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As a showing of the importance of sheep raising in Tulare county in early days it is noted that the fall clip of 1872 was 1,474,500 pounds. The winter following was the most severe one ever experienced yet the spring clip of 1873 was 947,375 clips.

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Although high water was expected every season, the first real flood after the arrival of settlers in appreciable numbers, occurred in the middle of January, 1862, when all the creeks and rivers overflowed and sent a deluge of water upon the little settlement of Visalia. Many homes were wrecked and the damage to property was general. Cattle and hogs were drowned and chickens that had found shelter in trees or other elevations starved to death.

The Delta of March 31, 1860 had warned of the danger of floods in consequence of recent rains and added "blessed are they that live in wooden houses for they have the materials to build a raft."

Danger was averted until the following January when, after a week of warm rain which filled the creeks to their banks, there came a rush of water early in the evening causing the inhabitants to make a mad rush in the darkness to safety. Mill creek overflowed both banks as did the St. John's river north of town. Main street was little less than a torrent.

Settlers later said the flood came in two deluges within approximately 10 days and that water stood in some low places for as long as a month. Many residences of this period were made of adobe and these began melting and sinking, causing the inhabitants to flee

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Since most of the water used in those days was obtained from open wells, drinking water was at a premium. Rain continued to pour down and some caught this water for domestic use. There was but one pump in the town at the time, near the present corner of Encina avenue and Oak street, and it was the duty of the young boys in each family to collect big containers and go each morning to fill them from the pump, carrying their loads in boats.

The Delta, even then careful of civic pride, stated in its issue of February 13, 1862:

"Many boats are still observable lying high and dry at the gates and steps in front of the residences of some of our citizens. Put them away, gentlemen, there is no chance of their being wanted again soon and their presence might give strangers the impression that floods were a regular institution in Tulare county."

On Christmas eve, 1867, residents from the surrounding district assembled in Visalia for observance of the holiday. The weather appeared normal when the several ^{parties} ~~companies~~ assembled but before the evening was over the heavens had opened up and a wall of water four feet high had swept down from the mountains, carrying logs and fallen trees that were scattered over the plains.

All streams left their banks. The Tule river spread over the Poplar and Woodville sections, Deer Creek and White river merged in a vast expanse of water and the Kaweah and St. John's rivers covered a large acreage around Visalia. Boats passed easily from Visalia to points in Kings and Fresno counties long after the waters had receded in Visalia.

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In 1879, the leve es that had been thrown up in haste to protect the town broke and water again flowed into Visalia for two or three days. The waters soon receded, however, leaving lakes in a few low spots.

The spring and early summer of 1906 brought new floods to the Visalia rea. Mill creek overflowed a short distance east of the city and the St. John's river levee broke, allowing the waters to pour into the city from the north as well. High water first came in March but abated after a week or 10 days. The snow in the mountains had been heavy that year and in June there was an unusually severe heat wave which caused the snow to melt rapidly and fdeluge the valley.

Downtown streets in Visalia were like canals during the height of the flood and those places of business where floors were level with the sidewalk or lower suffered considerable damage. The water in most places did no attain any considerable depth. It measured a foot at some points on Main street and on some of the side streets reached the hubs of buggies and other vehicles.

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