

Bridges and Buildings Swept Away by the Flood

Water Highest in History of County, and Reports Which Have Come from Outside Show That Even Greater Damage Has Been Done Further Down the Catawba--Railroad Bridges Gone--No Mails--No Telegraphic Connections--Situation Alarming.

In the terrific rainstorms which visited this section Friday, Saturday and Sunday and which by Sunday morning had caused the rivers and smaller streams to flood the surrounding territory as it had never been flooded before, and to sweep before their might almost everything that was in their path, Burke county experienced the greatest calamity in her history. It is impossible to estimate in dollars and cents the material loss. So far there has been report of loss of human life in the county, but at this writing it is impossible to get into communication with any but a small section immediately surrounding Morganton, and it is possible that there has been loss of telephone connection with Hickory was never cut off but that was the only nearby town with which any communication at all could be had.

The seven steel bridges over the Catawba river in Burke county were swept away Saturday night. This is a large portion of the county and makes it difficult to get food supplies to Morganton, the situation all the more serious because there are no trains running.

Early Saturday afternoon it was seen that the loss of the bridges was inevitable, as the waters were rising very rapidly. Watchers say that the two near Morganton, known as the upper and lower bridges, went very early Sunday morning, the latter going first. It is said that the creaking and groaning of the steel as it broke from the supports sounded almost like the animal in great despair.

When these bridges were built after the freshet of 1901 they were raised over 10 feet above what was then thought to be the record break-water mark. Judging from high water we have had in the past, it was thought to be improbable that these wooden structures would ever be swept away.

The railroad bridge over the Catawba near Catawba station suffered the same fate as other bridges and this is off the whole western section of the State from railway connection to the outside world. It is not known when it will be possible for trains to run. Guesses vary from four to five days to a month or six weeks, first based upon the belief that Southern will probably arrange a transfer by boat or ferry of at least mail and passengers. Likely it will be more than a month before shipments of freight can reach us.

DARING RESCUE FROM TOP OF STORE BUILDING--REAL HEROISM SHOWN.

When the water began rising so rapidly early Sunday morning the lives of a number in the Quaker Meadows section were greatly endangered. So suddenly and surprisingly did the water rise, many feet in a few seconds time, that several families were caught and but for prompt work would probably have been drowned. Shortly after midnight Saturday night the family of Mr. McK. Kincaid, living near Fleming's ford, saw that they would be compelled to get out. So surrounded even then was the house by the water that they telephoned for help. Thereupon Messrs. Leith Gordon, R. W. Pipkin, Thompson Gillam, Steve Lowdermilk, John Small, Charlie Moffit, Ted Gordon, Webb Estes and probably others built a boat as quickly as possible, the lumber having been secured at the plant of the M. M. & T. Co., and about six o'clock Messrs. Leith Gordon and R. W. Pipkin went after the danger-threatened family. They made several trips and finally succeeded in bringing them all to safety. Guests at the Kincaid home were Mrs. Kincaid's sister, Mrs. J. J. Hefner and her children, of Hickory. Also Mr. John Fox was one of those rescued from the Kincaid home. He had gone there to telephone to his son and while in the house the water rose so rapidly that he could not get away. He was the last one brought away by the rescuing party. Fearing the house might go he climbed a tree and was found there by Messrs. Gordon and Pipkin when they made the last trip.

The water reached the second floor of the home and though often it seemed that nothing could keep the house from moving it remained at the same place.

The most sensational rescue of the day was that of Mr. Fons Duckworth, who was brought to land about 10 o'clock Sunday morning from the top of his father's store where he had spent the greater part of the night. Early Saturday night water began rising in the store, which was probably 200 yards from the original bank of the river. Mr. J. L. Duckworth and his two sons were in the store and decided they should leave. The father and one son got out but Fons remembering some chickens which he thought ought to be let out stopped to attend to them and the rapid rise of the water caught him. When daylight came he was seen by those on the shore to be signalling for help. A reward was offered for anyone who would go to his assistance, the amount reaching about \$1200. Gordon and Pipkin who were exhausted from their rescue of the Kincaid family were not able to go. The water was angry and dangerous looking. Duckworth seemed doomed to death and an effort to save him meant a risk of life. Will Clark volunteered to take the chance. He went quite a distance up the stream and came down with the cur-

FIFTEEN FEET HIGHER THAN IN 1901.

R. W. E. Walton made measurements yesterday afternoon of the height reached by the water at the upper bridge and found it to have risen 41 feet above normal, this 17 feet more than the highest water mark had been reached previous to this year--in 1901 the water was 24 feet above normal at this point. At the lower bridge the measurement showed 4 feet above normal.

rent at which was judged to be about 20 miles an hour, and let his boat, the same in which the Kincaid family had been rescued, hit the store building in such a way as to halt it. He succeeded in bringing Duckworth to land, amid the cheering of the spectators who were lined along the water's edge. Very unselfishly he refused to accept the reward that had been offered, and received the praise of those who had witnessed his deed in a very modest manner. He has been acclaimed a hero, and his name will live as long as the memory of the 1916 flood.

The home of Mr. J. H. Parks went down the stream about 7 o'clock, the family leaving the house just about 20 minutes before it began to move. Miss Bessie Parks, the last to leave waded out in water several feet deep. The house was owned by Mr. J. T. Perkins. It is reported to have washed to Rocky Ford and there dashed to pieces.

Those suffering great loss in the Quaker Meadows section were Olin Avery, George Kanipe, Henry McGhinis, Mose Corpening (col.), Charlie Clark, L. A. Clark, Durant Williams, Joe Allman, John Parks, C. M. McDowell, McK. Kincaid and J. T. Perkins. The Edmonson farm at the lower bridge suffered considerable damage and large sections of it are still under water.

SITUATION IN CATAWBA AS BAD AS IN BURKE.

Telephone messages and a few travelers from Hickory tell a story that is just as fearful as that of Burke's loss. Every bridge in Catawba county is gone except one over South Fork river. The cotton mill at Rhodhiss has been damaged possibly irreparably. It is said 500 bales of cotton were washed out of the mill. A number of the mill houses went in the flood, and water in the company store building reached to the second floor. The Brookford mill was damaged to the extent of eight or ten thousand dollars, possibly much of the machinery completely ruined. Hickory and Newton, like Morganton, have been cut off since Saturday from communication with the outside world. Yesterday afternoon connection was re-established between Hickory and Newton, thereby connecting Morganton and Newton.

THE FLOOD IN LOVELADY.

For The News-Herald: The flood struck us heavily. Hoffman's bridge is gone. At Mrs. J. H. Hoffman's two out houses and a barn were moved about 200 feet, and the water was in 3 feet of Mrs. Hoffman's dwelling. The entire crop of wheat and hay on the place was lost and there will practically be no corn made. Mr. H. P. Holler lost his wheat crop. Water was up in his barn and in 3 feet of his house.

I hope our county commissioners will issue bonds at once sufficient to replace the bridges in the county. Then the member of the next Legislature can pass an act covering the same. By so doing employment can be given many men and teams now out of work. We must act speedily! S. M. ASBURY.

EVERY EFFORT MADE TO GET OUTSIDE NEWS UNSUCCESSFUL.

The News-Herald Tried Unsuccessfully to Get Outside News But Morganton is Yet Cut Off Completely.

This special edition of The News-Herald was begun in the hope that last night communication could be established in some manner with Charlotte or Asheville and telegraphic news from the outside world be obtained to act as a substitute in the absence of daily papers on which our people have learned to depend. Every effort that could possibly be put forth was made without any success whatever. We had hoped to get through the Hickory Daily Record messages from Charlotte, but it was found that no connection at all could be made. The Record sent to Lincolnton but a message from Editor Farabee last night stated that they had to content themselves with local news exclusively.

We hope to get messages sometime tomorrow; in fact, we feel sure we can get them tomorrow night and another special edition will be issued tomorrow morning which we feel safe in promising will carry news from the outside world. We want to serve the community as best we can and shall do everything in our power to get for our people the best news service possible.

Manager Matthews, of the Bell Telephone, is sending out a squad of men this morning to work on the line between Morganton and Marion. It is said 31 poles are down at Bridgewater, but even at that we may possibly get in communication with Asheville late today.

Trainmaster Leonard was here yesterday and said probably a train could be put through from Asheville to Morganton by Wednesday noon.

AN EXCITING TRIP.

Mr. R. W. Pipkin made a rather exciting trip to Hickory yesterday afternoon. The shower about noon caused one of what are known as the Double Branches near Valdese to get up considerably. He decided he would not try to ford it and for part of the distance between Valdese and Connelly Springs his Ford traveled the railroad track. Mr. Pipkin says that as he came back he saw some unknown motorist who had not used his caution in the stream with the water above his wind shield and he making a desperate effort to get the machine out of the stream.

Mr. Pipkin made the trip to bring Judge Lane to Morganton, but in some way missed him and Judge Lane came by horse and buggy to Morganton. Judge Lane also had to use the railroad track as a highway.

Judge Walter Clark and Miss Eugenia Clark, of Raleigh, are spending several days with Judge Clark's daughter, Mrs. J. Ernest Erwin.

HOW THE MERCHANT

Can Encourage the Farmer and What the Farmer Can Do.

Mr. Merchant and Business Man you now have before you the greatest opportunity in your life to help your farmer friends. The fact that you have fallen is not what counts, but how you take it. There's no question but that the farmers of Burke county, and especially those on the water courses, are in a very distressful situation. The farmers as a rule are the easiest people on the face of the globe to become discouraged when a calamity such as the flood has befallen them. For this reason I am writing this in the interest of the business men to take an interest in the farmers and cheer them up just a little. In cases of this kind the initiative part of the farmer's mind fails to work. As a rule he simply gives up when he could go ahead and make good.

The writer lives on Johns river and has gone through conditions very similar to the conditions that now prevail on the river today. One of my neighbor's farm was in a way destroyed from a visionary standpoint and he made a bigger howl than a man that lost his fortune in a mind. He was almost heartbroken. It seemed that he was broken up, and to hear him tell it, you would think that there would never be another chance for him. We bought millet seed and sowed the lands that looked as if they were destroyed for that season, and the yield from the millet hay was something enormous. The neighbor was so discouraged that he could not be persuaded to spend a few dollars for seed to make a crop that would take the place of the crop that he had planted in the spring. He spent the summer growling about how nature had broken him up. That fall and winter this neighbor bought ton after ton of the millet hay that we had grown on the land that was seemingly destroyed by the overflow of the river.

Now there is still a chance for the farmers to grow a heavy crop of hay. If millet is sown by the first of August and even a little later it will make a very fair crop to take care of the live stock on the farm this winter. Peas and cane will also make a heavy hay crop yet this year. Sudan grass is one of the fastest growing grasses we have, makes an excellent hay, and will make a good crop sown as late as the middle of August.

Now I think it behooves the business men to take this up with every farmer they come in contact with, and not only cheer them up, but give them a little real advice in regard to getting them to sow some kind of crop to grow feed to take the place of that which was washed away by the river. In fact you should press the question so strongly upon their minds that they will go right home and do something. They can even make a good crop of forage by sowing corn for hay if they should be unable to get the seeds as I have named above.

As I have described above, will take care of the live stock till next spring, and if they will sow a liberal acreage in winter oats to be cut next spring for hay, will carry them far into the summer. Crimson clover and vetch will also make an early hay crop for next summer.

Now let every business man in town

get right in behind the farmers in the flood zone and make this proposition to them so strong that they will take right hold and make next summer one of our most prosperous years.

Opportunities are scarce in this world, and remember that a neglected opportunity never comes back again. There should be about 45 to 50 pounds of millet seed sown per acre. Sudan grass should be sown at rate of 20 to 25 pounds per acre.

E. L. PERKINS,
County Agent.

PLANS FOR RELIEF.

In a Union meet held Sunday evening, July 16, on motion Rev. E. E. Williamson, a committee was appointed to devise ways and means of providing for the needs of those who suffered loss of the necessities of life by reason of the recent storm and flood. The following were chosen on this committee: Messrs. B. F. Davis, A. C. Kerley, E. M. Hairfield and J. Ernest Erwin. The committee was asked to meet Monday at 10:30 a. m.

The committee met at the appointed hour and elected Hon. B. F. Davis, chairman and treasurer, E. M. Hairfield, secretary.

After organization and a brief discussion of the situation E. M. Hairfield made the following motion which was passed:

Resolved, that a sub-committee of three be appointed to make full investigation and to ascertain, as nearly as possible, the damage done and loss sustained, and the actual needs to be met in specific and individual cases; and to report the same to the public meeting to be held in the Court House on Thursday evening at 8 o'clock.

The chair appointed the following committee: I. T. Avery, Chm., R. T. Claywell and E. M. Hairfield.

On motion of Rev. E. E. Williamson a Publicity Committee was named as follows: Rev. J. R. Williams, Rev. E. E. Williamson and Miss Beatrice Cobb, aided by the Boy Scouts.

On motion made by I. T. Avery that a Farmers' aid committee be appointed. The chair named on this committee, J. Ernest Erwin, E. L. Perkins, J. C. McDowell.

On motion offered by J. E. Erwin a committee on household needs was appointed as follows: Mesdames A. C. Avery, Jr., I. Lazarus, J. Ernest Erwin, H. L. Millner, W. A. Leslie.

Meeting adjourned.
B. F. DAVIS, Chm.
E. M. HAIRFIELD, Sec.
July 17, 1916.

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO LEARN FROM OTHER COUNTIES

In talking with the Hickory Record last night we learned that the Monbo mill in Iredell has been swept away. The old Turner mill is gone and the report is that the new Turner mill was submerged and damaged considerably.

Morganton people are especially interested in the last named mill, different individuals here owning \$17,000 worth of stock in the mill.

Over 100 feet of the Lookout dam, near Statesville, is gone, and over 300 feet of the embankment was swept away.

All the bridges to Charlotte, the railroad, interurban and highway were demolished and it is impossible to reach Charlotte by any route.