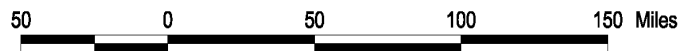
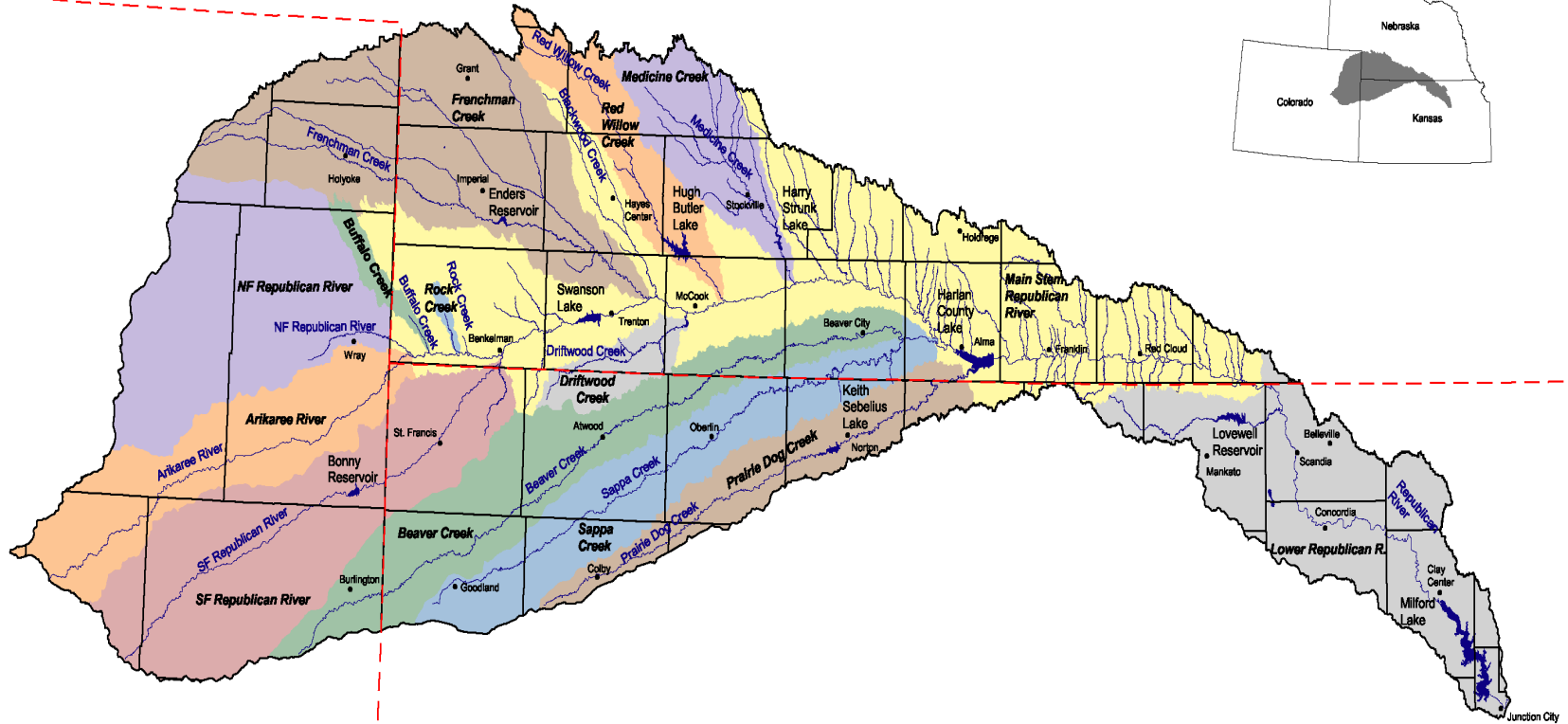


# The Great Flood on the Republican River 1935

*"Farmers and villagers say that after the drought come two other dreaded Riders of the Apocalypse - flood and tornado."*

*The McCook Daily Gazette, June 3, 1935*

INDEX MAP



LEGEND

- County Seats
- ▬ Streams
- Lakes
- ⚡ State Borders
- ▬ County Boundaries



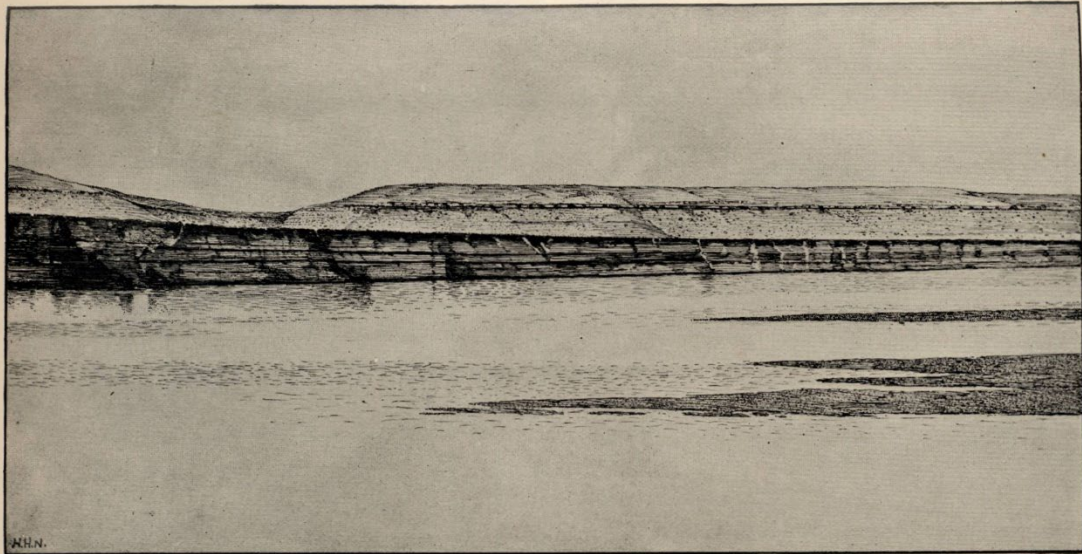






U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

BULLETIN NO. 137 PL. IV

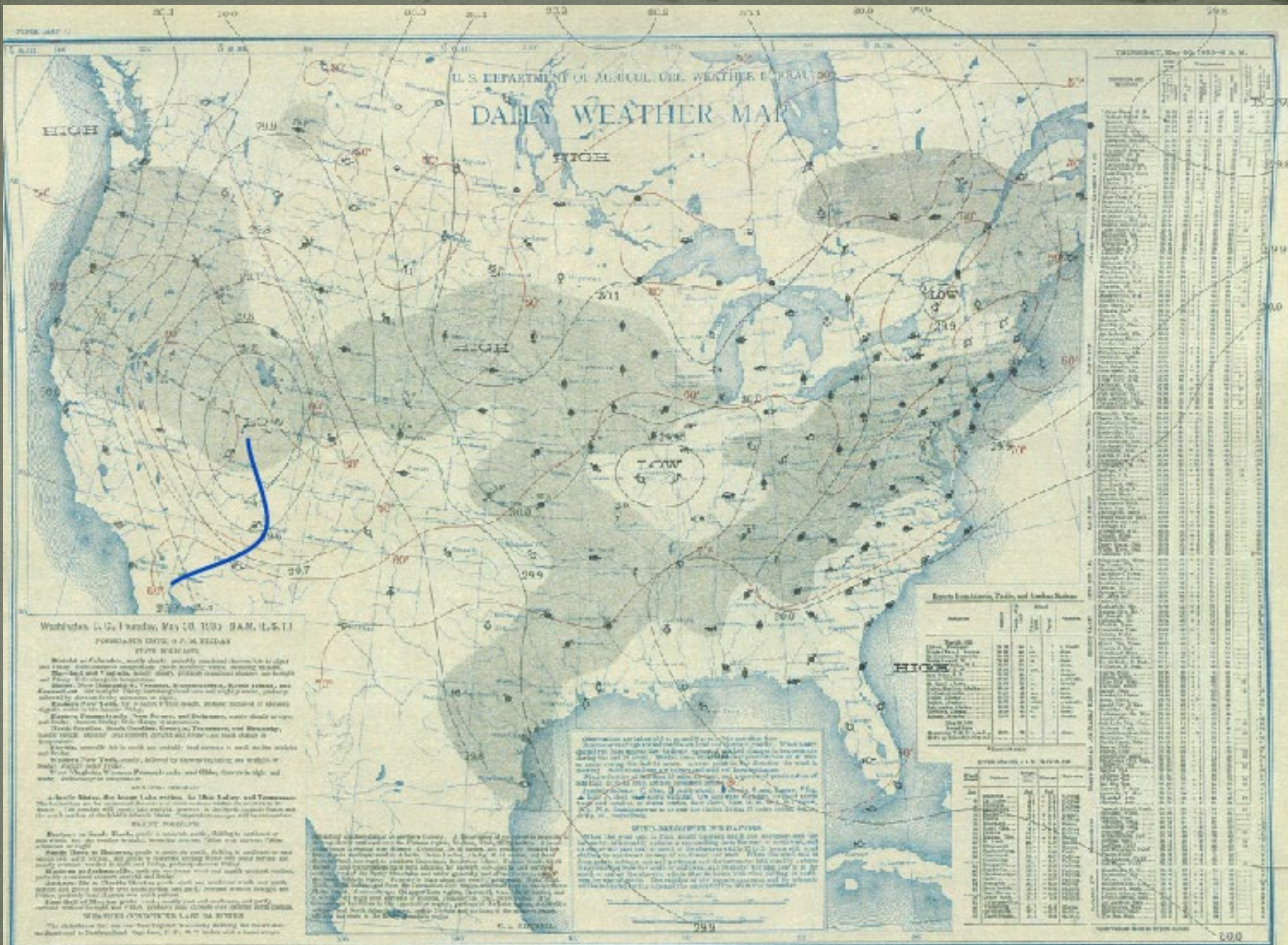


STRATIFIED ALLUVIUM IN RIVER BANK, REPUBLICAN RIVER, ABUTTING AGAINST LOESS AND GUMBO.









U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
DAILY WEATHER MAP

Wisconsin, U. S. Thursday, May 10, 1903. 9 AM, U.S.T.

FORECAST BY J. J. HEDDAR  
STATE WEATHERS

**Wisconsin** - Wisconsin, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

**Michigan** - Michigan, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

**Ohio** - Ohio, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

**Pennsylvania** - Pennsylvania, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

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**Indiana** - Indiana, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

**Missouri** - Missouri, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

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**Iowa** - Iowa, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

**Nebraska** - Nebraska, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

**Kansas** - Kansas, nearly clear, generally coolish, but fresh and strong, southerly breeze; showers, heavy, passing 11 AM. The West and Northwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The South and Southwest, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM. The East and Northeast, light showers; showers, passing 11 AM.

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**Observations are taken only at regular intervals...**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO STATIONS.**

**TEMPERATURE.** - The thermometer should be kept in a cool, shaded place, free from direct sunlight, and from the influence of heat or cold. It should be read at the hour appointed, and the reading should be recorded. The thermometer should be read at the hour appointed, and the reading should be recorded.

**WIND.** - The direction and force of the wind should be noted at the hour appointed, and the reading should be recorded. The wind direction should be noted by the number of the direction, and the force should be noted by the number of the force.

**PRESSURE.** - The barometer should be read at the hour appointed, and the reading should be recorded. The barometer should be read at the hour appointed, and the reading should be recorded.

**PRECIPITATION.** - The amount of precipitation should be noted at the hour appointed, and the reading should be recorded. The precipitation should be noted at the hour appointed, and the reading should be recorded.

Report from Stations, Trains, and Aerial Stations

Station	Time	Temp	Wind	Pres	Wind Dir	Wind Spd	Clouds	Remarks
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

STATION OBSERVATIONS

Station	Time	Temp	Wind	Pres	Wind Dir	Wind Spd	Clouds	Remarks
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...



**Table 1. Damage from Flood of 1935, Southwestern Nebraska**  
 (from: U.S. Geological Survey Water Supply Paper 796-B)

	Nebraska	Kansas	Colorado	Total
<b>Persons killed</b>	94	10	6	110
<b>Livestock killed</b>	8,100	12,193	300	20,593
<b>Poultry killed</b>	46,500	NA	NA	-----
<b>Highways damaged (miles)</b>	341	484	5	830
<b>Highway bridges</b>	307	202	6	515
<b>Crops damaged (acres)</b>	42,000	221,507	NA	-----
<b>Farmland damaged (acres)</b>	57,000	202,615	15,000	274,615
<b>Railroads (miles)</b>	NA	171	NA	-----
<b>Railroad bridges</b>	NA	83	NA	-----

NA - not available



# The Dirty '30s

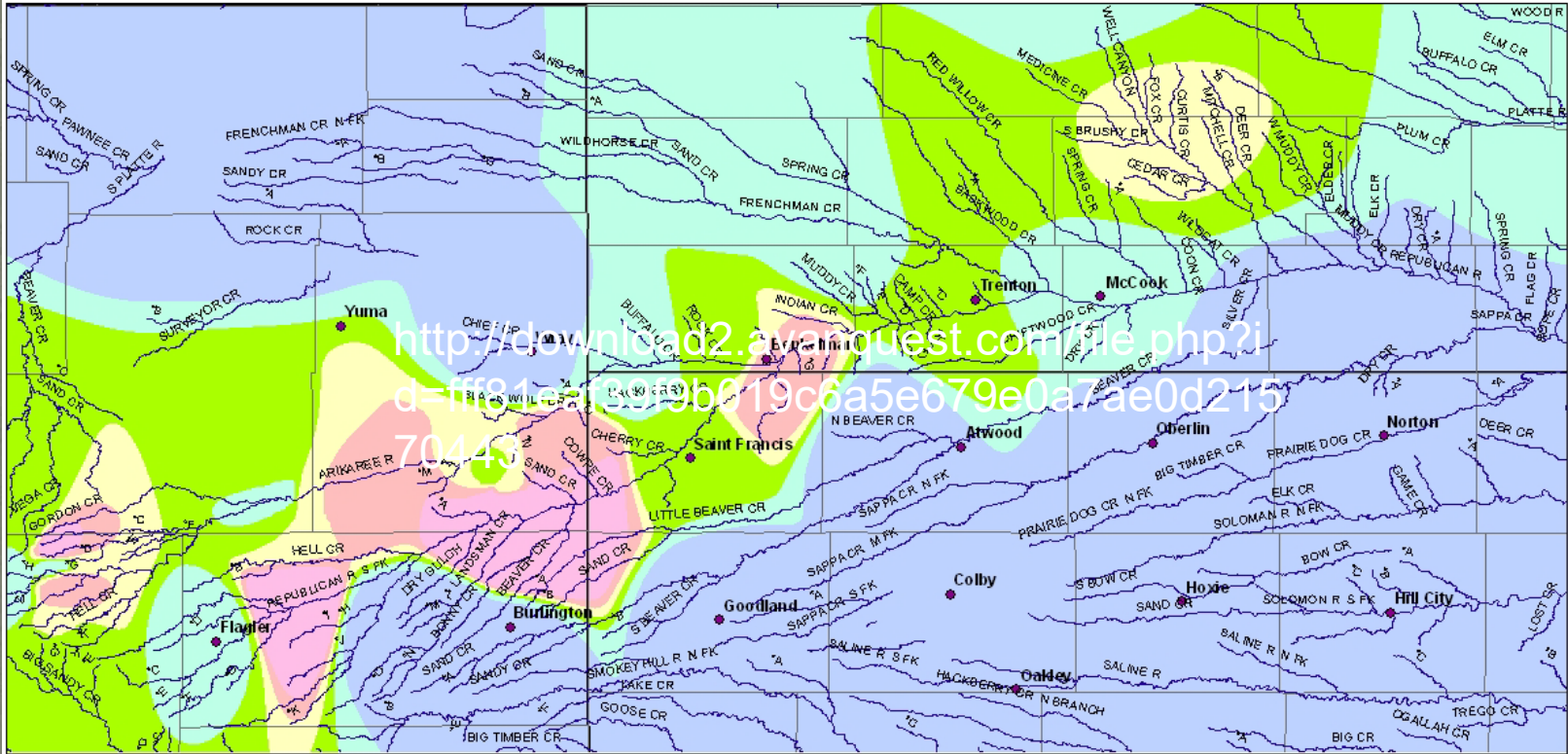


Photo courtesy



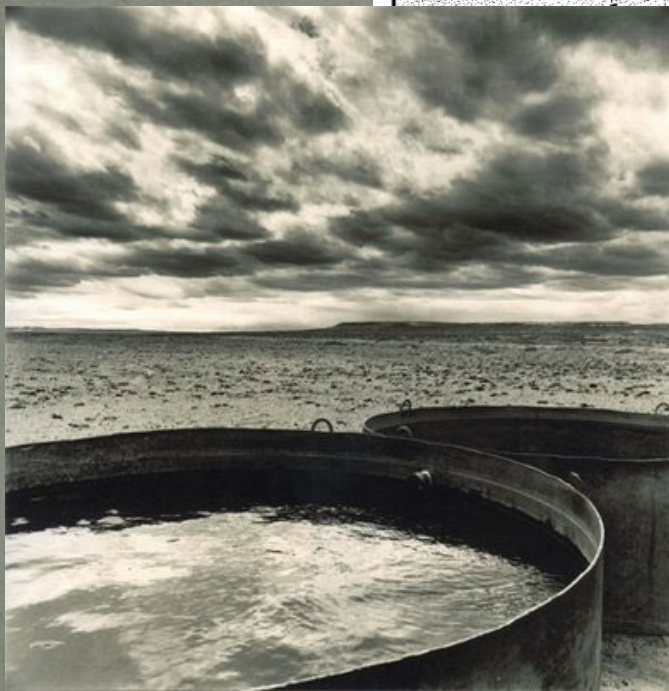
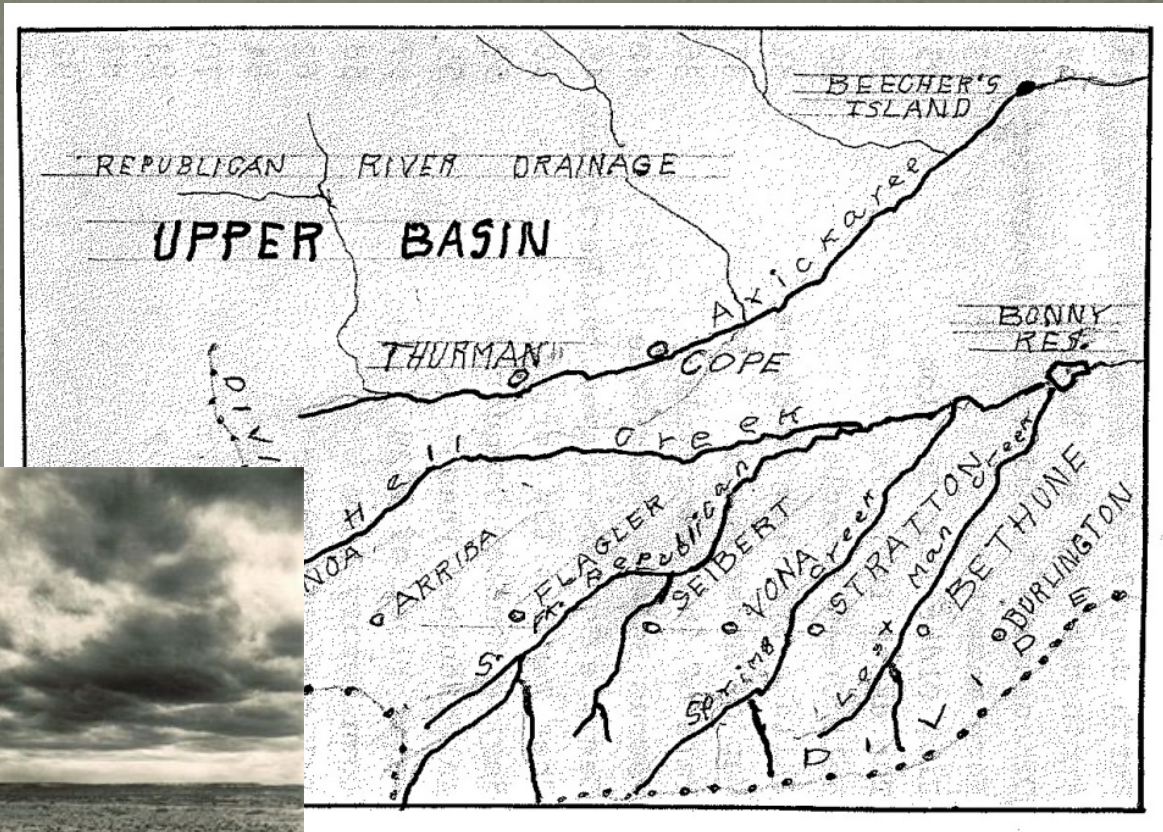


# Rain Amount (May 30 - May 31, 1935)



Rain Amount (Inches)	
< 1.00	5.01 - 7.00
1.00 - 3.00	7.01 - 9.00
3.01 - 5.00	> 9.00





Colorado

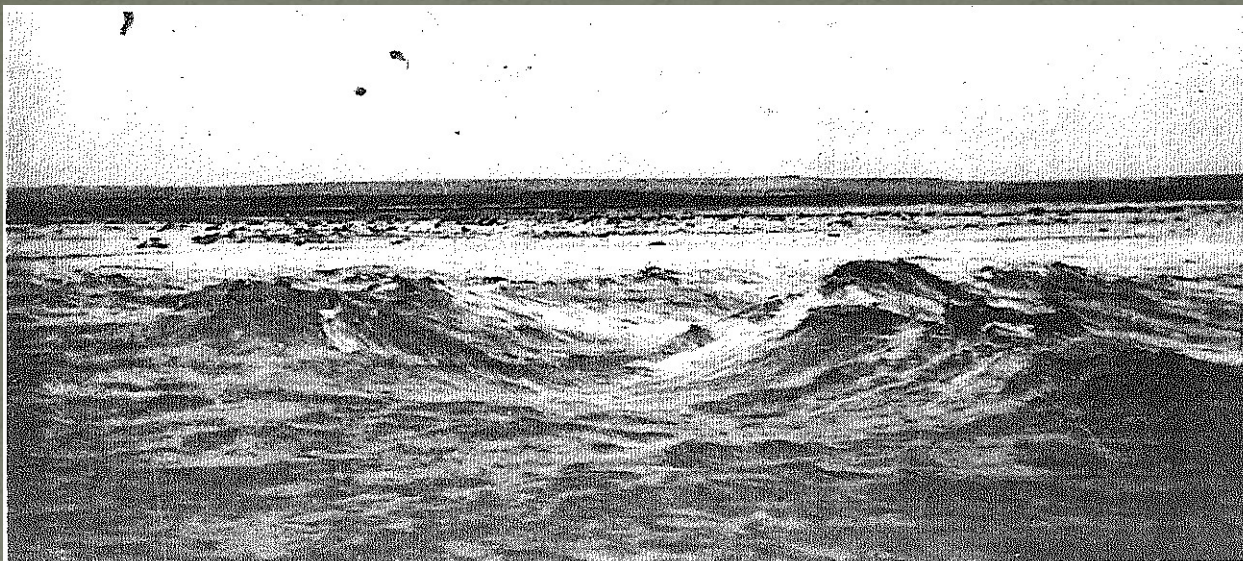












*The Strobels could hear the roar of the water four miles south of the river - notice the waves.*





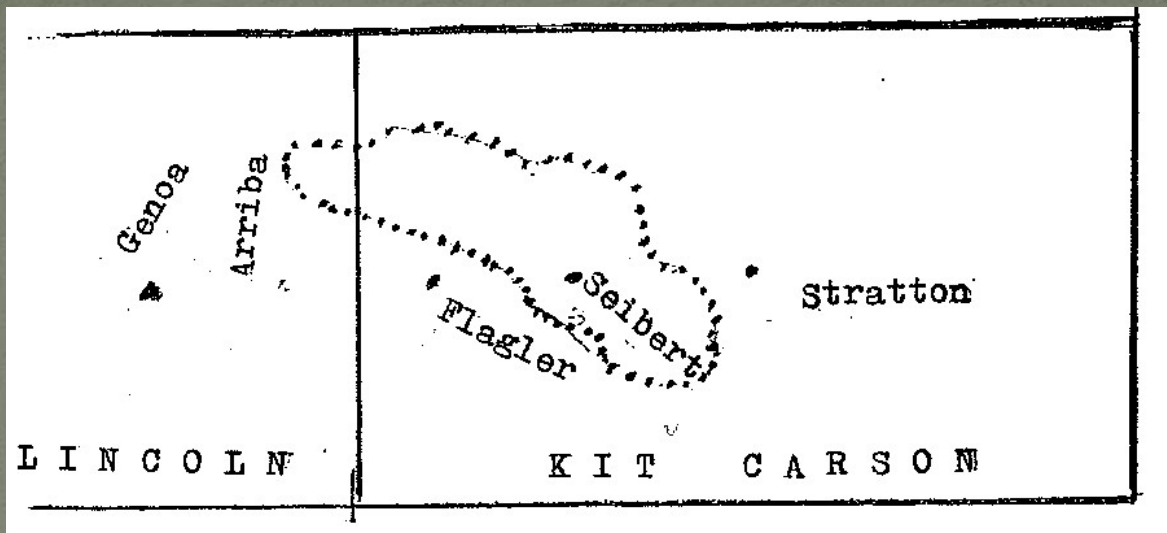


Victims of Eastern Colorado's greatest disaster. Left top, Wayne Gesner, whose body, fully clothed, was found after three days 35 miles down stream. Top right, Mrs. Gesner. Bottom, Clarence Lothian, in whose home the three perished.

Seibert, Colorado







*Back Trail Disaster*  
by  
V. S. Fitzpatrick

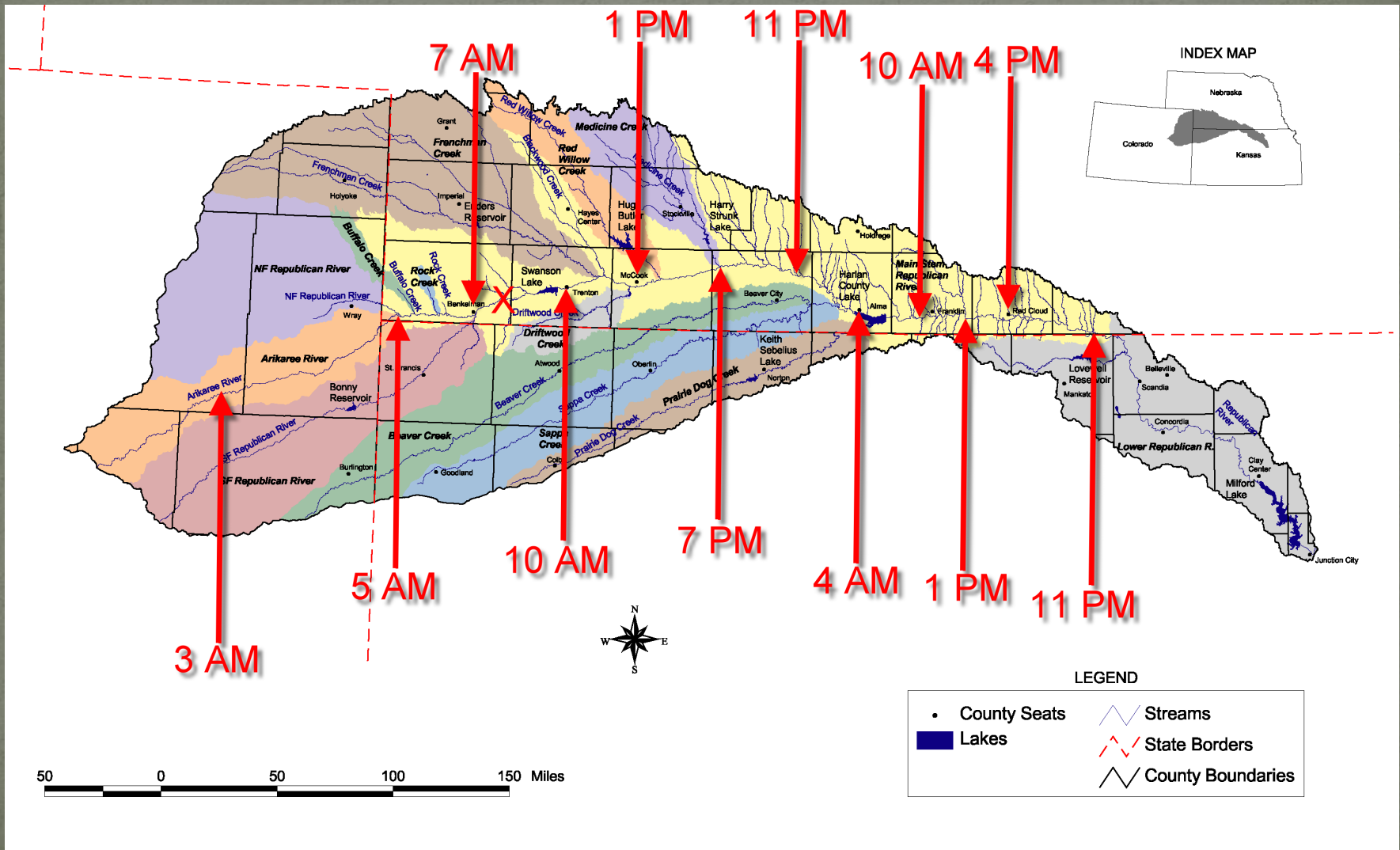








# Time of Crests



































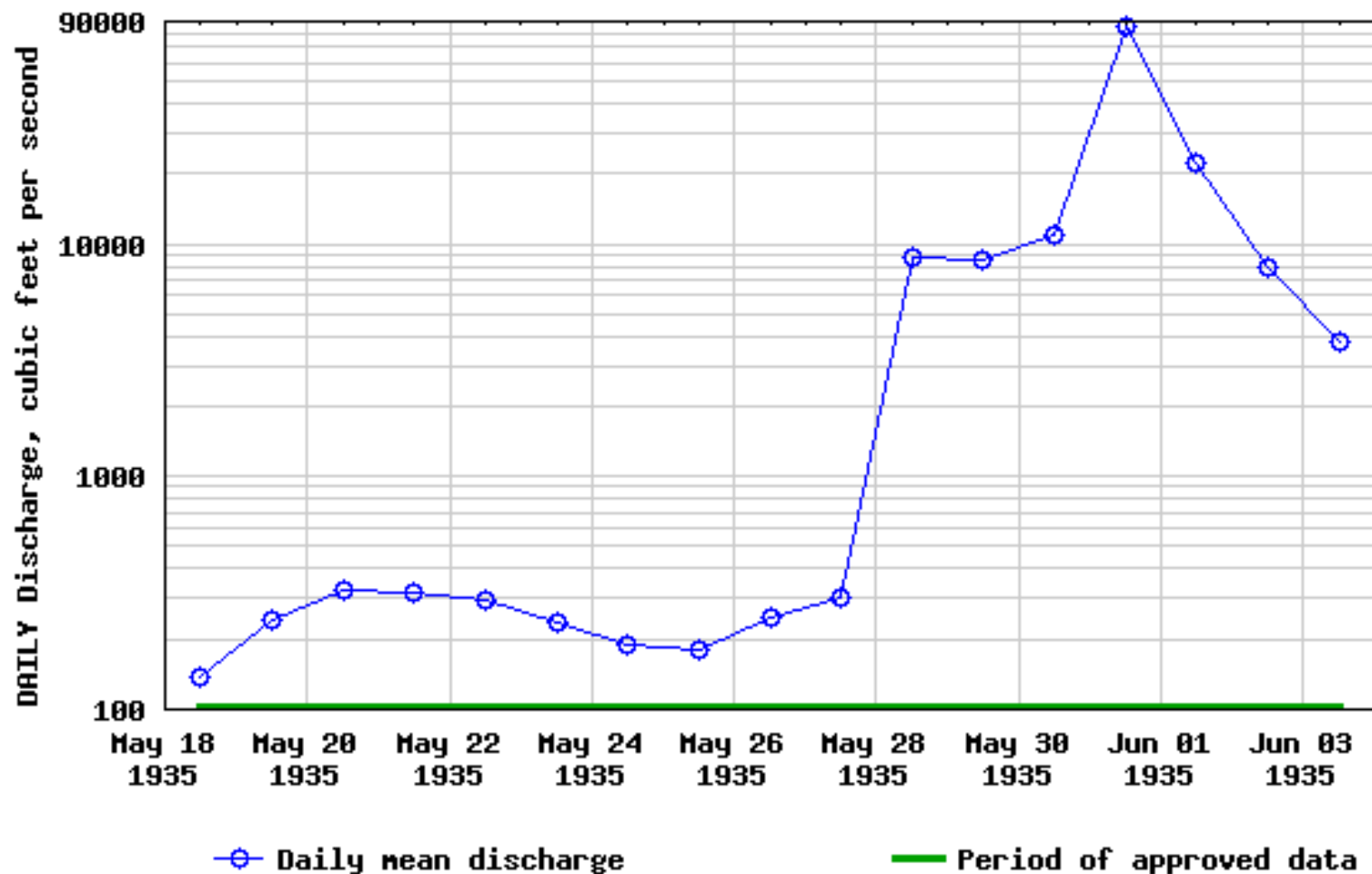








### USGS 06828000 REPUBLICAN RIVER AT MAX, NEBR.

















1935 floods from Depot Reef.  
Complete flood story  
in a file



26 PICAS





Trenton, Nebraska









AERIAL VIEW LOOKING TOWARDS MCCOOK  
REPUBLICAN RIVER 6-1-35

# 22







# The Rain Begins to Fall

**COOPERATIVE OBSERVERS' METEOROLOGICAL RECORD**

Month of May, 1935, Station, McCook, County, Red Willow  
 State, Nebr.; Latitude 40° 12'; Longitude 97° 17'; Time used on this form, Central

Mean maximum, 61.5  
 Mean minimum, 43.2  
 Mean, 52.4  
 Maximum, 80, date, 1  
 Minimum, 28, date, 5  
 Greatest daily range, 42, date, 1

DATE	TEMPERATURE			PRECIPITATION				DEPTH OF SNOW OR SHOULDER AT TIME OF OBSERVATION	PREVAILING WIND DIRECTION	CHARACTER OF DAY	MISCELLANEOUS PHENOMENA
	MAX. MIN.	RANGE	* SET MAX.	TIME OF BEGINNING	TIME OF ENDING	AMOUNT	SNOWFALL IN INCHES				
1	50	35	50			T			NW	Cloudy	mostly cloudy with
2	52	39	42			T					
3	42	26	40						NE	4A	
4	53	35	50						SE	1/2	
5	50	45	28						SW	clear	most
6	44	39	39						SE	3/4	
7	41	30	37			T			N		
8	41	34	37	6:00 am	6:00 am	.26			NE	cloudy	
9	60	44	40						NE	1/2	
10	60	48	55						SE	cloudy	Red Deer stream
11	41	31	34						W	1/2	
12	52	32	50	During night		.02			NE	cloudy	
13	50	40	45			T					
14	52	42	45	2A		.12					
15	55	42	47			.09					
16	50	44	46			.20			SE		about 1 hour of sun
17	54	42	50	6:00 pm	7:00 am	.41					
18	53	47	53	10:00 am	6:00 pm	.92					
19	52	45	46	All day		.45					
20	50	40	40			.53			NE		
21	67	47	53	During night		.14			NW	4A	
22	57	40	50						NE	3/4	clear
23	57	40	54								
24	52	37	40			T					cloudy
25	60	40	54						SE		
26	40	31	60			.02				1/2	
27	42	40	65	During night		.13					
28	65	43	60			.10					cloudy
29	64	47	58								
30	62	52	60			.25					cloudy
31	44	50	67	10:00 am		7.20			SE		
MEAN	61.5	43.2									

PRECIPITATION  
 Total, 7.20 inches; greatest in 24 hours, 2.40  
 Date, 31  
 Total snowfall, NE inches  
 On ground 10th, NE inches  
 At end of month, NE inches

NUMBER OF DAYS—  
 With .01 inch or more precipitation:  
 Clear, 3; partly cloudy, 10  
 Cloudy, 18  
 DATES OF:  
 Light, 18  
 Fog, 18  
 Dense, 18  
 Killing frost, 18  
 Thunderstorms, 18  
 Light, 18  
 Hall, Moderate, 18  
 Heavy, 18  
 Sleet, 18  
 Auroras, 18

REMARKS: JUN 6 1935  
 from 8 am until about 3:00 pm  
 air full of whirling  
 counted 163 at one time  
 some very large  
 mass of 25 lbs seen from 6:30 pm  
 17:00 to 6:30 am 5/31  
McCook

Cooperative Observer: Robert Duke  
 Post Office Address: McCook Neb  
 MAY - 1935



# The McCook Power Plant











NEARING FLOOD PEAK - MCCOOK 5-31-35

#11





Robert "Bob" French









# Total Destruction







MADREN AND WELCH MSCOOK NEB 6-1-35 #23





#### GEORGE WING FAMILY SAVED BY TREES

Mr. and Mrs. George Wing, Alvy and Lulu and Fred Ray spent most of the time from five o'clock Friday evening until two o'clock Saturday afternoon in some big trees just east of where their home stood.

When the water began rising, they hitched up a team and prepared to drive to town but heard that it was impossible to get past the Coon Creek Flood. They went back into the house again and as the water rose they retreated upstairs.

It finally became apparent that the house would not survive the shock of the raging waters. It moved off the foundations and up against some trees just east.

The family went out of the upstairs window onto the roof of the porch and from there to the trees. Fred Ray caught some wreckage that floated past and made a seat for the women. The house trembled and broke into parts and floated away.

Paul Malleck, Homer Duckworth and Merle Colling took a boat and in dangerous waters brought the parties to land. The farm is now a part of Finnell's island.



Indianola, Nebraska





MAIN ST. SOUTH  
CAMBRIDGE  
NEBR.









REV. BRAGGS  
CAMBRIDGE NEBR.

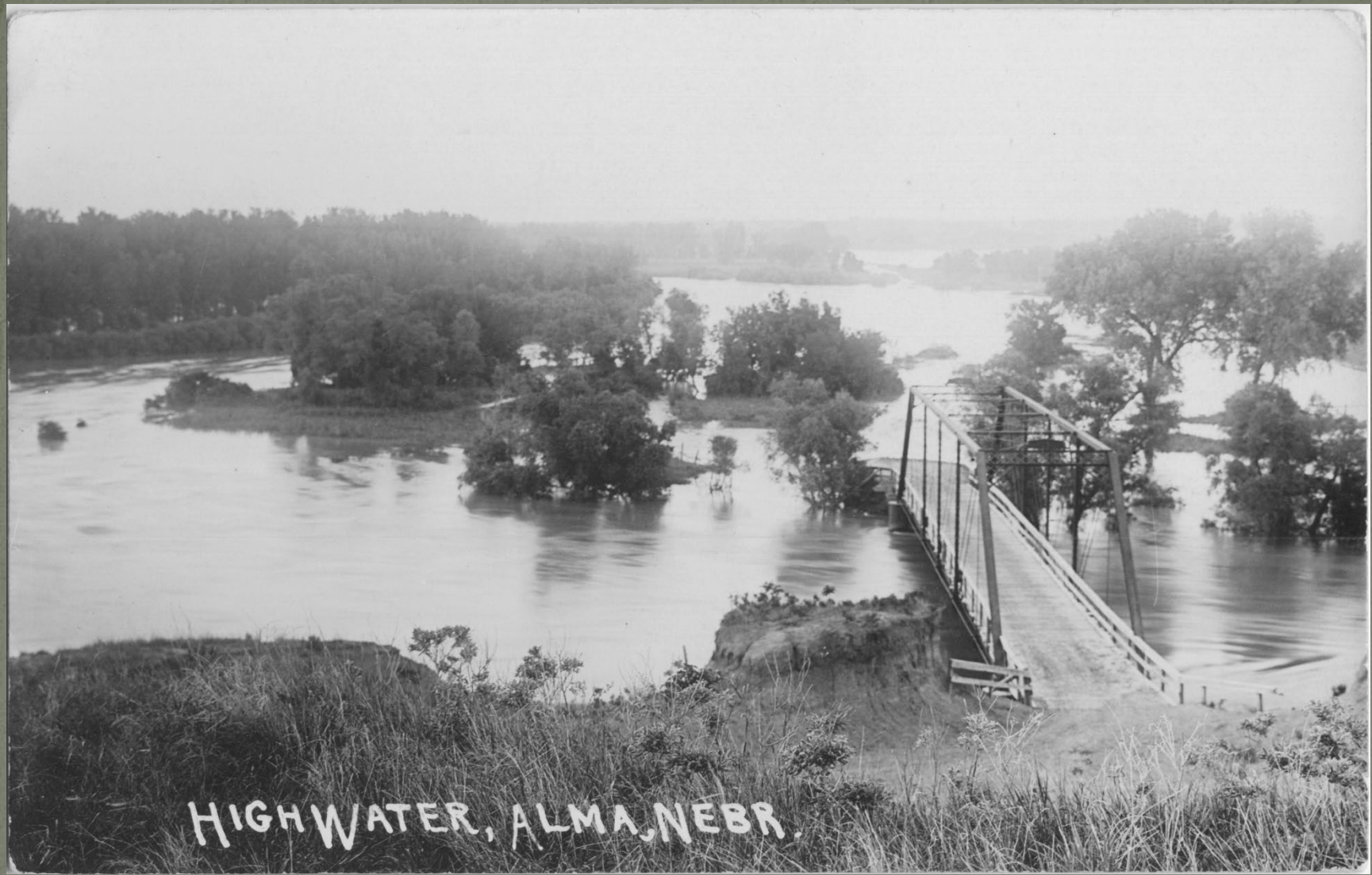












HIGH WATER, ALMA, NEBR.



Alma, Nebraska

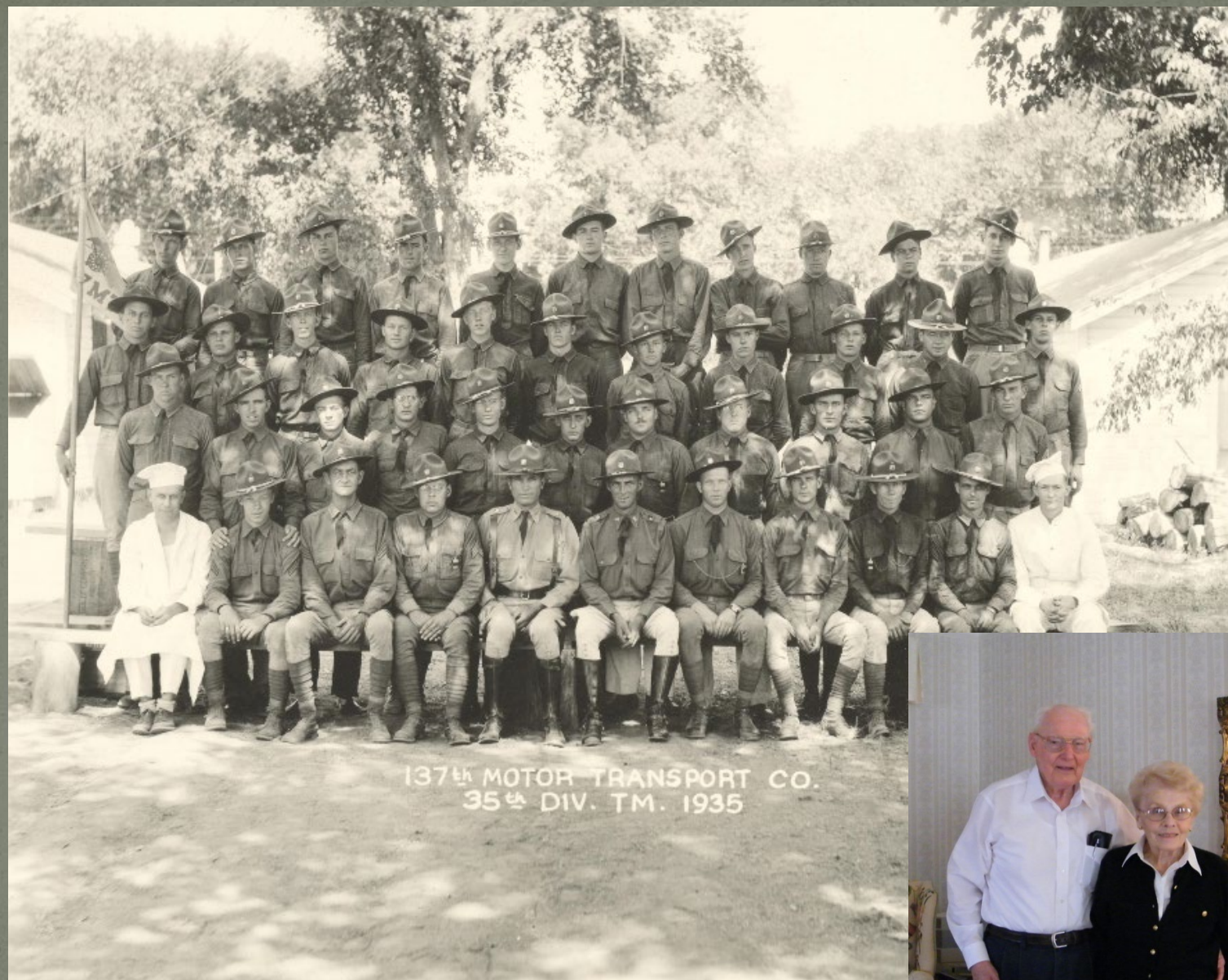


Cow caught by Horns on Bridge



Nov. June 1, 1935  
Kebber  
Photo





137th MOTOR TRANSPORT CO.  
35th DIV. T.M. 1935







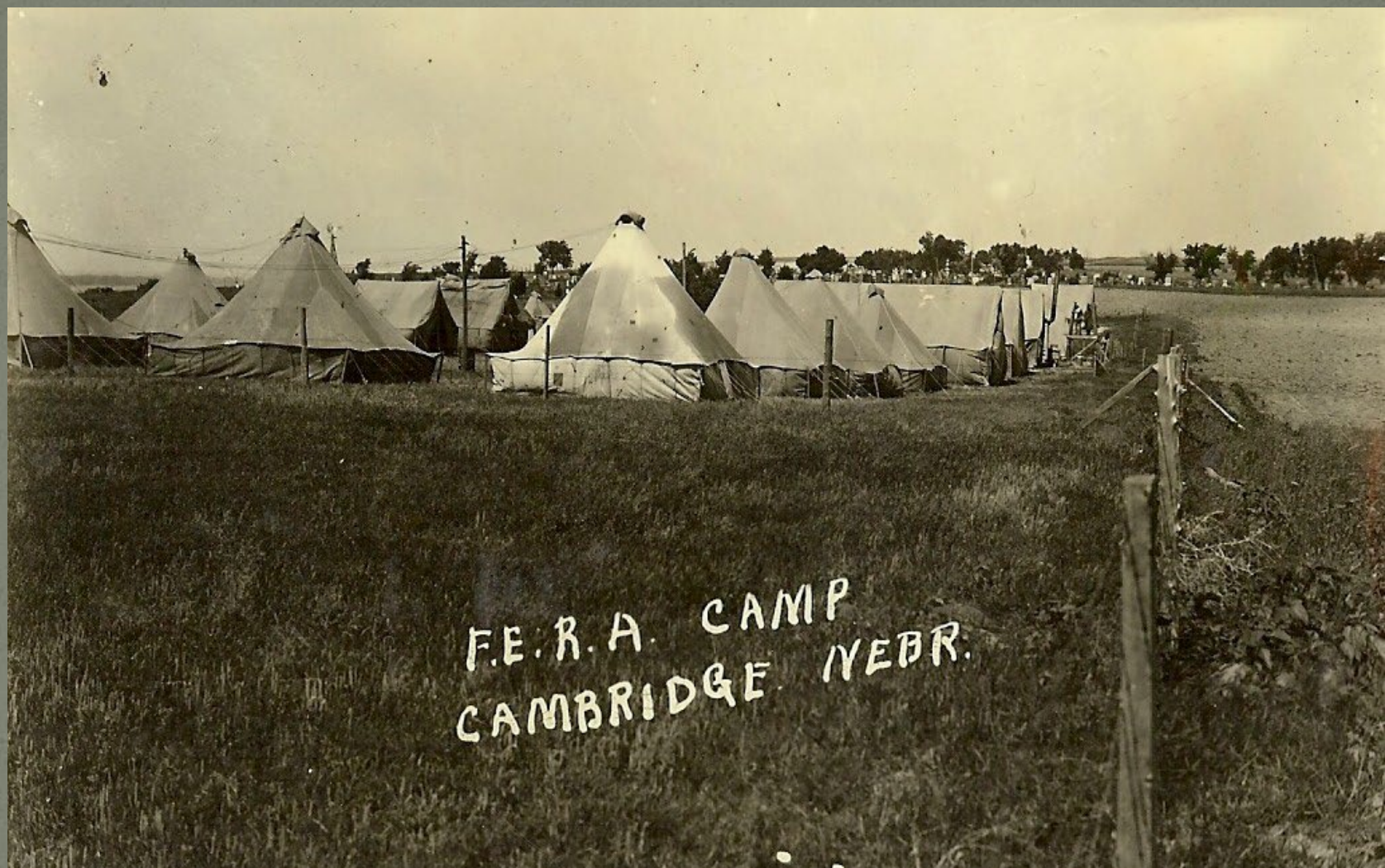




FLOOD WATERS  
CONCORDIA, KAN. JUNE 2 1935

Bergman  
Photo



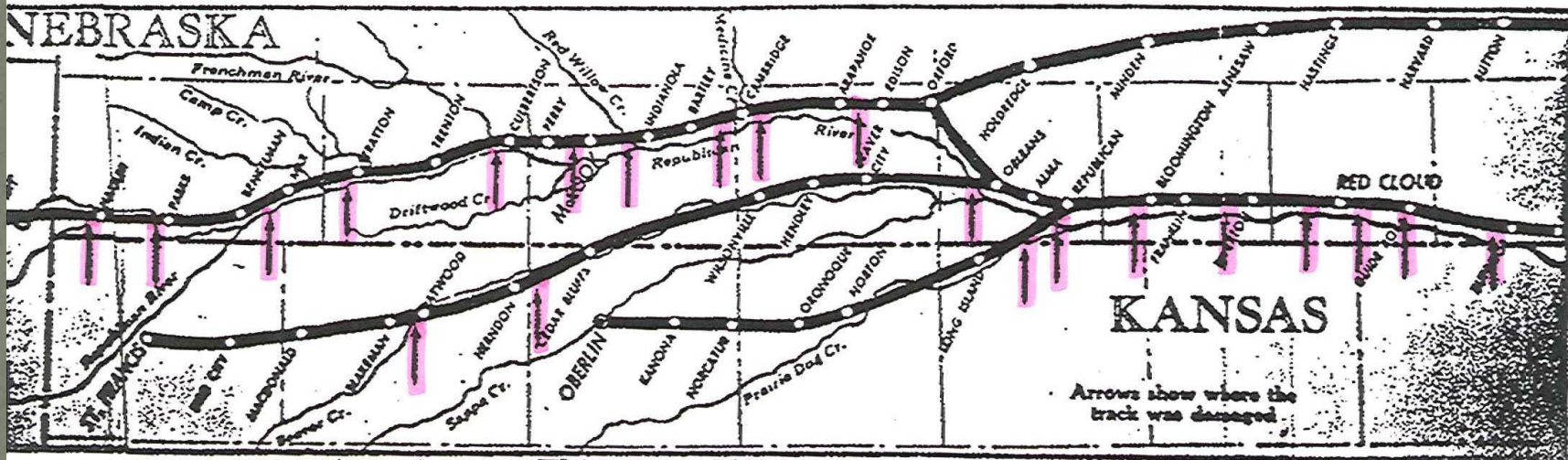


F.E.R.A. CAMP  
CAMBRIDGE 1928.









Burlington, Bible

MAP OF THE BURLINGTON RAILROAD IN THE REPUBLICAN VALLEY

Arrows indicate stretches of the railroad where the tracks were washed out by the flood. Such destruction from Haigler to Superior illustrates the continued ferocity of the flood waters in their movement down the valley.















# Preserving history allows us to...





# ... learn from the past.



[www.weather.gov/gld](http://www.weather.gov/gld)



Learn more about the Flood

### Historians

Jan Carman & the Cheyenne County Kansas Historical Society

Russ Dowling – Museum of the High Plains - McCook

Lucille Edwards – Personal Scrapbook Collection

Linda Hein – Nebraska State Historical Society Lincoln, NE

Virginia Roberts – Cambridge Museum

### Authors:

Mary Sherk – *Swept Away – Out of Print*

Marlene Harvey Wilmot - *Bluff to Bluff & Bluff to Bluff, Too!*

Raymond Borchers – *High Water Mark – Out of Print*

V. S. Fitzpatrick – *Back Trail Disaster – Out of Print*

FLOOD MSCOOK 5-31-35

#9



From The Stratton News, Thursday, June 13, 1935



The Bert Donaldson home in South west Stratton. The family escaped.

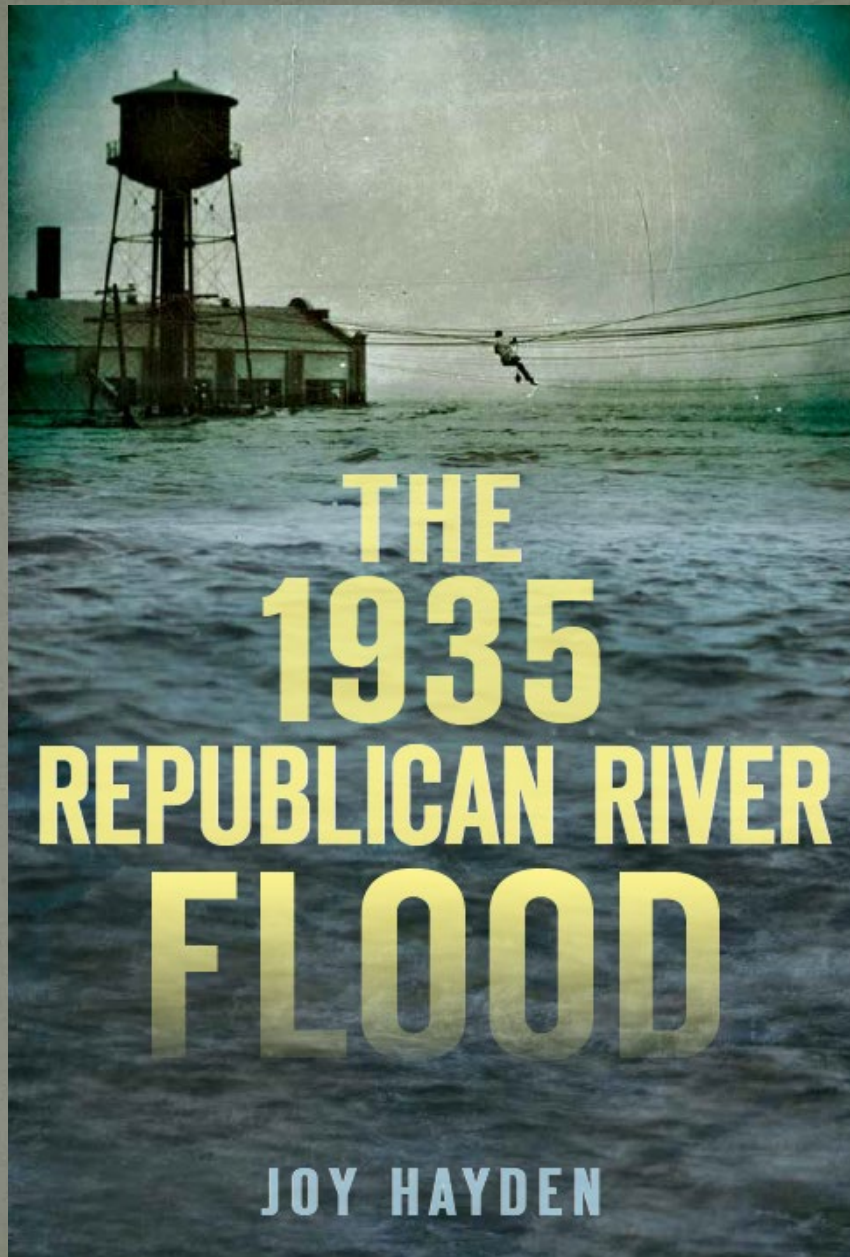
Stratton, NE - May 2023



*Anyone living on a flood  
plain is just waiting in the  
river's wings.*

Where the Crawdad's Sing  
by Delia Owens





**THE  
1935  
REPUBLICAN RIVER  
FLOOD**

**JOY HAYDEN**