

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
October 18, 1935

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed October 11, 1935

MILITARY METEOROLOGY

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman
Authority on Meteorology

It is an old story that weather and climate play a conspicuous part in military operations. It is a newer one that their role can be materially modified by the application of meteorology to military problems. Military meteorology took shape during the world war and its utility to armies and navies is not even yet fully recognized.

The traditional attitude of soldiers to the weather was expressed in a remark of Marshal Joffre in the early days of the last great conflict. Excusing setbacks experienced by his army on account of muddy roads, he said: "I command soldiers, but not the barometer." Yet then, or very soon afterward, Joffre had under his command men trained in the reading of barometers, who, at weather stations installed along the battle front, were operating an elaborate meteorological service for the benefit of the French army.

Most of the armies and navies participating in the war had meteorological units--something unheard of in previous conflicts. Aviation, gas warfare and the aiming of long-range guns profited especially by their observation and prediction of weather.

The Italians will doubtless make full use of this new branch of applied science in their Ethiopian campaign, and much will be learned about the meteorology of Haile Selassie's kingdom before the war is over.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE
2101 Constitution Ave.
Washington, D. C.