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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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LAKE ERIE WATERSPOUTS

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So far as published statistics go, Lake Erie appears to hold the world's record among inland bodies of water for frequent waterspouts. In 1928, W.E. Hurd, of the U.S. Weather Bureau, reported that in a hasty search he had found accounts of 20 spouts on that lake, and some have occurred there since. One of these was seen from the south shore near Cleveland September 24, 1932. According to Andrew Thomson, of the Meteorological Office at Toronto, two spouts were seen at the eastern end of the lake on the morning of October 18, 1933, from the S.S. "Cyclo Warrior."

At the time the first spout appeared the wind shifted from southeast to a gentle northerly breeze. The cloud cover then consisted of two layers of thick round-edged dense gray clouds. A dark point in the lower cloud crept slowly downward to the water where a whitish mass of spindrift rose to meet it. The column grew larger and darker, lasting some 30 minutes. At about 7.10 a.m. a second smaller waterspout was formed which lasted only 10 or 15 minutes. Both waterspouts were bent about their middle point at a slight arc towards the east.

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