

On Wednesday afternoon, 27 May 1885 a tornado swept through Western York County, following a similar storm's tract the year before. The storm first struck the Chamber's plantation on Bullock's Creek, eight miles west of York, damaging trees and fences. Moving eastward it fell upon the plantation of R. M. Whitesides at Meek's Hill just north of Sharon where fences were blown down and twisted large trees.

Next in its path was the Summerford farm and several buildings were unroofed. Continuing to travel northeast it struck the homes of J. M. Smith on Silver Creek, north of Howell's Ferry Road and five miles west of York; then William Dickson, Joseph Neal, A. E. Carroll, Hugh B. Wallace and William Carson whose house was unroofed. On each of these farms trees were twisted, buildings damaged, fences demolished and crops badly ruined. Next door to Carson and three miles north of York was the plantation of J. Harvey Dickson. Eight buildings on the Dickson farm were damaged, part of the house chimney was toppled and his orchard was ruined.

Several other farms were struck by the tornado, one of these was the home of Thomas N. Woods. The upper story of Wood's home was blown off and a wagon and buggy were blown from a shed and carried eighty feet away. At the time, Wood had nearly completed building a new home and it too was damaged. After a small house was flattened as Butler Thomasson's the tornada was last seen advancing into Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

Nearly two months to the day, on 24 June, rain fell in torrents in Western York County for nearly an hour. The greatest damage done by flooding wasters was experienced by those living on Kings Creek and in the Antiock section (now in Cherokee County). Doolittle Creek swelled from its usualy slumbering meanderings to 15 feet deep and 125 yards wide, sweeping everything before it. The creek widened out to 500 yards across in some places, causing many old timers say it was the largest freshet ever recalled.

The grist mill owned by Ira Hawkins was swept a way and H. M. Moore lost 200 shocks of wheat. Heavey loasses were also experienced by Gill Hambright, Drewry Neal, Elijah Hardin, James Dillingham, E. J. Downey, M. M. Tate, Lewis McSwain and Mark Wells.

The next year, seasonal bad weather came into York County during the winter of 1886 as a blast of cold artic air seemed to settle in for the duration. That winter the Broad River froze from bank to bank and continued freezing until it was a solid eleven inches thick. Boats were useless in the ice but those who

needed to get to business on the other side gingerly crossed on foot. It was said that one black man actually rode a mule across without a mishap.

Hard weather continued into the follow year and was dreadfully cold from mid January well into March. One man said there was little to do except stay near the house and monitor the firewood. February brought the coldest spell of weather anyone could remember. Until then, bluebirds were as plentiful as sparrows, but they were killed off in February's artic blast. It was several years before they began making their appearance again.

When the weather finally turned warm, the river ice began breaking up. Sounds of breaking ice emanating from the bluffs and bottomlands were like the sound of snapping and splintering of giant pines. In the several bends ice backed up for a mile and the ice piled up into icy mountains.