15 July 1982

Director
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
Washington, D.C. 20226

Gentlemen;

In accordance with 27CFR 4.25 a (e) (2) and on behalf of the wine producers and grape growers of New England's South Coast, this petition is submitted to obtain designation of "NEW ENGLAND SOUTH COAST" as an approved viticultural area.

The history of the New England South Coast as a grape producing area dates back to 1632 when Governor John Winthrop was granted Governor's Island in Boston Harbor to produce wine grapes in exchange for a hogshead of wine yearly - a payment made by him and his heirs until 1683. In his book The Wines of America, Leon Adams refers to the history of wine-growing in New England, principally near the coast, as going back two centuries, but obscured by time and dry attitudes in American agriculture. None the less, both place names like Martha's Vineyard and the great seal of Connecticut with three grapevines bearing fruit symbolize the agricultural activities of early settlers.

Beyond this there is little question that one of the principal contributions to American viticulture was the development of the Concord grape in the town of that name within the New England South Coast area. Also in the 19th Century a commercial winery was located in Meriden, Connecticut. Later between 1900 and 1919 when Prohibition killed the industry, Devil's Foot Winery at Quonset Point, Rhode Island with 300 acres of grapes distributed wine as far West as Chicago.

With the increasing interest in wine in this country since World War II, and with the availability of modern technology to allow the high quality European and French hybrid grape vines to survive and produce, there has been a great resurgence of interest in wine growing and production in the area. As of 1982 there are more than 30 commercial plantings of wine grapes within the proposed New England South Coast with more than 200 acres planted and an additional 135 planned for the next two years. A total of eight bonded wineries are now operating within the proposed area with four additional vineyard owners now actively planning to become licensed.

Sakonnet Vineyards

West Main Rd., Little Compton Rhode Island 02837

401-635-4356

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms 15 July 1982

The New England South Coast region is defined by and contains that area shown on the United States Weather Bureau State Climatic Division Maps as the Coastal Climatic Divisions of Connecticut, Rhode Island (which has no other division) and Massachusetts. In this region the more continental climate of the rest of New England is moderated by its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, Long Island Sound, Narragansett Bay, Buzzard's Bay, Cape Cod Bay and Massachusetts Bay. Within the region which is uniformly Low Region I by the University of California at Davis scale, the following climatic conditions exist:

Mean Date of last Spring Frost is April 30 or before

Mean Date of first Fall Frost is October 20 or later

Mean Period of Freeze Free Period is 180 or more days

Mean Daily range of temperature within growing season is 20°F or less

Mean Annual Precipitation is 44 inches

Mean average days with temperatures of 90°F or above is 10 or less

Mean average days with temperatures 32°F or below is 120 or less

Average Daily temperatures in January is 30°F and in July 70°

Mean Total Heating degree days is 6000 or less

These climatic conditions place the New England South Coast region in a unique viticultural situation in Eastern and midWestern United States. Generally the growing season is longer and more uniform than either other adjacent areas of New England or the recognized viticultural areas of New York State. The closest comparison between the New England South Coast and European appelation areas is with Burgundy where average temperature during the growing season varies less than 2°F, solar radiation and heat summation are almost identical, and rainfall during the critical period of August and September is also equivalent. Because of these close similarities, a large proportion of the winegrowing activity within New England's South Coast is concentrating on or including substantial plantings of the wine

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grapes of the Burgundy region and Germany as well as the best of the French American hybrids. Little or no American varieties are being grown commercially.

The proposed New England South Coast viticultural area would have the following boundaries as defined by the climatically similar coastal areas of Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and are clearly marked on three accompanying U.S. Geological Survey Maps 1:250,000 scale of the Hartford, Providence and Boston Quadrangles NK 18-9, NK 19-7, and NK 19-4 respectively.

Beginning at the point where the Connecticut and New York borders meet on Long Island Sound, Northerly along the Connecticut New York border to the intersection within Fairfield County of the state border with Route I84; thence Easterly along Route I84 to the intersection of I84 with the New Haven, Hartford County line; thence generally Easterly along the New Haven, Hartford County line to the intersection with Middlesex County; thence generally Easterly along the Middlesex, Hartford County line to New London County; thence generally Northeasterly along the New London, Tolland County line to the intersection with Windham County; thence Easterly along the New London, Windham County line to the intersection with the Rhode Island State Line; thence Northerly along the Rhode Island, Connecticut state border to the intersection with Massachusetts; thence Easterly along the Rhode Island, Massachusett border to the intersection with Norfolk County; thence Northerly along the Norfolk, Worchester County border to the intersection with Route I495; thence Northerly along Route I495 to the intersection with the Middlesex, Essex County Line; thence generally Southeasterly along the Middlesex, Essex County line to the intersection with Suffolk County; and thence Southerly along Suffolk, Essex County line to the intersection with Massachusetts Bay; and finally along the water boundaries of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut to the point of beginning.

Sincerely,

SAKONNET VINEYARDS

James A. Mitchell

James A. Mitchell

17 September 1982

Mr Charles Bacon
Research and Regulation Branch
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
Washington, D.C. 20226

Dear Mr Bacon;

This letter responds to your questions on our petition of July 15, 1982 to obtain designation of "NEW ENGLAND SOUTH COAST" as an approved viticultural area. Your most substantive question has to do with reference in literature to the term" New England South Coast" as a recognized area. While this term is descriptive and understandable, it does lack common usage. Therefore, we would like to offer as an alternative for the name to designate the area covered by the petition the term "SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND COAST". Southern New England is a term in very common usage refering to the Southern tier of New England States including Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts. It is a common road map reference (for example the "AAA Map of Southern New England") as well as a recognized political subregion. As a viticultural area "Southern New England Coast" would contain the area defined by the US Weather Bureau State Climatic Division Maps as the Coastal Climatic Divisions of Connecticut, Rhode Island (which has no other divisions) and Massachusetts. A copy of a portion of this map containing the States in question is attached to this letter.

If this change in terminology for the proposed viticultural area is acceptable to you the original petition can stand as it is with the only change being in the name. Areas, boundaries and boundary descriptions are unchanged.

In the event the Bureau feels that the proposed area "Southern New England Coast" is too broad as petitioned, we are prepared to submit a further revision which would delineate a slightly smaller area to be known as "SOUTHEASTERN NEW ENGLAND". Similar to "Southern New England Coast" it would contain

Sakonnet Vineyards
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Mr Charles Bacon 17 September 1982

the majority of existing vineyard plantings and include all of the current area west to Stonington, Connecticut but would exclude the remainder of the Connecticut coast. There is considerable precedence for this term including a report by New England River Basins Commission which precisely defines the area covered.

I think on balance we would favor sticking to the original petition with the title changed to "Southern New England Coast" which is based on climatic similarities rather than the alternate proposal of "Southeastern New England" simply because we believe the term is more meaningful to more people at this time. However, we will be pleased to accept the judgement of the Bureau. There is little question that "Southeastern New England" is more compact and with its 4400 square miles is in keeping with the size of the Hudson Valley Region which you approved recently. In this event we will submit the required evidence and a revised boundary description.

With respect to your question on the growing degree day reference, for viticultural purposes this is defined as the summation of average daily temperatures at a reporting station minus 50°F over the growing season which is defined as May through October. For a rough approximation it is permissible to use the monthly average temperature minus 50 times the number of days in the month. ← for the month in question For a handy reference on major reporting stations the Climatic Atlas of the United States, US Department of Commerce, Published June 1968 contains a number of maps of Normal Daily Maximum, Average Minimum and Extreme Temperatures tabulated by month. Copies of some of these maps are attached to this letter.

I believe this answers the questions rais ed during our telephone conversation, but we will be happy to provide further information as requested.

Most sincerely,

SAKONNET VINEYARDS

James A. Mitchell

James A. Mitchell

27 November 1982

Mr Charles Bacon
Research and Regulation Branch
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
Washington, D.C. 20226

Re: New England South Coast Viticultural
Area Application dated July 15, 1982
First Revision September 17, 1982

Dear Mr Bacon;

Confirming our recent telephone conversation we concur that it may make more sense to further restrict the proposed viticultural area to an appelation called "Southeastern New England". Such an appelation would include a small portion of east coastal Connecticut, most of Rhode Island excluding the highland areas of Providence County, and southeastern Massachusetts south of Boston and east of Rhode Island including Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket and the Elizabeth Islands.

I have sketched the proposed boundaries on an outline map of New England as we discussed and am including this for your use. On this map I have noted existing wineries, those that we know about in various stages of preparing permit applications, and some of the larger vineyard plantings that currently exist without being directly attached to a winery. You will note that almost all of these lie within a 40-mile radius centered on Little Compton.

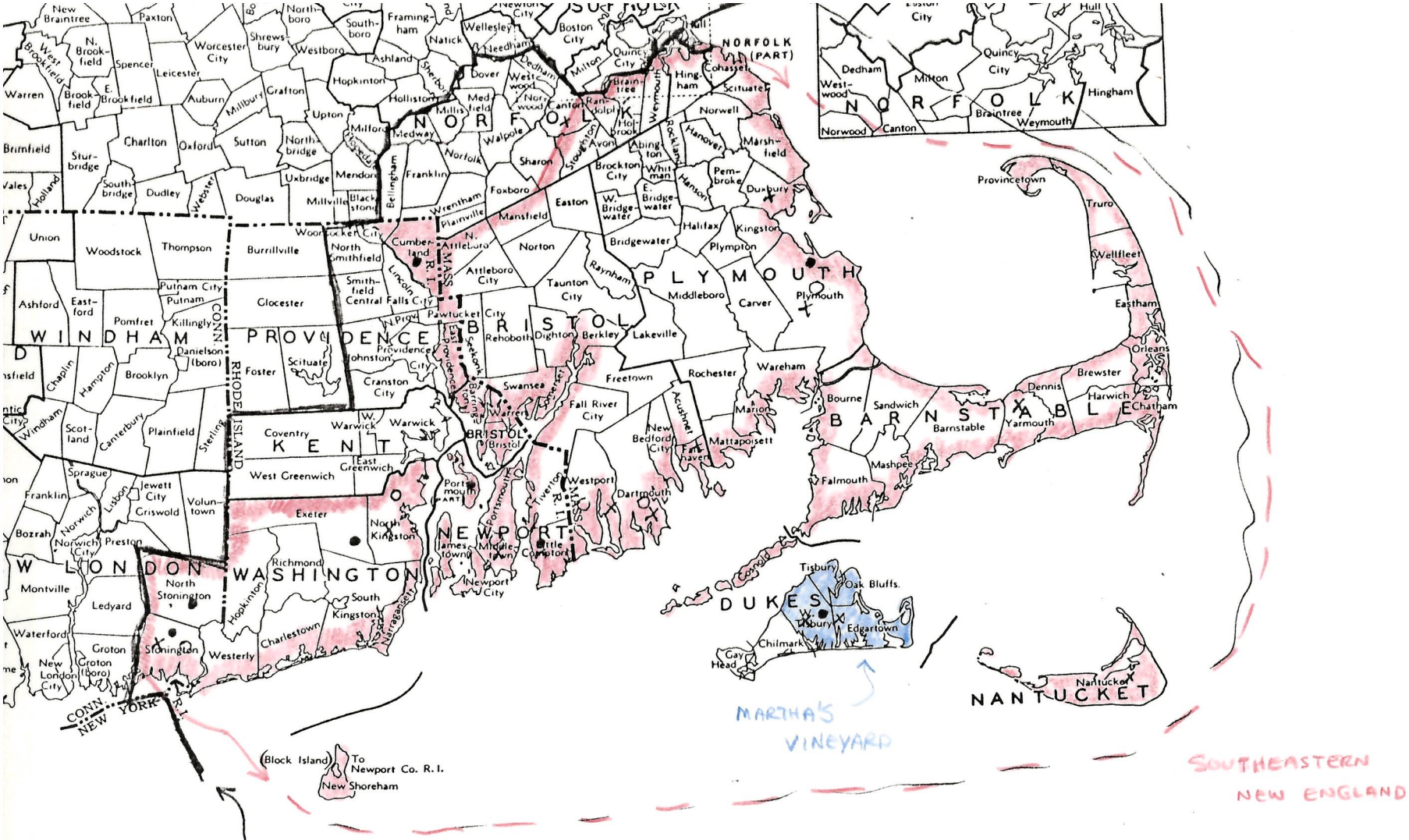
I hope this will help. Sincerely,

SAKONNET VINEYARDS

James A. Mitchell

James A. Mitchell

Sakonnet Vineyards
West Main Rd., Little Compton Rhode Island 02837
401-635-4356



Revised Border for proposed "Southeastern New England" Viticultural Area

● Indicates Existing Winery & Vineyard

o Indicates Winery in planning stage

x Indicates Vineyard of commercial or semi commercial scale

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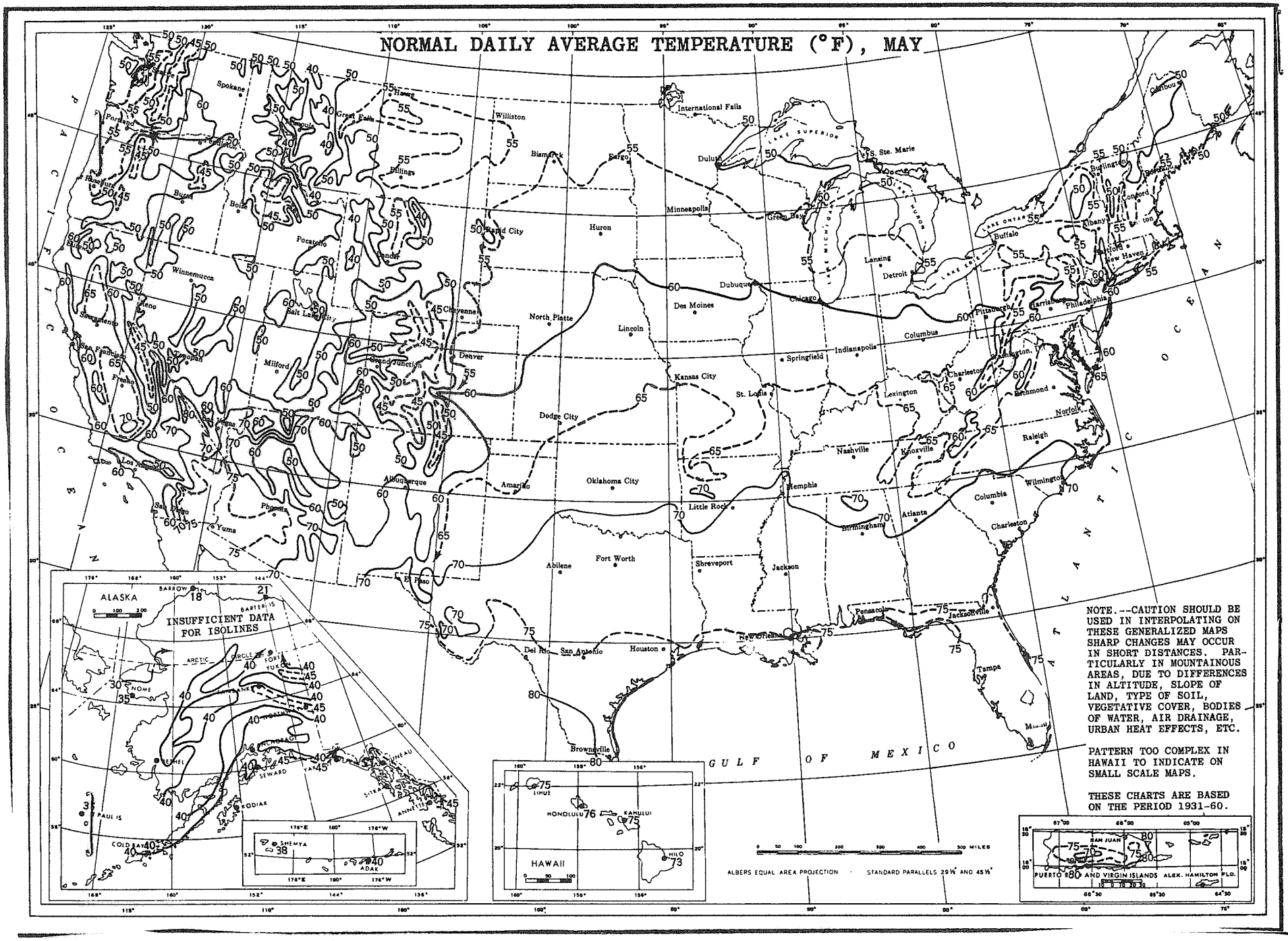
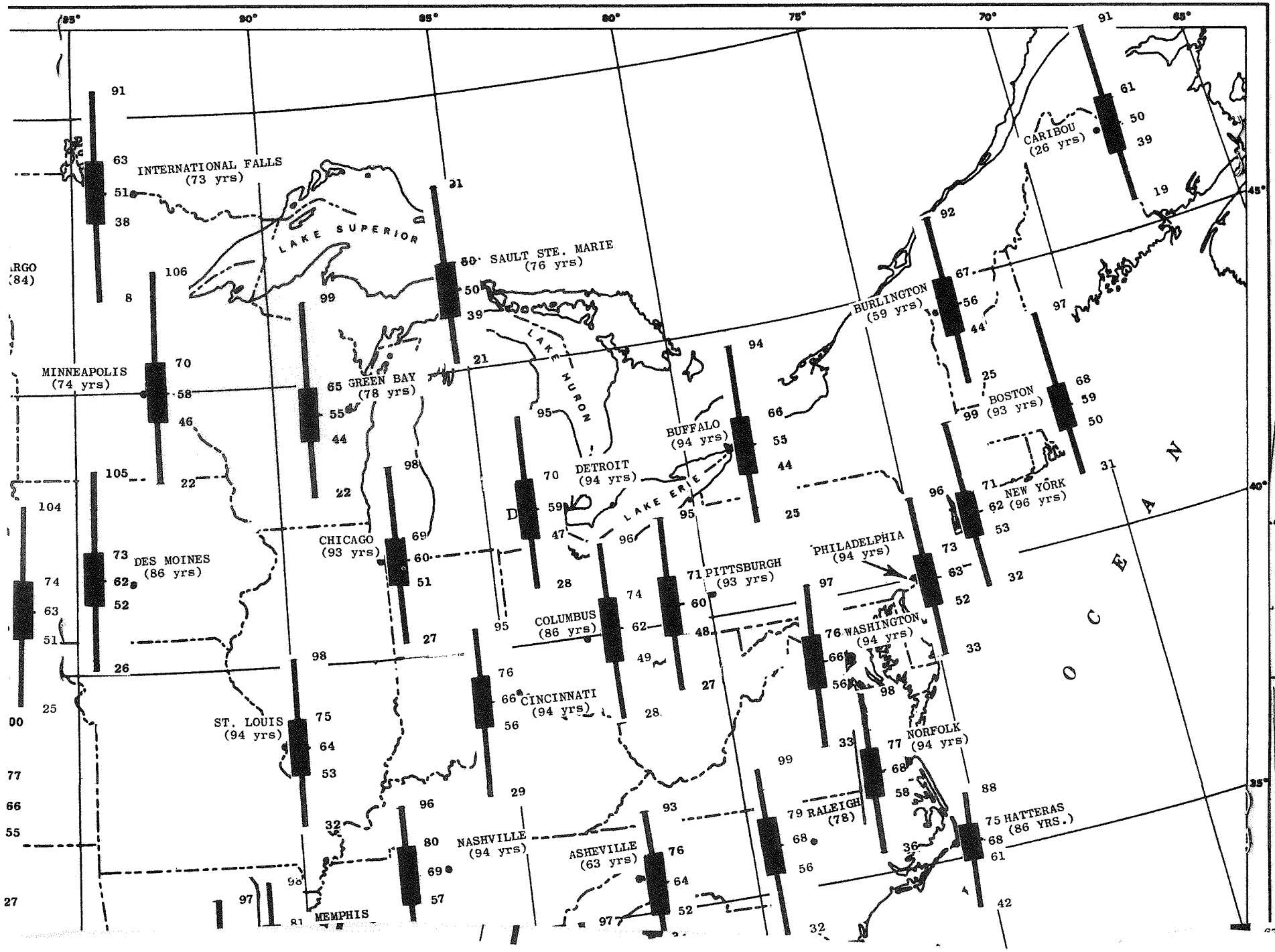
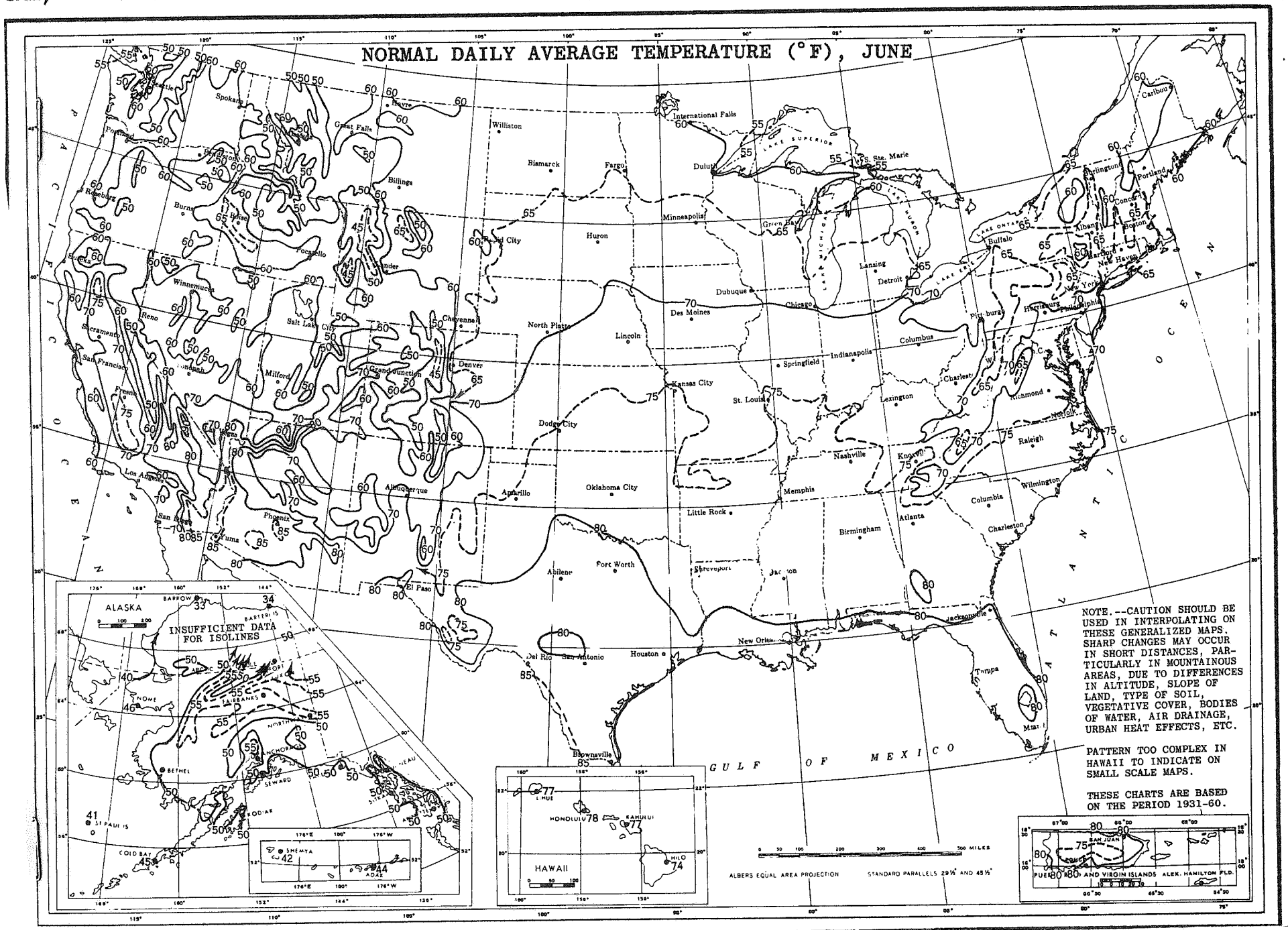
GE, AND RANGE OF TEMPERATURE (°F), MAY



MUM, AND EXTREME TEMPERATURES (°F), MAY



GE, AND RANGE OF TEMPERATURE (°F), JUNE



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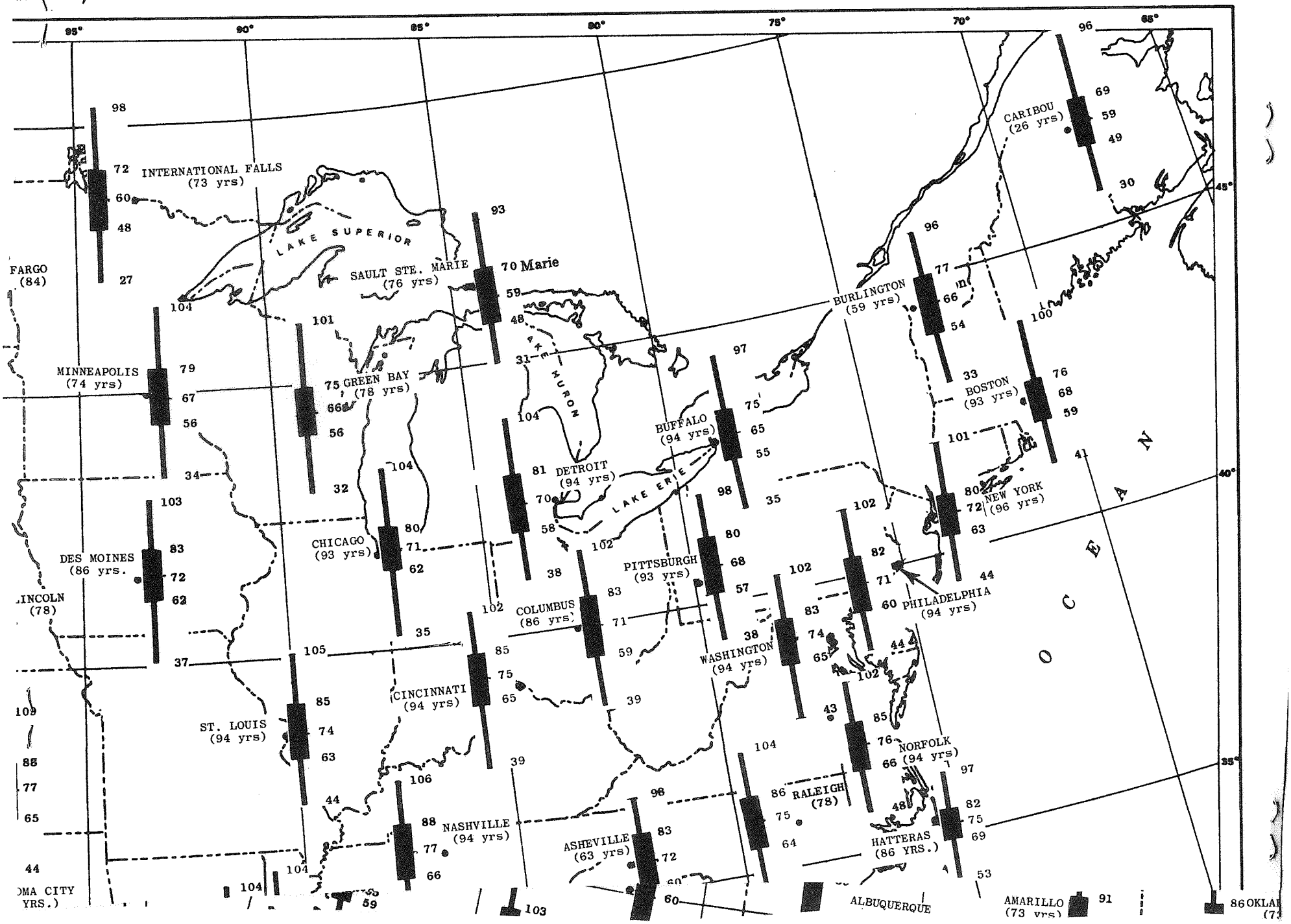
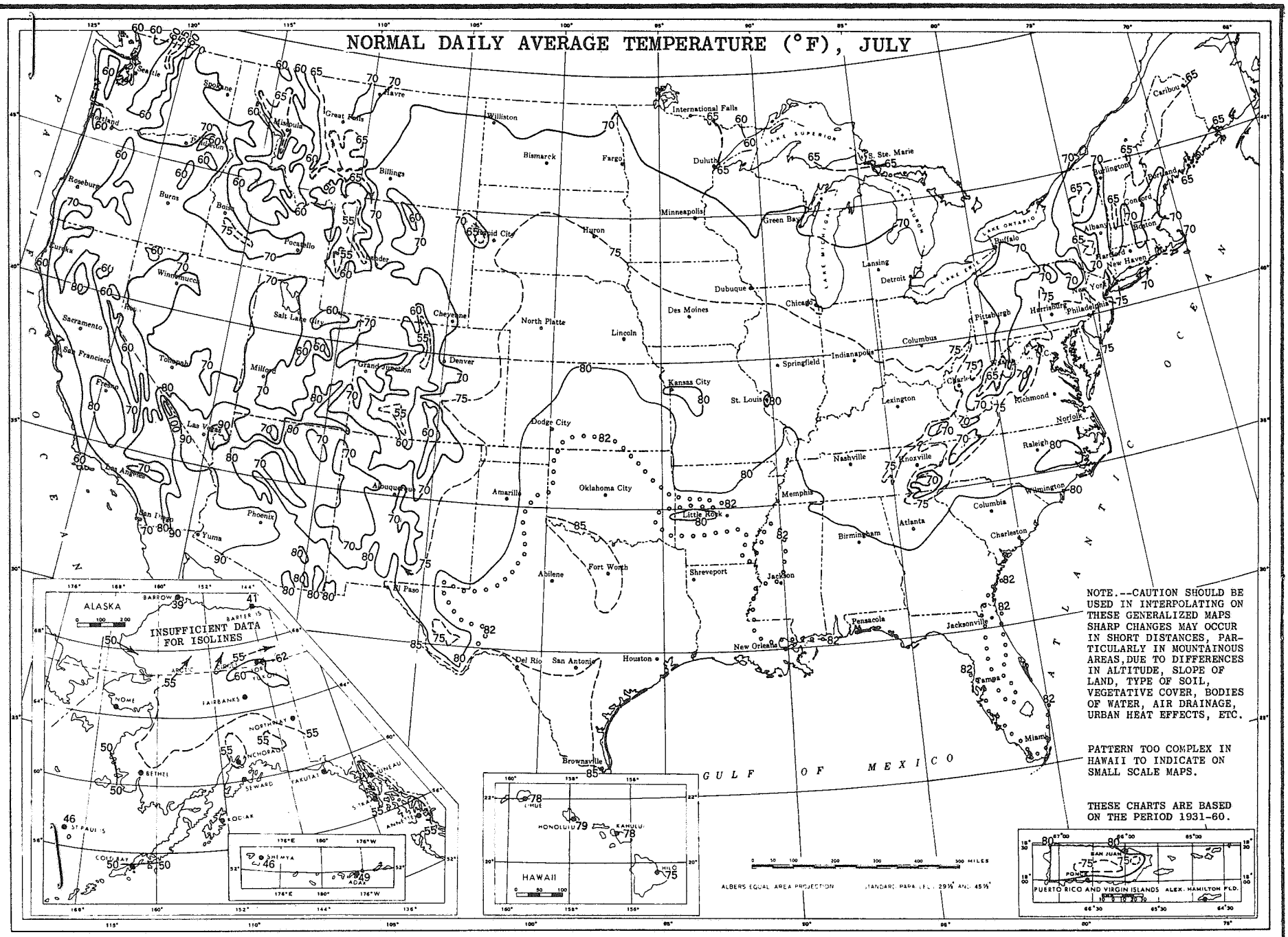
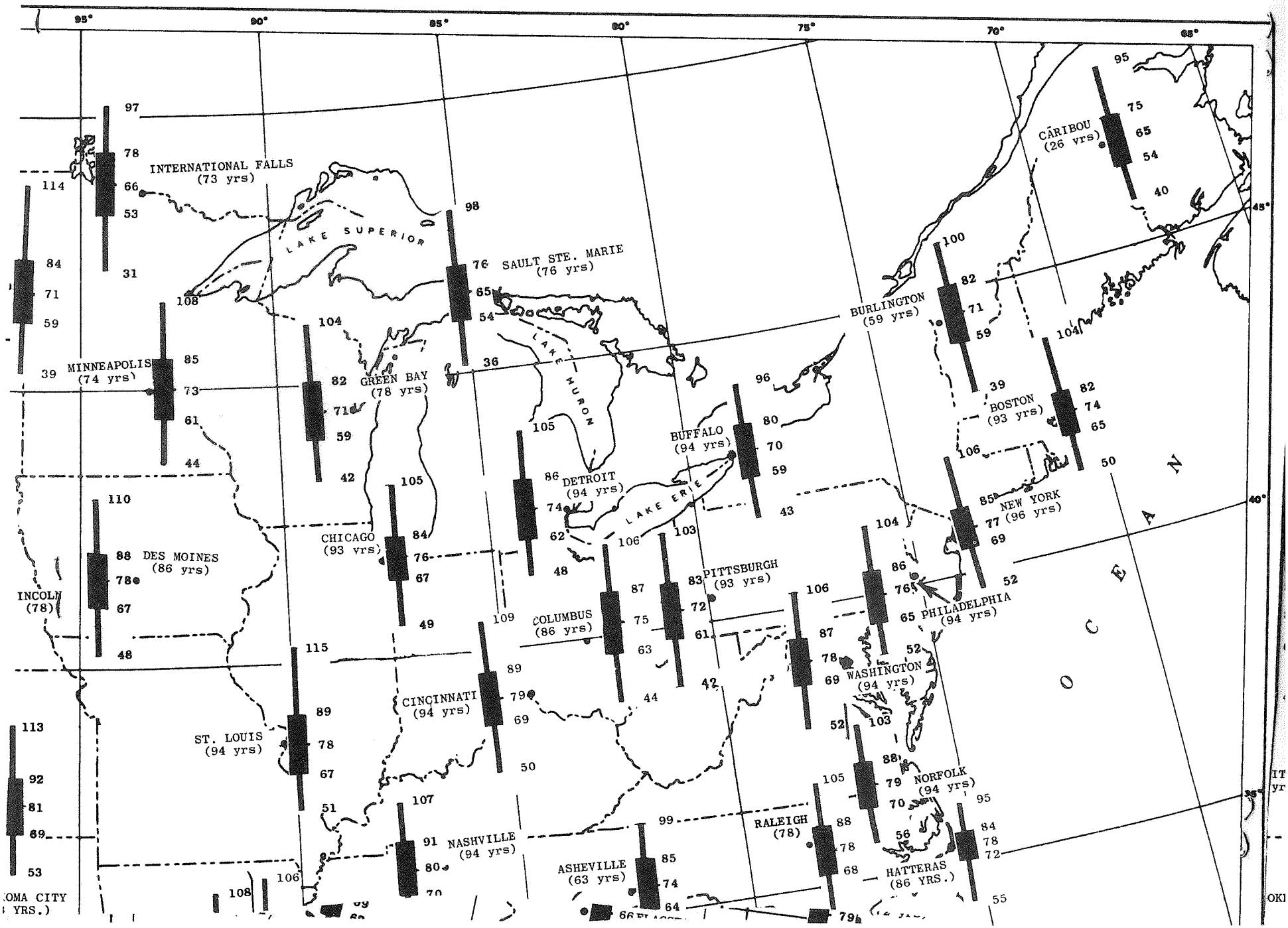


GE, AND RANGE OF TEMPERATURE (°F), JULY

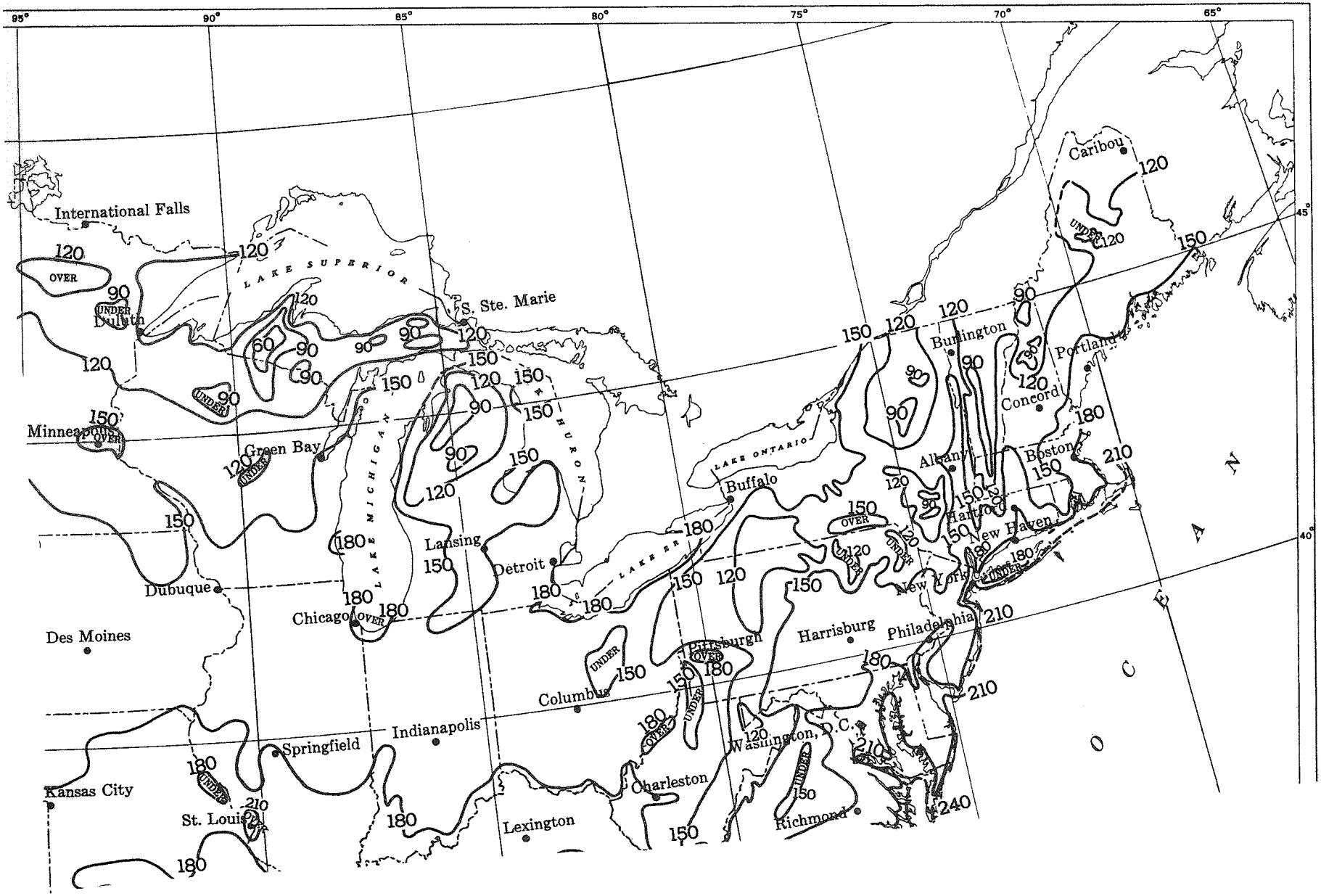


MUM, AND EXTREME TEMPERATURES (°F), JULY

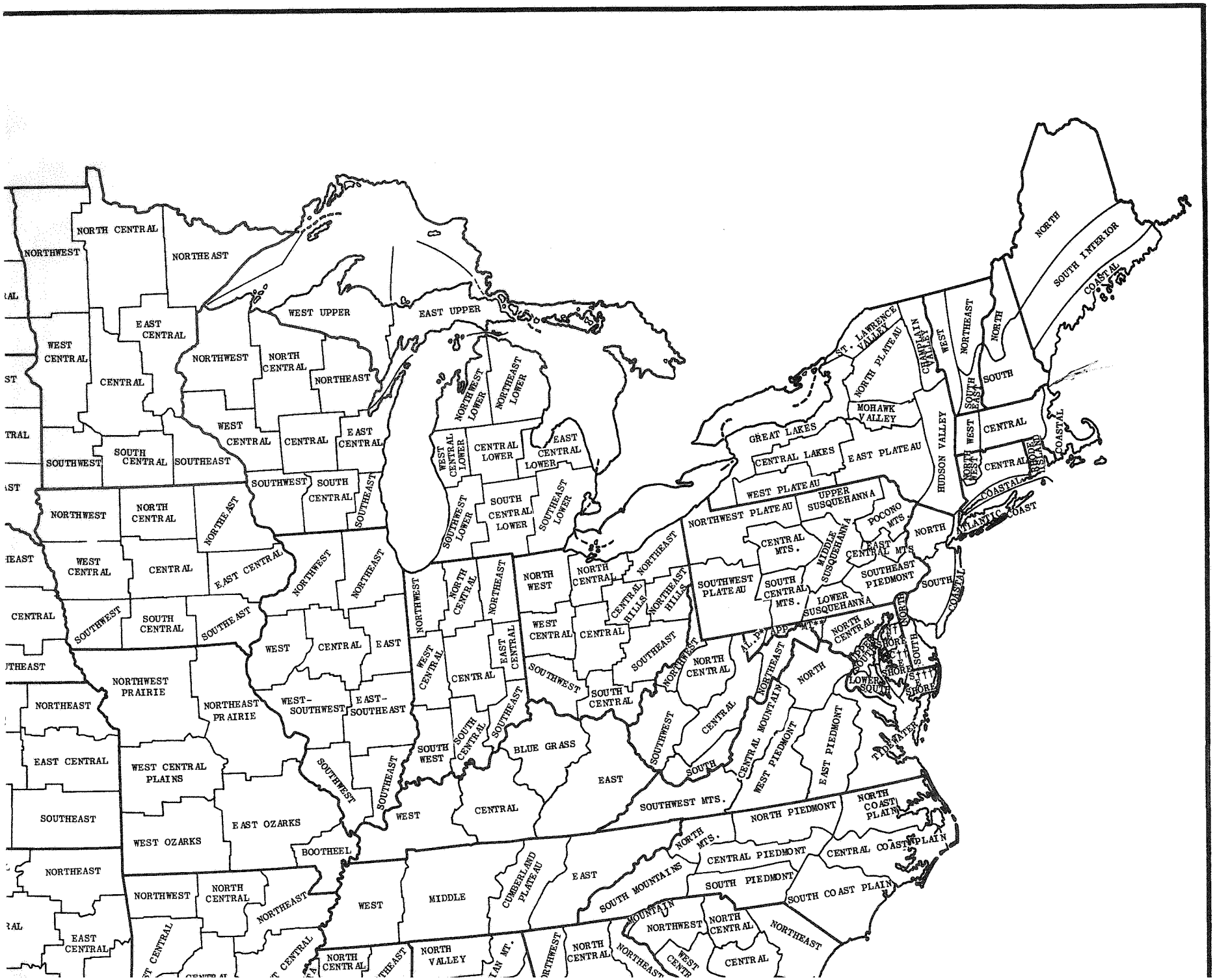


'ERIOD (Days) Between Last 32°(F.)
°(F.) Temperature in Autumn

Exhibit – Frost free growing period – States in Question



ATIC DIVISIONS



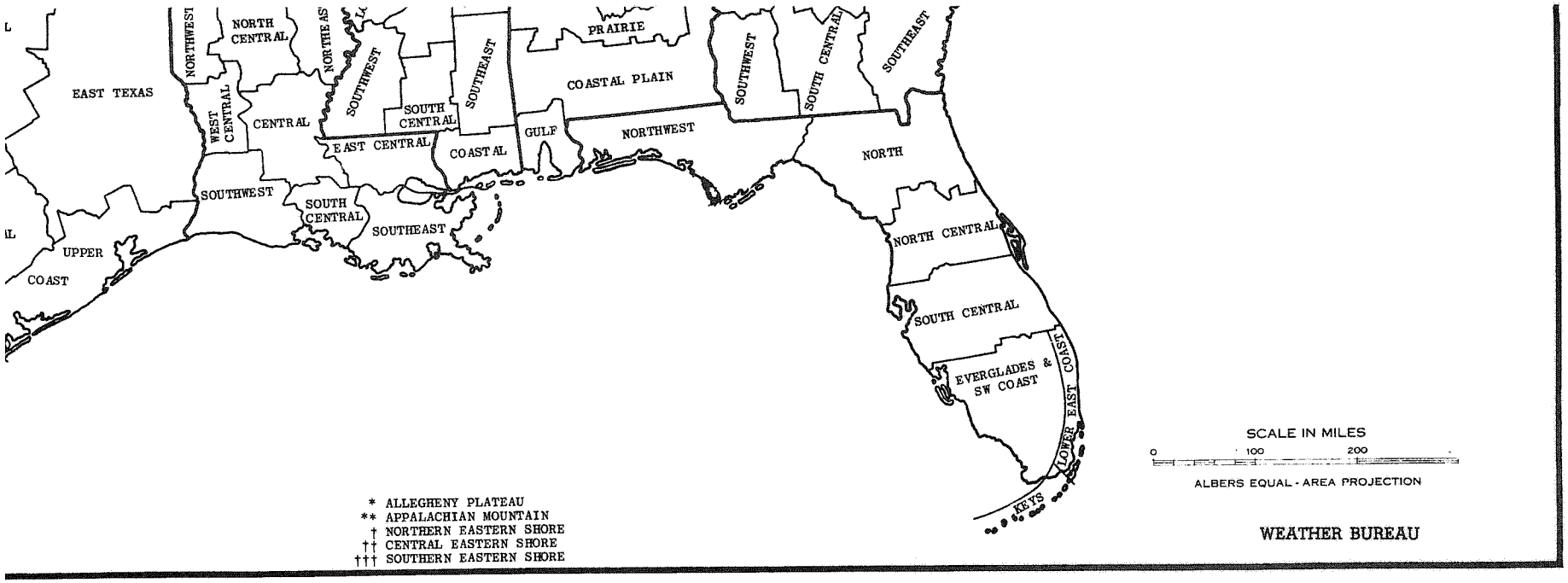


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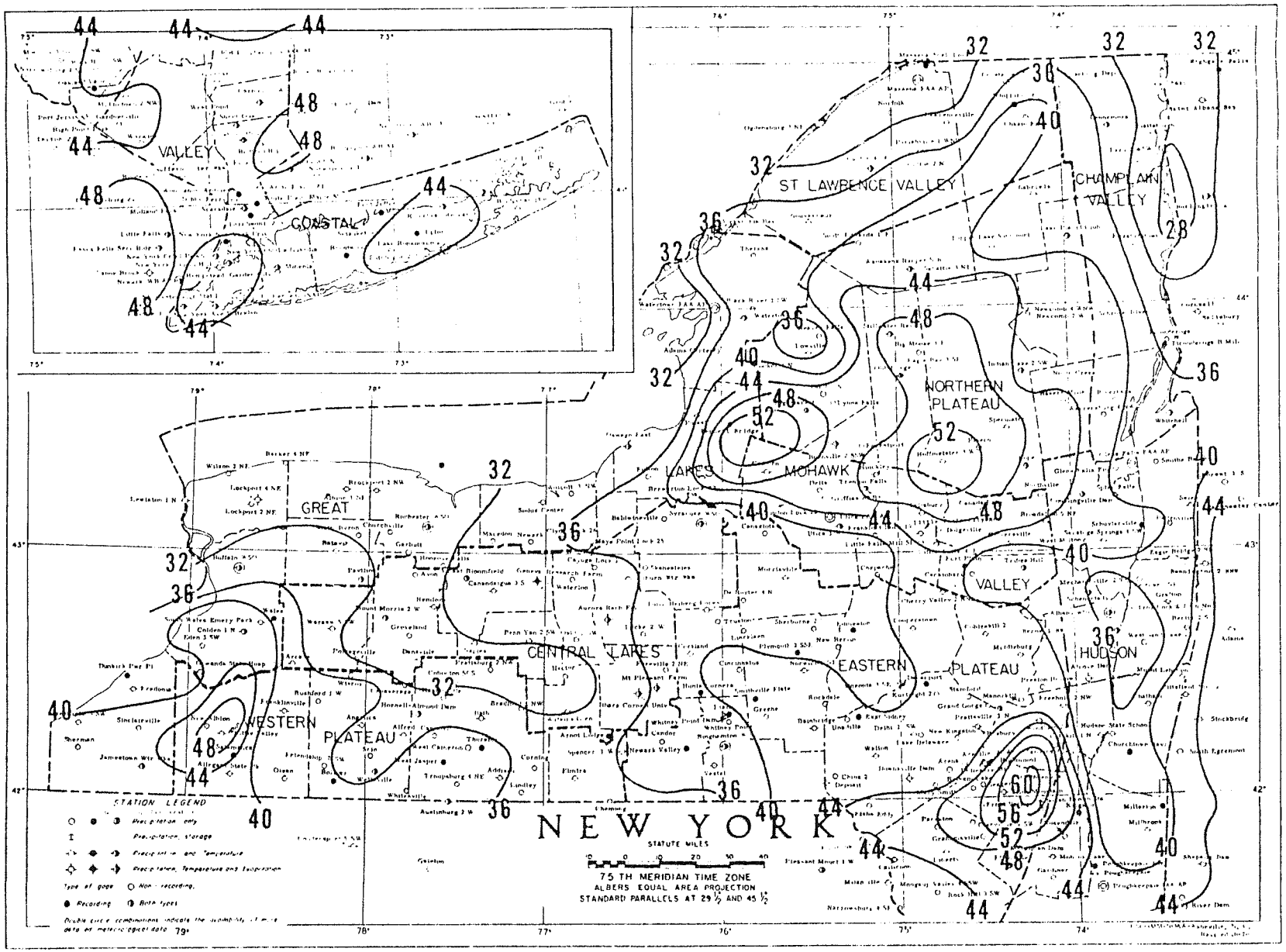
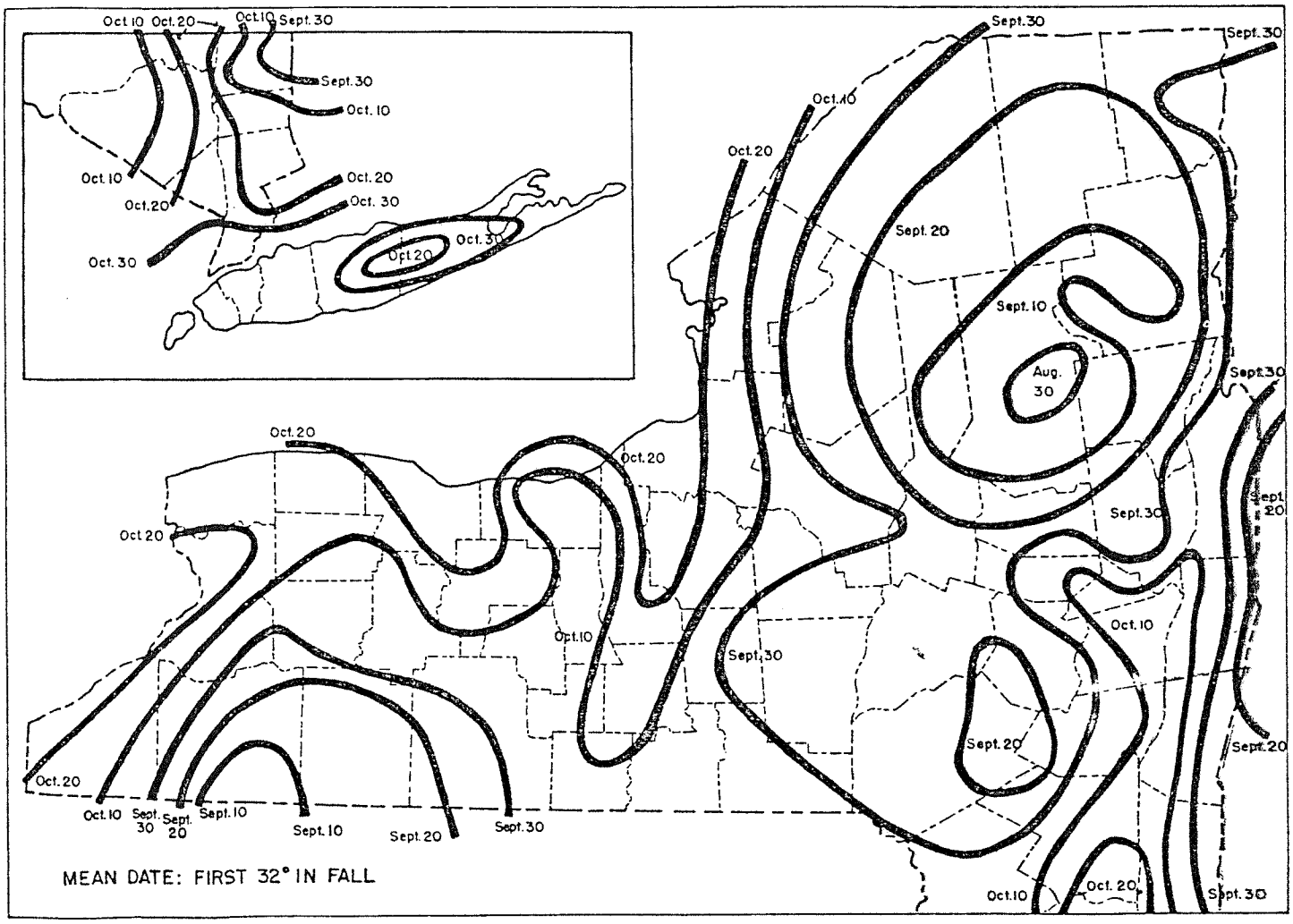
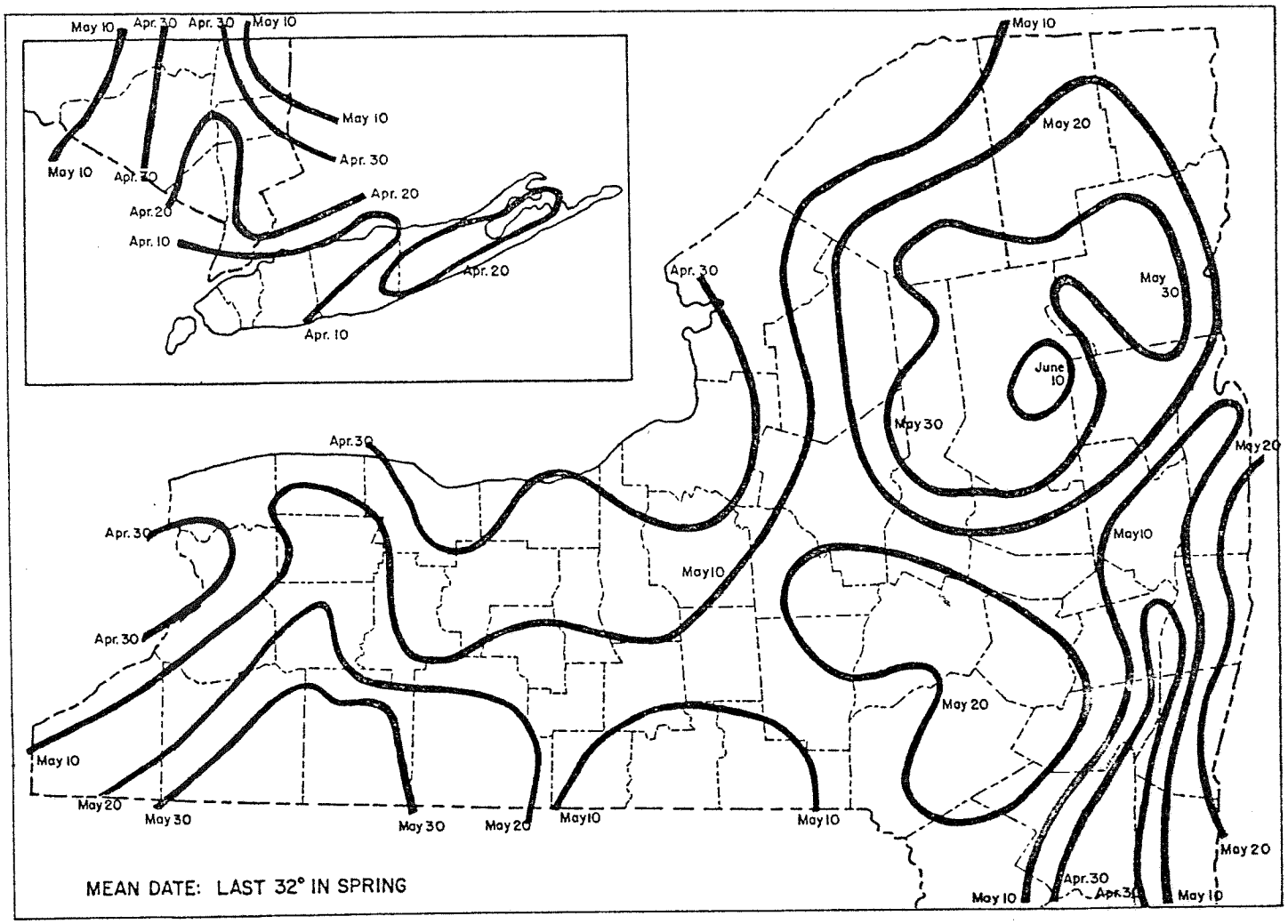
Exhibit – State Climatic Divisions
From Climatic Atlas of the U.S.
1968
Dept of Commerce

MEAN ANNUAL PRECIPITATION, INCHES



Data are based on the period 1931-55. Isolines are drawn through points of approximately equal value. Caution should be used in interpolating on these maps, particularly in mountainous areas.

3 Mean date of first 32°F. or lower temperature in fall.



2 Mean date of last 32°F. or lower temperature in spring.