

Puzzling Questions Surround Destruction Of Cecil House By Tornado



ONLY TANGLED DEBRIS remains of the Alfred Johnson summer home which was lifted from its foundation (foreground) by a tornado and hurled 50 feet away, uprooting a large tree in the yard. Four other nearby buildings were destroyed, but an old barn only 100 yards away was left untouched. The tornado apparently came down from a wooded draw above the house and made a sweeping turn against the Johnson property. (Mountaineer Photo).



HEAVY OBJECTS such as an electrical refrigerator (foreground) and a cook stove (not shown) were thrown together in a heap by the force of the twister which destroyed five buildings owned by Alfred Johnson on McClure Creek in Cecil community. At right are branches of a tree uprooted by the house as it was torn from its foundation. (Mountaineer Photo).



A BEDSPREAD (white arrow) from the Alfred Johnson house was blown more than an eighth of a mile and lodged in the limbs of this tall tree by the tornado which lashed across McClure Creek during the night of Monday, February 27. Neighbors told of being awakened by the noise of the wind, which they described as resembling the sound of a large airplane flying low. (Mountaineer Photo).



AMONG "VICTIMS" of the twister that flattened a three-room house and four small farm buildings on the property of Alfred Johnson on McClure Creek in Cecil community recently were bees inhabiting 20 beehives upset by the wind. Mr. Johnson has replaced several of the hives (black arrow) and bees have returned to their homes. (Mountaineer Photo).

Damage Is First Such In History

By BOB CONWAY

The big question is: How did it

happen? Supposedly the towering mountains in Haywood County form an impenetrable barrier to tornadoes and cyclones which ravage other parts of the country all too often. Although damage has been caused in this county by high winds from time to time, an actual tornado has never been reported in these parts before.

Nevertheless, during the night of Monday, February 27, the three-room frame house of Alfred Johnson on McClure Creek in Cecil Community was uprooted from its foundation and hurled 50 feet against a tree as if it had been a child's doll house.

Four other small farm buildings and 20 beehives also were bowled over that night, and the entire yard of the house appears as if a team of bulldozers had moved over the area.

Strangely enough, however, an

old, dilapidated barn only 100 yards away was left completely untouched and other homes and farm buildings in the neighborhood also escaped unscathed.

Although no one witnessed the destruction of the eerie midnight visitor, its roar was heard by several people in the vicinity. J. Edgar Burnette, who lives near the intersection of the Lake Logan road and the McClure Creek road, said it sounded like a giant airplane flying low overhead.

Some people here in Waynesville seem to feel that "tornado" is not the correct term to describe the damaging wind that hit McClure Creek. If you don't like that word, you can choose between "whirlwind," "twister" or "cyclone." The words "hurricane" and "typhoon" also describe destructive winds, but the latter two usually arise at sea and sweep inland. Whichever term is correct, Mr.

Johnson only knows that his summer house and other buildings have been utterly demolished at a total loss to him of more than \$2,000, and none of the property was insured.

Fortunately, though, there was no loss of life because the dwelling was not occupied at the time, but if the twister had come a little later, it might have been. Mr.

Johnson said that Bob Long, who resides in the neighborhood, had planned to move up to the demolished house temporarily to do some work on the Johnson place.

Although the tornado-struck area is approximately 12 road miles from Waynesville, it's only about six or eight airline miles across Lickstone Ridge.

In this same McClure Creek val-

ley, two persons were drowned several years ago when torrential rains pouring off the east side of Lickstone Ridge swelled small creeks in the area into a flash flood.

About 26 million families in the United States take a half billion photographs every year, says the 20th Century Fund.

Dark Horse?

CORPUS CHRISTI, Tex. (AP)—Deputy Sheriff E. W. Britt, investigating an attempted safe-cracking reported:

1. Nothing was taken, although the safe's knob was knocked off.
2. The only clues were tracks outside the door—horse tracks.

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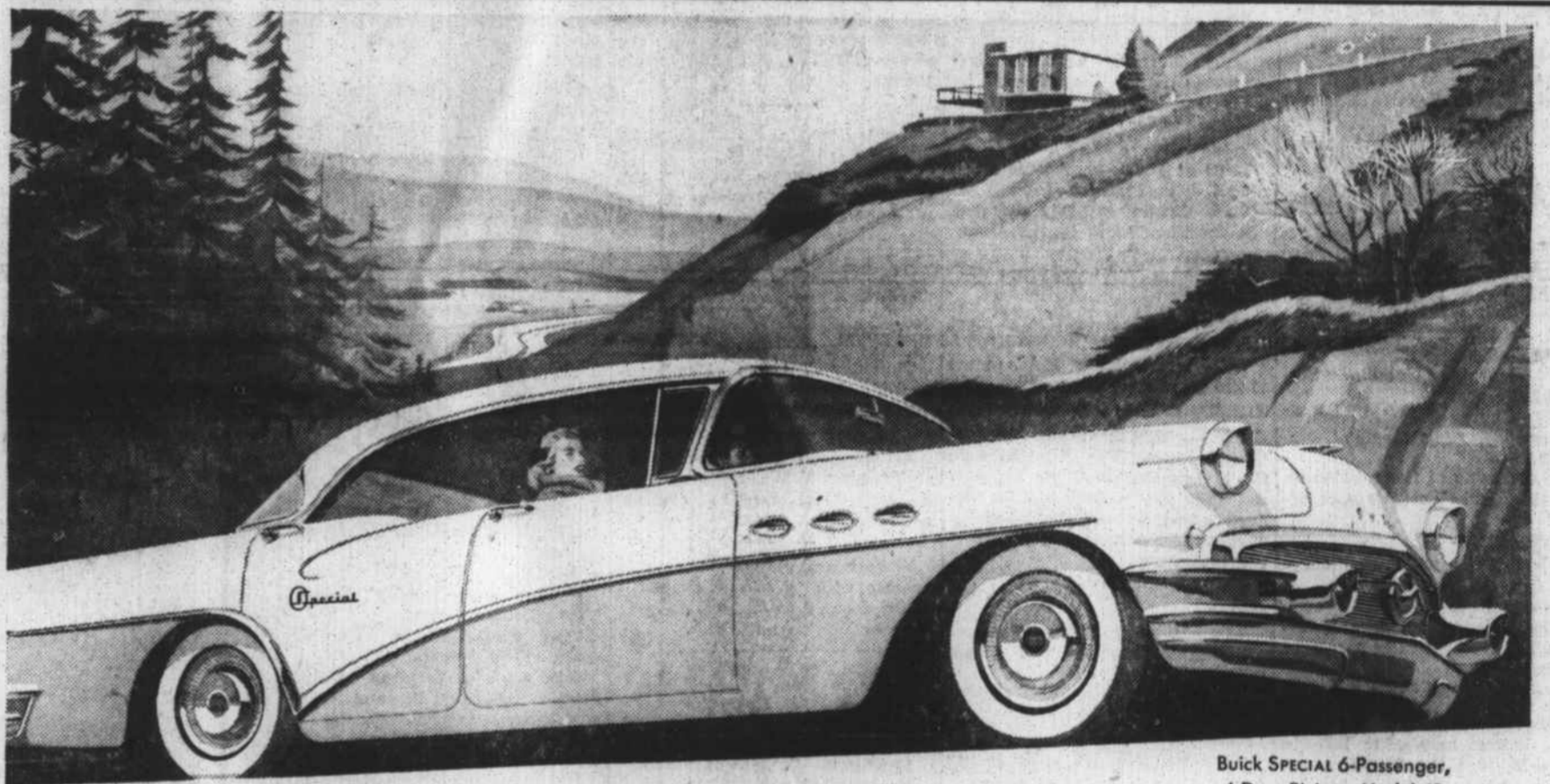
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