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GREAT CALAMITY.

Over a Thousand Lives Lost in a Pennsylvania Flood.

VILLAGES SWEEPED AWAY.

A Mighty River Sweeping Everything Before It.

FLOATING WRECKAGE FORTY FEET HIGH ON FIRE.

Not a Building to Be Seen in Johnstown, Pennsylvania—All the Villages in the Kiskimintus Valley Submerged—Thousands of People Homeless and Floating for The Lives—Communication by Wire or Rail Entirely Cut Off, Making it Impossible to Obtain Full Particulars.

PITTSBURG, June 1.—Destructive rains are reported from Johnstown, Cambria county, Pa., and adjoining towns. Great loss of life is reported and towns partly under water. Pennsylvania railroad officials in Pittsburgh state that they have advised that over two hundred dead bodies have been counted floating down stream, at Johnstown alone, while all along the line many additional lives have been lost. Johnstown is described as wholly submerged, only two houses being entirely above the water line.

A Dispatch From Greensburg. A Greensburg, Pa., special to The Times says: The banks of the Conemaugh river are overflowed for miles and the whole country is deluged with water. The Pennsylvania railroad all along the river from Johnstown to New Florence is washed away and travel is entirely suspended. At Sang Hollow, the operator in one of the railroad towers counted eighteen-seven dead bodies floating down the river on the driftwood. The river rose so rapidly that all the operators in the towers between Sang Hollow and New Florence had to flee for their lives.

The bridge at New Florence on the Pennsylvania railroad and Coketown on the West Pennsylvania, were carried away. Houses, furniture, etc., are being carried down the river. The latest report is that Johnstown is entirely submerged and the roofs of but two houses were visible, while it is still raining and the river rising at a very rapid rate.

The Cause of the Flood. The cause of the flood is attributed to the bursting of a water spout, and the breaking of the South Fork reservoir, which covers an area of one square mile, and has had twenty feet of water in it.

A freight engineer says: At 2 p. m. he saw three men and women struggling for their lives in the Conemaugh river just below Johnstown.

The Western Union office in Johnstown was swept away at 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon.

The water in Cambria City, where are located the Cambria iron works, is thirty-five feet deep and rising. A special train has left Pittsburgh with Pennsylvania railway officials, newspaper men and telegraph operators on board. A telegraph office will be opened at the nearest available point to Johnstown.

Story of an Eye Witness.

S. J. Herron, solicitor for The Times at Johnstown, has just arrived in this city. Mr. Herron tells a graphic story of the disaster that fell on the Mountain City. All of Thursday afternoon and Thursday night rain poured down in a deluge. The little mountain streams swelled in torrents, pouring their waters into the Conemaugh river that passes directly through the center of the city. Soon the banks of the river overflowed and the streets through the city began to disappear beneath the rapidly increasing current. Houses and bridges, from above the city were swept away by the flood and added largely to the damage further down. The water rose so rapidly that many people could not escape from their homes and ran to the upper stories, from which they were rescued by men riding horses and mules.

The scenes of rescue were most thrilling. Joseph Ross, a teamster, had in charge a pair of mules. He mounted one of them to aid some people. The mule fell into an excavation carrying Ross with it and he was drowned. When I left it looked as if 5,000 people were homeless. They were gathered on the mountain sides, looking sadly at their homes buried in the water.

The Cambria iron works were flooded, throwing 2,000 men out of employment, besides entailing a vast amount of damage to the mill. The sweeping away of four or five large bridges added greatly to the horror of the scene. Twelve car loads of iron were run out onto the Cambria bridge in an attempt to save that structure. The waters gathered strength and swept bridge, cars and iron away as if they were straws. But one bridge remains and it is badly damaged.

Lumber was swept down with the flood in vast quantities. It is estimated that 1,000,000 or more feet had already passed through the town. The railroad depots were thronged with victims of the flood that were rescued in skiffs. Piano boxes and rafts were used for this purpose. All trains on the Pennsylvania railway and Baltimore and Ohio railway are discontinued, the tracks being submerged for miles. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the water was still rising and the people were panic-

stricken. There is no doubt but that the loss of life will be heavy."

Pittsburg People Drowned.

Three citizens of Pittsburg are known to have been drowned. They occupied a house just below the dam a short distance above Johnston. Their names are Thomas Fallon, James Tighe and a telegraph operator, name unknown.

In the Kiskimintus Valley.

Reports from along the Kiskimintus river, into which the Conemaugh empties, are most distressing. The river near Saltsburg is filled with wreckage, and a number of persons were noticed clinging to such timbers as would bear their weight. At Blairsville men are stationed on the bridges and banks in the hope of rescuing some of those who were being carried down the stream. The volume of water is unprecedented. The iron bridge connecting Blairsville with Blairsville intersection has been carried away and with it a train of heavily loaded cars standing upon the bridge to hold it in place. This was the largest and strongest bridge on the West Pennsylvania railway. It is thought that all of the West Pennsylvania railway bridges will share a similar fate.

Five Towns Submerged.

All of the towns in the Kiskimintus valley are expected to be submerged, among them are Livermore, Saltsburg, Apollo, Leechburg and Avonmore, having populations of from 8,000 to 10,000 each. The inhabitants along the river have been warned, but are almost panic-stricken at the idea of their great loss of property, which is inevitable.

Coketown Under Water.

Later reports from Coketown is to the effect that the entire town is submerged, and a number of lives have been lost at that place.

Driftwood on Fire.

W. N. Hays, supervisor of the section of the Pennsylvania railway covered by the flood, telegraphed at 10 o'clock last night to Superintendent Pitcairn as follows: "The destruction is terrible. The dump at Johnstown is gone between the bridge and tower, west of Johnstown, at some points the tracks are entirely carried away and road bed gone. The river for three-quarters of a mile above the bridge is filled with buildings and driftwood, forty feet high, and is on fire, burning furiously, and is entirely beyond our control. I cannot estimate the amount of damage I walked over tonight from Johnstown to Sanghollow, four miles. Johnstown is literally wiped out."

Superintendent Pitcairn, who is at New Florence, sixty-five miles east of Pittsburgh telegraphs that over one hundred men, women and children passed Sanghollow, two at Conemaugh furnace and two at New Florence. Only forty-seven of the one hundred and over passed New Florence. The loss of life and property will be terrible.

Tyrone Flooded.

A special from Tyrone, Pa., says the Juniata river has overflowed its banks at this place and flooded the southern portion of the city, causing great damage. People were removed from their homes in wagons. All of the railroads centering at Tyrone are greatly damaged. One man is reported drowned at Carmansville. A dispatch from Clearfield says two young ladies were drowned there while endeavoring to escape from the flooded district.

Dispatches from Bolivar, Pa.

BOLIVAR, Pa., June 1.—The water is higher than was ever known and two-story houses, barns, stables, whole forests of trees, outhouses, smokehouses, railroad bridges, county bridges, rafts, inverted skiffs and driftwood by the acre, from all of which exploring hands were held out to those on the banks, willing but impotent to help, have floated down the swollen torrents of the Conemaugh. Information received is meagre, but for the most part accurate. At Lockport, two miles east, more than twenty people have been taken from the flood.

The first great rush of water reached here at 7 o'clock yesterday evening. This came from the burst dam above Johnstown. It came like a frenzied whirlpool, and before the people could realize it they were in its grasp. Fortunately the people living on the low-lying ground escaped. At 7:30 o'clock a great pile of driftwood was swept along, and from it shriek upon shriek for "Help! Help! For God's sake! come!"

The horrified spectators on the shore saw three women, to one of whom were clinging two children, neither of whom was apparently more than an infant. The rapidity of the current and the position of the raft in the stream, together with the lack of facilities for rescuing, precluded the possibility of ever thinking in the matter, and the raft passed out of sight, the screams of the women and children blending in their pleadings for aid long after the craft was around the bend.

The stream then became thick strewn with men, woman and children clinging to all sorts of temporary means of salvation and two men and a woman clung madly to the tops of huge trees, the men emulating the females in their shrieks for help that it was not possible to give. Just at dark a lad was noticed clinging to a log. James Curry secured a long line and ran to the river bank. The noise of the lasso fell over the boy's neck and shoulders and a moment later the drenched poverty stricken little fellow was hauled to the bank. He was soon restored and stated that his name was Edward Herston, 13 years of age. He had lived with his father and grandfather and mother in Cambria City, a part of Johnstown. At 4 o'clock their home had been caught in the volume of water let loose by the bursting of the dam. They had all climbed upon a mass of driftwood and were carried along. Their raft went to pieces against a bridge pier and he had not seen his relatives since, but thought that they were all drowned.

A Wrecking Train to the Rescue.

A wrecking train left here this morn-

ing to clear the tracks and re-establish communications. The people along the route between this place and Johnston are well nigh paralyzed by fear. At Bolivar, the water is the highest in history. It is now over the bed of the Pennsylvania canal, which has never before been submerged.

Fifteen Hundred People Drowned.

Joe Duffy was saved from the river. He intimates that fully 1,500 people were drowned. He saw a number of persons about him sucked under the turbulent water, and they never appeared again.

Three quarters of the city of Johnstown was submerged. The water rose up to the third stories of the houses in five minutes. He saw the houses of one street washed away in a short time. He floated on the driftwood to Lockport, and then jumped into the flood and swam about twenty-five yards to the shore.

The family of John Thomas, including his wife and five children, were lost. The hired girl and another man named Harvey were also drowned. Duffy says he saw people carried off by the flood in crowds.

Loss of Life Not Overestimated.

A man rescued in the river here, who was swept away from Johnstown, says positively that not less than 1,500 lives are probably lost in the valley of Conemaugh. This point is twenty miles below Johnstown, and the work of rescuing men, women and children sweeping down the river has been steadily going forward all night.

Mr. Rhoades, at Blairsville intersection, agent, saw a woman floated by on the roof of a house. With arms outstretched she called in the most piteous of tones to save her. "Oh, my God," she cried, "save, save me." I caught the name of Lucy above the roar of the flood. Just ahead of the house we could plainly see a cradle floating with a little babe in it. The child seemed to be sleeping, but more than likely was dead. A little after 2 o'clock an engineer of the Pennsylvania railway saw three men drown at the railroad bridge in Johnstown. At that time the water was fully fifty feet deep.

"As they were carried off the houses were jammed together and against the houses still standing, and in a very few minutes they were all battered to pieces before they had been carried very far. The house I was in was soon smashed to pieces, and I managed to jump on to a cellar door. In a few seconds I was rushed off into the flood, and when I looked back where Cambridge City stood, there was nothing but a great lake of water. It looks to me as if every house had been razed or covered over. The vast sheet of water was full of floating timbers, roofs of houses, rafts, boards and other articles. The scene was indescribable. The cries of the men, women and children were fearful. I passed Paddy Madden's wife, my son's wife and a man clinging to the roof of a house. I called to them and bade them good-by. In a short time I was caught by the water and turned under. Ever since once in a while I got into a whirl pool and more than once almost lost my grip on the cellar door. I saw people in the water ahead of me and all around me. Many of them were struck by the crashing timbers and killed outright. They were so badly hurt that they fell into the water and drowned at once."

Mrs. Boyle was also rescued at Lockport. The poor woman was moving moaning and crying and would not be comforted; her nine children and husband are supposed to be drowned.

At Lockport sixty-five families are homeless, having lost everything but their lives. Edward Deck, a young railroad, rescued an old gentleman, a lady named Adams, of Cambria, and her children by swimming out to the house in which they were imprisoned, cutting a hole in the roof and pulling them through. He then swam ashore with them, one at a time, until all were saved. Deck then fell exhausted.

Patrik Madden was nearly dead when pulled from the river. He was in the house of Edward Garvey. All were caught. Ten minutes later the house was wrecked, Garvey and his son-in-law were drowned, and Madden was thrown into the flood. When I rose to the surface, I saw my wife hanging onto a piece of scantling. She let it go and was drowned, almost within reach of my arm, and I could not help or save her. I caught a log and floated with it for five or six miles, but it was knocked from under me when I went over the dam. I then caught a bale of hay and was taken out by Mr. Marenrow. My wife is certainly drowned, and six children are all missing and I fear are all drowned. There are without doubt fully 3,000 people lost between Conemaughborough and Cambria City.

Henry Berkert and George Right were also conspicuous among the life-saving corps and rescued four people from the water.

At Braddock.

BRADDOCK, Pa., June 1.—Telegraph wires are down or unworkable twelve miles from Johnstown. News received here by the Pennsylvania railway officials corroborates the statements that Johnstown is nearly wiped out. The signal tower people at Sanghollow state that up to 8 o'clock they had counted 119 persons floating past on wreckage, some alive and some dead. They rescued a boy, name unknown, who said he and his father, mother, brother and two sisters, were swept away with their home. He was washed off from the building, but the others were in it when it was carried over the new stone railroad bridge at Johnstown. The house went to pieces then, and he thinks all were drowned. The alarm of danger seems to have reached Johnstown about 1 p. m. The railroad officials at once began carrying people out of town, some on regular trains, others on hastily improvised specials. Superintendent Pitcairn happened to be in the vicinity, and took charge of the work. The water

finally came down like a tidal wave, sweeping everything before it.

At New Florence.

New Florence, June 1.—The water is higher here than it was ever known before, and still rising. Centerville, across the river, is half submerged, but no lives were lost here. Two persons were rescued from floating pieces of wreck, and forty-five others were seen floating past, besides many dead bodies. There is probably not a bridge standing on the Conemaugh or Kiskimintus from Johnstown to Leechburg.

Another little boy rescued here, said his home had floated over the stone bridge. He was asked how many there had been in his family.

"Father, mother and three sisters," he replied.

"Where are they?"

He pointed to the river and burst into tears.

The Loss of Life Growing.

BLAIRSVILLE INTERSECTION, Pa., June 1.—At Lockport, about eighteen miles from Johnstown, the scene of the disaster Eliel Benson, an old man, Mrs. Boyle, Paddy Madden and two Hungarians were rescued. Mr. Benson said: "I live in Cambria City, and I think not less than 15,000 people are lost. In the house with me on Chestnut street, were ten persons beside myself, and I feel sure they were all lost. Up to 4 o'clock in the afternoon the water, which was seven feet deep in the streets remained stationary. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon the great rush came. In fifteen minutes the water rose fully ten feet. Houses came floating down the streets. There were people in every one of them, and God only knows how many were lost."

The Susquehanna River Rising.

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa., June 1.—The biggest flood since the memorable one of 1865, is now in progress on the west branch of the Susquehanna river. Much damage is reported from points north of here, but communications of all kinds is interfered with. Land slides are reported all along the Pennsylvania roads north of here. At Clearfield the water is rising at the rate of one and a half feet per hour. A half dozen bridges have been swept away and the streets of the town are overflowed. The people are going about in boats. The booms at Caledonia and Curwensville have broken and it is feared that the Lock Haven boom will break before morning, and that the Williamsport boom cannot stand the strain if this occurs. Logs valued at \$5,000,000 depend on the Williamsport boom holding. The river is twenty feet above low water mark at present. The rain is falling in torrents.

The Flood Reaches Pittsburg.

PITTSBURG, June 1.—The headwaters of the flood from the Conemaugh and Kiskimintus rivers reached this city at 3 o'clock this morning. It is coming down the Allegheny river very much as a tidal wave. Debris of all kinds is tumbling about and the river is rising very rapidly. The banks of the Allegheny river are thronged with anxious watchers. Details of police and firemen from Pittsburg and Allegheny have secured all available boats and are watching the fast increasing flood with its cargo of dead. Signal fires are kept burning along the shores almost the entire distance from this city to Freeport, sixty miles above, where the Kiskimintus river empties into the Allegheny river.

A Greensburg special says, houses are floating down the river with people clinging to them. At Coketown the houses are almost entirely covered. Many dwellings at Blairstown are submerged. Hardly a dwelling is left in the vicinity of Sanghollow. The Bolivar and Nineveh bridges are gone, and the Saltsburg bridge is likely to go. The river is rising at Livermore and threatens the town.

At Cambria City.

CAMBRIA CITY, June 1.—There are probably a dozen houses in what was a thriving manufacturing town forty-eight hours ago. No estimate can be formed of the amount of damage, but the probable loss of life is terrible. There are at present fifty lives known to have been sacrificed, and hundreds of people are homeless. The cold, raw weather of this morning is particularly severe on those who are without shelter and no means of relief at hand, as the trains cannot reach here from either west or east. Everything possible is being done for the sufferers. Communication with the outer world has been out off and only temporary accommodation can be had. Some place the damage to property at from \$12,000,000 to \$15,000,000, but until the excitement calms down it is impossible to form any correct estimate.

Later From Blairsville!

BLAIRSVILLE, Pa., June 1.—It is impossible at this time to estimate what the loss to life and property has been, so great is the terror and confusion. Families are scattered from Conemaugh to Sheridan station, and hundreds are safe where it was thought they had perished. On the other hand scores have been drowned when it was thought they were safe. It will take the light of day and a return to comparative cool-headedness to estimate even approximately who have perished and who have been rescued. Some of the level-headed citizens are disposed to think that many of those who were caught in the rush of waters were able, through the medium of driftwood, to keep themselves afloat until kindly hands at points below took them off.

A Suicide Identified.

SALEM, Mass., June 1.—The body of the man who shot himself on the common last Sunday has been identified as that of John Linnhan, aged 29, who had a wife, from whom he separated a year ago, living in Beverly, and two children in the Catholic home here.