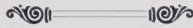


BARRE
IN THE GREAT FLOOD
OF 1927

By
DEAN H. PERRY

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927



A HISTORY OF TRAGIC EVENTS
AND OF GREAT LOSS SUSTAINED
IN VERMONT CITY
NOVEMBER 3-4



BY
DEAN H. PERRY, *Editor Barre Daily Times*

MADE IN THE GREAT
BRITAIN

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PREFACE.

Believing that Barre's experience in the great Vermont flood of 1927 was of sufficient moment to warrant recounting, and feeling that the history of that experience ought to be put in more or less permanent form for preservation, the author presents this book, with the hope that it will serve to relate the facts with fidelity and reasonable completeness. These facts are given somewhat in their chronological order. There is no attempt to sacrifice truthfulness to gain a more striking picture. It is written by one who was in somewhat close touch with the unusual events that took place in Barre during, and immediately after, the flood emergency.

The book attempts to portray by word description and by illustrations the situation in which Barre found itself placed during those early days of November. It reflects, in a measure, the feelings and the impressions that prevailed among Barre people. The flood situation in other Vermont communities purposely is avoided, as it is the author's desire to make this essentially a Barre book; and, too, the history of the flood in other communities is likely

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to be written by persons who were intimately acquainted with the happenings in those communities.

However, the author has included in this work a bare summary of the figures of the flood's devastating work in Vermont, as arrived at through the state survey authorized by the emergency state government that was called into being through the initiative of Governor John E. Weeks.

The illustrations, necessarily, are largely flood results rather than flood action because of the fact that the highest water came after night-fall of Thursday and the water had receded by daylight of Friday morning. Therefore, few of the illustrations indicate the depth of water in any part of the city. However, the results, as shown by the pictures, tell something of the devastation wrought by the flood.

INTRODUCTION.

To be cut off from communication by rail or wire, to be alone with its misfortune and only able to surmise what might have been the fate of other cities and towns not more than six miles distant—that was the experience of Barre for nearly 48 hours during the most disastrous flood ever recorded in Vermont in the early days of November, 1927.

Railroads, both steam and electric, were broken down by the flood water; even motor vehicle travel was impossible save on a very few hill roads, and then only at great hardship and considerable peril. Telephone and telegraph wires were torn down and submerged, so that the only way to learn of the flood damage in other communities was by walking, and inquiring in person; and that could not be done until the flood had receded far from its crest.

From Thursday evening, Nov. 3, until Saturday afternoon, Nov. 5, Barre virtually was isolated from the world. It could only conjecture what had taken place in other sections. Even Montpelier, located six miles distant in the valley of the Winooski river, was unheard from except through inaccurate information given by

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radio and through fragmentary reports brought by pedestrians coming to Barre two days after the height of the flood in Barre. The radio had stated that it was feared 200 lives had been lost in Montpelier. Another report had it that the new earth dam of the Green Mountain Power company, east of Marshfield, had gone out, carrying death and destruction to the village of Marshfield. Still another report, or rather, rumor, from the outside was that Montpelier's dilemma was such that boats had been sent from Burlington to aid in rescuing the imprisoned people.

Happily, the two former reports, or rumors, proved groundless when actual facts came to hand; but Montpelier certainly needed boats as the facts, determined later, bore out. However, these reports and rumors reveal how completely in the dark Barre was, figuratively, during the height of the state disaster, which, by the way, took toll of 63 lives, did property damage to the amount of \$25,000,000 and brought industry and business to a standstill in many communities of the state..

CHAPTER I.

BARRE VALLEY A HUGE CATCH BASIN.

It was a period of great anguish for the people of this little valley located along the banks of one of the most important tributaries of the Winooski river, Stevens branch, so-called, and its own important feeder, Jail branch. These two streams, ordinarily of a depth scarcely sufficient to float a rowboat, and their two chief tributaries, Gunner and Potash brooks, normally little larger than ribbons of water, had been transformed by excessive rainfall into fury. Stevens branch, rising in a swamp a mile south of Williamstown village, flows approximately seven miles before reaching the center of Barre and, after passing Barre's center, runs about four miles toward Montpelier before joining the Winooski as the latter comes from its watershed in Cabot. Jail branch has its origin more to the eastward in the town of Washington and rushes with more precipitous speed toward

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Barre, joining Stevens branch in the south end of Barre, almost at right angles, which, years ago, was named "Three Corners" by the boys who used to frequent the deep pool in the summer months.

Potash brook is the first of the two tributaries to join the united rivers. It finds its origin in two distinct little watersheds on the high eastern slope of Barre, and one of the those two branches has its tragic history in the flood of 1927 as it claimed the life of Vermont's lieutenant governor, Samuel Hollister Jackson. Both branches drop sharply into the bottom of the valley, where the heart of Barre lies, and the combined brooks enter Stevens branch in the center of the business district.

Gunner brook, larger than Potash, and less swift in its descent into the Barre valley, joins the river in the north end of the city and it, too, forms almost a right angled confluence with the river just north of Blackwell street. Like Stevens branch, Gunner brook flows through a thickly settled part of the city and does damage accordingly during high water.

CHAPTER II.

THE RECORD RAINFALL.

Such, then, are the chief water courses in Barre which were called upon to take care of the unprecedented rainfall, which occurred on Nov. 2, 3 and 4 of 1927. What that rainfall amounted to has been accurately and officially registered. The United States Weather Bureau at Northfield, located about ten miles from Barre as the crow flies, recorded 8.63 inches of rain during the 39 hours' continuous storm. A Barre resident, who, fortunately, had a proper receptacle in position, measured a round nine inches of rainfall—enough in either reckoning to make a normal rainfall over a period of several months. Yet here in 39 hours the whole precipitation was let fall on this region of Vermont.

Moreover, this greatest recorded rainstorm came at a time when the earth was saturated with copious rains that had fallen during the month of October. The earth, like a huge

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sponge, so to speak, had become filled with water to the extent that it could not absorb any appreciable part of this November storm; and, in consequence, the run-off of the rain was almost complete and, needless to add, excessively heavy.

Meteorologists endeavor to explain this unprecedented rainfall with the statement that two distinct storms came together over Vermont and fought a celestial battle, as it were. One of the contestants in this great battle far up in the air was a so-called "tropical" storm, whose approach up the Atlantic coast had been duly recorded, with warnings by the Weather Bureau, but with little expectation on the part of the inland folk of New England that the storm would come into Vermont. It was supposed the "tropical" storm would vent its fury and deposit its water on the coast.

But, coming up the New England coast, this "tropical" storm ran into aerial opposition over the ocean and, so the meteorologists say, was driven far inland until it came over the mountainous and hilly regions of the Green Mountains in the central part of Vermont.

Arriving at this point, the buffeted "tropical" storm ran into still further trouble in the air in the form of another rainstorm from the northwest. These two storms, to carry out the picture drawn by meteorologists, met head-on.

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Vermont was the real sufferer from the deadly conflict of the element, as this part of the history of the great flood will reveal later.

The weather in Vermont, prior to this battle of storms in the air, had been delightfully seductive and disarming. The month of November, generally bringing cold weather and bleak conditions, started out with almost a summer temperature.

But it was only the calm before the storm. The sultry atmosphere of November 2 might have been interpreted as a hint of trouble to come; and on the evening of Wednesday, November 2, the trouble began. Rain commenced to fall gently at about 9:30 that evening, probably being the precipitation of the storm from the northwest that was moving leisurely toward the Atlantic ocean. The rain continued through the night. Nothing out of the ordinary for the rainy fall; nothing to give any uneasiness whatever.

The morning of Thursday, November 3, the rain was still falling, more freely, perhaps, than through the night, yet not in sufficient quantities to give alarm. However, all the forenoon the rain came down copiously; and by noon the run-off from the earth had begun to attract attention. Brooks and rivers, even the thin waterways that do nothing more than to drain the surface, were running bank full. Some already

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had broken their bounds and were creeping slowly over the land on the levels. Fear of an impending disaster arose in many minds.

Presently, that fear became intensified when the volume of rainfall suddenly increased. The "tropical" storm, of which warning had been given, probably had arrived, driven inland by the pressure of air over the Atlantic ocean many miles to the eastward. And the "tropical" storm was waging its struggle with the storm that had arrived the evening before. Here in Barre, the day's edition of the afternoon paper, appearing on the streets shortly after 2 o'clock, gave warning of an "impending flood."

From 1 p. m. on through the afternoon such a volume of water came from the battle above as few people are called upon to witness save during temporary downpours in a summer storm. Householders along the streams, merchants doing business at what might seem ordinarily to be a safe distance from swollen streams, owners of loose materials that might come within the sweep of the water, should it rise still further, hastened to take such steps as they could to protect their property, never once fearing, however, that it was not merely property that was to be sacrificed in the hours just ahead, but lives themselves.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST CASUALTIES.

It was during these early efforts to salvage property in the mercantile district of Barre that the first toll of human life was taken by the flood. Potash brook runs alongside of Summer street, which, in turn, is parallel with Main street, where most of the stores are located. Development of the residential district along Summer street in years long gone by had included a plan to enclose the brook at a point near the junction of Elm and Jefferson streets and Eastern avenue. Perhaps, however, the engineering plan of making Potash brook a prisoner underground did not add to the flood danger at this point. Without a doubt, the brook would have sent its overflow, under such flood conditions as existed November 3, toward the business district of Main street anyway.

The brook passes under Elm street, near the

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Buffeted By the Current of Potash Brook Which Was Coming Down Elm Street and Also Boiling Out of Underground Channel. View Taken on Summer Street. Mathewson School in Background.

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junction with Jefferson street and goes, normally, into the underground channel. But the volume of water coming down from the East hill was too much for the entrance to the channel or for the channel itself. Part of the water continued to make its way through the underground route; the balance took to Elm street, causing a hurried dismissal of the 500 children from the Mathewson school on the opposite side of the street from the brook's channel. That part of Elm street was soon washed out to a depth of several feet, catching motor vehicles, whose drivers attempted to drive along through the flood to their homes in the eastern part of the city. This new stream moved swiftly, parallel with the brook, which was boiling out of its underground channel. This double current then made its way as most easily it could toward the river.

In seeking this river outlet, the flood entered the basements of the buildings on the east side of Main street, one of which buildings was the combined garage and store building at the corner of Main and Pearl streets. Rushing down an inclined plane into the basement of the garage part of the structure, it beat with tremendous force against a division wall, back of which several men were striving to save goods from the basement storage of F. H. Rogers & Co. and the Walk-Over Shoe store. Two of these men had come from a store, which was

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at the time not beset by the flood, and they were assisting in the removal of the goods when the flood, pushing against the division wall with all the pressure of a raging torrent back of it, suddenly overwhelmed that wall and swirled into the store basement, where the men were working.

These two volunteer salvage workers from another store were caught by the rush of the flood, as was another man, who, fortunately for him, was standing where the flood hurled him toward the stairway. The two men, Gerald W. Brock, 33, and Ralph B. Winter, 30, however, were driven away from the stairway and probably hurled with great force against a wall of the basement. Whether the force of the impact was sufficient to render them unconscious will never be known. At any rate, human efforts to save them were of no avail. The basement rapidly filled with water, which then swept through the basement windows into Main street, there to join the flood water that was coming from other sources.

Assistance was hurriedly called. The fire alarm was rung in, and all the fire-fighting apparatus was soon on the scene. Willing hands stood ready to help, but they were impotent. The imprisoned men were never seen after the inrush of the flood. Their bodies were not recovered until the following Saturday, after the

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water had been pumped out of the cellar sufficiently to permit entrance. Both these victims of the flood were popular men of the community, each of them married and Mr. Winter having one child.



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Corner of Main Street and Depot Square. During Early Stages of the Flood on Thursday Afternoon. Gerald Brock and Ralph B. Winter Drowned in Basement of Building At Right Foreground of Picture.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLOOD RISES RAPIDLY.

Although awed by this visitation of death, the people nevertheless were scarcely prepared for further tragic events and intense suffering before the flood should cease its relentless fury in this valley. The surrender of efforts to save the two men imprisoned in the store basement was done reluctantly; and the forced relinquishment of efforts to recover the bodies was also accepted with extreme regret. The firemen returned to their station for what was going to be only a brief rest before being called to greater work and under more hazardous conditions for themselves. The police turned to duties of warning persons against the peril of the rising waters. The volunteers resumed their work of salvaging property from basements, never once thinking that their efforts would be partly nullified when flood waters went even into the first floors—a condition unheard of in Barre except in certain very low-lying sections.

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By this time Depot square, always the first to get the brunt of high water, was a lake, as water surged from the underground channel of Potash brook, which flows to the river at that point. From that point northward, Main street was a swiftly running stream, and toward the south the flood had begun to set back, rising along the street at a rapid rate until, at the crest of the flood, water covered Main street as far southward as the Aldrich building at the corner of Elm street. Roughly speaking, the valley of Barre was a lake from the Aldrich building to the northern limit of the municipality when the flood was at its highest point. This body of water was pierced by sharply projected currents from the river and from numerous small streams, so that, strictly speaking, it was not a lake because the current was so swift that no human being could have stood against its force and large objects were carried down in the northern end of the city, where Main street was itself a river of swiftly moving water from five to six feet deep on the pavement.

Of course, all business was at a standstill save in a few isolated localities. Schools had been dismissed early in the afternoon in order that the children might return to their homes without peril. The granite plants let their men go when water began to enter the plants or to threaten to cut off ways of escape. Merchants were too busy trying to save their

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stocks to attend to customers had there been any of the latter. In fact, nearly everybody was intent on getting to their homes provided those homes were on high ground, and those whose homes lay in the lowlands were making haste to get out to places that promised safety. The North Barre school furnished a haven of refuge for a large number of people living in the North End, and there they slept and ate the meals brought them from the neighboring high districts. Goddard seminary hill was another place where many people sought refuge at least for the night of Thursday, Nov. 3; and the seminary was turned into a temporary hospital for an expectant mother who resided in the lower part of the city and whose intention to go to the City hospital was cut off by the sudden rise of the flood. The child was born at the school. School sessions at Goddard seminary also were suspended early in the emergency, and the male students came downtown and served well in various capacities, not only for Thursday but also for a week afterward. Homes in the higher parts of the city were opened hospitably to those less fortunately situated as to flood conditions. Hundreds of homes had to be deserted entirely or evacuated by their occupants to the second story because of the unprecedented encroachment of flood water.

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On North Main Street. Near Corner of Beckley Street, Water Lingers As
If Reluctant to Leave.

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For instance, the century-old Wheelock residence on Main street, which, by the way, was the only purely residence property left on Main street between Prospect street and Merchant street in 1927, was invaded by flood water for the first time in its 100 years and more of use as a home. Not only did water enter the cellar of the home, but water also went into the rooms of the first floor, leaving its high water mark on the furniture in the various rooms. This house is located at a point near the southeastern extremity of the flood lake heretofore mentioned. Of course, the houses in the lower North End received higher water, to say nothing of deeper deposits of mud after the flood had receded.

There never was a more muddy flood in this valley than the 1927 visitation. Along with the almost complete run-off of the record-breaking rain, there was eroded an unprecedented mass of clinging, slimy mud that added tremendously to the problem of rehabilitation of the flood region in Barre, as well as elsewhere in Vermont. Mud was so deep in the northern part of the city that householders had to shovel paths from house to street, afterwards, much as they shovel snow in mid-winter, with the removed material thrown up beside the path. Streets were in a similar condition after the flood, and hundreds of tons of mud had to be

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moved eventually before the North Main street pavement was again cleared.

Such a tremendous run-off of water from a soil that had not yet frozen could scarcely have failed to carry along a great amount of earth, even gravel and sizeable boulders. . Much of the mud found its way into stores, too, adding its element of ruin to what the water had started, so that when the rehabilitation time came there were many combination mud-and-water sales in nearly all the stores in the entire mercantile district, for it must be remembered that scarcely any of the low-lying part of the city escaped some degree of flooding. How could it have escaped with the deluge from the leaden skies continuing hour after hour, and with all the water from the outlying hills spouted into the valley, which is Barre? Had the rain ceased on the afternoon of Thursday, November 3, less than half the tragedy, less than half the desolation in this one valley of the flood would have had to be written. But the rain did not cease that afternoon.

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Central Vermont Passenger Station and Part of Railroad Yard, Into Which No Train Came From Montpelier for Months After Flood. Central Vermont Bridge At Dodge's Was Partially Dislodged., Barre Yard of the Road Torn and Tracks Undermined.

CHAPTER V.

NIGHT COMES ON EARLY—PUBLIC UTILITIES FAIL.

The approach of night, with the continued downpour of rain, brought fear, even terror, into the minds of many people, for an unseen peril is oftentimes more frightful to cope with than one that can be seen. Night comes on early at this season of the year in Vermont; and it was not long after the double tragedy in the store basement, above described, that a pall of darkness was cast over the city. Daytime itself had been partially shut out by the low-lying clouds and the curtain of rain; and day slipped almost unnoticed into night. A night under such conditions would not have seemed so fearsome had it not been that man-fashioned ways for illumination failed. Artificial lighting of the streets stopped in the emergency. Stygian gloom everywhere on the streets. Lights still glimmered from houses—how thankful the people were for that! But outside, the inky blackness that goes with a ter-

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Place Where Granite Street Iron Bridge Once Spanned Stevens Branch.
Note Bridge Abutment Stone in Foreground. View Looking Toward
River Street.

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rific storm at night. It no longer was safe to go about except on the higher streets, and even then only on familiar thoroughfares. Washington street was still open for traffic, as was South Main street. Those were the only safe avenues from the still unflooded business district.

Artificial light from homes and stores in the flooded district cast a fitful glare on swirling, turbid waters that constantly were rising and that were carrying on their bosom various articles they had dislodged, the flotsam and the debris that goes with a flood. In the main current of the flood adjacent to the river vast quantities of wreckage were being carried along, even buildings of smaller size that had been swept into the current and driven with great force against the quivering bridges. All the highway bridges inside the city stood the strain, however, with the single exception of the Granite street iron bridge across Stevens branch that connects the northern business district with the west side of the city. This bridge was lifted cleanly off its abutments and was carried down the flood to the first of the numerous bends beyond. But the bridge would have been useless for the time-being anyway, because all Granite street lay deep under water.

The Prospect street bridge, with abutments weakened by the continuous drive of the cur-

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rent and with the structure itself shaken by the debris, was early abandoned under orders from the city authorities; and it, too, would have been useless from early evening of Thursday, for its eastern approach was far under water. The granite bridge on South Main street stood the test well under the buffeting of Jail branch and the debris, although the Barre and Chelsea railroad bridge on a sidetrack, a few feet east of the granite structure, partially collapsed. All the other highway bridges in the lowlands were under water and, seemingly, in momentary danger of going out. They were not used, however, because they could not be used.

Thus the West Side was cut off from the business district of the city. The East Side was also cut off from the business district, not because of broken or impaired bridges but because Potash brook and Gunner brook, combined, formed an impassable barrier, or, at least, a barrier that could be passed only at one point, which was by way of Camp street from Washington street, and then only at some hazard.

But while physical contact between the various parts of the city became impossible, or virtually so, there still was a chance to keep in communication through means of the telephone; and the central telephone office was rushed with the demands of the people to get in touch with friends. Then the telephone failed

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Debris Scattered About, Pole Knocked Over. Houses Were Endangered.
Some Traces of Fury of the Flood.

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—not en masse, so to speak, but in successive stages until eventually 1500 of the 2500 stations in Barre were out of commission. Along with the local lines went the impairment of service to the outside world. Records of the telephone company show that the last toll line went out of business at about 9:30 on the evening of November 3—and this outside service was not restored until late on the afternoon of November 5 when an improvised line was rigged up through chance discovery of a possible connection with the outside world by telephone line-men out on an exploring expedition who found they could connect up with a single line leading through the Molly's Falls service in Marshfield over to Woodsille, N. H. Thus for the night of November 3, the inability to hear friendly voices over the wire added to the horror of the situation.

Not only the telephone and the street lights failed that night in Barre. The city fire alarm system was put out of commission; and had there been a fire in any part of the city not a box could have been rung in. Nor could the telephone have been used for a "still alarm" only in scattered localities. Moreover, the firemen were bent on another mission that night—they were out endeavoring to save life, as well as to protect property.

The police, too, had they been sought, could

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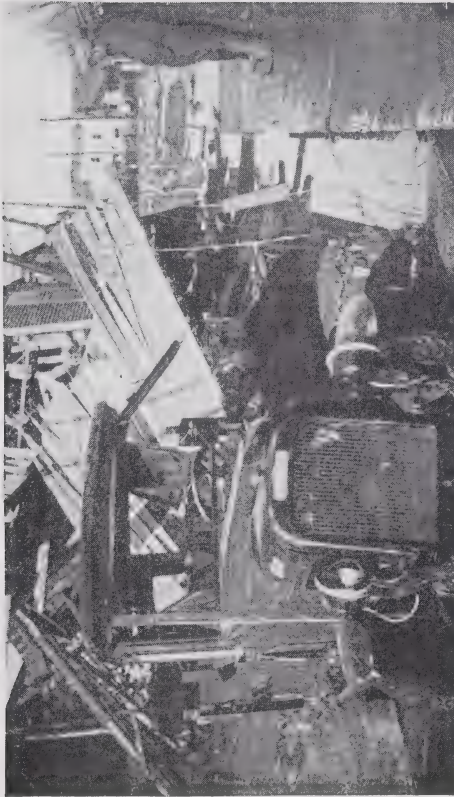
not have been located because police headquarters succumbed to the flood early in the evening of November 3, and before the flood receded the flood water mark was high on the walls of the police station in the basement of the city hall at the corner of Main and Prospect streets. The police, incidentally, were out on the same mission as the firemen.

Nor would there have been full aid for firemen in their normal service that night, for the city's main source of water supply was lost that same night. The Orange brook supply was completely broken off, as readers of this history will learn more about later. And firemen could not have reached many parts of the city that night, any more than they could have connected with hydrants had there been normal water pressure.

One piece of motor-driven fire apparatus was early wrecked that night when it plunged into a hole in the highway near South Barre while going for a boat to rescue beleaguered people.

Another piece of discarded, horse-drawn equipment was also temporarily lost and, along with it the lives of two city horses, when, manned by several volunteers, the equipment was directed toward the North End, where the situation of many people was becoming most alarming. This old hose cart was driven along Main street in the direction of the marooned

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Splintered Ruins Off North Main Street. Just At Right of Wrecked Automobile Two City Horses Were Drowned When Being Driven to Rescue Work in North End.

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people until, in the vicinity of Blackwell street, it was caught in the current of the flood and was swept along, horses, men and equipment, helpless in the force of the water until the plight of the men was discovered by householders along the route who threw a rope to the men and thus pulled them to safety. The horses, unguided and swept along with the flood, were found, dead, in a heap of debris, later, some distance from the point of the rescue of the men.

Yet still another public utility was lost that night. The gas plant, surrounded by deep water in its position off Granite street and near the channel of Stevens branch, necessarily had to go out of commission when its machinery went under water, and for several days thereafter there was no gas service in the city. People dependent upon gas for heating and cooking were thus sorely handicapped.

All these elements of deprivation added to the terror of the night of November 3. And still the rain continued to fall.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DROWNING OF LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JACKSON.

As the dreary night of incessant rain wore on people came to a realizing sense there was a grave situation to be faced, with no hint of what the end might be. Here was a city of 11,000 inhabitants more or less at the mercy of the rising waters but with hills handy for such as those who could reach those eminences in case of dire need. As already stated, street lights were out, telephones were growing silent in groups all over the city, the fire alarm was out of commission, the main source of city water was cut off, rail service was absolutely stopped, the gas supply was exhausted, the regular current of life was completely disrupted; the one thought in the minds of everybody was the flood—a flood that already had taken toll of two lives and done untold damage to property.

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Looking Along the Channel Cut in Nelson Street. Notice Automobile of Lieutenant Governor Jackson on the Extreme Left.

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Already a spirit of apprehension, if not fear, had spread throughout the valley of Barre; and, in the midst of that apprehension, there were projected alarming rumors of the plight of many people who had failed to flee from their houses in the lowlands before the water became too deep for them to get out.

Then in the midst of those rumors came disquieting stories as to the safety of Vermont's lieutenant governor, S. Hollister Jackson, a resident of Barre. As the first of these stories circulated to the newspaper office and other places where people were congregated, they were believed to be untrue, as this one or that one recalled that he had seen Lieutenant Governor Jackson only a short time before at his office. Still the rumors persisted. Then more authenticated statements were heard—Mr. Jackson had left his law office by automobile for his home; he had not reached his home. These statements, coupled with the known fact that Potash brook—or one branch of it—runs through a culvert on Nelson street, the natural course for him to take to reach his home, gave some plausibility to the rumors. It was known, too, that both branches of Potash brook were swollen to many times their natural volume and were racing down the steep slopes of the East hill with the speed of an express train.

Mr. Jackson's residence was at the corner of Tremont and Nelson streets, occupying a com-

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High Waterfall Off Nelson Street
Back to the Main Channel of Pot-
ash Brook. Taken the Next Day
After the Death of Lieutenant Gov-
ernor Jackson, Whose Automobile
Was Halted At Right of Picture.

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manding site far above the flooded valley and about a mile from the business center of the city. The residence lies only 300 feet from the bank of the east branch of Potash brook. To determine the truth or falsity of the rumors regarding his safety, parties of friends started off in the pouring rain and the blackness of the night. Proceeding up Washington street, to Nelson street, they arrived at a point where the waters of Potash brook were raging across Nelson street, the volume having been entirely too great for the culvert to carry. The overflow had cut across the premises of William Barclay, going either side of the Barclay residence and cutting deeply into the lawn. Further than that it was impossible to advance by road.

Moving cautiously in the darkness, the parties came across persons who had seen Mr. Jackson disappear after he had left his automobile in the flood and stepped off into the water, he being seen in the light of his automobile lamps. Presently, too, they came up to the place from whence they could discern an automobile and identified it as that of Mr. Jackson. The automobile was in water although by no means submerged. And when the witnesses to Mr. Jackson's disappearance had told their story, the worst fears of the searchers for him were realized, as it was certain that no person could have lived who had been swept into the rushing, spuming water that was pouring

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across the street and rushing back into the natural water course or across the Barclay property.

Grim, definite confirmation of this second tragedy, and third fatality of the flood thus far was furnished by a watcher who had stood at the corner of Nelson and Hill streets as Lieutenant Governor Jackson drove up the latter street in his light automobile. At this intersection, surface water from the Trow Hill section had cut a deep gully in the road and without seeing the hazard Mr. Jackson drove into it and across, although the vehicle was severely rocked in passing through the hole. As Mr. Jackson brought his automobile to a halt when across the hole in the road, he was approached by a man who had posted himself as a guard at that point.

According to this guard, Lieutenant Governor Jackson seemed dazed as if he had received a blow on the head from some part of his vehicle in going through the hole in the road. His hat had been knocked off and his glasses had fallen to the floor of the car, from which place they were retrieved by the highway guard when Mr. Jackson asked for them.

On passing the glasses to Mr. Jackson, the guard warned him as to the hazard of proceeding further along Nelson street, the distance to Mr. Jackson's home being only two hun-

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Lieutenant Governor S. Hollister Jackson's Automobile As He Left It and Stepped Off the Runningboard Into Deep Water to the Left. He Advanced a Few Steps Further and Was Swept Into Swift Water Flowing Across Nelson Street.

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dred yards from that point, but with the swift-rushing water intervening. Replacing his glasses and making no comment, Mr. Jackson again started his automobile and was soon making his way up the slightly inclined street toward home. He had driven his vehicle well to the right and upper side of the road, and when the water became so deep as to prevent further progress, it was seen to halt, by the dim light of the rear lamp.

The road guard had started to follow the Jackson automobile on foot when he was unable to prevent the driver from going further; and when at a point still fifty or a hundred feet from the halted vehicle he saw the occupant step out on the runningboard, hesitate a moment and then step into water of considerable depth. After taking a few steps Mr. Jackson was thrown down by the current but again attained his feet, after which he advanced somewhat further and suddenly disappeared from the range of the lights of his automobile.

The alarm was at once given in that vicinity and volunteer searchers looked as best they could in the handicap of darkness and over a terrain that was full of dangers. All to no avail. It was impossible to get near the main channel of the brook, into which Lieutenant Governor Jackson apparently had been drawn by the tremendous force of the current.

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Word was sent to the center of the city, after which a detail from Company M, 172d Infantry (Vermont National Guard), went with all haste to the scene of the disappearance of the state's second executive officer, along with other searchers. The effort to find some trace of the missing man failed utterly; and the slight hope that he had been able to save himself by catching hold of some object as he was swept through light underbrush and between trees, and was there clinging for life, sank into the sorrowful consciousness that the flood had claimed its third victim and in one of the most unexpected places for such a tragedy albeit the conditions even high on the hillside were admittedly enough to make such tragedies possible. The real flood was a mile away; and, as it turned out, people were clamoring for safety there while rescuers worked feverishly to save them. The spectre of death was expected to be in the valley if anywhere that night; yet here was a mere ribbon of water in normal times transformed into a life-claiming torrent high above the real flood and it had taken as its toll the life of the state's second executive officer.

Mr. Jackson had been a resident of Barre for thirty years, former city representative, former state's attorney, once a member of the state public service commission, recently president of

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Lieutenant Governor S. Hollister
Jackson, Who Lost His Life Within
a Stone's Throw of His Home.

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the Vermont State Bar association, for some years president of the American Granite association and, if the fates had ruled otherwise, might have been the governor of the state.

Lieutenant Governor Jackson was 51 years old, the holder of a degree from the University of Vermont, one of the leading lawyers of the state and prominent in other circles. He left his wife, who was Mabel Maud Parkyn, and two sons, Nelson and Hollister, jr.

It was not till the following afternoon that the body of Mr. Jackson was found far down the stream several hundreds yards from the point at which he had been swept off the highway by the flood waters. A private funeral was held several days later, and the body was laid to rest in Elmwood cemetery, past whose wooded slope runs the same Potash brook, which, at the time of the burial, was once more its placid self, strangely in contrast to the wild flood that had raged through the water-course on the night of November 3.

Two other automobiles besides that of Mr. Jackson were caught in the flood of Potash brook on Nelson street, one of the vehicles sinking into a chasm in the street so that the top of the automobile was almost on a level with the surface of the highway. The actual flood damage there was strangely out of proportion to the prominence of the life that had been taken.

CHAPTER VII.

A WHOLE STREET IMPERILLED—FOUR DROWNED.

While the Jackson tragedy was being enacted high up on the eastern slope of Barre, death also stalked in the southern, low-lying section of the city and ere it was satisfied it had taken the lives of four small boys, all of them from the single family of Fred Thomas, a resident of Webster avenue, where many families were marooned by the rapid rise of water in the Stevens branch. Webster avenue is really a triple row of small story and a half cottages, the first of which set from 50 to 100 feet from South Main street.

Immediately back of Webster avenue were two dams, the nearest one being connected with the E. C. Glysson granite plant and the other being the so-called "Woolen mill" dam, which was chiefly useful in impounding water for ice-cutting purposes. There is a fall of approximately 75 feet from the "Woolen mill" dam to

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the Webster avenue flat over a distance of perhaps two hundred yards. "The Avenue," as it is called by the dwellers thereon, also occupies a dangerous position by reason of the fact that it lies in a sharp bend of Stevens branch just before that stream joins the Jail branch.

Always a danger point during high water, "The Avenue" became superlatively so the evening of November 3. The Williamstown and South Barre watershed of Stevens branch poured an excessively large volume of water into the comparatively narrow channel of the river. The water beat against the "Woolen mill" dam with such relentless fury that that structure fell before the onslaught, but not until the Tucker house just above the dam had been set into the midst of a raging flood and a large storehouse filled with goods was washed off its foundation and was wrecked on the rocks just below where the dam had stood.

The dam below held itself but not the water. The water, rushing down the declivity and acting as if impatient to be on its way to Lake Champlain through the Winooski valley to the northward of Barre, cut across the bend in which "The Avenue" was located so perilously, actually making a new channel for the river and devouring the terrain like so much chaff, then spreading out in a fan formation till the section from the old riverbed to South Main

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A New Channel for Stevens Branch Straight Through Webster Avenue. Family Rescued From Attic Window When House Was Tilted At Sharp Angle Toward the Oncoming Flood. Four Thomas Children Lived in House to Right That Does Not Show in Picture.

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

street was a swirling, writhing lake—not large, to be sure, but bringing intense terror to the occupants of the fourteen houses that occupied “The Avenue.” Some of the dwellers had made their way to safety before the wall of water came down and enveloped the region; most of them had delayed, and delayed too long for safety.

The cries of the marooned people still occupying the lightly constructed houses soon rent the air, and the alarm was sent to the center of the business district that still could be reached. Firemen turned out with their apparatus; Company M rushed to the scene; police, city officials, volunteers likewise. All attempts to enter the flat by foot or by vehicle were nothing short of suicidal. The first thought was for boats. Would boats withstand the swift current? That soon was to be demonstrated in the negative. A light boat was brought to the scene and while a stout rope was being attached to one end of the shallow, round-bottomed structure, the cries of the endangered people resounded from one end of “The Avenue” to the other. Occupants of most of the houses had been driven from the first floor to the attics of their story and a half buildings.

From the attic windows they wildly waved lighted newspapers as if to direct the rescuers.

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All the while the rising flood was beating at the foundations of the little houses. The only available light to be effective for the rescuers was the headlights of automobiles that were lined up in the road, facing the scene of danger.

Under the glare of these headlights, the rescue squads prepared the boat, which, when manned by two men named McNulty and Carlson, was pushed out into the current which was swift even 50 feet from South Main street. The intent was to send the boat as far as the rope would reach down "The Avenue." But the attempt failed. Caught in the current, the boat was swirled in spite of the efforts of the oarsmen so that the vehicle was barely able to reach the first house, where, as it happened, were the Thomas family awaiting deliverance. Grasping the Thomas house as the boat swirled past, the oarsmen were able to draw themselves and their boat to the door of the little residence. Hastily loading the boat with four sons in the family—Ralph W., aged 11 years; Clyde E., aged nine years; Dean R., aged seven years, and Carroll V., aged five years—the two oarsmen gave the signal for a pull on the rope. One pull across the current, and the frail boat overturned.

The six occupants were thrown into the murky depths of the flood. The four boys were utterly powerless and were soon swept be-

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yond the grasp of the men and down the current. They were never seen after that, alive. McNulty stroked desperately back toward the house and was able to grasp the door and pull himself to safety; Carlson, not so fortunate but a powerful swimmer, went along with the current, keeping his head above the flood and being carried several hundred feet to a point near the Straiton stonshed, where, for a time, he was able to maintain a precarious hold on some projection until swept by the still rising water back into the flood and far down stream, still swimming desperately. The next morning (Friday) he was found, still alive, on a roof. He was rescued, and survived his dreadful experience.

Consternation reigned among the rescuers and spectators at Webster avenue over the failure of the boat method. The cries of the people in the other houses rang in the ears of the region as far as half a mile distant. How to reach the people was then a still greater problem. Presently a rope was taken to the survivors of the Thomas family and the other end was attached to a granite plant that heads on South Main street and runs back toward "The Avenue;" and by means of a hastily fashioned breeches-buoy the Thomas survivors were drawn to safety. The same method could not be employed for the occupants of the other

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houses ranging back from South Main street for several hundred feet. However, necessity was the mother of an improvised plan that worked.

Taking ladders from the fire department equipment, the rescuers went to the first house on the row of buildings nearest the Glysson dam, made their way at much peril to this house, smashed in the door (the occupants were among those who had been provident enough to get out on their own initiative), carried the ladders through the building, managed to throw the ladders to the next house, lashed them securely and thus made a bridge from one house to another so that, after anxious hours and almost complete surrender to despair by all the marooned people, the endangered houses were evacuated of their occupants. One of the houses in the center of the first row, undermined, tipped over. The family in this house was rescued when their house was tilted at a perilous angle in the flood. Oddly enough people in the houses nearest the riverbed stayed in their houses all night and were unharmed.

CHAPTER VIII.

A PERILOUS RIDE ON THE FLOOD.

Perhaps the most trying physical experience of any survivor of the flood was that which befel Helge Carlson, one of the two men who endeavored to rescue the Thomas boys at Webster avenue and who was swept down the flood for a distance of nearly half a mile, as stated in the previous chapter. Few could go through the same experience, and live—and Carlson himself declares: "I guess I was pretty lucky." Lucky he was, and plucky, too.

Carlson is a well set up young man 25 years of age and of Swedish birth. He came from Sweden five years ago, and, as he says, he was in the water a good share of the time over in the old country; so he is a good swimmer. He needed to be that night.

It was only by chance that Carlson came to be involved in the tragedy at Webster avenue and, consequently in his own great experience. He was on his way to visit a countryman in

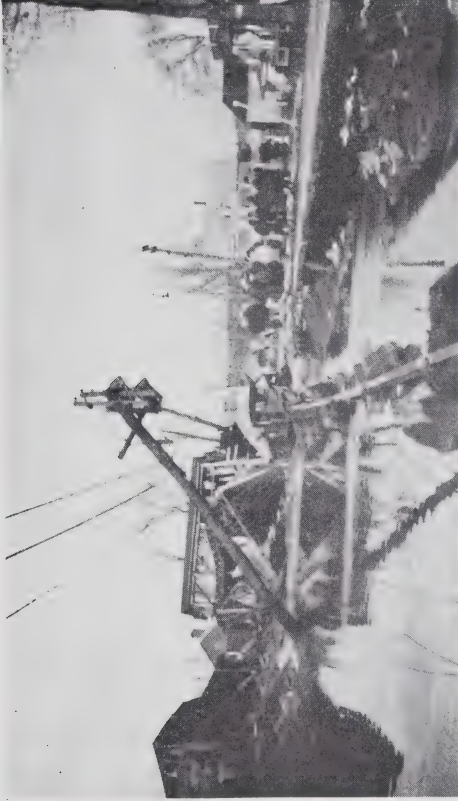
BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

the south end of the city Thursday night and came opposite just as the people were crying for help. Carlson volunteered to be one to man the boat that had been brought to effect a rescue, if possible. He joined McNulty, previously mentioned. They went out in the boat carrying a roll of slack rope. But let Carlson tell the story!

“The current was so swift it carried the boat rapidly down. We grabbed a house as the boat was swept along. Pulling hard we got the boat up to the house. We asked ‘who’s goin’ first?’ and they said the kids. So the kids got into the boat and we started to pull the boat along a rope that was hitched between the shore and the house. The current was so strong the boat tipped over. I didn’t see the other fellow after that and don’t know how he got out. I grabbed a kid who had been sitting in the front of the boat near me and lost hold of him when the boat went over. Pretty soon I heard a gurgling noise and swam over toward it and found a kid—I don’t know whether it was the same one or not.

“I tried to swim with the kid but the current was so strong I couldn’t hold him, and the boy slipped down and grabbed hold of my leg. Gee! I can feel him there now. But he lost his hold and I didn’t see him after that. I swam to a pole that was sticking out of the water, and

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Near Smith, Whitcomb and Cook Foundry. Single Rail Points Direction of a One-Time Railroad Track.

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there I sat. Guess I stayed there about half an hour, when along came some big object that knocked pole and me into the flood. The river was full of floating pieces and I got hold of a raft and climbed on top."

Then Carlson was on his way, he knew not where. "We rushed along," he continued his narrative; "the flood was full of things which kept bumping into my raft but I kept hold. Pretty soon the water began to act kind of funny, you know, and all at once me and my raft dived right over a waterfall and we went bottom side up (he had gone over the Trow and Holden dam). I lost hold of my raft when it went out from under me. I came up to the top of the water and logs and boards kept banging into me."

The distance from the Trow and Holden dam to the Prospect street bridge is not more than 500 feet but the water was very swift that night, and Carlson was right in the midst of the swiftest part of the current. He was hurled along, keeping his head above water by paddling although greatly weakened by his tremendous exertion in staying on his raft from Webster avenue.

"When I saw there was a bridge ahead of me, I made up my mind here was my chance. So just as the flood swept me up to it I lunged and grasped hold of the underpart. I must

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have hung there ten seconds when the current knocked my hands off and away I went. I don't know how I got under the bridge, nor the railroad bridge just below—perhaps I went over this bridge. Then I came to the stone-sheds there and as the water swept me toward them I made another lunge. This time I was lucky; I got a hold of a compressor pipe that sticks out the end of the Hoyt and Milne shed. I hung on for dear life and then when I had got strength enough back I pulled myself up the pipe and then got to the top of the Hoyt and Milne shed.

“There I stayed all night—gee! it was cold. Along about 8 o'clock the next morning (Friday) someone came along and found me on the roof of the shed and they got me home. I was pretty weak for a long time. Yes, I guess I was pretty lucky,” was the way the young fellow ended his modestly related story of his perilous night ride on the bosom of the most disastrous flood that ever swept this valley.

Swept along in the inky darkness of the night, never knowing when his uncertain raft would leave him, pitched over the top of the Trow and Holden dam, buffeted by logs, boards and other debris, being almost to safety when he grasped the Prospect street bridge only to be swept away again, plunged under or over the

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two bridges and then to be driven, providentially, toward a projecting pipe which was his anchor on life—that was, indeed, an experience that few could go through and still live.

Carlson is a granite cutter employed at this time of writing in the Marr and Gordon firm's plant.



CHAPTER IX.

CARING FOR THE REFUGEES.

What became of the rescued in Barre the night of November 3. How were they cared for? Did they suffer physical harm after rescue? Certainly not.

As swiftly as the people of Barre arose to meet the general flood emergency, both at the moment and in the rehabilitation and restoration later, an agency of mercy in the shape of the American Red Cross was set up. Hastily securing permission to use the new state armory at the corner of Elm and Jefferson streets, as a temporary hospital, the Barre chapter of that great organization rallied its members and volunteers to the work of protecting those who had met with misfortune and who were in immediate need of care. Ambulances were summoned, and as fast as men, women and children were rescued from Webster avenue, as well as from other parts of the city, they were concentrated at that point. Many of them drip-

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ping wet and shivering from the cold night air were wrapped in blankets, placed in the ambulances and rushed with all speed to the temporary hospital.

There at the hospital a system had been hastily worked out for the reception and care of the unfortunates who had gone through the trying experience. The clang of the ambulance bell was heard outside; the doors of the armory were swung open; Red Cross nurses in uniform stood in the front rank of the receiving line; other members of the organization, in their places, directed those who were able to walk and also those who were carrying children, the latter blinking as they came into the glare of the lights in the building and apparently uncomprehending the swift movements that were being made in their behalf. Warm baths were provided; hot drinks were given to the adults; warm milk was served to the children; dry garments were apportioned to each and all—and then the flood survivors were put to bed.

Here, again, Vermont's military arm came into effective use. Army cots were set up in the various rooms of the commodious building; army blankets were wrapped about the shivering forms; army utensils were brought into requisition; one might say that army discipline ruled even though many of the workers were volunteers. By midnight of November 3 the

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A Derelict of the Flood Which Rested on North Main Street After the Water Had Subsided Friday.

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arrangements were worked out so satisfactorily that it is safe to say that the rescued persons—there were perhaps as many as two score given such attention there that night—were given excellent care. As proof of such a statement, it needs only to be said that so far as known not a single person among the survivors suffered any serious physical result from the experience. Pneumonia might easily have resulted had not this prompt and careful attention been given.

The Red Cross continued to maintain headquarters in the armory for several weeks after the flood, and there was set up a clearing-house of clothing, supplies, medicines, employment agency and the numerous other features that enter into an emergency of this sort. Eventually, directors sent by the national headquarters of the American Red Cross came and took charge of the local situation; but it is undoubtedly true that no more efficient service was rendered by them than was given the rescued people the night of the flood's crest. As a matter of fact, the directors sent by national headquarters found matters so well arranged that they did not prolong their stay, and they were

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generous enough to assert that the local chapter had done very well in the hour of great need. The Red Cross aided homeless people to re-establish themselves; most generous donations of clothing, supplies and money were sent to the Barre chapter.

In reporting on the activities of the organization, the Red Cross made the following compilation of its work, speaking in figures alone:

“Number of people drowned or killed, seven; number of houses destroyed, five; number of houses badly damaged (about), 25; number of adults directly affected, 354; number of children directly affected, 250.



CHAPTER X.

RIVER GOES BACK TO ANCIENT CHANNEL.

Besides cutting for itself a new channel straight through Webster avenue, the Stevens branch performed similarly further along, as did the Jail branch in eliminating a sweeping curve along Batchelder's meadow, so-called, and cutting directly across the one-time trotting park. Fortunately, there was no hazard to lives in this action of Jail branch, but at various points from Barre to East Barre houses and other buildings were threatened and partly undermined, although the occupants of the houses had either beaten a retreat or were watching the rise of the water carefully, ready to depart on a moment's notice.

As has been previously stated, Jail branch joins Stevens branch just north of Webster avenue; and the force of the current in the former served to drive the flood waters of the latter back toward the normal channel, and the two streams, united, swept along the normal riverbed and away from the residential section of

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South Main street. But the united streams were to perform more peculiar stunts further along. At the Trow and Holden dam, once known as the "fork shop" dam, there was a strong concrete barrier, which stood the test of the flood so well that, although the flood was pouring over the dam in a level surface of water, the water made sport of the dam by sweeping around the western end and leaving the dam to itself.

In going around the end of the dam, the flood did a great deal of damage to Brooklyn street, cutting into the bank of the river and then eating its way across the street so that the foundation of one house was uncovered and other houses were jeopardized. A large private garage on the eastern side of Brooklyn street fell a prey to the flood and slipped gracefully into the vortex of the water, being then wrecked against the Barre and Chelsea railroad engine house and the abutments of the Prospect street bridge. That contact with the Prospect street bridge, together with other debris that piled up there and 300 feet further along against the bridge of the Barre and Chelsea railroad on the so-called Burnham's meadow, undid, for the time-being, the engineering feat performed many years before in the turning of the bed of the river from the rear of the business blocks on the westerly side of Main street to a straight channel across Burnham's meadow.

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New Building of Allen Lumber Company Twisted Into Semblance of Waves. Tracks Sliding Down Hill. Deepest Water of Flood From this Point Northward.

BARRÉ IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

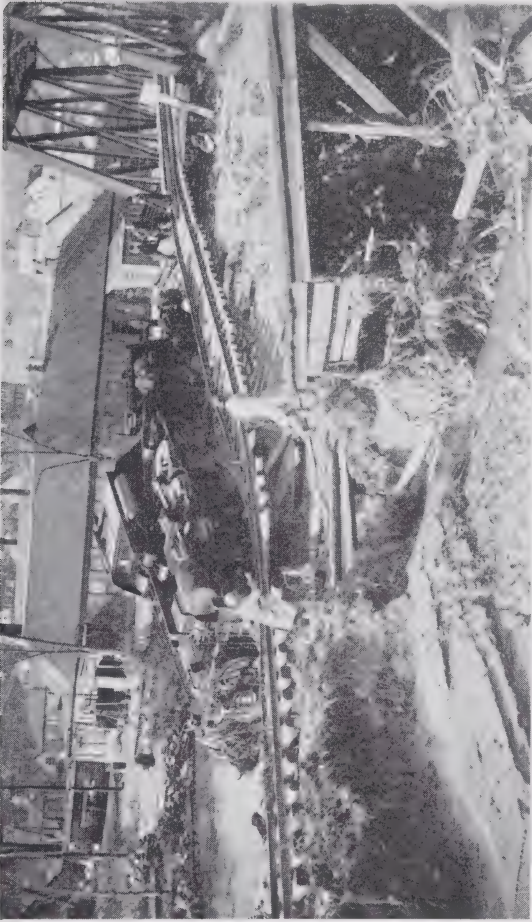
When that engineering feat was carried out, it was thought that the river had been controlled at that point for all time; and, indeed, it had been so many times during high water. But this 1927 flood was not the ordinary high water, it must be remembered. After delving into the bank protecting Brooklyn street the flood swung partly to the other side of the river and, approaching the rear of the residences on the westerly side of South Main street, coursed down the Barre and Chelsea railroad track, crossed Prospect street at grade and then raced into its ancient channel, which, in the older days, laved the rear walls of the Main street business blocks, beginning with the city hall. Realizing their impotence against this invasion of the old water course, merchants and others doing business on the westerly side of Main street, from Prospect street to Depot Square relinquished their efforts and watched developments. There was nothing else they could do. Caught between the Stevens branch in the rear and by the Potash brook and another underground water course from the site of the ancient Wood tannery toward the river, they figured it was merely a question of how much longer the rain would fall to determine their losses to stock and suspension of business.

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One of the heaviest losers in that part of the business district was the Barre Daily Times, which occupied the first floor and basement of the L. M. Averill building. The large press of the newspaper occupied a position in the basement, as did other articles of equipment. Water rose many feet an hour until the press and its motors were completely submerged, while in the adjoining storage room a complete carload of newsprint was ruined. The linotype machines and office, being located on the first floor, which is two feet above the street, escaped the water and with this partial equipment the newspaper force went about the work of preparing the next day's paper. That paper, as well as the issue for the next three publishing days, was "set up" on the home linotypes and was printed on the press in an upstairs printing office.

The first paper was essentially, even wholly, a flood issue. It was a small folder not larger than a handbill, entirely devoid of advertising matter because, of course, the merchants were not likely to do business for some time to come, and containing no telegraph material whatever as all wires were down and there was no chance to get material from the outside world, even from as far away as Montpelier. Even news from the North End of Barre itself was largely hearsay. As a matter of fact, no one cared to

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Iron Horse Undermined and Laid Low in Central Vermont Yard Near the Harrison Granite Company.

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read about anything except flood news, and the newspaper met that desire as best it could under the handicaps. The flood was in Main street only a few feet from the front door of the newspaper's office. From that point northward to Willey street and beyond nothing but a boat could have been used on Main street. Every store and business building northward had water in the basements, and most of them had several feet of water, which was of a particularly soupy consistency with mud.

The flood, of course, occupied all the territory of the low-lying ground. Swift currents tore their way through the railroad yards of the Barre and Chelsea, the Central Vermont and the Montpelier and Wells River railroads, carrying debris of all descriptions. A number of people were marooned in the passenger station of the Central Vermont railroad and when the water invaded that uncertain haven of refuge they, one and all, took to the passenger train that had been held at the station nearly all day. The water still continued to come up and made the vantage point of the train uncertain and precarious.

Thinking it possible to drive the train to a higher point, the engineer opened the throttle and the train threaded its way northward with the flood's direction but immeasurably slower. Reaching a point just south of the Harrison

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Granite company, the train began to tip; and there the train halted, with its trainmen and its passengers waiting for what the fates had in store for them. Another locomotive, halted nearby, slumped toward the regular channel of the river and then fell on its side. where it remained partially buried with mud and debris for many days after the flood had subsided.

Further north, railroad equipment on the Montpelier and Wells River railroad was destroyed or damaged in like manner. Where the various side tracks converge into the one-track way at Willey street, tracks were undermined and the rolling stock was tilted and up-turned at varying angles, and this section was a catch-all for many sorts of material that had come down the regular channel of the river, down the railroad tracks and down Main street. Railroad tracks, automobiles, other vehicles, lumber, firewood, household furniture were piled in indescribable confusion. And over all was mud—mud to the depth of a foot or more. all the way back to the South End there was a similar accumulation but in lesser quantity. A few houses and many small buildings had either been destroyed or seriously damaged on their foundations, while interiors were plastered with the same application of mud that permeated everything.

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Flood Turned Fence Builder, Using a Disrupted Track and Standing It on End With Perfect Alignment of Posts.

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Gunner brook had not claimed human life and did not claim human life; but it was wholly out of bounds from the Farwell street and Brook street intersection to the outlet. Maple avenue was a river in and of itself, with debris carried down the breast of the water to the outlet in the Smith, Whitcomb and Cook dam. All trace of the old brook was gone for the time-being. Householders in that section of the city who had not vacated waited from higher places in their homes for the water to go down, as, of course, it must go down.

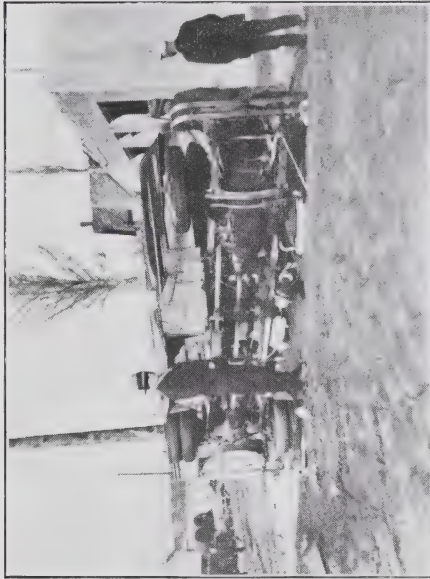
Indeed, that was about all a large part of the population of Barre could do—wait for the flood to recede. All people who were in imminent peril had been rescued and were being cared for either in temporary relief stations, in the City hospital or in homes on high ground. Firemen, police, National Guardsmen, relief workers, Red Cross aids and hundreds of volunteers still continued their services. But for most of the populace it was merely to wait and to hope that the rain would cease.

CHAPTER XI.

SCENE OF DESOLATION FRIDAY MORNING.

Thus the night of terror wore on, following a day of death, suffering, distress and intense anguish. The rain's terrific bombardment had eased off during the fore part of the night; yet the water continued to rise as the Barre valley received the run-off from its hills and from the hills and valleys of the streams that were tributary to Barre's main river. The height of the flood in Barre was reached at 11:30 during the night of Thursday, approximately four hours earlier than the crest of the flood in the neighboring city of Montpelier and about twelve hours earlier than the height of the flood in Waterbury and Bolton, further along the Winooski valley, where the greatest loss of life in all Vermont occurred.

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.



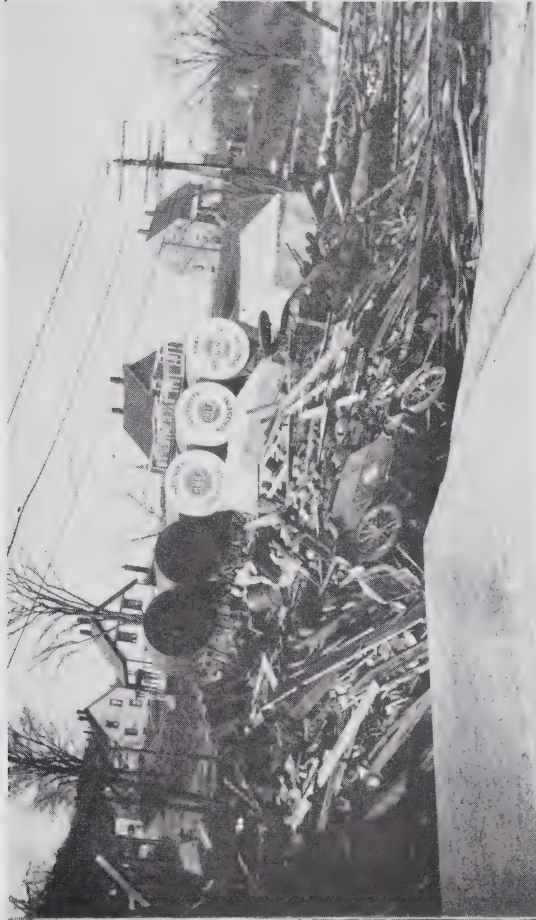
A Plaything of the Flood. Huge Yellow Bus Turned on Its Side and Deposited in Field Off North Main Street.

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Because of the topography of the terrain in and around Barre, the recession of the flood was even more rapid than had been its rise. That, too, in spite of the continued rain. Anxious watchers began to note the fall of the muddy water on walls, counters, shelves and equipment, the stain left by the slime showing unmistakably pronounced and not to be eradicated for days thereafter, in some cases not for weeks. There was little sleep that night even for those who were not intimately connected with the ravages of the flood.

When the morning of Friday, Nov. 4, broke with the dreary aspects of yet another stormy day—rain was still falling—there was a scene of desolation in the lowlands and there were marks and scars of the flood visible even on high ground for surface water also had added much to the general damage through cutting and gulying of highways and through destruction of culverts. Business, of course, was out of the question. The only business in hand was the restoration of conditions temporarily to permit of the resumption of general business—sometime. Flood water had left all parts of the city save in the extreme North End, excepting the cellars and basements of stores, houses and all buildings that were included in the broad lake of the night before.

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"Confusion Worse Confounded." At Willey street, Corner North Main Street. Notice Wrecks of Two Automobiles.

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Streets lay deep in their unwonted covering of slippery, sticky and foul-smelling mud. Motor vehicles lay buried in mud where the vehicles had been abandoned the evening before. Scores of automobiles dotted streets and premises. One of the large busses of the Yellow Bus line lay on its side on the North Main street pavement where it had been tossed about by the flood of the night before. A large pleasure automobile was likewise resting on its side in the same locality. Another car was pitched head foremost into the receded water of Gunner brook near the outlet into the river. All about that section were motor vehicles lodged in queer positions where the flood had forced them, and other similar vehicles were piled in the general debris that had become lodged by some obstruction and left by the falling water. Some store windows in the North End had been shattered under the bombardment of debris swept along the street by the current.

But the predominating aspect of all sections of the city was the mud. Where the vast accumulation of mud could have come from was not realized until later when some of the gashes on the surface were discovered nearer the head waters of the various streams that have their confluence in Barre. While some searching parties went out looking for the dead, the main effort was directed toward the mud. Hard as

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had been the blow inflicted by the flood, the main idea was restoration and rehabilitation.

It is remarkable how completely and how promptly that idea dominated the people of Barre. The thought was that Barre must recover as rapidly and as well as possible from this awful visitation of nature. With that thought firmly in mind, it was scarcely daylight of the morning of Friday, and with rain still falling, before individuals, groups and whole gangs of men—and some women—were at the work of combatting the mud so that there might be some semblance of former activity. Meanwhile, too, there was sorrow and distress over the loss of life that had visited the little city.

Some of the bodies were found deeply encased in mud where they had been left by the receding flood water during the night. The body of one of the Thomas children was located early Friday amid the debris adjacent to Prospect street, approximately quarter of a mile from the place where the boatload of people had been thrown into the water, and two other of the Thomas children were found in the Burnham's meadow section. The body of the youngest son was not recovered. That same afternoon the body of Lieutenant Governor Jackson was found in a pool of water in the Potash brook channel not far from Currier street,

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.



Plenty of Firewood for the Winter Months in North End of Barre, Railroad Tracks Piled on Each Other.

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

to which point it had been carried by the rushing flood. As previously stated, the bodies of Gerald Brock and Ralph Winter was not found until the following day, Saturday.

With the bodies of the flood victims either found or located, with the refugees cared for and with the flood water receded from nearly all the streets the first problems were to remove the deep accumulation of mud from the streets and sidewalks, and also to pump the water from the cellars of stores, homes and business places. Even before the call for volunteers had been made by Mayor Frank L. Small, there were many proffers of aid and cooperation, and, indeed, many went to work without being directed to do so.

By noon of Friday, large companies of men were at work with hoe and shovel, and many fleets of motor trucks were brought into use for the purpose of carrying off the mud and debris. At the same time, the pumping engine of the fire department was employed, together with private pumps, in drawing the water from the cellars along Main street. It was many days before that work was completed, and it was even longer before the mud and debris had been removed from the streets and sidewalks, particularly in the North End. Toward noon of Friday the rain ceased to fall, and a

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Heavy Trucks Hoisted Off the North Main Street Pavement and Deposited Beside the Road. Cement Pavement Was Broken At This Point.

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lower temperature gave indication that the flood danger was over.

The granite plants, being idle, released a large number of men for restoration work, and business and professional men joined in the general movement to clean up the city as fast as possible. It was no uncommon sight to see clergymen wielding shovel and hoe in the midst of the mud and the debris. They, like hundreds of others, had heeded the call of duty, which was contained in the following official notice:

Notice! Call for Volunteers.

Volunteer workmen and trucks are needed to clean up our city streets and sidewalks. All workmen are requested to report at the city council room to-morrow morning at 7 o'clock and each man is requested to bring his own shovel. Per order,

Frank L. Small, Mayor.

Needless to say, perhaps, the response to the call was instant and quite general. The unsolicited aid of Friday was followed by a still greater enlistment the following day, and so it continued on Sunday. Eventually, the city put the volunteers on the payroll, but a great deal of labor was furnished gratis.

CHAPTER XII.

FIRST VISITORS FROM OUTSIDE—AN AIRPLANE.

While Barre was laboring to remove some of the traces of the flood there was no hint during all of Friday as to the fate of other cities and towns down the Winooski valley; nor was it known how widespread the record rain and the consequent flood had been. In those days of prompt communication, it was odd, indeed, that two such close neighbors as Barre and Montpelier should not have known of the situation of each other. A large number of Barre people were employed in Montpelier, either at the State House, in the National Life Insurance company or in some other line of work. With the exception of the portion of such persons who had left their places of employment early on Thursday and returned toward Barre to flounder through the rising water to their homes, the Barre contingent in Montpelier was still marooned there and unable to communicate with their people at home.

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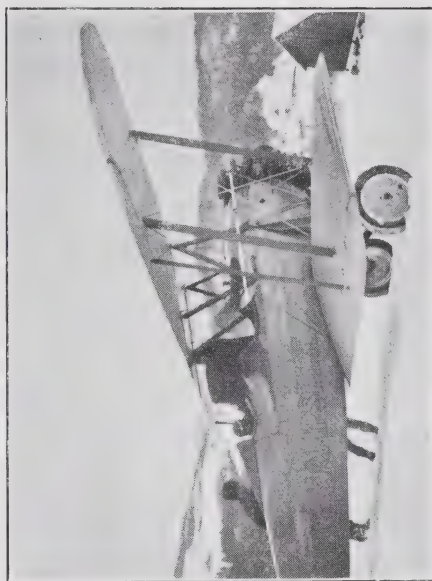
In the North End, M. & W. R. R. R. and Trolley Tracks Bowing to Each Other As If in Friendly Greeting After Flood Went Down.

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

On Saturday a party of the more hardy members of the Barre residents who had been held prisoner in Montpelier made their way home by walking the six miles, sometimes along the highways, again along portions of the railroad tracks that survived the flood and even through the woods and fields on the higher places. They had been unable to reach home for two days because the flood had not receded in Montpelier sufficiently by Friday to permit them to leave their havens of refuge and because of impassable conditions along the route between the two cities.

The first real visitor to Barre from the outside world was an airplane, which circled over the city Saturday morning. There was much speculation as to the errand of the air visitor. Some believed the visitor had been dispatched from a southern New England point to bring yeast to the beleaguered region, as it was known that the people depended upon daily shipment of yeast. It was surmised by others, and more correctly, that the visitor was from a metropolitan newspaper, as the press dispatches from Vermont on late Thursday had told of the impending flood, with the Winooski valley likely to receive heavy damage. Still, yeast was needed and needed badly in the flood region, in order to furnish the staple food, bread; and inasmuch as railroads were abso-

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Like a Snowbird. This airplane used in Carrying Mail.
Landed at Barre Airport.

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lutely cut off and highway service was extremely problematical for a long period, the appearance of this airplane on Saturday gave a hint of another thing which Barre ought to do, and do at once. That was to furnish an airport and then to notify the outside world in whatever possible way that Barre was ready to receive yeast, U. S. mail or other smaller articles by way of the airplane. No sooner had the air visitor been descried over the city than officials and people began to bestir themselves to get an air field.

Some years before the flood a commercial airman had utilized a field high up on Millstone hill, two miles from the city. Thought naturally turned to this plot of ground, and as the site was considered the most suitable in fairly close range of the city the projectors of the Barre air field picked out this location, which was known as the Wilson flat. Marshaling volunteers and trucks, the air field committee went to work the following day, Sunday, and before nightfall they had the field filled in with fine granite to make landing and taxiing fairly smooth. The field was marked, a dozen or so trees were cut down, airmen's signs were located and other arrangements made to comprise a fairly complete airfield of small size, although without a hangar. At the end of the day the committee reported that Barre had

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acquired an airfield and was ready to receive visitors from the upper regions.

This Barre airport was utilized soon by the air mail carrier who journeyed between Concord, N. H., and Burlington for some weeks after the flood, but it was not used to any extent by other fliers during the flood emergency. But Barre proved itself ready to meet the possible need as it was not known when the regular transmission of mail by railroad could be restored, with both mail outlets cut off, the Central Vermont for a period estimated at that time to be several months, and the Montpelier and Wells River railroad for at least four or five weeks.



CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST MAIL RECEIVED IN FOUR DAYS.

The first mail received in Barre for four days arrived late Sunday night from White River Junction. It was brought by Chief Clerk J. M. Ashley of the railway mail service who made his way into the flood region by use of an automobile over the hills between Bradford and Barre, the regular traffic route between Barre and White River Junction being impassable, largely through broken highways south of South Royalton. Mr. Ashley brought a single pouch of first-class mail for Barre and another for Montpelier. Mail continued to be dispatched from Barre and received in Barre by motor vehicle for many weeks; also the air mail service was utilized until the Montpelier and Wells River line was opened for traffic. The first train run into Barre came in over the Montpelier and Wells River track on Nov. 16, a local from Montpelier, and its arrival was received with great satisfaction by Barre people, a satisfaction that was heightened some weeks

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.



Barre's Native Granite Being Used to Good Purpose in Making Highways and Railroads Passable. Barre's Grout Piles Disappeared Fast After the Flood.

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later when the same railroad restored passenger service in and out of Barre, which had been cut off ever since the World war when Barre-Montpelier passenger service was consolidated on the Central Vermont branch line.

However, there were trains operated on the Barre and Chelsea railroad in Barre long before the Montpelier and Wells River railroad resumed its operation. The Barre and Chelsea railroad, bottled up in Barre, operated trains between the city and the quarries and, in addition, ran trains on Main street of Barre. People were somewhat startled on the Monday morning following the flood to see locomotives with long trains of cars trundling along the street car track through the business district, their presence on that track being for the purpose of carrying granite chips to make needed fills in the North End. The street car company, of course, was out of commission, having lost its bridge at the Pioneer in Montpelier, having had its carbarns devastated and having had its tracks torn and twisted by the flood.

The Barre and Chelsea made connections with the street car track at the grade crossing near the Trow and Holden plant on South Main street and at the Smith, Whitcomb and Cook plant on North Main street. This service was not maintained long on Main street because the Barre and Chelsea tracks were soon put in

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Locomotive Standing on Washington Street in Front of Library. Hotel Barre At Left Background Surmounted By Baptist Church Spire. Exedra of Soldiers' Memorial At the Right.

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repair so that the rolling stock could move over their accustomed iron.

While rail communication with the outside was denied Barre for many weeks, wire communication was restored in a comparatively short time. But even before then, the wireless came into its own and served acceptably. Barre was fortunate in having an amateur wireless operator who stepped into the breach of absolutely disrupted wire service and sent out the first reports of Barre's part in the flood disaster. This operator, George Cruickshank by name, and stationed at the ancient Paddock house on South Main street, put Barre in touch with the world and apprised relatives and friends outside of Barre with the conditions in Barre.

All day Saturday this amateur operator was busy with his little wireless set, working long hours at a stretch in order to meet the urgent demands made by Barre people to get in touch with the outside. For the time-being, he was an important part of the machinery of operations striving to put Barre back to normal once more.

CHAPTER XIV.

RESUMING SOME OF ACTIVITIES.

Telephonic communication with the outside world was restored to Barre, in partial form only, nearly 48 hours after the toll lines had been put out of commission Thursday night, although full service, toll line and local, was not being offered by the telephone company for some days after that first message that came in by way of Woodsville. Telegraph lines were restored on the Tuesday morning following the flood.

Highway communication between Barre and Montpelier was possible three days after the flood, there being no highway bridge out between the two cities, although it was necessary to use the trolley line bridge to cross the river at Dodge's because the covered highway bridge at that point had been removed just prior to the flood and the start on the new bridge had only just begun. The furnishing of gas was resumed early in the week following the flood. Full water service was not re-

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stored, however, until five weeks after the visitation of the flood.

At no time during the flood emergency was there a real fear of food shortage, although a few timid persons started to buy up remaining stocks of goods in the grocery stores. Trucks began bringing provisions into Barre within four days after the water subsided, thus supplementing the depleted stocks on hand. There was no rationing of food products, although merchants exercised discretion in the size of their sales. Gasoline, however, went on the requisition basis because of the greater difficulty of trucking that commodity over the gullied and torn highways between Barre and distributing points that were little affected by the flood.

The use of pleasure automobiles was discouraged, and requisitions for gasoline were honored by city officials only when applicants could show a need for other than pleasure purposes. The gasoline was conserved as much as possible for reconstruction work, as it was realized that the use of all available trucks would demand a great deal of gasoline. Within a week, however, this restriction was removed as the gasoline supply was found to be sufficient to meet the needs of the situation, it not being possible to travel far in any direction because of broken highways. North of Barre even the use of the highways had to be restricted, some-

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.



Not "Footprints on the Sands of Time," But Muddy Tracks Through Sodden Soil Heaped Up Between Burnham's Meadow and Central Vermont Yard.

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

times cut off entirely for pleasure cars, because the rains and alternate freezing and thawing rendered the highways all but impassable.

While at no time was Barre under martial law, there was an element of military discipline during the first week succeeding the flood. The local company of the 172d Infantry (Vermont National Guard) was under service from the night of Thursday when the situation was the most serious. Soldiers were stationed at all the leading highways that were passable, with orders to ascertain the destinations and purposes of persons coming into or going out of the community. This action was taken partly as a means to keeping sight-seers out of the city at a time when the presence of a large number of strangers might have interfered with the work of restoration and reconstruction. The action also was taken to keep an undesirable element out of the city that might have proven troublesome during the unsettled conditions. A further purpose was to protect other communities from unnecessary unloading of people on them temporarily.

Orders had gone out from the emergency state government at Montpelier that persons were to be kept off the highways unless their mission warranted transportation between communities. The highways were to be left primarily for those actually engaged in recon-

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struction or flood relief work. By posting guards on the roads leading into and through the city, Barre was cooperating in this purpose to keep the highways free for necessary traffic.

As far as conduct of its own citizens was concerned, it should be stated in this connection that there was a very manifest spirit of cooperation and willingness to assist in the public welfare. There were few instances of infraction of the law. There was little, if any, attempt at looting. One or two attempts at profiteering by small merchants were frowned upon and quickly squelched. People absented themselves from the streets to a remarkable degree unless there was good reason for their presence away from their homes or their places of business. It was not necessary for the law to lay its hands on many people for even minor offenses. All this aided greatly toward the restoration of material conditions throughout the whole city.

CHAPTER XV.

CITIZENS COOPERATE WELL IN RECON- STRUCTION.

The spirit of cooperation shown by Barre people furthermore tended to keep down the eventual loss to the community as it enabled the community to recover the quicker from the blow of the flood. Of course, a large aggregate loss was sustained in the forced suspensions of many of the industries and businesses of the city, chief of which was in the granite industry. When it was ascertained Friday, Nov. 4, that the city's chief source of water supply had been cut off by the flood, that meant that the granite industry would be required to remain idle inasmuch as the other sources of city water were scarcely more than sufficient to meet the domestic needs of the city. The city council realized this situation and promptly issued the following notice:

BARRÉ IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.



Like a Disjointed Snake Lay City Water Main Near Dugout on East Barre Road.

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

Until permission is given by the city to use water, the stonesheds of Barre will not resume operations.

Per order, Mayor Frank L. Small.

This forced idleness of the granite industry meant, of course, a heavy loss to the whole community, and more directly to the owners of the industry and the several thousand persons employed in it, either in Barre or at the quarries. Knowing what this continued idleness meant, the city council concentrated on efforts to restore the water supply from the Orange brook system. Finding that approximately 3000 feet of water main had been washed out by the destruction of the highway between Barre and East Barre, the city caused an order for a new supply of pipe to be sent Saturday evening, Nov. 5, on the earliest resumption of the telephone connection with the outside, the order being placed largely in Alabama, the chief source of the supply of pipe of the size needed in the replacement work.

In the loss of this pipe line between Barre and the Orange Brook reservoir, the municipality sustained one of the most serious blows of the entire flood damage in Barre. This pipe line is placed under the main highway from East Barre to Barre; and this highway had been quite largely destroyed by the Jail branch,

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Where Barre-East Barre Road Once Was. Flood Cut Not Only the Road
Away But Field Beyond. Note Water Pipe Sticking Out of Bank in the
Center.

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which flows alongside of the highway. Beginning at a point in East Barre village, the highway had been torn in successive attacks by the flood. In many places there was not even the semblance of a highway, the river having changed its course over until it occupied the one-time roadbed. Soil was washed clear down to the solid granite foundation, which lies between the granite hills of Millstone and Cobble, the former located on the western side of the river and the latter on the eastern. The carrying out of the highway was accompanied by the displacement of the city water main, so that the pipe was either lost entirely or thrown about in a confused mass with other materials. In order to restore the pipe line it was necessary to build up cribs to hold the pipe at the normal level below the former roadbed and at the proper level below the surface of the roadbed which it was expected would be built.

The force of the water in Jail branch was so strong when the flood was at its height that a granite and wooden dam, part way between Barre and East Barre, which once had been the storage for the city water supply, was cleanly washed away, some of the stone abutments being carried a considerable distance down the stream. The reducing chamber near the dam was endangered but remained intact except for the loss of pipe on either side of it. At the head

BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.



A View of Barre-East Barre Road Taken Near East Barre Village, U. S. Highway Route No. 2 Completely Gone and With It the Barre Water Main From the Orange System.

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of the supply, the dam at the Orange brook reservoir held, but its position was jeopardized by the fall of water at its base. The city water department gave assurance that if the dam was maintained, the city ought to be getting water from the Orange system in a month, or soon after the supply of pipe arrived. And the arrival of the pipe was attendant on the opening up of the Montpelier and Wells River railroad, which was the only feasible way of transportation inasmuch as the pipe was too bulky and heavy for trucking purposes.

Consequently, Barre people watched the progress of reconstruction on the Montpelier and Wells River railroad with grave concern; and there was much rejoicing when word came that the line had been opened up between Wells River and Montpelier, for the branch from Montpelier to Barre previously had been restored for operation purposes. When the main line was opened up November 28, about the first shipment over it was pipe for the Barre water main, which was speedily put in place. And Barre had its normal water supply again on December 7, just five weeks after the supply was lost. Until that time the higher parts of the city had been without water for domestic purposes as the pressure in the remaining part of the city water system was not sufficient to force the water to the highest points. Happily, there was no call for the use of water by

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the fire department during the period of water shortage, else there might have been a serious situation on the higher spots of the city.

An auxiliary supply of the city water system, known as the McFarland and Boyce system, was also put out of commission, the springs, which supply the water, being covered with the flood water and the pumping station being damaged. The McFarland and Boyce system, however, was put back into operation long before the Orange supply. For several weeks the city was given only a partial supply of water from the Bolster system, so-called, located on the heights west of the city. There was a feeling of relief throughout the whole community when the Orange water was once more being supplied.

The municipality of Barre was, naturally the heaviest single loser from the flood, the damage to streets and bridges and to the water systems contributing the greater portion of its aggregate loss of \$475,000, as estimated after a survey by city officials.

In closing this chapter on reconstruction, mention should be made of the invaluable service rendered by several of the large quarry concerns, which contributed not only their own officers and superintendents but their workmen as well. Quarry riggers turned bridge builders; quarrymen became road makers and airport constructors. The quarry owners and their

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men set out with axes and other implements early in the flood emergency and hewed road bridges from the nearest trees as the pioneer settlers of early New England hewed their settlements out of the virgin forests.

When the small streams had been bridged again to permit traffic into Barre, these quarry gangs went over and helped the railroads to lift their bridges back into place, working not only with much speed but also with remarkable precision. Huge derrick sticks from the Barre quarries also were put to use in bridging the Winooski river where the "two-way" bridge between Middlesex and Waterbury had gone out in the flood. One quarry contributed its private fire engine to meet the need. Barre's airport was also largely a product of quarry labor. Taken all in all, the quarry owners and their men contributed inestimable aid in reconstruction work. It should be added, too, that when the city of Barre was figuring up the costs of the flood it got either receipted bills or statements of "no bill against the city" from these same quarries.

CHAPTER XVI.

LOSSES IN BARRE AND STATE.

Learning soon after the recession of the flood that the total damage to the municipality would be large, the city council promptly issued a call for a special city meeting of the voters to act on a proposal to issue bonds or notes in the amount of \$100,000 to repair the streets and sidewalks. The official call for the city meeting was issued on Saturday, Nov. 5, and when the meeting was held on Nov. 17, the citizens readily responded and voted the amount asked for by the city government.

In voting \$100,000 the citizens realized that the act was to have a more far-reaching effect than the mere authority for the use of the money; they well knew it would have a good psychological effect on the entire community, to lead the way, as it were, to a concerted effort by everyone to recover from the effects of the blow each individual or firm had suffered. That the psychological effect was produced was

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shown by the developments. Nowhere was there a disposition to let the losses sustained overmaster the individual or the firm.

Particularly courageous was the attitude of the merchants and other business men. They had already taken steps toward rehabilitation of themselves and their businesses, even from the moment when they were partially submerged. Not a merchant in the city except some of the smaller dealers who happened to have locations on high land but what sustained damage to some extent; and some of them had a considerable percentage of their stocks and fixtures wiped out. The granite manufacturers showed a similar attitude, sturdily going about the task of cleaning out their granite plants and optimistically awaiting the time when they could resume business as soon as water could be restored for industrial purposes.

A rather careful survey showed the losses of Barre merchants to be \$215,515. It was more difficult for the granite manufacturers to estimate their loss.

The total loss sustained in Barre, not counting the losses by public utility companies, was estimated as follows:

Dwellings and personal property contents	\$212,825
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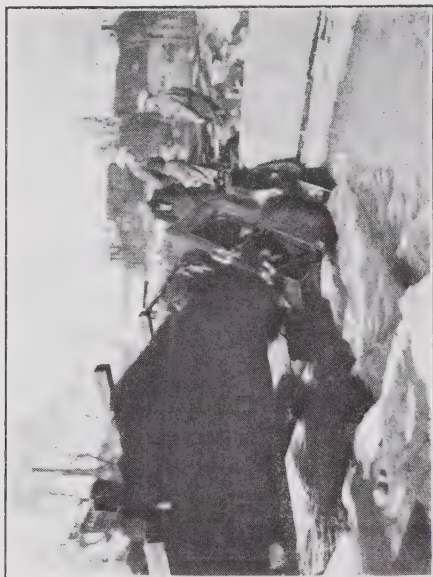
BARRE IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1927.

Business establishments and offices (excepting manufacturing and farming)	380,275
Public buildings damaged	400
Municipal works	475,000
Red Cross report	170,000
	<hr/>
Total.	\$1,238,500

Barre's loss in human life was over one-tenth of the entire casualty list of the state, being seven out of the state total of sixty-three. The destruction of property in Barre was approximately one-twentieth of the entire estimated loss in Vermont. The state loss was estimated at \$25,000,000, of which Barre sustained, at a conservative estimate, \$1,238,500. If the railroad losses were eliminated from the reckoning, Barre probably sustained one-twelfth of the loss of the whole state. With the exception of Montpelier, Barre is thought to have sustained the greatest property loss of any community in the state. In loss of income from suspended industries and businesses, Barre undoubtedly was the hardest hit of any community in the state, inasmuch as the great granite industry was idle for more than a month.

The state survey reported that 690 farms were damaged by the flood and put the damage at \$1,350,156; that highways were dam-

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Automobile Which Took Nose Dive Into Gunner Brook Near Junction With Stevens Branch. Happily the Driver Escaped.

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aged \$2,483,916 and that the damage to bridges was \$4,579,082, there being 1,258 bridges lost. A later survey by federal engineers put the highway and bridges loss at approximately \$300,000 higher than the state survey. Industrial losses to 125 establishments, estimated by the state survey, were \$5,558,800; property losses to cities and villages, \$6,121,151; twelve steam and electric railways, \$3,901,200; the state hospital at Waterbury, \$400,000; telephone and telegraph companies, \$319,050; gas companies, \$30,400. It is probable at this writing that the loss to railways will exceed the above figures, while there may be possible lessening of other classifications. However, it is not thought probable that there will be much divergence from the total of approximately \$25,000,000—the state survey's figures were \$24,743,755—when the final compilation is made.

Taken in its various aspects, the flood of 1927 was the most severe disaster that ever befell Vermont. Likewise, it was the heaviest disaster that Barre has experienced to this time. Yet the community made rapid progress back to normal conditions.

The people were heartened in this work of restoration by the many words of encouragement that came from outside sources and also in large measure by the generous proffers of assistance, both in money and in materials.

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Receding Waters From Barre Visited Montpelier. State Street on Friday.
County Court and Postoffice on the Right.

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Former residents of Barre, who had been rendered extremely anxious for the safety of friends in Barre and for the well-being of the community itself, were very prompt with their offers of assistance; and a considerable sum of money was received by the Barre chapter of the Red Cross to further the relief work among those who were the most unfortunate. Besides money, clothing, food and even utensils were sent into Barre, as well as into other places in the region most seriously affected by the flood. As soon as it became known that road vehicles could enter the district, motor trucks with many products made their difficult transit over the gullied and then muddy roads. It was not an uncommon sight to see a whole train of motor trucks drawn up beside the curb making a temporary stop in Barre while proceeding on to Montpelier, Waterbury and Bolton, where the temporary destitution of the people was more acute than it was in Barre.

The Red Cross (national organization) assisted several hundred families in Barre toward rehabilitation, largely in the line of furnishing household furniture and furnishings and to a certain extent in restoring their homes to normal conditions after the invasion of the water and the consequent visitation of clinging mud. Not all the scars of the flood were removed by Christmas, but by that time Barre was well on

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the road toward its normal current of activity; and when this book was prepared for publishing early in 1928 the sturdy current of life in Barre had been fully resumed. The city could not expect to recover that which was lost because of suspended activity during, and for some time after, the flood; nor could the sorrows of the brief period of the disaster ever be erased. Yet it was a forward-looking Barre, feeling a greater confidence in its future and conscious of a community interest that had been developed by the emergency and the severe tests imposed upon the people. The flood also had taught self-reliance and developed courage. So the flood had not been wholly without beneficial results, sorrowful and disastrous though it had proven to be in most particulars.

Note. The author hereby acknowledges courtesies of the Rock of Ages Magazine and Memorial Merchandising for many of the illustrations used in this book. Also to the Barre Daily Times for use of composing equipment.



