

Skagit County Times

NOVEMBER 22, 1906

RAGING WATERS

That Came and Have Gone and the Harm Done.

Skagit County Suffers Little in Comparison With Other Sections of the State—Useless Fears of Future.

So far as can be learned the recent flare-up of the Skagit river and its tributaries concentrated its damaging effects against bridges and railroads. No loss of human life, except that of Mr. H. Peterson at Mt. Vernon, was caused by it. The case of Mr. Peterson was the result of a self inflicted accident caused by coming in contact with the iron crank used in opening and closing the draw on the county bridge at Mt. Vernon. A blast to loosen a jam of debris in the river was about to be fired, and in running in the darkness to a place of safety the unfortunate man collided with the iron and injured himself internally, from which he died the day after.

From all reports the dykes held good for some distance below Mt. Vernon. At Mt. Vernon, while the water overflowed low places on the dike, by vigilance and hard work the citizens prevented the water making dangerous inroads. West Mt. Vernon was less fortunate and the town was flooded to a considerable extent but without serious loss. The dikes both above and below Mt. Vernon broke, but the overflow is, in most cases, looked upon as a benefit rather than an injury to the land covered. One span of the county bridge over the river at Mt. Vernon is gone and the structure otherwise damaged beyond repair. A ferry will have to be maintained until the bridge is replaced. Near Cedardale and on down the river most damage occurred to dikes and to the surrounding country from overflow.

The railroad bridge between Burlington and Mt. Vernon was put out of commission for several days by drift striking and throwing the draw out of line. It will require several days yet to get the structure into safe and workable shape.

The condition of the N. P. bridges near this city was precarious for several days, such trains as passed over them feeling their way with the utmost care. The flooded districts south of the river along the line were impassable for several days. The water in Big Lake, it is said, was backed up into the basements of several houses. North of the river the water backed in west of the railroad tracks for a considerable distance toward town, while the water in the slough between the town and river made things look serious for a time, and a rise of a few more inches would have put Sedro-Woolley into the flooded district.

The county seems to have suffered generally and principally from the total or partial loss and damage of the bridges, not one of which are so far as known have escaped the raging waters. However this last flood does not seem to have injured the county roads to the great extent the first one did.

The rapid succession of rises and overflows is the subject of much conjecture and comparison with old time occurrences of a like nature. High water marks of former days are contrasted with those being made, and imagination lures the possibilities of the future. In this relation it should be remembered that, with the obstruction made by the dense forests and undergrowths of years ago, the water which has recently ran out of the mountains and hills would have been backed up to the highest marks made by the floods anywhere in the past. Whatever may happen in future it has been fairly demonstrated that Skagit County is not in danger of a widely disastrous overflow. The greatest danger that threatens is to those who might be affected by a change of the river's course, which even now is demonstrated to be not unlikely. The removal of timber quite likely has something to do with climatic changes that are said to be notable in

this country. The same thing lessens resistance to any change of base crowding water will cause the river to make.

It is possible that an extreme was reached in the last rise and that the worst that can occur has been demonstrated and has passed. If that is true the lesson taught should prepare everyone for any future occurrence.

The Cleo Club will hold no meeting next Thursday, it being Thanksgiving Day. The next regular meeting will be at the home of Mrs. R. H. Ramsey on Thursday, December 6th.

Who's Jolly? What's Jolly?