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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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AN EARLY AUTUMN SNOWSTORM

A year ago yesterday occurred one of the most notable early fall snowstorms known in the northeastern United States and southern Canada. It attended a low pressure area with gales of great intensity that developed suddenly on the middle Atlantic coast as a large high swooped down upon the center of the country, carrying freezing temperatures generally to the 35th parallel of latitude. Over large areas far exceeding in amount any single snowfall on record for the month of October and coming in the Columbus Day holiday period, this storm caught a great many un-awares. The few inches of snow that fell south of latitude 43 did not greatly hinder traffic or otherwise disturb people. Nevertheless, the incongruity of driving snow over a green landscape with trees still in full leaf, was most striking.

In the mountains where the snowfall measured a foot or more in depth traffic was completely blocked in many places. Touring autos were unable to cope with the drifts, and many parties were virtually marooned. One man was lost in the snow and, when finally rescued, barely escaped with his life.

The winter's accumulation of snow on the mountains begun at this time did not melt throughout the entire spring and summer following. Early this fall a snow drift 10 to 15 feet deep still remained at an elevation of but 4500 feet above sea level on Mount Washington.

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