

The Blizzard of 1888

The singing of the meadowlarks on that cloudy, balmy morning in January, reminded one of spring. And the pioneer mothers who bundled their children off to school that morning had no idea that that day would be recorded in history as the time of one of the greatest storms ever to sweep the prairie.

All thirty-five children who attended the East Lynn school, a few miles north-east of Clay Center, Nebraska, were all in their places when the bell rang, that morning of January 12, 1888. They were the Martins and Rileys and Shraders; the Turners, the Clarks and the Frenches; the Galdings, the Deeders and the McCormicks. The young lady who taught the school was Miss Ida Sayer.

About 10 o'clock that morning the snow began falling, increasing in intensity until by noon it came down, not only in flakes, but in chunks, also. About 1 o'clock in the afternoon the wind whipped into the north west. There was a loud rush, and a roar, and the great storm was on. The temperature dropped, and intense cold followed. It was impossible to see anything from the school house windows.

The teacher, realizing the grave danger

forbade any child to leave the building during the storm. The year's fuel supply of cobs and coal had been placed in an anteroom built onto the front of the school house. The teacher was able to keep the fire in the stove burning and the children warm during the night.

About midnight the wind abated and the snow ceased falling. When daylight came they could see how severe the storm had been, as some of the snow drifts were as high as the school house itself.

It was afternoon, the following day before any one could get around the drifts to bring food, and take the children from the school house to their homes.

-Mrs. Geo. Heffelbower
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