

MOUNT VERNON ARGUS.

December 10, 1909

LESSONS OF THE FLOOD

Value of Wireless Signals During Floods

THE DIKES OF HOLLAND

An Old Pioneer Recommends That a Wireless Signal Station be Established In
This City to Warn People Against Floods

Editor of Mt. Vernon Argus: Please permit me through your paper to make a few suggestions which, if they are carried out will be of great benefit to the residents of Skagit River. As it is at present almost impossible to keep in communications with the upper country by wire when storms are raging, to thus warn people of approaching freshets, and as they will come again whenever the conditions are right, would it not be well to have a wireless telephone line from Mt. Vernon to where the power plant is to be established? I am told that a system of this kind would work to perfection and the cost would only be about \$25,000. If there was such a phone it would save a great deal of loss. If installed it would give ample warning from 20 to 30 hours ahead, with it should be installed a gauge at different points to tell the height of the water. On the Ohio river such a system is used and in times of great freshets there is a bulletin at every post office posted every hour, and people in the town where I was raised, 150 miles from Pittsburgh, could tell you at any time where the water would be at this stage at such an hour tomorrow. They should have this on the Skagit so they would be able to tell at least 15 hours ahead of it. There should also be installed a set of bells

on some high points that should be worked by electricity that would toll to tell the people by certain rings how the river is and what to expect and to give them warning. I will also state that the present dikes will not give the desired protection. They have for years confined the river to a smaller channel by diking of the sloughs that formerly carried the water and this brings greater pressure on to the dikes.

In Holland and Germany where they have these or practically the same conditions, they have left 200 feet on each side of the stream. They then build a stone wall on each side more than 8 feet higher than the highest water they ever knew of. They take the dirt or sand and make a slope to this wall, (the wall is built out of rock and cement two feet thick). They then plant the ground between the wall and the river with willows, mostly basket willow which pays them for the repairs if any are made, and it is often that you will see farmers in floods working 10 to 14 feet below this stone wall. They also control the water that may accumulate, by wind mills that constantly pump the water over the dike. A dike that was built in 1878 has never broken and has saved its cost many times. Of course the general government takes a helping hand in

matters of this kind and it should be so here. Hope that you may give space to this in your paper and that it may do some good for the future. I further wish to mention that from recent observations taken of that river on which the dike was built in 1878, that since that time it has lowered its bed four feet and is constantly lowering it as the great floods being confined, sweep out all sand and don't allow it to fill up the bottom and thus displace the water and cause it to rise higher from year to year. A. V. Presentin.