

## MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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## MAY, 1933.—A warm but dull month with frequent thunderstorms

Weather conditions during the first week were mainly dominated by a depression, centred off south-west Portugal on the 1st, which moved northward to the west coast of Ireland, while secondaries moved round it in a counter-clockwise direction. On the 7th the main centre moved across the country and was followed by a new Atlantic depression which passed across Scotland to the North Sea between the 9th and 10th. Rain was reported daily from the 1st–10th and thunderstorms occurred at times, particularly between the 1st and 3rd and on the 6th and 9th. Rainfall measurements were heavy occasionally in the south, but little was recorded in the northern half of Scotland. After the 10th the pressure distribution became rather indefinite and subsequently between the 15th and 18th a wedge of high pressure extending southward from an anticyclone in the region of Jan Mayn, crossed the country from west to east. For a time pressure was high to the east of the British Isles and low to the west, with rather unsettled weather in the west and north and mainly fine, warm weather in the south and east.

Ultimately anticyclones were established off our south-west coasts and to the north-east or north of Great Britain, while low pressure prevailed at first over France and later over west Russia and the Baltic. From the 25th to 27th shallow secondaries passed south or south-east across the British Isles. During the period 22nd–29th, thunder was frequently reported and heavy local rain occurred at times, but good sunshine records were also obtained. On the 30th a large depression on the Atlantic spread eastward and caused fairly heavy rain in the south of Ireland.

**Pressure and Wind.**—Pressure was generally a little below normal except in the extreme north-east of Scotland. The deficiency was greatest in the west, where it amounted to 1.7 mb. at Birr Castle, 1.4 mb. at Roche's Point and Valentia and 1.1 mb. at Stornoway. At Lerwick the excess was 1.8 mb. and at Wick 1.2 mb. An interesting feature of the mean pressure distribution was its uniformity over the greater part of England and eastern Scotland. (See chart of mean pressure.) At Southport the pressure was more steady than in any previous May since 1893.

Strong winds occurred at times during the unsettled period from the 2nd to the 10th, particularly on the 2nd, 3rd and 9th, and again on the 25th. An easterly gale was recorded locally in England and Ireland around the 2nd. In Scotland, no gales were recorded, and the month was in many areas one of the quietest Mays on record.

**Temperature.**—For the third month in succession mean temperature in all districts was well above the normal, a notable feature being the mild nights. The warmest spell occurred generally between the 19th and 23rd: at several places in east and south-east England day temperature approached 80° F. on the 22nd and 23rd, while in Ireland 70° F. was reached or slightly exceeded locally on the same days, and in Scotland 70° F. or above was recorded at some places between the 20th and 22nd. In parts of Ireland the warmest day occurred on the 28th or 29th. The coldest nights were experienced as a rule on the 1st, 2nd, 14th, 15th and 28th. Temperature in the screen fell to 25° F. at Balmoral and Dalwhinnie on the 2nd and grass minima of 13° F. and 17° F. were registered respectively at Dalwhinnie on the 2nd and at Logie Coldstone on the 3rd.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 82° F. at Stroud Green (London) on the 23rd, 29° F. at Rickmansworth on the 15th; (Scotland) 73° F. at Perth on the 21st, and at Ruthwell and Kilmarnock on the 22nd, 25° F. at Dalwhinnie and Balmoral on the 2nd; (Ireland) 72° F. at Waterford on the 28th, 33° F. at Markree Castle on the 14th, 28th and 29th.

**Precipitation.**—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the normal for the period 1881–1915 was 94, the values for the constituent countries being England and Wales 97, Scotland 69, Ireland 114.

Rainfall was decidedly in excess of the normal in southern Ireland but it was much more variable in northern districts, some stations recording an appreciable deficiency while others recorded an excess. In northern and eastern Scotland the month was notably dry, while in the south and west of Scotland, and in England rainfall totals were very irregular owing to the numerous thunderstorms. Among the frequent thunderstorms may be mentioned those of the 2nd, 6th, 9th, 22nd, 23rd, 28th and 29th. The storm on the 23rd was accompanied by heavy downpours in Surrey; at Brookwood 62 mm. fell in 3½ hours, at Woking 58 mm. in about 2 hours and in the 24 hours covering this period 63 mm. were recorded at Banstead and 57 mm. at Wisley. There were severe storms also on that day in north-east England, and both there and in Surrey large hailstones accompanied the thunder locally. At West Kirby, in Cheshire, 6 mm. of rain fell in 5 min. in a thunderstorm on the 20th. Other heavy falls include 56 mm. at Evan Water on the 22nd, 49 mm. at Limerick on the 6th and 40 mm. at Dunoon on the 4th.

A slight snow shower was reported at Braemar on the 1st and at Huddersfield on the 2nd, and very slight sleet was recorded at Manchester on the early morning of the 11th.

**Sunshine.**—The month was decidedly dull, sunshine aggregates being appreciably below the normal in all districts except the Channel Islands (see Table I). The deficiency was most marked in Scotland E., England N.E. and Scotland N. At Blackford Hill Observatory, Edinburgh, it was the most sunless May since records were started and, at Lerwick, in the Shetland Isles, the deficiency amounted to more than 4 hours per day. Conditions improved during the latter part of the month, and after the 18th good daily records were often recorded. For example, 15.3 hours were registered at Tiree on the 30th and 14.7 hours at Scilly and Valentia on the 22nd and at Falmouth and Scilly on the 23rd. The 15th was also sunny in many places.

**Fog.**—Fog occurred fairly frequently, particularly between the 5th and 8th, on the 13th, between the 16th and 24th and on the 30th. It was thick at times locally especially from the 5th–8th, on the 13th, from the 16th–19th and on the 23rd. It was also thick at Lerwick on the 25th.

**Miscellaneous Phenomena.**—The aurora was observed in the northern and north-western districts of Scotland on the nights of the 1st and 2nd. At Oxford solar haloes were noted on 17 days and a sun pillar on the evening of the 12th. A sun pillar was reported at Hastings on the 15th.

A small but violent whirlwind crossed the Observatory grounds at Eskdalemuir from north to south at 13h. 12m. G.M.T. on May 14th (see Meteorological Magazine, vol. 68, p. 117).