***Date* :** Tuesday, August 7, 1979

***Time* :** 6:18PM to approx. 7:00PM

***Location* :** Flannigan Corners, Stratford, Perth County to Bright, Oxford County

***F-Rating* :** F4

***Track Length* :** 29.83km (18.54mi)

***Max Width* :** 1km (0.62mi)

***Direction* :** 300° (WNW-ESE) \*Note: U-shaped track

***Shape* :** N/A, Maxi (likely wedge) tornado at its peak. Noted that a “few pictures of the funnel” exist. (though this may refer to Woodstock tornado)

***Injuries* :** N/A (

***Deaths* :** 0

***Damage Cost* :** Estimated at $20M as multiple farmsteads were impacted at various degrees of damage. Those that took a direct hit were destroyed with century old well-built stone structures mostly collapsed, with weaker structures such as garages and sheds being swept clean off their foundations with only concrete slabs remaining. Trees were partially debarked, and/or in some cases, sheared or violently twisted such as in one apple orchard where the branches were wrapped around the uprooted trucks.

***Notes* :** The first of two large, violent tornadoes to touch down in Southern Ontario on the evening of August 7. Some locals refer to this tornado and the Woodstock-Waterford tornado as if they were the same one, confusing the deaths and other statistics into a single event.

Witnesses and survivors stated that it was very still, hot, and humid leading up to the evening’s storms.

At about quarter after six, 5km SSW of Stratford, a funnel cloud touched down near Flannigan Corners and began to track SE toward the Perth/Oxford county line. It quickly began to take on violent characteristics as it tracked south of Tavistock over mainly open farmland. Over the township of East Zorra-Tavistock the tornado impacted multiple farms, destroying 100+ year-old houses, barns, silos, and other buildings over a 26km2 area. It was approximately 1km wide and at full F4 intensity as it tracked through this region. Witnesses recall having a normal thunderstorm turn very bad and so fast they either sheltered in place or ran to their basements for cover as it was right upon them. Some described it as a very loud roar and nil visibility and sheets of whipped up rain, with some indicating they saw parts of houses lift off or objects being thrown. One man became trapped in his basement as the tornado demolished his house above him. After passing though East Zorra, the tornado then took a more easterly track as it crossed the Thames River north of Innerkip, still doing heavy damage to bush lots and croplands, but began to weaken as it turned ENE toward the small town of Bright. Around 7:00PM, the tornado began to lift off just 2.5km south of Plattsville along the Nith River. It had been on the ground for nearly almost 45 minutes and travelled nearly 30km.

***Photos/Videos* :** Noted in EC file that some pictures of the funnel exist. Many damage photos, both aerial and from the ground are available. Newspapers contain images as well as many photos from local witnesses and survivors in private collections. Unknown if the tornado was videotaped or filmed. Possible damage footage exists.

Research Information

[www.tavistock.on.ca](http://www.tavistock.on.ca) - tornado link