard of it, had all but closed a contract for the necessary aid with the Eastern capitalists. A very few days more and it would have been too late; every thing would have been arranged, and the road and bridge built to Leavenworth, which city would probably have been enabled completely to crush her rival. Immediate personal appeals and propositions brought about a suspension of a final judgment, until the claims and merits of the two schemes could be investigated.