

Riverside Flood Of 1921 Was Worse: Argus

As flood waters receded throughout the county this week many longtime county residents began comparing the incident with the one taking place in December of 1921. Old issues of The Argus give quite a few details about the matter and make it easier for those who did not witness both floods to compare the two.

The flood began late Monday night, Dec. 12, when the dikes began breaking after three days of heavy rains and warm winds. The river soon reached a level of twenty-four feet in Mount Vernon and both Burlington and Conway were completely flooded as dikes broke here.

Early Tuesday morning the dikes burst near Riverside and the entire area was covered with several feet of water. One home in the area split in half by the water and the family hung on the roof as the better share of their dwelling was swept away.

Over 2000 feet of railroad tracks were washed away near Riverside and no autos or trains reached Mount Vernon from the south for several days. Several stores along the riverfront in Mount Vernon had portions disappear when the raging waters tore away their pilings.

Two days after the record water level the county had several days in which the temperature did not exceed twenty degrees. This froze all of the standing water to a depth of several inches and did much damage to livestock in the valley.

WYLIE RECALLS SEA FLOOD

What will the Skagit flood waters do to the farms?

Not as much as many fear, says one pioneer of the flats beyond Fir Island.

Recalling the 1921 flood that was followed by a freeze, pioneer John Wylie, FUD commissioner, said his lands were isolated, under sea water for 51 days. First year afterwards he got no crop, second year, 10 bushels to the acre. Then the lands began coming back.

Brief immersion in sea water will not be seriously harmful, Wylie declared. Lands flooded and silted, rather than covered with sand or debris, will benefit. Wylie cited a number of farmers who, he said, were "made" by silt from floods—the resulting bumper crops.