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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SOME BIG HAILSTORMS

Says F.D. Flora, of the U.S. Weather Bureau, in a recent analysis of official records of hailstorms in the United States:

"Reports of falls of hail in the crop-growing season so heavy the ice formed in drifts from one to three feet deep and of hailstones 9 to 15 inches in circumference striking the ground so hard they buried themselves appear in these staid government records along with masses of other weather data. These also tell of wheat and corn crops utterly destroyed over almost entire counties in the middle west, of half-million dollar losses to tobacco and fruit and truck crops in Connecticut and New York State and of whole sections of pine forests ruined in the Carolinas, besides million-dollar hail losses to cotton in Texas and Oklahoma. After reading these comprehensive official reports the tales of hail wiping out the crops of early settlers in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas sink into insignificance.

"At Ballinger, Texas, there is a record of such a great fall of hail March 16, 1917, that a drift of hailstones covered two acres of ground to a depth of 3 feet and was still a foot deep four days later. This official report is matched by a similar one from near Charles City, Ia., where hail fell on June 11, 1925, and the masses of ice were washed over a pasture where they covered an acre and a half to a depth of 2 to 4 feet. Thirteen days after this Iowa storm hail fell in Baltimore, until it blocked street cars at the intersection of Charles and Lanvale Streets and had to be hauled away by the truck-load the following day."

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