

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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AUGUST, 1935.—Warm and dry on the whole; unsettled, with heavy local rain after the 22nd.

The month was dry on the whole, although rainfall exceeded the average in parts of southern England, and west and north Scotland and in isolated areas elsewhere. It was warm for the most part until the 24th (particularly from the 6th to 8th and 20th to 24th), but the last five days were generally cool. Sunshine was excessive in England and rather variable elsewhere.

Conditions during the first six days were largely governed by an extensive anticyclone centred off our west or south-west coasts. Temperature rose gradually during this period reaching or exceeding 80° F. locally on the 5th and 6th. A little rain occurred at times in the west and north.

On the 7th, a trough of low pressure, associated with an Icelandic depression, caused more substantial rainfall in the west and north and, subsequently, the trough crossed the country, giving heavy local rain and widespread thunderstorms in eastern England and the Midlands, thus ending a period of drought in some parts of England. During the succeeding days other shallow depressions following a similar path caused further local rain at times. On the 13th, the Azores anticyclone again asserted its influence giving another spell of fair weather over nearly the whole country. From the 15th to 19th, however, shallow troughs moving north-east or north caused rain at times, mainly in the west and north. There ensued a very warm spell in Great Britain, with pressure high over Scandinavia and Germany and a trough of low pressure spreading east from our western seaboard. Temperature approached 90° F. at a few places in England on the 22nd and exceeded 80° F. in parts of Scotland on the 20th and 24th. In southern England the warm spell was broken by heavy rain and thunderstorms on the 23rd and 24th. A temporary improvement occurred in England on the 25th, but subsequently a large complex area of low pressure became established over the British Isles and cool, unsettled weather, with heavy rain in places, prevailed for the remainder of the month, although the duration of bright sunshine was considerable at times.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure somewhat exceeded the average everywhere, the excess at 7 h. varying from 0.9 mb. at Stornoway and Kew Observatory to 2.6 mb. at Valentia.

The month was, on the whole, a quiet one, but gales were reported locally in Scotland on the 10th, 22nd, 27th and 29th, at the Scilly Isles on the 24th and at Hastings on the 30th. Among the highest speeds recorded in gusts were 58 m.p.h. at Cranwell on the 8th, 59 m.p.h. at Scilly on the 24th, 57 m.p.h. at Kirkwall and Butt of Lewis and 59 m.p.h. at Dunfanaghy on the 29th, and 55 m.p.h. at Lympne on the 30th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average in all districts, the excess ranging from 1.5° F. in the Channel Islands to 3.3° F. in England N.E. and 3.4° F. in Midlands. (See Table I).

A warm spell occurred from the 5th to 11th with its peak from the 6th to 8th. Temperature reached or exceeded 80° F. locally in England almost daily during this period and reached 88° F. at Shinfield and Rickmansworth on the 7th. In Scotland, 81° F. was recorded at Dundee and 80° F. at Braemar, Balmoral and Perth on the 6th, and 80° F. at Balmoral, Balmakewan and Montrose on the 7th. A second warm spell was experienced from the 19th or 20th to the 24th, with a temporary break on the 23rd, which persisted in some parts of southern England over the 24th. A maximum of 89° F. was registered at numerous stations in England on the 22nd, 84° F. was reached at Gordon Castle on the 20th and 82° F. at Ruthwell on the 24th.

In marked contrast was the coolness of the last five days. The coldest night was, on the whole, the 28th, when ground frost was reported locally and temperature in the screen fell to 31° F. at Rickmansworth, and 32° F. at Thetford and Eskdalemuir. Other cold nights were the 2nd, 12th, 13th and 29th.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 89° F. at Cranwell, Hunstanton, Cambridge, Rickmansworth and Camden Square on the 22nd, 31° F. at Rickmansworth on the 28th; (Scotland) 84° F. at Gordon Castle on the 20th, 32° F. at Dalwhinnie on the 12th, Balmoral on the 13th and Eskdalemuir on the 28th; (Ireland) 79° F. at Foynes on the 7th and 39° F. at Markree Castle and Birr Castle on the 28th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 81, the values for the constituent countries being, England and Wales 80, Scotland 87 and Ireland 75.

In general rainfall exceeded the average in north and west (but not south-west) Scotland, in south-east England and at most places on the south coast as far west as Falmouth, and in small isolated areas elsewhere, including a few stations in west, south-west and Central Ireland. On the other hand, the deficiency was very marked in some parts, less than 30 per cent. of the average being recorded locally in Norfolk, Montgomery and Waterford, and less than 40 per cent. in parts of south-west Scotland and locally in Shropshire, Lancashire, and County Down. In contrast was the high percentage at Inverness, namely 183.

The long period without rain experienced locally in England during the latter part of July and the first three weeks of August deserves special comment. At Upper Heyford, rain on the 22nd ended an absolute drought of 32 days, while at Oxford, the absolute drought from July 21st to August 17th (28 days) constitutes the longest summer drought at that station since 1887.

Local thunderstorms occurred at times, notably in England on the 8th, 12th and 18th and over a wider area between the 21st and 24th and 26th and 30th. In Scotland, they were rather less frequent than is usual in August.

Among heavy falls on individual days in 24 hours or less are included:—

- 10th. 104 mm. at Kinlochquoich, 97 mm. at Ardgour, 69 mm. at Achnashellach and 68 mm. at Fort William.
- 18th. 67 mm. in a thunderstorm at Staindrop, Co. Durham and 55 mm. at Thetford (in 1½ hours).
- 23rd. 77 mm. at Mevagissey, 62 mm. at St. Austell and 59 mm. at Newquay.
- 24th. 54 mm. at Peaslake, Surrey, and 51 mm. at South Farnborough.
- 26th. 59 mm. at Hawkshead (Lancashire).

Sunshine.—There was a general excess of sunshine in England and Wales, the percentage of the average for the districts ranging from 123 in England, NW, to 106 in England, SW. At Stonyhurst the average daily excess amounted to 2.18 hours. In Scotland, the eastern counties for the most part enjoyed a slight excess and there was a deficiency in the west and extreme north. The total at Stornoway, 83 hours, is the poorest record in August at that station since records began in 1881. In Ireland, the duration was variable, but, on the whole rather deficient, particularly in the north-west.

Fog.—Local fog developed at times, particularly between the 5th and 7th, 16th and 26th, and on the 28th and 31st.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed at Balta-sound on the night of the 12th. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on 10 days and a sun pillar was observed at Oxford and Hastings on the evening of the 7th. A water spout was seen at Bude on the 28th, and two funnel-shaped clouds at Hastings on the 27th. On the 5th, a small, though well-defined, dust-devil was observed at Brownhills Heath, Staffordshire.