
**Probable Tornado
Strathroy - Lambeth, Ontario
June 23, 1944**

Date- Local: Friday, June 23rd, 1944

UTC: Friday, June 23rd, 1944

Time- Local: 1600

UTC: 2000

Location: NW of Strathroy - Lambeth

Region: Sarnia - Lambton

Classification: Probable Tornado

Category: B

Casualties: 1

Track Length: 52890 m

Width: 1620 m

Motion: 288 degrees

Damage Estimate: \$1 million

F-Scale Rating: F3

Code: UH, BS

Damage Survey: Yes

Spotter Reports: Yes

Other Documents:

Document outlining the sequence of events, descriptions from witness, and the damages sustained

Letter from Mr. Andy Stokman who had spoken with had spoken with local citizens with information on the event

Newspaper articles

Detailed map of tornado track and damage locations

Newark summary sheet

Tornado F-Scale Assessment

Brad L. Rousseau

Tornado Data Production Assistant, Environment Canada
January 26th, 2011

Classification: Probable Tornado

Date: Friday, June 23rd, 1944

Location: NW of Strathroy – Lambeth, Sarnia - Lambton Region

Assessment: F3

F-Code: UH, BS

Explanation of Assessment: Brick house was destroyed and barns were demolished or damaged.

SJS

Summary Sheet

IDTO - ID Number :694402
 AUTH - Report Author :
 TYFU - Tornado Type & Fuji Code :a3
 TITL - Report Title or Location :Strathroy to Lambeth
 PROV - Province :Ontario
 COUN - Counties :Lambton/Middlesex
 REFS - References :Strathroy Age-Dispatch
 August 15, 1979 Strathroy Age-Dispatch June 29, 1944, GM June
 24, 26, 1944
 ZOTO - Touchdown Zone Number & Easting :17425400
 NOTO - Touchdown Northing :4766720
 LOVA - Touchdown Error Value & Code :30c
 DADA - Date of Data Entry :12/06/1990
 ZOLO - Liftoff Zone Number & Easting :17475800
 NOLO - Liftoff Northing :4750700
 UPVA - Liftoff Error Value & Code :158r
 DEAD - Number of Fatalities :1
 HURT - Number of People Injured :
 HERT - Injuries Code :2
 DATA - Date of Tornado :23/06/1944
 DAVA - Date Error Value & Code :
 TITO - Time of Tornado :1500
 TIMR - Time Meridian :75
 TIVA - Time Error Value & Code :15c
 AXDA - Maximum Path Width :
 AXVA - Max. Path Width Error & Code :
 AVDA - Average Damage Width :1610
 AVVA - Avg. Damage Width Error & Code :5c
 SADA - Sample Damage Width :
 SAVA - Sample Damage Width Error & Code:
 INTO - Initials :JAM
 DFTO - Detailed Report Flag :n
 JUNK - PRDA & DIMO & DALE : 1000
 CODA - Property Damage Code :
 MISC - ORDE,PICS_TYPE,PICS_AVAIL,COCO :1112
 MANY - Multiple Event Flag :n

MEMO:Brick houses destroyed, houses damaged. Barns damaged or destroyed. Windmills blown down. Widespread damage in area. One death result of person being struck by flying timbers.

PHEN - Associated Phenomena :
 TSHP - Townships :Warwick/Adelaide/Caradoc/
 Lobo/Delaware/Westminster

JAM, 12/06/1990

694402

A

TORNADO PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

F=3

ONT

1. DATE AND TIME JUNE 23, 1944 LAT 1500 EST

2. LOCATION OR PATH
(attach map) NW OF STRATHROY TO JUST S OF LAMBETH
694402
~~694401~~ (NW-SE)

3. PATH LENGTH ☐ NOT KNOWN ☐ <1mi; ☐ 1-4mi; ☐ 5-10mi; ☒ 11-50mi; ☐ LENGTH IF >50mi

4. PATH WIDTH 1 MILE 5. TORNADO PART OF SQUALL LINE? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN: 52.9 km

6. ANY UNUSUAL COLORATION? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☒ UNKNOWN

7. ANY UNUSUAL SOUND? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☒ UNKNOWN

8. IF ANSWER TO 6 OR 7 YES, ELABORATE;

9. LIST ANY ASSOCIATED PHENOMENA
(Such as hail, vivid lightning heavy rain, no rain, etc.)

10. TOTAL DAMAGE ESTIMATE \$ 1,000,000 11. TOTAL DEATHS /

12. TOTAL INJURED Several 13. TOTAL HOMELESS 0

14. LIST ALL REFERENCES
STRATHROY. AGE-DISPATCH, AUG 15, 1979
GLOBE + MAIL, TORONTO JUNE 24, 1944
STRATHROY AGE DISPATCH JUNE 29, 1944

15. SUMMARIZE REMARKS PERTAINING TO (a) FUNNEL; (b) INTERESTING OR CAPRICIOUS EVENTS.

(a) a number of golfers saw "it" coming.

(b) Brick homes demolished, Paine's school wrecked. Archie Paine, a farmer, struck by flying timbers and killed.

WORKSHEET JUNE 23, 1944 (STRATHROY - LAMBETH)
IDTO 694402

① ORIGIN x 17425400
 y 4766720

⑤ ^{30-m C} Standard Error S_x

② LIFT-OFF x_1 17475800
 y_1 4750700

⑥ ^{158m R (l 1000 w 300)} Standard Error S_y

③ $(x_1 - x) = 50400$

④ $(y - y_1) = 16020$

⑦ DAMAGE LENGTH

$L = [(x_1 - x)^2 + (y - y_1)^2]^{1/2}$

③ + ④ $\rightarrow r, \theta = 52885 \text{ m}$

$x \leftrightarrow y = 18^\circ$

⑨ Standard Error $S_L = (S_x^2 + S_y^2)^{1/2}$

⑤ + ⑥ $\rightarrow r, \theta = 161 \text{ m R}$

⑩ $\beta = \frac{\tan^{-1} S_L}{L}$

⑦ + ⑨ $\rightarrow r, \theta$
 $x \leftrightarrow y = 0.17^\circ$

NE Quad $\phi = 90 - \alpha$

NW Quad $\phi = 270 + \alpha$

SW Quad $\phi = 270 - \alpha$

SE Quad $\phi = 90 + \alpha$

⑪ $\phi = 288^\circ$

From MS Runnalls. (519) 876-5501
on Oct 27/80, by P. E. Linn.

Damage occurred on the farm of
Harold Auld. LOT 13, CON 4 N.E.R. Warwick
Township by a tornado in about 1945.
Believe this to be the tornado of
June 23 1944, which continued on to
Caradoc Township.

12.35 Glengarry Hall,
University of Guelph,
Sept. 21 1981.

Dear Mike:

In the past week I talked with people who knew some more information about the June 23 1944 tornado. They were not sure where the origin of the tornado was, however, they said it started somewhere in Lambton County. One farmer whose name was Hawkins sustained severe damage in his sugar bush on the Middlesex-Lambton County line where the 402 highway is now. The tornado followed a path where the 402 is until it reached Irwin Carruthers farm where it curved down to 2nd line south of adelaide township. Also number 34 (Bert Frank) lived in the house at 4758000 m line and the road just east of highway 81. I put an ad in the London Free Press and got a response from a gentleman in London. He did not know anything about the Strathroy tornado but he did know a fair bit about a tornado that apparently happened some time in 1945. He said this tornado caused damage in Windsor and then it skipped its way towards London and north of Kintore. It caused extensive damage in the places where it touched down and caused two deaths. You probably have a file on this tornado but if you want some more information call Lorne at 439-8584. He does not know the exact date of the tornado but he does know the year is 1945 because he has pictures of some of the damage. Another thing I found out about the tornado in Strathroy was that it occurred at about 4:00 pm. If I get any more information I'll inform you.

Sincerely

Andy Stokman
Andy Stokman

P.S. I hope the Niagara Forecast program is still running smoothly.

MORE THAN 40 BARNS WRECKED SCORE OF HOMES DAMAGED. ARCHIE PAINE
FATALLY INJURED

198

Twenty mile swath one mile wide from north of Strathroy to Lambeth devastated by twister in eight minutes. Damage in town was comparatively light. Heaviest losses along second line south in Adelaide. Children had only left Paine's school half an hour before building was wrecked. Thousands of trees smashed into splinters. Government may give some assistance to heaviest losers.

In the brief space of 8 minutes late on Friday afternoon the most devastating cyclone that has ever struck this district caused more than a million dollars damage, wrecked more than 40 barns, smashed a score of homes and left thousands of trees broken and splintered.

Starting 3 miles northwest of Strathroy the storm cut a path a mile wide to a point just south of Lambeth. The heaviest loss was along the second line of Adelaide south where scarcely a building escaped. Barn roofs and timbers were scattered over fields for 100 yards and many of the big trees which were uprooted had big sections of corrugated iron roofing wrapped right around them by the force of the wind.

Dan McIntyre of Appin M.L.A. for South Middlesex said he would take up with the government the matter of securing assistance for those who had suffered heaviest losses and Robert McCubbin, M.P. is taking the matter up at Ottawa.

Beggars Description

The damage was so general and so heavy in the sections which felt the fury of the twister that it is impossible to realize what happened without seeing it. In many cases huge trees fell over houses. In other places half of a house was blown away. Most of the barns hit were reduced to splintered timbers. Thousands of trees were blown down, many of the larger ones being twisted into splintered chunks.

Roads and highways were blocked and power and telephone lines went down into the debris when trees, poles and wires fell.

After surveying the destruction, most people expressed amazement that only one life was lost. The victim was Archie Paine, one of the best known farmers of Adelaide township who died from injuries suffered when timbers flying from one of his wrecked buildings, struck him.

Many Narrow Escapes

Many narrow escapes were reported. At the golf Club several members were playing when they saw the storm coming up. Young John Pickard, 15-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. H.J. Pickard, was sitting in the club house. The players advised him to come with them in their car and a few seconds later a big tree crashed down where the boy had been and toppled the building over, smashing it badly.

At the home of Alton Oliver, on Front St. East, a big tree fell across the roof and tore away a corner. Mrs. Oliver and her small daughter were uninjured.

At the home of Alex Ferguson the whole top section of the two-storey brick house was blown away. Mrs. Ferguson and her three children were in the kitchen and went into a front room just a few seconds before the kitchen was blown away. Mrs. Ferguson had been washing a new 97 place set of dishes and had put them on a table. After the storm all she could find was 13 of the dishes.

Buried Under Stove

Glenn Wilton, 11, had his arm bruised, his only injury during minutes of terror when he was buried beneath the stove in wreckage of a kitchen in the home of his aunt, Mrs. Oscar Harnett, Wife of a soldier away with the Canadian Army. William Kenning, a neighbor, plunged into the twisted timbers to release the lad.

Three calves, a sow and about 10 little pigs were trapped in the junk which was the Elmon Zavitz barn, just east of Strathroy. Close by stood the Zavitz house, its roof torn off. In the barnyard a young bull stood bellowing trailing a length of broken chain from his nose-ring.

Barn Flattened

The barn of George Rivers was flattened and across an adjoining field was all that was left of the double-brick home of Alton Shannon. Apparently a suction created by the whirling winds had caused the east wall to explode outward leaving furniture and magazines lying within undisturbed. Most of the second floor was knocked off and a polished newel post marked the highest point left standing. The barn here was wrecked and the barnyard was littered with the bodies of dozens of dead chickens.

Rural Damage Heavy

With more than forty barns completely wrecked and scores of homes partially wrecked, the damage in rural sections may reach 250,000. Comparitively little wind insurance was carried, it is stated, although a few farmers had amounts up to \$2,000. Several farmers had only allowed wind insurance policies to lapse.

District buildings damaged and estimates of losses follow:

Concession 2 Adelaide;

- ⑦ — Farm owned by Clarence Fuller, with R.C. Demarey, tenant; cattle barn and windmill, \$1,000.
- ⑥ — Farm owned by Archie Muxlow with Mrs. Graham Alderson, tenant; two barns and damage to house, \$3,000.
- ⑧ — Richard Down, roofs off two barns, other damage to buildings and fruit trees, \$1,000.
- ⑩ — H. Eastman, reeve of Adelaide township; damage to three barns, two chicken houses, colony house and damage to the farmhouse, estimated \$5,000.
- ② — Joseph Petch, chiefly damage to orchard, \$500.
- ⑤ — LAC. M. Bice, now serving overseas, wife living on farm, estimated \$600.
- ③ — Farm owned by Avery Thompson, resident of the United States and formerly owned by Fred Trower, owner of Grattan Bars, \$1,000.
- ④ — Cpl. Witford Petch, R.A.F., serving overseas, wife living on farm, \$2,500.

Had Freak Escape

- (15) — F. Rawlinson, by freak of storm this farm escaped almost unscathed.
- (11) — J. Hendra, barn demolished, \$3,000.
- (18) — A. Campbell, now living in western Canada, barn down, \$3,000.
- (17) — D.J. Campbell, barn down and houses shifted almost at right angles on foundation, \$3,000.
- (19) — H. Harris, two barns down, house damaged, \$3,500.
- (9) — L. Knight, barn and driveshed destroyed, \$2,500.
- (16) — R. Hendra, barn and henhouse, \$1,500.
- (12) — Wilfred Down, six barns destroyed or partially destroyed, one house partially destroyed, another damaged, \$8,000.
- (13) — C. Sisson, barn demolished, henhouse destroyed, house damaged, \$3,000.
- (14) — B. Down, two barns down, house damaged, \$3,000.
- (20) — George Ward, barn down, house partially destroyed, \$5,000.

School Badly Damaged

- (21) — Paine School teacher, Mrs. Evelyn Clifton (14 students); \$3,000 damage less salvage room of ruins.
- (24) — Farm of Archie Paine where the owner was fatally injured: Property damage estimated at \$4,000 including barn and milkhouse.
- (23) — Frank Petch, one barn down, \$1,500.
- (1) —> Irwin Carrothers, \$500.

Mill Road Damage

- (33) — J. and G. Bogue, house and barn damaged, sugar bush mangled, \$10,800.
Charles Thompson, of Christina, owner, F. Durstan, tenant, one room of the house caved in, roof largely destroyed, \$1,500.
- (32) — A.R. Thompson, barn, front porch and windows of house demolished, \$1,000.
H. Letzens, of Port Huron, Mich., owner, cottage now vacant, largely wrecked, damage about \$800.
W. Dowding, barn demolished, roof and windows of house smashed \$1,500.

Duncan McLelland, age 81, roof and side of house torn off, garage and chicken coop leveled, \$4,000.

E.R. McNeil, roof off house, henhouse "missing" many chickens killed, damage \$500.

Mark Massie, roof off barn, chimneys off house. milkwagon damaged when thrown 25 yards by wind, haywagon, \$500.

(34) — Bert Frank, barn flattened, roof of house damaged, \$1,000.

On Highway 81

(25) — Liol Douglas, barn smashed, turkey brooder house destroyed, shed verandas and windows on house damaged and another barn leveled, chimneys damaged, at ^{least} 200 turkeys killed or missing, \$7,000.

(27) — Alex Ferguson, brick house in ruins, barn leveled, \$5,000.
Alton Shannon, age 70, house in ruins, barn destroyed, \$4,300.

(26) — T.W. Douglas, two barns, shed and henhouse down, house damaged, \$4,000.

A.B. Douglas, barn and two chicken houses destroyed, house severely damaged with walls bulging out, \$2,000.

(28) — W.C. Holland, chimneys, roof and windows damaged in house; roof off two barns, \$1,000.

(31) — Gordon Bolton, barn down, \$1,500.

(30) — William Eddie, barn and brooder house wrecked, roofs off henhouse and damage to home, \$1500.

Mrs. Morley Petch, widow, roof damaged, grove of shade trees knocked down, small building demolished, \$800.

Road West From Highway

(29) — W.H. Bramley, roof off house, henhouse moved 10 feet off brick foundations, which were demolished, \$1,000.

Caradoc Township

(36) — Elmon Zavitz, barn destroyed, house severely damaged, sugar bush decimated, \$5,000.

- (38) — Stewart McNeil, woodlot severely damaged, slight damage to roof of house, \$1500.

Other Losses

- (62) — Norris Brody, River road, Delaware township, apple and shade trees uprooted, barn damaged.
- (61) — George Blanchard, Komoka sideroad, 30 fruit and shade trees uprooted; barn slightly damaged.
- (59) — Mrs. Percy Seabrook, Komoka side road. 15 shade trees uprooted; several windows broken.
- Douglas Weld, Komoka side road, 55 shade trees lost.
- (58) — Albert Spence, Con. 2, Lobo, 10 fruit trees, chimney down, large henhouse lost, damage \$1,000.
- Mrs. Len Smith, Con. 2, Lobo, barn roof lost, 30 fruit trees uprooted. Loss over \$3,000.
- Raywood Smith, Komoka side road, half of barn leveled.
- (57) — J.B. Frank, Con. 3, Lobo, several fruit trees lost.
- (55) — Donald Janes, Con. 3, Lobo, 25 acres of demonstration woodlot heavily damaged.
- (56) — Ross Campbell, Con. 3, Lobo, 200 acres of bush heavily damaged.
- (60) — Arthur Melott, Con. 2, Lobo, roof off barn, some timber damage.
- (63) — Bill Giles, Con. 3, Delaware, slight barn damage.
- Robert Laird, Con. 3, Delaware, eight fruit trees and chimney lost.
- (51) — Graham, ^{Bolton} Con. 6, Caradoc, barn lost, damage \$2,000.
- (50) — Dan Fletcher, Con. 6, Caradoc, barn leveled; many fruit and shade trees uprooted.
- (43) — Duncan McNeil, Con. 8, Caradoc, 440 hard maples lost.

Two Barns Leveled

- (48) — Frank Nagle, Con. 7, Caradoc, two barns leveled, implements damaged, six acres of hard maples lost, Damage \$8,000 or more.
- (49) — Duncan Campbell, Con. 7, Caradoc, windows shattered, orchard leveled.

Elton Stevens, Con. four, Delaware, large barn destroyed, several trees and small sheds. Damage \$4,000 or more.

Sid Kemp, Con. three, Delaware, barn partially destroyed.

(42) — D.A. Crawford, Con. nine, Caradoc, bank barn and two large sheds, \$5,000 or more.

(41) — John T. Crawford, ex-warden of county, Con. nine, Caradoc, lost barn and other buildings. Damage more than \$5,000.

Ex-Warden's Loss

(44) — John A. Crawford, also and ex-warden of county, Con. eight, Caradoc, lost barn and smaller buildings. Damage \$5,000 or more.

(39) — Fred Berdan, con. nine, Caradoc, lost roof of home, half of barn and shed. Damage over \$3,000.

(40) — Duncan McLean, con. nine, Caradoc, windmill lost, plaster in home shaken down.

J. Evison, con. eight, Caradoc, orchard lost.

(45) — John McNeil, con. eight, Caradoc, two bank barns leveled. Loss over \$8,000.

(46) — D.A. McNeil, con. eight, Caradoc, 25 acres of woodlot loss, some damage to house and barn.

(47) — Bill Regans, con. eight, Caradoc, barn damage and trees uprooted.

(37) — Russell Thompson, 16th sideroad, Caradoc, barn leveled and orchard destroyed.

Sheep Killed

(53) — John McBain, con. six, Caradoc, barn and other buildings lost, 15 sheep killed, damage over \$5,000.

(54) — Colin Wernham, con. six, Caradoc, heavy damage to barn and other buildings, fruit trees leveled.

(52) — J.C. Henderson, con. six, Caradoc, orchard lost. Damage to home.
H.C. Mason, con. four, Westminster, barn roof lost milk house and chicken house overturned.

Samuel Kilbourne, Talbot road, Lambeth, two barns lost, loss \$5,000.

- (65) — Joseph White, Talbot road, two barns lost, damage about \$5,000.
(64) — Harold Thornicroft, No. 2 highway, barn heavily damaged.
William Deadman, Lambeth, windmill, house slightly damaged.
A.A. MacFarlane, Lambeth, barn damaged.

Cyclone Victim Has Big Funeral

Hundreds From Town And District Attended Services For Late Archie Paine

One of the most largely attended funerals ever held in this district was that of Archie Paine on Tuesday afternoon. Hundreds of people from town and district attended the services conducted at the family residence, Lot 20, Concession 2, Adelaide township, by Rev. R. R. Conner, pastor of Strathroy United Church.

During the services a quartette composed of Harvey Ward, Nelson Johnson, Douglas Manning and Frank Beatty sang "Peace Be Still."

Pall bearers were Calvin Lewis, Wm. McDonald, Clifford Ward and A. Fred and J. Paine. Interment was made in Strathroy cemetery.

Terribly Injured

Mr. Paine, who was one of the best known and highly esteemed farmers of the district, met death under the most tragic circumstances in the cyclone on Friday afternoon which wrecked the buildings on his property. As he was making his way towards his house after the storm broke, a timber from one of his smashed buildings broke both his legs. With wreckage all along the roads some difficulty was experienced by Cecil Denning in getting through with his ambulance. He got as close as he could but even then it was necessary to carry Mr. Paine on a door nearly a mile through the woods and when he reached the ambulance he was given first aid by a neighbor. Miss Galbraith, who was a former nurse.

Rushed To London

As hydro was cut off at the local hospital owing to the storm, it was decided to rush him to London. He passed away soon after reaching Victoria Hospital. Coroner E. L. Hodgins found that death had resulted from hemorrhages, the fracture of both legs and shock.

Mr. Paine, who was in his 64th year, was born in Adelaide township and was a son of John and Matilda Paine. He attended the United Church. Besides his wife, Mrs. Christina Paine, he is survived by one son, Ormand, of Adelaide township; a daughter, Thelma, in Fort Francis; two brothers, Wilbert, of Embury, Allan in the Air Force at North Battleford, Saskatchewan, and one sister, Jessie, of Toronto.

Help Those Whose Homes And Barns Were Wrecked In Cyclone

At a special meeting of the Council on Monday evening, it was decided, on motion of Chairman Walter Bolton of the Finance Committee, seconded by Deputy-Reeve Campbell MacKinlay, to send the following resolution to Prime Minister Mackenzie King at Ottawa:

"We hereby request immediate consideration of assistance to sufferers in the cyclone area of West Middlesex. Financial help, materials and army engineers from London or Camp Ipperwash are urgently needed. A survey estimates damage exceeding \$1,000,000. We believe the Dominion Government is the only body that can supply the adequate help needed now." The telegram to Premier King was signed by Mayor Arnold C. Anderson.

Assessments Explained

Messrs. Mogg and Quinlap, whose report on the equalization of assessments for Middlesex was recently accepted by the County Council were present and discussed increased assessments made in Strathroy and explained in detail how they are arrived at.

They have offered to take over and work out the assessments for the town furnishing a detailed loose leaf system that can be used from year to year for \$2,000 and this matter will be decided at the regular meeting of the Council on Monday evening.

Mr. Mogg told Council that two appeals against the County equalization have been entered, one by London township and one by Westminster township. They are not satisfied to have Judge Wearing hear the appeal so a special Court must be appointed to adjudicate the matter.

A special meeting of the County Council was held Wednesday night to pass the bylaw under section 90 to avoid litigation costs.

Values Were High

As far as Strathroy is concerned the last equalization, he said, was made in 1927 when values were high, especially farm values. As the trend was from rural to urban centres, Strathroy basis was 70 per cent. Business and income assessments business was \$149,580. The equalized were not considered and at this time total was \$1,797, 330.

Since then increase is about \$200,000. The county assessment at this time was \$53,333,099. This meant an 8 mill rate. Strathroy should be assessed at \$2,114,505 and if this was done the town would get a two mill subsidy.

LATE ARCHIE PAINE

well known farmer of the Second Line, Adelaide, who died from injuries he suffered in the cyclone which wrecked buildings on his property.

and far to view the damage. The scene gave some idea of how bombed areas must appear. Words can give scant idea of it, and even pictures not much. Nature just took a deep breath and in eight minutes or so, a wide swath through the countryside completely wrecked the scene of rural prosperity, the life-time work of many a family, and the growth of wood-lot which had been several human lifetimes in developing.

Huge Trees Snapped

Huge trees were broken off as casually as we could break a tooth pick with our fingers. They were torn up by the roots, leaving scars the size of a house. What had been peaceful, green woods were a tangle of splintered trunks, stark against the horizon.

Barns were robbed of their roofs which were draped over fences everywhere barns were lifted off foundations, and stacked up in a pile of splinters, often with the hay which had been in the mows, left intact on the foundation. Cattle were dead in the stalls or fields where the storm overtook them. Turkeys and chickens were scattered around like so many feathers after a plucking bee. The wrenching, twisting motion of the storm was everywhere to be noted. A few rods away from the worst devastations, in many instances, comparatively little damage was done.

Many Homes Wrecked

Even more pathetic were the wrecked homes, where tragedy hit so viciously, on a day which promised earlier to be just like any other happy, busy summer day. All hearts have sympathy for the families to whom the storm brought bereavement, sorrow and loss. There were little children saved by a miracle—brought by their mother to the kitchen, which a few minutes later was the only part of the strongly built house which was left standing. Pupils had left a school-house, which was wrecked in the storm, only a short time before the storm broke.

Traffic on all roadways was blocked, first by the blinding, sluicing rain, and then by trees which had fallen across roadways from both sides. Those who were caught in the storm will never forget it. With Nature in an uproar of thunder, lightning and wind all around them, they could do little but stay in their cars and pray.

After The Storm

After the storm, when the sun

came out once more, and the wind came down to what at most times would be considered very strong, but to them seemed like a mere zephyr compared with what had proceeded, the drivers crept carefully back to their homes by what routes they could find. In one case it meant a thirty-eight mile drive in place of what would normally be three miles.

Right in town, the worst part in the north and east. In that section roofs were smashed in by crashing trees, a sun porch was taken off as though by giant shears. All over town branches were torn off, windows blown in, gardens flattened.

The district has had many a bad storm, and at least one other tornado but no storm here ever left such a trail of damage as this eight-minute twister of June 23, 1944.

Council's Appeal Bringing Results

**Soldiers To Help Repair Damage
And Federal And Provincial
Governments May Assist**

The lead taken by Mayor Arnold C. Anderson and members of the Strathroy council in appealing directly to Prime Minister King for help for sufferers in the cyclone has produced prompt and very satisfactory results.

In their telegram to the prime minister they asked for financial assistance, materials, help in the release of lumber etc. for rebuilding homes and barns and skilled labor in the form of Army engineers from Upperwash or London.

Late developments are that soldiers will be sent to the district to help farmers and others who need it as soon as Middlesex County Council formulates a work plan. The discussed the matter at a special meeting last night. Minister of Munitions Howe has promised prompt release of lumber and building supplies that may be required. Robert McGabbin M.P. for West Middlesex, who went to Ottawa has sent a copy of the telegram that went to the Prime Minister.

In addition to the federal aid help may be forthcoming also from the Ontario Government. Dan McIntyre M.L.A., of Ayr and T. L. Patrick M.L.A., from Alderton were here on Tuesday afternoon and after looking over the scenes of devastation, got in touch with government headquarters in Toronto and Hon. Dana Porter, recently appointed Minister of Planning and Development is coming here on Thursday afternoon.

In the meantime scores of volunteer workers have gone to the help of those whose homes were wrecked and are helping them clean up and repair roofs, walls etc.

Typical View of Damage Caused By The Cyclone Here



Age Disasters, SEATTLE, JUNE 29, 1944

AGE DISPATCH, STRATHROY JUNE 29, 1944

Hydro Staff Had To Work Overtime



One of the biggest jobs in connection with the cyclone damage was getting Hydro wires out from the mass of fallen poles and splintered trees and restoring service to town and district homes. The Hydro men worked hard and long and did a splendid job under most arduous and difficult conditions. Here they are shown getting the lines in shape at Kittridge Avenue and Mill Road.

Strathroy Age-Dispatch, Ont.

August 15, 1979

CANADIAN PRESS CLIPPING SERVICES

the area?

1482

Remember when a 'cyclone' ripped through

Many Strathroy area residents reading about the tornado damage in the Woodstock area remember when a "cyclone" ripped a path of destruction a mile wide north of Strathroy.

One person died, and many persons had narrow escapes as more than 40 barns and a score of houses were destroyed on June 23, 1944, causing an estimated million dollars in damage. In the brief space of eight minutes, what was described by the papers of the day as a "twister" inflicted heaviest damage along the Second Line South in Adelaide Township. Starting three miles northwest of Strathroy, the storm cut a path a mile wide to a point just south of Lambeth.

After an appeal by Mayor Arnold C. Anderson and members of Strathroy council directly to Prime Minister McKenzie King, the government promised to send soldiers into the area and to release war-scarce building materials to help area residents get back on their feet.

Following Tuesday's tornado Strathroy sent help stricken Woodstock area. Linemen Larry Glover and Gillies have been sent from Strathroy Public Utilities

sion. Six men have been sent into the area by Ontario Hydro, John Henry, Paul Maciejewski, Tom Vincent, Terry Marshall, Brent Clark and Dave Currie. A spokesman at the Strathroy detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police said the local unit is already so short staffed that it has not been asked to free some officers to assist in the Oxford County disaster.

The victim of the 1944 storm, Archie Paine, was a farmer on the Second Line. He died when timbers flying from one of his wrecked buildings struck him. With wreckage all along the roads, some difficulty was experienced by Denning ambulance in getting to the scene. The victim was carried on a door more than a mile through the woods. As hydro was cut

off at the local hospital, it was decided to rush him to London where he died.

Many narrow escapes were reported. Several members were playing at the golf club when they saw the storm coming up. John Pickard, 15-year old son of Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Pickard, was sitting in the club house. The players advised him to come with them in their car, and a few seconds later a big tree crashed down where the boy had been and toppled the building over, smashing it badly.

At the home of Alex Ferguson, the whole top section of the two-storey brick house was reported blown away. Mrs. Ferguson and her three children were in the kitchen and went into a front room just a few seconds before the kitchen was blown away.

Glenn Wilton, 11, had his arm bruised, his only injury during minutes of terror, The Age Dispatch reported, when he was buried beneath the stove in wreckage of a kitchen in the home of his aunt, Mrs. Oscar Harnett, wife of a soldier away with the Canadian Army. William Kenning, a neighbour, plunged into the twisted timbers to release the lad.

It was reported that children had left Paine's school half an hour before the building was wrecked.

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JUNE 23, 1944

STRATHROY TORNADO.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, TORONTO. MONDAY JUNE 26TH. 1944.

STORM DATE. FRI. JUNE 23RD. 1944.

CYCLONE HANGS TUB ON PUMP SPOUT.

LONDON, ONT. JUNE 25 (C.P.). Strangest freak recorded in the wake of Friday's cyclone was at the farm of D.A. CRAWFORD, on the 9TH. CONCESSION of CARADOC.

A large metal tub filled with water was picked up by the twister and sent hurtling over a two storey house. The water flowed out en route but the twister made amends.

It sent the tub crashing into a pump on the opposite of the house. When MR. CRAWFORD found his tub the next morning it was hanging on the pump spout, right side up and ready to hold water again as soon as some one was ready to go to work on the pump handle.

STRATHROY TORNADO.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, TORONTO. MONDAY JUNE 26TH. 1944.

STORM DATE. FRI. JUNE 23RD. 1944.

CYCLONE DAMAGE ESTIMATED AT WELL OVER \$1,000,000.

LONDON, ONT. JUNE 25. (C.P.) Cyclone damage estimates rose to well over a million dollars as farmers living within a 20-mile strip of MIDDLESEX COUNTY countryside that was devastated by Friday's twister rolled up their sleeves over the week-end and began the tremendous task of repairing and clearing up their debris-strewn properties.

Approximately 150 barns and smaller out-buildings were damaged or blown to pieces and about 30 homes were damaged to varying degrees, a survey of the cyclone area disclosed today. Hundreds of orchard trees were uprooted and hundreds of acres of full-grown wood-lots were levelled.

Throughout the STRATHROY district the ruins and confusion of Friday night were being steadily cleared. Roads were being opened, and only some of the minor by-ways of the area were still impassable with the debris of fallen trees.

Many farmers and their neighbours were already hard at the job of re-building roofs, cutting away the wreckage of shattered trees from their own lots and erecting temporary shelters for live stock and poultry.

O.H.E.P.S. crews struggled through the day with electric wiring levelled with thousands of shade trees during the 10 minutes that marked the passing of the cyclone. Several dozen new hydro poles were already standing, and connections were being steadily pushed out from the town to farmlands that have been without light or power since Friday.

All roads led to the stricken areas Sunday as hundreds of Londoners and district residents consumed valuable "AA" ration mileage to see scenes that they had never seen before and hoped, considering the terrific loss entailed, they would never see again.

"The traffic was heavier than on a country fair day," said one resident.

"Never saw anything like it since before gas rationing," commented another.

TORNADO.CENTRAL MIDDLESEX COUNTY.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL,SATURDAY JUNE 24TH.1944.

STORM DATE.AFTERNOON,FRIDAY JUNE 23RD.1944.

HEAVY DAMAGE DONE BY ELECTRICAL STORM.

One man was killed,several persons injured and thousands of dollars worth of property damaged yesterday afternoon when a tornado slashed a half-mile swath through a section of CENTRAL MIDDLESEX COUNTY.Considerable damage was also done when a severe electrical storm broke over TORONTO early last night,severing power lines,flooding cellars and causing several freak accidents.

ARCHIE PAINE,63,died in Victoria Hospital,London,last night from injuries when his barn near STRATHROY was blown to pieces and he was struck by falling timber.ROBERT McGILLICUDDY,WATFORD,was also taken to the London hospital with a dislocated shoulder after being struck by a barn door as it flew through the air.

P.O. RON NELSON,No.4 Observer School,made an aerial tour of the MIDDLESEX AREA two hours later,and described it as the "worst mess"he had ever seen.He said he saw forest areas of 25 acres where all the trees had been snapped like matchwood,at least 25 barns flattened,and homes levelled.

LAMBETH,JUNE 23RD.Lashed by a half-hour gale this afternoon this village counted its damage in thousands.Homes and barns were damaged,trees uprooted or slashed,and telephone and hydro wires torn down.

The village's main thoroughfare,No.2 highway,which gives the community its slogan,"Lovely Lambeth",was a virtual shambles of shingles,wires,trees and branches.

Homes were damaged as great limbs crashed down.Notable among these were the homes of FRED CLARK and HAROLD THORNICROFT.A barn on the property of A.A.McFARLANE was left standing at an angle.

TORONTO, MONDAY, JUNE 26, 1944.

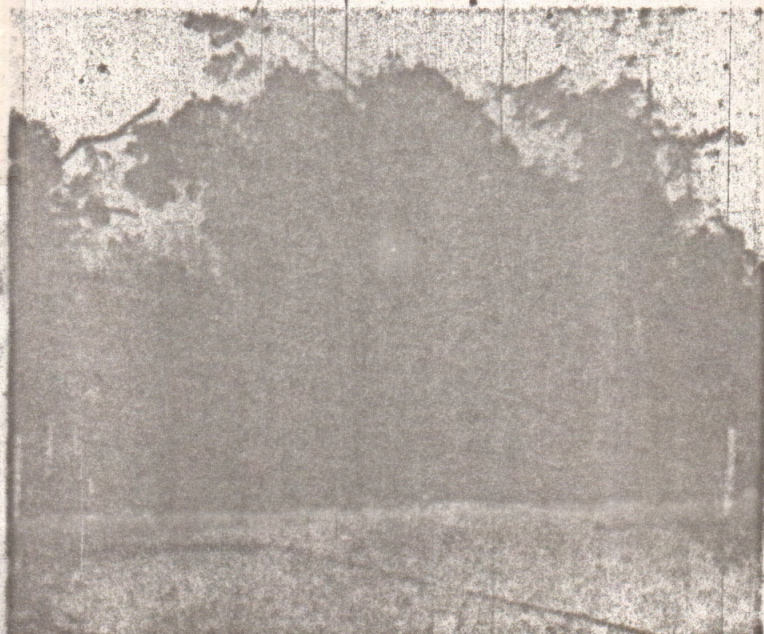
Gale Rips Through Ontario



High wind which cut a swath of destruction through Western Ontario flattened buildings and trees. Here Elmon Zavitz is shown milking in ruins of barn east of Strathroy. "It's the first time these cows have ever been milked outdoors," he remarked.



Paine School, north of Strathroy, was unroofed and interior wrecked. Ell of cement blocks in foreground is mostly a pile of rubble.



Fallen trees blocked Highway 81 for nearly a mile.

Villeneuve Sees Insult

S.D. FRI. JUNE 23 1944

Cyclone Damage Estimated At Well Over \$1,000,000

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Middlesex County countryside that was devastated by Friday's twister, rolled up their sleeves over the week-end and began the tremendous task of repairing and clearing up

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STAR, TORONTO

JUNE 26

1944

(~~'44~~ or '49?)

~~1944 or 1949?~~