

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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CLIFF EDDIES

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Authority on Meteorology.

The interesting phenomenon of the "cliff eddy" can be observed wherever a strong wind blows upon the face of a nearly vertical cliff; especially a sea cliff. Sir Napier Shaw writes of this phenomenon:

"It will easily be noticed that at the edge of the cliff one is out of the wind, because the strong air current passes upwards overhead. What wind is felt there is a light breeze toward the sea, forming the lower current of the eddy. An empty match box and even a hat thrown out seaward from the cliff will be carried overhead, and may come back again to its owner along the ground behind him.

"Such eddies in wind are sometimes very remarkable. I recollect an occasion when there was a gale from the west at Dover and it was scarcely possible to walk on the shore or in the streets on account of the wind. The only place where there was no wind was on the parapet of the Admiralty Pier, apparently exposed to the full force of the gale but really protected from the wind by the deflection of the current upward overhead by the face of the pier."

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