

Former Klamathites Tell Vivid Tale Of Flood Area

In a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gaston, 4421 Boardman, Mrs. O. R. Harris recently wrote a graphic account of flood conditions in the Vanport area.

Mrs. Harris and her husband own and operate a small grocery store in Vancouver, but formerly lived in Klamath Falls, where Harris worked for Fwanna Box company. They were in Klamath Falls visiting the Gastons when the Vanport dike broke and the flood was at its worst.

Following are excerpts from Mrs. Harris' lengthy letter:

"We came (to Portland) by the way you suggested and found the road good and not much traffic except the last 50 or 60 miles from Mt. Hood. Arrived back in Portland at 7 p. m. and found the entire city in a madhouse of excitement. Police and sheriff cars, Red Cross and Salvation Army trucks full of bedding, coats and food.

"Every intersection had five or six policemen or national guards diverting cars on to streets that led away from the flooded rivers. I've never seen more people on the streets at a big Rose Festival parade.

"Some with one little suitcase, some with blankets, some in house slippers and half dressed.

"Every school and church... crowded with people inside and out. And through the streets dump trucks... loaded with sand heading for Denver ave.

"Everything was under martial law and the cops were more ready to shoot than to argue... Had an idea we might get through... over 'Bridge of the Gods'... we hated to

take the chance of getting stranded up there.

"... We learned that a small flying outfit might bring us across in a seaplane. We rushed to their take-off dock on Swan Island... The approach to the island was flooded and we had to leave the car and walk a quarter of a mile across pontoons.

"The pilot said he would take us but he was afraid to do it in the dark because of floating logs... Got up at 5:30... Got on the plane, he could only take three at a time... We took off on the river over there and landed on what was the airport here but is river now... got in the store at 8:15 to find the phone ringing madly.

"Do you have any bread? Can I have a sack of flour, spuds, sugar, what are we going to eat? Will we all starve here. Vancouver is cut off from the world, how long can we hold out? and so on all day... Gas main and telephone cables went out with the dikes and we can't cook, heat water or telephone to Portland yet. People went crazy with panic here yesterday (June 1). Even made runs on the banks to get their money so they could buy and lay in food.

"Water... on road... up to Bridge of the Gods... gone now so Ora (Mr. Harris) rode to Portland with a salesman... got the car and drove back the same way... We never thought we'd ever have to drive 98 miles to come from Portland when it's really only about eight miles. Things were getting calmer today, and all the bread trucks, produce and delivery trucks are coming from Portland... poor

fellows are working night and day to do it, but we are being supplied except with meat... Portland Packing house under water... local place where we get meat each day can't operate until the gas is turned back on...

"... We are getting by with a hot plate and electric percolator and it's so hot a cold shower feels good so we are pretty lucky. It's surprising that people will get so upset about little things when so many have lost so much.

"Worth everything to see this whole area from the air. There are no words to describe it. To see each familiar building, street and house the way it is now is so horrible. To see those tall two-story Vanport houses and apartments with only the chimneys showing, that is the very few that are left. Hundreds of them just disappeared like kindling.

"Now that... river is dropping slowly it's going to take a long time for that water to seep away. Through hot weather it's going to be a stinking mess... There is talk of giving everyone typhoid shots. The flood they had here in 1894 took 50 days for the water to disappear.

"Highway crews working... will be linked back to Portland in about two weeks. Some train service will be restored Sunday. Gas is to be turned on by the week-end and telephone service soon.

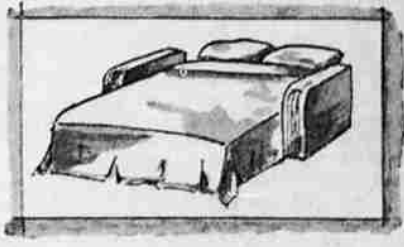
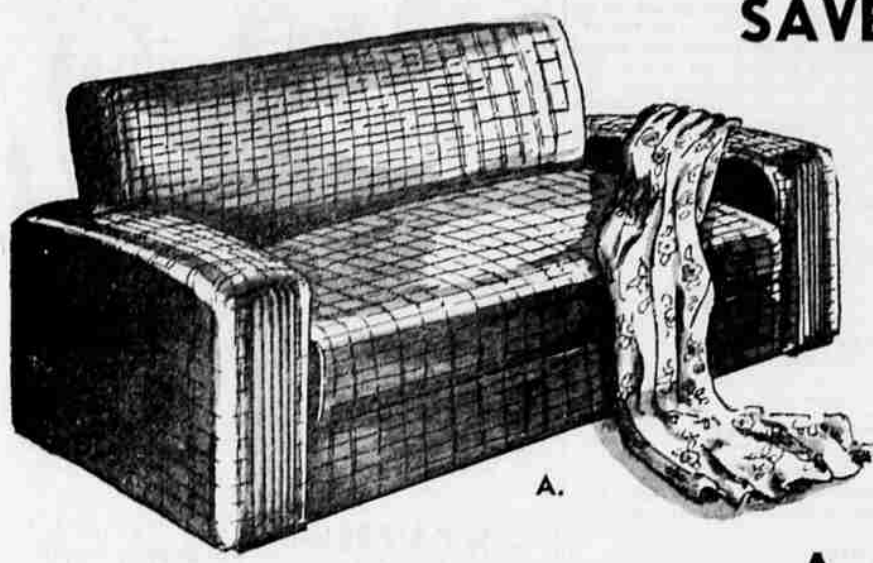
"Anyway this is something we shall never forget."

HEAT WAVE HITS MOSCOW AGAIN
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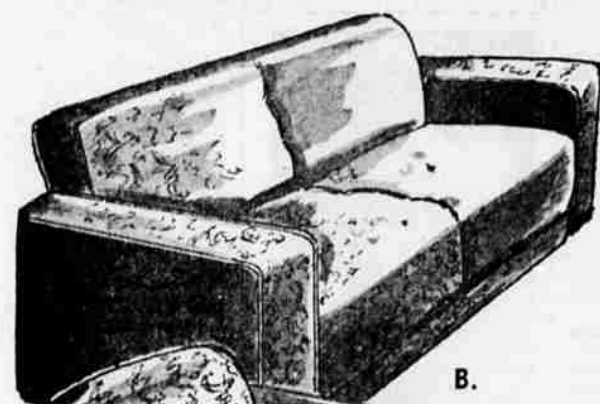


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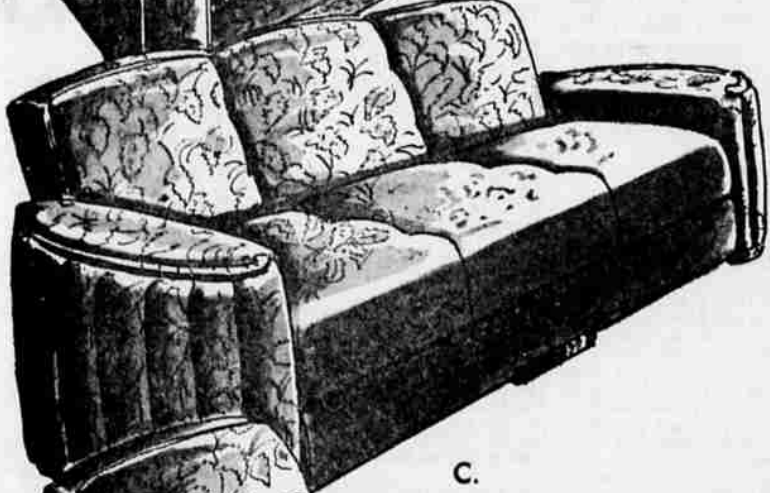


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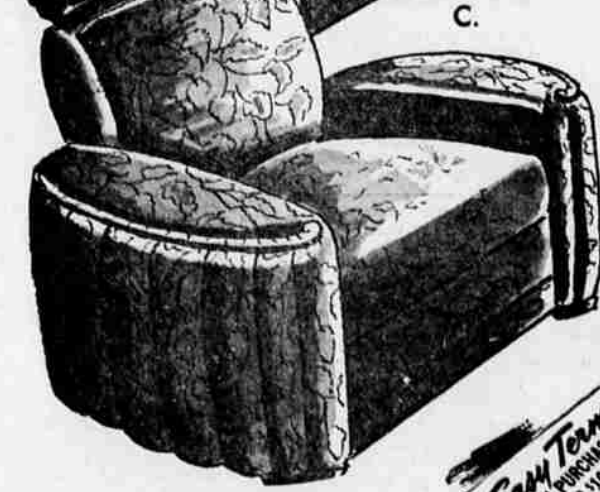


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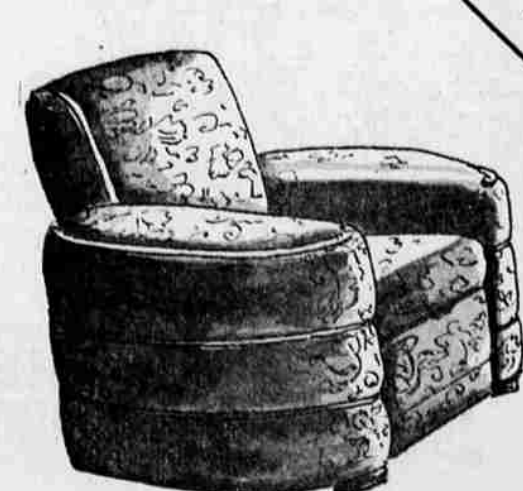


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