

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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COLLECTING MARINE WEATHER REPORTS

The United States Weather Bureau has for many years collected and compiled weather reports, so far as obtainable, from all parts of the oceans. The reports are rendered by seamen of many nationalities, who are known as "marine observers". The Bureau supplies these observers with forms for recording their observations and with a manual of instructions.

The weather observations at sea are taken at Greenwich mean noon. They relate to wind, barometric pressure, temperature, weather, clouds and the state of the sea. The observer also keeps a "journal", in which a good deal of additional information about the weather of each day is recorded. The reports are forwarded to the Weather Bureau at the end of each voyage. About 1,400 vessels are now taking part in this work.

The Bureau plots the records for each day on charts of corresponding dates. Thus manuscript charts are available showing the movements of storms and the progress of other weather events over the oceans. The data are also utilized from time to time in the preparation of new "normals" of the climatic elements for the different oceanic regions.

Some of the marine observers report their observations to the Bureau by radio; but that is another story.

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