

# Heaviest For Month Since 1928

A five-inch Sunday snow gave the Shenandoah Valley a white blanket last night after the heaviest fall for an April in 30 years.

As the wind raised, there were reports of side roads being drifted partially shut.

The warming and colorful spring scene was transformed in a matter of hours into a Christmas setting many had longed for and did not see. Spring flowers were wrapped in lacy snow flakes and early vegetables were given a cold coating.

There was slush everywhere after the snow, which followed sleet Sunday morning, continued to fall. There was also moisture everywhere for the dry Shenandoah Valley area. The snow followed two days of showers.

While there was no opportunity for the boys to try the sleds they received for Christmas, the motorists who had bought snow tires before the past winter gave them a trial on lanes and other routes off the main roads.

## Highways Are Clear

All highways were clear for traffic and unless there is a freeze this morning motorists should be able to travel without difficulty. Those who have to ford streams may have some trouble as long-dormant streams were rising there refreshed by three days of precipitation, which soaked into the dry earth.

County Schools will be open today as usual, although school buses may be slowed in some areas by rising streams, Supt. Wilbur S. Pence said last night.

T. M. Spencer, resident engineer for the State Highway Department, said last night that snow plows were used during the afternoon to keep Route 33 clear over Shenandoah Mountain, to the west, and in Swift Run Gap, to the east. All motorists had been advised to use chains in these areas.

Other paved highways were covered with little snow but the State Police and the Highway Dept. sent warnings to all to drive with caution. So far as was learned here last night there were no traffic mishaps; there was less travel and the warnings were being observed.

## Ten Inches In 1928

April snows are not unusual so far as the Dale Enterprise weather station records show, but Sunday's was so unexpected after the summer like weather which saw the temperature rise to 84 degrees. On April 27-28, 1928, there were ten inches of snow with the roads drifting shut. This was the heaviest April snow recorded at Dale Enterprise in 60 years.

The weather station reported 1.65 inches precipitation Saturday and Sunday. This followed over a half inch on Friday. This is the

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# 5-Inch April Snow Covers

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most rainfall the rather parched Shenandoah Valley has enjoyed in a three-day period since August.

Agriculturists said last night that the snow and cold damage to fruit and vegetation should be far offset by the benefits.

Some varieties of peach trees in the Timberville area were in full bloom when the snow fell. Others were developing rapidly during the warm week. An orchardist said that it will require a few days to determine whether the snow coating around the blooms protected them from the sub-freezing temperature or hurt them.

Pears, in full bloom, may be harmed. Again, it may take a day or two to determine.

County Agent Ken Peterson said last night that the moisture of the past three days is "wonderful" for small grains and pastures. The moisture will help early gardens. These, however, may be damaged by the freeze.

"We were very dry, as every person knows," said Mr. Peterson. "The showers and the snow should give a boost to small grains and pastures. These crops have suffered from lack of moisture for many months. The moisture could not have come at a better time.

"The cold, however, may affect the fruits and the vegetables, but we cannot forecast the extent now."

## Mostly In Valley

The snow blanket apparently was confined to Shenandoah Valley and the Northern Virginia area, according to Associated Press dispatches.

There has been ample moisture in areas of the county in the past three days, judging by the reports from two other weather observers. Jeff Fultz, at Cedar Run, near Broadway, reported over three inches. Wallace Obaugh, at Rawley Springs, measured over two inches in the past three days. In both cases, the rainfall is now above normal for April.

The Dale Enterprise readings bring that station to above the April normal of 2.82 inches.

Last year's growing season was one of the most bountiful in memory. Since August, the rainfall has been below normal: cisterns have long been dry, springs and wells provide no more water and the smaller streams have no flow.

Sunday's snow was the heaviest since March 9 last year when a white blanket measured 13 inches. On April 10, last year, there was a mixture of snow, sleet and rain, just as there was yesterday.

There were only four inches of snow this winter. That fell on January 16. The rugged winter of 1957-58, however brought nearly 40 inches of snow with the March measurements of eight snowfalls measuring 25½ inches.

Farmers are asked to provide feed for birds while the snow is on the ground.