

ACCOUNT OF 1916 FLOOD REPUBLISHED THROUGH COURTESY OF THE

French Broad Electric Membership Corporation

Serving More Than 10,000 Families In Madison, Yancey, Mitchell, and Buncombe In North Carolina and Unicoi, Greene and Cocke Counties In Tennessee

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THE NEWS-RECORD

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NO. 31

French Broad Overflows Marshall; Two People Drowned

\$125,000 Worth Of Property Destroyed; Bridges Washed Out

Heroic Efforts Of Many Are Praised; Citizens Are Optimistic

ON SUNDAY, JULY 16

The river commenced to rise at about 8 o'clock a. m., and at about 9:30 a. m., it was overflowing the rock wall along the Southern Railway Track. At 10 o'clock the water was in Main Street and the people living along the street were carrying to places of supposed safety such of their household goods as they could get out.

Houses, logs, lumber, barrels, boxes, bridges, all were carried away. The old bridge at Bridge Street here gave away and nothing of it was left save the rock piers upon which it had rested for many years.

An immense drift gathered at the east end of the Southern depot and turned a current against the houses on the North side of the street in that section of the town. Soon after 12 o'clock houses commenced to rise from their foundations and float down the river. The sight was one that cannot soon be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

At 4:30 o'clock p. m., the waters began to go down and at the Baptist Church where many people had gathered a short prayer service was conducted by Rev. S. T. Hensley.

Homeless People Cared For Stout-hearted and cheerful, Messrs. J. H. White, Dr. Frank Roberts, Jno. A. Hendricks, James West, Nat Holcombe, Guy V. Roberts, E. N. Carter, E. B. Gilbert, Posey Fisher, John Jarrett, Ben

ben Ramsey, J. C. Ramsey, E. R. Tweed, P. V. Rector, Rev. S. T. Hensley, and others living on the hill opened their homes and, in fine style cared for those who had been driven from their home by the flood. A good dinner Sunday and lodging and meals until the waters had gone down were provided by these good gentlemen and their wives.

Death List

Only two people lost their lives in the flood. They were as follows: James Guthrie and Miss Estelle Briggs. Both bodies were recovered on Monday and brought to the Baptist Church where they were prepared for burial. It is stated that both Mr. Guthrie and Miss Briggs had left the house and gone to places of safety but later, thinking there was no danger, returned to the house and when it began to move they became frightened and, in trying to make their escape were lost. They were in the Ball & Gudger Restaurant at the depot.

Washed Away

Quite a number of buildings were washed away. The following is a list:

Southern Railway pump house at depot, two tenant houses at depot owned by Ball & Gudger, Livestock stable at depot owned by Ramsey & Rector, Erve Bailey's two houses, Erve King's building on Bridge Street in which was located the Central Telephone Office, H. L. Banks & Company's Store, Posey Fisher's Pressing Shop and Alfred Lowe's home, coal bins and cotton house owned by Capitola Manufacturing Company, Rector & Ramsey lumber plant, stable, tenant house owned by J. G. Ramsey, tenant house owned by Citizens Bank, stable and garage owned by C. B. Mashburn, Reuben Ramsey's warehouse owned by F. Shelton, small garage owned by Mrs. Claude Allison, stable, wood and coal house owned by Mrs. Nanney, corn crib owned by Barnett Fortner, Marshall woodworking plant owned by J. J. Redmon and Son and a dwelling house between the river and railroad just below the old church at West end of town.

Flooded

Every building on Main Street except the residence of P. A. McElroy, the Court House and the Baptist Church were flooded and filled with mud. Household furnishings and merchandise in the homes and stores were badly damaged. Windows in many places were smashed and porches were broken loose from some of the resident buildings along the street. A few buildings were moved from their foundations and left close by. A few others floated for some distance but lodged

against other buildings.

Damages

No one can, at this time, give an accurate statement as to the damage sustained by the town. However, a rough conservative estimate figures, in sound numbers, a total damage of \$125,000.00 sustained by citizens of the town, aside from this the Southern Railway and Madison County have been heavily damaged. No bridges along the river in this county are left.

Clearing The Wreck

On Monday morning when the people came down to their homes only a small part of Main Street in front of the Baptist Church was visible. The street was full of drifts and presented a most forlorn appearance. But everybody went to work and gradually the street has been cleared of the rubbish, dwellings and business places have been cleaned up and the town is again becoming alive.

Convicts Used On Streets

Captain H. T. Peoples of the State Convict Force here brought down his force of men and worked on the street for three days. Mr. Peoples is a splendid fellow and his services, at this time, places Marshall under lasting obligations to him. Aside from this, Mr. Peoples and his guards and assistants came to our relief with cash and provisions.

Mr. Robert Tweed, in charge of the county convicts, has also done telling work for us on our streets and is deserving of our deepest gratitude for his much-needed assistance. Captain Tweed continued working his men here for several days and has done a large amount of work in helping to clear away the wrecks.

Contributors To Relief Of Marshall

No one can tell just how many people and who they are that have contributed toward the relief of our town. The following, however, is a list who have contributed in cash and provisions through Rev. S. T. Hensley, who has been in charge of the relief work. Many others whose names do not appear on this list have made substantial donations to persons in need of help:

W. S. West, Z. R. Merrall, J. M. Ramsey Sr., A. F. Sprinkle, Jno. A. Hendricks, Mars Hill, Mamie Morrow, Jno. Knight, H. T. Peoples, W. W. Doudan, Tobe Hodge, N. L. Smith, A. L. Edmunson, D. Rhymer, J. C. Rhymer, Willie Parker, D. W. Stewart, Howard Wills, S. B. Phifer, E. M. Pritchard, Z. G. Sprinkle, D. S. Tweed, W. J. West, Laura Bryan, S. E. Tweed, W. B. Ramsey, Polk Bryan, Jack Bryan, Mrs. J. J. Wright, L. M. Ryan, Clarence Gage, J. F. Bryan, D. M. Golden, T. A. Silver, E. C. Eller, Jesse Fisher, Rev. L. C. Roberts, J. W. Roberts, W. A. Kent, W. R. White, Mrs. Belle Kent, Mrs. Belle Runnion, Mrs. A. J. Runnion, Nora West, May West, Mrs. T. B. West, L. D. Edwards, Lyda McGraw, J. B. Bryan.

One of the greatest needs of the town was to get the streets and roads open for traffic. To aid us in this respect the following is a list of men who came

with wagons and teams to help us. Many gave their services in helping to clear the streets and clean out buildings whose names we do not have. We are grateful to all who came to our relief in any way and if we are not publishing a full list it is because we have been unable to get it complete.

W. B. Ramsey, 1 day; R. C. Rector, 2 days; J. F. Sprinkle, 3 days; Jasper Rice, 1 day; Will West, 1/2 day; Z. G. Sprinkle, 6 1/2 days; Jeff Runnion 2 days; Bud Stines, 4 days; Alfred Sprinkle, 2 days; W. L. George, 1 day; J. E. Burnett, 1 day; W. L. Runnion, 1 day; C. H. Runnion, 1 day; J. C. Hutchins, 2 days; E. Y. Tison, 2 days; L. L. Edwards, 1 day; Wm. Edwards, 1 day; Prof. R. L. Moore, 1 day; R. S. Gibbs, 1 day; Clarence Gage, 3 days; Doug Tweed, 2 days; C. B. Mashburn, 2 days; Z. R. Merrall, 1 day.

We are deeply indebted to all of these good people for their timely help.

Marshall Dark

For several days after the flood Marshall was in total darkness. The lights came over a part of the town on Saturday night following the flood. The lighting, water and sewer systems have not yet been fully repaired but the work of repair is going forwards rapidly and the town will again soon have plenty of both light and water.

Marshall Cut Off From Other Points

The high water put all telegraph and telephone lines out of commission and Marshall was off from communication with the outside world. The telegraph line, however, has been repaired, but all telephone lines are yet out of order. All railway traffic and mail service was completely stopped. Mail destined to Marshall was delayed for several days. Mail coming in from the west was delivered here last Sunday on a freight car. Postmaster Swann has brought mail up from Runnion once or twice by automobile.

The Southern Railway Company has been working a large force of men getting its track again in shape for traffic but up to date, no passenger trains have passed through Marshall. A few passengers coming from the West have been delivered on work trains at the west end of town. Freight traffic over the line through Marshall is expected to begin within a few days. Passenger service will not begin until the track is put in a safe condition which will probably take several days.

Business Conditions

No one will deny that our town has sustained a heavy blow but the business men who were damaged are men of sterling character, ability and energy and will soon be doing business as before the flood. Marshall has always been a thrifty town and within a short time business here will be good. Any spot of earth in Marshall can be sold today at a good price.

Housekeeping

Housekeeping for the first two weeks after the deluge was a

rather difficult proposition, but the women of Marshall who, on Monday morning, found their homes full of mud, now have clean floors. The fires in the cook stoves have been relighted and homes that were full of mud and water on Sunday are now in good shape. The transformation has been great. Our ladies have shown a most splendid and commendable spirit. Throughout the days of disaster, toil and labor, they have been cheerful and buoyant. It is always the woman's spirit that shines brightest, the woman's love that never falters, in the midst of disaster and ruin. All honor to Marshall's brave, noble women.

Thieves

Quite a number of people have been caught carrying away shoes and other articles of merchandise. Some have been made to bring the goods back.

Glad Of Marshall's Misfortune

We have heard of a few people expressing their joy that disaster had befallen our town. Our county is more unfortunate in having a citizen of this type than the town was in being hit with the flood. We pass this fellow up by placing him in a class with thieves who stole from our people when they were helpless. We would be glad to get a list of these fellows and to publish their names.

Carolina Special

The Carolina Special going east and carrying aboard 200 passengers, was held up by the high water at Nocona, a few miles below Marshall. The train had sufficient food to last passengers and crew until Tuesday. Afterwards supplies were carried in from the country and many of the passengers were kept by the farmers in the surrounding community.

Barnard

The bridge, a store, and a dwelling house, we are informed, were washed away at Barnard.

Hot Springs

Hot Springs was not seriously hurt. The bridge there across the French Broad was washed away and the Mountain Park Hotel was flooded.

Rollins

Quite a little damage was done at Rollins, just above Marshall. Several houses were damaged and a good bit of lumber was swept away.

OTHER PLACES ARE DAMAGED

The same flood that visited Marshall hit other places, washing away homes, crippling businesses and destroying property of immense value. Asheville and Buncombe County, it is said, sustained a loss of \$5,000,000. Mills near Craggy and Alexander were seriously damaged.

EDITORIAL

E. ZEPH RAY, Editor

J. H. WHITE, Business Manager

Cause Of The Flood

We have heard of a few people who have ventured their opinions as to the cause of the flood. A preacher who is alleged to have sold his vote in the primary election thinks the Lord sent the flood on Marshall because of the fact that a moving picture show was being operated here. A second holds the view that the Lord wanted to run a particular individual out of town. A third says the Lord was holding an equalization board, while the fourth thinks it was sent on us to punish certain individuals for building roads and bridges in the county. The community is fortunate in having men who possess such broad views and such deep thinking faculties upon moral and religious questions. We have not yet heard why the Lord at the same time, sent the flood on Asheville and so many other places. Should the information be in hand at any time we shall be glad to hand it out.

Governor Craig Calls On Marshall to Aid Flood-Stricken

We have been informed that a telegram from Governor Locke Craig has been received by Mayor Gilbert of Marshall, calling on the people for aid on behalf of flood-stricken people in the state. The Governor is to be congratulated for his activity on behalf of those made homeless and helpless throughout the flood. But Marshall has all she can do to take care of the suffering in her own borders. There is much to be done here, so that it will tax, to the limit, our energy and ability.

Freight And Passenger Traffic Resumed Over Southern Railroad

Freight and passenger traffic over the Southern have been partially resumed between Asheville and Knoxville. Passenger trains No. 11 and 12 operated on Thursday of this week. The track is not yet in condition for trains to make the old schedule. It is expected that within a few days all trains will again be in operation on this division. A large crowd of people assembled at the depot Thursday p. m., to welcome the arrival of passenger train No. 11, which was the first passenger train to reach Marshall since the flood. Soon after No. 11 had passed the block here, No. 12, rolled slowly up to the station. Both trains were loaded to the limit with passengers. No. 12 was about two hours making the trip down the river from Asheville. These trains carried some wagon loads of damaged mail destined to Marshall and other points in Madison County.