

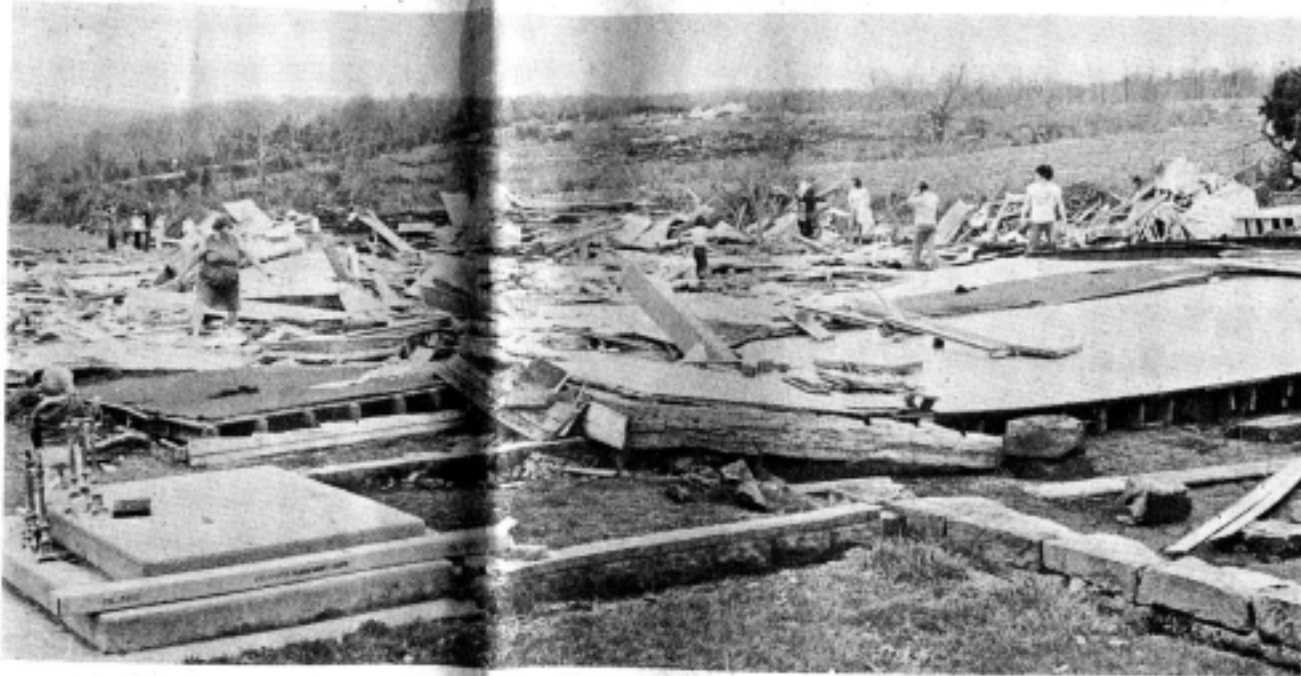
# Crawford County Democrat.

CHARLES MONTGOMERY 27HAT

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## Tornado Roars Through County



THIS SPLINTERED wreckage was all that remained of St. Joseph Catholic Church, south of Milltown, after a tornado touched down in the area Wednesday afternoon.

In the background can be seen a home and two barns which also were razed by the storm.

### Destruction Heavy, No Life Loss Reported

By H. O. JONES and  
JOHN I. COMBS

A tornado ripped through Crawford County at midafternoon Wednesday, digging down at least half a dozen places leaving homes in ruins and destroying untold areas of forest land.

Miraculously, though nearly 30 dwellings were leveled or ruined, no one was killed. State police said that to their knowledge, there were only two reports of injuries, and neither was regarded as serious enough to require hospitalization.

The funnel cloud entered the county near Sulphur, bounced erratically across the county on a northeasterly course, and departed just south of Milltown.

Though the reports may not yet be complete, the tornado hit at Sulphur, Riddle, El Bethel, and at least two places just south of Milltown.

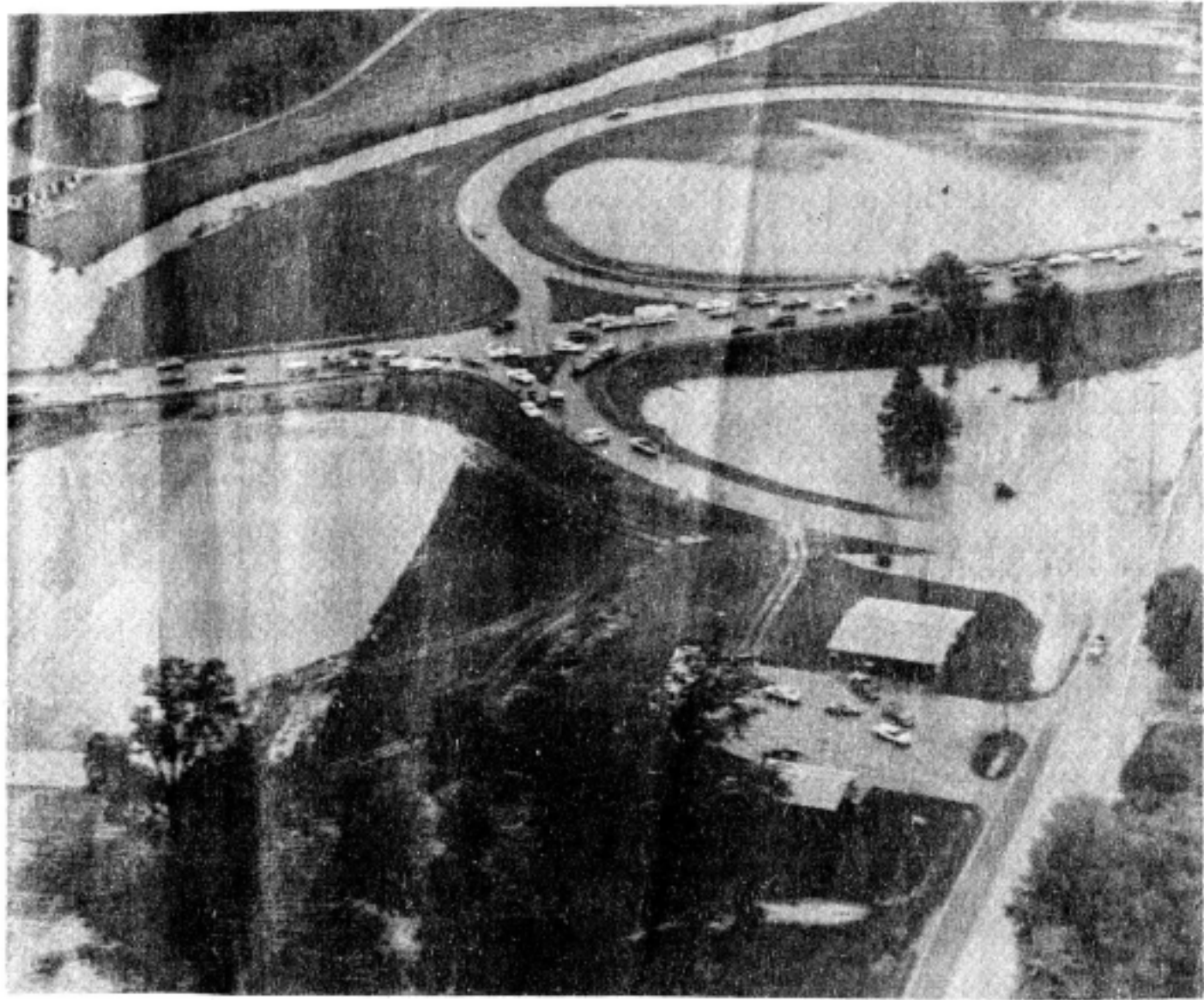
The storm also cut a wide swath through other areas in Southern Indiana, where several deaths were reported. Hard hit in nearby areas were Branchville, in Perry County; Depauw, Palmyra and other localities in Harrison County, and Borden in Clark County. Damage was extensive in a wide swath through south Louisville.

### Meet The Candidates

The Crawford County Democratic Women's Club will present a "Meet the Candidates" program at the courthouse in English on Friday evening, April 19, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Mrs. Clarence (Teresa) Gates, of Marengo, club president, said at the meeting is in preparation





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The interchange at English was used as a boat ramp Thursday for rescue operations by Indiana State Police Troopers and Conservation Officers.

Photos by Brian, Tim, Jon and John L. Combs

## President's Trip Included English

President Carter swept out of Bardstown, Ky., where he had conducted a town meeting, to make an unexpected side trip to English, Va., where he will visit a flood-stricken lot (the clubhouse had washed downstream).

The President stayed about 10 minutes and asked what was needed. "Money," was the reply. He promised to personally check on Federal Aid.

President Carter had earlier in the day signed a request for federal disaster assistance for Crawford County and several other counties in Southern Indiana.

A center is being set up this week at the English School to interview flood victims who will qualify for aid.

Damage has been set in Crawford County at about \$4 million to \$6 million.

Staff photographer and main production worker at the English Publishing Company, "Ish" Combs, has been kept busy day and night as he is Crawford County's volunteer Civil Defense director. He hastened from Marengo to English with his camera just in time to see the President's copter fly away.

## "Don't Return Books"

County Librarian Jewell Sears said that all books checked out should not be returned until further notice.

## Clothing Distributed

Clothing is being distributed this week at the Community building in English to flood victims and the public, Mrs. Maxine Faulkenburg announces.

## Notice to Handicapped

Any handicapped person who lost crutches, wheelchair, etc., due to the flood, please contact Crawford County Health Dept. Phone 338-2392.

# Crawford County

Crawford County has been declared a disaster area in the wake of floods Thursday, July 26, which virtually destroyed English and did extensive damage to Marengo.

The second major flooding in six weeks resulted in by far the highest flood marks in history in both towns as the soil, already saturated by two days of heavy showers, could absorb but little of the deluge which dumped an unofficial ten inches of rainfall between 5 a.m. and 1 p.m.

In Marengo, the flood on Whiskey Run Creek in the Old Town crested at more than four feet above the previous record set in 1964. In the newer part of town, water in the business district was more than a foot above a record established on June 9.

As hard as Marengo was hit, it was in no way comparable to the havoc played in English, where water stood almost ten feet deep on Main and East Fifth Streets, the business district was almost wiped out and more than half of the town's residents were flooded from their homes.

Bob Gilliland, who lost the entire contents of his Western Auto Stores and his home, said he "stayed in the store until the floor started coming up and the shelves started to fall off the walls." After the plate glass window caved in and television sets, refrigerators and other appliances started floating out into the street, it became "something quite painful to watch."

Almost miraculously, no lives were lost, though there were some close calls as boats rescued at least 25 persons, including one family from a rooftop.

Larry Lone, who helped in the boat rescues with Bill Beals, said "the boats saved several lives." David Dearborn and Iris Mason were in another rescue boat, and conservation officers manned another.

"We got everybody out who wanted to come out," Lone said. "Many wouldn't leave, so we left them and went on to others. The currents were so swift in places that

we had trouble getting through, and East Fifth Street was so full of stuff floating out of the stores that there were places we couldn't get through. There was so much oil and gasoline on top of the water that there was fire danger and everything was so slippery it was hard to hold on.

## Not Time For Anything

"The water rose so fast and got so high that people didn't have time to do anything," Lone said. "Most of those who moved their furniture up high simply wasted their time, the water got it anyway."

For most of the merchants, their stock losses were total or nearly so. These included the Railroad Tavern, Hanger Equipment Co., Western Auto Store, Town Grill, Marge's Beauty Salon, Recreation Hall, Green Lantern, Dinner Bell Restaurant, English Publishing Co., Tucker Jewelry, English Hardware, McLain Gulf Service, Carl Mitchell Barber Shop, Dairyland Food Mart and Station, Greiner's Jewelry, Crawford County Security Co., John Thompson Standard Station, Burger Palace, Leda's Dress Shop, Judd's Drug Store, Sam Benz and Son, Howerton Real Estate, the law offices of Luckett and Lawrence and of Jack Riddle. Also flooded were the fire house, Presbyterian and Christian Churches and Denbo Funeral Home.

The Crawford County Library lost more than 30,000 of its approximately 33,500 books, and Librarian Jewell Sears doubts that many can be salvaged. "We had six books above the water line," Mrs. Sears said. "About all we have left are the 3,500 volumes which were loaned out."

Next door, the County Extension Service had four feet of water, and County Agent John Sieberns sweated out damage to a \$19,000 computer and the loss of numerous records.

At the English Post Office, Helen Atkins said the upper part of the building which houses the office had 15 inches of water, but no known losses. The only interruption in