

RIVER STAGES AND FLOODS FOR AUGUST 1945

By C. R. JORDAN

Rainfall was spotty during August with more than three times the normal on the Texas Gulf Coast, in northern Utah, and in northern Nevada. Less than half the normal amount fell in the Northwest, the Southwest, the east-central Plains, and over a broad area between the middle Gulf and New England.

There was no general flooding during the month but damaging local floods resulted from excessive rainfall at scattered points throughout the country. There was some very light overflow at a few points along rivers in North Carolina, Louisiana, West Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana. The St. Francis River fell below flood stage at St. Francis, Ark., on August 13, the first time that the stream was below flood stage at this point since March 13, 1945.

Some damage was reported from local flooding of small creeks in the Chester, Pa.-Wilmington, Del., area on August 1.

Flash floods were reported in West Virginia, two of which were rather severe. One occurred during the early hours of August 2 in the creeks flowing into the Kanawha River between Montgomery and Charleston. The main stream did not go out of its banks. Two lives were lost as a result of the flood and considerable damage was done to homes, roads, bridges, and crops in the area. Another but somewhat less severe flood occurred in the vicinity of Ripley, W. Va., during the same period. The second storm occurred on August 23 in the West Fork River Basin. Rainfall of over 5 inches in 20 hours was recorded at Tygart Dam, W. Va. The most severe flooding was reported in the Elk Creek Valley at Clarksburg, W. Va.

The following report of a severe electrical storm was received from the Weather Bureau Office, Davenport, Iowa:

An exceptionally severe electrical storm, attended by rainfall in an amount of 4.01 inches, struck Clinton, Iowa, and much of Clinton County between midnight and 3 a. m., August 14, 1945.

Numerous creeks overflowed, carrying trees, stumps, fences, hog troughs, etc. Much damage was caused to the footings and approaches of the new Mill Creek Bridge, and two bridges in the city were washed out. Mud, sand, and gravel in heavy deposits covered streets and sidewalks in all parts of the city. Several inches of mud and sand were deposited on the floors of the cabins in the Shady Haven Camp. Water several inches deep covered the floors of many lowland homes. Subways were blocked to traffic by water. Many sections of pavements were washed out.

Although creeks overflowed their banks, there were no flood stages at regular river-gaging stations on the Mississippi and other main streams. Losses, therefore, were the result of the storm and other local overflows, but they were of such proportions as are usually associated with true river floods. Tangible property destroyed or damaged and the costs for cleaning up mud, sand, etc., amounted to a loss of approximately \$522,000, mostly in the city of Clinton. Field and garden crops lost were estimated at \$13,000. Livestock and movable farm equipment lost amounted to \$500.

Intense local mountain thundershowers did considerable damage near Tucson and in and near Clifton, Ariz., during the month.

A severe hailstorm passed over the north portion of Salt Lake City, Utah, on Sunday evening, August 19, 1945, followed by heavy flood damage in the City Cemetery, Lindsay Gardens, and Memory Grove areas. Not since the destructive earth washes of July 10, 1930, be-

tween Centerville and Farmington, when the state highway in Davis County was filled with rocks and debris over 8 feet deep, has so much damage resulted from a single storm in the State of Utah. The following report of the flood damage was received from Mr. G. K. Greening, Official in Charge, Weather Bureau Office, Salt Lake City, Utah:

The storm struck Black Rock about 9:15 p. m., August 19; the Salt Lake City Airport at 10:25 p. m.; 282 North Main Street at 10:27 p. m.; and Hoytsville at about 11:30 p. m. The hail ended at 10:48 p. m., at the Salt Lake City Airport Station, continuing over a period of 23 minutes.

Following on the heels of the hailstorm which damaged property to the extent of at least \$100,000, flood water damage amounting to approximately \$400,000 occurred in three separate areas of Salt Lake City; namely, Memory Grove, Lindsay Gardens, and City Cemetery. The catchment areas which were the sources of the floods are unusually small for such heavy damage. Perry's Hollow drains an area of 0.59 square mile and Valley View Canyon, 0.27 square mile.

Hardest hit sections of the city were hundreds of homes on the Avenues; M Street South to 1st Avenue; N, O, and P Streets between 3rd and 4th Avenues; 10th Avenue and I Street; and the City Cemetery. Basement-stored household effects in many homes were a complete loss, garages were mud-filled, and lawns were littered with debris and rubble. Gravestones were toppled over in City Cemetery, and tons of stones and debris were tossed over the ground.

Hoytsville, Utah, had been visited by a destructive local flood that came down Spring Canyon on August 6, from which the village was beginning to recover. Heavy damage occurred again following a torrential downpour that began at 11:30 p. m., on August 19, causing approximately \$30,000 damage in that vicinity.

FLOOD STAGE REPORT FOR AUGUST 1945

[All dates in August unless otherwise indicated]

River and station	Flood stage	Above flood stages— dates		Crest ¹	
		From—	To—	Stage	Date
ATLANTIC SLOPE DRAINAGE					
Roanoke: Williamston, N. C.	Feet 10	July 31	5	Feet 10.3	1
Tar: Greenville, N. C.	13	1	3	14.4	2
Neuse:					
Smithfield, N. C.	13	22	22	14.5	22
Goldsboro, N. C.	14	6	10	15.3	8-9
Kinston, N. C.	14	23	28	15.9	25
Cape Fear: Lock No. 3, Elizabethtown, N. C.	20	26	30	14.6	28
20	22	23	20.7	23	
EAST GULF OF MEXICO DRAINAGE					
Pearl: Pearl River, La.	12	July 31	2	12.6	1
MISSISSIPPI SYSTEM					
<i>Ohio basin</i>					
West Fork: Clarksburg, W. Va.	5	24	25	7.4	24
Scioto:					
Larue, Ohio.	11	15	16	13.2	15
Prospect, Ohio.	10	17	17	10.1	17
West Fork: Edwardsport, Ind.	12	16	17	13.2	16
<i>Lower Mississippi Basin</i>					
St. Francis:					
Fisk, Mo.	20	June 22	9	22.0	July 1-4
				20.2	Mar. 23
				20.3	Mar. 26
				21.9	Apr. 8
				23.4	Apr. 20
				21.5	May 3-5
				22.8	May 10
				21.9	June 12
				20.1	June 18
				19.5	July 6-7
				19.1	July 27-
					Aug. 1
St. Francis, Ark.	18		15	18.0	15
WEST GULF OF MEXICO DRAINAGE					
Brazos: East Columbia, Tex.	30	31		30.0	31

¹ Provisional.