

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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CHARTING THE WEATHER

When a "synchronous" weather map, showing the results of observations taken simultaneously at numerous places, is to be used as a basis of weather forecasts, the reports must be assembled by telegraph or radio. If the map is to be used merely as a means of studying past weather, the reports may be collected by more leisurely methods. Such maps were frequently drawn before the days of telegraphy.

The first person to make synchronous weather charts, so far as we know, was the German physicist Brandes. His charts were drawn in 1820, but were based on a series of observations taken in the year 1783 by the Meteorological Society of the Palatinate, which had its observers in many countries. Brandes' charts were never published and no longer exist, but one of them was reconstituted by another meteorologist in later times with the use of the original data. The first published synchronous weather chart was produced by Prof. Elias Loomis, of Yale College, in 1843, and represented the weather over the eastern United States on February 16, 1842.

The collection of reports by telegraph as a basis of forecasting appears to have been first suggested by Carl Kreil, of the Prague Observatory, in 1842, and the plan was carried out experimentally in England and America in 1849.

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