

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed August 17, 1928

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology

A "RECORD" RAINFALL

The storms of tropical origin that have recently visited the southeastern United States have had the usual accompaniment of torrential rains, and in some places have broken the local "records" of excessive rainfall. Thus at Washington 7.30 inches of rain fell from 6:15 p.m., August 11, to 6:15 p.m., August 12, as compared with a previous maximum fall in 24 hours/ of 5.80 inches, July 29-30, 1878.

The greatest 24-hour rainfall ever recorded in the United States -- exceeding any recorded in Canada -- was 23.11 inches, which fell at Taylor, Texas, September 9-10, 1921. The fall in 35 hours was 23.93 inches. Heavy rains were general on the same dates over southern and central Texas, resulting in phenomenally rapid floods, which took the lives of more than 200 people and wrought property damage estimated at more than \$19,000,000. A drought had preceded these downpours, and many barrels used for hauling water were standing out of doors on the farms. The amount of water collected in some of these barrels during the storm in the vicinity of Taylor indicated that the actual rainfall at certain points must have exceeded 30 inches in 15 hours; but the official measurement at the local Weather Bureau station was as stated above.

The rains in this case appear to have been caused by the "tail end" of a tropical storm which had moved westward toward the Mexican coast south of Tampico on September 7, after which its exact course could not be determined, owing to lack of reporting stations in northern Mexico.

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