



FROM OUR FILES:



# Brook Park Tornado

On May 30, 1911, a tornado hit Book Park.

## TORNADO TUESDAY

Plays Havoc At Brookpark.  
Much Damage Done

### 3 Lose Their Lives

Tornado Kills Three and Injures Many.  
Reduces Holmstrom House  
To Kindling Wood

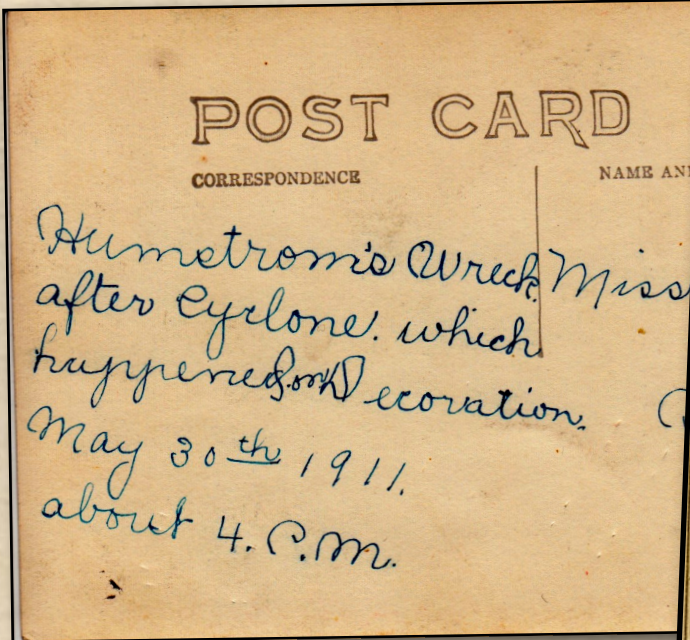
Tuesday afternoon at 4:30 o'clock our citizens noticed a funnel shaped cloud in the northwest sky. The tail of this cloud was seen to strike the ground and then raise up and travel for some distance before striking the ground again. Those who witnessed the strange sight were positive that we would hear of damage being done, but all agreed that it was a number of miles away. Imagine their surprise when at five o'clock word was received that the storm had struck the farm house of Chas. Holmstrom, who lives ten miles northwest of here, and that a woman had been killed and several children injured.

Dr. R. L. Wiseman was summoned and immediately left for the scene of disaster. Upon returning home he reported that there were two killed, a man and a woman, and several children injured.

Wednesday a reporter of the Pioneer went up to the place and this is what he found: The Holmstrom house was reduced to kindling wood. Mrs. Holmstrom, who was on the stairs at the time, informed us that she was turned around and round and when she came to herself, she heard one of the Burwick children, who had been spending the day at the Holmstrom home, crying. She at once crawled from the wreckage of her house and went around to the east side of the debris and there found Mrs. Burwick covered with blood. She at once went to the lady and took her in her arms, where she died a few moments later. She then picked up the children, one 14 months old and the other 6 months old, and carried them to the neighbors'. Mrs. Holmstrom was not seriously hurt, although she received a scratch on the arm and a slight injury on her right side.



Wade Deaver, age 14, recorded her account on the back of this postcard.



The tail of the tornado then lifted into the air and struck the earth again just a half mile east, demolishing the home of Chas. Cottrel, killing Mr. Cottrel, fatally injuring his wife and seriously injuring six children. The house was taken and carried about ten rods, and all that was left intact was the floor. The tail then lifted and went a mile further east, striking a house, but doing no damage.

The Burwick children were scratched and the oldest received a blow on the back, leaving a black spot about the size of a man's hand.

Mrs. Cottrel sustained injuries about the head and had several ribs broken. At the time of the accident Mrs. Cottrel held a four months old babe in her arms, which did not receive a scratch. The oldest boy, Clarence, aged 16, had his head cut and an arm and leg broken. Laura, a girl of 13, had an arm and leg broken and was otherwise injured. Myrtle, aged 10, had her collar bone broken and received other injuries. Ruff, aged 8, was hurt about the head and is in a very precarious condition. Bertha, aged 5, had an arm and rib broken. Francis, aged 2½ years, was not hurt at all.

Anyone viewing the remains of the two houses can scarcely comprehend how the occupants could escape with their lives.

Mrs. Burwick and Mr. Cottrel were buried in the Brookpark cemetery Wednesday afternoon.

The Pine County Pioneer  
June 2, 1911



COMPILED BY:  
Pine City Area History Association