

# The Skagit News

NOVEMBER 16, 1896

## THE HIGHEST WATER KNOWN

The highest water in the Skagit River known to white men occurred last night. On last Thursday a Chinook wind commenced to blow which was accompanied by a warm rain. This rapidly cut away the snow which for several weeks had been creeping down the mountain sides. The wind continued over Friday when the river commenced to rise rapidly. By Saturday afternoon the river was booming and many thought it had reached its highest stage. This however, was not the case as it continued to creep upward during yesterday, and until last night. As the water gradually rose on the levees it became apparent that unless strenuous efforts were made to raise them, the town would be flooded. The experience of former occasion was enough to induce all parties to lend a hand, so that when the fire bell rang out the alarm, not for fire but water, an army of men turned out with shovels and commenced to build a dike on top of the levee, commencing at the hill and working clear down through the city. This work saved the town, and but for it, from ten to eighteen inches of water would have swept over the levees and through the city. Too much credit cannot be given the willing hands which worked all day yesterday and part of the night.

### NOTES.

The big dam at Donnenmiller's went out. Many cattle and horses were drowned in the low lands near Sedro.

The Mt. Vernon bridge stood the test nobly. It is a grand structure.

Mortimer Cook's store at Old Sedro was twisted off its foundation and turned completely around.

No attempt will be made to carry the mail before tomorrow, and then there is doubt if it get through.

H.C. Frizell was a leader in the volunteer work on raising the levees and deserves special mention.

A lot of logs and drift struck the corner of the wharf at Gates street, and knocked the planking off the piles.

The brick building at Hamilton, that was formerly occupied by the Star, was undermined and fell into the river.

P. Gibbons lost over a million feet of logs, a portion of which may be saved by the boom company at the mouth of the river.

The protection pier at the Great Northern bridge was knocked out and that structure was in great danger of being washed away.

A hay stack and barn full of hay passed by the city yesterday from some upriver point. It was estimated that there were 80 tons in the lot.

W.A. Sparks lost 100 cords of bolts that were tied up in the bend below Kemmerich's place. They swept out to sea with a lot of driftwood.

Two big breaks in the levee on the west side occurred. One near F.C. Ward's place, the other at D. Storr's place. The whole

west side including West Mt. Vernon, is a lake.

Six hundred feet of the Great Northern railroad track between the bridge and Burlington were washed out, while over a mile south of the city and between Conway and Stanwood was turned upside down in the adjoining field.

McCliman's barn was undermined and tumbled into the river. At this point a perfect river swept through the break, carrying trees and drift with it. It is stated that McCliman himself was responsible for the break in the levee at this point not being closed. If this is the case he was the principal sufferer.

A big drift tree with roots on it as high as a house caught on the draw of the bridge in the city and swung it around as if it were a toy. Fortunately the bridge was not locked and no damage was done other than to swing the draw off the travelers. Four people were on the draw at the time it swung and it is safe to say they were somewhat frightened by the experience, although they persist in saying that they were not scared. A rope was thrown them after many failures, by J.A. Munch the strong man of the Mt. Vernon Drug Co., and the draw was pulled back into place. The effort to carry a rope across in a boat failed.