

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. 41, No. 8.

ISSUED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE.

Price 9d. Net, Post free, 10d.

Annual Subscription, including
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AUGUST, 1924: COOL AND DULL GENERALLY, WITH FREQUENT RAIN.

General.—The weather during August was mainly cool and unsettled, with westerly winds. At the beginning of the month rain fell generally over the whole country, but this was followed by a short spell of anticyclonic conditions from the 6th to the 10th, during which period 13 and 14 hours of bright sunshine were registered daily at several stations. At a few places in the north-eastern counties the week ending the 9th was rainless. On the 11th the approach of a depression south of Iceland caused a renewal of unsettled weather on the western seaboard, and this subsequently spread south-eastwards. For the rest of the month pressure continued generally low in the north and north-west, and rain fell repeatedly over the whole country. High winds or gales occurred in the English Channel and some other parts of the coast on the 17th.

The general character of the month is illustrated by the following remarks taken from the observers' notes:—Arlington (Devon).—The wettest August since 1912, when a total of 339mm. was registered. Berwick-upon-Tweed.—Dull, damp month, humid and calm. Copdock (Suffolk).—A very disappointing month, dull, wet and cold. Sunshine 20 per cent. below average and rainfall and raindays some 30 per cent. above average. Temperature much below normal. Skegness.—An average August. Torquay.—The outstanding features of the month were the absence of high day temperatures, dull and overcast skies with short periods of bright sunshine, frequent drizzle. Walton-on-Naze.—The month was remarkable for very low temperatures, scanty sunshine, high humidity and the unusual number of thunderstorms. Cranford House (nr. Aberdeen).—Wet, cold and little sunshine. Portree (Isle of Skye).—Weather very unsettled and wet. Robertson Manse (Roxburghshire).—From first to last a cloudy and rainy month. Dublin.—In fitting sequel to July, August proved a cloudy, cool and rainy month; wind almost entirely from between S.W. and N.W.

Pressure and Winds.—The mean pressure was below normal everywhere. The deviation of monthly means of pressure at fixed hours varied from -6.9mb. at Stornoway to -1.6mb. at Scilly. The isobars of mean pressure were irregular but trended mainly from W. to E. so that the prevailing winds were westerly.

Four primary depressions crossed some part of our Islands. The most noteworthy depression was the one whose track is lettered L on the chart; it crossed Ireland and England in an easterly direction on the 17th, causing local high winds or gales, and subsequently followed an unusual track, moving north-westwards from the North Sea and then returning slowly, first south then east across Scotland to the North Sea. The track, therefore, formed a complete loop during the period 18th to 23rd. Another depression (Track F) also pursued a very irregular course, traversing northern Scotland on the 12th and entering eastern England from the North Sea on the afternoon of the 13th. There was a spell of anticyclonic conditions from the 6th to the 10th. The highest recorded pressure, 1032mb., was experienced at several stations on the 8th and 9th; the lowest, 985mb., occurred at Liverpool (Bidston) and Sealand (Flint.) on the 17th.

The wind did not exceed a mean speed of 38 m.p.h. for the duration of an hour at any anemometer station. Gusts of 55 m.p.h. were recorded at South Shields and Spurn Head on the 25th and one of 53 m.p.h. at Birmingham on the 18th.

Temperature.—The mean temperature of Districts 1-10 was 57°F. The mean temperature of all Districts was below normal with the exception of Scotland N., which had an excess of 0.3°F. (mean temperature 55°F.). The largest deficiency, 2.5°F., was experienced in the Channel Isles and Scilly (mean temperature 59°F.). The week August 17th to 23rd was the coldest, but with very few exceptions the mean temperatures of all Districts were below normal during each week of the month.

There was a comparatively small range of temperature, the deviation from the normal being much more marked by day than by night. The night of the 4th to 5th was very warm in many parts of England, temperature not falling below 60°F. at some stations. Soil temperatures were in general somewhat below the normal, markedly so in Scotland, but were above the normal at a few English stations.

The extreme screen temperatures for the month were:—(England

and Wales) 79°F. at Walton-on-Naze on the 5th, Hull and Camden Square, London, on the 11th, 33°F. at Comondale (Yorks.) on the 28th; (Scotland) 73°F. at Gordon Castle on the 30th, 32°F. at West Linton (Peebles) on the 17th; (Ireland) 72°F. at Lisburn (Antrim) on the 4th, 40°F. at Ballinacurra and University College, Cork, on the 9th.

Ground frosts occurred at a few stations. Comondale (Yorks.) recorded a ground frost on four occasions. On the 9th the temperature on the ground was 29°F. at Rhayader (Radnor).

Precipitation.—Precipitation was in excess in seven Districts. In the remaining ones, Scotland N., England N.E. and E., Ireland S. and the Channel Isles and Scilly there was a very slight deficiency. Precipitation was under normal in several small and two relatively large areas, the first of the latter being an irregular region extending from northern England to central Scotland and the second embracing a considerable part of central and southern Ireland. Precipitation exceeding 150 per cent. of normal occurred in a number of local areas in England, Scotland and Ireland, the largest being one which extended from Co. Mayo to Co. Antrim. The distribution was very irregular. A few small areas in all three countries had under 75 per cent. of the normal. The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the normal was 113; the values for the several countries were:—England and Wales 114, Scotland 113, Ireland 112.

The week 3rd to 9th was the driest and the week 17th to 23rd the wettest. The heavy rainfall to the east of the Quantock Hills in Somerset on the early morning of the 19th was remarkable and gave the second largest fall ever recorded in one rainfall day in the British Isles. The rainfall at Brymore House, near Bridgwater, for the 24 hrs. ending 8h. G.M.T. on the 19th was 230mm., the amount for the 24 hrs. ending 9h. G.M.T. being about 239mm. The largest British fall on record is 243mm. at Sexey's School, Bruton (Somerset), on June 28th, 1917. The rate of fall at Brymore House was well over 25mm. per hour between 3h. and 7h. 30m. Very heavy hail accompanied the rain. Many rather heavy falls, chiefly associated with thunderstorms, were reported during the month; 83mm. fell at Inverurie (Aberdeen) on the 22nd, 51mm. at Stonyhurst on the 20th and 42mm. at Mallarany (Mayo) on the 27th. The wetness of the month was, however, largely due to the frequency of precipitation, not to its magnitude.

Among the heaviest total falls were 475mm. at The Styne, Seathwaite (Cumberland), 335mm. at Delphi Lodge, Mayo, and 305 mm. at Llyn Fawr (Glamorgan). At Logie Coldstone (Aberdeen) the month was the wettest August since 1878, and at Grantown-on-Spey (Elgin) the rainfall of the wet August of 1923 was exceeded.

Thunderstorms were frequent, and practically no stations in the eastern side of England or in the Midland Counties were entirely free from them. The largest number was 9 at Aldershot. In the western part of England thunderstorms were recorded at a good many stations. They were frequent in Scotland, but less so than in July. The most widespread one occurred on the afternoon of the 22nd.

Tenbury (Worcester) and Hampstead experienced 4 days of hail. Many stations reported no hail.

Sunshine.—The duration of sunshine was below normal in every District. The largest mean daily deficiency occurred in Scotland E. (1.39 hrs.) and the smallest (0.33 hr.) in Scotland N. England S.E. had 39 per cent. of the possible duration, while Scotland N. and E. had 22 per cent. The week August 3rd to 9th was the brightest, and the week 24th to 30th the least sunny. The two largest mean daily durations recorded were 6.89 hrs. at Guernsey and 6.86 hrs. at Ramsgate. Many daily durations exceeding 12 hrs. and a number exceeding 13 hrs. were obtained; Guernsey had 14.2 hrs. on the 2nd.

Fog.—Fog was infrequent at most stations and did not occur at all at the morning observation in many cases. Aberystwyth reported 10 and Bellingham (Northumberland) 6 occasions.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—Solar and lunar halos were again of very frequent occurrence. Parhelia were observed at Oxford on the 12th, 15th and 19th and at Clacton on the 22nd. A waterspout was seen at Ventnor about 10h. on the 20th.