

The 1920s

“Every flood brings a revival of boat building and this one has been no exception.”



1921 flood at 1036 Niles Avenue and taken from an unknown boat

Edwards County Historical Society collection photograph

A skiff was built by Jerry and Robert Wilson, John Ott, Charles Beal, L. F. Beal and Rex Woods and launched on the raging Coon last week. Several experimental trips were made to get the craft into good working trim then the party got aboard and started down stream. All went well till they got to the Fred Fletcher place when they hit an obstruction and capsized. However, as the water was only about four feet deep they rescued themselves and their craft. The plan on which this good ship was operated was very simple. The current was too swift for up stream navigation, so the party would voyage down stream to some convenient point then load their craft into an automobile trailer and go back up the stream and start again. Just like coasting, only on water instead of snow.

Dave Evans, Jake Evans, Harry Grindley, S. A. Franklin and Clyde Burke have built the most pretentious boat that has ever been built in this section. It is 20 feet long with 5 1/2 beam. They have installed a four cylinder Reo motor. It has capacity for about eight adults. They plan trips on the Arkansas and expect to develop enough power to come back against the current after going down stream. They launched their craft Sunday and after a few experimental trips, carried passengers for a small fee and did a good business.

*Kinsley Mercury
June 16, 1921*

One boat on Coon creek that has given pleasure to a number of the young people was built about fifteen years ago by Mr. Peticleite. He has kept it in good order and when the flood came he launched his boat. Coon creek runs through his yard and there has been so little current in that part that it has made a very good place for boating and many have enjoyed it.



“Automobiles began crossing the east river bridge Saturday about noon. One of the first to cross from the east was Will Brown. He was bringing Dr. DeTar to town and the doctor waded ahead and fell into the holes so he could tell Will where not to go and a traffic way was soon established.”

The Hutchinson News, April 25, 1922

WHOLE COUNTRY IS AT SEA

“J. F. Hoover, a Santa Fe man who was a passenger on Santa Fe train No. 5 which was marooned by the flood at Kinsley Sunday night...says the sight was one long to be remembered.

‘As far, almost as a person could see both east and west there was only a raging sea of water,’ said Mr. Hoover. ‘From the coal chutes at Kinsley we could see east almost to Garfield, but there was nothing but water to be seen.’

‘Where the Santa Fe trail runs along the railroad track was a torrent of water that looked like it was washing everything in its path. I can’t understand how many people were not drowned.’ ”



1922 - Kinsley Coal Chutes

Edwards County Historical Society collection photograph

“The other wild experience that was serious was that Frank Bernatzki and his brother-in-law Mr. Wagner, started down the Santa Fe trail driving a team of mules to a buggy and just beyond the chutes they were overturned by the current and dashed against a telephone pole. Frank could not swim so stood on the overturned rig and clung to the pole until about ten o’clock the next day nearly perishing from cold and wet but was finally rescued by a stranger swimming and wading to him with a rope which gave him safe convoy to shore with many willing hands dragging through the waters. The mules broke loose and found safety but at this writing Mr. Wagner has not been found and as he went with the mules it is feared he lost his life in the flood.”

Kinsley Mercury, April 27, 1922



**1923 - Unknown
Kinsley location**

Edwards County Historical Society collection photograph

