FERGUS NEWS RECORD. THURSDAY AUGUST 23RD. 1888.

STORM DATE. THURSDAY AUGUST 16TH. 1888.

A terrible thunderstorm, accompanied by rain and wind, passed over VALLEYFIELD, QUEBEC, last Thursday night, doing damage to property and causing loss of life. Along the ST. LOUIS RIVER upwards of twenty houses have been wrecked and it is reported that 25 lives chave been lost. Amongst these are CAPTAIN SAUVE, his wife, daughter and sister. The house was blown bodily across the river. Another small cottage belonging to a man named ROLLAND, was shattered to pieces against a large oak tree and the owner and his wife terribly injured. Barns and outhouses lie scattered all over the country.

Witness Aug 17th.

# HEAVY THUNDERSTORM.

## MONTREAL EXPERIENCES ITS FURY.

The long threatened thunderstorm burst last night. The air has been very heavily charged for some days past, and the pressure has been low, although very few anticipated a storm of such exceptional severity as that which visited the city late last evening. The oppressive heat of the afternoon became intensified as the evening advanced, and this was succeeded by a series of heavy showers, which stopped all pedestrian traffic in the streets, and rendered even vehicular locomotion an unpleasant undertaking, though the cabs and street cars seemed to reap an unexpected harvest, judging from their crowded condition and the avidity with which the public took advantage of their convenient shelter.

The worst, however, was yet to come; for about half-past ten o'clock the thunder clouds gathered and burst over the city, which seemed shaken to its very foundation. The lightning flashes were intensely strong and vivid and seemed for the moment to strike several parts of the city at the same time. The greatest consternation everywhere prevailed, and in some of the more crowded parts there even seemed every probability that a panic would ensue, but this was happily averted, when it was seen that the culminating fury of the storm quickly spent itself and that no very serious casualty to life or property had resulted. Still the effects of the storm were felt in all parts of the city, and some rather serious damage was done. The electric lighting arrangements were temporarily disorganized by the subtle fluid, and the lights along St. James, Notre Dame and Craig streets were extinguished to the no small terror of the inhabitants; but the circuits were almost momentarily in working order again and no great harm resulted.

### A STORE BURNED.

A large store in the occupation of Mr. Freedman, at the corner of Notre Dame street and Roy Lane, was, it is surmised, set on fire by the electric current, and upwards of one thousand dollars worth of damage done by fire and water, which is not wholly covered by insurance. The building, which was reported all right at 9.15 p.m., consists of 3 stories, and from an inspection of the premises by a *Witness* reporter this morning, the lightning appears to have struck through a small window looking into Roy Lane, and caught about forty cases of matches which were piled in close proximity to the open window. These were quickly fired, and the other goods on all the floors were soon alight. An immense quantity of lamp chimneys, sulphur, epsom salts, brooms, etc., has been totally destroyed, and on the lower floor heaps of stored sugar have been rendered valueless. The Fire Brigade were quickly on the spot.

At the Theatre Royal the audience were leaving the building just as the storm reached its most virulent stage. The first contingent had reached the door when there was a blinding flash, which the next moment seemed to obscure everything in utter darkness, but there was, it seems, nothing approaching a panic.

Strange to say, the post-office escaped almost scathless, although the building has so many electric wires within it.

At the Royal Electric Light Works the electrician on duty, whilst sitting in his room, suddenly saw a bright flash strike one side of the switch board, and then rebound on the opposite side. The boar d was

### A MASS OF VIVID ELECTRIC FLAME.

The first flash passed along the wires and out through the door, while the second one was carried through the floor to the compartment beneath and found an exit through the open window.

At the St. Lawrence Hall the guests very severely felt the shock, and it was really feared at first that the premises had been fired; but this happily had no foundation in fact. The lights downstairs were extinguished, but beyond the temporary inconvenience thus occasioned no harm resulted.

A flagstaff at the Balmoral Hotel was struck down by the electric current, and, running down the pole, it glanced off to the rear on to a partition wall in St. Maurice street, where it

### SCATTERED THE BRICKS IN ALL DIRECTIONS

to the no small consternation and alarm of the neighbors. Mr. Dowling, the cashier, who was conversing with a gentleman in the office, says that all at once a brilliant flash, like a ball of fire, entered the building by a side window, lighting up the whole of the rotunda. The building seemed to shake, and a general rush was made for the front door.

In many instances bright blue flames played around the telephone instruments.

Three ladies were passing the Balmoral Hotel last night when the terrible thunder crash, followed by lightning which produced a ghastly illumination, occurred. They felt a pressure which they cannot very well describe; but which seemed to force them to the ground. They felt momentarily stunned by the shock.

### COOLER WEATHER COMING.

Mr. Walter H. Smith writes:—"Reports show that the weather has been generally hot, showery and stormy, with electrical disturbances and comparatively low barometer readings over the greater part of Canada and the Northwestern States during the past few days. High pressure has prevailed at the same time south of us, over the Carolinas and adjacent States. Canada has consequently been lying under a long, wide trough of low pressure. The humidity has at the same time been great, running up towards saturation point. The clouds have had hardly any altitude, hence the proximity of the lightning and the increased noise of the thunder. But the natural reaction—the crest of the barometrical wave—must follow at once in the shape of fine, cooler weather which I expect in this

Valleyfield St Zotique 16.8.'88

# AT ST. ZOTIQUE.

## A "WITNESS" REPORTER'S VISIT TO THE SCENE OF THE GREAT STORM

*(Special to the Witness.)*

COTEAU LANDING, Aug. 17.—3 p.m.—A visit, this morning, to the scene of the storm's ravages revealed the fact that all that had been stated about the disaster was very far from being exaggerated. The effects seem to have been felt especially in the vicinity of the village of St. Zotique, and from appearances it must have been nothing less than a true tornado that passed over this locality.

The sufferers say that the whole thing did not last over five minutes, but these seemed to them like a century of suspense. Telegraph poles have been cut to the ground, and trees some twenty inches in diameter, have been torn up by the roots,

### TWISTED LIKE MERE STRAWS,

and carried away a considerable distance. Planks have been torn away from houses and barns have been found carried away over the fields where long tracks of ground have been literally ploughed up by them. Unfortunately, with few exceptions,

### THE SUFFERERS

are poor people. The storm came from the north-west, and moved toward the south-east.

In several places, groups were seen trying to kindle a fire with which to prepare their morning repast. They were homeless.

The three children of Fabien Rouleau, aged 4, 6 and 7 years respectively, who were sleeping in the upper part of the house, were

### SWEPT AWAY,

along with the roof of the house and laid down in the field at about an acre's distance. Happily, they received no injuries. Two other children are said to have received severe injuries on the head.

### MONTPETIT DOINGWELL.

Montpetet, the poor man who had his arm broken, came into the village this morning to have his wounds dressed. He seems to be doing fairly well.

During the storm a woman was found who had fainted in a field and was taken to the village.

The farmers here consider the disaster as a visit from heaven brought on the district by the recent murder of Pilon.

### LIST OF THE KILLED AT VALLEYFIELD.

VALLEYFIELD, Ont., August 17.—The terrible storm passed over here between six and seven last night from the north-west. It crossed the road leading to Ormstown about two miles from here. A house and barn was destroyed. Nobody was in it at the time. Andrew Longtin was severely hurt and died this morning. On the St. Louis River, two miles below the road leading to Ormstown, Guiseppe Sauvé, wife and child and a hired man were killed, one child was found in the river two hundred feet from house; Sauve with picket through his neck; Edouard Cardinal had his horse killed in the village. Mr. St. Louis, the watchman of the Beauharnois Agricultural Society building, had three children injured, one fatally, house and barns all blown down. Old Dainault, the keeper's father, is not expected to live. The nuns of the village are doing everything for the sufferers. About $34,000 damage was inflicted.

THE HUNTINGDON GLEANER AUG 23, 1988
STORM DATE AUG 16, 1988 BETWEEN 6 and 7:00 PM.

# THE CYCLONE.

THURSDAY, the 16th, as regards weather, presented no unusual feature. It was a cool, wet day until towards evening, when it became warm and thunder was heard, and heavy clouds massed to the west and south. It was not until after the cyclone had come and gone, that the electric display which made the night remarkable took place. The first we hear of the cyclone was in central Glengarry, a wind, strong enough to upset barns, passing to the rear of the township of Lancaster. Crossing the province-line its track narrowed with corresponding increase in violence, and among other property destroyed north of River Beaudette station was that owned by Judge Cross, consisting of a grist and sawmill. Entering the parish of St Zotique, 23 houses were wrecked, and many of the inmates injured, one old woman dying from her hurts. Leaving the land, the cyclone went whirling across the St Lawrence. It was now about 7 o'clock in the evening, and the C. Anderson was on her last trip to Valleyfield for the day, and those on board saw the remarkable storm sweep across the track they had passed not over 10 minutes before. The next to see it was the lighthouse keeper at Grosse point. Mr Shannon was standing outside at the time and says the cloud passed not over 100 feet west of the lighthouse. He describes it as being like a great wall of green smoke, accompanied with hay, straw, pieces of board and all sorts of debris. The cloud was funnel-shaped and seemed to work like a cork-screw. Wherever it struck, the water rose high in the air. It crossed Grosse Point about 200 yards from where Mr Shannon stood, and took everything in its path. Striking land close to the feeder, the house of François Daoust was laid low. He was thrown up into the air and his wife with her young baby was thrown in a ditch some distance off. The farm machinery was totally destroyed, also some fine cattle, together with all the outbuildings, fences, trees, grain for 2 acres wide. Close to the Larocque road stood the house and barn of André Daoust. These were soon nothing but a heap of ruins. Mr Daoust, his wife and four children miraculously escaped instant death. As it was, Mrs Daoust was fearfully cut and bruised, and one of the children was badly hurt; the others fell into the cellar and escaped. Mrs Daoust said she was watching the cloud approaching, when before she knew anything, she was struck a violent blow, and knocked senseless. At the time two girls, the Misses Houle, were driving past in a buggy, which was thrown into the ditch along with the horse. The older sister had an arm broken; the other escaped unhurt. A little farther on was the house of Cyrille Hainault, who with his wife, 3 children, and an aged aunt were occupying it. The house was demolished, all the inmates escaping with slight bruises except the aunt, who was so seriously hurt that her recovery is not expected. Mr Hainault lost his barns. Edmond Cardinal lived beyond him. His house was knocked about his ears and those of his large family, breaking his arm and injuring 3 of the children. He had a horse and 5 cows killed and his barns reduced to kindling wood. The next house was occupied by Joseph Chartrand, who saw the cloud coming in time to cry to the family to go into the cellar, which they did, when the roof was lifted off. The house, a brick one, was not otherwise injured. His barns were levelled, destroying their contents. His oldest son lived beside him, and he was badly hurt by the house falling on him. The next house in the track of the cyclone was that of André Montpetit, a much respected farmer and member of the parish council of St Cecile. He was milking a cow when the storm struck his barn, which fell, completely burying him beneath the boards and timbers. When taken out it was seen that the poor man had not long to live, for he was fearfully mangled. Death ended his sufferings the following morning. His house was demolished, but the inmates escaped with slight injury. Everything about the barn-yard was destroyed. A double wagon was lifted up and set down at some distance again safe on its wheels. The worst havoc done was at Egisippe Sauvé's, near the St Louis river, about 2 miles below the road leading to Valleyfield. At this house only a little child of 8 years old, out of a family of 6, was left, the others, viz., Sauvé, his wife, one child, and the hired man, were all killed, and another child died the following day. The bodies were found by the neighbors a considerable distance from the house. The poor little child, about 10 years old, was carried fully 200 feet and Sauvé, the father, was found half buried in the mud with a piece of picket through his neck, coming out at the left temple. No one saw the tragedy, but it is conjectured one of the boys was blown into the river, and while the father was going to the rescue he was knocked down by the debris and pinned to the ground by the falling picket. The boy was drowned. The mother was found dead near the oven, covered with debris, but bearing no wounds, it is supposed she was suffocated. The hired man was killed outside the door by falling timber. Another boy was found dead at the river. A little girl 10 years old was found in the house with a broken leg and a large piece of wood through her foot, with many severe face and body wounds; which caused death some time after. A bright little boy, 3 years old, was not seriously hurt.

N. Julien, whose house was quite close to that of Sauvé, escaped unhurt, with 7 of a family. The house was torn off the foundation and is a complete wreck. The cyclone now took a twist in its course, and next struck M. Patenaude's house on the north bank of the river, crushing it, then crossing the river, tore up its banks and lifting the water in its whirl, made for the grounds of the Beauharnois agricultural society, adjoining the village of St Louis. Outside the fair ground fence is the Presbyterian burying-ground, over which it swept, breaking three headstones, the base of one being pulled out. The manse, occupied by the Rev Thos Turnbull, was just outside the vortex of the storm, and escaped with some injury to the roof. Entering the show-ground, the first building struck was a barn and right in front of it was a large stable, lifted from its foundation, high enough to carry with it the roof of the horse stable and neither barn nor stable roof can be found; not even a board of it can be traced. The walls of the stable are still standing though somewhat shattered. The society's valuable horses escaped without hurt. Next came the show-house, which was turned on its foundation, crushed and smashed to splinters. The house of the caretaker, X. Daignault, at the entrance gate, was also crushed. His father and four children were in the house and the old man and two little girls were badly hurt. The dining hall and 120 feet of shed were wrecked, and the fine trees that shaded that part of the showground were torn out. In short, the property of the society is destroyed, and will have to be rebuilt from the fence upward. Crossing the road, two farmers, Bonhomme and St Onge, had their outbuildings destroyed, but their dwellings escaped. Their barns were torn to pieces, buggies, sleighs and carts destroyed, their orchards uprooted, vegetables pulled out of the ground, and fences broken up. Mr St Onge had a hay cart carried 1 mile and dropped at the side road leading to the village. On Mr Gagnier's farm, a timber, 1 ft square and 28 ft long, was turned over and over, end first, tearing the ground and hoisting out a large stone. Two or three houses on the road just east of the show ground suffered severely and the scene has a strangely desolate appearance. The cloud here suddenly rose high up and no signs of damage are perceptible until a long distance is passed, when the cloud dropped for a minute on nearing the English river, unroofing the house of Mr Peddie, tearing down the fences of Wm Robertson, and levelling a field of wheat belonging to Matthew Orr. Singular proof of the suction in the centre of the cloud, is the fact that shingles and other debris fell near the house of Mr Gregg, west of Ste Martine village and shreds of clothing dropped at Beauharnois. On Sunday there was a funeral service over the bodies of 3 victims at the St Louis church. The money loss it is impossible to estimate. The track of the storm varied from 2 acres wide to 6 acres and is marked by being strewn by debris and everything in its bounds levelled with the ground. Had it struck Valleyfield or St Louis, both of which places it passed near, the loss of life would have been frightful. Mr Normandin, N. P., who saw the cloud as it passed, says it was black with a red centre and a white streak in the middle. Reaching down from the red was a brush-like appendage, in shape resembling a horse's tail, which swept everything before it. Mrs (Rev) Turnbull saw large pieces of timber and boards high up in the air.

A

# TORNADO PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

F=4 ONT-(QUE)

1. DATE AND TIME THUR AUG 16, 1888 BETWEEN 1800-1900 LOCAL

2. LOCATION OR PATH (attach map) REAR LANCASTER TOWNSHIP (ONT) – ST ZOTIQUE (QUE) – ST LOUIS-DE-GONZAGUE – ENGLISH RIVER

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

4. PATH WIDTH 100 YDS To 1/4 MI 5. TORNADO PART OF SQUALL LINE? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN:

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

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

8. IF ANSWER TO 6 OR 7 YES, ELABORATE; LIKE A GREAT WALL OF GREEN SMOKE

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

10. TOTAL DAMAGE ESTIMATE $34,000 11. TOTAL DEATHS 9 (POSSIBLY 11) (all in Quebec)

12. TOTAL INJURED 14 13. TOTAL HOMELESS UNK

14. LIST ALL REFERENCES

THE HUNTINGDON GLEANER AUG 23, 1888
THE MONTREAL WITNESS, AUG 17, 1888
FERGUS NEWS RECORD, AUG 23, 1888

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

(a) "The cloud was funnel-shaped and seemed to work like a cork-screw. (Mr Shannon, Grosse Pt. Lighthouse Keeper). According to Mr Normandin, it was a brush-like appendage in shape resembling a horse's tail.

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

**ROUND TRIP MEMORANDUM** **NOTE ALLER RETOUR**

FROM / DE
MICHAEL J NEWARK
AES, CCAI/1
4905 DUFFERIN ST., DOWNSVIEW, ONT. M3H 5T4

File No. (originator) – *Dossier nº (source)*

TO / À
JEAN-MARIE LEGER, (514) 371-4353
BIBLIOTHEQUE MUNICIPAL
75, ST JEAN BAPTISTE, VALLEYFIELD, P.Q.

File No. (addressee)– *Dossier nº (destinataire)*

Subject - *Objet*

TORNADO OF AUGUST 16, 1888

Further to the telephone conversation yesterday between myself and M. Favreaux, I am sending you copies of our information concerning this tornado.

Our objective is to ascertain such details as the location of the damage, the length of the damage track, damage width, the number of deaths and injuries, the type of damage, the correct time and date, how people responded to the disaster etc. We have found local population directories and atlases of great help in locating people named in press reports. Any information or help that you can give will be greatly appreciated.

Reply - *Réponse*

Signature M Newark Date FEB 18, 1981

Signature Date

7540-21-029-0717

CGSB STANDARD FORM 59

FORMULE NORMALISEE 59 DE L'ONGC

3 ORIGINATOR *SOURCE*

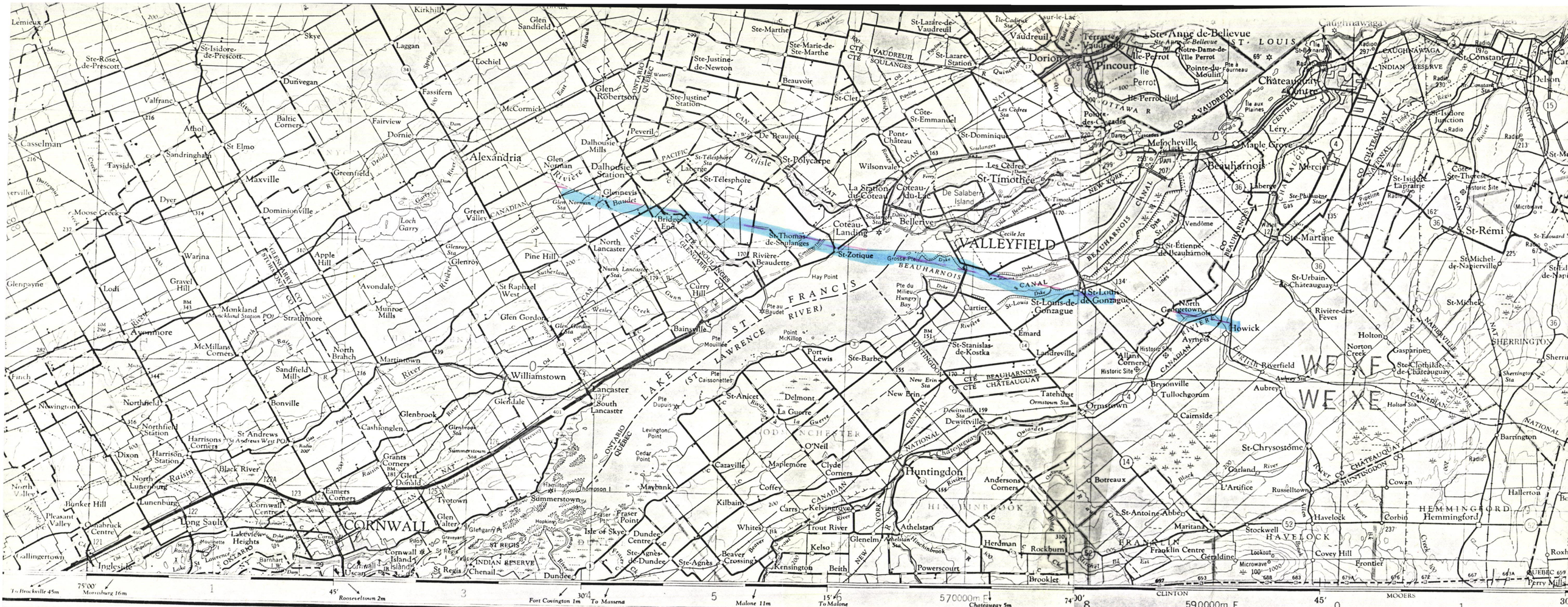
Remove this copy and its carbon for follow-up – Send copies 1 and 2 intact.
*Détacher cet exemplaire et le carbone qui le précède pour rappel – Envoyer les exemplaires 1 et 2 avec carbone.*

History Society.

~~1876~~ 1878

Jean-Marie Leger, Bibliotheque Municipal
75 St Jean Baptiste
Valleyfield, Que.

- W. Ellis St. Valleyfield, bad damage, many houses crushed.


OTTAWA
Publiée par le SERVICE TOPOGRAPHIQUE DE L'ARMÉE, (G.R.C.). Renseignements à jour en 1960. Imprimée en 1965
La déclinaison magnétique (1964) varie de 13°30' vers l'ouest au centre
Third edition map updated by the SURVEYS AND
BRANCH, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, MINES AND RESO
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DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
CORNWALL
HUNTINGDON
VALLEYFIELD
CHÂTEAUGUAY
HAVELOCK
HEMMINGFORD
SHERRINGTON
FRANKLIN
CLINTON
MOOERS
LAKE (ST LAWRENCE RIVER)
ST LAWRENCE RIVER
ST LOUIS
INDIAN RESERVE
ST REGIS
To Brockville 45m
Morrisburg 16m
Roosevelttown 2m
Fort Covington 1m
To Massena
Malone 11m
To Malone
Châteaugay 5m
570000m E
590000m. E.

Valleyfield
St Zotique QUE track northwest to southeast crossing road leading to Armstown
track 2 acres – 6 acres wide, about ¼ mile long.
16.8.1888 6 or 7 pm

5 mins

Montreal Witness 17.8.1888: Huntingdon Gleaner 23.8.1888:
9 dead 14 injured numbers homeless, $34,000 damage.

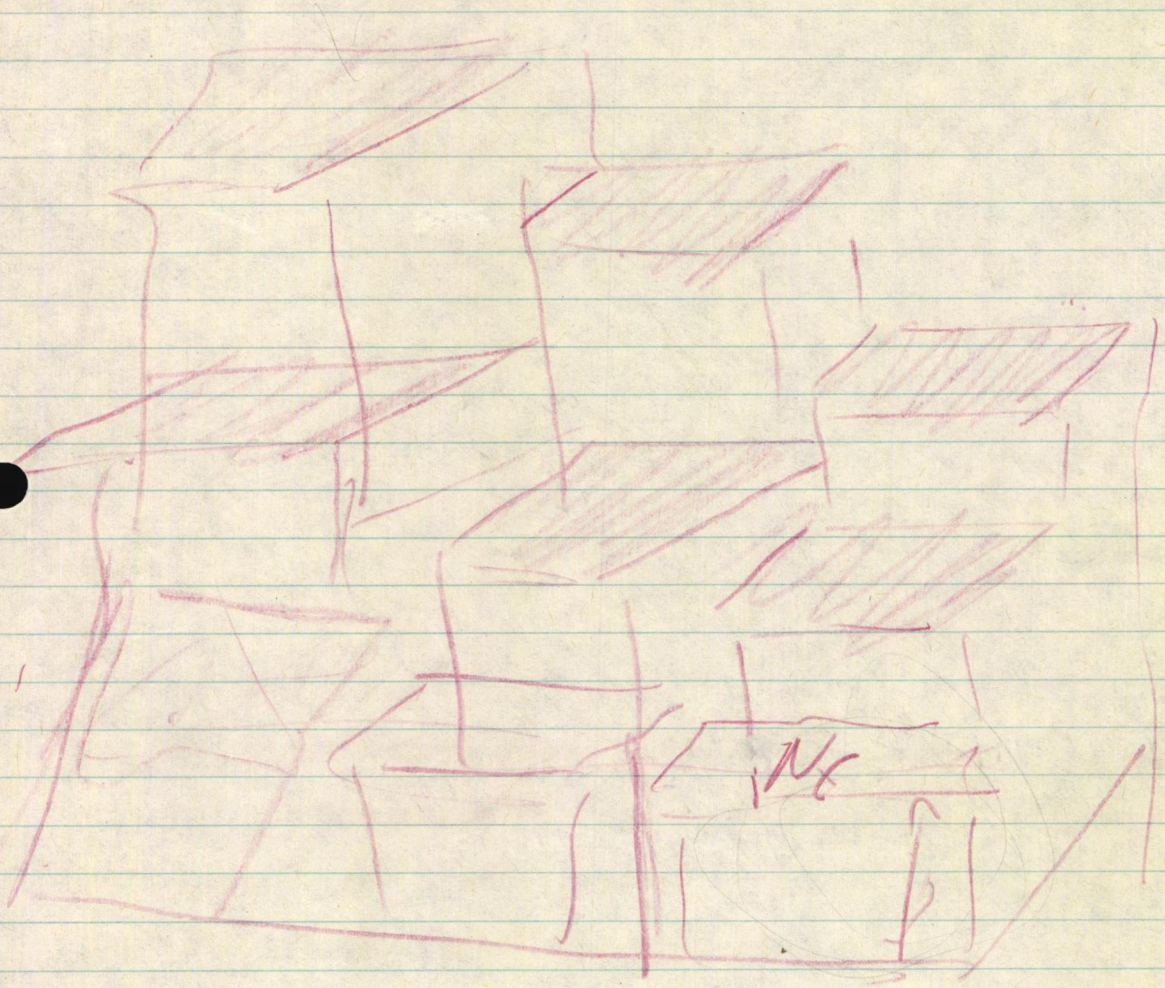
see file for more.

List of the injured:
- François Daoust his wife and young baby
- Mrs Andre Daoust + one child
- the older Miss Houle
- Edmond Cardinal & 3 children
- oldest son of Joseph Chartrand
- Father of X Saignault + 2 little girls

2 children of M St Louis

dead
an old woman in parish of St Zotique
the aged aunt of Cyrille Hainault
horse + 5 cows
Andre montpetit
Guiseppe Sauvé, his wife, two children and hired man
1 child of Mr St Louis

"The lighthouse keeper at Grosse Point... Mr Shannon... says the cloud passed not over 100 feet west of the lighthouse. He describes it as being like a great wall of green smoke, accompanied with hay, straw, pieces of board and all sorts of debris. The cloud was funnel-shaped and seemed to work like a cork-screw. Wherever it struck, the water rose high in the air..... Striking land close to the feeder, the house of François Daoust was laid low. He was thrown up into the air and his wife with her young baby was thrown in a ditch some distance off.


Nc

Deaths (9 and Possibly 11) Injuries on reverse

(1) A woman, name unknown. Parish of St Zotique.

(2) Farm of Edmond Cardinal. Horse and 5 cows killed

(3) André Montpetit, member of parish council of St-Cecile. Buried in the collapse of his barn. Lingered until following AM.

(4) Near Mr St Louis River, about 2 miles below the Valleyfield road. Giuseppe Sauvé found half buried in the mud, with a piece of picket through his neck and coming out at the left temple.
Mrs Sauvé was found buried in the debris of the home, near the oven.
A son, name unknown, aged 10 yrs carried. 200 feet and thrown into the river where he drowned.
~~Another son~~ A little girl, name unknown, injured in the collapse of the home, died the following day.
The Sauvé's hired man, name unknown, killed outside the door by falling timber

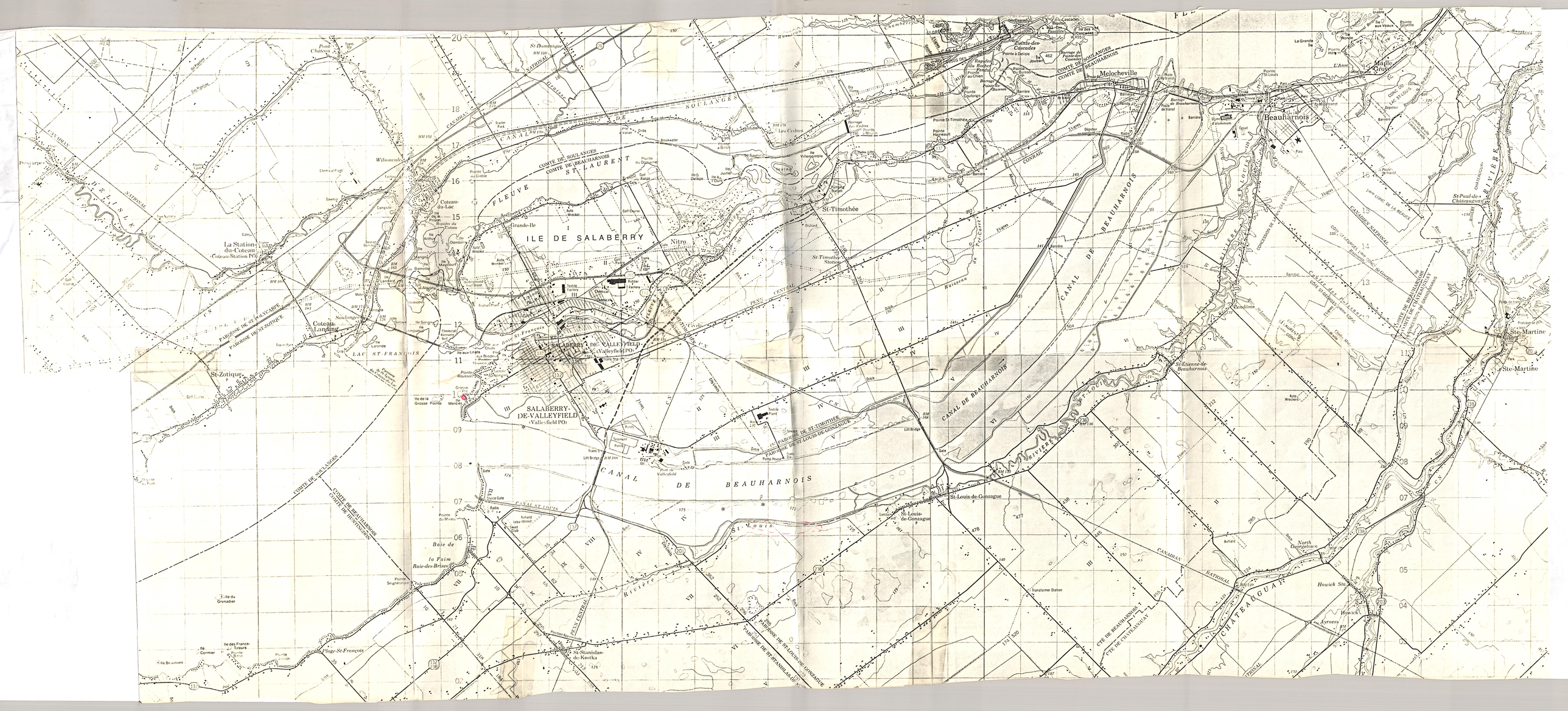
(5) Andrew Longtin. Severely hurt, and died the following morning.

(6) Beauharnois Agricultural Society Building. One child, name unknown, of Mr St. Louis Daigneault watchman, fatally injured
~~Daigneault St Louis~~, The watchman's father, not
~~(7)~~ expected to live.

(7) The aged aunt of Cyrille Hainault not expected to recover.

INJURED.

- Many in St Zotique
2 - André Daoust + one of his children
5 - 5 family members of Cyrille Hamanet bruised.
1 - Edmond Cardinal, arm broken
1 - Oldest son of Joseph Chartrand, badly hurt
3 - St Louis Daignault and two little girls badly hurt.



ILE DE SALABERRY
SALABERRY-DE-VALLEYFIELD
(Valleyfield PO)
Coteau-du-Lac
La Station-du-Coteau
(Coteau-Station PO)
Coteau-Landing
St-Zotique
Grande-Ile
Nitro
St-Timothée
Melocheville
Beauharnois
Maple Grove
St-Paul-de-Châteauguay
Ste-Martine
St-Étienne-de-Beauharnois
St-Louis-de-Gonzague
North Georgetown
Howick Sta
Howick
Ayrness
St-Stanislas-de-Kostka
Baie de la Faim
Baie-des-Brises
Plage-St-François
Lac St-François
Fleuve St-Laurent
Canal de Soulanges
Canal de Beauharnois
Canal St-Louis
Rivière St-Louis
Rivière Châteauguay
Comté de Soulanges
Comté de Beauharnois
Comté de Huntingdon
Paroisse de St-Zotique
Paroisse de St-Timothée
Paroisse de St-Louis-de-Gonzague
Paroisse de St-Stanislas-de-Kostka
Canadian National
Penn Central
Conrail