

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THE IMPRESARIO OF THE SNOW CRYSTALS

For 45 years Wilson A. Bentley, of Jericho, Vermont, has been photographing snow crystals under the microscope. At the close of last winter his collection of negatives totaled 4,700, of which no two were alike. This number probably exceeds the total number of snow crystals drawn and photographed by all other observers in the world, from the days of Olaus Magnus, who published such pictures in the sixteenth century, down to the present time. Pursued as a hobby, Bentley's self-imposed task has yielded results of absorbing interest not only to the man of science but also to the decorative artist and the general public. His wonderful pictures have been published in books, magazines and newspapers all over the world. They have appeared on the motion picture screen and have furnished designs for the craftsman.

The crystals photographed range through various degrees of complexity. Each winter Bentley photographs a few that he classes as "wonder" crystals on account of their extraordinarily elaborate designs. Last winter's snows yielded 40 of these marvels. Of one of them he writes: "I have named it the 'good luck' or horseshoe crystal. It not only has a horseshoe pictured as its nuclear feature but, more wonderful still, it has six surrounding features, each of which resembles a horse's hoof with heel calks." Pictures of this remarkable crystal and 17 others photographed last winter will be found in the Monthly Weather Review (Washington) for August, 1927.

The same skillful photographer has secured many admirable microphotographs of hoarfrost, window ice and dewdrops.

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