

# Farmers Move Stock Into Hills as Water Covers Broad Plain

The headlines grew bigger and blacker as the river roared south. Thousands of acres were added daily to the flood areas as agricultural levees were broken or topped.

And as the flood at Sioux City, Ia., and South Sioux City, Neb., worsened daily, uneasy residents farther south, rural and urban, prepared to meet the highest river ever recorded.

The man-in-the-street suddenly realized he might soon be the man-at-the-dike.

On the lowland farms, hasty moving preparations were made. Veterans of Missouri River floods who aren't readily scared seemed to sense that "this is the big one."

Truck operators worked days and nights hauling out livestock to temporary havens on hill farms. People in the towns rushed out to help farmers load feed and get it out, remove furniture or move it to second stories.

One favor the onrushing river had bestowed. It had provided ample warning of its coming and a fairly good idea of what it would do.

The hungry river gobbled up fertile lowlands all along the one-hundred-mile Omaha-Sioux City strip. It spread to six miles, 10 miles, 14 miles . . . the estimates were almost incredible.

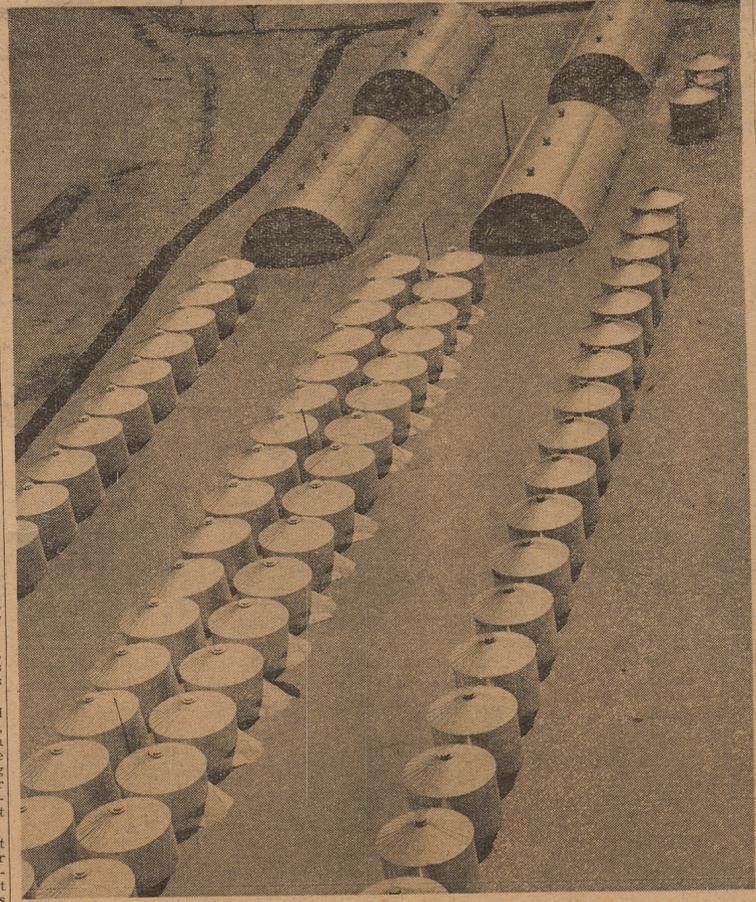
The list of evacuated towns got additions daily. Water swept into Whiting, Mondamin, Modale, Ia. Desperate efforts were made to ring communities with walls of earth.

Levees blew out near Blencoe, Ia., near Herman, Neb. Stretches of Highway 75 and lesser arteries disappeared from view.

Water careened under the famed "dry-land" bridge at Decatur, Neb. At one time there was a theory that the flood might put the bridge into business by crawling under it permanently. But after the water dropped back, the channel was still a river's width east of the bridge.

Blair, Neb., had a different problem. It worried about the river pulling out from under its automobile and railroad bridges. But again the channel returned to its accustomed place.

A 1½-mile, community-built dike near Decatur was credited with preventing the river from slashing a new channel through the Burt



**Feed for Ducks, Fish**—Two Government grain bin sites at Blencoe, one at Whiting were caught in the flood. More than two-thirds of the 1,590,219 bushels of corn the bins contained was damaged when the wet corn expanded and burst the bins. Some of it went down the river to feed ducks and fish. Top photo at right is a closeup of the mess after the flood subsided.

County "depression" all the way down to Tokamah.

When it reached the lowlands north of Blair, the crest was bulging badly. Water hung back in previously unflooded valleys and lapped higher on flood plain farm buildings, higher than the residents ever had seen.

Heavily-traveled Highway No. 30 was under water over most of its length between the Blair bridge and Missouri Valley, Ia. Damage may keep the highway closed more than two months.

As the crucial moment for the metropolitan area neared, all eyes were on the Blair bridge river gauge—last one above Omaha.

Up and up it crept—from 22.8 feet to 23.1 feet to 23.5 feet—then 23.4 feet. The crest had passed Blair and was hurtling down the narrowing neck of a funnel.

Could Omaha and Council Bluffs squeeze that monstrous deluge between them into a 1,500-foot channel?



—World-Herald Photos.

# Families from Lowlands Lived in Trailers—on Higher Ground



**"Christmas Tree"**—In Council Bluffs, evacuating families hung toys and other items in trees to keep them above the expected water level.



**Ten's a Crowd**—At Miller Park in Omaha and Kirn Field in Council Bluffs many families parked trailers brought from lowland areas. Here is the family of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Shields, packed into the smallest trailer in Miller Park. Some 60 families parked there, used the North Branch YMCA for baths and recreation.



**Train Service Cut**—Where the Illinois Central Railroad tracks cut through the levee in Lakeview Park on the north edge of Council Bluffs, sandbags were piled to shortstop the river.



**Roadblock**—One rainy night in Council Bluffs, trucks loaded with huge boulders were sent out Twenty-fifth Street to work on the levee. They found the road impassable. They backed into adjoining streets, dumped their loads and rushed back for other assignments.



**Plenty of Elbow Room**—At the Army Engineers' Florence Boat Yard, boats were the only means of travel five days before the crest arrived. From this spot, workboats and barges operated along the levees, carrying rock and sandbags.

—World-Herald Photos.

## A Page in History

When the history of the Missouri's greatest flood is completed, the Omaha-Council Bluffs chapter will certainly be one of the most heroic. For nothing could be more inspiring than the story of thousands of unselfish men and women working day and night to avert the tragedy of a major flood.

The Omaha Production Company wants to express its sincere gratitude not only to the people who helped in the evacuation of our plant, but to everyone connected in any way with the courageous battle against the river . . . to all those who thronged the levees and for long, sleepless, restless hours did the back-breaking labor which in truth saved our cities from the river.

### Omaha Production Company

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## Thanks . . .

Yes, thanks—a small word, but it expresses the deep and sincere appreciation of our 238 employees as well as ourselves. Yes, thanks to the many thousands of volunteer workers, as well as the many relief organizations, and the U. S. Army Engineers, the National Guard, and the U. S. Coast Guard. Your combined efforts held our loss to a minimum. Thanks again.

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