

Boston Sunday Globe

HURRICANE Edition

SEPTEMBER 19, 1954



**The Sloop "Trull" Burns
and Breaks Up at Marblehead**

OWNED BY ARTHUR METCALF OF MILTON

Hurricane Carol--

Her Wrath and Wreckage

By CHARLES WHIPPLE



The maelstrom of roaring destruction that was Hurricane Carol churned New England into one gigantic wind tunnel on Aug. 31, 1954. A century hence, people will still be referring to it.

It was just a hard, driving rain early that morning. But at 7:30 a. m. the hurricane warning went out. Then Carol struck, with all the leveling havoc of unleashed Nature.

It was a heavier damage toll than in the hurricane of Sept. 21, 1938. It felled more trees, blasted many more beachfront cottages, and in the pre-Labor Day season wrecked many more boats. The hurricane of Sept. 14, 1944, was small by comparison.

And after totting up the dollar damage, the heart-aches were beyond calculation. The \$3,500,000 damage to yachts paled beside the lobstermen's loss of boats and pots, the farmer's apple crop a windfall of red ink, or even, sentimentally, the destruction of shade trees that had stood since the Revolution or merely since childhood.

Historic landmarks toppled along with more modern engineering achievements. The most eye-catching of all was the 100-foot wooden steeple of the Old North (Christ) Church in Boston's North End, whence two lanterns in 1775 had told Paul Revere and America that the British were coming.

It had last been felled by another high wind in 1804.

Crashing down, too, came the 649-foot tower of station WBZ-TV in Brighton, where a steel girder lanced through a studio ceiling and stopped, quivering like a giant jew's harp, a foot from announcer Chick Morris' head.

Heroism was unsung, anonymous and almost everywhere. Police and Coast Guardsmen vied with civilians in feats of death-risking courage to save lives of persons unknown.

Buzzards Bay swelled shoreward in a tidal wave in the storm's worst pounding. It tore an infant from its mother's grasp. Out at sea, a 60-foot wave lashed a Coast Guardsman overboard from Martha's Vineyard Lightship; he rode through the hurricane on and off a balsawood raft to be picked up 17 hours later.

In 1938, a 7-months-old baby had been saved by her mother from the roof of their Swifts Beach, Wareham, cottage. Now, 16 years later, the rescued turned rescuer, waded seaward waist-deep to bring four elderly people ashore.

Boat-owners tried, mostly in vain, to save their craft. The Navy sunk its submarines at Portsmouth and Newport intentionally.

As the clean-up job began, a state of emergency was proclaimed in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Householders began sawing trees. Gov. Herter toured stricken areas, let food stores stay open to fill darkened refrigerators, then got legislative approval for a \$12,000,000 relief fund to include tax abatements.

President Eisenhower ordered \$1,500,000 allocated to the disaster areas. Sleepless state Civil Defense and Public Health officials directed emergency supply efforts. Thousands of linemen began restoring power and phone service. It took more than a week to finish.

On these pages, culled by the Globe from more than 1000 striking photos, is a pictorial idea of Hurricane Carol, whom New England may want to forget, but cannot.



- She left behind:
- 63 dead—the old, the infants and the able-bodied.
- 1000 injured—at least.
- \$500,000,000 property damage—at least.
- 50,000 dwellings damaged.
- 60,000 persons evacuated from homes—estimated.
- 2,000,000 families without electric power.
- 270,000 phones out of order—and communication crippled.

THE HURRICANE was wind. It was rain and heavy seas and tidal waves, but primarily it was wind. A good idea of the speed and constancy of Carol's blasting gusts is demonstrated by these

two yachtsmen on Wollaston Beach, who had to hang on for dear life while the boat they tried to save was smashed up against the beach.

(Globe-AP Photo)

Anything Afloat Was in Serious Trouble



It was the height of the yachting season, and boats of all sizes were riding on their moorings or tied up at floats. They were scattered like leaves when Carol hit. Above, Gov. Herter studies a battered hull on Revere Beach. Bill Flynn, of Nahant, tells him the sad story of the demise of the Sudden Imp. The Governor and the Legislature later appropriated \$12,000,000 in hurricane relief loans.

Photo by William Tamberg

The seas spared neither ships nor people. Right, Mrs. William J. Boudreau (center) of Fall River, her son, Robert, 16 (right), and daughter, Claire, 22, struggled to stay afloat in Narragansett Bay after their cottage was swept away in one stroke of a tidal wave.

Globe-UP Photo



Inland Homes Took a Beating from Falling Trees



Photos by Arnold L. Belcher

Many a fine old colonial home away from the seaboard was splintered by trees. At Hampton Falls, N. H., this house, belonging to Mrs. Emma Norton, caught the full impact of a giant elm. A car was buried in the wreckage.



Harold Brown of Green st., Exeter, N. H., was eating his dinner when Carol uprooted his shade tree and sent it hurtling through his roof. He was unhurt.

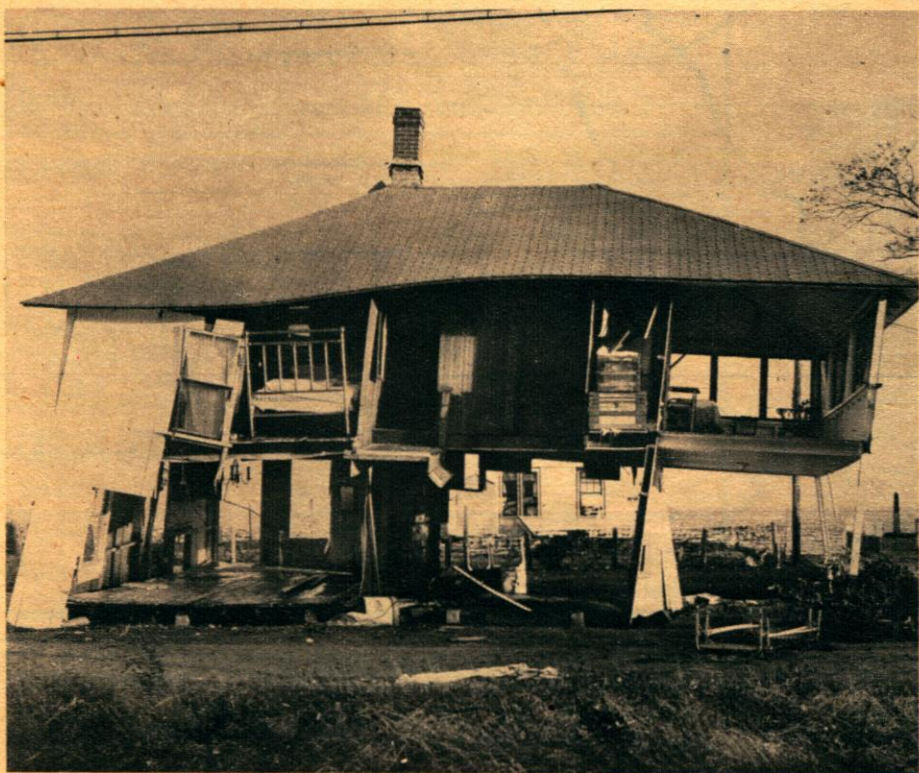


Not one tree, but three smashed into the old home of Com Charles Parker of Brentwood, N. H.

Beach Property Was Pounded to Pieces



This helicopter photo of the coast at Wareham shows how beach houses, softened by Carol's pounding winds, gave way under tidal waves which roared high over the sea walls. Most severe coastal damage of the storm was centered here and in Buzzards Bay.



A Wareham Summer cottage stands incredibly on stilts after Carol ripped out three of its walls. By some mockery of the storm, house beyond was barely touched.

Photo by Danny Goshtigian



A Westport woman does her best to salvage household articles from beneath the roof of her crushed home. Like most coastal homes, it was abandoned long before the storm sent it crashing.

Photo by Edmund Kelley

The Weather Experts Did Their Very Best

By K. S. BARTLETT

United States Weather Bureau personnel did all they could to track down Hurricane Carol and sound adequate warning. Perhaps the best proof is the death toll of 63 compared with 588 in 1938, when the damage was almost as great and Boston had no forecasting center.

Yet more people were at more shoreside cottages this year when Carol came before Labor Day. And this hurricane, going 40 miles an hour, took more time to wreak its havoc than the 70-mile-an-hour 1938 blow.

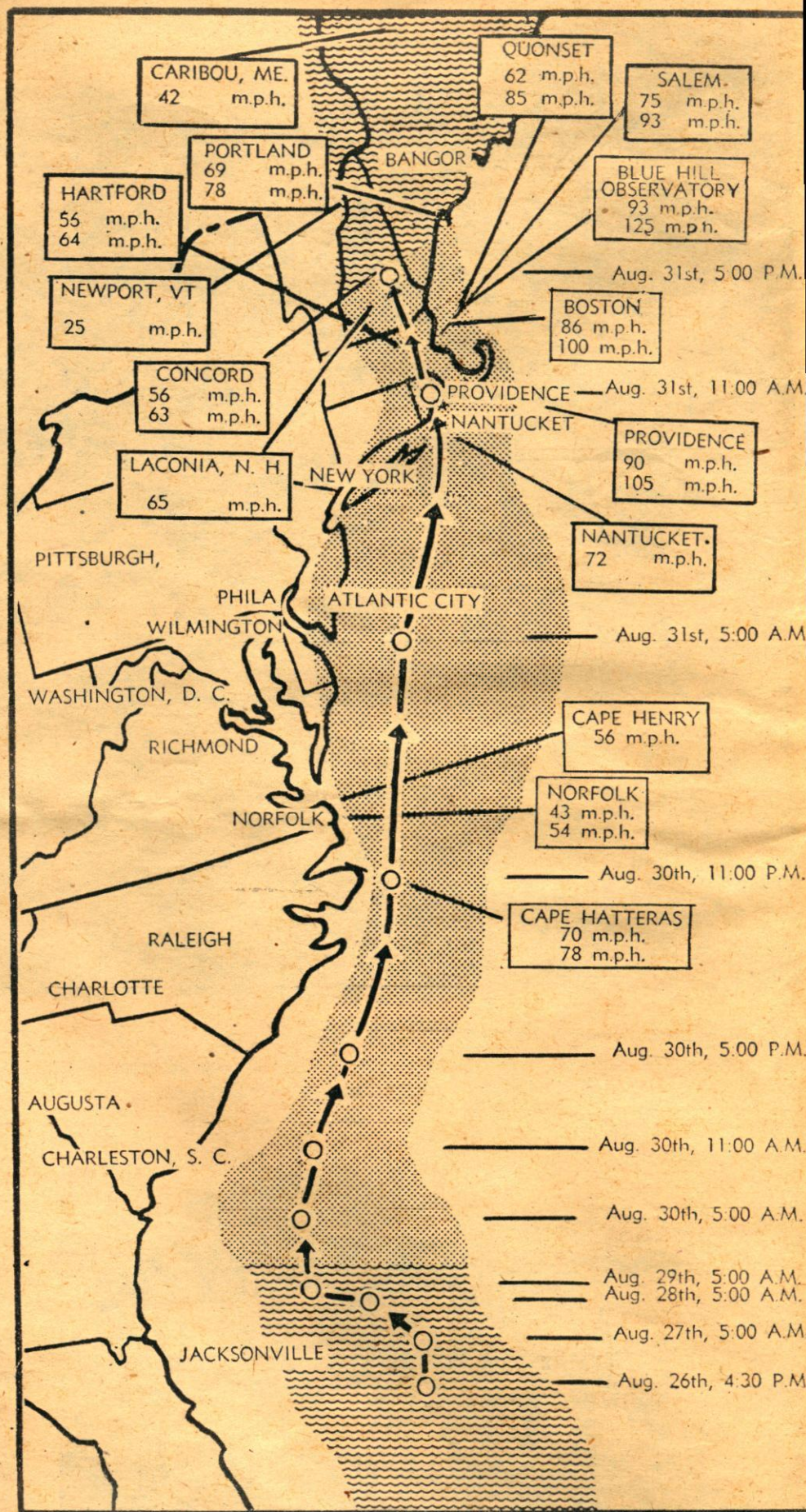
But several factors hampered the weather experts. After lazing along 400 miles in four days, Carol suddenly ate up another 400 miles, from Hatteras to Long Island, in only 12 hours late Aug. 30. And because of the darkness, the patrol planes which usually fly right in toward the centers of hurricanes were hampered that night. Radar reports were sketchy and a weather station in the Atlan-

tic, about half-way between New York and Bermuda, had ceased operating July 1. Still, Massachusetts got the hurricane warning at 7:30 a. m. Aug. 31, several hours before Carol struck. The center or "eye" of the 200-mile storm-path passed just east of Worcester, but the wind was stronger toward Boston. In future, a radio-equipped balloon travelling with the "eye" may give us better warnings.



This is how the hurricane, rotating counter-clockwise, moved through a low-pressure channel which led it up over New England toward New York. It began to peter out only after passing through Concord, N. H.

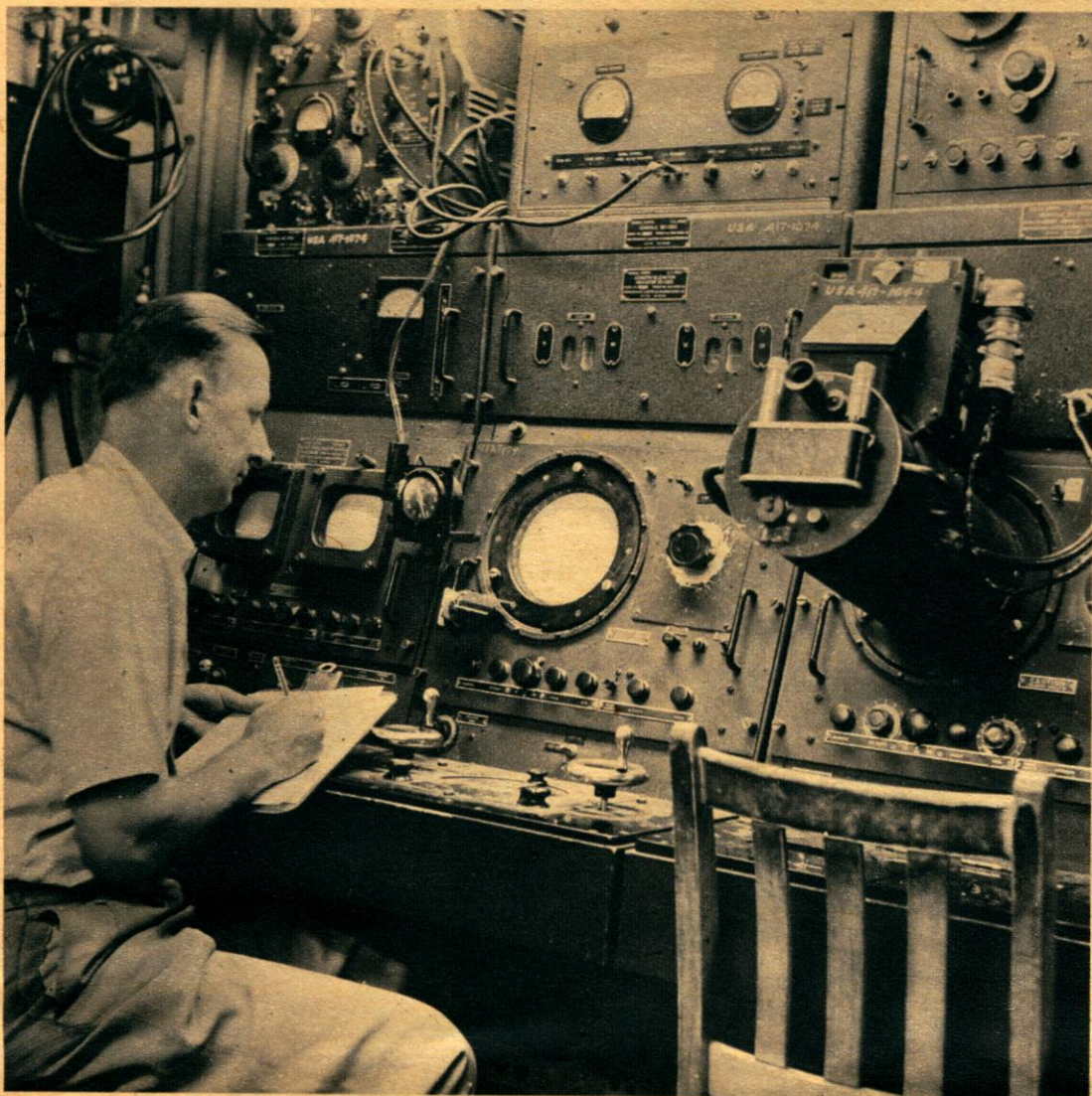
Globe-UP Fotocast Photo



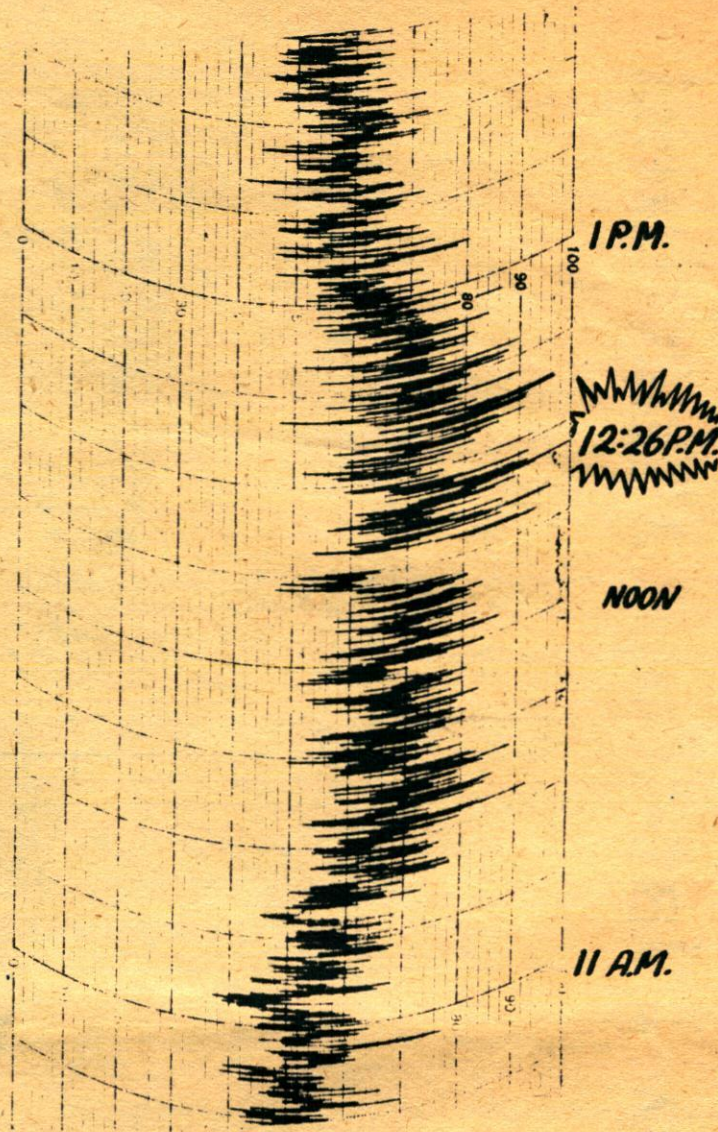
HURRICANE PATH—Map prepared from U. S. Weather Bureau material shows Carol was a gale (wavy lines) before and after becoming hurricane (dots). Open circles and connecting arrowed line shows "eye" or center. Smaller figures show highest sustained wind strength; larger figures show highest gust recorded.

Map, courtesy of Washington Post

to Keep Tabs on the Elusive Hurricane



Seeing Carol Home—This big radar installation of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with Walter Rutkowski of Watertown at the controls, may have helped cut down death toll. Radar reports on storm's path were sent to Weather Bureau.



Wind Recorder of Weather Bureau at Logan Airport shows Boston had a peak gust of 100 miles per hour at 12:26 p. m. Below—A hurricane at its height looks like this. The picture was taken at Mattapoisett as Carol reached her peak.

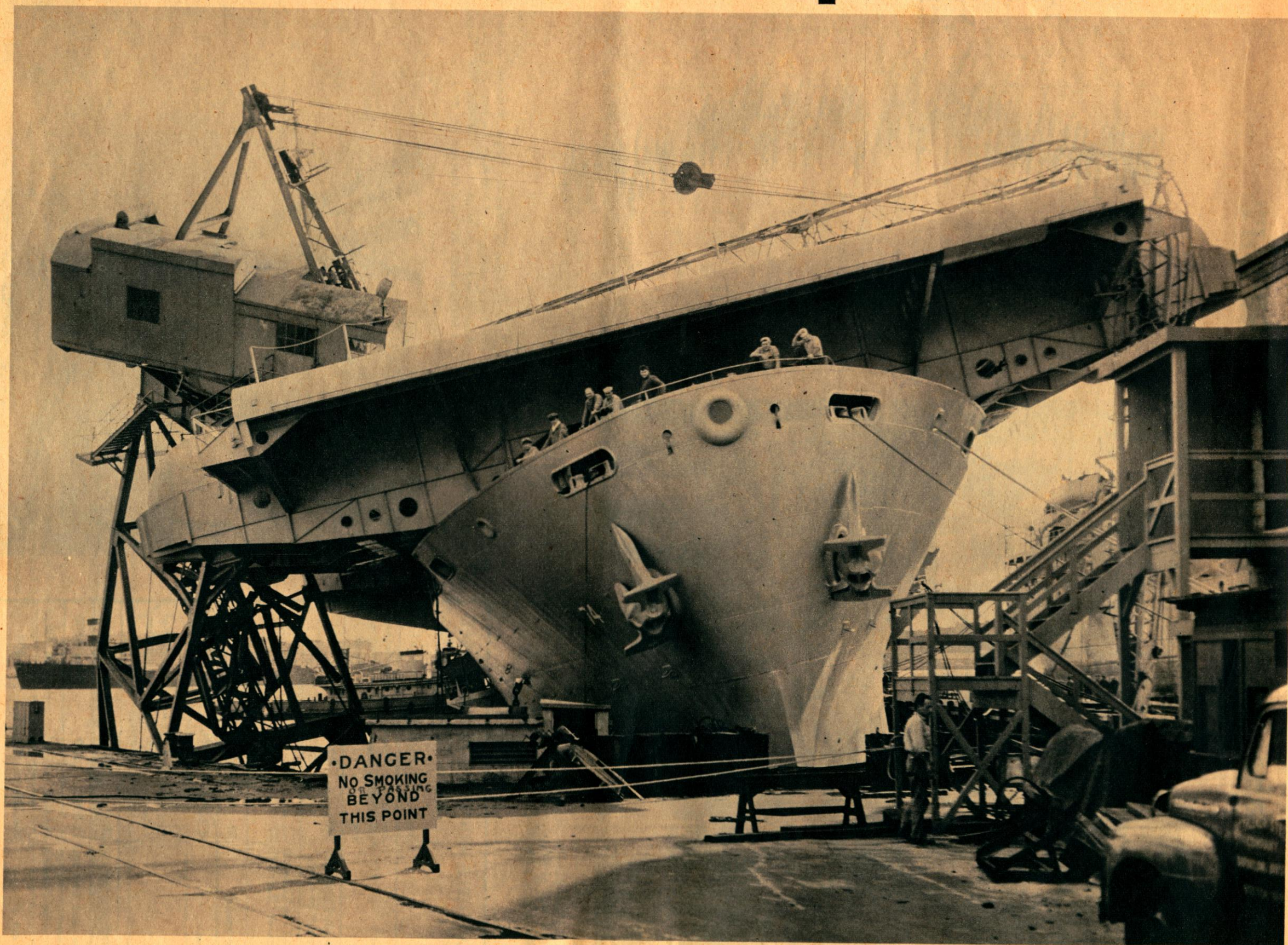
HOW THREE HURRICANES COMPARED

	1938	1944	1954
Date	Sept. 21	Sept. 14	Aug. 31
Forecast	No hurricane warning	Hurricane warning of 13 hours	Hurricane warning of 3 hours
Highest gusts at Boston or Blue Hills Obs.	183	72 98	100
Sustained velocity at Boston or Blue Hills Obs.	87	60	86
Forward speed	70	40	40
Direction	N. N. W.	N. N. E.	E. of N.
Path	Up Conn. R. Valley	Just south of Boston, over E. Weymouth	Just east of Worcester
Death toll	588	27	63
Damage cost (millions)	\$3-500	\$60	Over \$500
Homes without power	796,000		2,000,000
Phones cut off	604,000	192,100	295,000



Photo by W. F. Jenney

Reconditioned Flat-Top Flattened



The medium aircraft carrier Nahenta Bay was tied to her berth in East Boston after thorough de-mothballing and reconditioning. She rocked quietly, immune to the pounding of the hurricane, until the winds knocked a huge crane over, crashing it onto her deck. The carrier listed badly,

slid forward in her berth, and smashed her stern into the opposite pier. Two other heavy ships, tied up near her, were also damaged.

Photo by Charles B. Carey



**Hulls
Became
Hulks**

Some of the most beautiful vessels which ever sailed into Massachusetts Bay were battered to driftwood during Carol's rampage. Above, a stoutly-built fishing boat out of Wood's Hole is driven up on shore and crushed at Hyannisport.

Photo by Danny Goshtigian.



After the hurricane made her look insignificant, the tide made this power yacht look ridiculous by stranding her, stern up, on Edgartown Pier. Still, she is in better shape than many a Martha's Vineyard cruiser.



In Rye Harbor, N. H., Lawrence MacDougall and his son, Lawrence Jr., survey the incredible wreck of their light cruiser after it was buffeted against the boulder seawall.

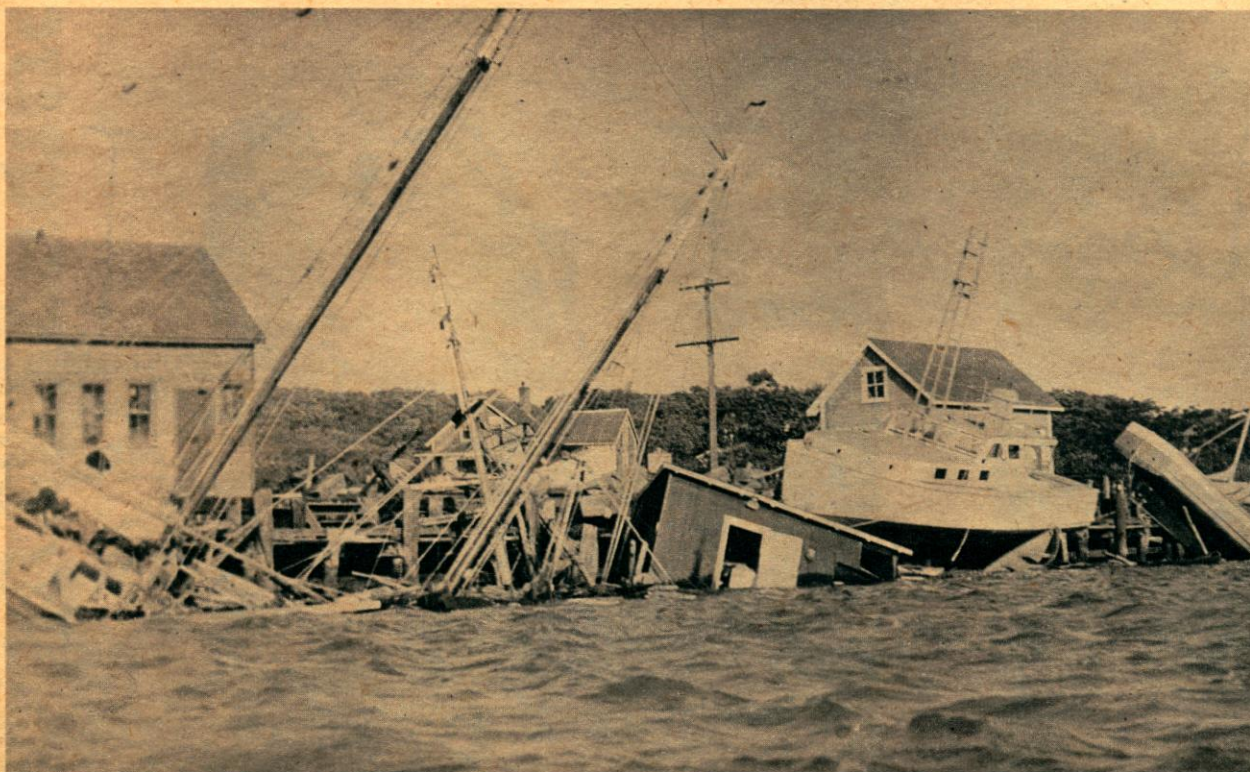
Photo by Charles F. McCormick.

A Hurricane Offers the Sea a Chance



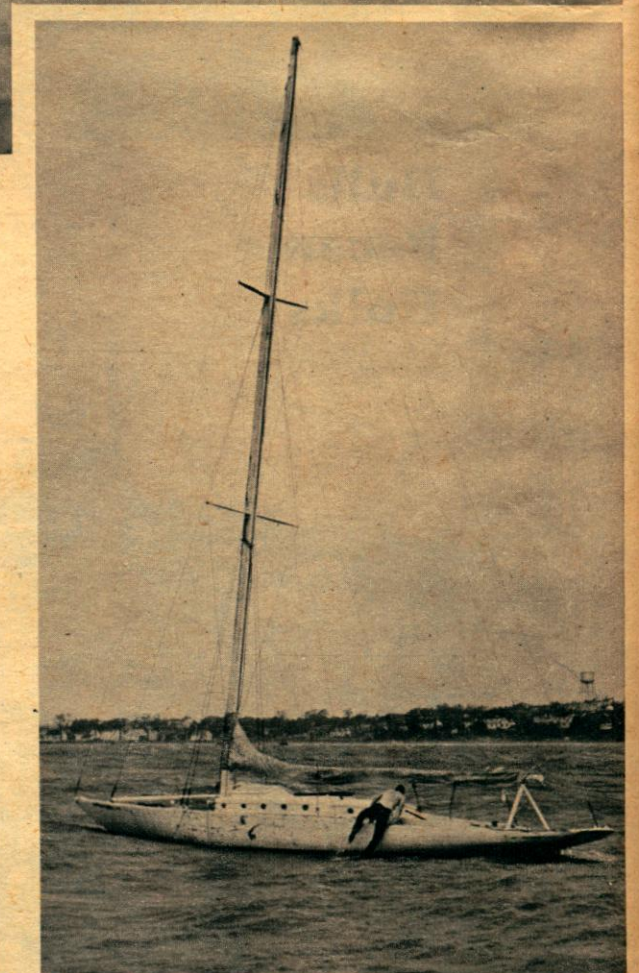
The full power of the hurricane's breakers pounds away at Kelly's Landing, South Boston. Besides splintering the seaward side of the structure, the seas tore away pilings along both sides.

(Photo by Joseph Runci)



One of the most hideous jumbles of boats, piers and gear buildings occurred in Menemsha, Martha's Vineyard, where the sea and the winds crackled hulls like so much kindling.

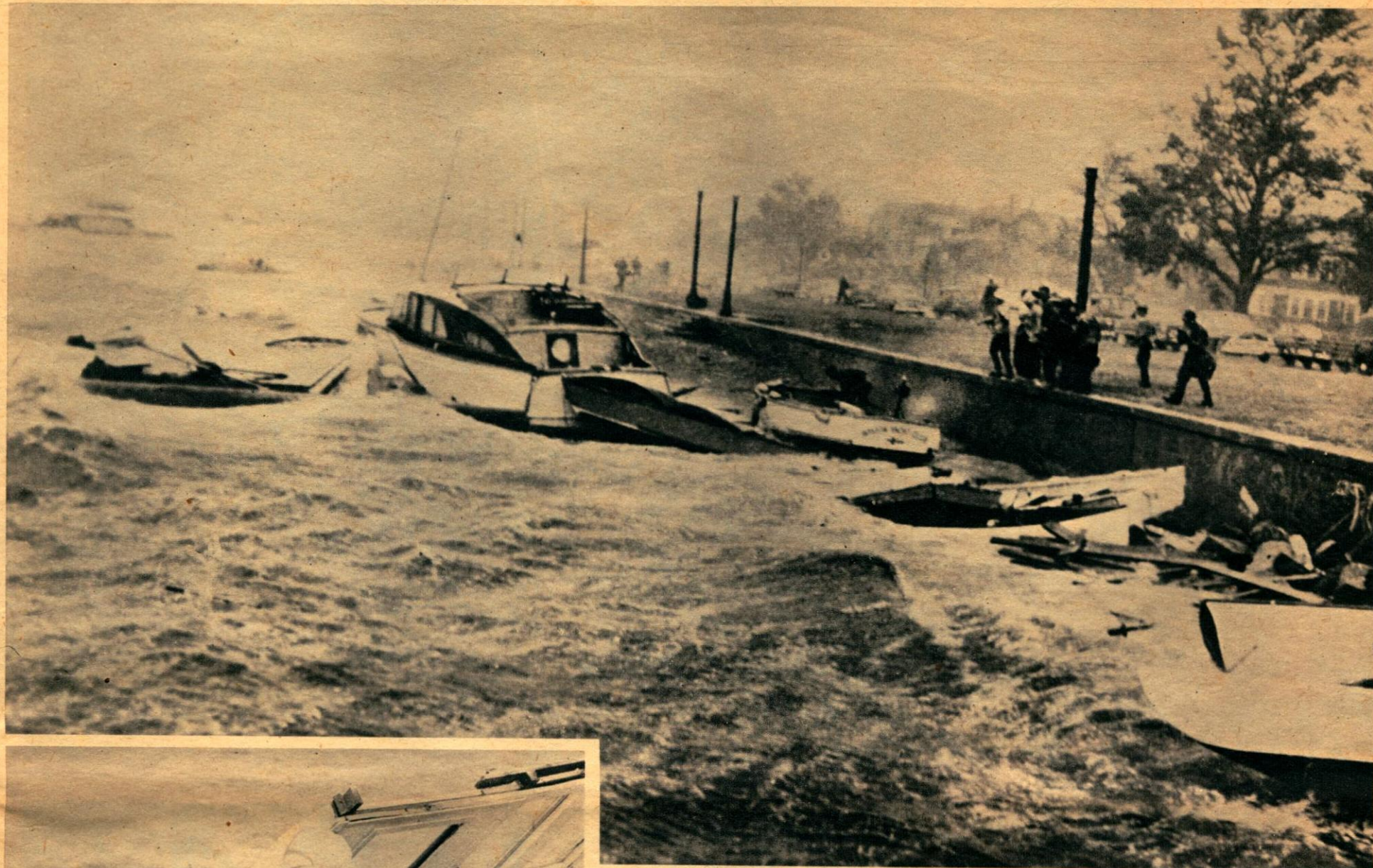
(Globe-AP)



This game yachtsman swam out to his yacht at the height of the storm. He stayed with it until it washed ashore on Squantum Neck, Wollaston, but was unable to keep it from heeling over in the marsh.

(Globe-AP)

to Misbehave at Her Very Worst



Sailboats, power cruisers, floats and tenders snarl into wreckage on the seawall adjacent to the Boston Yacht Club, Marblehead Harbor. After the storm, the whole inner harbor was chocked with broken boats.

Globe-AP



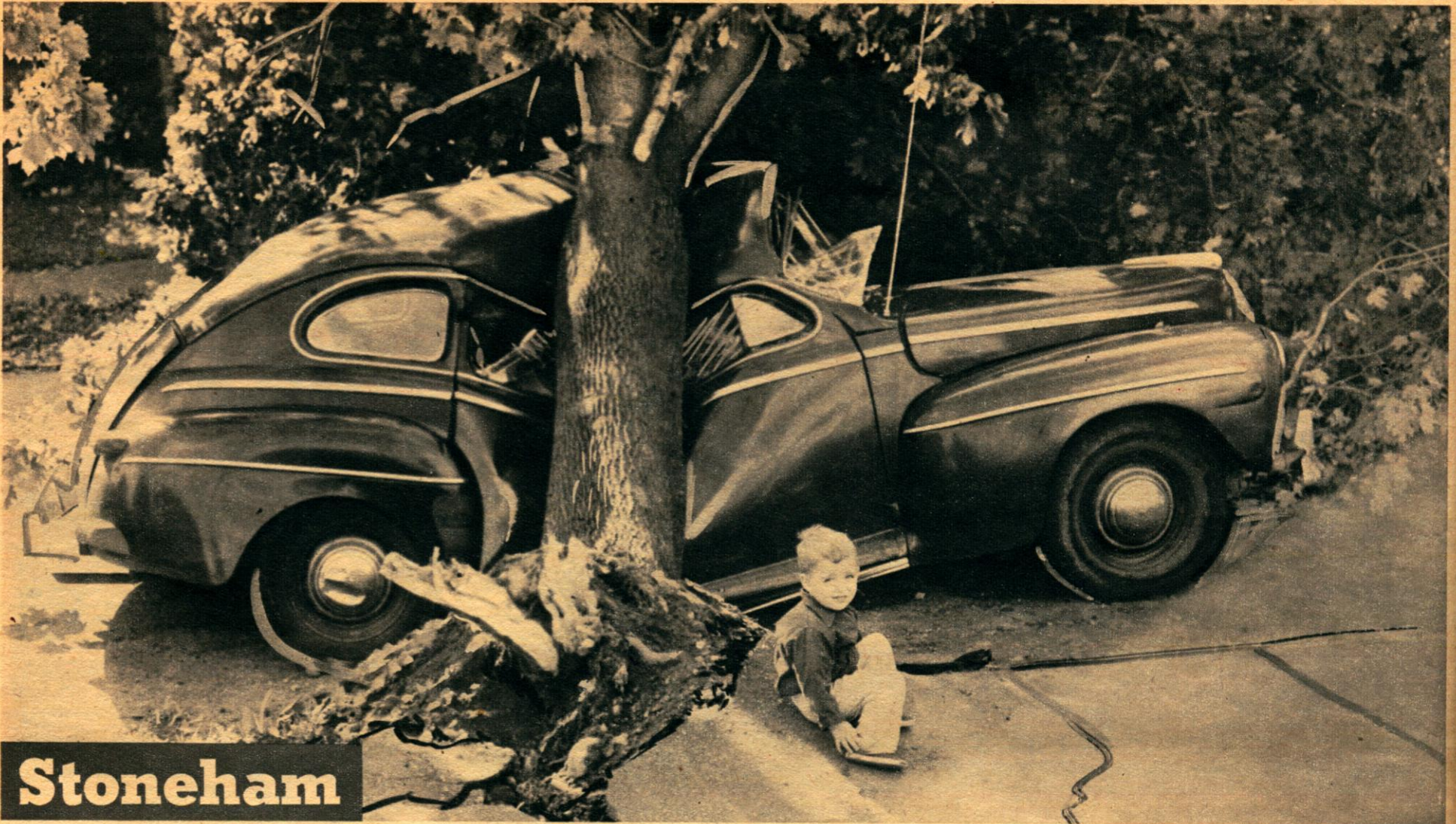
Russell Alvarez, of Dorchester, examines the hulk of his sloop and the loot stripped from it by two men who were later arrested. The craft piled up on Malibu Beach, Dorchester.



As this picture grimly testifies, the Fairhaven fishing fleet was badly clouted by Hurricane Carol. Huge scale salvage operations had to be instituted to swing the heavy boats back into the water. The storm put the vessels out of commission during the crest of their best season.

Globe-AP

Be it Oak, or Elm, or Maple, or Pine



Stoneham

Photo by Ronnie Donovan



Winthrop

Photo by Tom O Connor

It Was Never too Strong for Carol to Fell



Attleboro

Globe-UP Photo



Wells, Me.

Photo by Charles F. McCormick

Carol Crashes A

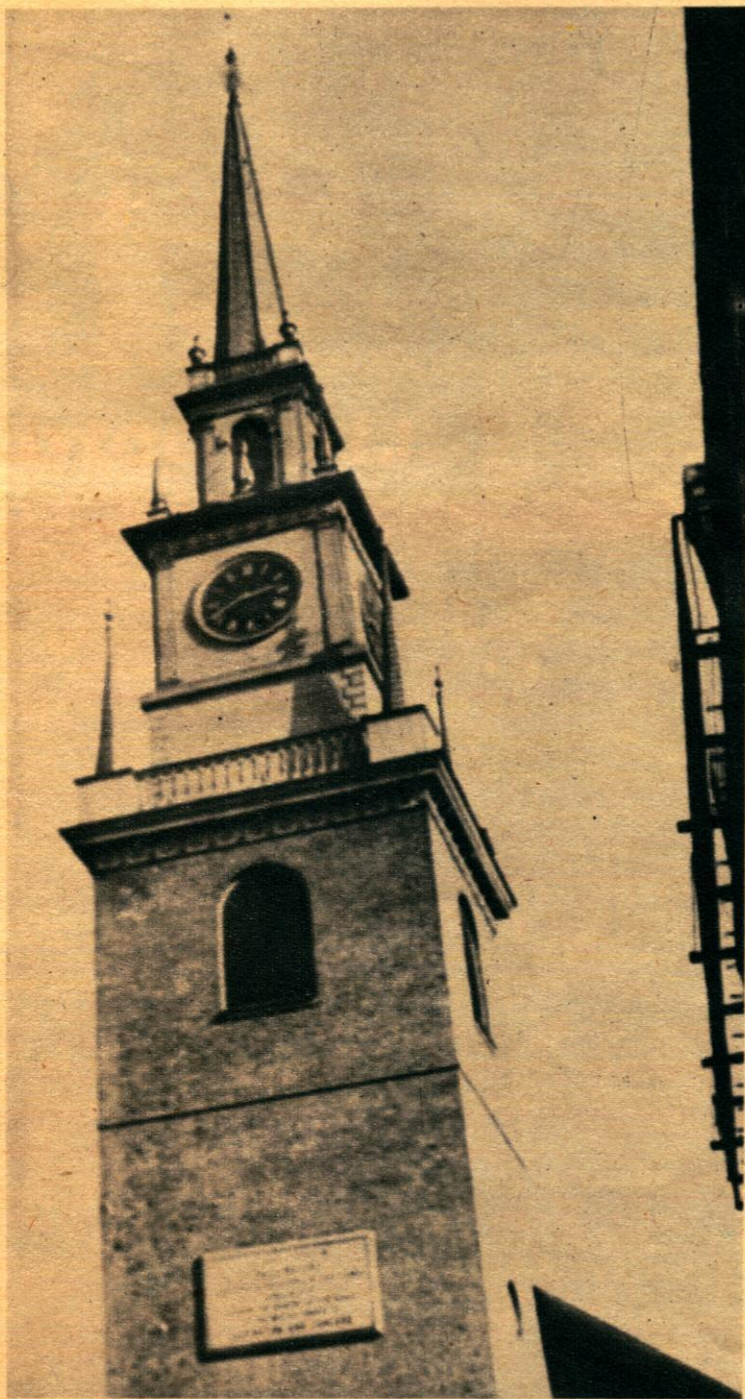


Rev. Charles Russell Peck, vicar of the Old North Church, stands beside the weathervane of the famed spire. The dented globe contained papers, sealed in 1740.

Photo by Charles B. Carey

The Old North Church was constructed in 1723. In 1740, a tower was made for it of the very best timbers and brickwork the artisans of the colonies could construct. At the top was placed a perfectly balanced lead and copper weather vane, into the globe of which were sealed documents of the times.

Situated high in Boston's North End on Salem st., the church looked out on Boston Harbor, Charlestown, the Back Bay and the whole of the thriving community. It was a natural choice for Patriot Paul Revere to look for the famous signal that would be shown in the tower by Capt. John Pulling—"One if by land, two if by sea."



The steeple was mounted on three sub-towers, the bottom one made of brick. When the swaying began, the movement curved through the joints of all three towers. But it was the lee side of the brick sub-tower which finally let go, sending the graceful spire down to become the rubble pile (at right).

Globe-UP Telephoto



Photo by Louis Russo

America's Best-Known Steeple

But to Hurricane Carol, there was nothing sacred about the beloved old spire. Shortly after her winds reached velocities of 80 and 90 miles per hour, the steeple began to sway in a short arc. The movement became greater and greater, until at last it became simply a question of which way she would fall. Then finally, as a great gust raced across the bay—very possibly the one that racked up a 100 on the Weather Bureau anemometer—the leeward base crumbled and the whole tower crashed into the street.

But such a landmark cannot long lie humbled in the street. Already the Lantern League and other interested groups have begun raising funds to reconstruct this great landmark of the American Revolution.

BEHIND THE CAMERAS

As in most disasters, the actual crumpling of the famous spire was captured on the films of amateur cameras. The picture below was taken by Joseph Spallino, a visiting New Yorker. He listened to the neighborhood conjectures about the Old North steeple, bought a roll of film and repaired to a rooftop with his small folding camera to wait for the right moment. The series to the right are from the eight millimeter movie film shot by Frank Cirignano of Salem st.

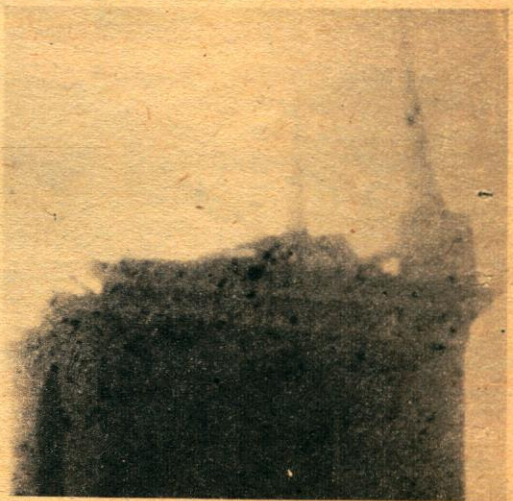
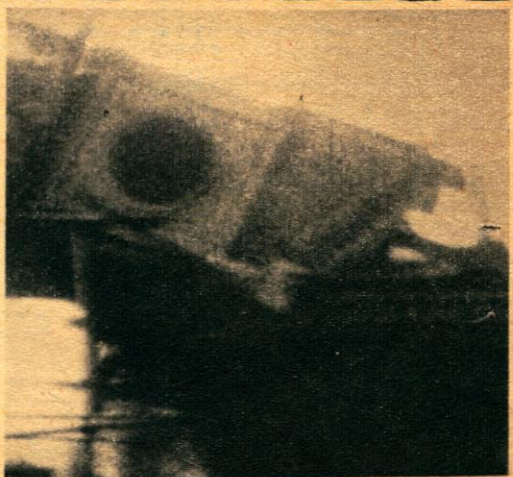
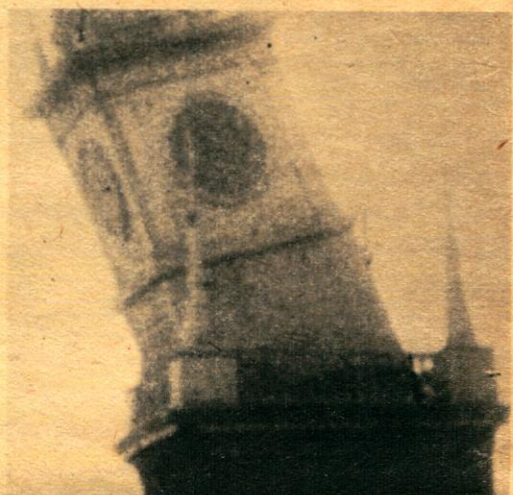
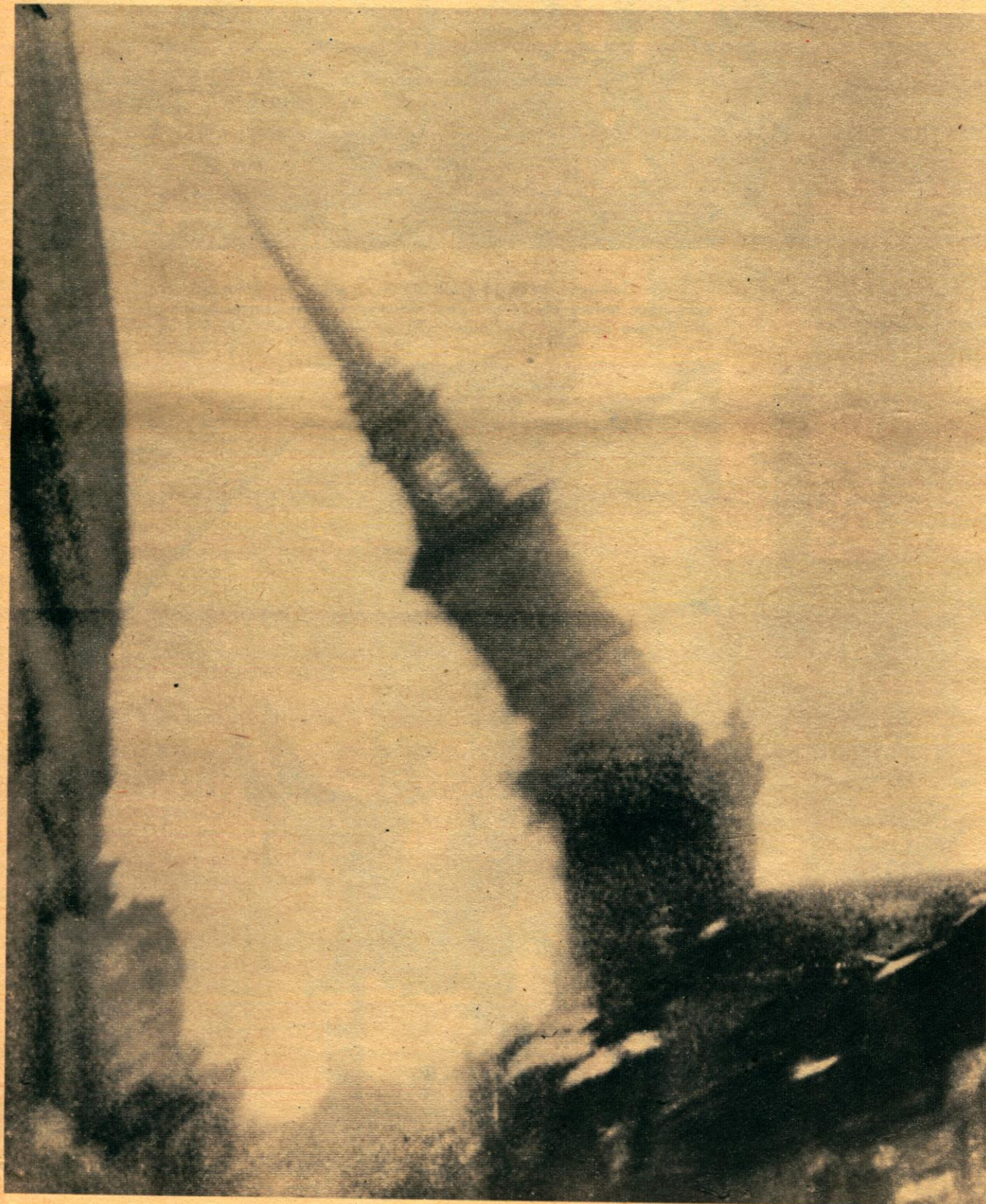


Photo by Joseph Spallino

649 Feet of Steel Becomes Spaghetti

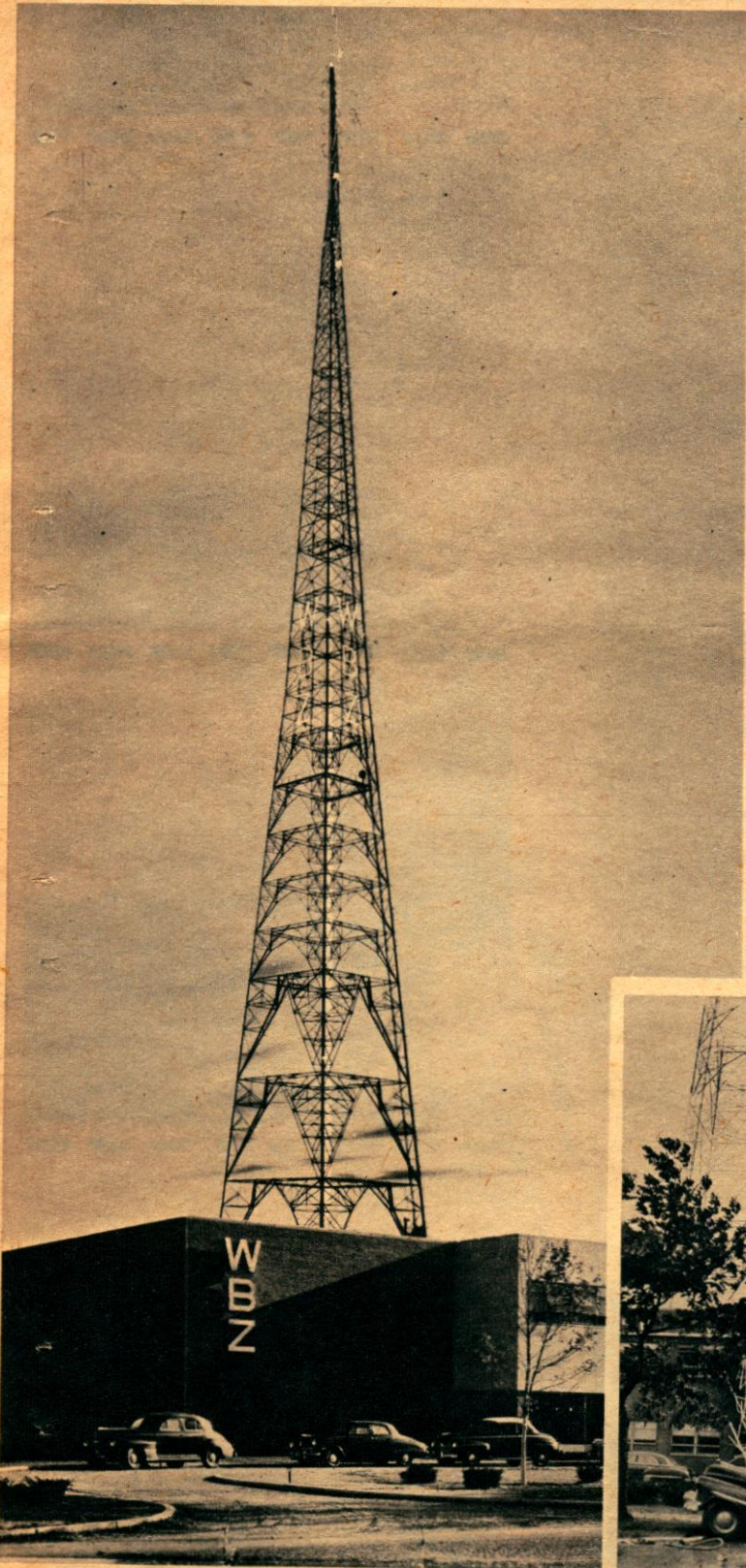
WBZ-TV Tower Crashes Across Studio Building

Full-scale television and radio operations went on at WBZ, Brighton, while the massive TV antenna tower swayed dangerously. When the tower gave way in the big wind and crashed across the studios, it endangered many lives and put the station off the air. But both radio and TV operations resumed after about 15 minutes for switching to auxiliary tower.



Photo by Charles McCormick

Joe Cullinane, WBZ-TV staff, stands in what was a handsome outside office before the 70-ton steel antenna tower buckled and fell onto it. Twelve girls, at work under roof on which it fell, escaped injury.



Above, the impressive steel shaft as it rose over WBZ offices before the hurricane. Right, considerably less impressive view of how it buckled across street.

Photo, right, by Charles B. Carey



Photo by Charles McCormick

A spar, which is part of the WBZ antenna as shown, pierced through the ceiling of one of the general offices.

With Yankee Ingenuity, the People Bounced Back Quickly

Power was out almost everywhere. Telephones buzzed and hummed, but would not carry messages. Gasoline could not be pumped, deep freezers and refrigerators began to thaw, and television again became a thing of the future.

But people pitched in to help each other. Those who had gas refrigerators stored neighbors' perishables. Those who had ice, shared it. The lucky few who managed to wangle dry ice for their deep freezers made room for those who couldn't.

No matter how bad it was, people managed to find something funny about their situation and tried to share the laugh with others.



Photo by Paul J. O'Connell

Old-fashioned ice suddenly meant a lot to everybody. This iceman's daughter, Loretta Signore of Brookline, was one person who never had to worry about refrigeration. Others weren't so lucky. Long lines of householders (below) waited patiently at dry ice plants to pick up packages of refrigeration. Quick action kept food spoilage down to a minimum.



Photo by Charles Dixon

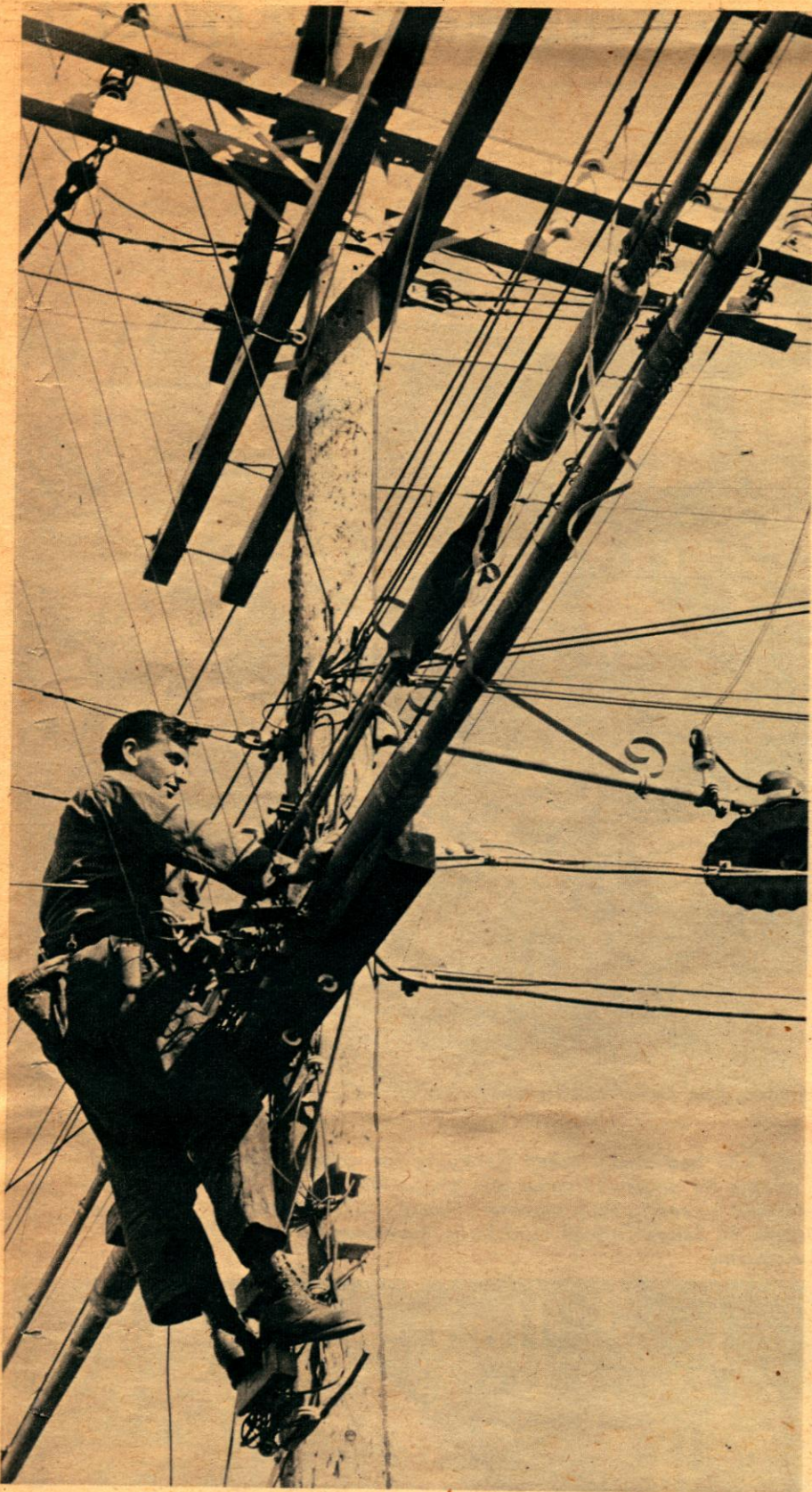


Photo by Edmund Kelley

People who had always taken electricity for granted found themselves abruptly missing it. Ingenuity came into play. On Cape Cod, one gasoline engine provided power to keep another running . . . while (below) in Jamaica Plain, 14-year-old James Driscoll used basic manpower to keep the local gas station functioning.



Photo by Joseph Runc



The Telephone and Light Companies Suffered a Technical Knock-Out

It seemed that hardly a tree fell without taking wires with it. Early in the storm most electric companies were forced to cut off power from the source, so that the extra hazard of charged wires would be eliminated. Better than 60 percent of telephone service was cut off. More than 26 million feet of telephone and electric wire had to be re-strung.

But before the job could even begin, the almost hopeless tangle of broken branches and uprooted trunks had to be cleared away. While emergency technical crews came in from out of state, forestry men, public works employees, homeowners and volunteers started sawing up the trees and carting them away.

By Labor Day, just about everything was repaired. But crews had to begin at six in the morning and keep going until eleven at night to put things back in shape.

Photo by Danny Goshtigian



New equipment helped in the heroic battle to restore utilities. This crew of treemen used adjustable "buckets" to untangle the mess in Malden. In this contraption, men could swing themselves right across the street without hindering traffic.

Photo by William J. Ennis



Emergency crews from hundreds of miles away were rushed to the stricken area. Linemen went methodically about the incredible task of unraveling the chaotic snarl of telephone and power lines.

Atlantic Photo Service

**This Is
What Faced
the Repair Crews**



Photo by Charles Dixon

In New Hampshire, Carol was Just Plain Wind



The Colony Club at Hampton Beach was typical of the destruction caused by the hurricane. In spite of it, however, the Miss Hampton Beach contest went off on schedule a few days later.

Photo by Charles F. McCormick



This huge shade tree ripped out roots as long as many of its branches, then fell on the Kingston, N. H., home of Mrs. Edward Watson.

Photos by Arnold Belcher



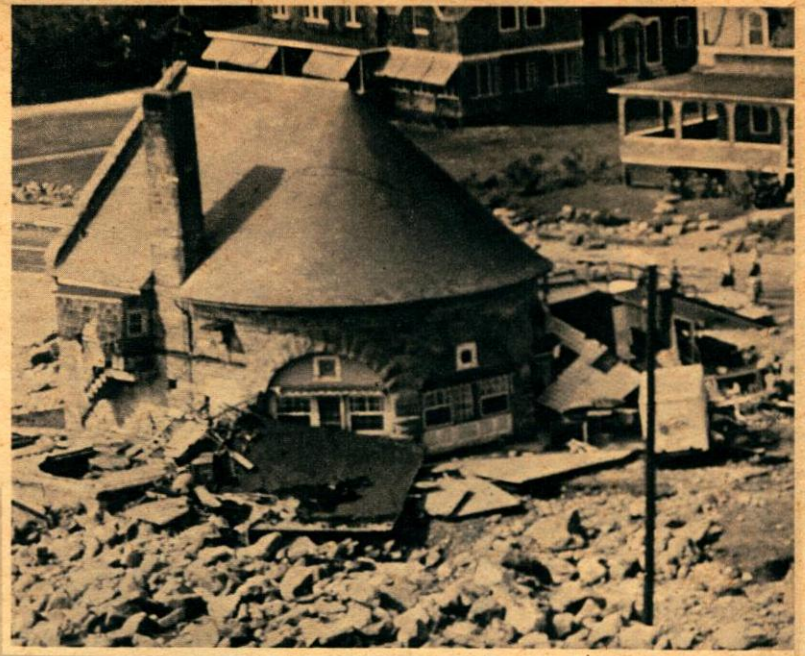
Donald Ring of Hampton seriously questioned the designation of his car as a "hard-top" convertible after a tree did a job on it.

In Rhode Island Carol Was Flood

Carol paid her visit to the city of Providence in a somewhat different form. She hoisted the waters of Narragansett Bay right up into the downtown streets. Cars were nearly submerged in the flood. The city looked more like Venice than the capital of Rhode Island. Martial law was declared soon after the great grey storm growled away to the North.

• • •
All that was left of the Coast Guard station at Narragansett, right, was a mass of debris—roof tops, timbers, shingles and heavy rocks which had been picked up by the storm and tossed into the building.

Globe-AP Photos



In Connecticut Carol Was Surf



In New London the seething seas boiled up over the seawall along Pequot av. Lawns, piazzas and even living rooms were inundated. *Globe-UP Photo*

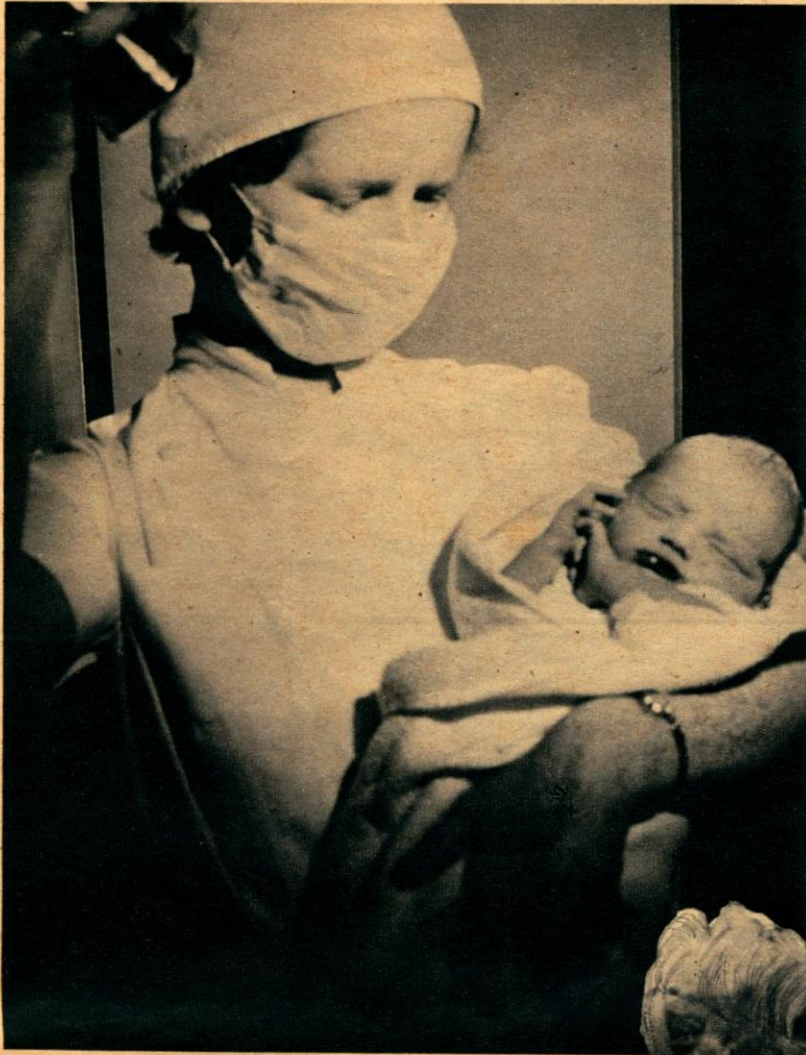


The high tide came at the very crest of the hurricane. Here, at Crescent Beach Lyme, 30-foot breakers smashed into cottages and piers. *Globe-AP Photos*



Splinters flew at Point-O-Woods Beach, Old Lyme, as the whole of Long Island Sound seemed to pick itself up and hurl itself ashore.

People Quickly Adjusted Their Lives



At Central Hospital, Somerville, nurse Madelaine MacLeod holds a baby boy who, because he chose to be born during a hurricane, came into the world by candle-light.

(Photo by Bill Tambora)



Mrs. Virginia Iannella, right, hurries to safety in Huma-rock, with her children, Suzy, 3 and Christopher, 1½.

(Photo by Paul J. Connell)



Carol's Humor Was Grim and Distorted



Flags on V. F. W. parkway sign, Roxbury, were made to look as though they'd been carried through a campaign.

Photo by Joseph Runci



The entire pick-up station was plucked from its foundation and plunked on this car at Quonset Point Naval Station, R. I.

Photo by William J. Ennis



The McCarthy's of Mattapoisett, fortunately, ceased to "live here" a few minutes before Carol paid her boisterous call.

Photo by Charles B. Carey

Dedham Fire Station Tower Dives Into Neighbor's Home

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE, SEPTEMBER 19, 1954



Insert shows Mrs. Anthony Guerrio and her son, Joseph, I, as they were sitting when the tower came through the wall.

Photos by Gil Friedberg

Hurricane Gusts of 100 Miles Per Hour



No movies tonight. Carol howled through the Weymouth Drive-in Theatre, reducing the giant screen to a pile of twisted rubble.

Photo by Charles Dixon



Downtown Boston was smothered in eerie darkness as the great wind quickened. This picture of Washington st. was taken at 10:45 in the morning while the force of the hurricane was still growing.

Globe-UP Photo



It looks like a section of Malayan jungle, but it's the Public Garden. Fine old trees were uprooted, or twisted by the power of the storm until they snapped, littering the peaceful walks.

Photo by Gil Friedberg

Screamed and Screeched Through Greater Boston



Carol showed no respect for the old and valuable trees on Boston Common. Many of them crashed to the ground, their roots levering up great chunks of the hallowed ground.

Photo by Thomas O'Connor



City streets weren't safe any more. Its headlights bravely gleaming, this car on Roxbury's Pleasant st., crumpled under the weight of a felled bough.

Photo by Joseph Runci



In Greater Boston's coastal sections like Winthrop, above, the ocean lapped the streets. The city's total bill is upwards of \$1,500,000.

Photo by Dan MacDougal



No Place Was Worst...

Neither Martha's Vineyard, above, nor Marion, below, nor any of the battered cities and towns could say that Carol hit them hardest. And nobody tried to; when the five hours of fury were over, everyone pitched in on the wreckage.



Photo by Harry Holbrook