

ICE STORM WAS DISASTROUS

Blanket of Ice Covered Country Doing Much Damage

In our report of the storm which visited us the fore part of last week, we had no idea it was so disastrous in the country until Friday when farmers came to town with reports of the damage done. Because of the flood we were practically shut off from the country and the telephone lines being down we were also cut off from communication with our farmer friends.

Friday and Saturday several farmers brought to town small branches of trees which had a coating of ice nearly an inch thick all over and this amount of ice clinging to the entire tree made so much weight that the limbs could not hold and the woods are full of ruined and broken trees, the ground being covered with branches. Telephone poles and wires could not stand the strain and in many places where the wire did not break the poles toppled over and the telephone system is in bad shape. It will be some time before the damage can be repaired and it will cost hundreds of dollars.

The electric light line running from town out on Sylvia ridge also came in for its share of damage. The poles were all up and but few of them are down but the wires are broken in many places. In a few instances limbs fell across the poles on which the transformers were held and broke them.

Farmers tell us that the falling of the ice laden limbs made it dangerous for anyone to be out during the storm. On every side could be heard the crackling of limbs, the crack of trees as they split open and the roar of the trees as they hit the ground with a thud. Damage to the standing timber amounts to thousands of dollars. Many beautiful trees which had required nearly a century for growth are ruined. The many profitable sugar camps of this section of country are ruined for this season at least and many groves are fit only for wood.

Similar afternoon we made a trip to the ridge land in order to see the sight for ourselves. We are unable to put into print a description of the scenes that met our eyes that will convey a proper conception of the storm to one who has never seen its like. It was a scene like we had never witnessed before and hope to never see its like again. Even the oldest inhabitants cannot remember of such a heavy ice storm.

We went up Bender Hollow and by the time we got to Billy Bender's place we were in the ice district. The dense woods around his house are a sorry looking sight, several of the trees stripped of their branches. We went up on the hill and as we turned facing Almer Goehman's farm house we were met with a beautiful as well as sorrowful sight. The telephone and electric wires were hang low, describing an inverted arch, covered with an inch of ice and short pieces hanging so thickly it resembled us of the fringe on a curtain. The sun shining on the ice made it sparkle and gliten so much as to remind us of the old fashioned Christmas cards liberally sprinkled with tinseled to describe a winter scene. As we neared the house we noticed the nice orchard with limbs weighted down to the ground and many of them broken. The beautiful hedge around the house was practically a solid cake of ice so thickly was it coated. We went out: Hopewell ridge and around by Sylvia and on every hand were evidences of the damage done by the storm. At Earl Eschman's farm several large trees stand near the house. One limb fell on the house, others on the porch and the front yard is covered with limbs. Worn wire fences along the road were frozen so full of ice that they looked like a sheet of ice hung up between the posts.

Concerning the extent of the storm we learn the affected area was Western Wisconsin, Southern Minnesota and Northwestern Iowa.

We in the valleys were not affected by the ice storm as the temperature was higher in the valley and the rain did not freeze. Not a tree was hurt and no wires were down in town. What we escaped in ice we made up in floods. The river raised so high that residents near the bridge were shut in the water entirely surrounding their houses. The Electric light plant was unable to run from Wednesday until Saturday and even yet they are bothered because of the ice jams below the plant which does not allow the full water to get away fast enough.

No storm of such severity was ever witnessed in this locality before and probably never will be again by the present generation. A similar storm struck here in the early 80's but it was not so serious and did not cause so much inconvenience as there were no telephone or electric wires to damage.