

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed September 28, 1932.

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Authority on Meteorology.

"CHINOOK"

A good deal has been learned in the last few years about the vicissitudes of the name "chinook" as applied to winds, and a paper containing the latest information on the subject was presented by T.C. Elliott, of the Oregon Historical Society, at a meeting of the American Meteorological Association last June.

"The term chinook," he says, "was used by the Oregon pioneers in the Willamette prior to 1870. It was brought to the Walla Walla country by these same pioneers or their descendants and in turn carried across the Rocky Mountains during the first movement of settlers into Montana. West of the Cascade Range it meant a cool wind of summer, but east of that range and of the Rockies a warm wind of winter. In both localities it meant a clearing-up wind."

Mr. Elliott quotes an example of the term as applied east of the Cascades to a warm, dry wind, now known to meteorologists as a "foehn," from a Walla Walla newspaper of February 8, 1862. This is much earlier than any example I have previously seen. He says further:

"Montana may be cited as the real home of the chinook wind. In Montana the Weather Bureau at Havre is quoted as being the most froakish station in the service. The town of Chinook, near Havre, was so named by a man connected with the construction of the Great Northern Railway because of the prevalence of this wind there. . . . Warm winds in winter are now and then hailed as chinooks even as far east as Minneapolis."

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