

NOTES ON THE WEATHER FOR SEPTEMBER 1974

General—September was a cloudy, warm month marked by an unusually high frequency of easterly to north-easterly winds. In many areas the weather was favourable for farming, with good growth. However, it was too wet in most eastern districts; and in Canterbury quite a number of lambs were lost due to rain.

Rainfall—Rainfall showed wide variations, especially in the South Island. It was above normal in eastern districts from Central Canterbury to Gisborne and in some other areas, but less than half the normal value over most of Otago and Southland.

Parts of the Kaikoura Coast and North Canterbury received 4–6 times the normal rainfall, of which more than half fell during easterlies on the 3rd and 4th. Clinton River, northwest of Kaikoura, reported 236 mm on these 2 days.

This has been a very wet year in some eastern districts and also in Wellington, Masterton, Wellington, Kaikoura, and Christchurch almost have totals well above their annual normal.

Temperatures—Temperatures were above normal, mainly by 1.5° c in the North Island and by 1° c in the South Island. The 28th was a particularly cold day in southerlies, with snow down to comparatively low levels in Canterbury.

Sunshine—Sunshine was below normal by more than 40 hours over nearly all eastern districts from Canterbury to Hawke's Bay besides Nelson, Wellington, Taupo, and eastern Bay of Plenty. Gisborne's 79 hours and Dannevirke's 81 hours were lower than any September totals previously recorded in New Zealand. Wellington's 110 hours was the lowest recorded for this station in 40 years of observations.

Only South Westland with Invercargill and some other parts of Southland received about 30 hours above normal.

Weather Sequence—At the beginning of September an anticyclone was centred to the east of New Zealand, while pressures were low over the Tasman Sea. Rain was reported in northern and western districts of both Islands. From the 2nd to the 4th a depression was almost stationary west of Auckland while an anticyclone was centred to the east of Campbell Island. At first rain was fairly general except in the south of the South Island, but it soon cleared also over the greater part of the North Island. Some particularly heavy falls were recorded in the easterlies in North Canterbury and Marlborough, causing flooding; while slips interrupted road and rail transport along the Kaikoura coast. On the following day the depression drifted northward, losing intensity, and the rain was confined mainly to Canterbury and the Kaikoura coast. On the 6th a weak ridge of high pressure brought mainly fair weather.

On the 7th pressures were high to the east while a complex trough of low pressure was approaching the country from the west. Rain was reported mainly on the West Coast and in Northland.

On the following day a depression over the North Tasman Sea crossed Northland. Temperatures became rather mild and rain spread over nearly the whole of the North Island, with considerable falls about Auckland, Coromandel, and Bay of Plenty. During the 9th and 10th the depression moved slowly south-eastward, while a ridge of high pressure developed in the south. The weather cleared on the West Coast but rain spread to Nelson, Marlborough, and North Canterbury. From the 11th to the 14th another depression developed northeast of Auckland and moved towards the east-southeast. In the south-easterlies rain was reported mainly east of the ranges in the North Island.

During the next 2 days pressures were high to the north and east. A depression far to the south moved eastward and the associated trough of low pressure crossed the country, bringing rain west of the ranges in both Islands. Showery conditions persisted in western districts on the following day. On the 18th a depression was centred west of Cook Strait with the associated trough of low pressure moving on to the North Island, where rain was reported west of the ranges. Rain also affected the northern half of the South Island and temperatures were warm. On the following day this depression moved through Cook Strait, while an anticyclone developed to the east of Otago. The weather cleared on the West Coast but cold southerlies swept over eastern districts of the South Island. On the 20th rain persisted over the North Island owing to the passage of a depression to the north of Northland, but the weather cleared in northern and eastern districts of the South Island. The next day was one of generally fair weather.

During the 22nd and 23rd a trough of low pressure moved over the country associated with a depression far to the south. Rain affected mainly western districts and temperatures were warm. On the following day a small depression which crossed the North Island caused rain there and also in Nelson and Marlborough. On the 25th a deep depression covered the Tasman Sea, with fairly general rain over the North Island and northern and western districts of the South Island. During the next 2 days this deep depression became stationary west of Cook Strait, while another centre developed in the north, and pressures rose in the south. Temperatures were warm at first but very cold southerlies swept over the South Island on the 27th, with snow well down on the high country. Rain became general, with heavy falls in some eastern districts, especially Gisborne and North Canterbury. As the two depressions moved away on the 28th the cold southerlies covered the whole country. The weather cleared in western districts and also over most of Southland and Otago. On the last 2 days of the month an anticyclone moved on to New Zealand and the weather was fair, apart from some showers at first in the east of the North Island. However, temperatures remained rather cold.

J. F. DE LISLE, Director.

(N.Z. Met. S. Pub. 107).

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