**[Elena](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11386-elena/" \o "Go to Elena's profile)**

* A Seadog Looking for Crewmates
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* Member
* 388 posts
* Gender:Female
* Location:Bucharest, Romania
* Interests:historical Age of Sail RPGs, music, reading, foreign languages

([IP: 92.86.121.233](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=92.86.121.233)) ·

[Posted October 29, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411876) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411876)

I mean, for the ships caught at sea, they sought refuge in hidden bays, where winds had less power.

But what about the hurricanes hitting the islands? There weren't refuges like now... and the houses, except few of them, were built from non-resistant material. Where did they seek shelter from the weather, especially if their poor homes got damaged?

I think in churches, these were usually big and made of strong stone. Other ideas, have you read about a hurricane in those times?

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=edit)

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
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* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

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[Posted October 29, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411877) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411877)

There was a big storm in around 1703 or so and most of the ships that survived rode the storm out at sea. The ships that stayed in port were run up on land and destroyed.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=411877)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_411877_menu)

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[Posted October 29, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411881) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411881)

And the civilians from the towns? This was my question, where did the town residents seek shelter, if in the church or in another place.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=411881)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_411881_menu)

[**William Brand**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1471-william-brand/)

* Mercury Malefactor
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* 
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* Gender:Male
* Location:Logan, Utah
* Interests:My name is William Pace and I live and work as a graphic designer, illustrator and photographer in Northern Utah. I'm married to the lovely Tracy Pace and we have three children. In addition to all things art, I enjoy traveling and meeting new people from every walk of life. I've always been a fan of history, theology, and of course, Pyracy.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSkt-q-HihQ

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[Posted October 29, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411882) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411882)

In many instances people simply took shelter in their homes, but there are accounts of individuals fleeing their houses during the storm of 1703 only to be killed by flying debris. They felt that their homes were unsafe and thought it better to be out of doors. Many accounts that I've read of the damages ashore indicate that private residences, commercial structures, churches and civic buildings were all damaged in like manner, so death in that particular storm was subjective and random. A lot of early communities in the colonies had root cellars and other underground earthen works used for cold storage and icehouses. I think anyone smart enough to go to ground would have a good chance of escaping bad storms.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=411882)
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[Posted October 29, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411884) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411884)

This is from Wikipedia, but I know I've read it elsewhere before.

"In [London](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London), the lead roofing was blown off [Westminster Abbey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westminster_Abbey) and [Queen Anne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_of_Great_Britain) had to shelter in a cellar at [St. James's Palace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._James%27s_Palace) to avoid collapsing chimneys and part of the roof.

There was extensive and prolonged flooding in the [West Country](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Country), particularly around [Bristol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bristol). Hundreds of people drowned in flooding on the [Somerset Levels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Somerset_Levels), along with thousands of sheep and cattle, and one ship was found 15 miles inland.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Storm_of_1703#cite_note-3) At [Wells](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wells), Bishop [Richard Kidder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Kidder) was killed when two chimneystacks in the palace fell on the bishop and his wife, asleep in bed. This same storm blew in part of the great west window in [Wells Cathedral](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wells_Cathedral). Major damage occurred to the south-west tower of [Llandaff Cathedral](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Llandaff_Cathedral) at [Cardiff](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardiff)."

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
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[Posted October 29, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411885) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411885)

I don't have much interest in the land-side of all this, but there are a bunch of quotes about being at sea during vicious storms. (People on land did what they always did - they coped as best they could.) However, I can't resist posting accounts of what happened at sea, as this was more unique to our sport.

“[Oct 9, 1678] All this night, which was exceeding dark, the storm raged furiously.

Next day…the sea, which before only seemed to tumble us from mountain to valley and thence to toss us into the clouds, now fell on us downright, for it was now grown all of a breach, as sailors phrase it, so that many times being covered with a sea, we could not hope ever to escape! And if we should hold out till the storms were over, we had been in danger of starving, for all our provisions were quite spoiled, our compass staved, and everything else so disordered that, if we should be kept off from land by 3 or 4 days longer, we must have perished, without a miracle, having eaten nor drank anything these two days; only I had in a locker 3 bottles of Punch, which we did now and then take a very little of to moisten our mouths. And now the night came on, and with it our danger increased, for we were continually forced to pump and bail out the water, which rendered this night very dismal and tediously obstreperous, especially to me, who was forced for my own security to trust the helm in no other hand but my own, so that I was continually wet from head to foot, and what was worse than that, the want of sleep, for I durst not close mine eyes, except I intended to shut them for ever!

In this condition the morning (10th) arose, and although it brought us light which is some help and comfort in such dangers, yet could we not by it see any probability of evading, for the storm still persecuted us, so that being now almost quite tired and spent, when rubbing of my eyes and looking out sharp, I spied land or rather hills of sand, which I knew to be the dunes of Holland, and withal saw that I could not avoid running ashore, for now the wind was at N.W. and no harbour within 5 or 6 leagues on either hand, and the tide of flood and sea together setting in so fast, that we struck aground before I was willing, it being about half a mile from the shore.” (Jeremy Roch*, Three Sea Journals of Stuart Times*,. Bruce S. Ingram, Ed., p. 103-4)

“[1680] And we stayed a long time for our lading [in Jamaica], at last there arrived a ship which had loaded at Barbados, with two more; and having been out of Barbados two days, did meet with a ‘harey-cane’ or storm of wind, which blew so fiercely, and continued so long that she was forced to cut her mainmast and mizenmast by the board, having much water in the hold, which had spoil’d all the lower tier of sugar and done them a great deal of damage’ and she was forced to bear up for Jamaica to repair again and get a new mast.

She was doubting the other two ships in her company were both lost in the storm, they being deep laden and but old ships: but about four days afterward there arrived one of the ships in a miserable condition, having lost all her masts and thrown overboard a great deal of her lading and her guns, above half her lading being lost, she having made a very narrow escape and with great difficulty arrived at Jamaica; but the other ship she did verily believe was lost, having a many passengers on board; which proved true, for she was never after heard of, ship and men and all being lost in that extremity of weather.” (Edward Barlow, *Barlow’s Journal of his Life at Sea in King’s Ships, East and West Indiamen & Other Merchantman From 1659 to 1703, Volume I, 1659-1677*, p. 332)

“[1690] In this stress of weather our three cables broke, and we did drive foul of one of the men-of-war, and had we been eight feet more northerly we had presently sunk by her side, and a thousand pound to a penny we had all been drowned.

We cut down our mainmast; and our long-boat, breaking away from our stern, sank…” (Barlow, p. 406)

“[1690] And coming into the Downs, we heard the sad complaints of the great losses many people sustained, there being near twenty ships which were sunk and drove ashore, and a hundred dead people taken up amongst the strand…

…there being many ships which were outer-bound which had lost their masts in the Downs and were forced to go up the river again to new fit their ships, many losing their voyage by it. The like storm had not been known in many years before…

In all this storm and when we ran ashore, our ship proved well and tight, and her greatest damage was in the loss of her masts and sails, rigging and anchors, the goods not much damnified but what was before we came into the Downs, in the bad weather on our passage.” (Barlow, p. 409)

“[1702] And the 26th day at night began a violent storm, which all England hath great cause to remember. And as for our ship, we escaped very narrowly, losing one of our anchors and drove with our sheet anchor and small bower ahead, and our best bower cable broke, and near to the ‘Shew’ and Blacktail Sands in a dismal condition we cut all our masts by the board, all things appearing as dismal as death; having drove three or four miles, and had we drove less than half a mile further, we had certainly been all lost and not one man saved. And in the morning, seeing swimming by us masts, yards, and sails, and wrecks of ships.

And we lay two days in that condition, nobody coming near us. And then had we lost two boats and the lives of twenty-four men in them, some of the best men we had in the ship.

And making what shift we could in getting small masts up, we turned up to the Buoy of the Nore, having then moderate weather; there, hearing of very great loss and damage amongst the ships in the Down, losing four third-rate frigates, the *Mary*, Rear-Admiral of the Blue, and all her men lost except one or two, and the ships *Northumberland, Restoration*, and *Starling Castle*, some of them losing most of their men; and a great many merchant ships: and at the Buoy of the Nore a bomb-ketch and several small ships and men lost: the *Weymouth* frigate driving out of Sheerness, cut all her masts by the board: and two or three at Portsmouth: the *Resolution* and *Newcastle* and the *Vigo* frigate upon the coast of Holland; and in that storm the Queen lost ten men-of-war, some ships being overset in the Hope and river of Thames: and great damage was done upon the land by the high winds. England receiving much damage in most places.

[Footnote 1: In this terrible storm 15 men of war, 300 merchantmen and upwards of 6000 seamen were lost.

The Eddystone lighthouse together with its ingenious architect Mr Winstanley was totally destroyed.

400 windmills were either blown down or took fire, through the violence with which they were driven round by the wind.

19,000 trees were blown down in Kent and 4000 in New Forest.

In London, 800 houses collapsed in ruins and 2000 chimney stacks fell. And the loss of life through the Southern Counties was as great as if it had been a West Indian hurricane.]" (Barlow, p. 552-3)

“In *Anno* 1703 I was bound from *Surat* to *Amoy* {Xiamen], and off the *Maccao* Islands, in the Month of *August*, I met with a severe Hurricane. We had visible Signs of an approaching Storm before it came, the air was in great Agitation by much Lightning continually flashing, but no Thunder nor Rain. We prepared for its coming from Noon to Sunset, making every Thing in the Ship fast, our Yards lowered as low as conveniently they could be, and our Sails made fast with Coils of small Ropes, besides their usual furling Lines.

At Nine in the Night it laid our Ship’s Gunnel under Water, and I wisht our Main-mast had been away, which about Ten was effected, and it carried our Mizzen-mast along with it. On its going over board our Ship came to Rights a little, and her lee Gunnel was clear of the Water, but much Water getting down at the Hatches, we had five Foot Water in the Ship, and no Possibility of getting it out by pumping, for our Main-mast breaking in the Parteners of the Upper Deck, disabled both our Pumps.

About Midnight we had cleared the Ship of the Main and Mizzen-masts, but cutting the Rigging that kept them fast to the Ship. By this time the Wind had shifted from North-east to South-east, and had rather increased than aswaged, and those two Winds had put the Sea in two violent Motions, however, we got our Ship before the Wind, but broaching too brought her Head almost to the Sea, which met her so Violently, that it broke quite over the Ship, carrying away our Fore-mast and Boltsprit, two Anchors from the lee Bough, three great Guns of twenty two Hundred each, with our Pinnace and Yole. We soon cleared ourselves of the Anchors, by cutting the Cables, and, before Day, we were quite of our Fore-mast and Boltsprit.

About Eight in the Morning the Storm abated, but between seventy and eighty bruised and wounded, who were carefully drest by our Surgeons, and all recovered.” (Alexander Hamilton, *British sea-captain Alexander Hamilton's A new account of the East Indies, 17th-18th century*, p. 485-6)

**Edited October 29, 2012 by Mission**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
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[**Capt. Bo of the WTF co.**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2748-capt-bo-of-the-wtf-co/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,339 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Spanish Louisiana - on the river Osage
* Interests:Many and varied.

([IP: 150.199.117.221](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=150.199.117.221)) · · 

[Posted October 29, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411887) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411887)

There were no warnings other than those issued by the elders of experience and "holy-men" who knew to watch the signs of brewing storms in the season. Therefore no real preparations could be made. Root cellars and/or wine/rum cellars were the only places that might offer shelter, but even those were prone to flooding in most cases. At sea, as mission has provided, you ride it out and pray/make your peace with the world. It was one of the hazzards that came with the occupation.

In the modern Navy we sent all able craft to sea and had any others that were not able to steam under their own power towed out as far as could be before the storm hit. I spent 38 hours aboard a frigate that was OOC. We (36 sailors and three officers) stood watches, drank coffee made on propane stoves and ate MRE's until the storm passed and we were towed back to port. We had two portable generators for operating minimal lighting and radio.This was 1985 during hurricane "Bob" and we were out of Charleston, S.C.

Bo

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
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[Posted October 30, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411906) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411906)

Thank you very much, you all have helped me a lot! <3 (And yes, I am interested in what happens at sea, but, as you said, there are more stories about it than about how the land-based ones fared).

**Edited October 30, 2012 by Elena**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
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I think there are probably period stories about weathering hurricanes in the islands, but this group doesn't generally read those books. Most of our land-based responses seem to have been about how Europe and the Colonies prepared for hurricanes from what I am reading, so no one's really answered your question. (Unless Bo's comments concern the islands.)

I still think that people would do what they could - it's simply logical. They would go inside buildings. (Who stands outside during 50+ mph driving winds and rain?) They would choose the strongest building they could. (Who would choose a ramshackle shack in 50+ mph driving winds and rain?) They would probably do the same thing as the sailors - move everything inside and make sure it was secure. (Who want to see a pitchfork coming at them in 50+ mph driving winds and rain? Besides, goods were probably pretty dear on the islands - just like they are today - and there's no sense in letting pitchforks be carried off if you could put them away.) They would probably get their slaves gathered in the safest place they could. (If they had affection for their slaves, this is a foregone conclusion, but even if they were the most callous caricature of a slave owner, who wants to sacrifice slaves to a storm and have to buy new ones afterwards?) If an individual didn't have a good house to take cover in, they would gather in the strongest central building they could find. (Probably a church or possibly a 'factory' [trading storage building] or other public building if they had one.) They would logically do what we still do today.

I was looking through Hans Sloane's massive books on Jamaica and the Caribbean last night with this question in mind. While I found some stuff on the weather, I didn't notice anything on hurricanes or preparations for them in particular. Of course, I only got about 150 pages into the first volume - there are 2 volumes and they are both about 1000 pages long. (Sloane tends to focus more on the naturalistic that humanistic, so even if he did comment on hurricanes he may not have mentioned how the islanders prepared for them.)

I do know there are other period books on the Caribbean Islands (or America/New Spain/Spanish Main as they are sometimes called) out there. Not personally having much interest in island life, I don't know their names or authors - Sloane's is the only book that interested me enough to take notice of - and that's primarily because he was a physician. I'm sure some research would turn them up, though. Since there are many, many period books now available for free download at sites like [archive.org](http://archive.org/details/texts), [Google books](http://books.google.com/), [Free-eBooks](http://www.free-ebooks.net/) and [Project Gutenberg](http://www.gutenberg.org/) (among other sites), you could probably find some answers if you needed them.

**Edited October 30, 2012 by Mission**

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There is an old movie that has a fairly believable hurricane scene set in the Carribean Islands. The Movie is I beleive *High Wind to Jamaica* starring Anthony Quinn and James Coburn as 1850's pyrates. The opening scene is of the hurricane and is probably a good representation of what it could be like (as movies go). I have a copy at home and it is a pretty darn good movie overall.

Bo

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
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* 
* 
* Member
* 388 posts
* Gender:Female
* Location:Bucharest, Romania
* Interests:historical Age of Sail RPGs, music, reading, foreign languages

([IP: 92.86.121.233](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=92.86.121.233)) · · 

[Posted October 30, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411918) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411918)

Thank you all, and, Captain Bo, I love Anthony QUinn!Maybe I'll find this movie too...

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=411918)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_411918_menu)

[**Elena**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11386-elena/)

* A Seadog Looking for Crewmates
* 
* 
* Member
* 388 posts
* Gender:Female
* Location:Bucharest, Romania
* Interests:historical Age of Sail RPGs, music, reading, foreign languages

([IP: 92.86.121.233](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=92.86.121.233)) · · 

[Posted November 4, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411985) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411985)

I saw the movie and I liked it a lot! Thank you very much, Captain Bo!

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=411985)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_411985_menu)

[**Capt. Bo of the WTF co.**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2748-capt-bo-of-the-wtf-co/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,339 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Spanish Louisiana - on the river Osage
* Interests:Many and varied.

([IP: 150.199.117.221](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=150.199.117.221)) · · 

[Posted November 5, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=411998) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=411998)

My pleasure, I am going to watch my copy tonight as it is raining and cold, so a movie, popcorn, and Pyrat rum are on the menu for this evening.

Bo

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=411998)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_411998_menu)

[**Coastie04**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/27-coastie04/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,008 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Juneau, AK
* Interests:Nautical history, sailing (especially tall ships and my own 'Sanctioned Mistress'), shooting (of all eras and calibers), and homebrewing.

([IP: 69.178.69.187](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=69.178.69.187)) · · 

[Posted November 9, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=412035) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=412035)

Just to put in a bit of storm tactics at sea, there are generally two accepted strategies for weathering a hurricane. Which one you choose depends on your location in relation to the storm, but other factors such as nearby shoal water or the individual sailing characteristics of your boat must be taken in to account as well. A hurricane is divided into two semicircles, the 'safe' and the 'dangerous.' In the northern hemisphere, the 'safe' place to be is south of the storm (or south-west depending on the direction the hurricane is moving). Here the winds will be less. For example, if a hurricane has 55 kt winds, and is moving at 15 kts, the winds in the safe semicircle will be 44 kts (ironically, about what the Bounty recently foundered in). In the dangerous semicircle, they will be 70 kts-MUCH more dangerous. If you're in the dangerous semicircle , you want the wind on your starboard bow. This will move you away from the center of the storm and behind it as quickly as possible. Of course, if you're sailing at 7 kts, the apparent wind speed will now be around 75 kts (approximate, depending on angle of sailing into the wind). In the safe semicircle, the theory is the same, but you want the wind on your starboard quarter. This will take you away from the eye of the storm and get you behind it as soon as possible. Plus, it will be a much more comfortable ride than beating into the wind and is generally much easier to do in a square rigger. And, that extra speed you get decreases the apparent wind even further and 'surf' down the swells. Still dangerous, but much less so. Of course, it's hard without modern weather information to exactly track a storm's location and direction, but not impossible. Generally, the closer you are to the eye, the faster the wind. Since the wind circles around the eye, the eye is approximately perpendicular to the wind direction. If the wind is backing (going counter clockwise), then you're probably in the safe semicircle. If it's veering, batton down the hatches and put up the smallest sails possible. And tie yourself to something solid. And pray.

These are at least the modern practices for hurricanes, and I'd imagine by the 1700s that there was some understanding of what works best at sea. However, I'd love to see if there are any period references to this type of procedure.

Arrrgh!

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=412035)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_412035_menu)

[**Elena**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11386-elena/)

* A Seadog Looking for Crewmates
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* Gender:Female
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([IP: 92.86.121.233](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=92.86.121.233)) · · 

[Posted November 10, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=412052) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=412052)

Thank you, it helps too! <3

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=412052)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_412052_menu)

[**Captain Jim**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2317-captain-jim/)

* Captain Jim for Captain!
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,254 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Off the coast of Tampa Bay (Unfortunately, inland from the coast)
* Interests:I'm 57, formerly a wildlife ecologist and biologist, now a stay-at-home dad. I grew up on the west coast of Florida, where Anna Maria Sound and Tampa Bay were my playground. My interests include, but are not limited to cannon, black powder arms, history, fishing the flats, sailing, fine wood working, flint gun building, hunting, good gun dogs. Above all, my wife and children.

([IP: 12.195.96.153](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=12.195.96.153)) · · 

[Posted November 10, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=412054) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=412054)

What Coastie said is correct. But the complicated choices of point of sail are dependent on where the "hard" is and how your boat handles. If you can run before the wind, the apparent wind decreases and you take seas astern or to quarter, making as little headway as is needed to prevent pitchpoling (going end-over-end.) The advantage of this is that the storm seems less severe and the waves much less menacing. If there is no room to run (land is downwind) then running is not an option. Then one would have to heave-to, basically trying to sail at an angle to the sea with as little forward progress as possible (which may not be the same angle to the wind) so as to limit the progress toward the land and make the ride as comfortable as possible. Less stress on you is usually less stress on the boat. Sometimes all of your choices suck. Perhaps your boat does not heave-to well, or requires constant attention lest it take a sea square abeam. The variables are almost limitless, especially when you add in the experience of the captain and crew, whether they trust the boat, whether there is some driving order to get to point "B" that overrides good judgment. In all cases, deep water is better. In all cases "wind against current" is bad (this may have been a factor in the Bounty sinking, as they were in the Gulf Stream with an opposing wind. Wind against current builds steep, angular, hard-hitting waves.) I have been in four cases where the choice had to be made. Ran once, hove-to three times. In all cases, once we stopped fighting the sea, reduced sail and went with the flow, there was less stress on the boat and the crew. We rested, ate, drank warm drinks and when the wind abated we went on.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=editComment&comment=412054)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/#elControls_412054_menu)

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

([IP: 12.232.174.154](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=12.232.174.154)) · · 

[Posted November 11, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=findComment&comment=412057) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18956-hurricanes-where-did-they-find-shelter/&do=reportComment&comment=412057)

Still feeling guilty about not having given a good answer to the original question, it occurred to me to search The Calendar of State Papers (Colonial: North America and the West Indies 1574-1739) for the term ['Hurricane' which produced 231 results](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/search.aspx?query1=hurricane&rf=source:123). Among the ones relevant to our time period in the first couple of search pages:

**From a letter sent by Mr. Estwick in St. Christophers to Mr. Popple, dated November 18, 1707:**

"It is with great concern I am to mention to you the extreem misery of the inhabitants of the Leeward Islands, by the French invasion, and since by a terrible Hurricane, that has not left any fruit, or hardly a green leaf on the Island, not a house or a mill is standing without great damage; besides wch. H.M.S. *Winchelsea* and *Child's Play* were at the same time both lost, the last lies now off Palmetto Point, near this place, her men and gunns sav'd, but the hull torn in pieces; The Governour is saving the gunns for to mount on some batteries wch. want them here; This sad hurricane was on Aug. 29, and is indeed a greater calamity than the invasion by the French, *etc*.

The Islands in generall are tollerably healthy having only a small aguish distemper among them, since the hurricane, of wch. few or none die; the most considerable persons lately dead are President Burt of Nevis, and Jno. Hackshaw, one of the Gentlemen nam'd in the Commission for this Island; Col. Burt is not much lamented, his indifferent behaviour when the French visited that Island being still remembred against him; there being no minister on that Island nor has been for some time, he was buried as all others there are, wthout. any ceremony over their grave, *etc*.

*P.S*.—St. Thomas's has, if possible, suffer'd more by the Hurricane than these Islands, Saba and Statia (Dutch Islands) equall with these; Curacao has felt a little; Guardalupa has likewise suffer'd; Martinique not at all; what other Islands have done, as yet I've not learn'd, but where it has come, it has destroy'd everything to that degree that many good Familyes have not had bread, other than potatoes and cassadoe to eat for many days; all sorts of provisions are upon this occasion at greater rates than ever."

**From another sent by Gov. Sir Jonathan Atkins on Barbados to Sec. Sir Joseph Williamson on October 18, 1675:**

"But their sufferings are infinitely augmented by a hurricane the last of August last, the ruin of houses, works, mills, sugars, and utensils being incredible, their canes for next year's sugar crop twisted and broken off, their corn and ground provisions that should have kept their families six months, laid flat or rooted up. Never was seen such prodigious ruin in three hours; there are three churches, 1,000 houses, and most of the mills to Leeward thrown down, 200 people killed, whole families being buried in the ruins of their houses, a torrent of rain beat down all before it, unroofing all their storehouses and letting in the wet to their sugars; never saw a more amazing sight in one night, all the trees were stripped of leaves and fruit, all their housing laid flat, and the people in such consternation and distraction that they resolved never to build again but to leave the island.

But upon second thoughts many have changed their minds and are repairing as fast as they can, but a great many can never be able to do it. All the prodigious effects of the hurricane would swell into a volume and puzzle belief; 12 ships, some of them laden with sugar, were driven ashore and broken to pieces. The King's frigate "Foresight" saved herself by standing out to sea, perceiving the storm coming..."

**From another from President Ayscough in Spanish Town, Jamaica to the Council of Trade and Plantations on November 1, 1726:**

"...on the 22nd day of October last a most dreadful hurricane happened here which has laid waste many houses and plantations and destroyed the greatest part of the shipping which were then in our harbours etc.; there were but two ships that escaped the storm without damage, one rode it out at the North part of the Island, the other at the Leward part thereof; this letter goes by the former, being very desirous your Lordships should have the earliest account of this melancholy news, the King's house and other publick buildings in this town are very much shattered, tho' the fortifications on Port Royal have not suffered so much as in the former [hurricane; neither has this storm been so general throughout the Island, as the former] but in such parishes where it happened to light, it has done vast mischief etc."

**And here is one that appears to be from a local publication in Jamaica:**

"Copy of The Weekly Jamaica Courant, *No*. ccxxxv., Sept. 12th, 1722.

Accounts of the Hurricane:—

*Kingston*. It began at 8 in the morning and continued till 10 at night. Near one half of the houses are shattered *etc*. We hear of no more than three persons who lost their lives. The wharfs are all destroyed. Of 26 sail of top-sail vessels, and 10 sloops that were in the harbour, no more than 10 are seen, and but five or six of them repairable *etc.*

*St. Jago de la Vega*. Considerable damage in our buildings, particularly the King's House and Secretary's Office, but very few persons hurt. "It is remarkable that those houses which were built by the Spaniards, sustain'd very little damage."

At Old Harbour the houses and people are all destroyed except two. Proclamation by Governor Sir N. Lawes empowering the Provost Marshall to search for and recover goods plundered from ships or houses damaged by the storm. 3rd Sept., 1722.

*Port Royal*. We were under apprehensions of the dreadful hurricane the day before, from the weather appearing very unsettled *etc*. and the prodigious swell of the sea, throwing up several hundred tons of rocks of large size over the wall at the Eastward part of the town *etc*. Near 400 persons lost their lives, and above half the town is destroyed. The streets were covered with ruins of houses, wrecks of boats and vessels, and great numbers of dead bodies. The inhabitants that were preserved, reduced to great extremity for want of water, provisions and other necessarys; many must have perished had it not been for the assistance of H.M. ships that rid out the storm *etc*. . . .

People differ in opinion concerning this hurricane and that in 1712; several circumstances are offered to prove which was most violent *etc*." (Too bad they didn't know about global warming/climate change or they could have wasted their time debating that instead of which one was the worst.)

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And so on and so forth. Follow the link in the first paragraph for more of them - you could spend hours and possibly days looking around in there. I didn't see anything in a brief perusal about actually *preparing* for Hurricanes, but I suspect any pre-warning that a storm was a hurricane and not just another tropical storm was probably almost non-existant.

**Edited November 12, 2012 by Mission**