The 1849 Balvullich Ice Fall

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Large chunks of ice seem to have been falling from the sky for centuries. The star of these reports is a solid mass of ice weighing nearly a ton that fell during a thunderstorm on July 30, 1849, near Balvullich (or Balavulich), a farm about ten miles west of Inverness, Scotland. The Guinness Book of ...
A curious phenomenon occurred at the farm of Balvullich, on the estate of Ord, occupied by Mr Moffat, on the evening of Monday last. Immediately after one of the loudest peals of thunder heard there, a large and irregular-shaped mass of ice, reckoned to be nearly 20 feet in circumference, and of a proportionate thickness, fell near the farm-house. The weight of this large piece of ice could not be ascertained; but it is a most fortunate circumstance, that it did not fall on Mr Moffat's house, or it would have crushed it, and undoubtedly have caused the death of some of the inmates. No appearance whatever of either hail or snow was discernible in the surrounding district. – Scotsman, Aug. 11, 1849, quoted in The Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal, October 1849. The 1849 Balvullich Ice Fall. Why Did We Call Prince Charles Foolish and Immoral? Flat-Earth Anxieties Reflect Misplaced Priorities. A Doctoral Dissertation on a Geocentric Flat Earth. Why We Can't Acknowledge Progress. See Full Table of Contents. is a magazine published by the Center for Inquiry. On May 11, 1849 he boarded the steamer Panama in New York City along with about 200 fellow fortune hunters risking all on a gamble in California. Behind him he left a wife and child in Windham, NY near the Catskills. Mr. Shufelt reveals his motivation when he tells his cousin that: "I have left those that I love as my own life behind and risked everything and endured many hardships to get here. On May 11, 1849 Shufelt sailed out of New York harbor headed for the Isthmus of Panama (at the time a part of Columbia). Although he experienced a few days of seasickness, he describes the voyage as enjoyable. We pick up his story as he makes his way across the isthmus to the Pacific Ocean hoping to find passage on a ship bound for San Francisco.