

THE DRAINAGE QUESTION.

Opinions of Tax Payers on a Pertinent Subject.

CITY DRAINAGE IS INADEQUATE.

A Long Suffering Public Implores Relief From Mud Holes, Frog Ponds and Wash-Outs.—Question Referred to the City Administration.

The proper and economical drainage of Norfolk is a question that has been before the people for many years past. When there were but a few interested the powers that be have been able to pass it by with little or no attention, but with the private work that has been done in the way of grading and drainage it has assumed a phase that claims the attention of a large number, if not a majority, of the property owners of the city. It is conceded that the original trouble lies with the situation on Thirteenth street, where the water from the hills north and west of the residence portion gathers on the occasion of every heavy rain and forms a freshet that damages public and private property inestimably. Particular attention has been drawn to the situation by the heavy rains of this spring and summer. THE NEWS has frequently and persistently insisted that the situation is one demanding the unprejudiced and careful attention of the city officials, and now that so many have been aroused to see it likewise the columns of the paper are reopened to a discussion of the question with the hope that there will be no let up until conditions are materially changed. It may be said for the present administration that an effort was made last year to solve the Thirteenth street drainage question, but the storms of the season have proven that such improvement was totally inadequate, and the situation must be handled on a much broader scope. Not only has the work done proven inadequate but the improvements of private owners have made the question of much broader import so that every person owning property east of Thirteenth and south of Main has become interested.

As offering less excuse for the condition, the natural advantage for drainage of the land on which Norfolk is located, is pointed out. It has a beautiful natural slope from the city limits on the west to the Northfork on the east and from the northern portion of the corporation to the Elkhorn on the south. In its primitive state the land was effectually drained, the surplus waters finding their way to the natural water channels, through and across fields, doing little or no damage; but civilization has interfered with nature's plans and obstructed the natural flow of water until the question of restoring or improving natural conditions is brought to the attention of residents with pertinency each year. A competent engineer could so direct the work of restoring natural conditions that the situation would no longer be cause for worry. The natural channels should be reopened or others substituted and enough should be kept in condition that the surplus water might be distributed and do no further harm. Many of the roadside ditches that would naturally carry off a large portion of the water are neglected and permitted to grow weeds until it would be impossible for them to carry even a small amount of muddy water without clogging and throwing the flood into the road.

The main street situation, while one of the most annoying, it would seem could be the most easily handled. Because of its having been filled and graded, the water that bothers does not flow in and only that which falls on the street or flows off the sidewalks and buildings needs attention. This, it would appear, could be effectually drained off through the city sewer if connections with it were made.

In the early part of this season a committee on the beautifying of the city, appointed by the Commercial Club, offered prizes for the best kept lawns, gardens, back yards, etc., in the city, with the hope that the standard of beauty throughout the resident portion might be raised. In their work of investigation, the attention of the committee was called to the frightful condition of streets and alleys, due to poor drainage, or no drainage at all. Stagnant pools covered with green scum, puddles of sticky mud from which arise vociferous odors and dangerous holes gutted by rushing water on side streets, are not only not infrequent but exceedingly common sights in Norfolk today.

Believing that this state of affairs was as evil and disgrace to the community, the committee has asked THE NEWS to feel the public pulse in regard to the matter and toward this end interviews with a few of the business men and property owners of the city have been secured.

Not all, but nearly every person approached, expressed the opinion that something ought to be done immediately, both with the business part of Main street and the west end of the town. A few favor paving, many would put in a curb, others want catch basins put in the sewer, and nearly all feel that Corporation Gulch should be given careful attention and a permanent remedy.

Rev. W. J. Turner is chairman of the committee and the others members are:

G. E. Moore, John R. Hays, C. C. Gow, D. J. Koenigstein, Mrs. A. J. Durland, Mrs. C. H. Reynolds, Mrs. C. E. Greene, Mrs. John R. Hays and Miss Mason.

The following will show what some of the people think about it:

R. R. Smith: Alley-ways are bad. Strongly favor a curb.

R. B. Weller: Would gutter Main street and fix the gulch.

E. H. Tracy: Presume funds are being used, but not to best advantage.

J. Baum: Ought to have a curb. Would be cheaper than present system.

F. A. Beeler: Would like to see the street paved. Sewage ought to be perfected.

A. Wilde: Streets and sidewalks are bad but there is no money to do anything with.

J. B. Maylord: The streets ought to be curbed by all means. City can't afford to pave.

E. P. Weatherby: It is a disgrace to the town. Something ought to be done immediately.

Asa K. Leonard: Condition is frightful. Frog ponds in front and rear of store are unbearable.

O. J. Johnson: In some places the situation is critical. Some sort of drainage is badly needed.

A. Degner: If possible would like to see Main street curbed, but treasury doesn't warrant such action.

P. J. Fuesler: Grade streets up. No need of curb or paving. City ought to spend \$500 on the gulch and fix it.

Rob't Utter: Something certainly should be done. Would favor having a competent engineer lay out a system.

A. H. Kiesau: Would like to know where the poll tax goes. Condition at present is abominable. Demands action.

G. B. Salter: A careful study of the situation should be made by a competent engineer and remedy made accordingly.

T. E. Odiorne: Main street should be guttered in some way, inexpensively. The gulch will have to be fixed and fixed right.

O. Uhle: The city can't stop the rains and if it overflows in the gulch on account of rains, that is the lookout of the people effected.

S. G. Mayer: Something ought to be done, both with gulch and business portion. Would favor paving between tracks and First street.

J. W. Humphrey: Feels that the wretched condition of drainage ought not to exist. Little grading and work with a plow would help matters.

C. H. Johnson: Situation disgraceful. Little common sense in opening up natural gutters down Main street. Old ditch in west end should be opened.

Frank Davenport: Would have an engineer figure out remedy for gulch and fix it. A little money spent right would be better than the present system.

W. J. Gow: Gulch is the big problem, and should be remedied permanently. Main street should be curbed. Kearney is a town which has done this with success.

C. P. Parish: With slimy slough both in front and rear of store feels very strongly on the subject. Favor ordinance requiring permanent walks and curb. Wonders what a street commissioner is for.

J. Durland: Would like to know whether or not Norfolk is up to other cities of its size in this regard. Pool of mud in front of store is absolutely unhealthful, to say nothing of the disagreeable feature.

G. A. Luikart: Would favor a curbing along Main street or paving between tracks and First street. West end should be remedied. Water could be dammed with piles and run out slow enough to be carried away.

John R. Hays: The water in the west end has been turned from its natural course upon the property of residents and something should unquestionably be done. It is radically wrong and people are not compelled to stand it.

L. C. Mittelstadt: The situation is bad. Course now runs through lumber yard and last year lost over \$1000. Had to completely repave yard. Some day lime will set fire to buildings and city will hear from insurance companies.

Dr. A. Bear: Remedy very simple. Stop hauling dirt into gutters and keep them open. Let every avenue north of Main carry its own water, instead of bringing it down to Norfolk avenue and then east. Would have nice street if it was curbed.

C. S. Hayes: Main street is a disgrace to any city of this size. Should be curbed by popular subscription if by no other way. Enough money has already been expended to pave it. The gulch situation is very bad and ought by all means to be fixed.

O. D. Jenkins: There is no drainage system here except what nature laid out. Be all right if man had not interfered. Sewage the only real remedy, grading might help. Has three foot ditch in front of residence on Ninth street, which threatens disaster.

G. E. Moore: With germs of disease in stagnant pools all over the city, it would seem that something ought to be done. There are actually puddles with green scum growing over them in the heart of the business portion of the city. Norfolk could have and ought to have a good drainage system.

P. F. Bell: There are two things that a town must have before it will ever pass beyond the village stage. They are a sewage system and paved streets. There can never be a town

until waste matter and overflows are drained off. With paved streets comes an awakening of business in all cities of this class.

N. A. Rainbolt: The dilatory manner in which Norfolk has not been drained, does not bestow upon the municipality any superabundance of credit. The problem has become dormant, but should be revived, agitated, carefully considered and properly solved at an early date. The unwholesome conditions demand attention. The fact is this, town should have been drained long ago.

C. A. Alexander, manager of the Dexter cold storage: The drainage question is very pertinent to us as will be known when it is understood that we have pumped about 1,000 barrels of water from our basement since the heavy rains began. It did no material damage but we were compelled to keep the pump going to prevent it. We were compelled to ship out 500 cases of eggs which would ordinarily have been kept in storage a month or more longer. The conditions would be improved here if the city would put in a sluice connecting culverts under the Union Pacific and Elkhorn tracks and the beautiful slope to the river east of the tracks would do the rest if the ditches were cleared of weeds. Not only would this relieve the situation as far as the cold storage is concerned, but I am confident it would drain all this section of the city south of Main and east of Thirteenth street. The water must go its natural course and the city should see to it that such course is kept open.

THURSDAY TIDINGS.
W. H. Bucholz is in Madison today. Carl Davenport went to Stanton today. S. G. Napper is home from a trip to Illinois.

M. C. Hazen went to Madison this morning.

F. A. Beeler is suffering from a sprained knee.

Mrs. Mary Davenport is visiting her son in Sioux City.

J. Koenigstein is in Kentucky, where his brother is very sick.

Beulah chapter, O. E. S., will meet tonight in regular session.

Mrs. M. Wheeler and children have returned from Hot Springs.

Mrs. D. O. Stone of Hawarden, Ia., is visiting Mrs. C. H. Brake.

W. Z. King came up from Omaha yesterday to visit his family.

H. Sonnenschein has bought the livery stable on North Third street.

Miss Mamie McNeill has accepted a position at the Johnson dry goods store.

Dr. C. A. McKim has returned from Salina, Kan., where he visited his mother.

While practicing at the bat yesterday, Byers received a painful jolt on the left eye.

In the Randolph-Creighton ball game yesterday, Creighton won by a score of 5 to 4.

Mr. and Mrs. Cornell, on South Fourth street, are the parents of a boy baby-born this morning.

The choir of the Trinity church enjoyed a picnic outing at Edgewater yesterday afternoon.

The old Schwenk house, recently bought by I. M. Macy, will be moved to a lot near the Plano yards.

A telegram from W. O. Hall at Hastings states that he won a four-heat race yesterday with Jessie Wilkes, time 2:24 1/2.

Business men are urged to be present at the meeting at the city hall tomorrow evening, to discuss plans for the September fair.

F. D. Jenkins and wife of Albia, Iowa, arrived in the city yesterday to visit at the home of E. J. Rix. Mr. Jenkins is a brother of Mrs. Rix.

Mrs. Lobnow and daughter, Antonia, who have been visiting Mrs. W. O. Ahlmann for the past three weeks, returned to their home in Omaha this morning.

Tracy & Durland sold a half section of land six miles north of Pierce, Tuesday, to B. Fulbert, at \$30. per acre. L. R. Hurdett was the agent at Pierce.

The republican congressional committee held a meeting at the Pacific hotel in this city Tuesday night. Reports indicate that there will be a landslide to McCarthy this fall.

THE NEWS keeps its job department up-to-date with the latest faces of type and does its work in approved style.

Notice.
Notice is hereby given that at a public sale for delinquent taxes held by the treasurer of Madison county, state of Nebraska, on the 5th day of November, A. D. 1902, the following described real estate situated in Madison county, Nebraska, to-wit:

Lot seven in block one of Bear's Addition to the town of Norfolk, in said county of Madison, which was taxed during the years 1899, 1900 and 1901, and in the name of C. B. Burrows.

The right to redeem said described real estate from said sale for taxes will expire on the 6th day of November, 1902, of which all persons interested will take due notice.

N. A. RAINBOLT,
Owner of certificate.

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The east one-quarter of the west 18 feet of the south 100 feet of lot 11, block 5 in the original town of Norfolk, in said county of Madison, taxed for the years 1899, 1900 and 1901 in the name of W. Gereke.

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Lot one, two and three (1, 2 and 3) and the north seventy-five feet of lot four, (4) all in block one, (1) of Bear's Addition to the town of Norfolk, in said county of Madison, which said described premises were taxed during the years 1899 and 1900 and in the name of G. W. Gillilan, and in the year 1901 it was taxed to and in the name of G. W. Gillilan.

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Lot two, block sixteen of Western Town Lot Company's Addition to Norfolk Junction in said county of Madison, which said described real estate was taxed during the years 1899, 1900 and 1901 and in the name of E. M. Brooks.

The right to redeem said lot from said

sale for taxes will expire on the 6th day of November, A. D. 1902, of which all persons interested will take due notice.

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Lot one, block one, (1) of the original town of Norfolk, in said county of Madison, taxed in the years 1899, 1900 and 1901 to C. B. Burrows.

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Another Line of Comparisons.

(Issued Under Authority of the Railroads of Nebraska.)

In our former articles we have made comparisons showing the relative assessment of railroad property with other property in the state of Nebraska. We will continue to make these comparisons. They will show that the railroads have paid proportionately more taxes than any other interest in the state, but to complete the line of comparisons, it will be necessary for us to show that the railroads of Nebraska have paid as much or more than other roads in the Trans-Mississippi states.

No matter how taxes against railroads are collected, whether by excise or direct taxation, the general average shows practically the same. With the railroads it is immaterial to them what the assessed valuation of their property should be so long as they are not required to pay an undue amount per mile to meet the requirements of taxation, and not in unfair proportion to other property.

From the Inter-State Commerce Commission report for 1900, we find that there were 83,175 miles of railroad lying west of the Mississippi river. These railroads paid \$14,361,109 for taxes, which makes an average of \$171.45 per mile. These figures include every state and territory west of the Mississippi river, excepting the Indian Territory, where the tax on railroads, being but \$10.86, is so low that we do not include the sum in our estimates. If we did it would make the foregoing amount per mile a few dollars less.

In this territory the average net earnings of all the railroads amounted to \$2,784 per mile.

In determining the value of the railroad property there are several essentials that must be considered.

First: The volume of business that can be given a railroad.

Second: The difficulties of operation.

Third: The tariffs allowed to be charged.

These three features must be taken into conjunction in any estimate that should be made regarding the value of the railroad property as an investment.

A comparison of the railroads of Nebraska with those of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland would be misleading unless these elements were taken into consideration. In these states the railroads were furnished tonnage that enabled them to handle 1,900,578 tons of freight and 202,902 passengers for each mile of railroad, while in this Trans-Mississippi country, the railroads were furnished but 378,300

tons per mile and but 49,314 passengers as reported in 1900.

A comparison of Nebraska railroads with those of Massachusetts would be senseless, because in Nebraska there are 53.31 miles of railroad to serve each 10,000 people, while in Massachusetts there are but 7.55 for the same number; or, with New Jersey, which has 29.99 miles of railroad to each 100 square miles of territory, while Nebraska has but 7.4. However, in the comparisons we will select sections of railroad in Nebraska which have a large business, and we will pick out some eastern roads that handles approximately the like character and volume of business and make the comparison with those roads, showing the taxes that they pay and the tax that is paid here. It will be found that in those instances the roads of Nebraska pay relatively higher taxes than they should be called upon to do.

The critics who make a comparison of the tax per mile charged in the District of Columbia, with that charged on western railroads, evidently intend to deceive, from the fact that the city of Washington has outgrown the District of Columbia, and the 52 miles of railroad which are reported in that district are practically all city property. A comparison of a Nebraska railroad with the New York Central, a four-track railroad with \$7,000,000 worth of equipment alone, would not be fair, but we will give the people of Nebraska the details of taxation in these other states, for the purpose of letting them make their own conclusions and judge whether the railroads in Nebraska are paying their just share of tax, when compared with other railroads.

There are but a few states in the Union in which the railroads pay 15.4 per cent of the taxes paid while in the territory west of the Mississippi the railroads in Nebraska pay more per mile than sixteen of the other states. Three mining states oblige the railroads to pay more than they do in Nebraska, but it is a well known fact that tax levies in mining counties are much higher than in any other localities in the United States.

Our statement will show what the railroads pay to each county the average rate per mile, and from these you will be able to judge whether the people are being treated fairly in this matter.

There is no necessity to conceal anything on the part of the railroads, as they have borne and bear their just share of the taxes.

In the Year 1900

Average Tax per mile on Railroads West of Mississippi River, \$171.45.

Tax per mile Paid in Nebraska, \$198.86.

Average Net Earnings Railroads West of Mississippi River, \$2,784.

Average Net Earnings Nebraska Railroads, \$1,883.

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The south east quarter of the south west quarter of section 33, township 24, north, range 1, W. 6th p. m. taxed in 1899 to A. J. Huebner and in 1900 and 1901 to A. C. Powell, and the west half of the south east quarter of section 33, township 24, north, range 1, W. 6th p. m. taxed in 1899, 1900 and 1901 to A. C. Powell.

The right to redeem said described real estate from said sale for taxes will expire on the 6th day of November, 1902, of which those interested will take due notice.

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S. M. Wagers. Also lot seventeen, of block eight in said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed to M. D. Gillett. Also lot eight and eighteen, block nine of said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed in name of R. W. Saley.

Also lot nine, block nine of said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed to J. C. Sheehy. Also lot 10, block 9 of said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed to I. Kulokopsky. Also lots 14 and 15 of block 9 of said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed to J. A. Foley. Also lot 16, block 9 of said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed to D. Patterson. Also lot 22, block 9 of said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed to W. S. Fox. Also lot 3, block 10 of said Riverside Park Addition to Norfolk, taxed to W. W. Campbell. The right to redeem said real estate or any part thereof from said sale for taxes will expire on the 6th day of November, 1902, of which all persons interested will take due notice.

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