

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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SEPTEMBER, 1939.—Dry; unusually warm 1st-9th.

The weather of the month was dry on the whole, the latter half of the month being particularly dry. The first nine days were unusually warm and the last week was cool. Thunderstorms were widespread and severe locally from the 2nd to 3rd.

During the opening days pressure was low on the Atlantic, while secondary depressions moved in a northerly direction over the British Isles. On the 3rd and 4th a closed secondary moved from the south of Ireland to northward of Scotland. Rainfall was heavy locally from the 1st-3rd, while scattered showers occurred on the 4th and thunder was reported daily from the 2nd-4th. Temperature was high for the season and there were some good records of bright sunshine on the 3rd and 4th.

Pressure rose over the British Isles on the 4th and from the 5th-8th high pressure on the continent extended over England; fair, warm weather prevailed for the most part in England but rain fell at times in Scotland and Ireland. Mainly fair weather prevailed in England on the 9th but a depression approaching Scotland from the west brought further rain to Scotland and north Ireland. From the 10th-12th a depression off north-west Scotland moved east-south-east to the Netherlands and on the 13th a new disturbance moved south-east from the Færoes to south Scandinavia; occasional rain occurred and the northerly winds in the rear of these disturbances brought a fall of temperature. Local showers were reported on the 14th and rain fell in eastern districts of England on the 15th.

On the 15th a wedge of high pressure moved eastward over the British Isles and thereafter a spell of anticyclonic conditions prevailed over the greater part of the country until the end of the month. For the most part the anticyclone was centred over or to the north-west of Scotland. This period was very dry on the whole; numerous places experienced an absolute drought from the 14th or 15th to the 29th or 30th. Some local rain occurred, however, chiefly in the eastern districts of England, and rain was reported locally in Scotland on the 30th.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure exceeded the average, the excess being greatest in the north-west; the deviation from the average at 7h. ranged from +2.5 mb. at Yarmouth to +8.9 mb. at Stornoway. Northerly or easterly winds were unusually prevalent after the 10th; at Southport, the frequency of north-easterly winds was greater in September 1939 than in any previous September since records were first taken at the Fernley Observatory in 1871. The month was quiet in some parts; for example, at Southport the mean daily movement of the wind was 101 miles below the average. Local gales were recorded, however, at times; a gale was reported at Lerwick on the night of the 8th-9th, at Lerwick and St. Abb's Head on the 11th and at Banff on the 24th. Strong easterly winds occurred at the Lizard between the 27th-29th. Among the highest speeds recorded in gusts were 67 m.p.h. at Lerwick on the 8th, 57 m.p.h. at the Lizard on the 28th and 53 m.p.h. at Bidston on the 3rd and Stornoway on the 9th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average, the excess ranging from 1.1°F. in Ireland, N. to 2.7°F. in England, E. The first nine days were warm and the last week was cool. Some high night minima were registered during the first few days; for example, 68°F. at Dovercourt on the 1st, Redcar on the 2nd and Felixstowe on the 3rd. Ground frosts were fairly widespread from the 28th to 30th.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 83°F. at Southend on the 8th, 27°F. at Newport, Shropshire, and at Newton Rigg on the 28th; (Scotland) 76°F. at Kilmarnock on the 2nd, 25°F. at West Linton on the 28th; (Ireland) 76°F. at Glasnevin, Dublin, and Rathfarnham on the 1st and 30°F. at Birr Castle on the 29th and at Markree Castle on the 30th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 63, the values for the constituent countries being England and Wales 53, Scotland 78 and Ireland 74.

In Scotland, less than the average occurred over most of the country but more than the average occurred locally in the east and south-west. Less than 50 per cent. occurred over a fairly large area in the north and at Glen Afton in Ayrshire. In Ireland more than the average was received in a strip down the eastern side from County Antrim to Waterford, while less than half the average occurred in the west from County Sligo to County Kerry. In England more than the average was received in small patches in the eastern half of the country and less than 25 per cent. of the average at a number of places in Wales and south-west England and at Malvern and Tenterden. The period from the 14th onward was excessively dry and a large number of places experienced an absolute drought from the 14th or 15th to the 29th or 30th. At Ross-on-Wye, it was the driest September, with one exception, since 1910.

Among the heaviest falls in 24 hours were:—

2nd 2.94 in. at Swanage, 2.43 in. at Poole, 2.14 in. at Bournemouth and 2.04 in. at Pontefract.

3rd 3.88 in. at Skallary (Barra), 3.25 in. at Dunlossit (Islay), 3.17 in. at Eallabus (Islay), 2.39 in. at Bunessan (Mull) and 2.21 in. at Glenbranter.

Thunderstorms occurred at times mainly from the 2nd-4th, 10th-11th, and on the 30th. They were widespread and severe in many parts from the 2nd to 3rd. The unusually heavy rain in Islay on the 3rd caused flooding which was said to be the worst experienced on that island. Serious landslides occurred on both sides of Loch Eck.

Sunshine.—Broadly speaking, in England and Wales sunshine exceeded the average in southern England, south Wales and the Channel Islands and was deficient in northern England, north Wales and most of the Midlands. In Ireland there was, on the whole, an appreciable deficiency but locally in the north-west and south-west there was an excess. In Scotland, sunshine was variable; there was a lack of sunshine at most places in the east and an excess at numerous places in the north and west. The percentages of the average for the districts ranged from 73 in England, N.E. to 115 in England, S.W. and S. Wales and 124 in the Channel Islands.

Fog.—Fog occurred at times, mainly from the 1st-10th, 26th and 28th-30th. It was reported rather frequently in the Clyde area; at Greenock it was recorded on nine days at the morning observation hour.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on nine nights; it was also observed at Gorleston on the night of the 19th-20th. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on eight days.