

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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ONE USE OF WEATHER RECORDS

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Authority on Meteorology

Apropos of the many uses to which weather records are applied, C. J. Root, of the U. S. Weather Bureau, calls my attention to a recently published account of the methods employed by federal agents in capturing the bandits who kidnaped Charles Urschel in July, 1933.

Urschel was blindfolded at a home in Oklahoma City and taken for a ride of about 12 hours in an automobile to a house entirely unfamiliar to him, where he was held until the ransom was paid. The agents interviewed him carefully upon his release in order to obtain, if possible, a clue to the place where he was held. The fact that the ride was about 12 hours and made rather slowly on off roads indicated the place was within a radius of 300 miles of Oklahoma City. The fact that the days and nights were uncomfortably warm indicated it was not among mountains or hills and the passage of a plane over the place at 10:30 a.m. gave an important clue.

Urschel was able to recall one heavy rain on a certain day. The Weather Bureau checked up the records for the nine days of Urschel's detention, which helped eliminate place after place. Finally, there was only one place that fitted every condition and that was Paradise, Texas. Following an investigation of suspicious places near this locality the bandits were rounded up and given life sentences.

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