

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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AUGUST, 1936.—Dry; warm and sunny during the latter part of the month.

The weather of the month was distinguished by a marked deficiency of rainfall, particularly over large areas in the southern half of England and Wales and the Midlands and in parts of southern Ireland. The first week was mainly cool but from the 23rd onwards conditions were, on the whole, unusually sunny and warm.

A trough of low pressure situated over the North Sea on the 1st and a depression which moved across Scotland to the Skagerrak between the 2nd and 4th, maintained cool, unsettled weather, with rain at times during the opening days of the month. A wedge of high pressure crossed Great Britain on the 5th but a new disturbance westward of Ireland moving east caused heavy rain in the west on the night of the 5th-6th and rain in England and southern Scotland on the 6th. In the rear of this system a cool, cloudy day was experienced in east and south-east England on the 7th, but a wedge of high pressure moving south-east across the British Isles maintained fair, sunny weather over a large part of England between the 7th and 9th. Meanwhile a trough of low pressure moving east caused rain in Scotland and Ireland. A depression over Belgium moving slowly north-east and a shallow trough of low pressure over Ireland moving slowly east caused rain locally at times between the 10th and 12th, while a new depression moving slowly north-east from off north-west Ireland gave further rain in places in the west and north from the 13th-15th. Subsequently pressure became high to the south and south-east of the British Isles while a depression skirted our north-west seaboard. Rain fell at times in the west and north but little or none occurred in the south-east. On the 19th, however, a small secondary depression moved rapidly across northern England and rain fell generally in England.

The Azores anticyclone spread north-eastward on the 22nd and thereafter dominated conditions over the greater part of the country. Some rain occurred at first in the west and north but from the 25th-28th inclusive, fair weather was general. Slight rain was again recorded locally in the west and north between the 29th and 31st. During the anticyclonic spell abundant sunshine was enjoyed and high day temperatures were recorded for the most part.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure exceeded the average generally, the excess at 7 h. varying from 2.9 mb. at Lerwick and Wick to 5.5 mb. at Valentia Observatory and 5.6 mb. at St. Mary's, Scilly.

Gales were reported from a few stations on the 2nd and 3rd, from two or three places in Scotland on the 22nd and 23rd and from Kirkwall, Orkneys, on the 29th and 30th. Among the highest speeds registered in gusts were 50 m.p.h. at South Shields and 52 m.p.h. at Fleetwood on the 3rd, 53 m.p.h. at Manchester (Barton) on the 2nd and at Aberdeen on the 3rd and 54 m.p.h. at Bidston on the 4th, at Lerwick on the 23rd and at Kirkwall on the 30th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average generally, the excess varying from 0.6°F. in the Channel Islands to 2.8°F. in Scotland, E.

The first week was cool in most districts, particularly in east and south-east England. Subsequently warmer conditions prevailed and from the 23rd onwards the days were, for the most part, really warm.

On one or other of the days after the 23rd, 80°F. was reached or exceeded in many places. Another interesting feature of this period was the large diurnal range of temperature experienced at times. A range approaching or somewhat exceeding 40°F. was recorded at numerous stations in the eastern districts of England on the 29th; at Rickmansworth, where both the character of the soil and the situation of the station tend to induce extremes of temperature in quiet weather, the range amounted to 51°F. In east and south-east England the period 15th-17th was also warm.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 85°F. at Rickmansworth on the 29th, 34°F. at Rickmansworth on the 22nd and 29th; (Scotland) 81°F. at Gordon Castle and Logie Coldstone on the 27th; 36°F. at Balmoral on the 7th; (Ireland) 80°F. at Glasnevin on the 29th and at Cork on the 31st and 41°F. at Phoenix Park, Dublin, on the 11th and 28th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 48, the values for the constituent countries being England and Wales 39, Scotland 70 and Ireland 45. It was only at a few isolated stations in northern England and west and north Scotland that rainfall exceeded the average. Less than 20 per cent of the average occurred over most of the south-west of England, parts of the southern Midlands and south Wales and locally in County Cork. At numerous stations in the west and south of England it was the driest August on record. For example, at Falmouth, Newquay, Barnstaple, Holne, Teignmouth, Ross-on-Wye and Totland Bay, Isle of Wight, it was the driest August since records were first taken in 1871, 1893, 1857, 1875, 1871, 1859 and 1887 respectively. At Teignmouth the month's total was less than 1 mm.

Thunderstorms occurred at times, particularly on the 4th, 10th and 15th. They were accompanied locally by heavy rain and among heavy falls in 24 hours or less may be mentioned:—

- 9th. 23 mm. at South Shields in two periods of 25 minutes and 10 minutes.
- 10th. 66 mm. at Leatherhead in 75 minutes, and 50 mm. at Leyland in just over 90 minutes.
- 15th. 58 mm. at Carrbridge (Inverness-shire).
- 19th. 60 mm. at Festiniog (Merioneth).

Sunshine.—Sunshine was rather variable but exceeded the average for the country as a whole. The percentage of the average for the different districts varied from 87 in Scotland, N. to 126 in Scotland, E. The first half of the month was dull in most districts but the period 22nd-29th inclusive was unusually sunny. The mean daily sunshine for the week exceeded 10 hours at a large number of stations and amounted to 13.0 hours at Jersey, 12.8 hours at Guernsey, 12.0 hours at Falmouth, 11.7 hours at Torquay and 11.5 hours at Scilly.

Fog.—Fog was reported locally at times mainly from the 1st-2nd, 6th-11th, 14th-17th, 19th-20th and 24th-30th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—Solar halos were noted at Oxford on seven days.