



Pictures of the tornado that hit Alexander, June 11, 1925.

Loss in Alexander is \$150,000 from Thursday Tornado

Alexander, June 13.—The history of this village will be reckoned from the tornado of June 11, 1925, for it is the most eventful happening since the town was founded and probably will be unequaled in time to come.

Half the town is in ruins. Thirty homes and other buildings are demolished, with materials scattered about the streets and littering the countryside, where it was fanned by the terrific force of the tornado that hit without warning Thursday afternoon.

Today as the rescue workers continued their task in helping to repair the less damaged buildings it became evident that the losses would reach the \$150,000 mark.

Tore Path Through Middle

The storm tore a path through the middle of the town, mowing down houses, twisting trees and buildings into strange shapes, leaving a terrific loss of property, but dealing kindly with the human lives in the village.

Five were injured in the town. One of these, J. Pryor, brakeman on the train, which was blown from the tracks, had to be brought to a hospital. He suffered a broken leg and other bruises and was placed in the Lutheran hospital at Hampton.

Chris Larson was able to be on the streets this morning. One of the small bones in the lower leg was broken. He had his leg in a cast and with the aid of crutches he is in the midst of things today.

Alfred Anderson, who with his two children was slightly injured, was reported much better this morning. Mr. Anderson had several cuts on the head for which stitches had to be taken. The children were about as usual this morning, their bruises and minor scratches are healing rapidly.

Boy Scouts Help

Boy Scouts and American Legion men from Belmond succeeded in placing temporary roofs on most of the homes by Friday evening so that protection from the rain was afforded.

Mrs. Henry Weide, who resides on a farm two miles north of Alexander, is much improved this morning. She was unconscious for several hours after the storm. Her baby was blown from her arms to a field about 20 rods away and was left unharmed.

Two storms met at Alexander at about 4:30 o'clock Thursday afternoon. One entered the town from the southwest end, destroying a barn and scattering straw and debris for blocks. Just missing a large brick school house, the storm swept across the street ripping roofs from houses, tearing away porches, demolishing garages, uprooting trees and lowering electric and telephone poles and wires.

The other storm entered the east end of town and it is supposed they met in the center, and the second storm went out the west part of town tearing down the St. John's Lutheran church. The church was folded over the parsonage, next door, like a paper cracker box, the steeple blocking the entrance to the home. The rest of the church encircles the house and lay in splinters on the ground. The roof of the house on one corner was torn loose.

All day Friday men worked on the roofs of the homes, which had been damaged during the storm, in a downpour of rain. Boy Scouts, numbering nearly 30 from Troop 1 with their Scout Master and the assistant from Belmond, came to the rescue and helped in carrying away the limbs of trees and the debris left by the storm. Other volunteers from Belmond also came to relieve conditions.

Church is Ruins

The Congregational church, which was the largest church in town, was demolished. A part of a partition about ten feet square, was the largest remnant left of the structure. The remainder lay in the basement of the church in fragments. On top of the whole pile of debris was a large electric light shade which had been in the church and which by some freak of the storm was left perfectly whole with not even a crack to show what it had been through.

Next to the church was the home of E. L. Klinefelter, the village blacksmith. Mrs. Klinefelter and her five daughters sat on a sofa in the living room when the storm struck their home. Some of the boards from the church were driven through the wall of the house into the living room, the window casings were ripped out and the glass crashed. Plaster and debris filled the room. No one was injured.

M. E. Church Moved

Mrs. Klinefelter said that she heard a terrific roaring but did not realize what it was all about until their house was struck. The whole thing did not last longer than three minutes, said the woman.

The Methodist church was moved from its foundation and the interior badly damaged from falling plaster. Windows in the building that were left in the frames, had been pierced with objects, either hailstones or gravel, and the holes were round, the edges smooth as if they had been beveled.

One home, that had been unroofed, the porches torn off, all the windows broken, had a mattress thrust through a window. The vacuum from the storm was so great that it had literally sucked the mattress from the bed.

Hide Behind Stove

The M&St. L station agent and his son who were in the small frame station just had time to crawl back of a stove for protection. The wind carried the entire building away and left the men unharmed. The lad's head was in the door of the stove when he was found by rescuers. Some of the contents of the building were unmoved while large pieces of wood were carried for rods out into a field.

A row of box cars that was standing on the M& St. L tracks was overturned. The cars were ripped from the engine and caboose and these latter were left right side up. The brakeman was slightly injured.

A half a mile out from Alexander, boards and wreckage showed the path of the storm.

The Ed Richards home which was about the second place to be struck by the storm from the southwest had part of the roof torn away and the porch damaged. Here as in so many places along that street, the windows were shattered. The Richards garage was entirely blown away. Next door to this house was a fairly good sized house, the home of an elderly man. A large porch had nearly encircled the house and this was torn off and broken into kindling wood. All of the windows of this house were out.

No Damage To Businesses

The business section of the town escaped the fury of the storm. The W.P. Aldinger general store had two large plate glass windows in the front of the store broken, and besides a few other small panes of broken glass, this was the extent of the damage in this part of town.

As in almost all such tornadoes, freakish plays that have a humorous side were displayed.



Alexander Cemetery Society