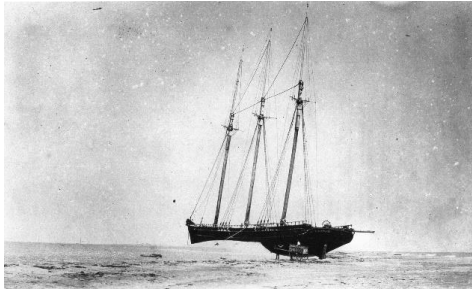




Seaside News

San Ciriaco: The August Storm of 1899



Nine days after Puerto Rico was brought to its knees by Hurricane San Ciriaco in 1899, the storm made landfall near Hatteras as a Category Three hurricane, though the winds were clocked up to 140 miles an hour – mid-range for a Category Four storm by today’s standards. Sound and sea joined forces to cause significant storm surge flooding. What once was sandy scrubland and pasture populated by homes and grazing cattle became a body of water rising four to ten feet.

Though not as heavily populated as Puerto Rico, the coastal islands suffered. Her people quickly learned that this storm was like no other. As the water rose, people moved from home to home, seeking safety on high ground. Folks crowded 40-50 per house; some reported standing up all night. A large percentage of island homes were damaged. Livelihoods suffered as warehouses and fish packing structures washed away. Downed telegraph and telephone lines cluttered the barrier island landscape.

In the Salter home on Portsmouth Island, a newborn baby and mother were lifted atop stacked bedsteads to escape flooding. Dutiful weather bureau and life-saving station folk waded through waist and shoulder deep water to read instruments, record the wind speed and write in the logbook. A young man swam through the flooded Ocracoke landscape to rescue the Thompson family dog found paddling for its life.

Surfmen from multiple lifesaving stations worked tirelessly over days to save people clinging to ships in distress. An estimated 17 ships ran aground or disappeared without a trace. Photo: Florence Randall that grounded during the storm courtesy of the Outer Banks History Center and NC Division of Archives and History.

The August Storm

Q P J B H P W S L S O C R S G
 P J H R A A T M E N B H H T X
 X P T E S B X R S A E Y U O V
 E A A K D T Y N A A D F R R W
 M D D G I G U W N A S O R M I
 T D E M S Z W T C N T F I A N
 R L E G T F O E I E E R C L D
 A I P M R L A L R E A D A E S
 C N Y F E O D E A F D T N G N
 E G D P S O O P I V S K E T E
 N P J A S D G H C S J S B E W
 I R C N O I O O W H U J H B
 G T A G B N A N N M X I H D O
 H H U J R G G E B Z J L P G R
 T F V R W A T E R F I S H S N

San Ciraico
 telephone
 bedsteads
 distress
 flooding
 newborn
 paddling
 trace
 water
 ships
 hurricane
 night
 winds
 fish
 baby
 deep
 sea
 storm
 dog

1. How many people crowded in a single house?
2. How hard was the wind blowing?
3. What things were destroyed in the storm?
4. Why did a young man swim through the flooded Ocracoke landscape?

1. 40-50 people
2. 140 miles per hour
3. Homes, warehouses, fish packing structures, and telegraph and telephone lines.
4. To save the family dog.

JOKE OF THE MONTH!

What part of the fish weighs the most?

The scales