

A History of Flooding

# Before 1920

Old-timers say that the Indians looked down from what is now Hillside Cemetery hill and laughed at the crazy White People settling where floodwaters always came.

The Kinsley Library has documented early flooding in the following years:

1879	1906	1910
1884	1907	1912
1905	1908	1917



c. 1906 - Harry Schnatterly home, 1014 Marsh Ave. Edwards County Historical Society collection photograph



Flood of 1910

Edwards County Historical Society collection photograph

From the Kinsley Mercury, July 5, 1884

The violence of the storm soon subsided, but the rain continued late in the night. The next morning found the whole country flooded with water. Coon creek was out of its banks and carried away the bridges over it early in the morning, and by ten o'clock a steady stream of water was flowing from the neighborhood of the Creamery down Marsh avenue to Sixth street, and then east into the low ground beyond the Congregational church. The slough half a mile east of the depot became a raging river carrying away the railway embankment and spreading out over the prairie until the whole country between Hobbs' and Cronk's place was one sheet of water. A mile farther out another break occurred in the track and still further the railroad bridge became impassable by noon. The west bound passenger train Tuesday night passed over these places in safety, but was wrecked in a washout four miles west of Speareville. The engine got over in safety, the mail, baggage, and express cars got across, but were derailed, while the first two coaches went down, telescoping together and forming an arch over the gap. Two tramps were riding on the platform, one was killed and the other badly hurt. Only one passenger was injured and he not dangerously. An extra engine brought the train back to Kinsley where the passengers and injured ones were taken care of. The passengers on the afternoon train from the east were brought to town in carriages and remained here until arrangements were made for a transfer over the Speareville washout which was accomplished Thursday morning. The blockade was not raised until Friday and the last of the delayed trains did not leave here until Friday night.



Coon Creek, Kinsley Kan, June 18, 1912

Kinsley Library Collection

“Very Few towns are so situated as to be placed at such a disadvantage as Kinsley....

Here practically the whole north, east, and south parts of town have been under water since the terrific downpour.... Coon Creek which ordinarily is a scarcely discernible ribbon of water, at times, vanishing altogether and always remaining within the bounds of decency in its behavior, overflowed its banks, and in an astonishingly short time was running in torrents along the streets and alleys of the city.... In some of the farm homes along the Arkansas valley things were in worse shape even than in town, the first floor of many houses being under water and some of the houses loosened from their foundations. ... Mr. Wiggins was with another gentleman riding in a buggy along the street which was very badly flooded. At that point there is a culvert over which they could pass with safety, but on each side of which the water stood seven or eight feet deep. As bad luck would have it, they missed this culvert and plunged into the deep water, where for a time it seemed that men and horse would all be drowned. Mr. Wiggins' companion, however, cut the harness, and hanging to the horse was carried to safety, and immediately summoned help. Everybody was willing to lend assistance, but owing to the depth of the water, those who first came to his aid were unable to reach him, with the result that he was left standing on the buggy seat in water reaching his waist for considerably over an hour. Finally Ed Matheny approached him on horseback near enough to throw him a rope, and clinging to this, he was dragged through the water and rescued.”

Kinsley Mercury September 21, 1906

