Severe weather event in Iberia related to a Hurricane in 1842

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This contribution documents a rare episode of severe weather in Spain that took place during the mid-nineteenth century when a hurricane struck south-west Iberia on 29th October 1842. The use of a variety of independent documentary sources has provided unprecedented scope for the analysis of this event episode, allowing it to be set within its wider context and for a judgement to be made on its tropical origin. Documentary sources include instrumental weather data and weather diaries over land areas, and ship logbooks from Spain, the UK, and the US. Data were mapped to assess the 1842 track and intensity. The evidence suggests that this was similar to the more recent hurricane Vince, which made landfall in Spain on 10th October 2005. This case study not only places hurricane Vince, suggested at the time to have been unique, in its more proper long-term context but it also demonstrates how documentary sources can improve our wider understanding of climate dynamics during historical times in the Atlantic basin. A paper describing this research in detail has been published recently [JM Vaquero, R Garcia-Herrera, D Wheeler, M Chenoweth and CJ Mock (2008) "An historical analogue of 2005 Hurricane Vince" Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, 89, 191-201].