

# MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

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

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## MAY 1932.—Dull. Excessively wet in England and Wales.

The most remarkable features of the weather of the month were the pronounced excess of rainfall in England and Wales and the destructive floods in the Midlands and Yorkshire.

The passage of a depression across southern England during the first three days occasioned rain in most parts of England and Wales, heavy falls, associated with thunderstorms, occurring in the Midlands and south-east on the 1st. As a result of these, many roads in the Chippenham, Swindon and Cricklade area and in the Ludlow, Kidderminster and Evesham area were rendered impassable. Meanwhile an anticyclone to the north of the British Isles maintained fair weather in parts of Scotland and Ireland. By the 3rd, cold northerly winds had set in over the country generally as the anticyclone extended southwards. Winds were strong locally about the 6th, whilst wintry showers occurred in northern districts. On the 8th a shallow depression off southern Ireland moved eastwards causing heavy rain in southern districts. During this period maximum temperatures in most places failed to exceed 55° F., and on the 6th 44° F. was the maximum recorded in parts of the Midlands and Scotland.

A complete change of weather occurred about the 11th. A deep depression lay over the Atlantic; southerly winds spread over the country and temperature rose considerably. There was heavy local rain on the 11th, 12th and 15th (Whit Sunday), but many sunny periods notably on the 14th and 17th (15.1 hrs. at Tiree on the 17th). On the 18th another deep depression approached from the Atlantic and there ensued the warmest spell of the month, temperature rising to 70° F. and over during the period 19th to 21st. A depression which moved from the English Channel to off the north-east coast of England on the 21st to 22nd caused unusually heavy rain and widespread destructive floods in western districts, the Midlands and Yorkshire. The areas most severely affected were in the Don Valley at Bentley, the districts in and around Burton, Derby and Nottingham and in Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

After the 21st followed a period of northerly winds and cool weather; at Kew the maximum temperature fell from 74° F. on the 20th to 53° F. on the 25th. On the 29th another depression approached from the Atlantic, temperature rose and heavy rain occurred in the south-west of Ireland, but in Scotland the 30th and 31st and in eastern England the 31st were sunny.

**Pressure and Winds.**—Monthly mean pressures at 7h. ranged from 1010 mb. to 1013 mb. and were everywhere below normal, the deficiency being slight in the extreme north and amounting to

about 5 mb. in the east of England. Winds were mainly light to moderate. There was a considerable frequency of northerly winds in northern districts.

**Temperature.**—Apart from brief warm spells about the 20th and towards the end of the month the days were mostly cool, markedly so from about the 4th to 9th. The nights, however, were often mild, so that mean temperatures were not very much below normal. The extreme temperatures for the month were:—(England and Wales) 77° F. at London (Regent's Park) on the 20th, 24° F. at Cantref (Brecknock) on the 8th, (Scotland) 73° F. at Ardtornish on the 31st, 23° F. at Braemar on the 8th, (Ireland) 68° F. at Killarney on the 21st, 27° F. at Markree Castle on the 8th.

**Precipitation.**—The general precipitation over the British Isles, expressed as a percentage of the normal for the standard period 1881–1915, was 174; the values for the constituent countries were:—England and Wales 221, Scotland 108, Ireland 134. Generalised rainfall values for England and Wales for earlier years back to 1727 have been computed recently and although the values for the earliest years are naturally less reliable, one may fairly conclude that May 1932 ranks as the wettest May over England and Wales as a whole for the past 160 years. Few places had less than 20 days with measurable precipitation. Amongst the largest daily falls were 78 mm. at Osgodby and 70 mm. at York on the 21st.

In striking contrast to the general marked excess of rainfall, a pronounced deficiency was recorded in the west of Scotland, Orkney and the Shetlands.

**Sunshine.**—In Orkney, the Southern Hebrides and the north-west of Ireland sunshine aggregates exceeded the normal; at Tiree the month was very sunny with a daily mean of 8.65 hours. With the exception of these restricted areas, sunshine aggregates were well below the normal, the deficiency being greatest in the Midlands where several places had less than half their normal May sunshine. In parts of England the month was the dullest May on record, e.g., at Kew Observatory, where records extend back to 1880.

**Fog.**—Coastal fog was reported frequently during the period 16th–20th, mainly along the east coast of Great Britain.

**Miscellaneous Phenomena.**—Aurora was observed locally in northern districts in Scotland on the 2nd, 4th, 5th and 8th.

Ball lightning was observed during a thunderstorm at Upper Heyford on the 1st.