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A Science Service Feature

! WHY THE WEATHER !

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GEORGE WASHINGTON'S WEATHER RECORDS

The last words ever written by George Washington were his account of the weather of December 13, 1799, the day preceding his death. The record reads as follows:

"13th. Morning snowing, and about three inches deep. Wind at northeast, and mercury at 30. Continued snowing till one o'clock, and about four it became perfectly clear. Wind in the same place but not hard. Mercury 28 at night."

Washington was an assiduous observer and recorder of weather throughout his life. An interesting task still awaiting some meteorologist is the compilation and discussion of the weather notes contained in his diaries, so far as they are extant.

In the absence of regular climatic statistics for the region where he lived, Washington doubtless found his own record, kept for years at Mount Vernon, of considerable value as a guide in his agricultural undertakings. He was in the habit of reading the thermometer three times a day - morning, noon and night. He noted also the direction of the winds, the general character of the weather, and the occurrence of rain and snow, but evidently had no rain-gauge, which is not strange, as there were probably not a dozen of them in this country up to the time of his death.

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