

RUIN AND DESOLATION SCATTERED EVERYWHERE

Scenes that Beggar Description Appear on Every Hand in the Stricken Territory Between Heppner, Lexington and Ione.

Bits of People's Clothing Are Seen Hanging to Branches of Trees—Fragments of Homes and Other Wreckage Strew the Land.

RUIN AND DISASTER SCATTERED BROADCAST

(Journal Special Service.)
HEPPNER, June 17.—Twenty miles of ruin, 20 miles of the fairest garden land in the world laid waste and desolate; farms and orchards, a few days ago smiling with nature's promise of abundant bounty, are now pathless wastes, piled high with a conglomerate mass that includes everything movable in Morrow county.

Marking the sinuous course of Willow Creek, from Ione to Heppner, lies a stretch of desolation extending on either side, from a few hundred yards to a mile and a half in width.

Where the little valley narrows, the farms and orchards have been literally obliterated. The titanic force of the flood spared nothing. With the crops wrenched even the soil to a considerable depth. The entire landscape has been metamorphosed. This stretch of country is now covered with trees, rocks, portions of what were once homes, farming implements, articles of furniture and a thousand other things.

Along the line of the O. R. & N. railway articles of clothing, more than of women than of men, are to be seen, hanging to bushes, and bits of barbed wire fencing.

At Jordan's Sliding, about half way between Ione and Lexington, the scene of desolation commences and continues, growing more appalling as Heppner is approached. At Gray Creek, a half mile above this point, stands a grove of poplar trees. Here the valley narrows and the flood waters concentrated their fury long enough to deposit strange, grim relics of its journey from the town it had destroyed.

There is a deep cut, made by the creek, the banks of which are in many places from 20 to 30 feet high. Here the crest of the flood mounted to a height of at least 15 feet. On the top branch of a tree, 15 feet above the ground, hangs the front gear of a farm wagon. Scattered about the grove, on the branches of the trees there is a miscellaneous collection of farming utensils.

Railway Damage.
At bridge 59 commences the damage to the railroad. The supports of this bridge are twisted and curved. To the right of the track, in a rye field, was found a massive Saratoga trunk. In this same field, and scattered about in the limbs of trees can be found almost every thinkable article of household goods. Bureaus, beds, baby carriages, stoves, organs—these are a few of the things deposited here by the all-mov'g flood.

Bridges 60 and 61 are more damaged than is bridge 59. Bridge 62 was entirely washed away. Here was found one of the strange freaks of the flood. Six hundred feet of track was caught up by the swirling water, twisted into a gigantic coil, like so much rope, and hurled into a field of rye, 600 yards away. The grade is not damaged at this point.

On every hand lie the bodies of dead animals, cattle, horses, pigs and sheep. Great piles of wreckage can be seen in every direction. Under these piles undoubtedly lie the bodies of many human beings whose lives went out in the mad rush of water.

On each side of the track the telephone and telegraph poles were cut down like so many straws.

Hundreds of Cattle Dead.
Andrew Rainey's ranch, which extends from this point almost to the town of Lexington, and which was noted for its alfalfa production, has been practically ruined. At the lowest estimate 150 head of stock lie dead on the now useless ground.

On this property the creek broke from its channel and threw its flood across the ranch, following the course of the railroad grade. The farm is lined with willow trees. These caught the debris and it was piled up to a height of 15 to 20 feet above the soil.

It was here that the body of Mrs. Judge Keithley was found. An arm, protruding from the mass of tangled brush, caught the attention of the searchers and the body was uncovered. Mrs. Keithley was at her home in Heppner when the torrent of water struck the town. Her remains were carried by the flood for a distance of 11 miles.

On the only remaining span of the first bridge south of Lexington rests the roof of what was the residence of R. L. Hill of Heppner. Inside the house—

covering are many articles of clothing still intact. This house, hurried against one end of the bridge, destroyed the first two spans and itself became wrecked. Then the water, rising to overtop the obstructions found at this point, swept the roof of the house across the swollen river and deposited it on the nearest span at the opposite shore.

Between Lexington and Heppner the several bridges that spanned Willow Creek are all gone. Between the two points there is scarcely a stretch of track 200 feet long that is not destroyed. The rails, were torn up, twisted into fantastic shapes and left scattered in places in every direction.

Six miles and a half from Lexington there is a wash-out of about 20 feet. The grade at this point had an elevation of 19 feet above the tillable land. This grim panorama continues until a point three miles from Heppner is reached. Standing at this point and surveying the scene of ruin ahead, Superintendent O'Brien of the O. R. & N. exclaimed yesterday, "Was there ever a railroad here?"

Stretching out to Heppner the path of the railroad can be discerned by the wreckage, but the railroad has been practically obliterated.

STORY OF THE FLOOD

(Continued From First Page.)

waters divided and passed to either side, never harming those within the hotel. The highest point of the flood barely wet the feet of those of us who were on the lower floor, while on every side death and destruction was dealt to those less fortunate.

"Even while the crest of the flood was passing we were making preparations to carry aid to those whom we knew to be victims of the terrible disaster.

"I stripped my clothing, except my undershirt, and others did the same. There were no rubber boots to be found in the hotel, but I caught a Chinaman and made him give me the leather boots he wore. Then, while the waters were still raging on every hand, a little band of us went forth to render what assistance we could.

A Rushing Stream.

"Oh, God! the terrible sight that was disclosed. On the little island that was formed by the steps of the hotel we stood and watched houses, sheds, logs and pieces of timber racing past us in the swirling torrent; each, it seemed, with its little cargo of human freight. Screams for aid, cries of agony assailed our ears from every hand, but we were powerless to render assistance. One step from off the porch and we would have sacrificed ourselves uselessly to a fate as bad as that toward which these poor, helpless, helpless victims of the flood were being carried.

"Men, women and children clung to life with a grim tenacity that was heroic personified, and we—standing within a stone's throw, but as far removed from rendering actual assistance as though separated from them by miles—could only cover our faces and weep and curse and pray.

"All the deaths of a decade of ordinary life passed before our eyes almost in an instant.

"Then, almost as suddenly as it had come, the procession of the doomed dwindled to its end. The worst had passed. The torrent began to recede.

"Oh, the relief of being able to wade shoulder deep in that torrent and struggle toward some threatened victim, carrying to him the only hope of eternal salvation."

It was at 5:30 o'clock on Sunday evening that the flood struck Heppner, and fully two hours elapsed, according to



A SUBMERGED HOME.

By Journal Photographer.

Mr. Tooker, before the waters had gone down sufficiently to permit of work in the streets. Not until 9 o'clock at night did the creek return to its natural channel, and when he left the following morning the stream was still swollen and threatening. Mr. Tooker's story of the work of rescue is graphic and given from the standpoint of a participant and personal observer. He said:

Work of Rescue.

"Wearing nothing but a pair of boots and my underclothing and carrying a rope, I left the hotel porch and waded deep into the flood. Almost the first thing I came across was the body of a baby buried in the mud. I had no thought that the little thing was living, but I carefully extricated it from the slimy grave to which it had been consigned by the flood and carried it back to the hotel where it was given over to the care of eager women.

"Hours afterward, when I returned to the hotel again, they led me to a warm corner of the hotel parlor and there, kicking its little bare legs into the air and cooling in innocent, childish glee, was the infant I had plucked from the very gates of death. Near where I had found it they brought to light the bodies of its father and mother—both dead. A great discoloration of the skin across the baby's forehead showed where it had been rendered unconscious by a blow, but otherwise it was unharmed.

"As I stood there beside that little human being, which was happily oblivious of its orphanage and the terrible peril from which it had escaped, I thanked God that He had made of me

"We dragged him to the shore and there listened to his almost incoherent story of how he had gone upon the roof at the first alarm, begging his wife to accompany him. This she had refused to do until she had extinguished the fire in a stove on the lower floor. She had not thought the flood was dangerous, and with her life she paid the forfeit of her doubt.

"After the waters had begun to recede and I found I had done all that could be accomplished on the side of Willow Creek where the hotel was situated, I waded the stream to do what I could on the other shore. The water reached in many places to the height of my shoulders and the danger was great, but I managed to pass safely through and reach the other shore, if water knee-deep can be called a shore.

"It was just after affecting a firm foothold on the opposite side of the stream that I found the body of a man named Geiger, firmly wedged between tons of debris and weighted down with wagons and farm machinery.

"Frozen hail, in great cakes of ice several feet in thickness, were piled and jammed about the corpse. It was as though some section of a great glacier had split off and been swept down the valley by the watery avalanche.

"I called for help and about 20 men gathered to assist me. We were obliged to fasten ropes to the different articles which held the Geiger corpse in place and then all take hold and pull together in order that they might be loosened and the dead body removed. This was at last accomplished, but only after the most fatiguing effort. I relate this merely as an incident, for there were hundreds of just such cases in many



THE PATH OF THE FLOOD.

By Journal Photographer.

the instrument of His saving power upon this earth and that my efforts had at least not been wholly without result.

I longed to take the little one in my arms and bring it with me to my own, but I realized that my place was with the men in the field of further labor and not among the women in the hospital and with the dead, so I turned away and returned to the task of rescue and reclamation. I do not know the name of the child whose life I saved. I never saw it again.

"Mr. Ball, a member of our party from the hotel, waded into the water and clutched the clothing of a Chinese who was floating past. Let him go because he was only a Chinaman," Ball got the man upon his back and waded to a place of safety.

"It is a human life," Ball said, "and I will save it if I can."

"We saw one house coming toward us, and even as we planned to reach it with our ropes, it struck against some obstruction and broke in half.

"On the second floor of one-half of the house was an aged man, and from a window on the other section of the sunken building a woman stretched her arms toward her husband, who grasped them and attempted to drag her upon the same makeshift raft to which he clung. But his efforts were useless and the pitiless flood tore the two apart, hurrying the woman to an awful death and sweeping the man within our reach.

"There was no ceremony, no prayer, no funeral—only a removal of the dead.

"Volunteers went to the lumber yard and returned with pine boards. A hard-ware store yielded hammers, nails and saws, and ride coils, which were nothing but narrow boxes speedily gathered. The corpses were washed and swathed in bed sheets. Then they were placed in these pine boxes and carried to the

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"At 9 o'clock on the morning of Monday, after having worked all night without food or sleep, Mr. Tooker and those in his party left Heppner for Echo, where we had done all we could," he said, "and realized that for 24 hours at least we were utterly exhausted. At the end of that time there would be plenty of men in from outside points to take our places.

"So we started across the hills toward Echo, for the most part sleeping in the seats of the wagon that had been given to us by the heavy stable keeper. The road was very difficult, in many places having been washed out altogether. We could see where the flood had broken upon the hills and the course of the main stream down the mountain marked by rows of giant boulders which had been strewn in straight lines along either side of its improvised channel.

NERVOUS PROSTRATION CURED BY PE-RU-NA.



HAL P. DENTON.

Mr. Hal P. Denton, Chief Department Publicity and Promotion of National Export Exposition, writes:
Philadelphia, Dec. 20, 1899.
The Peruna Medicine Co., Columbus, O.
Gentlemen:—Toward the latter part of August I found myself in a very much run-down condition. I suffered particularly from catarrh of the stomach, aggravated no doubt by the responsibilities and worriment incident to the exploitation of a great international exposition. What I ate distressed me and I would lie awake at night "threshing over" if I may use that expression, the affairs of the previous day.

"My family physician said I had nervous prostration and recommended a sea voyage. I gradually grew worse. A kind friend whom I had known in Ohio recommended Peruna. Though skeptical, I finally yielded to his advice. After using one bottle I was much improved and with the fifth bottle came complete recovery. I am in perfect health to-day and owe everything to Peruna.

Very truly yours,
HAL P. DENTON.

If you do not derive prompt and satisfactory results from the use of Peruna, write at once to Dr. Hartman, giving a full statement of your case and he will be pleased to give you his valuable advice free.

Address Dr. Hartman, President of The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, Ohio.

graveyard, where they were buried in a trench. As soon as one cargo of death was deposited, another wagon would return for another load. Speed in disposing of the dead was essential to the safety of the living.

Scenes Most Shocking.

"A terribly touching scene came under my observation at the bank. It was when the body of Mrs. Thomas Matlock was found and carried in. Her husband was standing by and Mr. Ball led him around the corner where they engaged in conversation while the corpse was deposited with the others. Then the sorrowful tidings were broken to the husband. Without a word Tom Matlock walked into the bank and stood looking down at all that was mortal of the woman who had been his companion through 20 years of life. A friend strode in and touched him on the shoulder. Blindly Matlock groped about until he found the hand of his friend, and together they stood like statues, each looking unutterable sorrow into each other's eyes. Then the flood of grief came and Matlock wept as would a little child. It was the most touching thing I ever saw."

As soon as daylight came, Mr. Tooker says, the Palace Hotel was turned into a public eating house.

"Every storekeeper in Heppner who had anything left in his stock turned it over to the proprietor of the Palace Hotel," he continued, "and volunteers did the cooking. Free tables were set and men almost prostrated by the terrible toll of the past night, hurried to them in the early morning and ate with the ravenous appetites that came from utter exhaustion.

"Bedclothing and tablecloths went from the hotel to clothe the stark and naked dead, and there was no word of complaint. The proprietor was more than willing. Everything that was his belonged to those who needed it. The generosity of every man, woman and child, except an unknown few, could not have been surpassed.

"Early in the evening robbers began their work, but as soon as their depredations became known most rigorous measures were taken to bring them to a stop. Guns and pistols were served out to all the searchers, and orders were issued to shoot down without question every person caught robbing or destroying the dead. Such action was not necessary to carry out, for the threat had its effect and there were no further complaints.

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"In the Willow Creek Canyon, six miles above Heppner, the first holes had been swept away, and it was somewhere between this point and the main town that the full force of the waterspout first was felt."

"Echo was found that the last news that had been received from Heppner was over the O. R. & N. Company's wire. Operator Kerrin, who, with his wife perished in the flood, telegraphed 'The flood is coming.' Just before the wires went down, the bodies of this man and his wife were found dead, but their two children escaped to the hills and were not harmed."

Mr. Tooker says that on Saturday night there had been a small cloudburst

Woodard, Clarke & Co.

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98¢—SHOES—500 pairs
MEN'S SHOES,
Worth \$1.75.

49¢—BLANKETS, grey
or white—double
blankets.

2¢—SOAP—large cake
best LAUNDRY
SOAP.

The White Corner

in the Heppner hills, and for a short time the creek rose above its banks. No damage was done, however, at that time.

MUCH CREDIT DUE O. R. & N. OFFICIALS

"PARIS, June 16.—A. L. Mohler, President O. R. & N. Company—Do all you can for the relief of destitute and for devastated cities on the Heppner branch.

"E. H. HARRIMAN."
The above cablegram was received by President Mohler this morning from Mr. Harriman, who is at present recuperating from his recent sickness in the French capital. As soon as definite news of the disaster began to arrive Mr. Harriman was notified by cable.

The sentiment expressed in the above dispatch suggests the mastery with which the officials of the O. R. & N. have, both in behalf of the road and in conjunction with local committees and others, done all in their power to aid in the relief work.

The immense losses that will fall on the company have been forgotten entirely in the efforts to put forth succor to those who need it.

When the first news of the disaster reached Portland in desolatory dispatches, the O. R. & N. ordered two relief trains sent at once, one from Lexington and one from The Dalles. The timely assistance of those thus sent at company expense did untold good. Medicines, bedding and such food as could be gathered in the short time were forwarded on those trains.

For the past three days all passenger, freight and relief trains, both regular and special have been offered freely to any who would go to help the suf-

ferers. Not only from Portland have helpers been carried free, but from Walla Walla, Pendleton, The Dalles, Umatilla, Huntington and other places. A very conservative estimate places the number of those who have been carried free from various points to Heppner at 450. Hundreds of tons of freight have been taken to Heppner and other points North free. The railroad company also has a number of private detectives stationed where needed to prevent vandalism and protect private property. Neither effort nor expense has been spared and greater credit is due the O. R. & N. than in the disordered state of affairs can yet be estimated.

During the time when many anxious persons were waiting for news of friends and relatives in breathless expectation, the private wires of the Oregon Railway & Navigation Company in the headquarters building, as far as serviceable, were freely donated.

Many Heroic Acts.
Officials of the road are already considering a suitable way to express the thanks of the company for many heroic acts that resulted in the saving of life. J. M. Kernan, the O. R. & N. station agent, who stood by his post and warned Lexington and Ione of the impending disaster, and who with his wife was drowned a few minutes after the last dispatch had been sent and answered, left three small children, the eldest eight years old. So far as known they have no living relatives, and in view of the heroic services of their father the company will see that the little ones never want.

"The loss to the company will aggregate \$100,000," said President Mohler this morning. "The greatest loss will be the loss of life."

(Continued on Page Eight.)

SUMMER RESORTS

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Free Bus to and From Hotel. Rates Furnished on Application

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