

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THE SOUTHERNMOST WEATHER STATION

In the year 1903 the Scottish Antarctic Expedition, under Dr. W.S. Bruce, established a meteorological and magnetic observatory on Laurie Island, in the South Orkneys, a group of islands southeast of South America on the verge of the Antarctic regions. The observatory was maintained by the original Scottish staff until the following year, when it was transferred to the Argentine Meteorological Office, which has operated it ever since. Each year a naval vessel visits the island, carrying supplies and a new party of observers to replace those of the year before. Apart from this annual exchange, the place has heretofore been completely cut off from communication with the outside world, but at the end of March, <sup>1927</sup>~~1927~~, a radio station was opened here. At present weather reports are sent by radio twice a day to Buenos Aires and published on the Argentine weather map. Reports of ice conditions about the island are also made daily by radio.

Laurie Island is the southernmost permanently inhabited spot on the globe and its only inhabitants are the staff of the observatory. Strange to say, service at this lonely spot is popular with Argentine meteorologists. One man has spent five years there, another four, and several three. The climate is said to be healthful, but gloomy skies are the rule, as there is little sunshine at any season.

Argentina also maintains a meteorologist at a whaling station in South Georgia, which is in lower latitude but within the limits of Antarctic drift ice.

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