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A Science Service Feature

March 11

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,  
of Clark University,  
discusses:

THE MEMORABLE "BLIZZARD" OF MARCH, 1888

While February generally has a greater total snowfall than March, March conditions favor an occasional exceptionally heavy snowstorm. In New England, for instance, cold snow fields in the north and relatively warm water to the south make a large temperature difference which encourages storminess. Four feet of snow in one storm seems to be the maximum which can be expected in southern New England. Only on one occasion, 200 years ago, was there apparently as much as six feet. The famous March snowstorm of 1888 gave New Haven a snowfall of 42 inches on the level, with drifts exceeding 30 feet.

The great snowfall of March 11-14, 1888, usually called the "Great Blizzard", is still remembered throughout eastern New York and New England. The great prominence given to the storm is due to the fact that the snowfall was so excessive and so greatly drifted that for several days there was almost a complete suspension of the railway traffic in the region affected. One hundred and thirty-five schooners and 81 other vessels were lost along the middle and north Atlantic coast of the United States during this single storm.

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(Tomorrow: Winter Weather and Health)

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