

Mighty Rush of Water Sweeps Out Montopolis Bridge Like Kindling Wood

A mighty rush of water down the river took out the Montopolis bridge over the Colorado Saturday morning about 11 o'clock.

Eugene Howard, nursery operator in the vicinity, stood on the edge of his property and saw the span, constructed of wood and steel in the 80's, go out.

"The water swept the bridge away in about two minutes. You could see the steel structures twist off and sink and the boarding float off down the river.

"When it started, one part of the bridge just ripped the rest off and it went out and was gone in less than five minutes," Howard said.

Others in the vicinity who witnessed the washout said that the water snapped the bridge as if it were a toothpick and that it went out with a terrific noise.

At least six or eight buildings in the Montopolis bridge area were swept away by the water. Only one residence was standing short-

ly before noon. Included in the structures taken away by the rushing waters were Mrs. Bettle Hemphill's store, an ice depot, two sand and gravel plants owned by Sam Hicks and Alonzo Robinson, some residences, and two garages, one owned by Mrs. Hemphill and the other by Ralph Robinson. The Hemphill's loss was estimated at about \$2000, the bigger part of their possessions. They had no insurance.

Howard, who said that he had "never seen anything like it" on the Colorado. Several acres of his property were covered by the overflow.

He could not estimate his loss. Under water, he said, were about 75,000 to 100,000 young pecan trees, about 15,000 evergreen trees, and other nursery stock. His orchard of several acres and other crops planted on the land also were believed to have been ruined.

A house that had been brought down the river was being washed upon his land, Howard said.