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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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BBBBBBBB!

At the village of Verkhoyansk, lying about one degree of latitude north of the Arctic Circle, a temperature of 90 degrees below zero was recorded on February 5 and 7, 1892. This is generally accepted as the lowest temperature ever measured at a meteorological station, though there has been some controversy about the reliability of the thermometer from which the reading was taken and there have been several unconfirmed reports of lower temperatures registered elsewhere. Even colder winters are supposed, on the basis of a short recent series of observations, to prevail in the little-known district of Oimekon, which lies a few hundred miles farther east and well inside the temperate zone.

During a recent summer Verkhoyansk reported a temperature of 94 above zero. In other words, this place has experienced an absolute range of 184 degrees Fahrenheit, which is more than the range between the freezing and boiling points of water! And people live there!

The lowest temperature officially recorded at any place in the United States was 65 degrees below zero at Fort Keogh (now Miles City), Montana, in January, 1888. Lower than any temperatures observed near the earth's surface are those measured with sounding-balloons in the upper atmosphere, the lowest up to date being 134 below zero over Agra, India.

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