

A Science Service Feature

Released on receipt
but intended for use
July 9, 1927

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed July 2, 1927

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"CONROY"

The late Clement L. Wragge, who organized the Australasian Weather Bureau in 1887, with headquarters at Brisbane, introduced the unique plan of giving individual names to all the storms that appeared on the daily weather map of that region. Instead, for example, of referring to "the storm central yesterday morning over the Timor Sea," he would call the depression "Eline," or "Luita," or "Braddon," etc. These names were used in his official bulletins, and also in the newspapers in descriptions of the storms and their effects.

Most of Wragge's storm names are now forgotten, but one of them lives in the history of meteorology. There was a prominent politician, a Mr. Conroy, who, as a member of the Australian Parliament, had opposed the plan of granting free telegraph service to the weather bureau and had further incurred Wragge's displeasure by ridiculing his forecasts. When an exceptionally violent and nasty storm made its appearance, during the year 1902, the meteorologist saw his chance to get even. The troubler of the Australian atmosphere was named "Conroy", and its misdeeds were reported in appropriate language day by day, while all Australia - except Conroy - chuckled.

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