

THE ENTERPRISE

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Williamston, Martin County, North Carolina, Friday, May 2, 1924.

500 HOUSES DESTROYED, 1 KI AND MANY INJURED IN TORNADO

Storm Going East Sweeps Martin County Resulting in \$1,000,000 Damage

TORNADO WINDS ITS WAY THROUGH SEVERAL STATES AND FINALLY ENDS IN BERTIE COUNTY, WEDNESDAY

The most destructive Tornado that ever passed through this section of the State, struck Martin county Wednesday at 2:30 P. M. The storm entered the county at Flat Swamp church which stood near the Martin-Pitt line, and demolished the building, scattering it in every direction. From this point the tornado, causing complete destruction of all houses in its path, crossed the county, finally crossing the Roanoke river into Bertie county near Spellar's Ferry.

The storm covered a space of about 300 yards in its main path of fury and force, extending out in a feathered manner, doing much damage even out of its main path.

The course of the storm was an air line one, traveling north 65 degrees east.

The exact amount of damage will never be known but it is thought it will go over the million dollar mark for Martin county alone.

Reports received here at noon today place the total injured at seventy-five and one dead. It is estimated that 500 houses have been torn asunder or wrecked so badly that rebuilding entirely will have to be resorted to.

Though there are several persons not expected to live only one death is known, that of a colored child on a Conoho farm near the Roanoke river.

The scene is so indescribable that it is something more than a task to attempt to say how the objects in its path really look. You approach the spot where once stood a dwelling and outbuildings to find them scattered to the four winds with not one timber standing. You rush to a spot here and then there to find a family pinned down and who are suffering broken limbs and other serious wounds. After going through the waste of the home where there is scarcely a thing recognizable you wonder how its occupants escaped sudden death. Then to the farm building where you find horses, mules and cattle killed and terribly wounded. The pets, the dogs, the cats and the poultry killed and scattered in most every direction.

Truly when you behold the scenes, it sets the mind to wondering of what it means to be Master of the storms. All seem to be Unable to Describe It.

Those who were caught in the midst of the storm are all too feeble to describe it. They know, and in the twinkling of an eye they scarcely know, in a moment to realize that they have been in the midst of a great force that has swept home and friends away. Even the furniture gone and at the farm of Mr. Herbert Ward's at Conoho nothing save the pump remains.

Many of those in the worst of the path say that even the voice of the thunder was hushed by the fury of rushing wind which had the shape of enormous funnel and the appearance of fire and smoke, and the light of day shut out by the density of things.

The number of wounded in Martin county, as reported this morning, reaches the 74 mark, most of whom were colored, though a goodly number of white people were also badly hurt. Mrs. Whitehurst who lived on the Thomas Andrews' farm at Flat Swamp church suffered a broken back and her condition is considered very serious. Not far from the Andrews farm a score or more tenants on the Gray farm were injured, several very badly. Just a short way on from the Gray farm the home of Mr. Noah Thomas Leggett was destroyed and he and wife were both wounded, he suf-

fering a broken leg. Neighbors of Mr. Leggett also lost their premises. A copy of the Progressive Farmer was carried from Mr. Leggett's home to the Indian woods in Bertie county, a distance of more than 20 miles. It is also said that his Bible was also found in Bertie county.

The storm crossed the Robersonville-Oak Grove road just south of Robersonville and destroyed the buildings on the Dr. Hargrove farm. Mr. James Hyman Wynn and wife who occupied the home were each badly hurt.

The next road crossed by the tornado was at the home of Mr. W. L. House. At this point the storm took for its toll every building on the place, hardly a piece of furniture could be found afterward.

Mr. B. A. House's residence was stripped and torn considerably and every out building and tenant house on his farm was destroyed. The spot where one of his tenant houses stood looked as if it had been cleared for a tennis court.

The buildings on the Jesse Rawls farm were practically all destroyed, also those on the Dennis Rawls farm.

Read Crew in Storm
The storm struck the road crew where the new road crosses the rail road about a mile from Robersonville. There a truck was blown around, turned over and smashed to pieces. While the truck was battling the cyclone a tiny Ford car stood in the midst of the circle and was run around several times by the big truck and it suffered the loss of a top only. The large crew of men working on the road made for the ditches and escaped the fangs of the tornado, no one being hurt.

Means of Communication Shut Off
Immediately after the storm this part of the county was completely shut off from the outside world as far as telephone and telegraph service was concerned. Out of one mile of telephone poles three were left standing and the wires were threaded and woven in the trees similar to a spider web. The damage to the telephone lines alone amounting to several

hundreds of dollars while the wires of the Western Union Telegraph Co. were torn asunder and will run the damage up to thousands of dollars.

The next place in the path was the farm of Mr. G. W. Keel. Here every building was destroyed. Mr. J. T. Powell, the next neighbor was a little bit out of the main path, but lost most of his out buildings.

From this point the storm headed straight for and crossed Collier swamp, striking the old Wilson farm, where Mrs. Charlie Mobley resided. All the buildings on that farm were destroyed and Mrs. Mobley herself was seriously injured. Several small farms owned and occupied by colored people were then caught in the wake of the storm and all were flattened to the ground, but no one was seriously injured.

When the storm struck the Wilson Chapel road one colored residence was carried away and a colored church nearby was blown into the woods.

The J. E. Barnhill home, the big oak grove around it and all the outbuildings were laid waste. A colored child on this farm was seriously injured and some doubt as to its recovery is expressed by doctors.

The Noah Hogard and Ed Peel farms were then struck and the buildings scattered in every direction. Mr. Peel's horse was killed and a male caught under a building, was perhaps ruined.

The farm belonging to Anderson and Harrell was next visited by the sweeping tornado and one or two dwellings were destroyed along with the outbuildings. James Hodges, one of the colored tenants had his leg broken and suffered other injuries.

Nine Homes Destroyed in 1 Spot
Including the dwelling on the Anderson and Harrell farm there were nine homes to be completely destroyed in sight of each other. The house occupied by Mack Baker was completely swept away save the floor of the house. Baker's wife was ill with pneumonia and was being nursed by Litha Roberson another colored woman. The Roberson woman was seriously wounded, she receiving a dangerous skull wound, while Baker's wife was unhurt by the storm. The Mary Cherry farm was next swept and practically every building on it was torn down, the dwelling occupied by Mr. Charlie Cowan damaged less than the others, but was almost ruined. The teams on this farm had been rushed to a large shelter where one mule was thrown under the falling mass but came out without serious injury. John Furvis an old colored man had his ankle crushed and suffered many other cuts and bruises. Furvis's son was hurt internally while attending the teams. No less than half a dozen dwellings on the Cherry farm were destroyed.

Some of Mr. J. E. Harrison's out houses were damaged but not destroyed.

On Mr. Herbert Ward's Conoho farm every building was swept away, also some of the buildings owned by Mr. J. E. Roberson on the adjoining farm were torn entirely down, one of them recently having been built. Henderson Norfleet, the colored tenant on Mr. Ward's farm and his wife were literally blown away.

Child Blown Away
The six day old infant was taken out of its parents arms and carried away and was discovered about dark in a piece of a bed mattress and a pile of feed hay. It was living when found but died shortly afterward.

The only thing left standing on the Ward farm was the pump. Another tenant on a Conoho farm, Peter Casor had his skull crushed but is still living and an aunt of Casor's, Maggie Ward and who lived with him had her leg broken.

Course of Storm
The general course of the storm seemed to have commenced in Alabama, passing through Georgia, South Carolina. Yet this particular tornado apparently made up a few miles south of Bethel, doing considerable damage in Pitt county before reaching Martin.

Uniformity in Width
One of the remarkable things about the storm was its extreme uniformity in width and force, apparently maintaining as much uniformity as a piece of ribbon.

People in Distress
The local people are really in distress, everything gone, nothing to eat, nothing to wear, no bed upon which to sleep and no shelter for themselves nor for their stock.

Rebuilding Already Commenced
Neighbors by the hundreds from neighboring communities are flocking to the scenes of destruction with saws and hammers, and helping to get together the twisted timbers and building sheds for the corn and such scattered hay and feed stuffs as may be left.

CITIZENS AND COMMISSIONERS MEET JOINTLY

To Render Aid To Victims of Tornado Wednesday

Yesterday afternoon at the Court House at four o'clock a joint meeting of the citizens and the County Commissioners was held to determine upon methods to relieve the victims of the tornado which occurred the day before.

The county commissioners appropriated one thousand dollars as an immediate relief fund to render medical assistance to the sufferers and for food and shelter for those without food and shelter. Dr. Biggs was selected as chairman of a relief committee and he is to call upon anyone that he needs to determine the greatest needs of those who were victims in the vicinity around Williamston and to find all those who are in need of medical and hospital treatment and see that they are cared for. A chairman and a committee from the town of Robersonville has been selected by their people to take care of the situation up there and the County will see that they are rendered the proper assistance.

At the meeting it was also decided that although the county is taking care of the situation for the present, a committee will be named in a few days who will go around and solicit old furniture and clothing for those who sustained total losses. And for the next few days if the people of the county would find something that could be used for either purpose it will greatly benefit those who have nothing left of either their wearing apparel or their household goods.

For the next few miles the course of the tornado was through the Roanoke river swamp and huge trees were torn down and they covered the ground for miles. It crossed the river at Spellar's ferry and blew down four houses on the Wesson farm and several colored tenants were wounded. Gordon Douglas, a colored man got his leg broken and so badly lacerated that he was taken to the Washington Hospital where it was found to be necessary to have his leg amputated.

Dr. Dave Taylor, who did the amputating, inquired of the man something of the effects of the storm and how his patient was hurt and to which he replied, "We boys ran to help get father out of the house and I was caught under the falling timbers." That sound rather queer to the doctor, judging from the appearance of his informant, one boy, so he asked him his age. He said that he was eighty-four and that his father was one hundred and six.

When the Duke of Windsor pays another visit, we will ask him how old his subjects get before they die.

Storm Ends in Bertie
The fury of the storm seemed to break soon after entering Bertie and little damage was done in that county.

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TRI-COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY MEETS HERE

Two Local Doctors Made Officers of the Society

The meeting of the Tri-county Medical Society for Beaufort-Pitt and Martin counties was held here last evening in the Masonic Hall. The meeting was the largest ever held here of its kind, there being present about sixty doctors.

J. H. Saunders, a local doctor, was made President and W. E. Warren another of Williamston's doctors was selected secretary of the society at the meeting last night.

All the discussions and papers were well received. The talk of Dr. Dickson was on hospitals and tended to make a Martin county citizen think that we, too, need a hospital, and that we can have one if we will.

The Society passed a resolution inviting the doctors of Bertie and Washington counties to join the Association.

The new officers for the coming year are, J. H. Saunders, President, Williamston, N. C.; Dr. D. I. Taylor of Washington, Vice-president and Dr. Wm. E. Warren of Williamston, Secretary.

The program for the meeting follows: Invocation, Rev. E. D. Dadd. Address of Welcome, Mayor J. L. Hassell.

Response to Address of Welcome, Dr. Chas. O.H. Laughinghouse, of Greenville.

The Treatment of Sore Legs and Ulcers, Dr. W. H. Dixon of Ayden, N. C. Iritis, Dr. H. W. Carter, Washington, N. C.

Inguinal Hernia, Dr. D. T. Taylor, Jr., Washington. Paper, Subject unannounced, Dr. E. T. Dickinson, Greenville.

A most appetizing menu was served

NOT TOO LATE TO ENTER CONTEST

The missing word contest which is being staged by this paper continues to be a source of interest to many. Out of the several hundred beginners only twelve have failed to keep the faith. At present there are thirty contestants tied for first place, all having missed one or more words. The contest manager states that if there should be a tie of not more than two persons, each will receive \$10, and that this will have no effect on the other prizes—this is, of course, provided there should happen to be a tie. This issue marks the fourth installment of the contest page and if you have failed to send an answer in, there are chances of winning. Ten dollars is worth reading after, then if you should happen to miss the first number it is followed by a five spot and so on down.

ROSE MAIDEN ENJOYED BY ALL WHO ATTENDED

The Rose Maiden, given by the McDowell Club of Washington, under the direction of Mrs. Mark Swingley, was enjoyed by all those who heard it.

It was a cantata that would appeal to all music lovers. Several of the solos and duets were rendered beautifully. Mrs. J. S. Rhodes of Williamston sang very well a solo just after the prelude. The duet of Mr. and Mrs. Swingley was especially good and as were the solos of Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Carter and Messrs. Swingley and Gardner.

The following Williamston members of the club appeared in the choruses, Mrs. Wheeler Martin, Jr., Mrs. V. H. Biggs, Misses Vella Andrews and Carrie Dell White, Mrs. L. C. Bennett and Mrs. J. S. Rhodes. Many Williamston people attended.

Mr. L. B. Culpepper of Elizabeth City was in town this morning in the interest of the Culpepper Hardware Company of that city.

Messrs. Julius S. Peel and Miles Wolf attended the Rose Maiden last night in Washington.

Hardware Store To Open Here June 1st.

S. S. MANN SPEAKS AT COURT HOUSE

Hon. Samuel S. Mann, candidate for Congress spoke in the Court House last night. Mr. Mann comes from the good county of Hyde, which has been used in the past mostly for its food supplies. It has never had the opportunity to rise in the political field. Hyde county has been designated as being the smoke house and corn crib of North Carolina, but it has never furnished a congressman. It is located on the outskirts of the district and has been an isolated territory for some time but is now progressing rapidly. It cannot be said, however that Hyde has not produced some very fine citizens.

Mr. Mann has never held any office other than acting a senator in the Senate of the State Legislature. He is by profession a lawyer and a farmer. Based on a farm and knows the needs of the citizens of his district. Mr. Mann is 57 years old, active, mature and well poised.

Mr. Mann's ideas as gathered from his speech are that the government should not only continue but should enlarge its activities in road building, extension of the mail service, the reclamation of the waste land of the nation, irrigation and drainage.

He stands square on the principles of the democratic party and has ever maintained its principles. He is making his own campaign and is much gratified at the support he is receiving in every part of the district. He says, however, that regardless of whether or not he loses he is still a democrat.

Mr. Mann will speak in Robersonville tonight at eight o'clock.

KING HEZABUB TO HOLD COURT TONIGHT AT EPWORTH LEAGUE MEETING

An Hour's Fun in Store For Those Who Attend, Small Admissions. Free to be Charged.

The Epworth Leagues of the Methodist church have an hour of fun in store for you this evening at 8 o'clock when King Hezabub holds court. The King has an attack of melancholia resulting from his strenuous executive exertions. He calls for the merry makers. The nonsensical stunts which follow will drive away our gloom as it does that of the King. All these stunts are yours for the admission of ten cents. After the stage performances ice cream, cake, candy and sandwiches will be sold in an attractive little tea room. You are sure to find just the apron, centerpiece or other domestic article you have been wanting in the variety booth.

This evening enterprise is an attempt to make our treasury properly clothe our adopted orphan child, and then send two delegates to the Merchants conference in June. You cannot spend your change more profitably than at the Masonic Hall tonight.

SERVICES AT THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH Sunday, May 4th.

Holy Communion 8 a. m. Church school 9:45 a. m. Morning prayer and sermon 11 a. m. Evening prayer and sermon 7:45 p. m. Everybody welcome.

J. E. WARNER, Priest.

STRAND THEATRE

Williamston, N. C. MONDAY

(One night only) Mae Murray in "JAZZMANIA"

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY "DAUGHTERS OF TODAY"

Come on the the "party". The Jazz Band's playing and waltz youth is having its fling.

Wine from strange glasses! Kisses from strange lips! Wags youth trends on dangerous paths in its mad pursuit of thrills.

Show starts 8:30 p. m.