The Louisville office of today’s National Weather Service was established on September 11, 1871 in the Custom House and Post Office at the corner of Third and Green (Liberty) Streets. Weather observations were taken by U.S. Army personnel working in the Signal Corps. Meteorological duties were given to the Signal Corps, in the War Department, because it was felt that military discipline would secure the greatest promptness, regularity, and accuracy in the required observations.

In the 1870s, official forecasts, which only went out to 24 hours in the future, were displayed in post offices, primarily for the benefit of farmers. In 1890, President Benjamin Harrison transferred the government’s weather program from the War Department to the Department of Agriculture, where it would remain for the next 50 years.

In 1940, President Franklin Roosevelt removed the U.S. Weather Bureau from the Department of Agriculture and gave it to the Department of Commerce, where it remains today. In 1970, the Bureau was renamed the National Weather Service.

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