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WHEN THE 'HOPPERS CAME TO KANSAS

After Vegetation Was Gone the
Insects Devoured
Clothing.

FARMERS IN DISTRESS

Simple Contrivance That Was Instru-
mental in Exterminat-
ing Pests.

By CHARLES C. HOLLEBAUGH.

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The winter of 1873 and 1874 was one long to be remembered by the people living at that time in north-eastern Kansas and southeastern Nebraska, from the fact of its being unusually long and severe. The Missouri river was full of ice as early as November of '73, and by Thanksgiving day people with teams were crossing the river on the ice.

There were heavy snow falls as late as March of '74 and, as this was, and still is, an agricultural country the farmers were late with their spring work. Owing to the lateness of the season, plowing did not commence until late in April, but when spring came everything was favorable to facilitate the work, which continued uninterrupted, until the crops were planted, which quickly grew, and everything seemed auspicious for a bountiful harvest.

Summer came, small grain, such as wheat, oats, barley, rye and all kinds of early vegetables, were harvested in abundance. Corn and the later vegetables, not yet matured, showed promise of enormous yield.

Then comes the never to be forgotten 10th day of August of 1874, a typical August day, but a day long to be remembered for the havoc wrought in a few short hours. The morning dawned, bright and warm, not a cloud in the sky, but at the noon hour, while the people were resting from their toil, and enjoying their midday meal, it suddenly began to grow dark.

The people growing alarmed, rushed from their homes crying "a storm is coming up!" They saw—not a storm, but a sight, beautiful, dazzling, bewildering, for the sky was full of what seemed to be bright particles of silver and gold, sparkling in the noonday sun. Astonishment, bewilderment, consternation now filled the minds of the people, question after question was asked, and though many answers were vouchsafed, too soon the truth was to be learned, for, on they came, a slight breeze from the west now sprang up, the air filled with these bright particles creating a slight rippling sound, as of a small brook falling over stones. Louder and louder grew the sound until it became a roar. Darker and darker the air until the fowls with terrifying sounds sought their roosting places, thinking night had come. The air grew heavy and stifling, the grasshoppers for such indeed they were, now began to alight, and as soon as they struck the earth, began their destruction, that by nightfall very little of any vegetation was left.

After they came to the ground, the air once more became bright, the fowls came from their roosting places and a feast, for them began. As I said, when the "hoppers" (as they were at once named, and henceforth were known) alighted, they began their destruction.

Such, indeed, was the case, nothing escaped, they even tried to eat the boards of fences, shingles on the roofs, and clothing, no matter whether hanging on clothes lines, or worn by the people. Before seeing this, the women, thinking to save their choice flowers, covered them with bed quilts, sheets and etc., only to have them in a few minutes completely riddled.

The railroad tracks were so slippery with the insects that trains were several days in making the trip from Atchison, Kans., to Lincoln, Nebr.

SCENE OF DESOLATION

The morning of August 27th dawned, a sight heart rending beyond description was to be seen. The trees and shrubbery were stripped of their foliage as by winter's icy blast, the ground, which the day before was covered with a rich carpet of green, was now brown and bare. Corn which was just changing from the milky stage to one of ripening, was now cut and torn as by some huge machine. Flowers, blooming the day before, had now totally disappeared.

Of beans, peas and other vegetables, nothing remained but the hard woody stems of the plants.

Oh! the destruction, Oh! the desolation, what painter can picture the scene; what yesterday was a garden, today is a barren waste; the toll, the expense, the care of an entire season annihilated in a few short hours.

Be it remembered, the people of this section of the country at that time were not as well to do financially as now. They, up to this time, while not lacking the necessities of life, had few of the luxuries, surely nothing as compared with today. The people, for the greater part were agriculturists many of whom lived on rented farms, paying the rent in a percentage of what was raised. But many more were trades people, carpenters, brickmakers, brickmasons, stonemasons, etc., whose livelihood and prosperity depended almost wholly on crop conditions; so it can be seen that a failure of crops meant a failure of all conditions. Such was the case that by September 1 not a spear of living vegetation of any kind was in evidence, and for a fact I have seen the grasshoppers eat the plants down into the ground several inches.

Many people, in fact all who could do so, left for places the "hoppers" had not visited, for business of all kinds was now almost ruined. Money, which had been scarce, was now rarely seen, and winter with its additional demands for fuel and clothing was drawing near, starvation seemed almost inevitable.

As there was nothing left for cattle and hogs to eat, they were killed or sold as quickly as possible, and, while our fowls yet remained, their flesh and eggs were so rank with the "hoppers" which they waxed fat upon, that they were nauseating in the extreme. Those who lived near the rivers caught fish and turtles, but soon they, too, had a "hopper" taste.

In those days we knew no such thing as a refrigerator car, consequently could get no fresh meat from the unfested district, until the weather was cold enough to ship without spoiling.

Noting these facts you can readily believe me when I say we tasted no fresh meat (unless it was fish which we sometimes caught uncontaminated) from some time in September until about Christmas; what meat we had was pickled and salted meat, left from the winter before, some of it over a year ago.

Of course this terrible calamity was soon heard of all over the country. Relief committees were organized, clothing, fuel, food, etc., asked for, and be it said to the everlasting glory of the great American people, they responded most liberally. Many foreign countries, too, proffered aid.

Not only great quantities of the necessities of life were furnished, but many of the luxuries also, with instructions—"Telegraph at our expense anything you need and at any time."

So, while we had to forego the pleasure of eating fresh meat for awhile, we had an abundance of such things as they could ship at that season, and many things were shipped us we had never even heard of, our greatest wonder being canned vegetables, what few vegetables we had for winter's use heretofore had been such as could be dried; corn, peas and beans.

PREPARE TO EXTERMINATE

The grasshoppers, not yet satisfied with the havoc already made, now began preparations for future depredations, by laying eggs in the earth to hatch when warm weather should come again. They chose for this purpose, firm, dry ground, the roadside, meadows, pathways, etc. Immediately the people began preparations for exterminating the pests. Great trenches were dug with the expectation of driving the young into them as soon as hatched, cover them with dirt, thus smothering them. Roads, fields and many pastures were plowed up as soon as the eggs were laid, thus exposing them to the frost and cold and killing the germ. But behold, when spring came, the young "hopper" was in evidence by the million.

One day the wife of one of our farmers, while out doors, filling her lamp with kerosene (or coal oil as it is commonly called) spilled some on the ground. Of course Master "Hopper" (or more correctly, several) being "always in the way," got the bulk of it. "Drat you," said she, "I wish I had a river of coal oil, to put every one of you in and set fire to you," and with that she scattered some more over the pests, when looking at what she had done, was astonished to see them "give up the ghost."



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THE EDITOR "PINCHED"

An "Extraordinary" Session of the City Council was Called and the Marshal Ordered to Arrest us.

Last Saturday morning, Fred Shaw, an employe of the World office with instructions not to allow any papers to be placed outside where the wind might blow them away, accidentally allowed a large piece to be drawn out of the back door by a strong suction of the wind. In front of the drug store Marshal Milholland picked up the paper and brought it to the World office and asked if it belonged to us. We acknowledged that it did and explained its escape. The marshal then left and we supposed the episode had closed, not dreaming that we had committed so grave an offense. After having consulted Police Judge W. F. Swiggett, Mayor Myerly, Councilmen Kline, Gorrell and Herrick, the Marshal returned and said that the aforesaid city officials had ordered our arrest and that the Police Judge suggested very strongly that we be made a public example of, accordingly we were fined one dollar and costs. In as much as it was our first offense of this nature and in as much as there is no city ordinance covering the little offense which took such large proportions and also that other ordinances which are much more important and are violated almost daily, we have arrived at the conclusion since we did not support the new council during the recent city election, they took this small petty method of showing their malice toward us. They have belittled themselves as men and officials in this transaction and we would vastly rather occupy our position than theirs. Henceforth we feel the council will have plenty to do if they are as vigilant with the people they like who violate even in an accidental manner some small ordinance as they have been in our case where it was personal spite, pure and simple. Touching our good citizenship and law abiding qualities, we do not have to say a word. Councilmen Baker and Spencer we fully vindicate as they had nothing whatever to do with the matter and we believe them to be men of much too large a caliber to stoop to such pettiness as was shown toward us in this incident.

Filled with excitement, she called her husband and showed him what she had done. Rushing to the barn he got a large though shallow, tin pan and emptying the contents of the oil can into it, dragged it around the yard until he got it full of "hoppers;" then taking it to the middle of the road, tried to set fire to them, but strange to say, they would not burn, and afterwards though we tried repeatedly to set fire to these oil soaked "hoppers" never could we burn one. But we had learned something, and quickly hitching up a team, he drove to town and soon got the people interested in his story. Understand at this time all was excitement, every one was interested in any plan to exterminate the "hopper." A rush was made for the tin shops, shallow pans quickly made, the stores raided for kerosene, and every one as fast as made, quickly pressed into service.

But soon the frail tin was found to be inadequate for the rough usage subjected to it, a conference was held, with the result of some one suggesting making the pans out of iron even if it took a couple of men to draw them, you did not draw a pan far until you got it full of "hoppers" and had to stop to empty it anyhow.

Wise suggestion, but where to get the iron? "The committee in the East," suggested some one. Ah! true, "our coal oil is exhausted too," said some one else. "To the telegraph office," shouted several. To the telegraph office rushed every one, a telegram was sent, "send coal oil and sheet iron."

Back came the answer, "how much coal oil and what size sheet iron." Another conference by our people, which resulted in the pans being made of any length, but wide enough that the young "hoppers" could not jump across, yet not too wide to be unwieldy. Some of us boys were sent outside to make the young "hoppers" jump, and measure the length of that jump, with the result that we reported that "those darned 'hoppers' can jump anywhere from two inches to twenty feet." (The truth was, they were so numerous you could not keep track of any certain one.)

Again we went out and tried to measure the jump, with the aid of someboards, and this time it was we boys who made a discovery—that it was not the length of the jump, but the height, that was important, and we soon found that in his present stage he could jump no less than two feet. Then we reported, with the suggestion that the pans be made only a few inches high in front, a couple of feet in the back and the sides to conform with the front and back, therefore any size sheet iron would do.

THE "HOPPERDOZIER."

Again they telegraphed "any amount of coal oil, any length of sheet iron two to four feet wide," for some one suggested "for want of time, and material and tools to work with, we can nail strips of wood a couple of inches high for the front, build up the back high enough that the "hoppers" cannot jump over, but rather strike the back and fall into the pan. This was a sensible sugges-

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE

Obituary

On Friday, May 5th, Mrs. E. L. Morgan died at her home after many months of illness. She has long been a resident of Trego county, having come here when she was a little girl.

Mrs. Morgan was a kind neighbor, a loving wife and daughter and by her gentle disposition made many warm friends who greatly miss her and most sincerely mourn her death.

Mrs. Morgan was called away early in life but God was able to see that her life's mission was filled and called her to a better land. Her death is particularly sad owing to the fact that she leaves five children, some of them still very young. Besides the children she leaves a husband, mother, two sisters and two brothers to mourn her loss.

On Sunday the funeral was held at the M. E. church, Rev. Greene officiating. The Eastern Star of which Mrs. Morgan was a member, also assisted in the services. The floral tributes were many and very beautiful attesting the esteem in which she was held.

The World with the entire community extends sympathy to the family thus sadly bereaved.

Card of Thanks

The family, mother, brothers and sisters desire to thank all who assisted in so many ways to the comfort of their loved one who has departed this life.

E. L. Morgan and Children
Mrs. H. E. McCormick
Mrs. C. G. Brady
Mrs. D. Yoder
Frank McCormick
John McCormick

Obituary

Baby Fay, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. F. Weller, was born May 24, 1910 and died at Winona, Kansas, April 28, 1911, aged 11 months and 4 days. She was sick but a short time having had the measles which turned into pneumonia fever. Everything was done for the little one that medical aid and tender care could do, but the Giver saw best to take her from earth. A little bud nourished and cared for on earth to blossom in heaven.

The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Rice of the Russell Springs charge at 10 o'clock Sunday a. m. The remains were laid to rest in the cemetery west of town. The family and friends have the entire sympathy of the community.

Lay away her little play things
With the parent's tender care.
She will need them on earth never—
She has climbed the golden stair.

Weather Report

Maximum and minimum temperature according to the government thermometer at Wa-Keeney for the week ending Wednesday noon.

	MAX.	MIN.
Thursday	47	40
Friday	55	45
Saturday	81	50
Sunday	78	51
Monday	91	46
Tuesday	99	61
Wednesday	87	63

A week of extremes; from cool to hot, from calm to very windy, but dry right up to the minute.

Abstracts of title made promptly at reasonable rates. W. H. Swiggett.

School Closing Exercises

The school year 1910 and 1911 will end Friday, May 28th, 1911. The last week will be given over to closing exercises as in former years. Sunday evening, May 21st, Rev. J. E. Mumford will preach the class sermon in the Methodist church. Tuesday evening Prof. Holton of the State Agriculture college will deliver the address to the common school graduates. Wednesday evening the class play will be given by the Seniors. Thursday evening you may hear Rev. Geo. E. Fort, the distinguished lecturer from Salina, Kans., and on Friday is Field Day. A week full of school exercises, following a pleasant and profitable school year.

Fresh pork at Baker's.



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A Few Hard Facts

- Look them over carefully
- Let 'em soak in
- Then come to us

THERE has been no time in the recent business history of the country when a dollar has been so hard to get nor when it has been spent more carefully and judiciously. Therefore in buying you want to know as to the quality and intrinsic value if you get 100 cents worth on the dollar. We handle goods that possess a maximum of quality as to material and workmanship, combined with attractiveness of style and design at a price that is fair.

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