

Monthly Weather Report

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OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

Price 2s. 0d. net
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SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL STATIONS AND VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS

VOL. 71 No. 9

PUBLISHED BY HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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September 1954—Cool and unsettled; wet in most areas; sunny on the whole.

The unsettled weather of the preceding three months continued through September. On nearly every day a substantial part of the country was affected by cyclonic systems moving from the Atlantic and the few intervening ridges of high pressure were weak and transitory. Winds were frequently from a westerly point and reached gale force at intervals in association with the more vigorous depressions. Temperature was for the most part below average but, in marked contrast to the previous three months, sunshine appreciably exceeded the average in many areas. It was very wet in some western districts but drier than usual in some eastern areas.

The very warm weather of August 31st in many parts of England continued over the following day; Southport, with a maximum temperature of 81°F., had its warmest September day since 1906 and at places in east and south-east England 11 to 12 hours of sunshine were recorded. In Scotland and Northern Ireland the month opened with mainly cloudy weather and rain in places. These conditions spread south-east on the 2nd and were accompanied in England and Wales by a fall of temperature amounting to some 10°F. No really warm weather occurred during the rest of the month. On the 3rd a depression moved from south-west Ireland to a position off south-west Norway giving a gale locally in the Irish Sea. On the 9th another depression followed a similar track and on the 10th a wave depression moved quickly across southern England to the North Sea; gales occurred at exposed places in the west and rainfall was heavy in some areas. On the 14th an Atlantic depression moved to north-west of Scotland and then north-east to the west of Norway; considerable rain fell in northern districts on the 15th and 16th and strong westerly winds and local gales were recorded on the 15th to 17th. An intense Atlantic depression moved to north-westward of Scotland on the 23rd and thereafter to the Northern North Sea, while troughs of low pressure crossed the British Isles; rain fell generally and was heavy in places and winds were strong to gale force locally. Though there were periods of continuous rain in many parts of the country much of the rainfall of the month fell as showers and there were considerable sunny intervals in between; thunderstorms occurred in places on numerous days, chiefly in the second and third weeks. Distinctly colder weather spread southward over Scotland on the 26th and extended to the whole country during the 28th and 29th. Snow fell on the Scottish hills during the last week and sleet showers locally at lower levels in the north of Scotland on the 26th to 29th. Ground frost occurred at places in widely separated areas on several occasions in the early morning in the latter part of the month and screen minima of 23°F. were registered locally in Scotland on the 27th and 28th.

Pressure and wind.—Mean pressure was below the average for the period 1921–50, the deviation from the average at 9h. ranging from –10.4 mb. at Lerwick, in the Shetland Islands, to –2.9 mb. at Plymouth. The mean pressure gradient was thus considerably stronger than the average, particularly over England and Wales; winds from a westerly point predominated and the total run of the wind over England and Wales was substantially above the average. Winds were strong to gale force locally at times mainly on the 3rd, 9th, 10th, 13th–16th, 19th–21st, 22nd–25th, 28th and 29th. Among the highest gusts, registered in knots, were 55 at Sellafield on the 3rd, 68 at Prestwick, 60 at Aldergrove and 58 at Eskdalemuir on the 9th, 59 at Durham, 57 at Bidston and 56 at Renfrew on the 16th and 64 at Stornoway on the 28th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature differed from the average for the period 1921–50 by –1.5°F. in England and Wales, –2.2°F. in Scotland and –2.0°F. in Northern Ireland. It was very warm on the 1st, particularly in England and Wales but from the 3rd onwards it was mainly cool, the last week being unusually cool in Scotland. Notably low screen minima were registered locally particularly in northern districts on the 27th and 28th. Ground frosts occurred in places in widely separated areas on several occasions during the latter part of the month; temperature on the grass fell to 14°F. at Moor House, Westmorland on the 27th and to 15°F. at Glenlivet and Dalwhinnie on the 27th and 28th.

Extreme temperatures for the month included:—(England and Wales) 87°F. at Camden Square, London, on the 1st, 24°F. at Kielder Castle and Moor House on the 27th; (Scotland) 77°F. at Elgin on the 1st, 23°F. at Glenmore Lodge, Carnwath, Leadhills and Eskdalemuir on the 27th and at Carnwath on the 28th; (Northern Ireland) 71°F. at Castle Arch-dale on the 1st, 28°F. at Ballykelly on the 28th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 138 over England and Wales, 156 over Scotland and 162 over Northern Ireland. It was less than average locally in north-east Scotland, on the coast of north-east England, over most of East Anglia, the London area, and much of Kent and also in an area sheltered by the Welsh Hills extending from Liverpool to Ross-on-Wye. It was more than twice the average in the Shetland Islands, most of an area extending from Tiree across south-west Scotland and the Lake District to the south Pennines, locally in central Wales and on the borders of the Bristol Channel.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

9th	2.61 in. at Borrowdale, Cumberland and 2.24 in. at Patterdale, Westmorland.
10th	3.15 in. at Wet Sleddale, Westmorland and 2.29 in. at Swansea Waterworks, Brecknockshire.
15th	2.45 in. at Thirlmere, Cumberland.
16th	2.22 in. at Cruadhach, Inverness-shire and 2.04 in. at Vementry, Shetland.
23rd	3.29 in. at Ardrishaig, and 2.63 in. at Kingairloch, both in Argyllshire.

Thunderstorms occurred, locally, on the 3rd and 4th and on most days in the second and third weeks.

Snow or sleet showers fell locally in Scotland on the 16th to 18th and from the 24th to the 29th. Snow lay on some high peaks in Scotland from the 17th to the 20th and the 26th to the 30th.

Sunshine.—In contrast to the preceding summer months, sunshine in September substantially exceeded the average in most districts, the percentages of the average for the period 1921–50 being 120 over England and Wales, 105 over Scotland and 112 over Northern Ireland. In England and Wales it was the sunniest September since 1940. Sunshine was less than average at a number of places in the west of Scotland, locally on the south-east and south-west coasts of England and at one or two places elsewhere. In most other parts there was a considerable excess.

Fog.—There was often very local fog but it occurred more widely at times, mainly on the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 14th, 18th, 19th, 23rd and 30th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 19 nights. Following damage by lightning to a house in Southport on the 20th, ball lightning was observed.