

# KENTUCKY COUNTS 100 DEAD IN FLOOD

## Heavy Damage Lies In Wake Of Flood That Took Scores Of Lives In Morehead



THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS' damage lay today in the wake of a "flash" flood at Morehead which took more than a score of lives Wednesday. Employees are shown trying to salvage records of the damaged Citizens' Savings bank.



A HOUSE owned by Loren Fannin was washed (top) across the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway tracks, which themselves were damaged extensively. Below is the wreckage of a cleaning establishment which was washed off its foundations.



DAMAGE OF \$20,000 was wrought by the flood to the J. F. Sparks carnival, part of whose wreckage is shown here. More than 150 employees of the carnival saved themselves by clinging to rooftops, trucks and trees.



ONLY SURVIVORS in their families were Noah Carter (seated right), whose wife and step-son perished, and Curt Salyers, who lost his wife and three children. Coroner Leslie Caskey is standing. The stenographer is Leila Crothwait.

Portsmouth Times, Portsmouth, Ohio, US

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# Rehabilitation Begins In Death-Struck Morehead

## Survivors Still Horrified By Memories Of Harrowing Night Of Hundreds Trapped During Sleep

By L. W. BURNS  
Times Staff Writer

MOREHEAD, July 6—Struck by the worst catastrophe in its history this community of 2,500 inhabitants today turned its shoulder to the wheel to rehabilitate after a "flash" flood left 25 dead, 13 missing and thousands of dollars in property damage in its wake early Wednesday. Loss of life elsewhere in the flood area is expected to bring the total to more than 100.

An incessant rain began falling in the watershed of Triplett creek about 11 p. m. Tuesday and by 1 a. m. Wednesday a cloudburst turned the insignificant creek into a death-dealing torrent which cut its path of destruction about 25 miles long and a half mile wide throughout the valley.

Many of the dead were awakened from sleep by water entering their homes and were washed to sudden deaths in the millrace as they attempted to reach safety. So rapid was the rise that many citizens reported that the water came up 6 feet in 10 minutes.

Houses, barns and outbuildings were overturned and many were washed long distances down-streams. Many crashed into trees and other buildings and were demolished.

Generation after generation of these people of the hills have built their homes along the banks of these treacherous streams because there is so little level land between the tall mountain peaks.

They have been through floods before, many of them, but old timers shook their heads over the big loss of life.

Morehead, probably the worst hit, was but one of numerous communities to feel the brunt of the fury of the storm and its aftermath.

### Breathitt County Hit

Seventy-five miles almost due south, Breathitt county—called "Bloody Breathitt" in feuding years—had seven known dead, Sheriff Walter Deaton who went to the village of Keck, 10 miles west of Jackson, the county seat, said 69 persons were missing.

At Keck the two forks of Frozen creek merge. The sheriff said the tiny streams poured such a volume of water onto the sleeping town that the death toll may include all of the missing. Search for the missing was continued. The sheriff estimated the crop and property damage in Breathitt county alone at \$1,000,000.

Protection against typhoid, feared by health authorities to lie in polluted water at the time of floods, was being given by the state board of health, which also chlorinated water for drinking purposes.

Injuries, the Red Cross reported, were negligible among the more than 100 homeless in Morehead.

### Victims' Moans Echo

Survivors Wednesday in Morehead walked the streets, still hearing the cries, screams and moans of the victims that terri-

fied the night. Families living on Main street and north were terrified by the screams in the night. All was dark and the water kept rising and rising and above the roar could be heard scream after scream. More than 2,000 persons were helpless to aid those who were caught in the swift current and could only pace the street, following the

### BATES TO ASK HELP

WASHINGTON, July 6—Congress will be asked to make a direct appropriation for the aid of victims of Kentucky's mountain flood. Representative Bates (D.) of Kentucky, whose district was hit heaviest by the waters, said today he will draft a bill for congressional aid as soon as the extent of the loss is determined. The American Red Cross wired Red Cross chapters at Cincinnati and points in the immediate flood area, asking them to make a newspaper appeal for cash funds to be used in relief.

cries downstream, hoping that in some manner they could lend aid. What few boats that were available could not be used against the torrent. The current was too swift to man a boat as the water approached its crest.

The electric lines snapped and the town went into darkness at 1:25 a. m. and from then until daylight the survivors walked the streets hearing cries for help. Panic reigned as none could determine how high the water would rise or when the crest would be reached.

"The night was a living hell," as one survivor pictured it.

After the water receded search-

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## MOREHEAD'S FUN ENDS IN TRAGEDY

### Townfolk Still Dazed By Suddenness Of Tragedy That Struck

By NANCY GRIMES  
Times Staff Writer

MOREHEAD, July 6—Following a big celebration of the Fourth of July, which included a fireworks display and a visit to a street fair, residents of this peaceful little college town, nestling at the foothills of mountains green with summer leafage, retired in a happy mood.

Business houses were closed, amusements were stopped. The street fair manager counted receipts of the night's show. They weren't quite as large as he'd hoped, because rain had started just about show time, and it was raining hard as he pulled the last tent flap shut.

Gaunt mountaineers . . . over-all-covered farmers . . . college students . . . tired, sleepy children retired leisurely, happily as they'd retired hundreds of nights before—unmindful of a tragedy that was to strike their sleeping populace from slow, sluggish Triplett creek that flows by Morehead just over the C. & O. railroad tracks.

### Tragedy Hits In Sleep

And then—while men, women and children slept in their homes—the tragedy struck.

There was no warning . . . only the sudden roaring surge of muddy waters that tore out of creek banks in a thunderous, rushing onslaught of death and destruction. Caught in their homes, there was little chance of escaping the torrent of water that poured over two main streets of the town.

The great rush and sweep of the water destroyed electric power, and before residents scarcely were aware of the tragedy all lights were out—there was only the sound of roaring water and the piercing screams of victims caught in the midst.

Stark terror gripped the town. Men worked feverishly to rescue the trapped residents, hampered by swift currents that tore houses from their foundations, swept automobiles, horses, cattle and human beings in their wake.

### Heroism Told

From all sides came harrowing tales of heart-rending tragedy and heroism.

Flooded clocks in the town

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# KENTUCKY LISTS MANY VICTIMS IN SUDDEN FLOOD

## Rehabilitation Begins in Hard-Hit Morehead And Surrounding Area

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ing parties were organized to recover bodies. Coroner Leslie Caskey employed 40 men and sent 20 in each direction to comb the path of the flood. Searchers reported finding bodies hanging in trees, under debris, in wrecked houses and fields. Several bodies were carried five and six miles west of Morehead.

A company of CCC joined the search as did many volunteers. Coroner Caskey reported 205 men to act as deputies. Bodies were returned to Ferguson and Lane funeral homes in Morehead, where funeral chapels and rooms of the homes were turned into morgues. Embalmers were sent from five surrounding counties. American Red Cross was sent on the scene with food, clothing, medical supplies and nurses. A squad of 50 state police arrived in the afternoon to patrol the community. They gave most of their attention to prevention of looting.

### Observe Typical Holiday

Morehead observed a typical holiday, July 4, American Legion

sponsored a fireworks display and a street fair. There was a shooting in the afternoon. Roy Gastenau was shot and critically wounded. The town's big event really got started Monday night when a fire destroyed buildings and contents on a main street.

Rain marred Tuesday night's events and most of the town rested for a night's rest after a busy holiday. Many were uneasy about the torrential rains and remained awake.

Panic struck about 1:25 a. m. when the lights went out and water flooded Railroad street and one square south of Main street. Railroad street is much lower than Main street and Tripplet creek flows about 50 yards south of Railroad street.

### Night of Horror

It was a night of horrors for those on Main street and north. The flood roared down Railroad street and impacted against buildings crisscrossed. The water kept rising higher and higher until seven sections of Main street were under to 4 feet of water. Families on the south side of Main street fled their homes when first floors became flooded.

Many took refuge in dormitories of Morehead State Teachers college, which is located on high ground in the east end of Morehead.

Mr. and Mrs. Curt Salyers and children, Ivan, Alberta Mae, 3, and Carl, 8, were aroused by water entering their home. Mrs. Salyers' mother, Mrs. Mahala Mae Battist, and her son, Leroy Lehman and Mr. and Mrs. Chester Keeton, who were married a few days ago, arrived at the Salyers' home in a car and all climbed in except Mr. Salyers. He was certain his family would be carried to safety in the machine. There was not room for another and he elected to stay behind to give his family a chance to escape. He hoped to reach high ground as best he could.

### Father Slays, Saved

The water was about a foot deep and rising rapidly as he walked toward Main street, fearing his family would be saved. Fighting the current and swimming the bear he could be managed to reach Main street and hours later learned his family was lost.

The car was "drowned" out by the rising water and stalled. The occupants climbed onto the top and a swift current overturned the machine. Mr. and Mrs. Leston managed to swim to a tree and clung there until the water receded. All the rest were swept downstream with the current and were drowned. All of the bodies, except that of Noah G. Carter, were recovered by 8 p. m. Wednesday.

Noah G. Carter is crippled and walks with aid of crutches. His family, Mrs. Carter and

six children, were trapped in their home at Railroad street. Realizing his handicap Mr. Carter urged his wife and children to flee and leave him to meet death alone.

Mrs. Carter and her children left. She sent the children on and returned to help her husband and was followed by a son, Junior Saly, 11. As they neared the house the water rose and threw off their feet and carried both to their deaths. The children were rescued.

As the water rose in the house Mr. Carter kept piling up furniture and climbing on top of the pile. Soon he was able to reach the rafters and clung with water splashing around his neck. He hung onto the rafters until the water began to recede and a neighbor assisted him to the roof of a nearby house.

### Tree Is Haven

Harley Boyd and son went to a pig lot to free the swine and were caught in the rising waters before they could reach home. Both climbed a tree and sat there several hours until the water receded. Water washed their house off the foundation. Mrs. Boyd climbed to the roof and clung there. The current carried the house about 50 yards and dashed it against a dam. She held to the roof all night and was rescued a few minutes before the house collapsed and was carried on down stream and dashed to pieces.

### Word Reached Coroner Caskey

That Mrs. Walter McRoberts, a widow, and two sons were drowned in Norton. Four or eight miles northeast of Morehead. He sent Embalmer T. P. Anderson to prepare the bodies for burial. It was necessary to walk or ride horseback three miles to reach the McRoberts' home.

The body of Mrs. Canna Ambury was found in her wrecked home. The house crashed against a tree. Her husband was killed in a railroad accident about a year ago.

### Business Stocks Destroyed

Every piece of property on Railroad street was damaged or destroyed. Homes were overturned and others were wrecked. Business houses were damaged badly and virtually all stock was a total loss. The Citizens' National Bank suffered a heavy loss. First floors were covered with a deep coating of mud and slime after the water receded.

The home of Loren Fannin was carried 1,200 feet down the railroad tracks and stopped across the main line near the Chesapeake & Ohio freight station. The family vacated the house before it was carried away. Mr. Fannin is a son of Ed. Fannin, who is a brother of Floyd Fannin of Lyra, William and Robert Fannin of New Boston. His home was not damaged.

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Caudill and family waded in waist deep water on the first floor of their home and reached safety on the second floor.

### Dwellings Gone

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe Hutchinson was washed off its foundation and left sitting across Carey street. Homes of Roy Gastenau and Dwight Pearce were carried about a square and jammed against the Hutchinson home.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Cales was carried a block away and wrecked. Occupants of these homes vacated before the water reached a torrential stage.

### Livestock Destroyed

All of the livestock was destroyed. Mr. Sparks placed his loss at \$20,000. Viewing the mass of wreckage he began plans to rebuild. "The show must go on," he said.

Mrs. N. K. Wells, chairman of the Rowan county Red Cross chapter, set up headquarters in the city hall and distributed food and clothing most of which was furnished by families not reached by the flood. Mrs. Sheridan Caudill represented the national headquarters of the Red Cross. C. P. Caudill, president of the Peoples' Bank, helped direct the work.

Scores of American Legion members arrived from other cities to assist.

State Representative Taylor Young assisted the undertakers and drove an ambulance. A CCC camp ambulance also was used to carry the dead.

### Newspaper Plant Damaged

The Morehead Independent, a weekly newspaper, suffered heavy loss. All of the presses and machinery in the building were inundated and covered with mud. Water is supplied Morehead by the college, which has a filtration

plant and pumping station along Tripplet creek. Both plants were damaged badly by the flood.

The college has a reservoir back on a hill near the school. It holds a normal three-day supply. To conserve the water the reservoir will be used about an hour a day.

Several water and gas mains were broken when houses washed off foundations. The gas company arranged to furnish gas to homes not in the flood zone.

Scores of electric and telephone linemen arrived early to repair wire damage.

### Has Troubles After Marriage

Events turned fast in the last week for Coroner Leslie Caskey of Rowan county. The coroner was married Thursday, June 26, and returned from a honeymoon Monday night July 3 and then "my troubles began," he said.

Fire destroyed the City hotel and garage, owned by Coroner Caskey and his father, Alf Caskey. Loss was estimated at \$75,000.

"I saved the clothes I am wearing and my wife saved her wedding dress," the coroner said. The fire burned all night Monday, Tuesday and was still smoldering Wednesday afternoon. Several machines, trucks and seven new buses were destroyed.

"What little we might have salvaged from the fire," he said, "was destroyed by the flood."

"Here I am worrying about the loss and with more than a score of deaths to investigate when a man comes up and starts a fight. He is sore because his car burned in the fire."

The fight occurred at the garage Wednesday afternoon and caused more excitement in the town. Coroner Caskey suffered cuts and bruises during the fire and added a few more in the scrap, he said.

### CONGRESS

(Continued From Page 1)

ready has been cut 41 cents from the theoretical 100 cents prevailing before 1934.

The legislation extending the monetary program for two years was approved by the house earlier in the session, but virtually was rewritten last week by the opposing senate coalition.

### Silver Price Cut Down

Beaside delegating the evaluation power, the senate had inserted a silver price of 77.37 cents an ounce and had a substantial treasury purchase of foreign silver.

The bill at lastly enacted, was agreed upon hastily by a joint senate-house committee, which removed the prohibition against foreign silver buying in addition to restoring the evaluation authority and reducing the silver price to 71.11 cents. Up to June 30, that price had been 64.64 cents under a treasury proclamation.

On the roll call, 40 Democrats, including Senator Donahy of Ohio, fought with Senator Borah (R.) of Idaho, La Follette (P.) of Wisconsin, Norris (I) of Nebraska and support of the legislation. Opposing were 19 Democrats, 18 Republicans, including Senator Tamm of Ohio, and two Farmer-Laborites.

### FLOODWALL

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chief of the army engineers' Cincinnati district to report the local progress and cooperate with the engineers in an effort to begin work on the flood defenses as soon as possible.

Considerably more earth levee has been prepared by the army engineers for protection of the city. Although this type of construction would be less costly to the federal government, it would require a wider strip of right of way, which would be more costly to the city in acquiring the necessary land.

### Part To Be Levee

Present plans of the army engineers call for a considerable portion of the flood defenses to be concrete wall, similar to the city's present 62-foot floodwall, but several sections of the project are to be levees.

Colonel Elliott has announced \$750,000 has been allotted for the first year's work on the local project. This is nearly double the original estimate that \$400,000 could be used the first year.

The second year's allotment is expected to be considerably higher, inasmuch as continuation of the actual construction can be accomplished much more rapidly than when the project is being put under way.

### Notes Authorized

In the meantime, city council Wednesday night passed an ordinance providing for issuance of notes in anticipation of issuance of the \$100,000 bond issue already voted for purchase of floodwall rights of way.

The notes will enable the city to use the money as it is needed for rights of way. It will not be needed all in a lump sum, and thus the city will save some interest charges.

### JUDGE UNDERWOOD ILL.

COLUMBUS, July 6.—U. S. District Judge Mel G. Underwood's office reports that the jurist is ill with influenza in a Zanesville hospital but that his condition is not serious.

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# TRAGEDY

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were stopped at 1:25 a. m. the time residents estimated the tragedy struck.

Higher and higher the muddy waters swirled, reaching a crest sometime around 3 a. m. And then, almost as quickly as it started its death rush, the water began to subside.

When we arrived at Morehead at 3 p. m. Wednesday, a hot sun had dried much of the mud and silt on Main street and dust was swirling in the wake of automobiles. People milled all over the streets, their faces drawn and tired, lined with the tragedy and shock of the catastrophe.

### Community Dazed

Everybody seemed dazed and still shocked by the incredulity of the tragedy that had struck so suddenly. Crowds formed around the two funeral homes where bodies of the victims were taken as soon as they were found.

Seated on the back step of one of the funeral homes was a red-headed, freckled-face, snub-nosed youngster. He was a handsome little fellow, in spite of his mud-splattered face and clothes. Mud oozed between his bare toes. We had come around the rear of the funeral home and were standing near the youngster.

"When will they let you go inside?" he asked us. And in reply to our answer he said: "My mom's in there." His lips quivered and tears ran down his cheeks.

We just had gotten to the other funeral home when a man staggered out the door. He stared around at the crowd of people, his eyes dazed.

### Family Drowned

Suddenly he pushed his straw hat back off his forehead, covered his eyes with his hands and burst into convulsive sobs. His wife and three children were drowned, along with other relatives.

Those were the real tragedies of the night of terror. Some bodies were recovered, others still were missing. Those who were safe wept for those who were lost.

So suddenly had the catastrophe struck and so violent was the damage and loss of life, that the entire populace was stunned. Everything was in chaos, while the more fortunate residents strove to regain a semblance of order and administer aid to stricken families.

Headquarters was set up at the city hall and residents were bringing in clothing of every description. Those families that had been struck by the full fury of the swirling waters had lost everything. Little could be salvaged from the wreckage.

### Police Give Aid

State highway patrol cars moved along the streets asking all who needed food, clothing or any kind of aid to report to headquarters.

Little was being done to clean up debris-piled streets and homes. The first concern was for those lost and caring for those saved. There was no letup in work of every description. Residents had not slept since they were routed from their beds by the tragedy.

We talked to many of the townspeople . . . those whose homes and families had been washed away and those who had gone into the water to rescue victims.

One man told us: "The horror and terror of those black hours

the Royce camp where they were spending the holiday just a few hours before the swift waters washed the cottage away.

They left camp at 7:30 p. m., Mrs. Royce said, but only got half a mile when they were informed of a washout further up the road and were forced to turn back. They had intended to spend the night at the Kinniconick hotel but found that water covering the road back of them had them trapped on high ground.

### Leave By Another Route

They were able to drive away Wednesday by taking roads east out of Kinniconick in place of by way of Vanceburg.

Mrs. Royce's sister, Mrs. H. W. Liles of Camp Dix, narrowly escaped death when the front porch of her cottage was washed away.

Other damage on Kinniconick included: Petersville postoffice carried about 40 feet and lodged against a storehouse owned by Mrs. Frank Curtis who reported heavy damage to merchandise; water was eight inches deep in the Lawrence Jones store, a five-room home owned by Lester Carver at Fuller was carried away by the water.

### Other Property Destroyed

A home and barn owned by David C. May and a large barn owned by Pat Cooper, both of near Vanceburg, were destroyed.

The store and blacksmith shop of E. B. Fearis at Cottageville were destroyed and barns owned by Albert Truesdell and Pleas Henderson were carried away.

Searches rescued Mr. and Mrs. William Howman (Rena Mae Coryell) from the second story of their camp house on Kinney.

The state game and fish commission at Frankfort was informed today that approximately 10,000 small bass and 75 brood bass had been swept out of the Vanceburg hatchery by high water. The small bass are what are known as "fry" and are about an inch long.

## Louisa Sector Also In 'Flash' Flood Area

Special To The Times

LOUISA, July 6—A home and store and three bridges were washed off by a "flash" flood which swept down the left fork of Blaine creek early Wednesday, causing damage estimated at more than \$100,000.

At Keaton postoffice, floodwaters from Keaton and the left fork of Blaine washed away the store of Marcus Fraley and a residence nearby which was occupied by Mrs. B. L. Bailey, his mother-in-law. The family was in Painsville at the time and no one was in the building. Magistrate Mart Hay, after an inspection of the flooded section, said the flood washed away an 88-foot bridge over Laurel creek

is indescribable. We couldn't see anything. We could hear the rush of water and the screams of those poor people, and were helpless to assist them. It was terrible, horrible!"

## LUNCHEON FOR F

Cold Plate Lunch  
Virginia Baked Ham  
Potato Salad  
Cole Slaw  
Apple Sauce  
Bread and Butter  
Coffee Tea or Milk

## GALLA

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