

A Science Service Feature

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January 30, 1935

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed Jan. 23, 1935

COLORED HAIL

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman  
Authority on Meteorology

Hail discolored with dust fell in thunderstorms in conjunction with some of the widespread dust storms of last summer in the middle western United States.

T. A. Blair, of the U. S. Weather Bureau, quotes the following description from A. D. Rough, a resident of Lincoln, Nebr.:

"The hail came in two periods with an intermission of perhaps five or ten minutes between them. In the first the hailstones were small at the beginning, gradually increasing until they were like marbles, some larger. It lasted but a few minutes. In the second shower the stones were from the size of marbles to hulled walnuts. It was not the size of the stones that attracted my attention, but their color. Some of them looked almost as yellow as clay, and very much like small balls of clay, the others were quite dark. Two large ones were brought to my room. They were very dark and looked like a mixture of Nebraska soil and water but had the ordinary white spot in the center. I suppose this (coloring) was from the dust that has filled the sky to such great extent this spring."

D. P. Thomson, in his "Introduction to Meteorology," mentions a shower of red hail that occurred in Italy in 1813, and Humboldt heard of a similar case in South America; but there is no reason to suppose that colored hail is very rare.

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