

THE BIG BLIZZARD OF
JANUARY 12, 1888, AS
TOLD BY FRONTIER FILES.

January 12th each year brings back the memories of that fatal day thirty-six years ago when many men, women and children lost their lives in the big blizzard. For the benefit of those who care to refresh their memory of the result of the storm, we reprint the account of it as it appeared in the issue of January 19th, 1888:

THE STORM.

Thursday's Blizzard the Worst for Fifteen Years. The Fatalities and Casualties Reach the Thirties.

The storm of Thursday the 12th was the worst known in this section for about fifteen years. We described it to some extent last week and will speak more particularly of its results. But first we will speak of the storm reported by our oldest settlers, the first winter many of them were here.

Messrs. Wisegraver, Wolf, McIlarvie, Brennan, Fallon, McEvony, Hughes, Hayes and several others were here for their first winter. It was a bright, clear January day, warmer and more pleasant than last Thursday morning that the wind suddenly veered to the northwest and blew a perfect hurricane for three days, the thermometer ranging from 30 to 36 below zero. Mr. Fallon told us that it was impossible for him to see any distance at all, and that he made three attempts to reach the well from the house, a distance of not more than 25 feet; that the storm was worse than this one can easily be accounted for because the country was one vast unbroken prairie with no trees, fences, and but here and there scattering settlements to break the force of the wind. Yet the loss of life and property was not so heavy then for the simple reason that there were few people here and not much stock, except on the large ranches.

All day Friday and Saturday we received many reports from the country of deaths and loss of stock, but they were so conflicting that little could be depended upon. Sunday we heard of the first death, that of Joseph Bellar, a Minonite living about ten miles northeast of O'Neill. He got lost near his home and drifted to the farm of Peter Dugan, where he was discovered on Saturday. Mr. Bellar was a man about forty years of age, but recently married and was well and favorably known here. His funeral took place on Tuesday.

The same evening we learned of the death of Thomas Kellar, better known as "Uncle Tommy" brother of J. S. Kellar, Shamrock. He was out for the morning of the storm hauling hay for the cattle and when the storm struck him he had a load on the wagon and started for the house. Just how he was lost will never be known, but it is

probable that he became bewildered and could not find the way with the team and tried to go to the house near where he was hauling the hay, but could not find it. He was found next day after the storm only about thirty rods from the house (that of Mr. Dougherty's, east of Mr. Kellar's). Mr. J. S. Kellar was in O'Neill during the storm and went home Friday. The funeral services took place on Tuesday at the house. Mr. Kellar was one of those exceptionally good men, the friend of all, and universally beloved. He was about seventy years of age, had always lived the life of an earnest, devout Christian, and friends have the consolation in his death that the parting will not be forever. He leaves no family, having never married, but leaves a large circle of friends and relatives to mourn his sad, sudden demise.

Monday Wm. Lell, living near Little postoffice, brought the intelligence that a man by the name of Jacob Kohler, living north of Shamrock, was found on his place. The man had drifted as much as fifteen miles with the storm only to find an icy grave. Mr. Lell also said there was a man by the name of Glaze, near Goose lake, who perished. He went out after hay to burn and lost his way and could not find the house again. He also said the report was in circulation that a child was found frozen to death and that several others were missing and not heard from up to the time he left home.

Another fatal case, that of Mrs. Kruppe, living west of Shamrock, is reported. We could not learn full particulars.

At Inman there was one fatality, Miss Cora Riley, a sister of Mrs. Wilson Hoxie, who lives east of O'Neill, being out and unable to reach any shelter. She started for a neighbor's only a short distance just before the storm and when it came she drifted with the wind. She fought bravely and when found was six or seven miles from home on top of a big sand hill. Soon after the young lady left the house her brother started after her, but got lost himself and it was several hours before he reached a place of safety. The remains were found on Sunday. Miss Riley was about twenty-two years of age, a young lady held in high esteem by friends and acquaintances and her loss is deeply mourned.

Russel Carey, living near Middle Branch, was another victim. He was at the mill at that place and left during the storm for home, but failed to reach there, although found near it.

The saddest case to hear of yet is that of the mother-in-law of Harry Faust, of Stuart, and his two little children, aged eleven months and five years respectively. Mrs. Chapman and the children were coming to Stuart the morning of the storm in a sleigh and when it began to blow were away from the house, and they perished in the cold. They were brought to town just as found and an eye witness informs us that it was a most heart-rending scene. The funeral took place Tuesday. To the bereaved father and mother The Frontier extends its heartfelt sympathy.

At or near Dustin a man by the name of Mattis was found frozen to death. Another case is reported there, but we could not learn particulars or names.

We learn of a death at Stony Butte, Knox county, of a widow lady who went out to take care of her stock and was lost. The north and northeast part of the county was very fortunate, in that no lives were reported lost in that locality and the loss of stock is not as large as in other parts of the county. In the central and southern and southwestern part of the county the loss of stock is heavy, many losing all, or nearly so.

We have quite a list of causalities and narrow escapes that are distressing to say the least. A Mrs. Bikes, living north of town about fifteen miles, went out in the storm to get in their cattle, but became lost and drifted with the storm. She brought up at the barn of James Mullen, where her cries were heard by the men and she was brought to the house. Her shoes were lost and feet and limbs badly

frozen. The latest reports from her are to the effect that she is improving.

The driver on the Cummingsville stage line, John Summerville, was badly frozen below the knees and the team was frozen to death. He was within a mile or two of Shamrock when the storm struck him and he drove to a point as he thought within a quarter or half a mile of the post-office, when the team refused to go farther. Unhitching them he took the mail sack and started to find the office, but missed it and drifted down to the river and brought up at the sheep sheds of Hoksoms near the bridge on the line just south of J. S. Kellar's. Here he buried himself as best he could and remained until next day when he was found. The latest reports from him are to the effect that he is recovering and will not lose more than his toes perhaps. The team was the property of C. A. Moore, proprietor of the mail route.

A man by the name of Crook in the South Fork country was out with his team and becoming lost drifted with the storm. The man found shelter, but we understand that the team was frozen.

Perhaps the most remarkable case of preservation was that of Miss Etta Shattuck, a young lady eighteen years old who had been teaching school in district No. 141, nine miles southwest of O'Neill. She was not teaching that day, having recently closed her school, but had gone to the home of J. M. Parkins to get her order signed. Attending to her errand she started for her boarding house when the storm came up and she soon got lost, wandering for some time until she found a friendly hay stack, into which she worked her way and layed down determined to make the best of it. She remained in the hay stack 74 hours before being found, from Thursday to Sunday, conscious all the time of her surroundings and yet not able to extricate herself. She sung and prayed to keep up her courage. A coyote came about the stack and howled and a friendly mouse nibbled her wrist, of which she was conscious but could not hinder. When found her limbs were frozen to her knees and fears are entertained that she will lose her feet or toes.

Jeff Bowles, the hired man of J. C. Smith, six miles south, was lost and stayed all night in a hay stack. His feet and legs badly frozen, but he is getting along alright now. Mr. Smith lost nearly all of his herd of sixty cattle.

M. C. McNichols is a heavy loser of stock, his entire herd of 160 had, besides 20 belonging to P. McCoy and 2 of Dr. Shore's being swept away and so far as heard from only one or two being found. Mike also lost most of his horses. He and his little brother were out with the cattle in the morning, having driven them to the farthest stacks about two miles from the house, they were hardly out on the feeding grounds when the storm came up and after a few futile attempts to drive them back to the sheds, finding the same impossible started for the house and it was four hours before they reached it and then only by a miracle almost. Mike's loss is at least \$6,000, but he is thankful to save his own life and that of his little brother.

W. D. Mathews and Clyde King were coming from Shamrock on the day of the storm and just as they passed Mr. Doran's place two miles south of Dry Creek the storm struck them and they traveled three miles bringing up at Wm. Ryan's place. They had a very hard time to find the place and Doc says if it had not been for Clyde they would have perished. He got out and walked ahead of the team in the road, keeping it by means of its being harder than the outside. By accident they found the corral of Ryans and driving into it soon found the barn. John O'Neill, who lives there, soon came to the barn for hay, when they went to the house with him remaining all night.

R. B. and C. Graham, of the South Fork, lost almost their entire herd of 300 head of cattle. They thought at first that one of their hands, a Mr. Bell, was frozen to death, but he was found in a hay stack.

Jas. Doran, living south of Dry Creek two miles, lost the greater part of his herd, as did also a number of others whose names we did not learn.

H. W. McClure lost about thirty-five head of cattle, Charlie Gardner about seven, but Mr. Lehmer lost none.

Reports came in from all parts or persons who had narrow escapes and harrowing experiences, but it will all be forgotten, to a degree at least, when fine weather sets in again.

The fact of the matter is that it is no worse here than many other places, and the loss of life and property in Dakota at least is far ahead of any other state. That the damage to our county will be inconsiderable amount it is useless to deny, yet we have every faith that she will rally and come out brighter and better in a few years than ever before. It will have the effect to make people more careful to husband their resources in a manner to bring them better returns on less amounts invested and to be more careful of what is left them. Then it is hardly possible that we shall have another such storm for years to come.

The loss of property, though, can not be compared to that of human life, and words fail to express the deep sorrow and grief that is upon the people of Holt county because of the direful effects of the storm.

Frank Skinner, an employe of the F. E. and M. V. R. R. company, started from Stuart the morning of the storm and was eight miles from town when the storm came up. Turning his back to the wind he drifted until he brought up at a barn near Stuart, where he managed to keep warm until morning. He was not badly frozen, but had a fearful experience.

Maggie Skirving, aged fourteen, daughter of James Skirving, and Mrs. Campbell, a lady about thirty, started from Stuart for Dustin Thursday morning and became lost in the storm. They found an empty house and stayed in it all night. Miss Skirving was not much frozen, the other lady's feet be-

ing frozen but not seriously.

Two men by the name of Sisley and Bowman were caught out while hauling hay and crawled into a hay stack. They were not much frozen.

One man near Stuart was out in his shirt sleeves and only succeeded in reaching his house after much hard work.

Joseph Leatherman, W. Mosir and Chas. Gill, of Grand Rapids, were out in the storm and had a narrow escape.

Reports of heavy loss of stock and of several missing parties reach us from Stuart, and the fatalities may possibly reach twenty in the county.

The following additional account of deaths and causalities will appear in this week's issue of the Ewing Item:

An hour or two before the wind changed several parties living near Goose Lake, left Ewing for home. They made the sand hills about seven miles west of town just as the storm struck them in full fury. Here is a stretch of country of five or six miles without a house in sight. There were several men and teams in the party, and a Mrs. Joe Miller and two children. When overtaken by the storm the team that carried the woman and children were tied to the preceding wagon, but became frightened and broke loose, with this the teams became separated and the party likewise, for it was impossible for them to find one another after getting three rods apart. All night and until nine o'clock the next morning they were out on the prairie before assistance came to their relief, and when it did the little boy, about twelve years of age, was frozen to death, and the mother's feet were so badly frozen that it is said that they may have to be amputated. The other child—a little girl—escaped without being frozen. Sunday morning the boy was brought to Ewing to be laid out and his remains now lie at Mr. French's undertaking rooms waiting relatives form Columbus. The mother is being tenderly cared for at the farm of W. McKee, nine miles southwest of this place. The boy's name was Frank Metz. He was his mother's child by her first husband.

Mr. J. Mathewson, who was one of this party, when separated from the others after wandering around for some time was brought up at Cache Creek by his team. Here he unhitched his team, turned them loose and struck out alone. He finally found himself at the house of a Mr. Scharf, about three miles from his own home. Though very cold he was not much frozen.

Mrs. Henry Stewart, of Deloit precinct, was found Friday morning within three quarters of a mile of her home frozen to death. She had gone to meet her husband who was after a load of hay, but became blinded, lost her way and perished. Mr. Stewart, when the storm got bad, unhitched his team, crawled into his load of hay and stayed there until the next day. When he arrived at home he found the mother missing and the children crying. He thereupon instituted a search with the above result.

A sixteen-year-old boy, by the name of Gibson, on the South Fork, had gone to the school house on horse back after his two sisters. On their way back they crawled into a stack of hay nearby which afforded them comfortable quarters. But the young man's horse some way got loose and while trying to catch it, got lost and was frozen to death. The two sisters who remained in the stack escaped being frozen.

An old gentleman by the name of B. F. Gerry, living near Venus post-office, was several miles away from home when the storm began. Being anxious about things at home he made an attempt to reach there, but perished in the attempt.

90 YEARS OLD JANUARY TENTH.
 (Atkinson Graphic)
 "Thursday, January 10th was the 90th birthday of Mrs. Elizabeth Mack, who has been confined to her bed at the home of her son, E. J. Mack, most of the time since an attack of "flu" last winter. Mrs. Mack was unusually active for one of her years and had made many friends during her frequent visits here who regret her illness."

Mrs. Mack is the mother of Mrs. W. J. Gray, living a short distance northwest of O'Neill.

We Have Carbon Paper For Sale.

Public Sale

Having decided to quit farming I will hold a clan-up sale at my place one-half mile north and 1 mile west of Inman, 7 miles west of Page, and 4 miles east and 3 miles south of O'Neill, (known as the A. D. Pond farm) on

Tuesday, Jan. 22nd

7 Head of Horses
17 Head of Cattle
38 Head of Hogs
Farm Machinery, Etc.

2 Fat Sheep; 100 Hens, 150 bushels Ear Corn, Yellow; Early sweet seed corn; some pop-corn; some beans. Household Goods, Etc.

FREE LUNCH AT NOON. BRING YOUR CUPS.
 SALE STARTS AFTER LUNCH. TERMS—NINE MONTHS.

M. V. LEWIS, Owner

COL. G. P. COLMAN, Aucr. GEO. W. DAVIES, Clerk.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1923

Number of Books in Library	33,109
No. of books donated	1066
No. of books mended	692
Books damaged and not settled for	6
Books borrowed and not returned	5
No. of readers accumulated	1,910
Number of Readers added	104
No. on black list	7
Circulation	7,340
Adult circulation	4,214
Juvenile circulation	3,126
Overdue notices mailed	167
Fines not paid	\$15.00

Receipts:

Fines collected for the year	\$37.68
Cash on hand, January 1, 1923	1.90
Expenses For Year 1923:	
Box rent	\$3.00
Books purchased	11.90
Incidentals	17.00
Cash on hand, Jan. 1, 1924	\$7.66

MARY McLAUGHLIN,
 Librarian.
THAT MORNING LAMENESS.

NEB. LEGISLATIVE LEAGUE TO MEET IN OMAHA.

The annual banquet of the Nebraska Legislative League will be held at the Fontenelle Hotel, Omaha, on February 5, 1924. All present members or past members of the House or Senate or a member of the constitutional conventions are eligible to attend this banquet. Plates \$1.50 each. Please notify Hon. Tom B. Dysart, president of said League if you will attend so that he can arrange for all. A very elaborate program is being arranged so do not miss this rare treat, and the renewing of old acquaintances once more.

Very truly yours,
 B. E. STURDEVANT.
 By order of committee.

SUPERVISORS' PROCEEDINGS.
 (Continued from last page)

To the honorable board of supervisors of Holt county, Nebraska:

The undersigned, Western Securities Company, a corporation, is now owner and holder of the following claims filed by the Western Bridge and Construction Company against Holt county, to-wit: Claim filed November 16th, 1922, in the sum of \$22,510.48, and which said claim was duly allowed on the 16th day of November, 1922, by this honorable board, and also claim filed by the said Western Bridge and Construction Company on the 30th day of August, 1923, in the sum of \$6,772.92, and which said claim was on the 30th day of August, 1923, duly allowed by this honorable board and which said claims are now wholly unpaid. The said Western Securities Company does hereby request and demand that you include in your annual estimate for the year of 1924 and levy taxes in an amount sufficient to pay said claims against the county of Holt, together with interest thereon from the date of said allowance, not exceeding in the aggregate the amount limited by law for such estimate and levy.

And you are further notified that unless you comply with this demand that the said Western Securities Company will apply to the District court of Holt county Nebraska, for a writ of mandamus compelling you to perform your official duty in that regard.

Dated the 8th day of January, A. D., 1924.

(Continued.)

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C. & N. W. Ry C. St. P., & O. Ry.

What the Railroads Accomplished in 1923 Under the Transportation Act

THEY carried the largest traffic in history without transportation difficulties and with virtually no car shortage.

THEY freight cars and nearly 4,000 new locomotives. THEY placed in service nearly 200,000 new.

THEY expended for equipment and other facilities, \$1,076,000,000, and paid as taxes over \$300,000,000.

THEY expended for fuel, materials and supplies used in current operation and maintenance almost \$1,800,000,000, and paid their employes average annual wages equal to almost double the amount of the average annual wages paid in 1915.

Purchase of supplies and materials, taxes, interest and rentals 95 per cent (estimated) of the gross income received from transportation.

THEIR efficiency helped all business and all credit by making turn-overs more rapid.

THE Transportation Act provides that the railroads may earn 5% return. None of the different groups did so in 1923, the average for all Class 1 roads being 5.11%, while the North Western Region group earned less than 4%.

M. W. Finley
 President

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