

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
September 21, 1932

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed September 14, 1932.

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

DEADLY HAILSTORMS

Some weeks ago a brief press dispatch, to which newspapers since received from China add no particulars, told of a hailstorm in western Honan Province, which is said to have battered down the houses in 400 villages, killed 200 people and injured thousands. If this story turns out to be somewhere near the truth the hailstorm in question will take its place among the most murderous on record.

The killing of human beings by hail is astonishingly uncommon. There is a tale, which may be a gross exaggeration, of a storm in France in April, 1360, in which hail took the lives of 1,000 English soldiers and 6,000 horses; an event that is alleged to have terrified King Edward III, of England, into concluding peace with the French.

On April 30, 1888, more than 250 natives of India perished in a hailstorm in the Moradabad district, about 100 miles east of Delhi. Some of the victims were undoubtedly pounded to death by hailstones, but according to a well-known meteorologist then living in India many or a majority may have died of exposure after being knocked down and packed in ice.

On May 12, 1853, hail is said to have killed 84 human beings and 3,000 oxen in the Himalayas north of Peshawar.

On July 10, 1923, twenty-three persons are recorded to have been killed by hail near Rostov-on-the-Don, Russia, and on July 16, 1930, hail is reported to have killed 22 persons in the Siatista district of Macedonia.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE
21st and Constitution Ave.
Washington, D.C.