

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL STATIONS AND VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS.

PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE. To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses: ADASTRAL HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C. 2; 28, ABINGDON STREET, LONDON, S.W. 1; YORK STREET, MANCHESTER; 1, ST. ANDREW'S CRESCENT, CARDIFF; OR 120, GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH, or through any Bookseller.

VOL. 43, No. 7.

ISSUED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE.

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JULY, 1926: FAIR AND WARM WITH OCCASIONAL BREAKS AND WIDESPREAD THUNDERSTORMS.

General.—The weather was mainly fair and warm with occasional thunderstorms during the first part of the month and unsettled, but with many fine periods, during the later part. Fine, anticyclonic weather was experienced generally during the first three days. On the 4th, unsettled and mainly cooler weather with much rain at times and local thunderstorms spread over the southern districts of England, while warm cloudy weather continued in Scotland. Rainfall measurements exceeded 30mm. in several southern places, e.g., 42mm. (1.67 in.) were recorded at Haughley, Suffolk, on the 5th. On the 7th conditions were generally unsettled, but on the 8th a general improvement took place over England, and maximum temperatures of over 80°F. occurred in many parts. On the 9th thunderstorms, accompanied in some instances by heavy rain, occurred over a wide area. About the 10th an anticyclone passed across France towards Denmark and was associated with a short spell of hot weather in our islands. Each day the temperature rose higher until on the 14th 89°F. was registered at Woburn, London (Camden Square) and Calshot, and night minima were generally above 60°F. On the nights of the 13th–14th and 14th–15th minimum temperatures of 65°F. and slightly above were recorded at several stations. Meanwhile, pressure was rising on the Atlantic, south of Iceland, bringing a supply of air from a more northerly source to Great Britain. This caused cloudier skies and a marked drop in temperature on the 15th, the maximum readings in some cases being more than 20°F. lower than on the 14th, e.g., at West Witton, the maximum temperature on the 14th was 85°F., on the 15th 63°F. Temperature rose again, however, during the next few days as the anticyclone moved south-east to the continent.

On the 17th local thunder was experienced in the south-west districts. During the 18th a depression developed quickly over north-west France and moved north, causing an unusual combination of severe thunderstorms and strong winds later in the day. By the evening of the 18th thunderstorms had spread to eastern England, where they continued until the morning of the 19th. The thunderstorms were the most widespread for many years past, affecting practically the whole of the British Isles. In some western districts the storms were very severe and prolonged. At Birr Castle, in central Ireland, thunderstorms recurred at intervals for over 24 hours; a thunderstorm lasted for 12 hours at Seaton; 30mm. (1.20 in.) of rain fell in 15 minutes at Lancaster; 78mm. (3.08 in.) fell in 6 hours at Somerton (Somerset); 84mm. (3.29 in.) fell in 8 hours at Haverfordwest; 103 mm. (4.06 in.) fell in 24 hours at Rhayader. Serious floods occurred in several places as a result of this heavy precipitation. A report from Ross-on-Wye states that the river rose rapidly to 11 feet above its normal. Hail of unusual severity was reported from many stations in the south-west of England.

Somewhat unsettled rather cool weather with, however, many fair periods, when day temperatures reached 80°F. locally, then prevailed until about the 27th when an anticyclone passed north-eastwards to Scotland, giving fine warm weather over the whole kingdom.

The general character of the month is illustrated by the following remarks taken from observers' notes:—Lerwick—A very fine month. Bromyard—Pleasant, seasonable month. West Kirby—On the whole a month of beautiful, warm, summer weather, but broken by some severe thunderstorms. Dublin—True to its traditional reports, July was a month of varying weather; it was warm and, for the most part, dry, but a broken rainy and windy spell was ushered in by a severe thunderstorm and a downpour of rain on the 18th. Markree—Fine, warm and dry generally. Southport—Mean temperature higher than in any previous July during the 56 years' records; days and nights almost equally warmer than usual. Forenoons remarkably dull, while the afternoons were almost normally sunny. Westerly winds extremely deficient and easterly ones much in excess of normal.

Pressure and Winds.—The mean pressure was everywhere above normal. The deviations of monthly means of pressure at fixed hours varied from 3.1mb. at Wick to 0.9mb. at Portland Bill. The highest recorded pressure was 1032mb. at Valencia on the 27th and the lowest 990mb. at Lerwick on the 23rd. With the exception of a gale at Fleetwood on the 21st no gales were recorded during the month at any anemometer station in the British Isles. The highest gusts recorded

were 55 mi/hr. at Spurn Head at 1h. 15m. on the 19th and 52 mi/hr. at 21h. 25m. at Holyhead on the 23rd. Over the country generally winds from between N. and E. were much in excess of normal and there was a deficiency of winds from between S. and W.

Temperature.—The mean temperature of districts 1–10 was 61.0°F. and was 2.2°F. above normal. The temperature in every district was well above normal, the greatest excess being 3.2°F. in Ireland S. The warmest period was the 11th to the 14th when maximum temperatures of 80°F. and more were reached in most districts and night minima were unusually high. At Manchester on the night of the 12th–13th temperature did not fall below 70°F.; at Ilkley on the night of the 12th–13th and at Hawarden Bridge on the 13th–14th, the minimum temperature was 69°F.; at Morecambe (13th–14th), Wallasey (12th–13th), Weymouth (14–15th), Woolacombe (14th–15th) and Jersey (17th–18th) a minimum temperature of 68°F. was recorded.

The extreme temperatures for the month were:—(England and Wales) 89°F. at Woburn, London (Camden Square) and Calshot on the 14th, 35°F. at Comondale on the 26th; (Scotland) 87°F. at Kelso (Broomlands) on the 13th and 14th, 32°F. at Balmoral on the 26th; (Ireland) 85°F. at Kilkenny and Killarney on the 14th, 43°F. at Lisburn on the 26th and at Clongowes Wood on the 31st. Ground frosts occurred at Achnashellach, Balmoral, Braemar, Renfrew, Worcester and Rhayader.

Earth temperatures were generally decidedly above normal. At Holton Heath the mean temperature at 1 ft. was 66.6°F. and at 4 ft. 63.2°F.

Precipitation.—Taking the British Isles as a whole, the month's rainfall did not differ appreciably from normal: expressed as a percentage of the normal for 1881 to 1915, the values were:—England and Wales 96, Scotland 90, Ireland 102, British Isles 96. Over central and northern Scotland the month's aggregate was generally less than normal and locally in the north-west totals only slightly more than half the normal were recorded. Over central and eastern England the month's rainfall was generally slightly below normal; over northern and western England and over Wales, rainfall was slightly in excess; in Pembroke as much as 175% of the normal was recorded. In Ireland rainfall was slightly in excess of normal generally with a maximum of 169% of normal in King's County.

The first half of the month was generally dry but some heavy falls were recorded locally on the 5th and the 9th. Tynemouth had as much as 64mm. (2.52 in.) on the 9th. The period from the 10th to the 17th was rainless almost everywhere. On the 18th unusually widespread thunderstorms affected practically all districts and some heavy falls were recorded on this day. Rhayader had 103mm. (4.06 in.); Haverfordwest 84mm. (3.29 in.); Somerton (Somerset) 78mm. (3.08 in.); Birr Castle 58mm. (2.29 in.); Tenby 54mm. (2.13 in.); West Kirby 52mm. (2.05 in.); Ballinacurra 49mm. (1.93 in.); Holylake 47mm. (1.85 in.). Thunderstorms occurred over limited or wide areas on 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th and 29th.

Sunshine.—The mean daily duration of sunshine did not differ much from normal in any district except in Scotland N., where the excess was 1.58 hrs. (mean daily duration 5.76 hrs). The greatest deficit, 0.76 hrs., occurred in England S.E., but, with the exception of the Channel Islands, this district had the highest mean daily duration with 6.20 hrs. Amongst the largest daily measurements were 15.7 hrs. at Dumfries on the 3rd and at Stornoway on the 7th; 15.6 hrs. at Aberdeen on the 13th and 15.5 hrs. at Malvern on the 2nd.

Fog.—Apart from coastal fog, which occurred on a few occasions on various dates, little fog was reported during the month.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—A sun pillar was seen at Oxford on the 4th. Parhelia were observed at Armagh on the 2nd and 3rd.