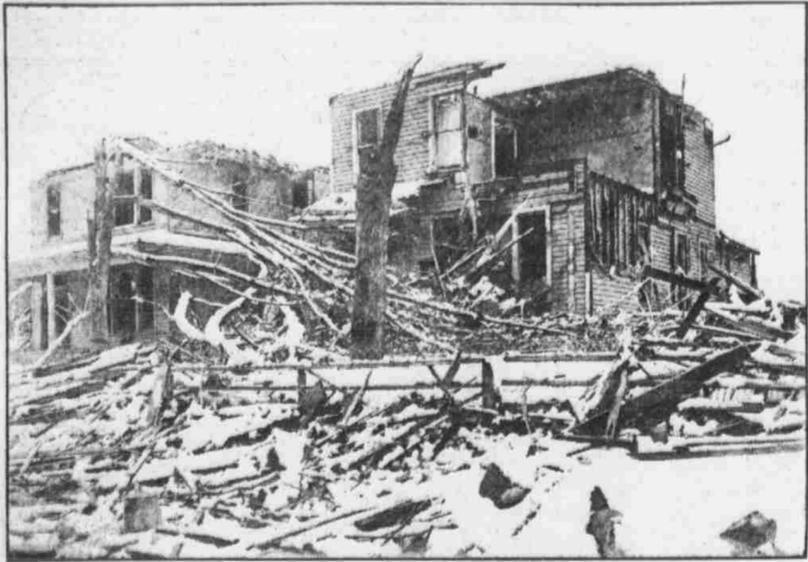


In the Track of the Tornado



Lake Street, Between Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Streets

(Continued from Page One)

and iron-went down as if it had been a fragile paling fence.

Now, over the hills to beautiful Bemis park lurches the infuriated demon, licking up telephone and telegraph and electric light poles as it goes, scattering a few more structures, uprooting trees and shooting them in some cases blocks away, skirting the vast building of Sacred Heart convent, Thirty-sixth and Hurt, and thrusting a glance aside at the residence of the Rt. Rev. Richard Sheen, Catholic bishop, disfiguring the large new, half-completed home of Louis Nash and demolishing others nearby.

Laughs at Wooded Hollow.
Here once more it reached a sharp decline and takes the grade into Bemis park like the winning auto on the last lap of the speedway. Here it truly "scours over the land," and "ploughs up the whole deep from the lowest bottom" for not a spot of Bemis park seems to have been missed. It burrows into the hollow and rolls "vast billows" of trees and earth and furniture from Cuming street homes ever against the north side slopes.

One might imagine that so great a depression as the tree-templed lowlands of Bemis park would break the velocity of the wind, but he would not imagine it after gazing upon the sad ruins of the once handsome homes that densely crowded upon the hills of this choice residential district. There they lay an indiscriminate mass of material intermingled with the shattered trunks and limbs of the splendid old trees that made Bemis park as pretty and inviting a spot for a home as ever the eye of the artist feasted upon.

As if gathering new impetus the funnel cloud on sealing the hill back at Fortieth and Farnam streets came hurtling north with a queer quivering of the eastward wing, wrought, it seemed, to an insatiable fury, no now it rears its sable head over the Bemis hills and up the steep incline of the old Creighton farm abutting on Thirty-third street and extending east.

Wreckage on the Lowland.
Aha, from the summit of this last elevation it looks down upon its completest conquest, the low plateau to the north. Speed on, thou madest purveyor of death, speed on! Feed thy ravishing passion upon the precious lives of men! Tear thy way to them through this dense forest of homes built by their frugality and skill! Snatch them from each other in the quiet of an Easter Sunday's communion and reate thyself in their blood! And so it did. It passed down Parker and Blondo streets eastward to Twenty-fourth street, here expanding the width of its path to about six blocks and as far north as Lake street it wrought its worst devastation. It took house after house and converted it into kindling wood, strewing streets with a mass of rubbish and splinters, which but a few seconds before composed dwellings for hundreds. And in these somber ruins were to be found the largest toll of victims, dead, dying or badly injured.

Apparently Split Twice.
Some descriptions of the cloud indicate that it separated twice, once at Forty-eighth and Leavenworth streets, when a spur took down the Belt line, and again on North Twenty-fourth street. The more destructive part moving along Lake, Ohio, Maple, Locust and Binney streets until it crossed the river on the east. These apparent separations must have been the widening of the path, as, for instance, in the vicinity of Fortieth and Farnam streets, when, at the time it veered eastward, the western extremity was at Saunders school on Forty-first and Cass streets and the eastern away over near Thirty-sixth street and further north.

It was no respecter of persons or things, and besides making a clean sweep most of the way, shook out windows and some doors blocks distant from its regular line of travel. Wherever buildings withstood its ravages at all, they were, mostly, the brick or stone structures. As a rule the frame simply crumbled up like egg shells, no matter how well built. One illustration of the relative resistance of a frame and brick house under similar circumstances is found on Thirty-eighth avenue near Farnam, where a two-story frame, or the crushed remains of it, lie hurled against a brick, comparatively free from serious damage. Of course, there is room here for a freak of the storm also.

Centers of Chief Damage.
The centers of chief damage were around the Fortieth and Farnam section from Fortieth to Forty-second and from the City Saving institute on Howard north to Dodge; in Bemis park and for a radius of a few blocks around Twenty-fourth and Lake. Of course, the damage done the scores of most costly dwellings on Thirty-ninth, Thirty-eighth and Thirty-sixth, from Farnam to Cuming, was extensive, chiefly because of the great values of the buildings, but the density of destruction, while tremendous and complete in spots even here, was not to be compared with the devastation in Bemis park, along Cuming street and over in the north bottoms, where for whole blocks houses were simply leveled. Here, too, was the greatest loss of life. In Idlewild hall, 207 North Twenty-

fourth, the largest single body of lives was lost, thirteen in all. This was an old two-story brick structure, not far from Lake street, owned and patronized by colored men. Some were in it playing pool, others for refuge from the storm, but most of them were buried in the basement when the floors fell in and the walls out and water filled up the cellar.

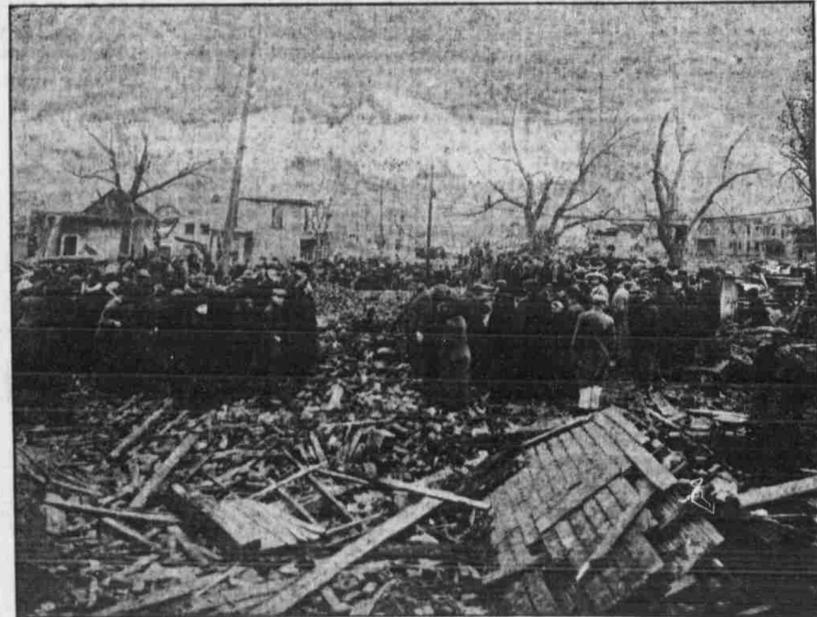
Its Work Among Poor.
Here, also, on this north side, was the greatest amount of suffering, for the majority of homes belonged to or were occupied by poor families, a large portion of them negroes. To some it was a complete effacement of a lifetime's savings and a noble destitution. Many of the people, wage-earners, white and colored, were buying modest homes on the installment or building loan plan and for their homes as well as their furniture consequently were turned out adrift with nothing but the clothing upon their backs, and, as the death list shows, all too many came out even minus their lives. One whole family, a father, mother and five little ones—the Nathan Krinsky family—was completely wiped out.

It was at first reported that another thirteen men and women went down to death in the Diamond moving picture theater on Lake street, near Twenty-fourth, where one negro escaped after six hours of confinement in the ruins, alive and well. But time proved that no deaths occurred here.

Several were killed within a radius of three blocks of the fatal Fortieth and Farnam corner. On the south side of



Scene at Twenty-fifth and Grant



Crowd at Idlewild Hall, Before Lines Were Stretched, Viewing Recovery of Bodies



Removing Debris at Twenty-eighth and Parker Streets

Farnam from Forty-first to Forty-second three were killed, George J. Duncan, Miss Mabel McBride and the venerable A. J. Peck, and a fourth, Ray Talbot, barely escaped, coming out with severe, though not mortal, injuries.

Cellars Sought for Safety.
People generally, where possible, rushed to cellars and basements for safety and, as the facts show, the vast majority of them did not go in vain, though scores did.

Next to the loss of life and homes, the destruction of shade trees was disheartening. Beautiful maples, elms, oaks and others by the score were destroyed, some whipped into shreds, some torn from their sockets by the roots and others badly disfigured. While such devastation was common all along the path of the storm, it was most noticeable, perhaps, in Bemis park, where the trees in their pristine glory so graciously adorned that picturesque section. It has been the current comment that it will be years before these old friends will be replaced, if they ever are.

Rescuers Work by Night.
The public utilities, especially electric light and power, were badly smitten by the storm. Lights went out and street cars stopped in the very spots where the tornado overtook them. Many fires were caused by overturning stoves or furnaces or gas lights and the firemen had a strenuous night of it, vying with the policemen and others in the work of rescue and salvage. All night long men carrying lanterns could be seen searching ruins for missing men, women and children, and now and then strode solemnly by four men in khaki uniform bearing a stretcher, on which lay a dead or dying,

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McBride Home at Forty-Second and Farnam

or injured victim of the vicious wind. Soldiers from the federal forts were quickly on hand with their ambulances and did heroic service. So along this same line did civilians, many of them owning autos putting in the whole night at this humane task.

Hospitals were thrown open and filled with maimed sufferers. Physicians and nurses had a busy time of it. Private homes in many cases were converted into havens of refuge. Names were not asked; the only requirement for admission was to be injured or homeless.

Monday Morning's Awakening.
The city officials, led by Mayor Dahlman, Police Commissioner Ryder, the other city commissioners, Chief of Police Dunn, Fire Chief Saiter and others, were quick to respond to the call for help and put in, most of them, a ceaseless night of toil, laying immediately plans for the important relief work to be carried on indefinitely.

The city awoke, as cities usually do under such circumstances, stupefied by the appalling disaster, not yet prepared fully to comprehend or appreciate what had happened. The morning was still cold and this long line of devastation presented a bleak and forbidding spectacle, indeed.

Monday became largely a holiday, thought not formally so. People—men, women and children—tramped, tramped all day long over every vestige of the waste places, though not all simply in curiosity, for ever and always there was the helping hand outstretched. V. th-

out delay the work of restoration really began in the efforts to clear away debris. The city set large numbers of laborers to work and private individuals looked out for their own and others, but a day of ever so strenuous toil made but little impression upon the twisted ruins.

Relief Work Organized.
Bright and early Governor Morehead came up from Lincoln, made a tour of the ruined districts, repaired to his hotel appalled at the magnitude of the disaster to reflect upon what to do. Before leaving Lincoln he had ordered out four companies of the state militia and soon he augmented the forces to 600 troops. Martial law was declared throughout the zone of destruction, lines stretched and sentinels placed in charge.

At midnight Police Commissioner Ryder had devised a system of "passes" to be used in case of necessity in getting through the lines and these were printed and ready for distribution at daybreak. The city police and officials co-operated with the young men of the National Guard and soon the system of patrol was established on a systematic basis. The big task now was relief to the stricken. Hundreds of people had to be housed and fed and clothed and that would require vast sums of money, stores of provisions and raiment, and the city bent to as if it had been schooled in the facilities of such a service.

A citizens relief committee was at once formed of Police Commissioner Ryder, T.

(Continued on Page Three.)



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