

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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July 1953—Unsettled and wet, with heavy thundery rain at times; rather cool.

After the first few days the weather was unsettled and rather cool. Thunderstorms occurred frequently and were fairly widespread on the 9th, 12–18th and 27th. The month was wet in most areas and dull in Scotland and east England but sunny in the Midlands and western districts of England and Wales.

At first a ridge of high pressure moved slowly south-east across the country and apart from considerable cloud in eastern districts and some local rain and thunder in south-east England and northern Scotland it was mainly dry and sunny up to the 4th; on the 4th a trough of low pressure brought cloud and rain to north-west Scotland (heavy locally in Skye and the Western Highlands); the rain spread over Scotland, Ireland, Wales and the extreme north of England on the 5th and over the rest of England during the following night; temperature was above normal, reaching 80°F. locally in south-west and central Scotland on the 1st and locally in England on the 1st, 2nd and 5th. A south-westerly to westerly type of weather, with occasional rain, ensued and there were fog banks in the English Channel and on the south-west coasts on the 6th–7th. From the 8th to the 10th a cool, unstable west to north-west airstream gave showers and bright periods in most districts with widespread thunderstorms on the 9th. The showers became more scattered on the 10th as a weakening ridge of high pressure moved across the country. During the remainder of the month the weather was dominated by four large slow moving depressions whose centres passed over or near Ireland and Scotland, giving an unsettled south-westerly to westerly type of weather, with frequent rain or showers. On the 11th rainfall was considerable, particularly in the west and south; there were also heavy falls on the 12th–14th and flood damage was reported at a number of places. Thunderstorms were fairly widespread between the 12th and 18th, notably from the 16th to 18th when they were reported to have seriously affected crops in the west Midlands and central Scotland, while there was local damage due both to lightning and flooding and some loss of life. During this period temperature was somewhat below the average and the sunniest places were in the south, but on the 20th temperature rose and although the unsettled weather continued, with heavy rain at times in the west and north, there were some sunny days, particularly in the south. After reaching 80°F. at a number of places in eastern districts of England on the 25th temperature fell on the 26th with the influx of an unstable south-westerly to westerly airstream; on the 27th there were widespread thunderstorms causing damage in many areas. On the 30th and 31st a depression moved from the west of Ireland to south-west England and thence across southern England giving periods of continuous rain in the south.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure was below the average, the deficiency being greatest in Scotland; the deviation from the average at 9h. ranged from –7.1 mb. at Wick and –7.0 mb. at Stornoway to –2.5 mb. at Newquay. Although there were no mean hourly wind speeds of 34 kt. or more the wind reached gale force at Lerwick on the 6th and at one or two places in England and Wales on the 13th and 20th. The total run of the wind was, however, considerably greater than the average in England, though it was well below the average at Lerwick; at Oxford it was the windiest July in a record going back to 1881 and at Southport since 1928. Among the highest speeds registered in gusts were 46 kt. at Bidston on the 13th and 46 kt. at St. Mary's, Scilly on the 26th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature was below the average for the period 1921–50 by 1.1°F. in England and Wales, 0.6°F. in Scotland and 0.9°F. in Northern Ireland. The first week was mainly warm and

it was also rather warm on the 20th and 21st; in eastern districts of England it was warm on the 25th, with temperature up to 80°F. locally. Otherwise the month was mostly rather cool.

Extreme temperatures for the month included:—(England and Wales) 84°F. at Southend on the 5th, 37°F. at Kielder Castle on the 11th; (Scotland) 84°F. at Glenlee on the 1st, 36°F. at Leadhills on the 11th and 16th and at Dalwhinnie and West Linton on the 31st; (Northern Ireland) 75°F. at Nutt's Corner, Armagh and Castle Archdale on the 1st, 45°F. at Garvagh on the 11th and 31st.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 135 over England and Wales, 147 over Scotland and 146 over Northern Ireland. In Great Britain less than the average was registered locally on the coast of Angus and Fife, at some places in Northumberland, over County Durham, in a large area extending from the Mouth of the Tees to Cambridge, on the coasts of north Wales and south Lancashire and in a few other small isolated areas. Rainfall was more than average elsewhere in Great Britain and throughout Northern Ireland and more than twice the average in small scattered areas, for example at Lerwick, around Eskdalemuir, Ambleside, Lake Vyrnwy and Larkhill and on the north coast of Devonshire. It was the wettest July at Greenock since 1884, at Auchen Castle, near Moffat since before 1895 and at Eskdalemuir since records were first taken in 1910. Rainfall was not only heavy but rain fell frequently; at some places in Scotland measurable rain fell on 25 to 28 days.

Among the many heavy falls in 24 hours were:—

- 4th 2.35 in. at Polish in the Western Highlands and 2.32 in. at Glenbrittle, Isle of Skye.
- 5th 2.30 in. at Cwm Dyli, Snowdon.
- 11th 3.16 in. at Maesteg, Glamorganshire, 2.54 in. at Princetown, Dartmoor and 2.45 in. at Naseby Reservoir, Northamptonshire.
- 13th 2.97 in. at Glenlivet and 2.73 in. at Glenrinnies Manse, both in Banffshire.
- 20th 2.76 in. at Blaenau Festiniog, Glamorganshire and 2.41 in. at Llydaw Intake, Snowdon.
- 24th 2.33 in. at Thirlmere, Cumberland.

Thunderstorms were frequent and at times severe; they occurred somewhere or other on the 1st, 2nd, 6th–10th, 12th–22nd and 25th–31st; they were widespread on the 9th, 12th–18th and 27th.

Sunshine.—The general sunshine expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1921–1950 was 104 over England and Wales, 76 over Scotland and 97 over Northern Ireland. There was a deficit everywhere in Scotland, the deficiency being greatest in the neighbourhood of the Moray Firth and around Fort William; it was the dullest July at Fortrose since 1910, at Perth since 1931 and at Nairn since 1939. Sunshine appreciably exceeded the average in Wales, and at most places in western districts of England and the Midlands but many places in eastern districts of England had less than the average. In Northern Ireland percentages of the average ranged from 91 at Hillsborough to 104 at Armagh.

Fog.—Fog occurred at times, mainly at night or in the early morning, chiefly on the 1st–7th, 16th–18th, 20th–21st, 25th and 31st. It was most frequent in the Shetland Islands, the extreme north of Scotland and locally on the west and south-west coasts and most widespread on the 1st and 2nd.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—Solar halos were noted at Oxford on 15 days.