

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed May 27, 1932

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

HAIL AT ITS WORST

"A violent hailstorm," writes S.D. Flora, of the U.S. Weather Bureau, "has to be experienced personally to be appreciated. Official reports of storms that have occurred in past years contain statements that seem scarcely creditable to a person who has never been in the path of heavy hail, either while it was falling or shortly afterward. Crops on which the livelihood of a farmer depended have time after time been pounded into the ground, total losses. Houses have had roofs shattered and weather boarding stripped of paint. Every severe hailstorm of late years has left a trail of automobiles with tops punctured, and in many cases wind-shields smashed and even bodies and fenders dented."

In his last annual review of such visitations in the United States, Mr. Flora tells of one that occurred near Warsaw, Mo., early in June, 1931. The region was visited by a correspondent of the Kansas City Star soon after the storm. He found a scene of desolation seven miles long and from a mile to a mile and a half wide in the Ozark farming community of Passo. The storm was reported to have lasted forty minutes. Stones as large as baseballs fell with such force as to strip houses of weather boarding, kill poultry and live stock and pile up four feet deep in the roads. One man was asleep when the storm broke and knocked down his front door. He ran to hold a blanket over the doorway but the hailstones nearly bowled him over. The following day hail was still being shoveled out of houses and barns, while cultivated fields looked as if they had been the playground of a giant with a shovel.

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