

No. 634

A Science Service Feature

May 23

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

By Dr. Charles F. Brooks  
of Clark University.

SPOTTING STORMS BY RADIO

Aviators in the South must watch out for thunderstorms which are so frequent in that region. A radio receiving set proves quite helpful in spotting disturbances. When static becomes so strong that messages cannot be received, it suggests thunderstorms in the vicinity. The radio compass will show on what line the strongest static exists. If thunderstorms are found to be all in the North or Northeast from a particular plane or airship that aircraft is not in danger, for such storms usually move eastward or northeastward.

The intersecting lines from two directional recorders for atmospherics in England last July showed, in much the manner as a pair of surveyors do in triangulation, the progress of thunderstorms on a cold front for 40 hours and 2000 kilometers (1250 miles) across western Europe. During the night when the thunderstorms apparently ceased to be active the atmospherics weakened or stopped, but resumed again in the daytime.

When static is too strong for receiving in general, focussing on a particular station often makes messages audible provided the path of the storm makes an angle of more than 45 degrees with the line of the sending station.

-----  
All rights reserved by Science Service

SCIENCE SERVICE,  
B and 21st Sts.,  
Washington, D. C.