

Excerpts from correspondence with

Mrs. Marcella Benson
6154 Bahiamar Road
Toledo, Ohio

We thought we saw searchlights all around us, but there were no light beams shooting up to the clouds from the ground. The lights darting around in the clouds were sort of luminous and appeared to be more round in shape than anything else, also they were quite large. The lights were not as bright as a stroke of lightning, but they were above a dense layer of clouds, and bluish white in color. The lights did not stay in a steady position, they were shooting around. We could see the lights in the west, northwest, north, and northeast from 8:00 PM on. I think this is important. We did not have much stroke lightning and I do not recall hearing thunder. Our electricity was knocked out at 9:32 PM, and that is when we saw one black funnel. The reason we could see it is because there was a slight glow coming from the sides of it. It came from due west. (tornado of April 11, 1965)

file

March 2, 1966

Mrs. Marcella Benson
6154 Bahiamar Road
Toledo, Ohio 43611

Dear Mrs. Benson:

I wish to thank you for your letter of February 27 which just arrived.

It is very good of you to have taken the trouble to prepare the account of your tornado observations and your description is a valuable piece of evidence that we plan to incorporate in the paper that we are writing. When the paper is completed, we will see to it that you get a copy.

Again, thank you for your valuable help.

Sincerely,

Bernard Vonnegut

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6154 Bahiamar Rd.
Toledo, Ohio 43611
February 27, 1966

Dr. Bernard Vonnegut
Arthur D. Little, Inc.
15 Acorn Park
Cambridge, Mass. 02140

Dear Dr. Vonnegut:

In answer to your request for a written report on the tornado that struck Toledo, Ohio, on April 11, 1965. I will do my best to tell you what my husband and I could see.

We thought we saw searchlights all around us, but there were no light beams shooting up to the clouds from the ground. The lights darting around in the clouds were sort of luminous and appeared to be more round in shape than anything else, also they were quite large. The lights were not as bright as a stroke of lightning, but they were above a dense layer of clouds, and bluish white in color. The lights did not stay in a steady position, they were shooting around. We could see the lights in the west, northwest, north, and the northeast from 8 P.M. on.

I think this is important. We did not have much stroke lightning and I do not recall hearing thunder.

Our electric was knocked out at 9:52 P.M., and that is when we saw one black funnel. The reason we could see it is because there was a slight glow coming from the sides of it. It came from due west.

I'm sorry I can't tell you more. We do thank you for the photographs. Also you have our permission to use any or all parts of this letter.

Sincerely,

Mrs Marcella Benson

Mrs. Marcella Benson

August 9, 1966

Mrs. Marcella Benson
6154 Bahiamar Road
Toledo, Ohio

Dear Mrs. Benson:

I thought you might be interested in having the enclosed preprint of the article we have prepared on the tornado that swept through Toledo on May 11, 1965.

I have recently been pleased to learn that Science Magazine has accepted this article for publication, and it should be appearing soon.

I am very grateful to all of you kind people in Toledo for your help and cooperation in this effort to further our knowledge of tornadoes through the writing of this article.

Sincerely,

Bernard Vonnegut

BV:spm
Enclosure

Tornado

March 17, 1966

Mrs. Marcella Benson
6154 Bahiamar Road
Toledo, Ohio 43611

Dear Mrs. Benson:

I am presently still working on a scientific paper that will describe some of the observations made in the Palm Sunday tornado and in this article I plan to use the very interesting description that you were good enough to provide for me.

I wonder if I might trouble you for several additional pieces of information. I am planning to have a map of Toledo in my article and on it I want to indicate exactly where your house is and the damage path produced by the tornado. I am enclosing for you a copy of the Toledo street map and I wonder if you would please be good enough to indicate in pencil on the map the exact location of your house. I would also appreciate it if you could also indicate on the map, by shading in pencil, the regions you know in which the tornado produced damage.

Again, thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Bernard Vonnegut

/fr

enclosure

February 23, 1966

Miss Marcella Benson
6154 Bahiamar Rd.
Toledo, Ohio

Dear Mrs. Benson:

It was very good of your to tell me of your experiences with the tornado when I talked with you on the telephone. What you have seen is of considerable scientific interest and I hope you will be willing to write up what you saw and send me your description in the stamped envelope that I enclose. I wonder if you could tell me more about the unusual lightning. Did the lightning look like the photograph that I enclose which was taken by Mr. Weyer from Lambertville? His picture is one of the first taken of its kind and we are trying to figure out what is going on. You are welcome to keep the enclosed picture and I would very much like to know how it compares with what you saw. Have you any idea how long the "searchlight" lasted? Was the light steady? Was the light bright and what color was it? If you could make a pencil or crayon sketch of what you saw this would be very helpful indeed.

I am writing up an article for a scientific magazine and I hope you will be good enough to give me permission to quote what you saw?

Again, thank you.

Sincerely,

Bernard Vonnegut

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Encs.

DRAFT

Abstract from telephone call Feb. 21, 1966 with Mrs. Marcella Benson
6154 Bahamar Rd. Toledo 11, Ohio.

We only saw one tornado . The reason that we saw it ~~x~~ was because we were looking at lightning that was so different from any we have ever seen. It was like a searchlight up in the clouds. There were no flashes . It was like a searchlight going hither, thither, and yond. It was over to the west, to the northwest and to the north. We are both 46 years old and we have never seen anything like this before.

We were standing when the lights went out and saw the tornado coming from the west. We said, we see a tornado coming and ran right into each other and flopped on the floor. The tornado did \$150 damage to our house.

6154 Babington Rd.
Toledo, Ohio 43611
February 27, 1966

Dr. Bernard Vonnegut
Arthur D. Little, Inc.
15 Acorn Park
Cambridge, Mass. 02140

Dear Dr. Vonnegut:

In answer to your request for a written report on the tornado that struck Toledo, Ohio, on April 11, 1965. I will do my best to tell you what my husband and I could see.

We thought we saw searchlights all around us, but there were no light beams shooting up to the clouds from the ground. The lights darting around in the clouds were sort of luminous and appeared to be more round in shape than anything else, also they were quite large. The lights were not as bright as a stroke of lightning, but they were above a dense layer of clouds, and bluish white in color. The lights did not stay in a steady position, they were shooting around. We could see the lights in the west, northwest, north, and the northeast from 8 P.M. on.

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Sincerely,

Mrs Marcella Benson

Mrs. Marcella Benson