

The New Brunswick Tornado of 1835

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ON THE NINETEENTH day of June, 1835, a real tornado visited Central New Jersey, causing great destruction in New Brunswick and vicinity. Singularly enough it seems to have originated, without apparent cause, in Somerset county, south of Millstone, passed over a portion of Piscataway township and, increasing in violence, struck New Brunswick with terrific force. The newspapers of the day gave details, to which the reader is referred. Suffice it here to say it destroyed, by wholly unroofing or blowing down, about one hundred and twenty dwellings in that city, beside churches, stores and storehouses, and continued on to Perth Amboy, where the injuries were slight. About five persons were killed by it and many injured.

Directly after the catastrophe a "town meeting" was held in New Brunswick, at which a Committee, headed by Rev. Dr. Jacob J. Janeway, pastor of the Presbyterian church, was appointed to collect funds for the relief of sufferers. Seven months later this Committee reported as follows:

"CIRCULAR.

"The Committee appointed by a Town Meeting of the City of New Brunswick to adopt measures for relieving the sufferers by the late Tornado, having fulfilled the duties of their appointment, submit the following report of their labors.

"Having surveyed the field of desolation and raised some money, their first care was to relieve those who stood in need of immediate assistance.

"The next step was to prepare and circulate a printed address, setting forth the extent of the desolation, and presenting to view those classes of the sufferers which especially preferred a claim to the benevolent sympathy and pecuniary aid of their fellow-citizens. This address was sent by mail to leading individuals in this and the adjoining States. It was also published in newspapers. The Committee are happy in being able to report that their appeal was responded to in a manner that reflects great credit on the donors; and they now tender, in the name of the widow and the fatherless, and other sufferers who have been assisted, their cordial thanks to those benevolent persons, who so willingly and liberally furnished the means for abating the pressure of the calamity, which it pleased God to inflict on this City.

"In the distribution of the charity entrusted to them, the Committee have constantly acted under a deep sense of their responsibility. It was their uniform endeavor to meet what they conceived to be the wishes of the donors. They restricted the charity to those who had suffered by the Tornado and relieved only the wants that were occasioned by that awful visitation of Divine Providence. They have assisted none but those who, they believed, ought to be relieved; and they apportioned the assistance to the losses suffered and other circumstances connected with the cases of the persons relieved. The losses of the poor amounting to 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, or 50 dollars, were entirely made up. But individuals who had experienced heavy losses and stood in need of assistance could be relieved only in part.

"To guard against mistakes the Committee were careful and diligent in making inquiries into the circumstances of sufferers, and in ascertaining to whom the title of the buildings injured belonged. In some instances to ensure the right application of the

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charity, it was found expedient to commit it in trust to judicious persons for the purpose of laying it out in repairing buildings, that the sufferers intended to be relieved might receive the benefit.

"As a few of the donors expressed a wish that a portion of their charity might, if the Committee deemed proper, be appropriated in aid of the sufferers at Piscataway, and one or two of the donors had fixed the sum, the Committee, after having ascertained the losses produced at Piscataway by the Tornado, and the relief they had received and probably would receive, appropriated to the sufferers in that place such an amount as they thought would accord with the views of the donors and was consistent with the claims of our own sufferers.

"The total amount of money received by the Committee, as will appear by the statement annexed, is fifteen thousand and eighty-six dollars and ninety-five cents, all of which has been appropriated to the sufferers with the exception of a few dollars for necessary incidental expenses.

"J. J. JANEWAY,
G. S. WEBB,
D. FITZ RANDOLPH,
F. RICHMOND,
MILES C. SMITH, Committee.

"New Brunswick, January 17, 1836."

The following is a complete list of the donations received by the Committee from every source

Mr. Rosenbaum	\$10.00
Peter I. Nevius	50.00
Cash from B. M.	2.00
John Jacob Astor	100.00
Hon. John Sergeant	50.00
Andrew Bell	100.00
D. G. M	100.00
Second Reformed Dutch Church, Somerville	36.65
Frederick Gebhard & Co	100.00
Hon. James Parker	50.00
Citizens of New Brunswick and vicinity	2,770.00
William Philips	25.00
Robert Lenox & son	100.00
Hon. M. Dickerson	50.00
B. W. Richards	20.00
E. W. Dunham	20.00
John Cole	25.00
Children of Samuel Hill	3.00
Hon. B. F. Butler	50.00
Dr. Brodhead's Church, N.Y	105.00
Job Squier	25.00
Cornelius Baker & Co.	50.00
Citizens of Morristown, N. J.	230.17
B. McVickar	20.00
Friend in New Jersey	20.00

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Mr. Wells	10.00
St. Ann's Church, Brooklyn	140.00
Second Reformed Dutch Church, Albany	100.00
Citizens of Easton, Penn	369.75
Gen. Van Rensselaer	100.00
Citizens of Mount Holly, N.J.	514.17
Citizens of Trenton, N.J.	684.20
Wm. T. Rodgers	20.00
Lady and Gentleman, Richmond, Va., by Rev. John Croes	10.00
R. S.	20.00
B. Aymar	10.00
Mulford Martin & Co.	50.00
Citizens of Cranberry, N.J.	154.30
Citizens of Flemington, N.J.	176.25
Citizens of Bordentown and vicinity	157.75
Citizens of Newark	1,215.87
Citizens of Burlington	594.75
Rev. R. K. Rodgers	10.00
Township of Bergen	51.50
Lamington Church	21.17
New Shannack Church	66.00
Citizens of Lambertville	152.00
Friend by A. F. Randolph	10.00
Citizens of Belvidere	113.00
Citizens of Orange	216.75
William Rankin	50.00
John McDonnough, New Orleans	100.00
Citizens of Bridgeton	143.75
Citizens of New York	3,514.00
Reformed Dutch Church, Fishkill	27.00
Citizens of Bloomsberry and Mill Hill	15.50
Citizens of Township of Ewing	105.75
Citizens of Elizabeth Town	300.00
Baptist Church at Middletown	17.73
Citizens of New Hope	55.00
Reformed Dutch Church at Bushwick	37.00
Gentlemen in New York, by Mr. Letson	5.00
Capt. P. F. Voorhees	10.00
Citizens of Plainfield	72.00
Cash from D. C., by Rev. J. Wynkoop	13.32
Citizens of Philadelphia	861.24
Pascack Congregation	13.50
Amity Street Baptist Church, N.Y.	27.00
Citizens of Princeton	515.00
Dutch Church at Millstone	33.87
Citizens of Brooklyn, N.Y.	35.00
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	\$15,086.95