

The Key West Hurricane of 1846 - Oct. 11-12 - Part I

Ho's estimated storm parameters when the hurricane was off of Key West:
Central Pressure - 902 mb.
Radius of Maximum Winds - 9 nmi.
Direction of forward motion - 180 degrees.
Speed of forward motion - 11 knots.

The hurricane passed a few miles to the W of Key West. The town was inundated by 5 feet of water. Nearly all of the 600 houses on the island were severely damaged.

Only the 1935 Labor Day hurricane was of stronger intensity in Key West than this storm. Ho estimated the pressure of the hurricane as it passed by Key West to be 902 mb.

Colonel W.C. Maloney called this storm the "most destructive of any that has ever visited these latitudes in the memory of man." This great hurricane left a path of destruction from Cuba northward along the West Coast of Florida, and then northeastward along the Atlantic coast to Canada. The course of the hurricane over Middle Florida cannot be determined as there were no reports between Tampa and St. Augustine. A storm track over Cedar Key is probable, then a turn to the NE between Tallahassee and Jacksonville. The principle ports of the South Atlantic coastline were to the east of the storm's center. The center of the storm passed between Augusta and Savannah, and between Columbia and Charleston. The storm accelerated through east-central North Carolina, and then entered Chesapeake Bay early on the 13th. It passed to the west of Norfolk, and caused notable damage to the Middle Atlantic States and western New England.

20 0 20 40 Miles

