

Milk River, Lower Tributaries Pooled Their Flood Volumes

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 Army Engineers' levees around the town, the Bureau of Reclamation Heart Butte dam upstream provided the margin of safety.

At Garrison dam, upstream from Bismarck, the ice jammed behind a construction bridge. Water washed room-size cakes of ice three miles off the flats.

When the jam let go, it went all at once. The result was a wall of water that engulfed North Dakota's capital city of Bismarck. Water stretched from Bismarck to Mandan, seven miles across the bottoms.

Several homes were torn from their foundations and floated away. One man moved his house to a telephone pole. A man was rescued by helicopter from a farmhouse roof after clinging for 44 hours.

By the time Bismarck was passed the flood had become so mammoth that in most places there was no fighting it. Flight, and not fight, was the only course.

Pierre concentrated on saving these fundamentals of urban life—the water supply and the power plant. The plant was saved. Three of the community's four wells were engulfed.

Both Pierre and its across-stream neighbor, Fort Pierre, were major victims. One third of Pierre's 5,720 residents were homeless. All of Fort Pierre, locale of one of two major American Fur Company posts in the old days, was inundated.

At Moberly, S. D., the flood measured 440 thousand cubic second feet, which put it in the same league with last year's Kansas City flood.

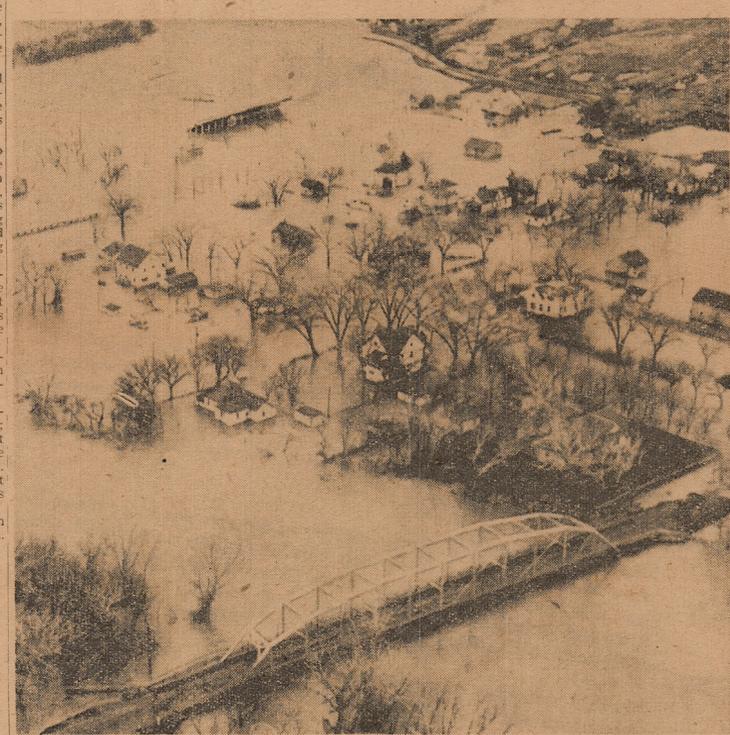
Yankton got off lucky. Not so Sioux Falls, whose trouble came from the Big Sioux rather than the Missouri. A levee was flanked, water went over the Sioux Falls Air Base. The 1,400 persons living in a war-time barracks that had been converted into a housing project were forced out.

South Sioux City fought. Residents knew in advance they were doomed. They were trading effort for time, to win a few more hours to get things squared off before the water hit.

The river crumpled the community's primary dikes and then rolled over secondary dikes constructed in the business district.

South Sioux City suffered heavily. The town was half deserted; 806 homes suffered damage. Short water rations were decreed to ease the load on the sewer system. The bridge to Sioux City was cut off for the first time since its construction in 1896.

Sioux City was the major urban victim of the flood upstream.



Above
Flood Starter—This was the scene at Glasgow, Mont., April 10 when the Milk River was dumping its flood into the Missouri. In 11 days the river had done \$2,000,000 damage, left 3,000 homeless. This was the starter of the Flood of '52.

Hardest hit was the industrial area. The Sioux City stockyards were embargoed and the packing plants closed.

The sewer system was knocked out of a 10 by 26 block area, extending the flood's hardship to places where no water hit. The sanitation menace created delayed the return of victims to their homes.

Mayor Ralph Henderson estimated the community's loss at \$2,500,000.

At Sioux City much of the river's flow swept in a shortcut across the curving arc that was South Sioux City. There the water seemed to gather itself as it pointed a great looping punch downstream towards Omaha and Council Bluffs.

Upstream was the dreary aftermath of the flood. The water, contaminated by contact with a thousand cesspools and barnyards, spilled into water wells. The bloated carcasses of animals putrefied in the sun. Filth and slime. Everywhere the smell of dead vegetation, dead land, dead water.

At Right
Fort Pierre Hit—Downstream at Fort Pierre, S. D., across from Pierre, the state capital, the swollen Missouri backed up to force the Bad River through the city.



Dike Break Adds Trouble—Protection of a housing development at Sioux Falls, S. D., ended when a dike broke and let the Big Sioux ramble through.

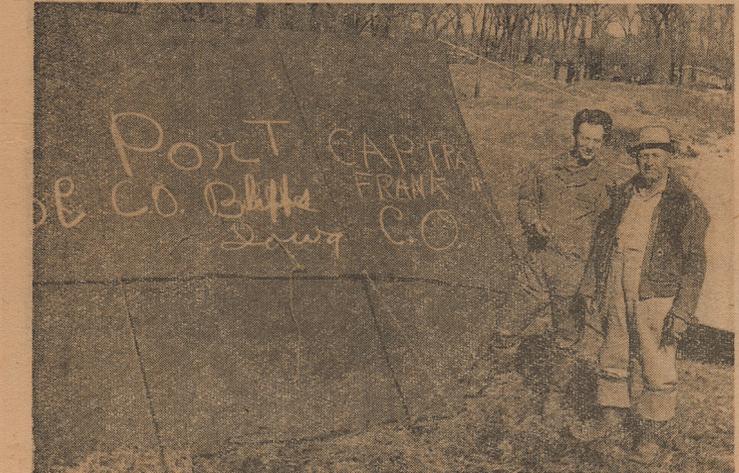


Another Tributary Chimes In—Renner, S. D., near Sioux Falls, was swamped with water from the Big Sioux, a Missouri River tributary.

Night Caused No Slackening, for River Raged 'Round Clock



No Time for Sleep—Under floodlights, headlights, flashlights and portable carbide lamps, men and trucks are shown working on the Council Bluffs levee at the north end of Twenty-fifth Street. In center foreground are bales of sandbags ready for filling. At left, blurred figures are men with shovels filling the bags. Then there are trucks, loading up to move down the levee where a furious battle was waged.



Too Much for Schultz—Frank Schultz (right), who bills himself as "captain" of the "Port of Council Bluffs," stayed in his fishing cabin below Ak-Sar-Ben Bridge during the 1943 flood. But when the crest prediction for 1952 came through Mr. Schultz got assistance from Marvin Osborne, 3220 Avenue C, and pitched a tent on the "dry" side of the levee. His cabin washed away, too.

A Dash of Spice Was Added...

And Not Long to Wait—World-Herald Reporter Tom Allan came back to Omaha from South Sioux City, Neb., as the crest was passing the latter city. He brought a half-gallon jug of Missouri River water. Pasted on it was a note to City Editor Lou Gerdes from Bill Lee, editor of the Dakota County Star: "... Herewith is, exclusive to you, a sample... The other 500,300-000,000 1/2-gallons will be along soon."

Slow Down—On flooded Grand Avenue in the Sioux City, Ia., suburb of Morningside, merchants had a complaint—against speeding. They said motor boats were moving too fast, stirring big waves which broke store windows.

1952 No ah—Mr. and Mrs. Walter Cramer of South Sioux City rode out the flood in an "ark" tied alongside their flooded cottage. They lived aboard the 28-foot houseboat seven days.

Worst Hardship—Tom Cooper, marooned five nights and four days in his attic in South Sioux City, was barefooted, had only a couple of cans of beans, some crackers and eggs which he ate raw. But food wasn't what he missed most.

"What I wouldn't have given for a chew of 'snosoe' about the second day!" he told his son who rescued him.

Indian No Lie—Farmer-Pilot Ralph Beerman knows the Indians were telling his grandfathers the truth. Ralph was tooling a cub plane over South Sioux City looking at the awesome spread of muddy water.

"My granddad used to tell about the Indians telling him the Missouri had flooded the valley from hill to hill," Ralph said. "Now I know they weren't kidding."

Brand New, Too—An evacuee from the East Omaha danger area was downcast when his request for a pass to return home was denied. He had taken everything of value with him when he left his house—except one. He had forgotten his brand new toilet seat. "Why, I paid \$12 for it," he told police.

Taking All Comers—"We always come down to fight your Golden Gloves teams—now we're willing to come down and fight your river," Jack Fickler of Ashland, Neb., told Omaha Flood fight officials. He is perennial coach of the Ashland fight teams. He said 35 business men of Ashland—which often is flooded by Salt Creek—had expressed willingness to shut up shop and come to Omaha.

George's Luck—George W. Winkler, head of Omaha Police Department communications,

had been setting up electrical equipment for several years to meet an emergency like Omaha's flood. But came the flood and where was George? In St. Joseph Hospital several days for an examination.

Mr. Dike Was There, Too—A man approached the information desk in the Council Bluffs City Hall, identified himself as an insurance specialist from Des Moines. He said he had been sent to assist during the high-water emergency. His name: E. M. Flood.

What a Hangover!—A nattily-dressed man was lying on sandbags on an Omaha levee. He wore no overshoes or raincoat and the soggy bags were staining his sport coat. "How come you're down here dressed like that?" a fellow-worker asked. The answer: "I was drunk and the police picked me up. It was either go to jail or down here. So here I am."

Pay Up—The sightseeing mania paid off for The World-Herald Flood Relief Fund for the Red Cross. A seventeenth-floor office in the Medical Arts Building offered a good flood view. This sign was put on the door: "Admission only by contributions to the flood relief fund."

Courtesy—A dike-worker, weary and mud-spattered from a day's labor on the river, boarded a crowded bus. He stood near an elderly woman who was sitting. "Have you been working on the dikes?" she inquired. He said yes. "Will you take my seat?" she offered. The man declined.

Unexpected Compliment—Rescuers floating down a South Sioux City street in a boat heard a raucous voice in one of the flooded homes. They found a disheveled parrot in a cage in danger of drowning. They took the cage from the house into the boat. As they started the motor, the parrot cocked a beady eye at his rescuers and croaked: "Good boys! Good boys!"

Crazy Cool—Company employees guarding the Independent Metal Products Company, Eleventh and Grace Streets, during the flood haggled a confused cool, or mudhen. With all that water to land in, the waterfowl flew into a company building, crashed into a steel beam, broke its neck.

All this and More—Beating the Missouri River at Omaha and Council Bluffs took, among other things: 421,600 man-hours of work by troops, Army Engineers and contractor's staffs; 5,500,000 sandbags; 1,396 dump trucks; 52 radio cars; 38 draglines; 83 scoops; 2,500 carbide flares.

The Reward of Merit . . .

Thanks to thousands of determined people—the rampaging Missouri was contained in the Omaha-Council Bluffs channel. Many thousands of homes and scores of businesses and industries have been spared millions of dollars of damage. Hardship and tragedy was reduced to a minimum.

Although our Grace Street area proved to be one of the weak spots—hundreds of willing workers turned the tide in our favor. Without them our losses would have been incalculable.

The least we can do is to point out the merits of neighborliness and friendly cooperation have their own reward—and give humble thanks they exist in such quantity in our community.

We also want to extend our thanks to all of our customers who have been so patient during the disruption of our normal service.

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