

4-22-74

Members of the college community,

I will greatly appreciate it if you will take time before details slip away to write down what you (and your family) were doing at 3:51 p.m. on April 3rd, what damage the tornado did to your property, any unusual incidents connected with the tornado and its aftermath you were involved in or observed, and any personal reactions to the tragedy. We believe that this material should form part of the historical record of this day which now joins July 4, 1837 (tornado) and December 19, 1941 (Classic Hall fire) as Hanover's third major disaster. I plan to use some of the material in an extended spread in THE HANOVERIAN and possibly as background for a somewhat more ambitious publishing project. Please check below the appropriate permission and then sign and date the sheet. You may, of course, attach other sheets of data if you wish. And do you mind dropping off your contribution to the information desk in the Ad. Bldg. or put it in the campus mail addressed to me? Sometime this week hopefully?

Frank Baker

There were several of us at the Theater, working on the set for Blood Wedding, which was scheduled for production in three days. I remember about 3:40 somebody came in and said "You know, there's tornado warnings out!" and I said "Yeah, there's always tornado warnings" because anybody from Ohio or Indiana hears them all summer long and pays no heed. Well, a few minutes later, a crew of 5 or 6 guys and Dr. Evans had just pulled the trap door from the stage floor, and the lights blinked on and off a few times, while we all froze. I remember being right next to Dr. Evans and he was squatting, lifting myself, peering out into nothing, and he mumbled something about "This could be serious or something like that," as the lights dimmed out for several seconds. For some reason we scattered toward the workshop downstairs, and suddenly the lights were out and there was an awful lot of noise. I was near the rip saw, as I remember groping about for my wristwatch on the saw, where I'd left it. It sounded like the entire set was crashing down, and I thought I would see huge pieces of it come dropping through the trap. I had no idea where anybody else was and I was extremely upset. I moved toward the costume room and I was very near the side exit of Parker, near where several gigantic trees crashed down on the porch. The wind pressure was tremendously strong, and I remember pressing against the wall to keep from being thrown about. The noise crescendoed and I thought all of Parker had been collapsing on me. Then as quick as it started it was gone and I had no idea what the world was like until I ran with Dr. Evans to find his son and I realized I was climbing over trees where they

— This material is not to be used for publication in any form but only as historical record material to be housed in the college archives. —

— This material may be used for publication as long as my name or the names of my family are not used. —

X This material may be published without restriction.

Signed

Steven C. Giepen

Date

April 23, 1974