



## Weather Front.

**August 2023/1923.**

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### Observers Notes.

**Middleton:** An uneventful month apart from the second lowest air pressure on the station record for August; on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 984.1 mb. Only 6 days reached a maximum temperature of 21.1 C compared to 20 in August 2022.

**Derby:** Continuing with the changeable theme, with temperatures similar to July.

**Mickleover:** Only two days this August when the maximum temperature exceeded 25 C. The mean temperature was equal to August 2021.

**Mountsorrel:** A slightly cooler month. A very cool start with the coldest August maximum, on the station record, occurring on the 5<sup>th</sup>. The weather improved after the 7<sup>th</sup>, but no intense heat arrived. Rainfall and sunshine were below average.

**Saltfleetby:** A heavy shower, with thunder, occurred during the afternoon of the 26<sup>th</sup>. On the 27<sup>th</sup> very heavy, but brief, downpours occurred during the afternoon.

**Lowdham:** Radcliffe-on-Trent sunshine was 169.2 hours, which equates to 98% of the 1991-2020 average.

**Ely:** The mean maximum was just above average, but the mean minimum was the lowest for the month since 1993. The air pressure of 981 mb, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, was the lowest for the current year, and the lowest for August on the station record.

**Pitsford:** As July, largely unsettled but with some drier interludes.

### UK overview<sup>i</sup> August 2023.

August was a rather mixed and unsettled month, continuing the theme of July, although to a slightly lesser extent. Low pressure systems mostly dominated the weather, with any brief spells of high pressure bringing settled weather generally short-lived in nature. Summer warmth was mostly confined to southern and eastern areas, with only one really hot day on 10th when temperatures reached the mid to high 20s quite widely. There were some notably

cool spells; on 5th August maximum temperatures struggled to reach even 15°C across many eastern areas. Any periods of dry weather were also fairly brief. Two named storms, Antoni on 5th and Betty on 18th to 19th brought unseasonably wet and windy weather to many parts of the UK. Maximum temperatures for the month overall were near average, with minimum temperatures slightly above average across the north and west. The UK monthly mean temperature was 0.2°C above average. The rainfall pattern was variable but generally near average with the UK recording 95%. Sunshine was slightly below average with 92% and it was dull across some western areas, with only 79% of average sunshine hours for Wales and south-west England, and 85% for Northern Ireland. Reference climatology used for calculating anomalies is the period 1991-2020 unless otherwise stated.

### **Weather impacts •**

#### **Impacts from thunderstorms and wet and windy weather, including two named storms.**

The often unseasonably unsettled weather brought various impacts through the month. Storm Antoni brought strong winds and heavy rain on 5th August, with the Met Office issuing an amber wind warning for parts of Wales and south-west England – and many people on holiday at this time of year. A number of events were cancelled including the Cardigan County Show and Big Welsh Bite food and drink festival at Pontypridd. In the south-west, train services between Exeter and Penzance were disrupted and around 1500 properties experienced power cuts in Cornwall. Trains were cancelled in the Brighton area and an event was also cancelled on the Isle of Wight. Some flooding occurred in parts of north-east Scotland and in northeast England around Whitby, Scarborough, Redcar and Cleveland. After a thundery breakdown, storm Betty on 18th to 19th brought strong winds and heavy rain although with no significant weather impacts reported. Another low-pressure system brought some heavy rain on the 25th to 27th August affecting parts of northwest, northeast and southeast England and southeast Scotland. Parts of Merseyside and north Cheshire were affected by surface water flooding and there were two fatalities when a car was submerged at a rail underpass in Liverpool. The M57 was closed and the M53 was also affected by flooding.

### **August 1923.**

#### **Observers Notes.<sup>ii</sup>**

**Berkhamsted:** A spell of fine warm weather during the first fortnight.

**Copdock (Suffolk):** The sunniest August in my record, with the exception of August 1911. Rainfall considerably below average.

**Fulbeck:** Thundery conditions prevailed during the latter end of the month.

**Keswick:** The wettest August for 32 years.

**Scaleby:** The wettest August registered here for 60 years (209 mm), the wettest being August 1877 (184 mm).

**Skegness:** A beautiful month, the sunniest August on record. Although thunder and lightning occurred on 5 days, yet the storms were light. Remarkable freedom still from east winds.

**Torquay:** Fine warm weather continued without a break to the 20<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently conditions were less settled, and a cooler spell set in after the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Aberdour:** A cold, wet, sunless month, harvest will be very late.

**Cargen:** This has been the wettest and most disappointing August ever experienced here.

**Dublin:** An unsettled month. At first the weather was seasonably warm, with, at times, rather heavy rainfalls. From the 16<sup>th</sup> onwards rain fell daily and there were very violent gales on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Derby/Burton-on-Trent:** Rainfall appears to have been normal, with all stations around 60 mm plus or minus 5 mm. The first half of the month was comfortably warm, with daily maxima frequently in the 21 C to 24 C range. The warmest day was the 8<sup>th</sup> with 25 C, or 26 C recorded at two sites near Burton. The lowest minimum was 5 C on the 31<sup>st</sup>; it is not unusual in this area for late August to have one or two chilly nights. The mean temperature at Burton was 15.4 C, which at that time was fairly close to the 30-year average (1891-1920).<sup>iii</sup>

**Brocklesby:** Thunderstorms were reported on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup>. Strong winds, reported as gale, and heavy rain, over night 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup>; 12.5 mm registered in the rain gauge.<sup>iv</sup>

### **UK Overview, August 1923.<sup>v</sup>**

The month started with a fine day, but by the 3<sup>rd</sup>, a depression had crossed Ireland and Scotland producing heavy rain in both countries. High winds also affected many parts of the coast, together with gales in Ireland and Wales. High pressure spread from the south in the rear of this depression, but further depressions maintained unsettled weather in the north and west of the country. The high pressure succeeded in producing fine, warm, weather in the south-east for nearly a fortnight. At Kew there was no measurable rain from 0700 on the 1<sup>st</sup> until the night of the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>, with sunshine exceeding 10 hours almost every day during this period. Temperatures rose well above average exceeding 80 F [27 C] on several occasions but remained below the maxima reached in July. On the 14<sup>th</sup> a shallow low developed over England producing local thunderstorms and heavy rain at night, as it moved east. The following day maxima in the south showed a fall of about 10 F [5 C] in the northerly winds, bringing cold air in the rear of a depression near Iceland. Further depressions extended their influence towards the south-east, but heavy rain was rare until the last week. Gales, or high winds, frequented the coastal areas, but were particularly severe on the 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> due to the passage of a deep depression over England, which produced strong gales at some inland stations.

The mean temperature for much of the country was below average, except for eastern England, the Channel Isles, and the Isles of Scilly. The mean temperatures ranged from +0.7 F [+0.3 C] in eastern England to -1.3 F [-0.6 C] in eastern Scotland; the Midland counties were very close to average, the departure being -0.1 F [about -0.05 C].

### **Extremes.**

**England and Wales:** Maximum, 90 F [32 C], on the 9<sup>th</sup>, at Camden Square, Canterbury, and Halsted.

Minimum, 36 F [2 C], on the 31<sup>st</sup>, at Andover.

**Scotland:** Maximum, 79 F [26 C], on the 5<sup>th</sup>, at North Berwick.

Minimum, 31 F [-0.5 C], on the 29<sup>th</sup>, at Balmoral.

**Ireland:** Maximum, 77 F [25 C], on the 13<sup>th</sup>, at Newcastle, Minimum, 40 F [4 C], on the 29<sup>th</sup>, at Dublin and Lisburn.

Some ground frosts were reported, particularly at the end of the month, but a grass minimum of 29 F [-2 C] was reported at west Linton (Peebles) on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Rainfall in the area north of, and including, Inverness, and around the Solway Firth, exceeded 200% of average. However, in a large part of the Midlands and southern England recorded below average. The remaining areas of England recorded between 100% and 150% of average, and in the extreme north-west the rainfall exceeded 150%. In Scotland and Ireland rainfall was above average, and in several large areas over 150% was noted. At Grantown-on-Spey, Dumfries, and south-west Scotland it was the wettest August on record, but in some places the falls were less heavy than in 1912 or 1917.

The MWR noted that a rate of rainfall of significance occurred at Bexley Heath on the 24<sup>th</sup>. During a thunderstorm, which started at 0830, 10 mm of rainfall in 10 minutes. Significant falls of rain occurred at Keswick on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (75 mm); at Lochailort, Inverness, on the 20<sup>th</sup> (59 mm); at Galashiels on the 29<sup>th</sup> (56 mm); and at Newcastle, Co Wicklow on the same date (54 mm). Falls above 50 mm were also reported at stations in Cumberland [now Cumbria] and in Wales.

Snow fell on the Cairngorms on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.

Local thunderstorms were frequent in eastern England, Bennington, in Hertfordshire, recording 7 days, and at Geldeston, Norfolk, recorded 6 days. On the 18<sup>th</sup> thunderstorms were recorded in an area lying between Southampton and the Humber, but more general thunderstorms occurred about the 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> and the 27<sup>th</sup>. No widespread storms were reported in Scotland.

There was little fog noted inland during the month. However, during the first fortnight mist and thick fog were noted in the English Channel. In the area of Waterford sea-fog was reported during the week ending the 11<sup>th</sup>.

On the 18<sup>th</sup>, a large waterspout was observed at 1330 about 2 miles to seaward of Brighton.

### **Europe and the Rest of the World.<sup>vi</sup>**

At the beginning of August cloudless skies and sunny days were experienced in most parts of France. Very high temperatures were recorded. On the 8<sup>th</sup> a maximum of 111F [44 C] was noted at Toulouse and was reported, in the press, as the highest ever recorded in France. Numerous forest fires, due to the excessive heat, and lack of rain, were noted in many places and lasted for several days. A violent gale on the 18<sup>th</sup> enhanced the fires, which were still raging on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The worst fires occurred in the Midi, the forests of Var, and the Cote d'Azur. The last week of the month saw the drought ended at Montpellier and Beziers with heavy rain and hailstorms, which damaged vineyards, and buildings were struck by lightning.

The heatwave was also experienced in Italy and Switzerland, with serious forest fires occurring near Corbeyrier and Leysin. During the week of the 13<sup>th</sup> violent thunderstorms and torrential rain was recorded in parts of Italy, and in Switzerland the storms were accompanied by very strong winds. Heavy rainstorms occurred again in Italy towards the end of the month.

During the early part of the month heavy rain caused much damage to the crops in Russia, and at Tashkent, Turkestan, violent gales destroyed crops and buildings.

Rainfall in India was reported as average in Upper Burma [Myanmar] and Bengal, scanty in Hyderabad and Mysore, but above average in Lower Burma and the Punjab. Floods occurred in Burma during the early part of the month making many people homeless, and almost destroying the rice crop. Floods were reported on the Jumna and Ganges, which lasted for a considerable time, while in Bihar the floods were the highest ever recorded. A small, but intense, tornado was reported at Moulmein (Burma) at the beginning of the month and caused considerable damage.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> a typhoon caused considerable damage at Hong Kong, with much loss of shipping. A second, less serious typhoon occurred on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

A tidal wave hit the north-west coast of Korea during the middle of the month, causing heavy loss of life, and considerable damage to property.

In South Australia very heavy rain was again being reported. Since the beginning of May rain had fallen on about five days a week. This had made the rainfall total for the period May to August the highest in the previous eighty-four years.

Rainfall in Brazil was high in the central districts, being 37 mm above average. However, in northern and southern districts, it was scarce, being 36 mm and 24 mm below average

respectively. The temperature was slightly above average. The prospects for the coffee and sugar crops continued to be good.

#### **Central England Data.<sup>vii</sup>**

##### **August 1923. (Averaging period is 1891 to 1920.)**

Mean Maximum Temperature: 19.4 C. Average: 20.1 C.

Mean Minimum Temperature: 11.0 C. Average: 11.3 C.

Mean Temperature: 15.2 C. Average: 15.4 C.

England and Wales Rainfall: 92.7 mm. Average: 89.6 mm. 103%.

#### **Midlands.**

##### **August 1923. (Averaging period is 1911 to 1920).**

Midlands Mean Maximum Temperature: 19.4 C. Average: 19.8 C.

Midlands Mean Minimum Temperature: 9.8 C. Average: 10.4 C.

Midlands Mean Temperature: 14.6 C. Average: 15.1 C.

Midlands Rainfall: 74.8 mm. Average: 75.3 mm. 99%.

#### **Central England.**

##### **August 2023 (Provisional) (Averaging period is 1991-2020).**

Mean Maximum Temperature: 20.5 C. Average: 20.9 C.

Mean Minimum Temperature: 12.3 C. Average: 12.1 C.

Mean Temperature: 16.4 C. Average: 16.5 C.

England and Wales Rainfall: 77.0 mm. Average: 82.3 mm. 94%.

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<sup>i</sup> Weather Summary, August 2023, Meteorological Office, September 2023.

<sup>ii</sup> Monthly Weather Report, August 1923, Meteorological Office, HMSO, September 1923, p. 99.

<sup>iii</sup> D J Stanier, by email, 1 September 2023.

<sup>iv</sup> Lincoln Archive Office, YARB 14/2, August 1923.

<sup>v</sup> MWR, August 1923, Meteorological Office, HMSO, September 1923, p. 99.

<sup>vi</sup> Meteorological Magazine, September 1923, Meteorological Office, HMSO, September 1923, p. 192-193.

<sup>vii</sup> Hadley Centre, Central England and Midlands, Meteorological Office.