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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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KANSAS TORNADOES

Most people have a greatly exaggerated idea of the frequency of tornadoes in particular areas of the United States, and Kansas has an especially bad reputation in this respect that is considerably at variance with the facts. During the 13 years from 1916 to 1928, inclusive, more accurate tornado statistics were gathered in the United States than during any previous period. Kansas had 155 tornadoes during these years, or an average of 12 a year. The area of the state is 82,000 square miles and the average destructive area of a tornado is about 10 square miles. Hence, if we assume 12 tornadoes a year to be the normal frequency for the state, it follows that any given locality in Kansas is likely to suffer damage from one of these storms only once in about 680 years, on an average.

Kansas had more tornadoes during the 13 years mentioned than any other state in the Union, but in proportion to area the smaller state of Iowa came first, with 149 tornadoes; Arkansas second; Kansas third; and Indiana, Ohio and Illinois not far behind. In loss of life and damage to property resulting from tornadoes Kansas was outranked by many other states, as her population is sparse and there are few large towns in the state. Kansas has had, however, three tornadoes that wrought damage to a value of a million dollars or more.

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