

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

Summary of observations compiled from returns of official stations and voluntary observers.

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August 1969 — *Changeable with thundery spells in places*

Low pressure prevailed over the British Isles for most of the month. It was concentrated to the west or north-west until about the 20th thereafter transferring to the east or north-east.

Weather — During the first three weeks it was very warm at times but the last 10 days or so were cooler with mainly north-westerly winds. Thunderstorms occurred in most areas and there were a number of exceptionally heavy falls of rain locally especially in the south. Holiday traffic was frequently disrupted by temporary flooding following the heavier outbreaks of rain. On the other hand, many areas in west Scotland suffered from a water shortage.

Wind — Gales occurred locally on 19 days in England, 6 days in Wales and 3 days in Scotland. In general it was a quiet month and occurrences of gale-force winds were mostly localized and short-lived. However, winds became blustery in the north during the last 10 days especially in exposed areas. On the 23rd a gust of 55 kt occurred at Whitby (North Riding of Yorkshire) and a gust of 51 kt was recorded at Dounreay (Caithness) on the 27th.

Temperature — In Scotland, monthly mean temperature was about 1 degC above average and some places had their warmest August since 1959. In other districts mean temperature was near normal but it was slightly below average in south-west England.

The first half of the month was generally warm although nights were cool in the south. The 8th was a very warm day in most areas (the temperature reached 30.9°C at Jersey Airport) and it was hot in south-east England and East Anglia a few days later. Maxima recorded during the month included: 30.6°C at a number of places in East Anglia on the 10th and at North Heath (Sussex) on the 11th; 27.8°C on the 8th at Nairn Forres (Moray), Prestatyn (Flintshire) and Port Talbot (Glamorgan); 24.4°C at Portadown (Co. Armagh) on the 6th.

It was rather cool during the last 10 days. On the night of 23rd/24th there was slight frost in some upland areas in Scotland and ground frost was widespread in the north and occurred also in a few places farther south. Minimum temperatures recorded during the month at low-level stations included: -0.6°C at Achentoul (Sutherland), 2.5°C at Carlisle and 2.8°C at Ceinws (Montgomeryshire) all on the 24th; 1.6°C at Loughermore Forest (Co. Londonderry) on the 6th.

Rainfall — Most of Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England were drier than normal. Less than half the average rainfall occurred in many parts of Northern Ireland (where it was, in general, the driest August since 1959) and in south-west Scotland. Some areas in north-east England had less than a third of the normal rainfall. The distribution of monthly rainfall in the remaining areas was very variable due to some intense local falls. The distribution in Kent provides an extreme example; in the south-west of the county rainfall was about normal, in the east it was over three times the average. Less than half the normal rainfall fell in parts of the West country.

Heavy thundery rain in Wales and the West Country on the 1st and 2nd caused flooding in some areas. A small depression brought rain on the evening of the 2nd to south-east England and spread northwards during the next day. Rain was very heavy locally and flooding occurred at places as far apart as Surrey and Staffordshire. At Hampton, in south-west London, over 96 mm of rain (nearly twice the monthly average) fell in 10 hours during which more than 31 mm occurred in 30 minutes. These falls are classified as 'remarkable' rainfalls and may be expected to occur, on average, on only one day in 40 years. At Slough (Buckinghamshire) a 'daily' fall of 97 mm was recorded on the 2nd and falls in excess of 50 mm occurred in many areas. At Norwich on the 5th, 24 mm of rain fell in 50 minutes and caused flooding in parts of the city.

Heavy rain affected many areas from the 8th to 12th. At Torquay, 25 mm fell in 30 minutes on the 8th and on the next day several places in Scotland recorded 'daily' falls of over 50 mm. On the 11th and 12th flooding occurred in many areas of England and Wales following heavy rain at Tredegar (Monmouthshire) 74 mm were recorded in the 24-hours ending 0900 GMT on the 12th. Exceptionally heavy rain fell in south-east England and East Anglia on the 15th. A 'remarkable' fall of 46 mm in 1 hour occurred at Manston (Kent); this is almost the average for the whole month. On the 16th, during a thunderstorm, a 'very rare' rainfall of nearly 78 mm occurred in two hours at Coulter Reservoir (Lanarkshire). After a showery day in Northern Ireland on the 19th a 'daily' fall of 51 mm was recorded at Glenderg Forest (Co. Tyrone).

Thunder was reported on 19 days in England, 16 days in Scotland, 6 days in Wales and 2 days in Northern Ireland. It occurred on 7 days locally in Norfolk and on 6 days at places in south-east England and in the Birmingham area; this is about twice the average number for August in these areas. Thunderstorms were sometimes widespread and lightning strikes causing damage to property and electric power installations were often reported. Despite the frequent thunder, reports of hail were not common.

Sunshine — In most of Scotland monthly sunshine amounts were rather above average but they were slightly below elsewhere. The least favoured area was East Anglia, and at Mildenhall (Suffolk) it was the dullest August since records began in 1936. Although Tiree (Inner Hebrides) had its dullest August since 1942, the Shetlands and parts of southern Scotland had excesses of sunshine. In the Glasgow area, where amounts were nearly 50 per cent above the normal, it was the sunniest August since 1947.

Fog — Hill and coastal fog occurred in many parts of Scotland during the first week and air traffic was disrupted at times. Around mid-month coastal fog was widespread in eastern areas and, on the 18th, it was extensive in exposed areas of southern and western England.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was observed on 2 nights in Scotland.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES, August 1969

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE °C					EARTH TEMP. °C		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUN-SHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 30 cm.	Mean 122 cm			
0 SCOTLAND, N.	26.1	3.5	+1.1	+1.0	+1.0	+0.6	0.0	-2	71	111
1 SCOTLAND, E.	27.8	3.9	+0.9	+1.2	+1.0	+0.7	+0.6	-3	68	109
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	28.2	3.3	-0.5	+0.6	0.0	+0.8	+0.3	-1	49	85
3 ENGLAND, E.	30.6	5.6	-0.7	+0.6	0.0	+0.3	+0.5	+3	102	76
4 MIDLANDS	28.9	5.0	-0.2	+0.9	+0.3	+0.9	+0.8	+2	98	82
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	30.2	5.3	0.0	+0.6	+0.3	+0.1	-0.1	+2	126	86
6 SCOTLAND, W.	26.6	-0.1	+0.8	+0.8	+0.8	+0.9	+0.4	-3	53	112
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N.Wales	26.4	2.8	+0.2	+0.9	+0.6	+0.2	+0.6	-2	78	87
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S.Wales	27.2	3.3	-0.3	+0.3	0.0	+0.1	+0.2	-4	120	97
N.IRELAND	24.1	3.8	+0.1	+0.7	+0.4	-	-	-3	54	99
SCOTLAND	27.8	-0.1	+0.9	+1.0	+0.9	-	-	-3	71	111
ENG. and WALES	30.6	2.8	-0.3	+0.2	+0.2	-	-	0	95	85

*Highest Max. and Lowest Min. of the District Value Stations.