

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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KNOCKED OUT BY BALL LIGHTNING

The records of so-called ball lightning indicate that one of the mysterious fiery balls may strike an animate or inanimate object without leaving the slightest trace, or, on the other hand, may cause great injury. Between these extremes all degrees of damage are reported. The destructive powers of the phenomenon are illustrated in a case reported to Dr. Humphreys, of the Weather Bureau, by N.J. Dominy, now postmaster at Dublin, Ohio.

In August, 1896, Mr. Dominy was driving in a buggy on a highway near Dublin late in the evening during a severe thunderstorm. The night was very dark except during the flashes of vivid lightning. Suddenly a ball of fire, about a foot in diameter, came swiftly from a southwesterly direction. Its color changed from red to dazzling white as it approached. It made the hissing or roaring noise of a skyrocket and left a long trail of sparks behind it. The ball struck the buggy on the left fore-wheel, hurling buggy, horse and man from the middle of the road a distance of 30 feet into a ditch. Mr. Dominy was knocked senseless. When he came to, some three hours later, he found the buggy and harness badly shattered. The horse was lying on its back in the ditch, but finally revived and recovered. There was a strong smell of sulphur in the air.

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