

Released on receipt  
but intended for use  
February 6, 1928

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed January 30, 1928

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology

AMERICAN WEATHER MAPS

The earliest official daily weather maps issued in the United States, published by the Signal Service in Washington, began to appear in January, 1871. They were crude documents, compared with the beautiful lithograph map now issued from the central office of the Weather Bureau in the same city. They were manifolded by the use of carbon paper, the impressions being made by means of steel dies and a mallet. The data they contained were meager and there were no isobars or isotherms.

The lithograph process was adopted for the Washington map in October, 1871. The weather maps issued in other American cities were formerly manifolded from a stencil prepared by hand. Later a typewriter was introduced for making the stencil. Some stations still issue stenciled maps, but at the more important stations the maps are now printed.

In 1876, during the Centennial Exposition, an attempt was made to send the lines of the daily weather map by means of autographic telegraphy. The chart was telegraphed in this way each morning from the headquarters of the Signal Service in Washington to the exhibit of the same service in Philadelphia, and was there reproduced and distributed. The plan was not put into wider use, as the reproduction was not sufficiently exact. Just half a century later the Weather Bureau experimented with a process of transmitting complete weather maps by radio.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

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