

UPDA 700

Confirmed Tornado
Edgewater Beach-McGregor, Ontario
May 12, 1956

Date- Local: Saturday, May 12th, 1956

UTC: Saturday, May 12th, 1956

Time- Local: 1845

UTC: 2245

Location: Edgewater Beach - McGregor

Region: Windsor – Essex – Chatham - Kent

Classification: Confirmed Tornado

Category: -999

Casualties: None

Track Length: 13720 m

Width: 100 m

Motion: 280 degrees

Damage Estimate: \$250000

F-Scale Rating: F3

Code: AH

Damage Survey: None

Spotter Reports: Yes

Other Documents:

Numerous newspaper articles

Synoptic analysis charts (Isobaric, frontal, 500mb)

Map of tornado track

Newark summary sheet

Tornado F-Scale Re-Assessment

Brad L. Rousseau

Tornado Data Production Assistant, Environment Canada

January 26th, 2011

Classification: Confirmed Tornado

Date: Saturday, May 12th, 1956

Location: Edgewater Beach – McGregor, Windsor – Essex – Chatham – Kent
Region

Original Assessment: F2

Re-Assessment: F3

F-Code: UH

Explanation of Assessment: Houses destroyed constitutes F3 rating but construction quality unknown therefore remained F3 and not F4

1. DATE AND TIME SAT MAY '12 1956 1745 EST
2. LOCATION OR PATH (attach map) EDGEWATER BEACH TO JUST BEYOND MCGREGOR
FROM, APPROX. 290° 06956-01
3. PATH LENGTH ☐ NOT KNOWN ☐ <1mi; ☐ 1-4mi; ☐ 5-10mi; ☐ 11-50mi; ☒ 18 LENGTH IF >50mi
4. PATH WIDTH 100 YDS 5. TORNADO PART OF SQUALL LINE? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN:
6. ANY UNUSUAL COLORATION? ☒ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN
7. ANY UNUSUAL SOUND? ☒ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN
8. IF ANSWER TO 6 OR 7 YES, ELABORATE; ⑥ SOMETIMES BLACK, SOMETIMES ORANGE
MISS ELLA BOTSFORD HEARD A DRUMMING NOISE AS THE BARN SHE WAS
⑦ IN WAS DESTROYED, EXCEPT FOR THE CONCRETE LOWER SECTION
9. LIST ANY ASSOCIATED PHENOMENA
(Such as hail, vivid lightning ONLY RAIN MENTIONED
heavy rain, no rain, etc.)
10. TOTAL DAMAGE ESTIMATE \$250,000 11. TOTAL DEATHS NONE
12. TOTAL INJURED 16 13. TOTAL HOMELESS 16?
14. LIST ALL REFERENCES WINDSOR STAR MAY 14 1956 AND OCT 13 1956
TORONTO STAR, MAY 14 1956
GLOBE AND MAIL, MAY 14 1956
15. SUMMARIZE REMARKS PERTAINING TO (a) FUNNEL; (b) INTERESTING OR CAPRICIOUS EVENTS.
① THE TORNADO'S FAMILIAR AND DARK FUNNEL WHIRLED ACROSS THE DETROIT RIVER INTO ESSEX COUNTY ABOUT 6:45 PM AT EDGEWATER BEACH AND MOVED S.E. TO JUST BEYOND MCGREGOR
WRECKAGE INCLUDED 4 HOMES DESTROYED, 14 BARNs DESTROYED OR DAMAGED
10 TOOL-MACHINE SHEDS DAMAGED OR DESTROYED; A SCHOOL ROOF DESTROYED
COUNTLESS GARAGES AND SMALL BUILDINGS TUMBLED, AND ONE WOODEN FARM SILO DESTROYED
GERALD MORRIS COUNTED AS MANY AS FIVE FUNNEL SHAPED CLOUDS JUST BEFORE THE TORNADO STRUCK THE MORRIS FARM
ANOTHER WITNESS SAW THE TORNADO CLOUD WHIP OUT OF THE SKY LIFTING THE WATER AT TURKEY CREEK "RIGHT INTO THE SKY"

AT THE HOME OF JOSEPH DAILAIRE ALL THE CARPETS ON THE LOWER FLOOR WERE FOUND ROLLED UP AT THE REAR OF THE HOUSE
A HOME DISAPPEARED LEAVING THE OWNER STILL SITTING IN THE KITCHEN CHAIR HE OCCUPIED WHEN THE HOUSE WAS STRUCK AND RATTLED TO PIECES.
IN DOZENS OF CASES WIND TOSSED BARN AND SHED TIMBERS CAME PELTING THROUGH WINDOWS OF HOUSES AND FAMILIES DUCKED TO AVOID INJURY.
AT THE MCKINNON FARM, IN A MATTER OF MINUTES THE ROOF WAS TORN FROM PART OF THE HOUSE AND THE BARN FLATTENED
A MANURE SPREADER WHICH HAD BEEN INSIDE THE BARN WAS LYING ABOUT 150' AWAY UPSIDE DOWN
AT THE HOME OF MC CLEMENT GIGNAC A CREAM SEPARATOR WHICH HAD BEEN BOLTED TO THE FLOOR WAS LYING IN THE BACKYARD 200' FROM THE HOUSE

1. DATE AND TIME SAT MAY 12 1956 1845 EDT
2. LOCATION OR PATH
(attach map)
3. PATH LENGTH ☐ NOT KNOWN ☐ <1mi; ☐ 1-4mi; ☐ 5-10mi; ☐ 11-50mi; ☐ LENGTH IF >50mi
4. PATH WIDTH 5. TORNADO PART OF SQUALL LINE? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN:
6. ANY UNUSUAL COLORATION? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN
7. ANY UNUSUAL SOUND? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN
8. IF ANSWER TO 6 OR 7 YES, ELABORATE;
9. LIST ANY ASSOCIATED PHENOMENA
(Such as hail, vivid lightning heavy rain, no rain, etc.)
10. TOTAL DAMAGE ESTIMATE \$ 11. TOTAL DEATHS
12. TOTAL INJURED 13. TOTAL HOMELESS
14. LIST ALL REFERENCES
15. SUMMARIZE REMARKS PERTAINING TO (a) FUNNEL; (b) INTERESTING OR CAPRICIOUS EVENTS.
- THE HOUSE OF MR HASWELL HAD SHELVES TORN OFF THE WALL FURNITURE WAS STREWN ABOUT AND EARLY SUNDAY MORNING MRS HASWELL WAS TRYING TO FIND THE OTHER HALF OF AN INSURANCE POLICY AROUND THE BACK YARD. IT SAYS WE'RE COVERED UNDER ITEMS 1 AND 2 BUT ITEMS ARE MISSING FROM THE REST OF THE POLICY SHE SAID.

WORKSHEET 0695601

ORIGIN x 17325300
 y 4667600

C 500 m
 Standard Error S_x

L 2000 m
 W 1000 m

LIFT-OFF x_1 17341600
 y_1 4663600

R 408 m
 Standard Error S_y

$$(x_1 - x) = 16300$$

$$(y - y_1) = 4000$$

DAMAGE LENGTH

$$L = [(x_1 - x)^2 + (y - y_1)^2]^{1/2}$$

$$= 16784$$

Standard Error $S_L = (S_x^2 + S_y^2)^{1/2}$

$$= 645 \text{ C}$$

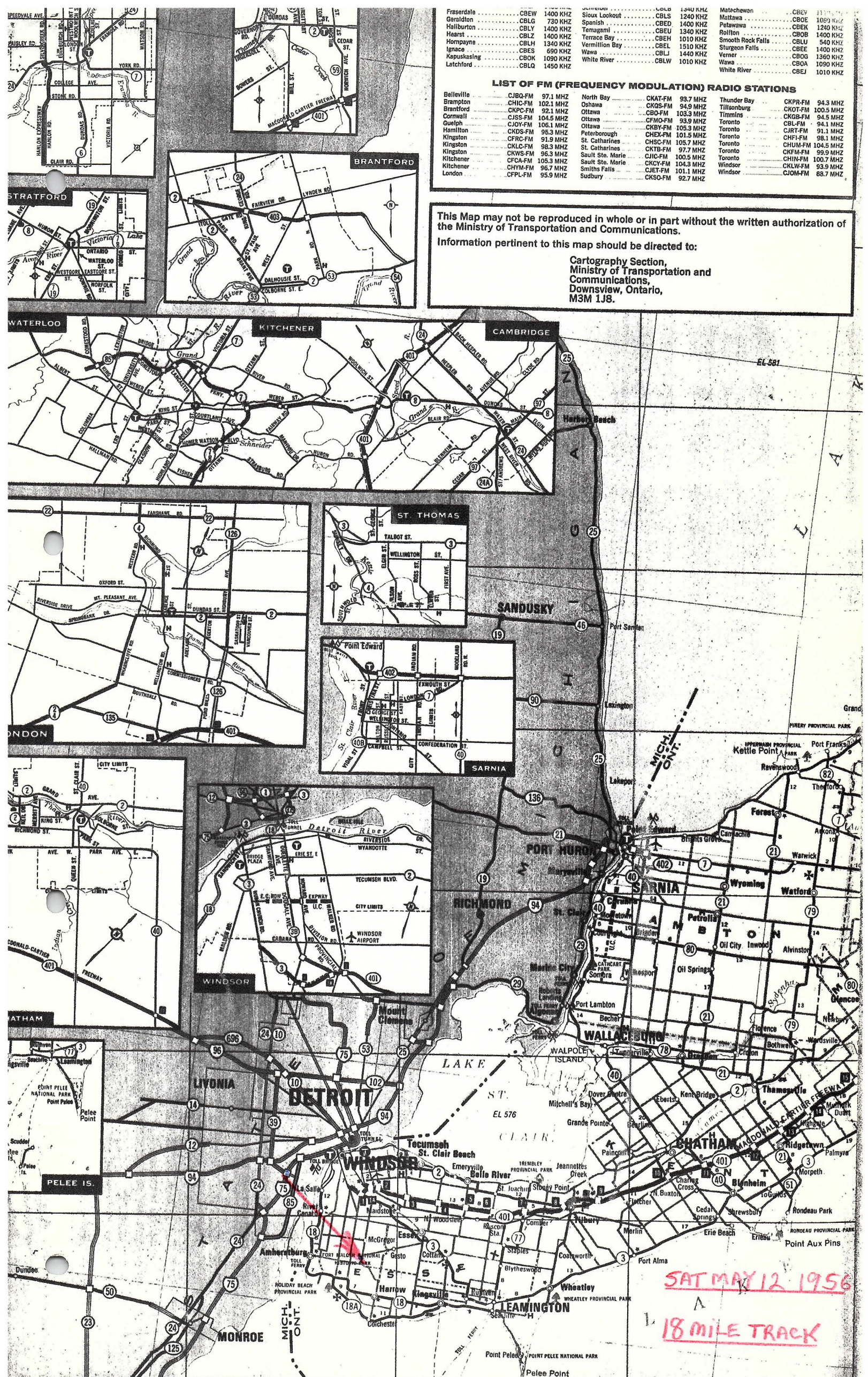
$$\beta = \frac{S_L}{57.29 L}$$

$$= 2^\circ$$

$$\alpha = \tan^{-1} \frac{|y - y_1|}{|x - x_1|} = 13.8^\circ$$

NE Quad $\phi = 90 - \alpha$
 NW Quad $\phi = 270 + \alpha$
 SW Quad $\phi = 270 - \alpha$

SE Quad $\phi = 90 + \alpha$
 $\phi = 284^\circ$



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Savage Twister Slams McGregor, Tramples Farms

MAY 14 1956

16 Injured, Toll \$250,000

As Wind Flattens Buildings

(See Other Pictures, Stories—Pages 3, 5, 7, 20, 21 and 37)

By TED DOUGLAS and ERNIE BEZAIRE
Star Staff Reporters

Cleanup crews were working today in the wake of a blasting tornado that skipped through Anderdon Township Saturday night, injuring 16 people, smashing houses, barns and sheds and causing damage estimated at \$250,000.

No one was killed.

The tornado's familiar and feared dark funnel whirled across the Detroit River into Essex County about 6:45 p.m.

The big, swirling vortex exploded barns into matchwood and ripped houses to pieces. In one case, a home disappeared, leaving the owner still sitting in the kitchen chair he occupied when the house was struck and rattled to pieces.

In case after case, heavy barn timbers tumbled, but cattle and other animals struggled out of the wreckage, unscathed.

Of the 16 injured, 14 were in one house when the big twister thundered down on Walker Rd., three miles south of McGregor and 16 miles south of Windsor. All the injured were struck in this one area, where the heavy damage took place.

The injured were:

Charles Root, Jr., 25, owner of the house in which 14 of the 16 persons were injured. He may have a fractured back.

Betty Root, 31, wife of Charles, chest injuries.

Catherine Jean Root, two months, daughter of Charles, shock.

Mary Alice Root, 3, daughter of Charles, minor injuries. She has been released from hospital.

Sidney, 4½, son of Charles, minor injuries. He was released from hospital.

Albert Farcela, 52, of 389 Church St., a relative of

See McGREGOR—Page 6

6:45 PM

SAT MAY 12 1956

The Windsor Star Library

By Windsor

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6:45pm

SAT MAY 12

1956

miles south of McGregor; home of Charles Root, three miles south of McGregor; home of Mrs. Colin Botsford, Concession 6, Anderson; and an unoccupied place three miles south of McGregor.

The tornado struck with most families around the dinner table. The twister hit Allan Park, Mich., then raced across the Detroit River at Edgewater Beach, three miles north of Amherstburg.

The sometimes black, sometimes orange vortex, cut a slash across Anderson from the northwest to the southeast of the township, blowing itself out just beyond McGregor.

Reeve Eugene Whalen of Anderson said: "It was miraculous. Thank God nobody was killed." Sunday, he surveyed the wreckage which included four homes destroyed; 14 barns destroyed or damaged; 10 tool-machine sheds damaged or destroyed; a school roof destroyed; countless garages and small buildings tumbled; and one wooden farm silo destroyed.

In dozens of cases, wind-tossed barn and shed timbers came pelting through windows of homes, and families ducked to avoid injury. Window damage was so extensive it is beyond estimate.

Barns, silos, implement sheds and chicken coops took a beating all through the area. On the farm of Grant and Gerald Morris near New Canaan the twister ripped a 60-by-38-foot barn, scattering it through the fields. Left exposed to the rain were the seed grain, 200 bushels of soy beans, 150 bushels of wheat and 100 bushels of oats.

Tarpaulins were placed over the grain by neighbors to keep it from getting wet and it was being transferred to another building nearby today.

Gerald Morris, who was looking out of a window in the basement when the twister struck, counted as many as five funnel-shaped clouds just before the tornado struck the Morris farm. The wind blew in a window of the house, and moved a partition between two rooms, knocking part of it down.

Across the road from the Morris farm, Nicholas Gardner's barn blew down on two cows and a tractor. Mr. Gardner was in Windsor at the time the tornado struck. He hurried home and about a quarter mile from his house, his car struck a transformer which was lying on a Hydro pole stretched across the road. The whole underpart of the car, frame and front end, was ripped out.

Stan Haswell and his wife, Martha, were in their home a few doors down the road when the tornado hit tearing shelves off the wall.

Mr. Haswell was cut about the head by flying glass. Furniture was strewn about and early Sunday morning Mrs. Haswell was trying to find the other half of an insurance policy around the back yard.

"It says we're covered under items one and two, but the items are missing from the rest of the policy," she said.

Swooping over the district the funnel-shaped cloud picked up a fishing store and shack near Turkey Creek and dumped them upside down in the water more than 100 feet from where they had been ripped from foundations.

Arthur Cooper of LaSalle

ter of minutes, the roof was torn from part of the house and the barn flattened. A manure spreader which had been inside the barn was lying about 150 feet away upside down.

On the farm of Alois Rada and John Zatorsky, the twister ripped the roof from two mushroom houses from which a crop was being harvested.

Metro Ostrowercha and his wife, Stella, estimated the tornado damage on their farm at \$25,000. From the back porch of Metro's home, a garage, a corn crib, a barn and a pig pen were flattened. Six head of cattle in the barn escaped. After it was all over, a sow who was separated from her litter was found in the middle of a field. The terrified animal lay along side of the back steps and refused to move.

In the house when the twister struck were Mr. and Mrs. Ostrowescha, their son, Pete, 17, 16-year-old Mike and Mary, 11. A grandson, Gary Ostrowercha, of 1030 Cadillac St., Windsor, was visiting at the Ostrowercha home. No one was hurt despite flying glass which smashed windows in the front of the house.

At the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clement Gignac, also on the New Canaan Road, the roof was ripped from the house, the barn levelled and an implement shed was strewn about. A summer kitchen was ripped from the side of the Gignac home and a cream separator which had been bolted to the floor was lying in the

Charles Root, was huddled on the floor, but the walls were gone.

At the home of Joseph Dallaire, next door to the Boismiers, all the carpets on the lower floor were found rolled up at the rear of the house. Considerable damage was done inside.

Mrs. Ada Botsford, 79, Concession 6, Anderson, was sitting in the living room of her home. Her son, Donald, and his wife and daughter were home from Milwaukee for Mother's Day. The twister uprooted a few cedars in the front yard, tore the front part of the house from the rear and moved it off the foundation about 12 feet.

Miss Ella Botsford, Mrs. Botsford's daughter, was in the barn looking after 11 head of cattle and a pony. She says she heard a drumming noise. When she came out of the barn the upper structure was scattered across the fields, and only the concrete lower section remained.

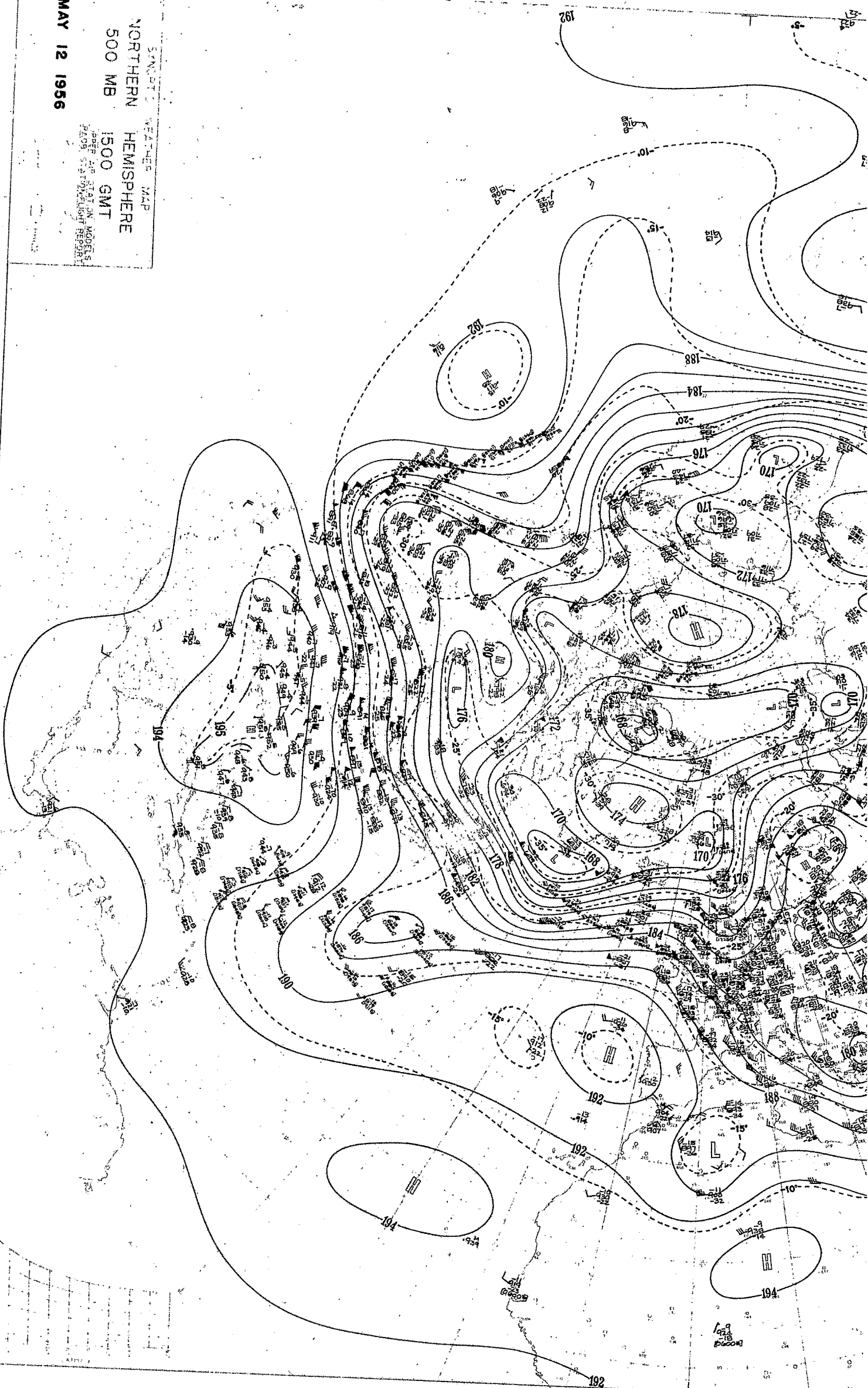
Next door, at the home of Chester Thrasher, where a wall was blown out of the barn, Mr. Thrasher and his four children took to the ditch in front of the house.

Also on Concession 6, only the foundation was left of the barn of William Thrasher. Some of the cement block wall at the rear of the barn was knocked out.

Mr. Thrasher estimated his loss at \$15,000 on the barn alone. The wind blew a chicken house over, moved another one 30 feet off the foundation, and levelled two silos.

SINOT
NORTHERN
500 MB
HEMISPHERE
1500 GMT

1500 GMT
 DEPT STATION MODEL'S
 PROB. STATENIGHT REPORT

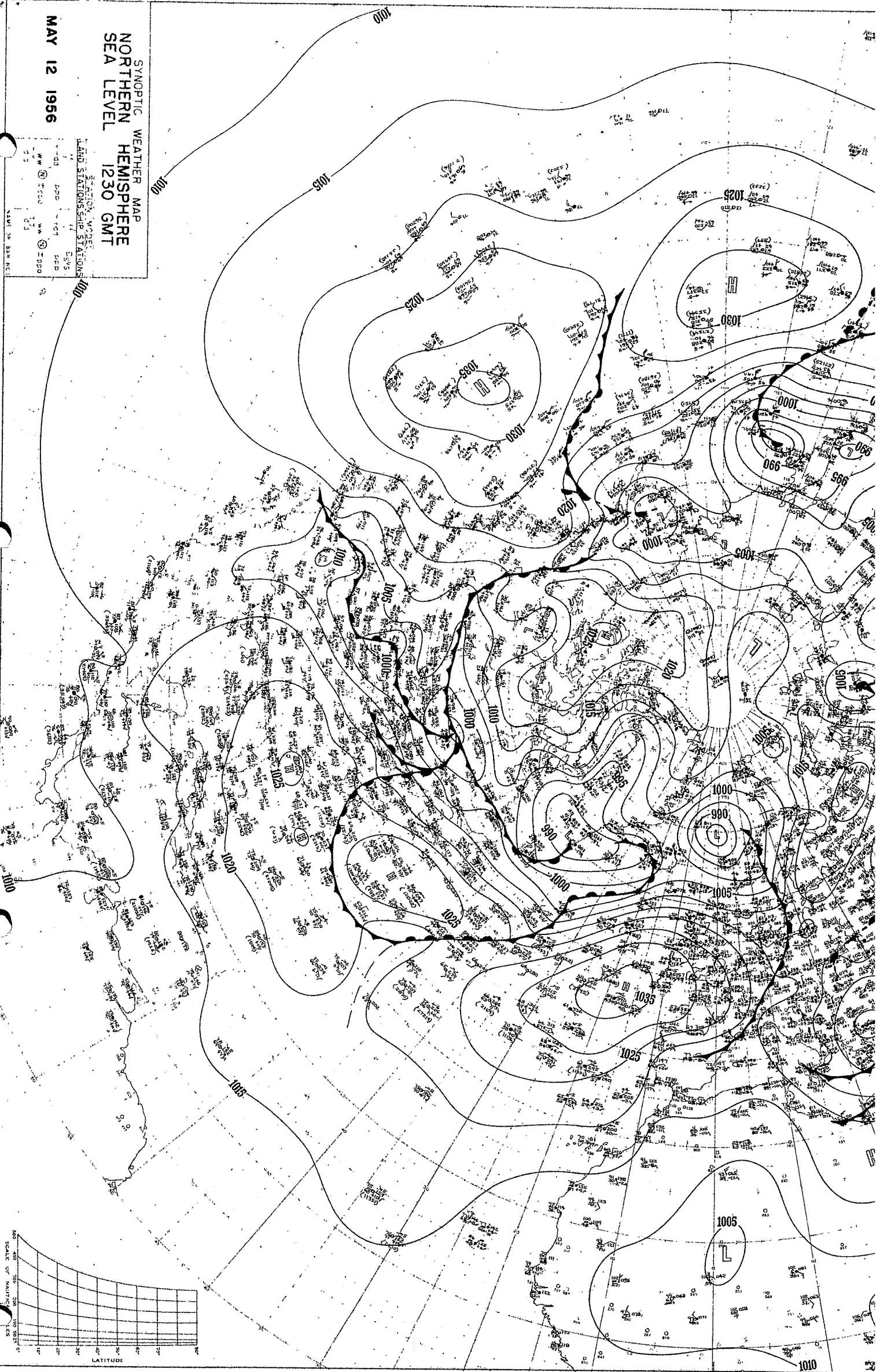


MAY 12 1956

SYNOPTIC WEATHER MAP
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
SEA LEVEL
1230 GMT

LAND STATIONSHIP STATIONS

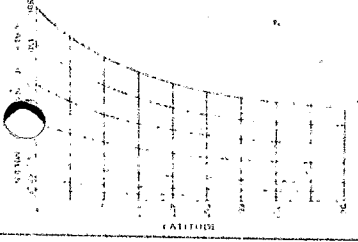
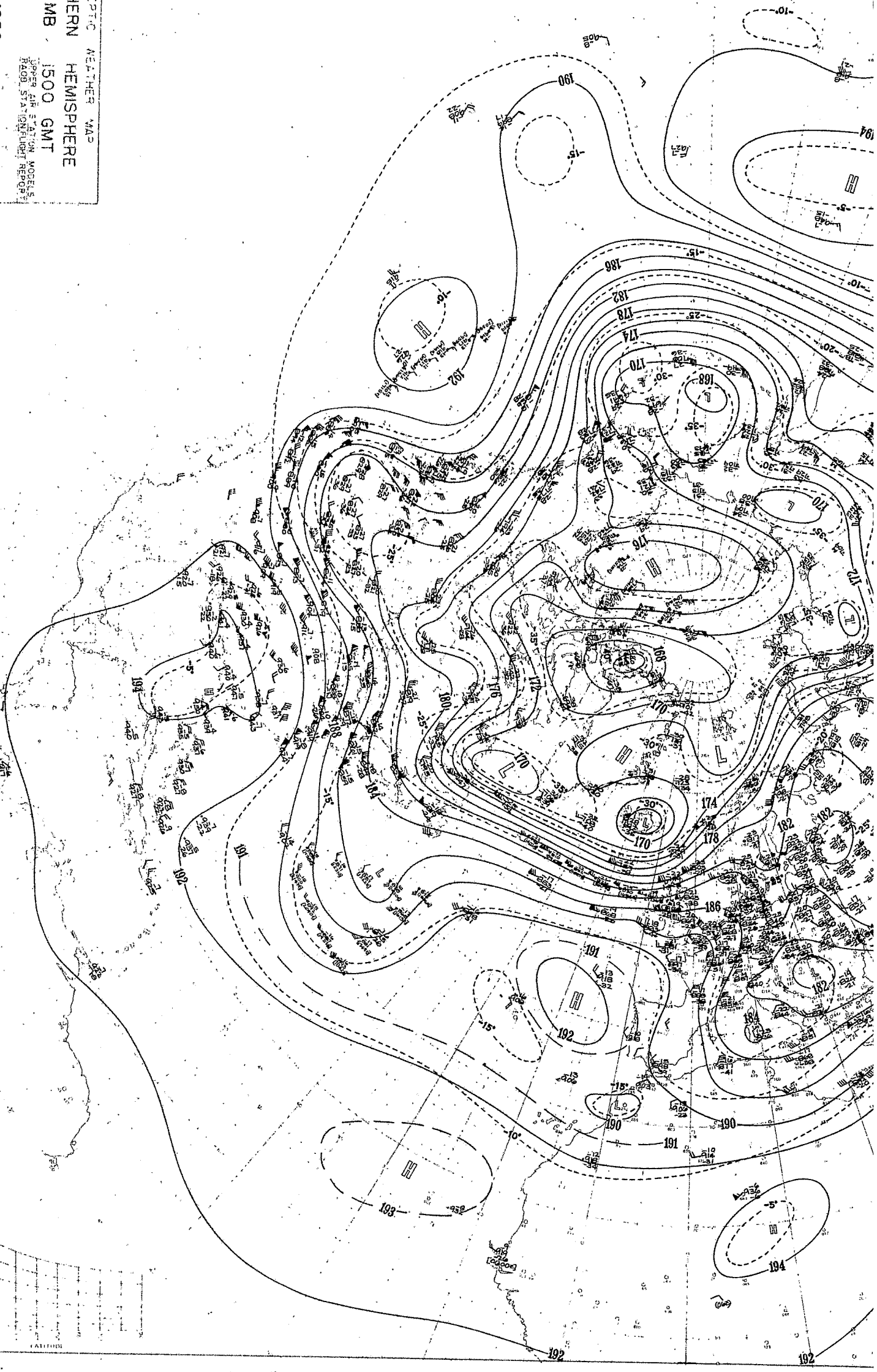
SYNOPTIC WEATHER MAP
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
SEA LEVEL
1230 GMT



MAY 13 1956

SYNOPTIC WEATHER MAP
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
500 MB
1500 GMT

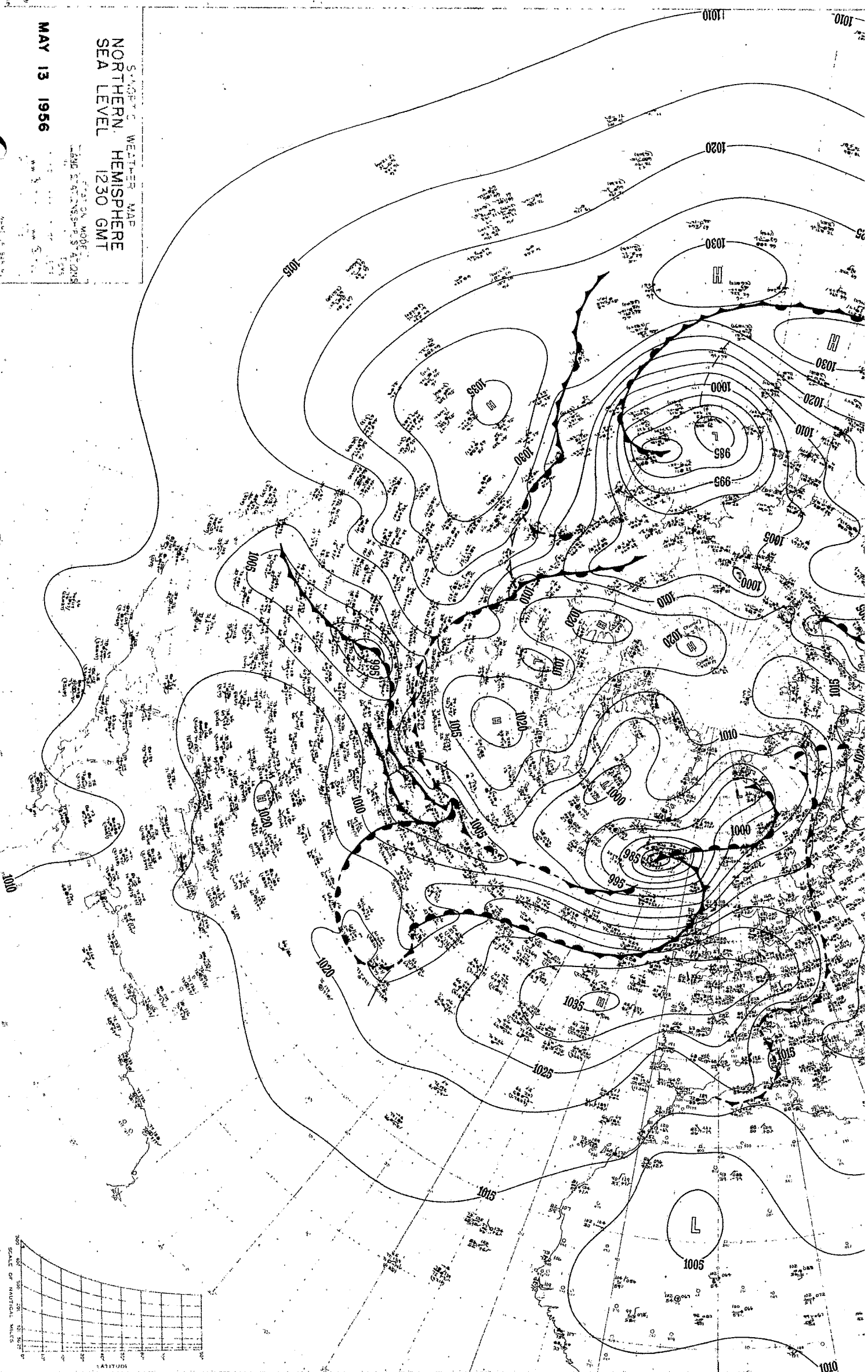
UPPER AIR STATION MODELS
FA08, STATION PLOT, REPORT



MAY 13 1956

STANDARD WEATHER MAP
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
SEA LEVEL 1230 GMT

STATION MODE
TWO STATIONS PL. ST. ALONG

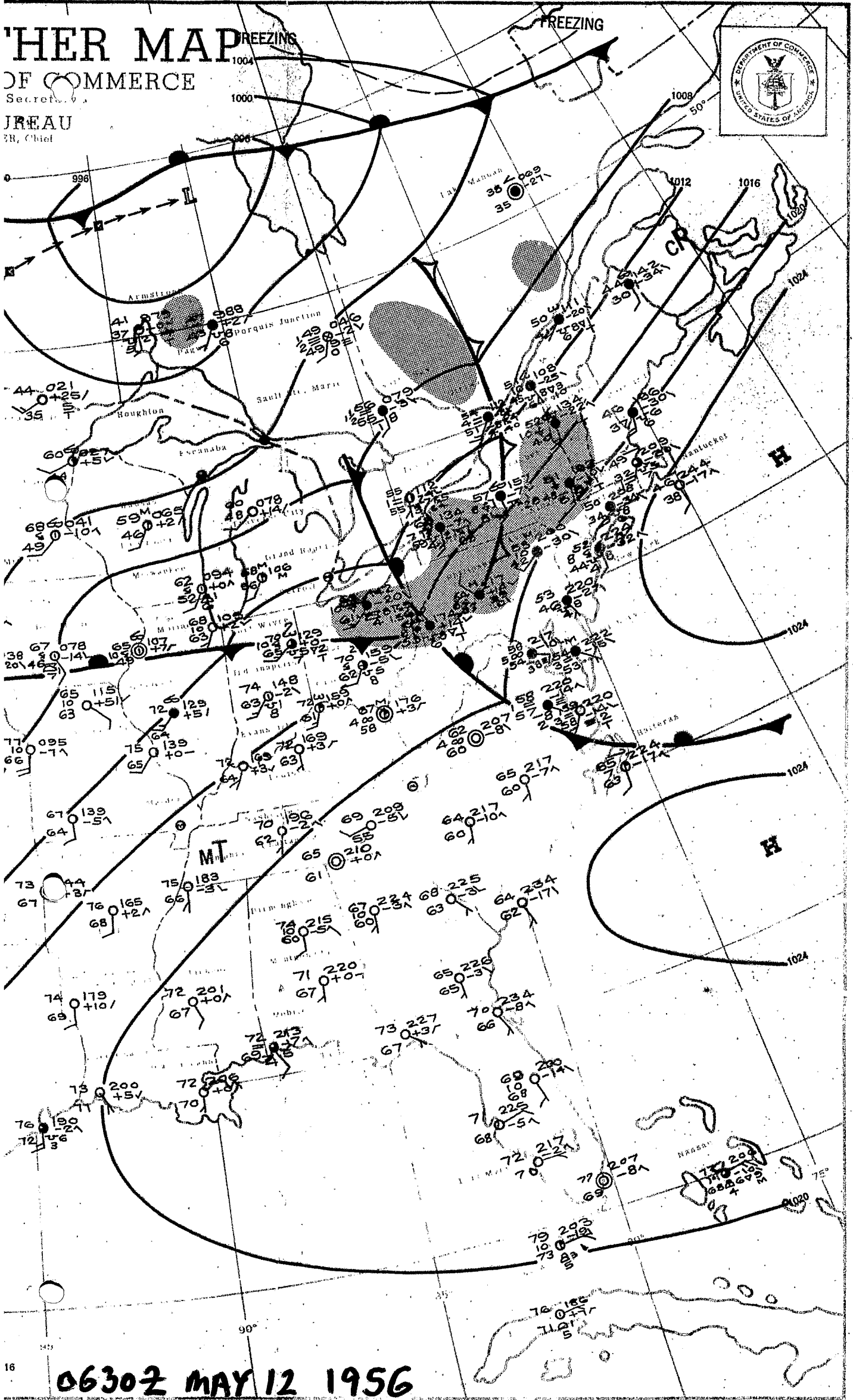
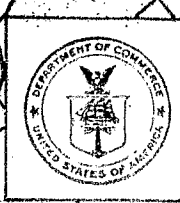


90° 85° 80° 75° 70° 65° 60° 55°

HER MAP

OF COMMERCE

SECRETARY
BUREAU
OF CHIEF



SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1956

0630Z MAY 12 1956

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND AMOUNTS

3-1-56

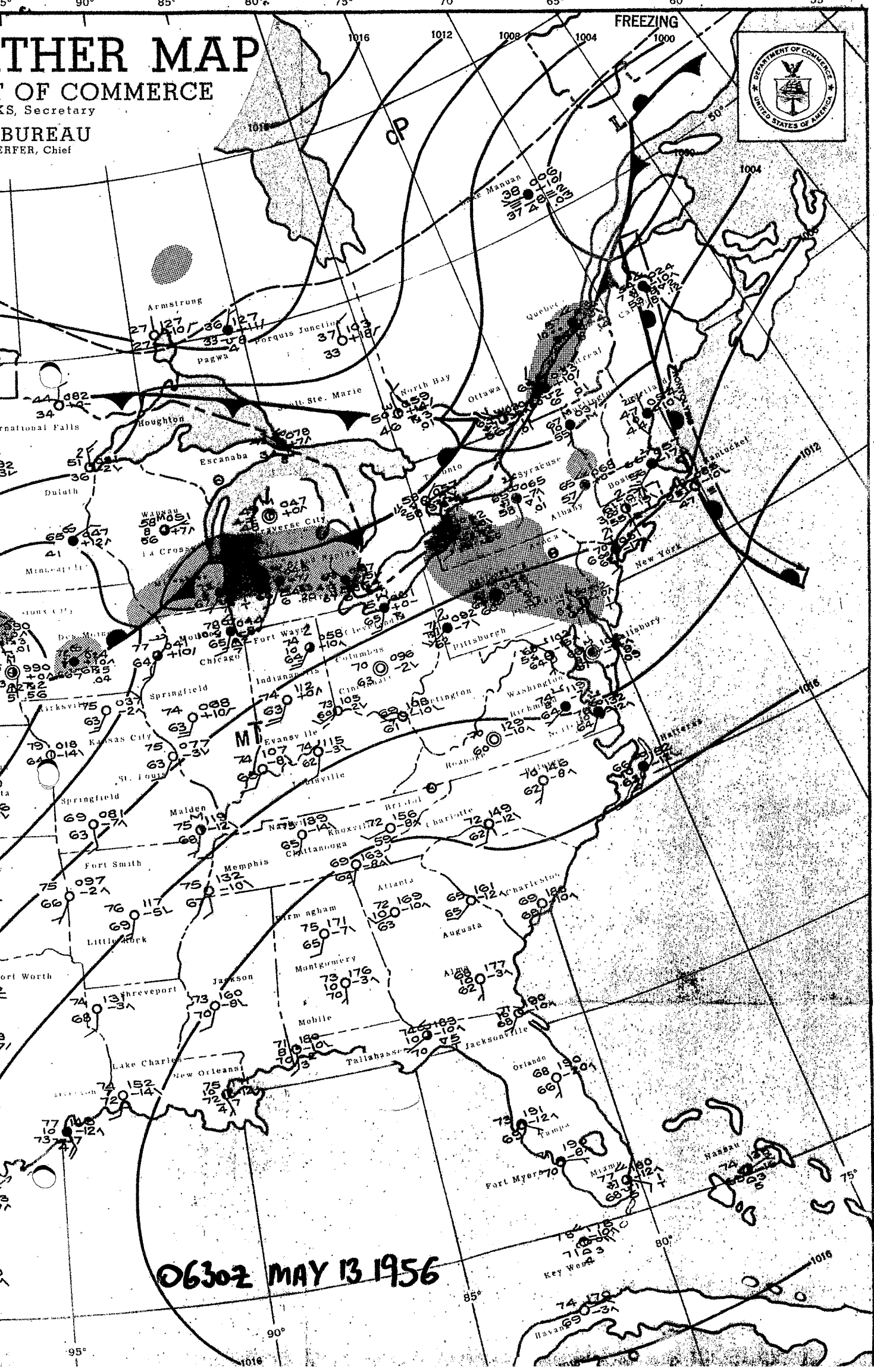
THE MAP

OF COMMERCE

U.S. Secretary

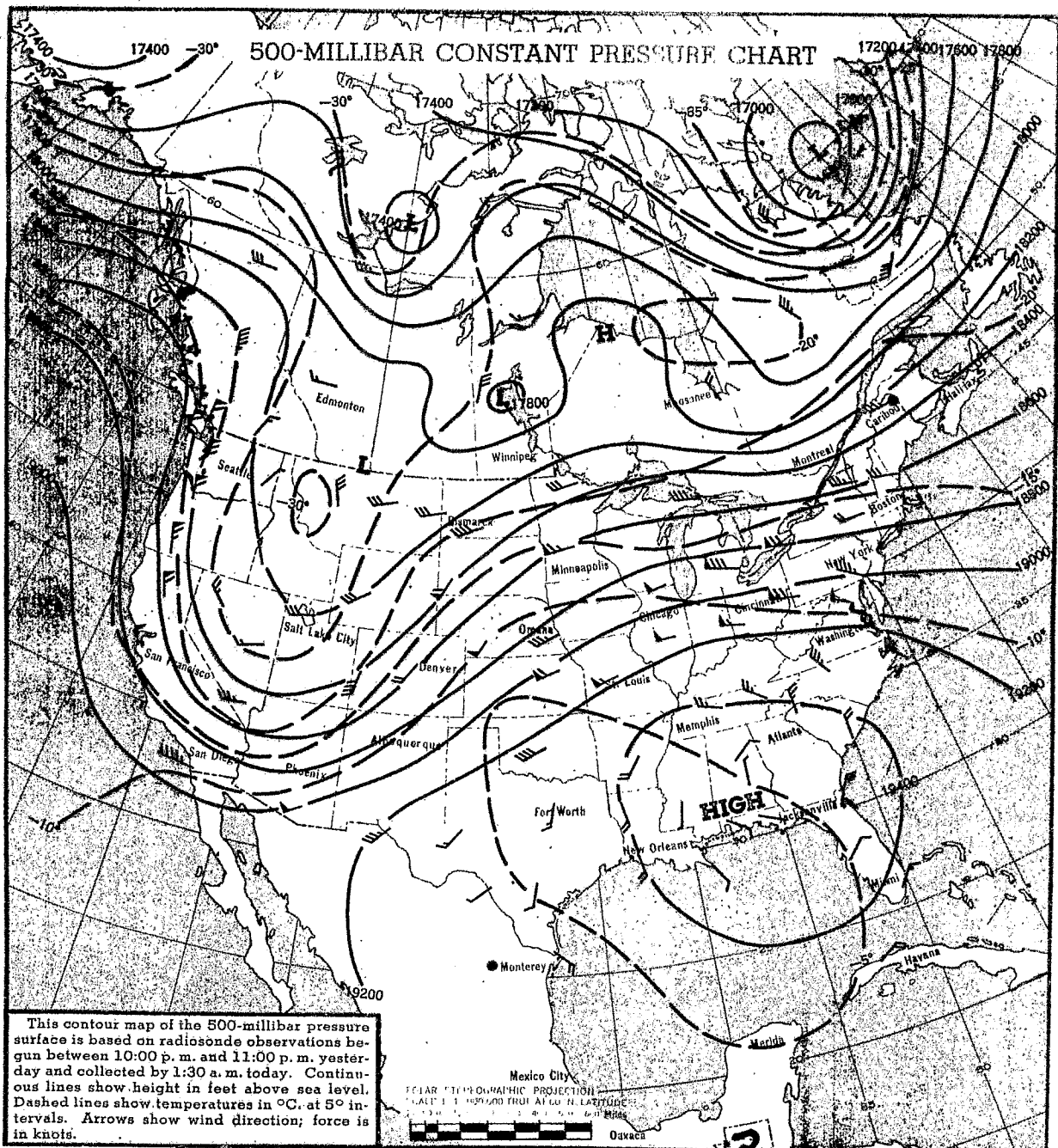
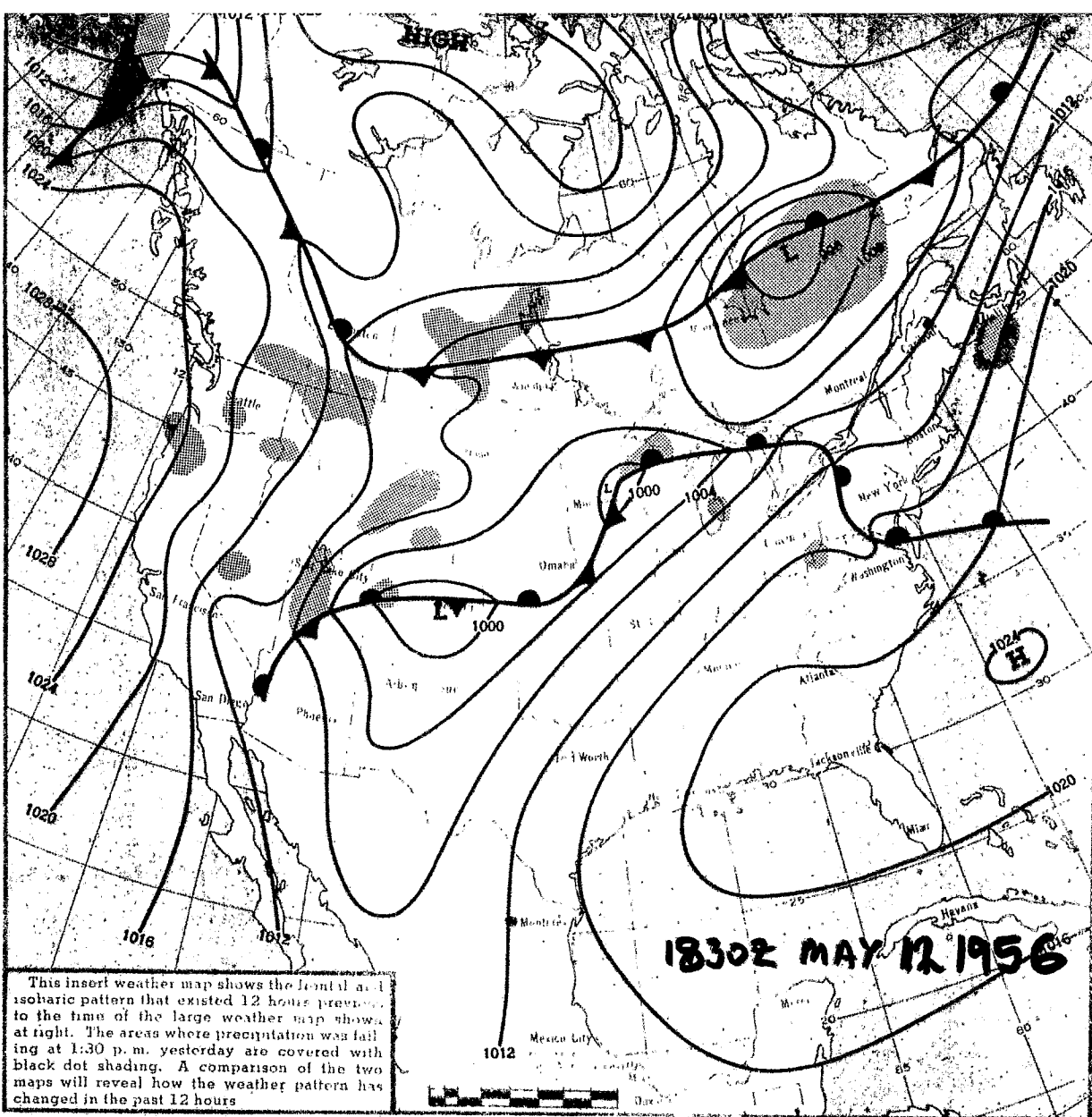
BUREAU

OFFICE, Chief



0630Z MAY 13 1956

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 1956



Wind speed in knots (1 knot = 1.15 mph)

Direction of wind blowing from the northwest

Temperature in degrees Fahrenheit

Total amount of clouds (sky completely covered)

Visibility (in miles)

Present state of weather (Clouds as slight snow in flakes)

Dewpoint in degrees Fahrenheit

Cloud type (Ears, stratatus and/or fractocumulus)

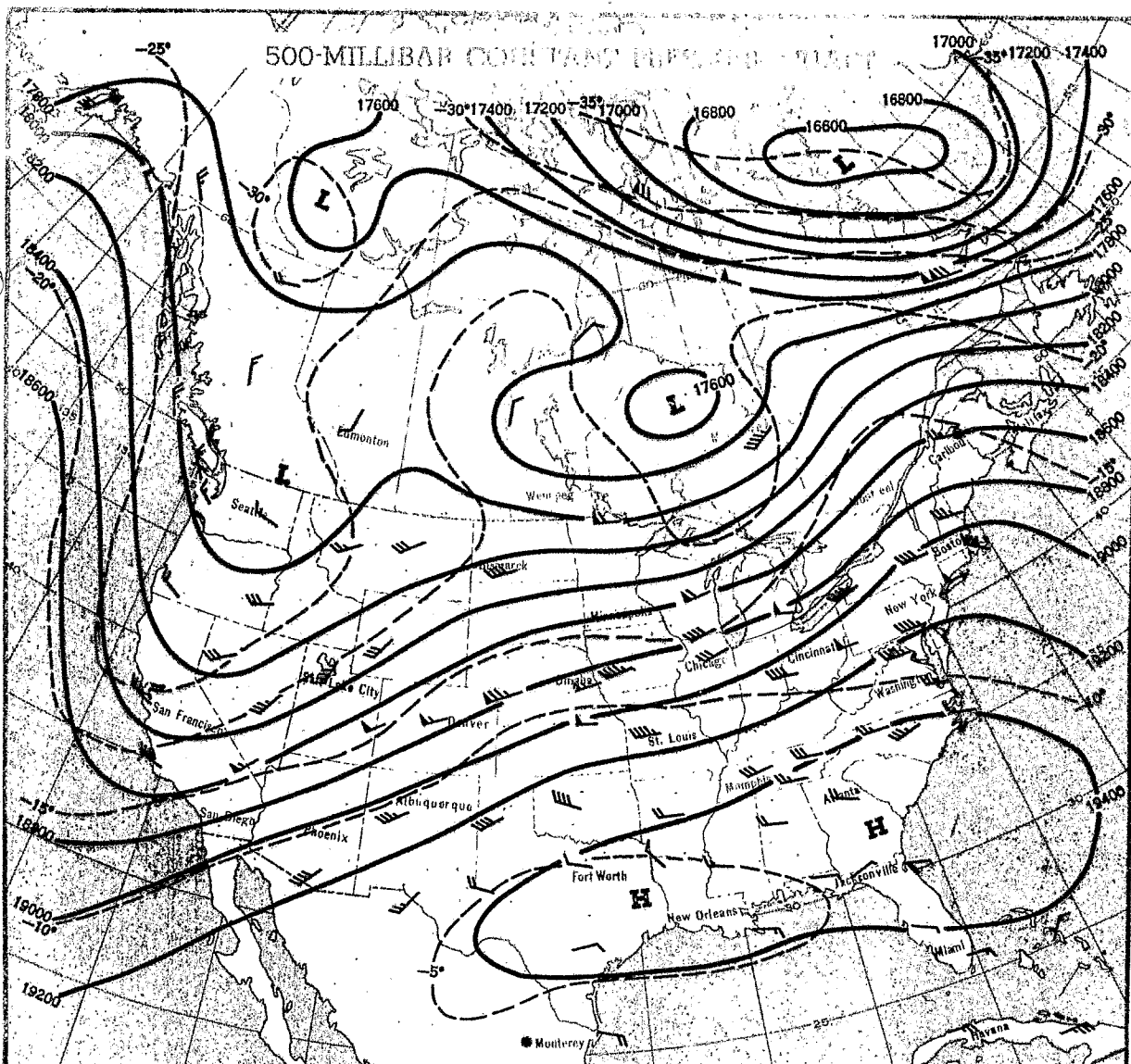
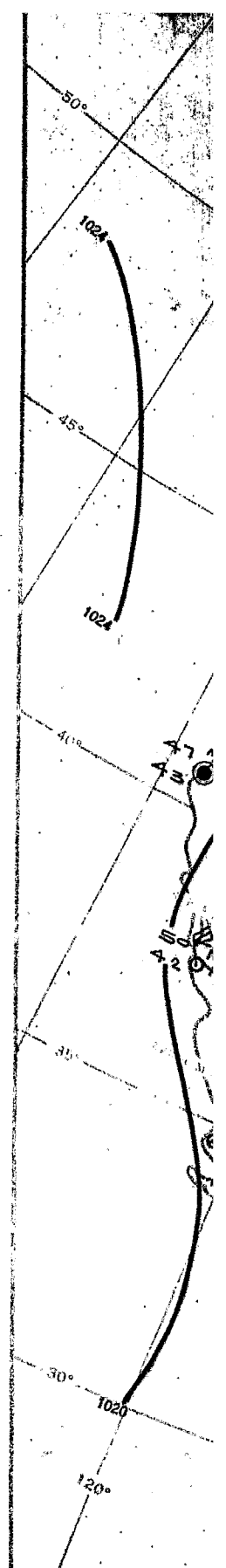
Height of cloud base (in feet)

WEATHER MAP FOR 1:30 P.M.



This insert weather map shows the frontal and baric pattern that existed 12 hours previous to the time of the large weather map shown at night. The areas where precipitation was falling at 1:30 p.m. yesterday are covered with black dot shading. A comparison of the two maps will reveal how the weather pattern has changed in the past 12 hours.

1012 1830Z MAY 11 1956



This contour map of the 500-millibar pressure surface is based on radiosonde observations begun between 10:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. yesterday and collected by 1:30 a.m. today. Continuous lines show height in feet above sea level. Dashed lines show temperatures in °C. at 50 in.

(03302) 0630Z MAY 12 1956

Wind speed in knots	ST
Direction in degrees	
Total amount of clouds (sky completely covered)	11
Visibility in miles	N
Present state of weather (Continuous slight snow in flakes)	WW
Dewpoint in degrees Fahrenheit	61
Cloud type (Protonotatus and/or fractocumulus)	C
Height of cloud base (300 to 999 feet)	h
	w
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