

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed November 21, 1931

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THE RAINIEST PLACE IN NORTH AMERICA?

Attention has just been called by F. Napier Denison, of the Canadian Meteorological Service, to the hitherto unsuspected fact that Canada possesses a weather station where the average rainfall is nearly twice as great as at any station in the United States proper. The station is on Henderson Lake, near the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, a short distance from Barclay Sound. The rain gauge is installed at the Dominion Fish Hatchery at the north end of the lake, with a high mountain lying close to the north and east of it. The forced ascent of moist winds from the Pacific passing over this mountain evidently explains why the rainfall is far greater here than at other places on the western side of the island.

The station was established at the beginning of 1923 and the rainfall for the eight years 1923-1930 has averaged 251.30 inches a year. Records of older stations in the vicinity indicate that the period in question was a relatively dry one; hence the average rainfall at this place will probably turn out to be considerably higher when a longer series of observations is available.

The rainiest known spot in the continental United States, exclusive of Alaska, is Glenora, Tillamook County, Oregon, with an annual average of 131.54 inches from a 25-year record. In Alaska the station at Latouche (lat. 60 degrees 43 minutes North., long. 147 degrees 55 minutes West) has an average of 178.43 inches a year from a 13-year record. A still greater average -- 195.46 inches -- was measured at Jumbo Mine, Alaska, but the station was closed after only three years of observations.

The heaviest rainfall for the whole North American continent, so far as existing records show, is at Greytown, Nicaragua, -- viz, 254.91 inches a year -- but this figure is from measurements for only 6 years; much too short a period to furnish a satisfactory "normal." Henderson Lake may eventually prove to be even wetter than Greytown.

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