

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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AUGUST, 1933.—An unusually warm and sunny month; notably dry in most districts but wet in north-west Scotland and locally in north-west Ireland.

The anticyclone, which moved eastward over the British Isles in the rear of the deep depression which crossed Scotland on July 31st, maintained fair, notably warm weather during the first five days of August. From the 5th to the 9th shallow troughs of low pressure passed eastward across the country and caused occasional rain, mainly in the north and west; meanwhile over the greater part of England the weather continued fair and very warm. By the 10th an extension of an anticyclone centred off our south-west coasts lay over the British Isles, but a shallow low off north-west Spain moved north-east and caused thunderstorms in southern England on the 11th and 12th. Subsequently, from the 14th to the 19th depressions moving eastward off our northern seaboard caused a spell of unsettled weather generally, and after the 19th these disturbances took a south-easterly track, and conditions continued unsettled but cooler.

On the 24th a wedge of high pressure crossed Great Britain, and subsequently pressure became high on the Continent and low to the west and north-west of the British Isles. A period of very warm, sunny weather ensued over most of England, but unsettled conditions with rain at times prevailed in Scotland and Ireland. Heavy rain, locally in Scotland and in Ireland on the 27th and in Wales and north-west England on the 28th, was associated with a secondary depression or trough which developed off the west of Ireland and moved east. Temperature during this second warm spell reached its highest point in eastern districts of England on the 28th or 29th: 90° F. was registered at Cranwell and Cleethorpes on the 28th and at Maldon on the 29th.

Pressure and Wind.—Pressure was above the normal except in the extreme north and north-west of Scotland, the deviation at 7h. varying from -1.7 mb. at Stornoway to +3.4 mb. at the Scilly Isles and +3.7 mb. at Liverpool. The windiest periods occurred for the most part during the early hours of the 1st, on the 7th and 8th, the 15th, and the 17th and 18th, and gales were reported locally on each of these days: a gale was also reported at Lerwick on the 28th. Among the highest velocities reported in gusts were 64 m.p.h. at Lerwick on the 28th and at Kirkwall on the 8th, 62 m.p.h. at Dunfanaghy Road, and 60 m.p.h. at Butt of Lewis on the 17th.

Temperature.—For the sixth successive month, mean temperature was well above the normal in all districts, the excess for August ranging from 2.4° F. in Scotland, W., and Ireland, N., to 4.9° F. in England, N.E. In Scotland and in many parts of England it was the warmest August since the record month of that name in 1911. In Ireland, August, 1916, was warmer for the country as a whole. At Greenwich Observatory the mean temperature, 66.5° F., is the highest for August since 1841, apart from the value 67.5° F. attained in August, 1911. At Kew Observatory there were 12 days with a maximum temperature above 77° F. These figures have been analysed back to 1901, and only in 1911 (when there were 13 such days) have as many as 10 days been recorded in the month of August.

There were two warm spells, one from the 2nd to the 8th or 9th, and the other from the 26th to the 29th. In most parts the highest temperature occurred on the 5th or 6th: in Scotland 84° F. was reached at Kelso and 83° F. at Ruthwell, Kilmarnock, and Paisley on the 5th, and in Ireland 80° F. was reached or exceeded at many places on the 5th and 6th. It was in England, however, that the highest temperatures were registered: 90° F. or above was recorded at a large number of stations in the Midlands, south-east and east England on the 6th, and 93° F. was touched at Wisley, Rickmansworth, and Camden Square. The second warm spell was most pronounced in the eastern and Midland

districts of England, and 90° F. was registered at Hull, Cranwell, Cleethorpes, and Attenborough on the 28th, and at Maldon, Essex, on the 29th. The mornings of the 7th, 12th, 17th, 22nd to 25th and the 31st were among the coldest: at Dalwhinnie a grass minimum of 21° F. was recorded on the 7th and 12th, and a screen minimum of 32° F. on the 12th. The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 93° F. at Rickmansworth, Camden Square (London), and Wisley on the 6th, 37° F. at Rickmansworth on the 17th; (Scotland) 84° F. at Kelso on the 5th, 32° F. at Dalwhinnie on the 12th; (Ireland) 82° F. at Mountmellick and Kilkenny on the 5th, 39° F. at Markree Castle on the 7th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the normal for the period 1881–1915 was 51, the values for the constituent countries being England and Wales 38, Scotland 75, and Ireland 58. As far as can be ascertained at present the value 38 is the lowest in August for England and Wales since 1818, when the percentage was only 20. In Scotland the month was wet in the north-west and west and dry in the south and east. Locally in the east it was the driest August on record, and at some places in the west it was the wettest: at Ardgour, Achfary, and Portree the totals in each case exceeded 10 inches. In Ireland, at a few places in counties Mayo and Galway rainfall exceeded the normal, but in the east and south-east there was a noteworthy deficiency: at Phoenix Park, Dublin, it was the driest August since records were begun in 1877, apart from the equally dry one of 1913.

Thunderstorms were fairly frequent, particularly on the 5th and 6th, from the 10th–14th and 20th–23rd, among the more severe being those in south-west England between the 11th and 13th (a man was killed by lightning at Weymouth on the 13th), and locally in the Midlands and north-west England on the 21st. Torrential rain caused severe flooding in Ireland and Scotland on the 27th, and heavy rain caused some flooding in Blackpool on the 28th. Among notable falls in 24 hours were 76 mm. at Aasleagh House and 74 mm. at Delphi Lodge in County Mayo, and 70 mm. at Stornoway on the 27th. Unusual falls in short periods included 43 mm. in 1 hour at Fowey on the 11th, and 26 mm. in 20 minutes at Yaxley, near Eye, Suffolk, on the 6th.

Sunshine.—Abundant sunshine was one of the noteworthy features of the weather of the month, and it was only at a very few isolated stations that less than the normal was recorded. The greatest deficiency occurred at the Scilly Isles, where the daily average was nearly 1 hour below the normal. In the Midland Counties and in south-east England, 135 and 132 per cent. of the normal were recorded respectively (see Table I). At a number of individual stations the duration was the highest on record for August. For example, at Aberdeen (188 hours), Birmingham (229 hours), and Hampstead (246 hours), the totals were the greatest since records were begun in 1881, 1897, and 1910 respectively. At Worthing, 281 hours was the highest since 1899, when 298 hours were registered. In many parts of England there was no single day with a complete absence of bright sunshine.

Fog.—Local fog occurred frequently, particularly in England, from the 2nd to the 10th and from the 24th to the end of the month. There was also some fog on the 12th and 15th; on the latter date it was thick at Wick and Lerwick.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed at Baltasound on the night of the 20th. At Oxford solar haloes were noted on 15 days.