

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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August 1968 — *Dull and wet in the south-east, sunny in Scotland and Northern Ireland.*

Weather was mainly cyclonic in character in the south and east on the 1st–11th and in most districts on the 12th–21st, otherwise it was dominated by anticyclones chiefly over the northern part of the country.

The first five days were fine and warm in northern and western districts as an anticyclone drifted slowly from south-west England to become centred off the north of Scotland by the 5th. In east and south-east England, however, weather was dull and cool with north to north-east winds and occasional thundery rain.

A depression over north-east France brought rain, locally heavy, to south-east England on the 6th, and this rain spread over much of the southern half of England on the 7th–9th bringing the first rain to many south-western districts for about three weeks. The 10th and 11th were dry, sunny days followed by widespread fog at night. However, anticyclones were still situated to the north and west of the British Isles and weather in Scotland and Northern Ireland continued generally fine and warm until the 11th.

The weather pattern changed on the 12th as a deepening complex depression approached western Ireland. This depression moved across northern England on the 13th bringing to most districts periods of heavy rain accompanied by thunder in places. Northerly winds spread over the country on the 14th as the depression moved eastwards, and temperature everywhere fell sharply. From then until the 17th a complex low pressure system covered the British Isles and adjacent sea areas. As this system moved slowly eastwards rain, heavy at times, alternated with showery periods. There were also local thunderstorms.

The 18th was a generally sunny day as a ridge of high pressure moved from the west of Ireland to join an area of rising pressure in western Europe. A trough of low pressure moving north-eastwards on the 19th brought rain to most districts and there were particularly heavy falls in the north-west. With the return of south-westerly winds temperatures on the 20th rose a little above average generally. Further troughs brought some rain to western and northern districts on the 20th and 21st.

By the 22nd high pressure extended from the Azores to Scandinavia and weather became mainly dry and rather warm for about a week. The warmest days were the 22nd and 23rd when temperatures rose to 28°C at places as far apart as Ross-on-Wye and Cleethorpes. From the 24th an anticyclone lay to the north of Scotland and north-easterly winds brought cooler weather with some drizzle to north-eastern coastal areas.

The warm dry spell ended on the 27th as thunderstorms developed in south-east England. During the next two days temperatures were again below average in a general north-easterly airstream associated with low pressure over France. Rain from a deep depression south of Iceland reached north-western districts on the 30th and spread over the remainder of the country on the 31st.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was considerably above the 1931–60 average in Scotland and northern England but slightly below average in south-east England. The deviation at 0900 GMT ranged from +6.0 mb at Kinloss to –1.1 mb at Eastbourne. Surface winds were mainly light and variable in the north on the 1st–12th and 23rd–29th but were mainly north-easterly in the east and south of the country during these periods. North-westerlies predominated on the 13th–18th and south-westerlies on the 19th–22nd and 30th–31st. Wind reached gale force on the 14th and 15th in the English Channel and on the 30th in the Hebrides when a gust of 54 kt was recorded at Stornoway.

Temperature — Maximum temperatures were slightly above the average in western and northern districts but below average in the east

and south. The third week was the coldest over much of the country. Air frost was reported at some upland places in Scotland. Temperature was above average for most of the fourth week, the warmest days being the 22nd and 23rd.

Extremes included: (England and Wales) 29.4°C at West Camel on the 23rd, 0.6°C at Kielder Castle on the 10th and 19th; (Scotland) 25.6°C at Kelso on the 23rd and at Glenlee and Dinnet on the 27th, –0.6°C at Cairngorm on the 18th, at Carnwath on the 10th and 19th and Glen Etive on the 19th; (Northern Ireland) 24.5°C at Strabane Convent on the 4th, 1.8°C at Loughermore Forest on the 4th.

Rainfall — Practically the whole of north-west Scotland and large areas in south and east Scotland and in northern England as well as parts of Wales and south-west England had less than half their average rainfall. But in east and south-east England and in the east Midlands, rainfall was above average; it was 150–200 per cent of average over much of East Anglia.

Snow fell on the Cairngorms during the third week.

Thunder was heard on 10 days in Scotland and on 17 days in England and Wales. Thunderstorms were reported mainly during the first and third weeks and were widespread on the 16th and 17th.

Sunshine — One of the notable features of the month was the great difference in sunshine duration between the north-west and south-east. Sunshine was above average over the whole of Scotland and Northern Ireland except in Zetland and a small part of south-east Scotland; it was more than 150 per cent of the average in parts of Western Scotland where it was the sunniest August for over 20 years. On the other hand many parts of eastern and southern England had only 60–70 per cent of their average sunshine. Gorleston had its dullest August since records began in 1906.

Fog — Localized fog at 0900 GMT was reported on 10 days in Scotland and on 19 days in England and Wales. Sea fog patches affected eastern coastal areas during the first week and overnight fog was fairly widespread in southern England on the 10th–12th and 21st–24th but cleared quickly during the morning.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was visible on three nights.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES, AUGUST, 1968

| DISTRICTS | AIR TEMPERATURE °C | | | | | EARTH TEMP. °C. | | RAIN DAYS | RAIN-FALL | SUNSHINE |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|------|------|------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|----------|
| | *Highest Max. | *Lowest Min. | Max. | Min. | Mean | Mean 30 cm. | Mean 100 cm. | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Difference from Average | | | | | | | | % of Average | | |
| 0 SCOTLAND, N. | 22.8 | 2.9 | +0.1 | -1.1 | -0.5 | -0.5 | -0.5 | -8 | 52 | 128 |
| 1 SCOTLAND, E. | 22.8 | 2.8 | -0.7 | -0.4 | -0.5 | 0.0 | -0.1 | -5 | 47 | 120 |
| 2 ENGLAND, N.E. | 27.8 | 4.8 | -1.5 | +0.1 | -0.7 | -0.1 | -0.2 | 0 | 78 | 74 |
| 3 ENGLAND, E. | 26.7 | 6.7 | -1.9 | +0.1 | -0.8 | -0.9 | -0.7 | +1 | 161 | 64 |
| 4 MIDLANDS | 28.3 | 5.6 | -1.5 | +0.1 | -0.7 | -0.5 | -0.3 | +1 | 107 | 74 |
| 5 ENGLAND, S.E. | 27.1 | 5.6 | -1.3 | +0.5 | -0.4 | -1.1 | -0.9 | +1 | 107 | 66 |
| 6 SCOTLAND, W. | 22.8 | 1.7 | +0.1 | -0.6 | -0.2 | +0.1 | -0.3 | -8 | 68 | 129 |
| 7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales | 26.2 | 5.6 | +0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | -0.1 | -0.2 | -6 | 61 | 109 |
| 8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales | 28.3 | 6.1 | -0.6 | +0.3 | -0.1 | -0.3 | -0.1 | -1 | 70 | 66 |
| N. IRELAND | 23.9 | 2.2 | +1.1 | -1.6 | -0.2 | - | - | -6 | 73 | 144 |
| SCOTLAND | 22.8 | 1.7 | -0.2 | -0.7 | -0.4 | - | - | -7 | 57 | 126 |
| ENG. and WALES | 28.3 | 4.8 | -1.1 | +0.2 | -0.5 | - | - | -1 | 92 | 75 |

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

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