

Summary of Newspaper Articles

Daily Herald – Provo, UT (last date searched 02/16/1958)

Headline: [Provoans 'Shaken Up' By Earthquake; Little Damage Reported](#)
Date: 02/14/1958
[Info Categories:](#) B, E, N, P, S

Deseret News – Salt Lake City, UT (last date searched 02/16/1958)

Headline: [Mild Earthquake Shakes Provo, Damage Slight](#)
Date: 02/14/1958
[Info Categories:](#) B, E, N, P, S

Salt Lake Tribune – Salt Lake City, UT (last date searched 02/17/1958)

Headline: [Shivery Tremor Stirs Provo Area Residents](#)
Date: 02/14/1958
[Info Categories:](#) B, E, N, P, S

Information Categories

A -- Aid:

provide medical services, shelter, donations, loans, advice, encouragement, implement safety measures

B -- Building Damage:

structure itself plus windows and chimneys (typically damage visible from outside the building)

E -- Earthquake Description:

where, when, duration, direction, sound, motion, number and timing of aftershocks

G -- Geologic Effects:

changes at the Earth's surface, fault scarps, rockfalls, landslides, ground cracks, ground subsidence, sand boils, water spouts; effects on springs, lakes, wells

H -- Humor:

I -- Impact:

changes in daily routine; rumors; influx of reporters, politicians, cost in dollars

L -- Lifelines:

effects on transportation: roads, bridges, railroads, airports

effects on communications: telephone, telegraph

effects on power, gas, water, and sewer lines

effects on dams

N -- Nonstructural Effects:

effects on plaster, furnishings (typically damage or rearrangement of furnishings visible inside a building)

P -- People:

effects on and responses to, during and after; deaths, injuries, near misses

R -- Recovery:

clean up, rebuild

S -- Scientific:

explanation of the day

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PROVOANS 'SHAKEN UP' BY EARTHQUAKE; LITTLE DAMAGED REPORTED Seismographs Report Fairly Severe Shock

By Joan Geyer

"We were really shook," Provoans wisecracked Thursday but with a deep note of unease, as an earthquake of 4.5 intensity on the Mercalli scale (total destruction is estimated at 12) jolted the valley for 5.8 seconds.

It began at 3:53 p.m.

After shocks are continuing at intervals of 40 to 50 minutes, usually not felt, but recorded on the seismographs of Brigham Young University and University of Utah.

"They probably will continue for about two weeks," says Joseph Owens, curator for geology at Brigham Young University.

Reports of moving chairs, swinging chandeliers, cracked plaster and bouncing windows flooded the switchboards at The Daily Herald, BYU and police stations.

Serious Note

Under the "I'm all shook up" quips of Provoans was awareness that they live along the great Wasatch geological fault--which slips a little from time to time--and gratitude that the shock was less than the recent San Francisco quake.

University of Utah scientists said the quake registered between 4 and 4.5 on the Richter scale.

J. W. Berg, associate professor of geophysics at University of Utah, described the quake as a "severe jolt" but not as strong as the San Francisco quake.

BYU curator Owens said BYU was too close to the center of the shock to estimate its central location.

Near Provo Canyon

However, the University of Utah reported preliminary calculations place the quake epicenter close to the mouth of Provo Canyon.

As yet no visible faults or scars upon the earth's surface have been reported, BYU Curator Owens said early this morning. He was scheduled to survey Provo Canyon this morning to look over old faults and see if any changes have occurred.

At the University of Utah, the quake was recorded for six minutes. The University of Utah estimate is probably more accurate since the BYU seismograph was disturbed by a change in classes about five minutes after the shock began--and as it was near ending.

Needle Affected

The BYU curator was lecturing Thursday at 3:53 p.m. to a group of students, when the even course of the writing seismograph needle began to swing wildly.

At the same time the building itself began to shake.

BYU students and the many residents of Utah Valley who felt the quake described it as similar to the shaking, vibrations of walls common to a small house along a railroad track as a train thunders past.

Mrs. Bessie Gourley, 561 Buckley Ave., Springville, said she felt the temblor while telephoning a friend, Mrs. Lula Liechty, 323 W. 4th South, Springville.

Mrs. Gourley said Mrs. Liechty told her she also felt the jar. Mrs. Gourley resides on the east side of Springville and Mrs. Liechty on the west side.

Ornaments Teeter

"Some of ornaments in my house teetered but did not fall," Mrs. Gourley said. She also said the dishes rattled.

The shock was felt more strongly indoors than out, and was intensified immediately by residents who have experienced previously quakes.

Dick Hall, 400 E. 758 N., said he was lying down when walls of the room began to shake. He recalled a similar experience during a Nephi quake several years ago.

Mrs. Richard Smith, employed in a North University building, heard a slight rumbling, as the walls began to quiver. "It was just like the California quakes," she said.

Ceiling Cracks

Mrs. Ralph Craven, 365 E. 7th N., reported plaster cracked in two rooms, one crack extending most of the way across the ceiling. R. L. Reid, 234 E. 2nd N., said the "floor shook," and a small crack appeared in one wall.

Phyllis Farley, on the second floor of a building at University and Center, felt the walls vibrate and sway.

A divan at the home of Mrs. Glenn Jensen, 459 N. 6th E., "jumped away from the wall."

A stenographer said a typewriter on a stand rolled away from her desk. Gladys Spaugey, seamstress in the alterations department at Firmage's was sewing and her machine skidded 1 foot across the floor as the quake hit.

Some Herald personnel felt the shock. One man phoned that the temblor upset him from his chair as he was reading a newspaper.

Despite relative mildness of the quake--4.5 on a total destruction scale of 12, Provoans were quick to recall they live along the brink of a great geological fault, which has been slipping a few inches off and on for millions of years.

'Drop Valley'

Over this long span, the fault plain has created a "drop valley" some 7,000 feet below the Wasatch Mountains to the east. The cliffs of Timpanogos, Cascade and Provo Mountains are the face of the fault.

There is evidence of "recent" faulting--that is within the last few thousand years--in the old Lake Bonneville terraces, near the mouth of Rock Canyon.

On a fault plain, there may be a little movement at any time; and when the earth slips and moves, we're bound to be shook a little.

Code Not Affected

This shaking since recorded history of the white man is sufficiently mild that it has not affected Utah building code.

"Our building code," says Provo City Engineer Earl Conder, "requires only brick walls of two-brick depth, as compared to Los Angeles and San Francisco earthquake zone code which requires three-brick walls or re-inforced concrete."

Provo's shake Thursday did no observable damage to water lines or city pavements, said the city engineer.

Only the people were shook.

[Daily Herald; February 14, 1958]

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MILD EARTHQUAKE SHAKES PROVO, DAMAGE SLIGHT

PROVO--A mild earthquake shook Utah County residents Thursday about 3:53 p.m., causing minor damages in some buildings near the Wasatch Range.

Although no extensive damages were reported, plaster was knocked down from some ceilings and small cracks appeared in walls of some buildings in Provo.

The earthquake, classed as a "mild tremor" by geologists at Brigham Young University, was felt by thousands of residents in their homes throughout the valley.

Police and BYU were swamped with calls from residents who wanted to know "what it was and if there were damages."

Registers 4.5

Joseph Owens, geology curator at Brigham Young University, said the quake registered 4.5 on the Mercalli scale of the BYU seismograph. The scale runs from 1 to 12 with 12 being total destruction, he said.

"It was a sizable tremor which shook the Eyring Science Center and shook some plaster loose in the student service center," Mr. Owens said.

Geologists from BYU and the University of Utah had fixed the direction of the quake as originating near the mouth of Provo Canyon, Mr. Owens said.

It was so close to Provo that BYU officials had difficulty finding the center of the tremor, he said. But the University of Utah equipment placed the center of the tremor at the mouth of Provo Canyon, he said.

Houses Shake

Most residents of Provo who were indoors reported that their houses shook, their dishes rattled and their windows shook. Some reported rumblings.

Some residents as far north as Lehi reported their houses shook and furniture "jiggled." Dr. Eugene Wiemers of Provo, who has sat through several quakes in various parts of the country, said he felt a "fairly good shock that was easily recognizable." There was a rumble sensation accompanying the shock, he said.

An Edgemont housewife, Mrs. Melba Perry, said the "whole house shook and dishes and big, plate windows rattled."

Workers in the third floor of the City and County Building at Provo said the building swayed.

Lasts 5 Minutes

"There were no preliminary recordings on the BYU seismograph indicating that the center of the quake was close by," Mr. Owens said. He said the duration of the tremor was about five minutes.

Officials of Utah Power and Light Co. at plants at the mouth of Provo Canyon said no damage occurred at the plants, apparently at the center of the quake.

Everett Weeks, official in the hydro plant, said he felt three sharp jars which were "up and down disturbances." He then received several calls from residents of Olmstead inquiring about the tremor.

Dr. Owen P. Heninger, superintendent at Utah State Hospital, said he felt his office in the hospital "sway" and his windows rattled.

[Deseret News; February 14, 1958]

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SHIVERY TREMOR STIRS PROVO AREA RESIDENTS Temblor Gauges At U., BYU Indicate Mild Earthquake

By Karl Jensen

PROVO--A mild earthquake that rattled doors and windows, knocked plaster from ceilings and cracked walls in several buildings startled central Utah residents Thursday afternoon.

While no serious damage was reported, Brigham Young University geology department and Provo police received numerous telephone queries from widely scattered points shortly after the initial shock at 3:53 p.m.

BYU seismograph equipment recorded the quake's intensity in the "four range" on a Mercalli scale that runs to a maximum intensity of 12, or total destruction.

Duration of primary and secondary shock waves was measured at about five minutes.

While Utah scientists are still attempting to pinpoint location of the quake, Joseph Owens, geology curator at BYU, said the quake was "very close--probably not more than 135 miles away."

If it were more distant, it should have caused "tremendous damage" at site of the quake, he said.

While most people outside probably did not notice the tremor, many Provo residents indoors experienced weird sensations of motion.

Ellis Mower, Provo City traffic engineer, said the shock gave him a "sensation of movement" and caused the chandelier in his office to swing back and forth like a pendulum.

Plaster was knocked from a wall in the student service center on the BYU campus, and a cracked wall was reported by Mrs. R. L. Reid, 234 E. 200 North.

The divan in the home of Mrs. Glenn Jensen, 459 N. 600 East, literally jumped away from the wall, and a secretary sitting at her typewriter reported the quake rolled her chair about four feet from her desk.

Mr. Owens was explaining mechanics of the BYU seismograph to a group of students when first shock waves reached the sensitive device.

As they watched the instrument's needle record the quake, they felt the floor in the huge Eyring Science Center tremble, the curator declared.

General nature of the scientific recording indicates the earthquake was "local," he said.

The instrument received no introductory shock waves as it usually does when earthquakes occur several hundred miles away.

[Salt Lake Tribune; February 14, 1958]

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