

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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A DUST WHIRLWIND

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A book by Ellison Hawks lately published in England describes one of the most remarkable dust whirlwinds that has ever visited the British Isles. The date was May 20, 1933, and the scene was the district along the River Mersey. The storm was first reported on the Cheshire side of the river, where at 3:15 p.m. a cloud of dust, sand, and pebbles passed over Port Sunlight, lasting for two minutes and subsiding as quickly as it had arisen. Moving across the Mersey, it arrived over Liverpool at 3:20. Here great crowds of people were watching a parade of horses. Suddenly a great brown cloud of dust appeared from the direction of the river and swept down the main streets of the city at terrific speed. Shop window-blinds were torn asunder, hundreds of people were temporarily blinded, and thousands were covered with dust and grit. Small pebbles mixed with the sand and grit struck their faces, and there was a general shrieking of frightened children. The duration of the whirlwind was only two minutes, and it passed on its way westward, doing considerable damage to property before it crossed the city boundary, leaving a trail of broken slates, split window-blinds, and desolated gardens in its wake.

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