

Excerpt from letter from Mrs. J. C. Adams, Rumson, New Jersey

September 22, 1956

Although the local paper did not use the word "tornado," that's what everyone said it was. They (the paper) called it a "freakish violent wind storm." See what you think. It was a warm sunny day all day on Monday. At about seven I drove to Red Bank to pick up Jim at the station. The sky directly above the horizon suddenly looked pitch black, with occasional zig-zag streaks of lightning. The rest of the sky above us was clear. Within ten minutes or so the black cloud had covered about one-third of the sky. On top of it (or rather in front of it with the blackness as a background) was a large gray mass - it was churning and it looked like a gray ghost - two large, long arms reaching down toward earth - they didn't quite touch it.

Within seconds after we got home, all hell broke loose. The whole outdoors made a roaring noise like a train. It was blowing so wildly that you could not see more than a foot or two. It was madly roaring and hailing huge things - some of them golf ball size. There was lightning of the big flash variety but not in a clear form. Within about 5 or 8 minutes the whole thing was over and the moon came out.

It had a path about a mile or two miles wide. On either side of it there was only a slight wind and no rain. Here in Rumson and Sea Bright trees were uprooted and a roof was pulled off. All electricity and stuff was off, and things were in a general mess - roads blocked by trees and branches etc. The school was closed because a giant oak tree in front of it had been uprooted pulling with it the sidewalk and water pipes and falling across the electric wires. A stop sign was folded back in two like a piece of paper. Was it a tornado?