

**MEMORANDA OF
THE BAHAMA
TORNADO OF 1850**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649259472

Memoranda of the Bahama tornado of 1850 by Wm. Jno. Woodcock & R. J. Nelson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WM. JNO. WOODCOCK & R. J. NELSON

**MEMORANDA OF
THE BAHAMA
TORNADO OF 1850**

Fig. 1.



*Wreck of a Framed Cottage near S.
See Paragraph 21.*

Fig. 2.



*M. Miller's House,
See (i) of the Plan, & Paragraph 13 & 21.*

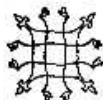
Memoranda
OF THE
BAHAMA TORNADO

OF
1830.



BY THE REV. WM. JNO. WOODCOCK,
CURATE OF ST. AGNES, NASSAU;
AND
CAPTAIN R. J. NELSON,
ROYAL ENGINEERS.

WRITTEN FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
SCHOOLS AT GRANTS-TOWN, AND BAINES-TOWN,
NEW PROVIDENCE, BAHAMAS.




Mellin-Mumbray:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN DAY;
SOLD ALSO BY
MESSRS. LONGMAN, BROWN, AND Co.,
PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

1850.



PREFATORY NOTICE TO PART I.



N committing these somewhat crude pages to the press, it seems necessary to explain why in this first part, so much of a personal character has been introduced. It was conceived that personal narrative, in such cases as that of which these pages treat, will generally possess the greatest amount of interest, for parties unacquainted with the characters and scenes affected; and as the amelioration of the case of the poor people who have suffered most by this awful visitation, through the medium of sound religious education, is the object to which any emolument arising from the sale of this pamphlet will be devoted, it was deemed not foreign to the subject in hand, to mention the Baines-town Day-Schools, whenever they come fairly within the range of the narrative. Moreover, I am not without hope, that the sympathy excited in behalf of the distress of our poor and ignorant population, may be proved and attested by aid towards the annual expenses of these Schools, in which 400 black children are daily taught the elements of a plain and religious education.

WM. JNO. WOODCOCK.



Subscriptions will be received by William Latham, Esq., Melton-Mowbray, Leicestershire; or, the Rev. Thomas H. Howard, Wadsley Parsonage, near Sheffield.







Bahama Tornado.



THE season towards the close of March was unusually rough for the Bahamas. Such violent weather as Nassau is visited with, is commonly to be expected in the autumnal portion of the year, when the little vessels scarcely venture from their anchorage, but wait until the dreaded time of "the Hurricane months" is past. When therefore, Saturday the 30th of March, 1850, was ushered in with rain, and continued with storm, thunder, and lightning, and every indication of great electrical disturbance; although men crept under shelter, and shut their windows, no one apprehended any very unusual convulsion of the elements.

Yet it had been so decreed by Him who "maketh the clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind"; and the black-fringed clouds which hung like a curtain over the Island of New Providence, though regarded only as an evidence of a thunder storm, were in reality dark precursors of a desolation as gloomy and mysterious as themselves.

The sky grew blacker and blacker. The idlers in the streets gathered into the shops, the women who had gone to the Saturday's market, crowded for shelter under the market-

house, and few were the loiterers in the war of rain, thunder, and lightning, which ensued. Suddenly, there was a solemn stillness, a lull, after the roar of the conflicting elements. Rapid, short, and deafening claps of thunder, preceded by vivid flashes of forked light, occurred at intervals, as if the heavens were presaging some fearful judgment of Jehovah. At last, (about a quarter past one p.m.) a low roaring noise, somewhat resembling the rush of many wheels, arose towards the south-west of the town and suburbs of Nassau. In that direction lie the settlements of Grants-town and Baines-town, chiefly inhabited by Africans, and containing a population of about 2500 souls. The houses of these people are made either of wood, or of the young saplings (called wattles) of the native pine-tree, intertwined and consolidated with plaster, and are nearly all thatched with the leaves of the palmetto or fan-palm, which grows in great abundance throughout the Bahamas. Some few are built of the coarse limestone, of which these Islands consist.

At the South-western corner of these settlements the storm descended in the form of a Tornado, and proceeded with terrible velocity in a slightly curved line, to the north-east, its path rarely exceeding from 20 to 100 yards in width. Whatever stood in this line was destroyed or desolated, the fragile houses of the poor Africans were caught by the whirlwind, dashed to pieces, the fragments scattered over the Island, and into the sea; stone walls and more substantial dwellings were overturned and prostrated, and the sky seemed crowded, for the while, with flying beams, roofs, furniture, and clothes. The rotatory character of the Tornado, by whirling round and round these terrible missiles, increased the destruction, and diminished the power of resistance. In vain the lofty cocoa-nut palms stuck their roots into the rock; they were twisted assunder like a tender herb, and hurled upon the earth, monuments of the power of the unrestrained tempest. The fruit gardens—upon the produce of which the poor settlers of Grants-town and Baines-town so much depend—were utterly desolated, the avocado pears, the shadocks, the oranges, lemons, limes, and sabadillos were stripped