YEAR 1856

Three storms have been listed by Tannehill (1938) for this year and a fourth one, which has not been mentioned by him, has been listed by Dunn and Miller (1960). The author of this study has recently found two additional storms which had not been documented before. This finding represents, of course, a 50 percent increase in the total number of known storms for 1856.

Storm 1, 1856 (Aug. 10-11).

Tannehill (1938) has mentioned this storm as having occurred along the Louisiana coast. Dunn and Miller (1960) and Ludlum (1963) have also mentioned this storm. The author of this study has prepared the storm track which is displayed in Fig. 7.

The New-York Daily Times, Aug. 16, 1856 p.1, col.1, published that there had been a storm in the New Orleans area on August 10 and that such a storm had been most disastrous at Last Island (Ile Derniere). A narrative of what had happened at Last Island included some meteorological remarks: Heavy N.E. winds prevailed during the night of August 9 and a perfect hurricane started blowing about 10 A.M. August 10. The water commenced to rise about 2 P.M. and by 4 P.M. currents from the Gulf and the Bay had met and the sea waved over the whole island (The New-York Daily Times, Aug. 21, p.3, col.4).

The following information has been extracted from Ludlum (1963): The ship "C. D. Mervin" passed through the eye of the storm off the Southwest Pass. Captain Mervin checked the barometer at 8 A.M. Aug. 10 and noticed a reading of 28.20 inches, a 24-hr drop of 1.70 inches. At 9 A.M. the ship had a calm which lasted for 5 minutes. The sun shone and there was every appearence of clearing off but the wind suddenly struck the ship from the opposite direction. For two more hours, more a southerly hurricane struck the ship and then gradually abated. After the hurricane, the ship location was found to be only 60 miles to the W.S.W. of Southwest Pass.

At Iberville, Parish of Vermillon, the Aug. 10-11 storm raged with terrific force but only gales were reported at New Orleans, where the maximum wind at observation time was force 8 on the Beaufort scale (39-46 miles per hour) from an easterly direction at 2 P.M. August 10 (Ludlum, 1963).

It can be inferred from the above information that Storm 1, 1856 was a hurricane which was moving on a northwesterly course as shown in Fig. 7.

Storm 2, 1856 (Aug. 13-14).

This is a new case recently documented by the author of this study. The author's track for Storm 2, 1856 is displayed in Fig. 7.

The following information was published in The Times, London, Sept. 15, 1856, p.12, col.1: West Indian journals speak of a terrific storm which swept over some of the West Indies on August 13, doing considerable damage. It appeared to have been felt particularly at Grenada and Barbados. There is a letter describing the storm, which was written by a gentleman in Carriacou

(Grenadines) on Aug. 14: "About noon (Aug. 13) strong squalls commenced with rain, which increased towards evening when it blew a heavy gale. About 8 P.M. this increased to a hurricane, and so continued for fully 2 hours, after which it gradually abated, although still blowing hard".

Based on the above statements, the westward moving Storm 2, 1856 was placed to the southeast of Barbados on August 13 and to the west of Grenada on August 14.

Storm 3, 1856 (Aug. 21-22).

Tannehill (1938) is the only author who has mentioned this storm as having occurred in Cuba on August 21-22. The author of this study has not found any additional information about this alleged storm. However, he has decided to retain it on record and to arbitrarily place it near Havana on August 21-22, 1856 (Fig. 7).

Storm 4, 1856 (Aug. 25- Sept. 3).

Tannehill (1938) as well as Garriott (1900), Dunn and Miller (1960) and Ludlum (1963) have referred to this storm. The author of this study has produced the track which is shown in Fig. 7.

The New-York Daily Times, Oct. 25, 1856, p.8, col.6, stated that the breeze increased at Matthewtown, Inagua (Bahamas) on Aug. 25, a hurricane set in and, at 2 P.M., the wind suddenly changed to S.W. According to The New-York Daily Times, this information was furnished by the master of the brig "O. S. Livermore". News from Nassau, which were received via Charleston, indicated that the hurricane had done much damage at Inagua where 30 houses were blown down, several vessels stranded and 4 lives were lost. The other Bahama islands escaped the hurricane (The New-York Daily Times, Sept. 26, 1856, p.4, col.4). The above information was the earliest the author of this study could obtain on this storm.

After leaving the Inagua area, the storm moved along the northern coast of Cuba. The New-York Daily Times, Sept. 13, 1856, p.8, col.6, published that the storm was at its height at Sagua la Grande in the forenoon of Aug. 27 and that several vessels ran ashore in Cuba in the August 27-28 gale. Citing W. B. Stockman, Garriott (1900) mentioned a minimum pressure value of 29.49 inches at Havana from 9:45 P.M. to midnight Aug. 27. Garriott (1900) also mentioned a second value which he took from a paper by Marcos J. Melero, which appeared in Diario de la Marina on October 9, 1873. Melero stated that the lowest barometer reading at Havana was 28.62 inches, and Tannehill (1938) also stated the same value, which is 1.15 inches lower than the minimum pressure of 29.77 inches reported to have occurred at Key West at 10:30 P.M. Aug. 27 (Ludlum, 1963).

The New-York Daily Times, Sept. 13, 1856, p.8, col.6, published a report stating that the ship "Rubicon", which was sailing from Boston to New Orleans, had arrived in Havana in distress after encountering the hurricane at lat. 24 N., long. 86 W. on Aug. 27 and 28. The author believes that either the longitude or the days indicated in this report, or both, are in error because they do not fit the space and time continuity along the track in Fig. 7. Therefore, he discarded this report.

The ship "Daniel Wester" provided very useful information about the hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico (Ludlum, 1963). According to Ludlum (1963), Captain Churchill of the "Daniel Wester"

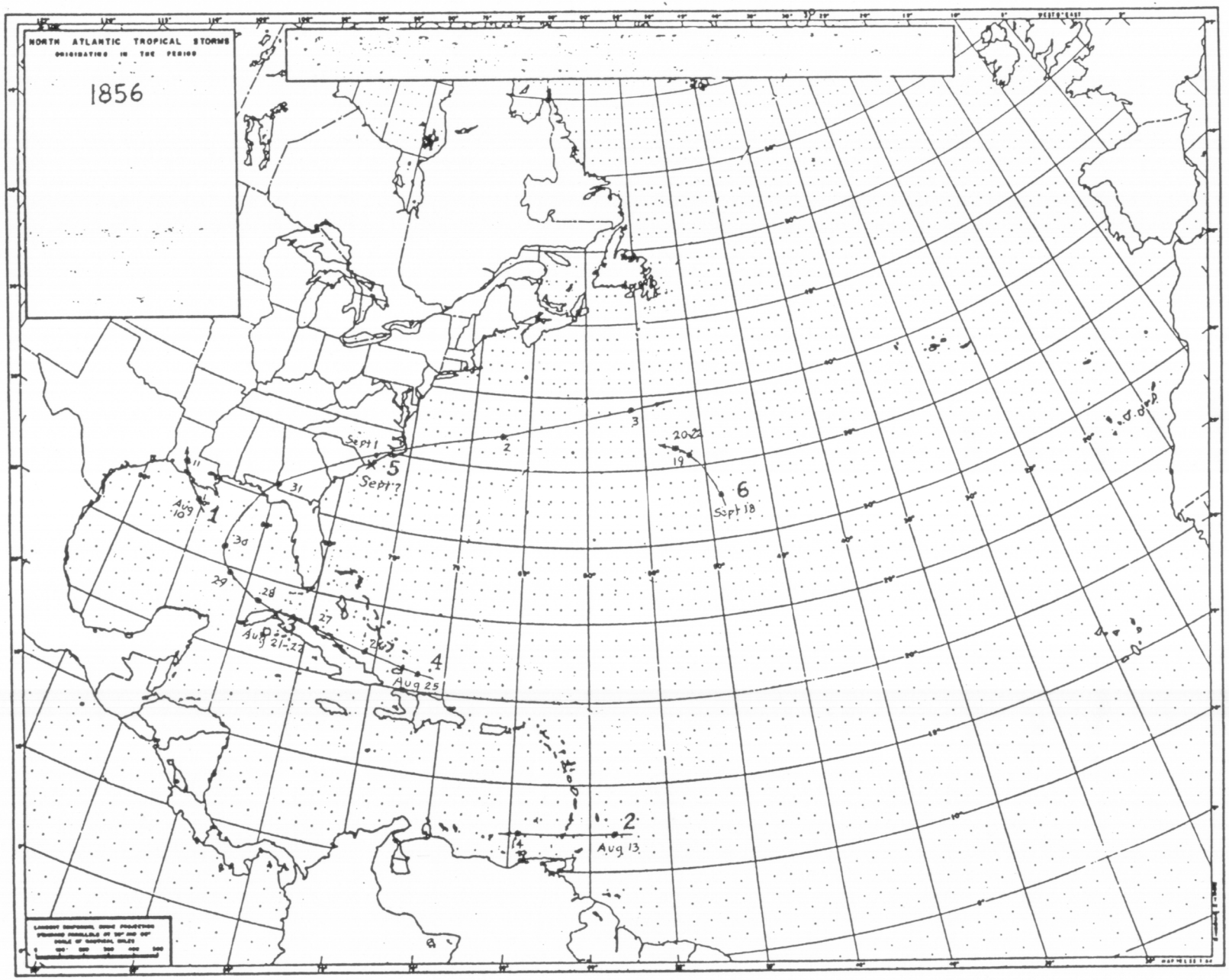
NORTH ATLANTIC TROPICAL STORMS
ORIGINATING IN THE PERIOD
1856
Aug 10
1
Sept 1
5
Sept 7
6
Sept 18
Aug 21-22
4
Aug 25
Aug 13
2

Fig. 7

reported the following: 1) 10 A.M. Aug. 29, heavy swell rising from S.E. 2) 4 P.M., gale increasing fast, barometer 29.80 inches. 3) 8 P.M., blowing a heavy gale, barometer 29.40 inches. 4) 4 A.M. Aug. 30, barometer 29.10 inches. 5) 10 A.M., barometer 28.90 inches, anything 10 yards away could not be seen. 6) Noon, at lat. 26 31 N., long. 87 30 W., barometer 28.60 inches (lowest value reported). 7) 2 P.M., barometer 28.80 inches, gale broke as it were a passing squall, in two hours it moderated to a common gale. 8) 4 P.M., ship lay quite easy at her dredge. 9) Midnight (Aug. 30-31), weather cleared, sea running down fast.

The wind gradually increased at Apalachicola during the afternoon of August 30 and by dark it blew with great violence. The water reached a maximum level at 3 A.M. Aug. 31 and then started to recede as the wind blew from the southwest and west. At Marianna, 60 miles to the west of Tallahassee, the wind subsided by daybreak Aug. 31 but it blew again from the S.E. with great intensity before changing to S.W. At Columbus, Georgia, it blew a perfect gale from the north and, at Augusta, very heavy rain commenced at 9 A.M. Aug. 31 and lasted for 12 hours accompanied by high winds. At Whitemarsh Island, near Savannah, a S.S.E. gale started around 1 P.M. and abated after 9 P.M. Georgetown, in South Carolina, experienced a S.E. gale until 2:45 A.M. Sept. 1 when it shifted to S. and S.W. and continued for two more hours. Ludlum (1963) was the source of the above information.

The New-York Daily Times, Sept. 5, 1856, p.1, col.6, stated that the ship " Joseph Whitney" met the storm near Cape Henry from noon to 4 P.M. Sept. 1, and that the storm commenced at Norfolk at 4 A.M. and raged all day with tremendous force. Additional marine information about Storm 4, 1856 follows: 1) Schr. "Flander" experienced a gale from S.E. on Sept. 2, coming to New York from Savannah (The New-York Daily Times, Sept. 10, 1856, p.8. col.6). Author's note: It should read Sept. 1-2. 2) Brig "Florence" had a gale from N.E. at lat. 39 44 N., long. 58 W. on Sept. 2, and 3 (The New-York Daily Times, Sept. 23, 1856, p.8, col.6). 3) Ship "Addin Snow" experienced an E.N.E. to N. gale at lat. 42 N., long. 59 W. on Sept. 3 (The New-York Daily Times, Sept. 18, 1856, p.8, col.6).

Storm 5, 1856 (Sept. ?).

This storm has been mentioned only by Dunn and Miller (1960) as having occurred in the Wilmington area in September 1856. It is possible that this storm might have been the same Storm 4, 1856 just described. However, there is no proof that this was indeed the case and, therefore, the author of this study decided to keep the storm on record and to place it near Wilmington, North Carolina, in September 1856 (Fig. 7).

Storm 6, 1856 (Sept. 18-22).

This storm has not been recorded before. The author of the present study has recently documented it and has prepared the track shown in Fig. 7. It has been found that Storm 6, 1856 occurred in the North-central Atlantic over the period Sept. 18-22.

Storm 6, 1856 documentation was based on the following newspaper information: 1) Brig "Caroline E. Kelly" experienced a heavy gale from the S.E. at lat. 33 40 N., long. 46 W. on Sept. 18 (The New-York Daily Times, Oct. 13, 1856, p.8, col.6). 2) Bark "Utah" had a severe gale from the N.E. at lat. 37 20 N., long. 52 19 W. on Sept. 18. On the 19th the gale increased to a hurricane and,

at 8 P.M. Sept. 20, the bark was struck by a heavy sea (The New-York Daily Times, Oct. 18, 1856, p.8, col.6). 3) Schr. "Black Fish" encountered a very heavy gale from S.E. which suddenly changed to S.S.W. at lat. 35 N., long. 44 W. on Sept. 19 (The New-York Daily Times, Oct. 1, 1856, p.8, col.6). 4) Schr. "Pride of the Sea", at lat. 37 43 N, long. 50 W., had a very heavy gale from S.E. on Sept. 21 and 22, which lasted for 50 hours (The New-York Daily Times, Oct. 1, 1856, p.8, col.6).

The track for Storm 6, 1856 (Fig. 7) shows a general motion towards the northwest on Sept. 18 and 19 and the storm to have been stationary on Sept. 20-22.