Summary Sheet

IDTO - ID Number :693109
AUTH - Report Author :
TYFU - Tornado Type & Fuji Code :
TITL - Report Title or Location :Sarnia
PROV - Province :Ontario
COUN - Counties :Lambton
REFS - References :The Globe July 18, 1931
ZOTO - Touchdown Zone Number & Easting :17387400
NOTO - Touchdown Northing :4759500
LOVA - Touchdown Error Value & Code :1291r
DADA - Date of Data Entry :29/06/1990
ZOLO - Liftoff Zone Number & Easting :
NOLO - Liftoff Northing :
UPVA - Liftoff Error Value & Code :
DEAD - Number of Fatalities :
HURT - Number of People Injured :
HERT - Injuries Code :
DATA - Date of Tornado :17/07/1931
DAVA - Date Error Value & Code :
TITO - Time of Tornado :1200
TIMR - Time Meridian :75
TIVA - Time Error Value & Code :416s
AXDA - Maximum Path Width :
AXVA - Max. Path Width Error & Code :
AVDA - Average Damage Width :
AVVA - Avg. Damage Width Error & Code :
SADA - Sample Damage Width :
SAVA - Sample Damage Width Error & Code:
INTO - Initials :JAM
DFTO - Detailed Report Flag :n
JUNK - PRDA & DIMO & DALE :
CODA - Property Damage Code :
MISC - ORDE,PICS_TYPE,PICS_AVAIL,COCO : 1
MANY - Multiple Event Flag :y

MEMO:Trees blown over.

PHEN - Associated Phenomena :
TSHP - Townships :Sarnia

JAM, 29/06/1990

THE GLOBE, TORONTO, SAT. JULY 18 1931 693109 1.

STORM DATE: FRI. JULY 17

# Four Girls Perish Of Storm and Heat In Windsor District

## Swimmer Loses Life at Noranda—Sailor Aboard Vessel Partly Paralyzed by Bolt — Church and Hospital Are Struck

## WESTERN ONTARIO BADLY BATTERED

(Special Despatches to The Globe)

Leaving death and destruction in its wake, a storm of terrific intensity flashed across Western Ontario and other parts of the Province today. Two girls were killed by lightning, another injured at Windsor, and two girls drowned seeking relief from the heat, while various other sections of the Province reported minor injuries. Buildings were damaged, trees uprooted and telegraph poles flattened by the storm. In addition, farmers have suffered a heavy loss through the levelling of their crops. In several cities, hail accompanied the strong winds and heavy rain.

The two little girls killed were Myra Hayes, 10 years old, and Edna Dupuis, 6, a farm near St. Joachim being the scene of the tragedy. Both were killed instantly, and Bernadine Hayes, sister, was burned. Those drowned were Margaret Laird, 21 years old, and her sister, Isabel, 23. They were from Michigan, and were holidaying at Riverside.

2 DEATHS

**Struck Aboard Ship.**

A sailor on the steamer August Ziesing was struck by lightning, temporarily blinded, and the right side of his body paralyzed, as the vessel was coming up the St. Mary's River.

Going swimming immediately after a meal, Peter Dasavich, 21 years old, of Noranda, was seized with cramps and died in Lake Osisko.

The wind assumed tornado velocity around Sarnia, Embro and Mount Brydges. Near Embro, a large barn was removed from its foundations; the roof of another lifted off, a silo was blown down, and a horse killed by a falling tree. At Sarnia, lightning struck a gasoline still and set it on fire, and a tree fell across a doctor's residence, damaging it, but injuring no one.

TORNADO →

**Severe in Mount Brydges.**

Mount Brydges reported that the wind and hail had battered grain into the mud, and much of the apple crop had been ruined. In the village itself, scarcely a house escaped without glass being broken. The loss is believed to be particularly heavy here. The rain delayed haying and harvesting, and much of the hay crop, particularly, will be ruined.

HAIL. →

Blenheim was visited by the storm, too. Lightning struck the Town Hall and Anglican Church, both being but slightly damaged. Three Guelph homes were struck by lightning, while a large stone was hurled from a church tower and narrowly missed a woman who was entering the edifice. A radio transmitter operated by a local manufacturing company was ruined. Root crops were washed out at Dundalk, where one of the heaviest rains in history fell.

Long-distance telephone lines at Ingersoll were blown down. Portions of barns, trees and fences were strewn about in this vicinity. Trees blocked highway traffic, and crops were flattened. One horse was killed, while the Ingersoll Telephone Company reported 150 telephones out of commission. Hydro was disrupted in West Zorra.

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Telegraph poles were broken and splintered at Stratford, and a chimney on the General Hospital was struck. A transformer on the power house was blown out, plunging the city into darkness, and the tower of Knox Presbyterian Church was struck.

The storm swept Hamilton early in the morning, and reached Toronto later. While it rained heavily in both cities, there was little damage reported.

**Windsor, July 17.**—Storms, in conjunction with the heat wave which enveloped the Border Cities district, today, claimed four lives. Two young women were killed by a bolt of lightning in one of the most violent electrical storms of the season, while two girls who were seeking relief from the torrid heat were drowned in the Detroit River near Riverside.

Margaret Laird, 21 years old, and her sister, Isabel Laird, aged 24, North Avenue, Highland Park, Mich., lost their lives in the Detroit River shortly after 6 o'clock tonight.

**Stricken With Heart Attack.**

The girls, who had been on vacation in Riverside, went bathing in the river just east of the Riverside Brewery. Margaret, it is believed, was stricken with a heart attack as she waded into the colder water near the channel. She threw up her hands and screamed. Isabel, seeing her plight, went to her assistance, but was swept away by the swift current before she reached her sister.

The body of Margaret was recovered fifteen minutes later by two boys in a rowboat. They seized her by the hair, and kept her head above water until help arrived. Dr. Paul Poisson, Coroner, of Tecumseh, who was called, said death was caused by heart disease, brought on by the sudden contact with the cold water. The body of Isabel was not recovered at 8.30 o'clock. The Laird sisters came from Scotland seven years ago. Both were employed as stenographers. Their mother left for Scotland two weeks ago for a vacation.

**Girls Killed by Bolt.**

Myra Hayes, 11 years old, daughter of Herbert Hayes, and Edna Dupuis, 11 years old, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Josephine Dupuis of St. Joachim, 25 miles east of Windsor, were killed instantly by lightning near their homes this evening. Brenda Hayes, 14 years old, sister of Myra, was shocked by the same bolt. She will recover. The children were playing in an open field at the rear of their homes. They were clad only in their bathing suits. There was a gentle rain, but a severe electrical storm developed, and the group of little ones were struck down by a bolt that also fired a barn in the vicinity.

Dr. Emile Drouillard, of Belle River, who was called, said the rain acted as a conductor for the bolt.

**Cramps Cause Death.**

**Noranda, Que.,** July 17.—Going swimming immediately after a meal, Peter Dasavich, aged 21, Noranda, was seized with cramps and died in Lake Osisko this afternoon. Dasavich cried for help and disappeared 100 feet from shore. A companion, John Pacrmich, and two Indians, living near by, going to his aid immediately. The body was recovered in 10 minutes, but efforts at resuscitation failed. The accident occurred near the Noranda pump house. Deceased was a Jugo-slavian, and had been in Noranda only three months. His father resides in the United States. An inquest will be held.

**Sailor On Vessel Struck.**

**Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.,** July 17.—A sailor on the steamer August Ziesing, was struck by lightning, temporarily blinded, and the right side of his body paralyzed as the boat was coming up the St. Mary's River early this morning. Captain D. W. McLeod, of the Ziesing, said that soon after passing Detour early this morning, the lookout on the boat reported to him and soon after lightning struck the forward end of the ship. Captain McLeod said he watched the lookout from the pilothouse for some time, and he did not move. Investigating, he found that the man's right side was paralyzed and that he was blinded by the flash. The lookout was standing by the railing on the side of the ship, when the lightning struck. The sailor was much improved when the ship reached the locks here. The blindness had gone and he was able to move, the captain said.

**Heat Broken in Sarnia.**

**Sarnia,** July 17.—The terrific heat of today in which Sarnians sweltered, with the thermometer at times reaching 100 degrees, was broken in mid-afternoon with a violent electrical storm. The deluge of rain at times was sprinkled with hailstones. No damage was caused in the city, but reports of injury to standing grain came from various parts of the district. The storm lasted for about two hours. Lightning struck a gasoline still at the plant of Imperial Oil Limited, but the resulting fire was quickly extinguished. A tree broke and fell over the residence and office of Dr. Margaret Kinsman, but no one was injured.

**Guelph Church Struck.**

**Guelph,** July 17.—Guelph was today swept by one of the heaviest electrical storms which has visited this city in several years. While it was at its height a church was struck by lightning and two dwellings were damaged, two persons having remarkable escapes from death. A bolt of lightning, which struck the home of S. Hetherington, Melville Street, occasioned heavy damage to the interior of several rooms. A valuable radio transmitter operated by the Hammond Manufacturing Company, in a home on College Avenue, was almost ruined, while Mrs. Patrick, Waterloo Avenue, was knocked to the floor in the kitchen of her residence when lightning entered the room. She was not seriously hurt. A stone several feet in diameter was hurled from one of the towers on the Church of Our Lady, falling to the church steps and narrowly missing Mrs. W. H. Bedford, who was entering the edifice.

**Hay Crop Damaged.**

**Kitchener,** July 17.—Daily heavy rains have depreciated the hay-crop value in this section from 25 to 50 per cent. For virtually two weeks there has been rain every day, with the result that the hay could not be taken into the barn. Some has been lying in the field for nine days. That in the fields, while it will be taken in after it has dried, will be inferior in quality.

**Ingersoll District Suffers.**

**Ingersoll,** July 17.—The most vicious storm of the present summer was that which visited this district and West Zorra Township this morning. One storm, breaking at 8 o'clock, was severe in West Zorra Township, while Ingersoll got only the fringe of it. A second, coming shortly before 11 o'clock, dealt with equal strength in both places.

Three miles north of Ingersoll seven poles, carrying long-distance leads of the Bell Telephone Company, were blown down by the high wind. Silos were blown from their foundations in some places, and in others, portions of barns, trees and fences were strewn about. Crops were flattened by the deluge of rain which accompanied the storm. Trees lay across the roads and blocked them in some parts. A horse belonging to Roy Masters was killed near Walker's School in West Zorra. Trees were blown down across county road machinery. The Ingersoll Telephone Company tonight reported 150 telephones known to be out of commission, and feared many more. Hydro was disrupted in West Zorra, as well as telephone service. Water ran or lay inches deep on many fields. Both storms were the worst of the year in Zorra, especially around the Cody's Corners section. Three telephone poles north of here were lifted clear of their settings, but undamaged.

→ of barns trees and fences were strewn.

**Like Cyclone In Stratford.**

**Stratford,** July 17.—Stratford and district tonight were visited by one of the most terrific thunderstorms within the knowledge of the oldest residents. A driving rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning, and a tornado-like wind ripped out trees, split branches and telephone and telegraph poles as if they were matchwood, and otherwise caused damage to property that at the moment is impossible to estimate.

On top of it all, one of the large transformers in the local power house was blown out, plunging the city into darkness. Valiant efforts are being made by the Hydro staff to restore service. A hook-up was made on two occasions, only to have another break and at 10.30 tonight the city again was in darkness.

At the height of the storm the tower of the Knox Presbyterian Church was struck, but beyond removing a number of bricks, no damage was caused. By a coincidence, it was Knox Presbyterian Church that was struck by lightning during a severe storm in 1913, and in the fire that followed Stratford's Fire Chief, Police Chief and a police constable were killed.

**House Is Destroyed.**

About the same time the Armour Keane's ice house on the outskirts of the city was struck by lightning and destroyed by the fire that followed. The loss is estimated at $2,000.

Seeking to find the opening in the gas tank of an auto during the storm, an attendant at a service station struck a match, the flame from which immediately ignited the hose of the gas pump. A fire-extinguisher was close at hand, and the blaze was extinguished before any great damage was done.

Just outside the city, miles of telephone wire are put out of commission by fallen trees. It is believed the damage to Telephone Company property will run into thousands of dollars. The farmers in this neighborhood will also be heavy losers. Vast quantities of wheat and oats are flattened, and much of the hay crop, due to the continued rains of the last week, will be a total loss.

**Dundalk Storm Swept.**

**Dundalk,** July 17. — This district was swept with one of the heaviest rains on record. A terrific wind accompanied the deluge. Grain was flattened in some places, and root crops were washed out.

**Crash in Heavy Rain.**

**Tillsonburg,** July 11. — During a heavy rainstorm yesterday, George Mounford, Lake Short Road, Toronto, and a young woman companion, had a narrow escape from death when their car was struck broadside by an auto driven by Stanley Carren of Milwaukee, Wis., and rolled over into the ditch on No. 3 Highway, just east of Tillsonburg. Mounford's right arm was lacerated, but all others escaped with a few scratches. The American driver was charged with reckless driving by Provincial Officer Coles, and was fined $10 and costs by County Magistrate Petterson. His car is also being held until he makes arrangements with Mounford for $150 damage, alleged done to the latter's car.

**Sheep Killed Near Beamsville.**

**Beamsville,** July 17.—A severe rain and electrical storm struck this district early this morning. A number of sheep on the farm of George Beckett, Clinton Township, were killed when the tree under which they were standing was struck by lightning. Several trees in the district were struck, but no property damage was reported. Fruit growers said the rain was welcome, and would do no damage to crops.

**Goderich In Darkness.**

**Goderich,** July 17.—Goderich was thrown into darkness tonight as a result of the severe electrical storm early this evening. The chief damage was done to the main line of the Hydro, between Clinton and Seaforth, where poles are down. Many trees are blown down in Goderich causing damage to Hydro lines. There were no outbreaks of fire. The severe electrical storm lasted upward of an hour and there was a heavy downpour of rain. With Hydro power off the talking picture theatre could not operate. Chautauqua is playing here this week and the big tent was blown in, while many people sat waiting for the program to commence. There were no casualties, however, and the program proceeded under difficulties. Cars were pulled up close to the tent and car lights used to illuminate the stage. The telephone facilities were crippled but the Canadian National telegraph lines continue to operate.

**Chatham District Swept.**

**Chatham,** July 17.—A severe electrical storm swept over this district this afternoon, but as far as can be learned no serious damage was occasioned. In the city two transformers were put out of commission by the lightning, and Hydro service in numerous houses crippled through blown fuses. The rain came down in torrents, and in some sections of the city the basements are flooded, as the sewer capacity was inadequate to take care of the water.

# ELECTRICAL STORM CAUSES DEATH OF 4

## Heavy Damage Done to Crops and Property in Ohio

(Canadian Press Despatch.)

**Cleveland, Ohio,** July 17.—At least four persons were killed by lightning and widespread damage was done to crops and farm buildings by wind and electric storms that swept into Ohio from the northwest tonight in the wake of a two-day record heat wave.

The East Bay Shore district at Toledo was hit by wind and lightning which tore down trees and tangled light and power lines. Wade Marsh, aged 26, of Curtice, was killed by lightning while at work on a farm near his home. Daniel Rush, aged 56, was struck and killed by a bolt in Holmes County. William Fristoe, aged 15, was killed by lightning at a Boy Scout camp near Zanesville. James Crawford, aged 13, was killed by lightning as he rode in a farm wagon near East Loudenville. The bolt also killed the team of horses hitched to the wagon.

Communications were disrupted, both in Cleveland and Columbus.