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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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ICE SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

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One of the earliest recorded cases in which ice was used as a material for sculpture was that of Lieutenant de Meynerts who carved out of ice at Lübeck, Germany, a lion about seven feet long. He surrounded this by a bastion, mounted with five cannon, a soldier and a sentry box; all formed of ice.

Far more remarkable was the elaborate ice palace with its furnishings of the same material erected on the River Neva in the winter of 1739-40 by order of the Empress Anne of Russia. Within this building were statues, tables, chairs, looking-glasses, candlesticks, a pendulum clock, a complete tea service and a great variety of other objects made of ice. One room was a bed chamber, containing a bed with its curtains, bed-clothes, pillows, slippers and night-caps -- all of ice.

Outside there were urns containing orange trees, a life-sized elephant, six cannon and two mortars; likewise of ice. Most wonderful of all, this icy artillery could be loaded and fired. The mortars threw bombs weighing 80 pounds.

The poet Cowper wrote a long description of this palace in verse.

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