

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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May 1967 — *Exceptionally wet with frequent thunderstorms*

Weather was cyclonic in character throughout the month except on the 18th and 31st when ridges of high pressure extended over the British Isles from the south-west.

During the first two days pressure was low over Scandinavia and a northerly airstream from high latitudes brought occasional thundery showers of rain, hail or snow to most districts. Frost was severe at night, air temperature falling to -5°C around dawn in parts of Scotland on both days.

On the 3rd wind reached gale force in many places as a deep depression approached the west of Ireland and associated troughs brought widespread, and at times heavy rain; falls of as much as 40 mm were recorded in parts of South Wales. The stormy weather continued on the 4th. Subsequently the depression became almost stationary off the west of Ireland, and during the next few days belts of rain, associated with minor troughs, moved across the country, interspersed with sunny periods, showers and scattered thunderstorms.

The depression, by the 8th a rather shallow feature covering Northern Ireland, became centred off the north of Scotland on the 9th and 10th before filling up. During each of these three days much of England and Wales enjoyed 11-12 hours of sunshine, but on the 11th thunderstorms with heavy rain broke out on a frontal trough extending from St. George's Channel north-eastwards across Britain. South of the trough, over the southern half of England, winds were easterly and mainly of sub-tropical origin, and temperatures, which had been rising steadily during the previous few days, reached 26°C at a number of places in Middlesex, Suffolk and Berkshire.

The trough was persistent and slow-moving and thunderstorms became rather more widespread in central districts on the 12th and 13th. North-easterly winds brought cooler and drier weather to northern and western districts during the next two days as the trough moved slowly southwards. In south-east England, on the other hand, rain was heavy at times, particularly on the 14th, as a deepening depression moved slowly north-eastwards across the English Channel from north-west France. Rain continued for much of the 15th as the depression became centred over southern England, and exceeded 30 mm at many places on both days. The cyclonic circulation brought temperatures down to a little below the mid-May average.

On the 16th and 17th, both cool and rather wet days, a complex depression extended from southern England to Scandinavia, but this gave way before a ridge of high pressure which spread over the British Isles from the south-west bringing 10-12 hours of sunshine to many southern districts on the 18th.

The improvement was short-lived, however, for on the 19th, fronts, associated with a deep depression approaching western Scotland, brought rain to most districts. This was the beginning of a period of very wet weather which lasted almost to the end of the month, as troughs and depressions, associated with a complex and slow-moving disturbance off the west of Scotland, moved over or near the British Isles in rapid succession. Thunderstorms broke out in south-east England on the 23rd and continued during the next three days as wave depressions from the Atlantic skirted the south-coast of England. Rainfall was heavy at times on the 27th and 28th as small secondary depressions moved north-eastwards from Biscay over the British Isles; in parts of the Midlands and northern Scotland more than 30 mm were recorded in 24 hours. The general area of low pressure which had persisted off the west of Scotland for about 10 days, slowly filled on the 29th (a sunny day with scattered thundery showers), but thunderstorms were again rather more frequent on the 30th as small depressions formed in the English Channel and moved northwards into the Midlands. The last day of the month was dry and sunny as a ridge of high pressure extended across the whole country from the south-west.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was considerably below the 1931-60 average everywhere, the deficit at 0900 GMT ranging from 9.8 mb at Ballykelly to 6.5 mb at Gorleston. Surface winds were northerly at first, mainly south-easterly from the 3rd to the 7th, north-easterly from the 10th to the 17th and south-westerly from then until the 24th.

During the remaining days of the month wind direction was very variable. Winds reached gale force on 10 days in England and Wales and on 6 days in Scotland. Gales were widespread on the 3rd and 4th and were most frequent around our south-west coasts. The highest gust recorded during the month was one of 61 kt at Portland Bill on the 3rd.

Temperature — Mean temperature was generally below the 1931-60 average especially in Scotland where it was the coldest May since 1951. There was a warm spell during the second week over most of England, and one towards the end of the month in Scotland. On the morning of the 3rd temperature fell to -1°C at Kew, the lowest May temperature there since records began in 1871.

Extremes included: (England and Wales) 26.1°C at several places on the 11th, -6.7°C at Moor House on the 3rd; (Scotland) 21.1°C at Lephinmore on the 30th and Paisley on the 31st, -9.4°C at Cairngorm on the 3rd; (Northern Ireland) 21.6°C at Strabane Convent on the 31st, -6.1°C at Lowtown on the 3rd.

Rainfall — In England and Wales it was the wettest May since 1773. Rainfall was more than twice the average almost everywhere, apart from a few coastal districts where it was 140-200 per cent of the average. It was three times the average in parts of Cumberland, Co. Durham, the West Riding of Yorkshire and Leicestershire. In Scotland rainfall was less than the average in the inner Moray Firth and locally in the west, but approached or exceeded twice the average in the east and south.

Thunder was more frequent than usual, especially in England and Wales where it was heard on 26 days. Much of the East Riding of Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, the east Midlands and East Anglia reported thunder on 8-10 days. In Scotland thunderstorms occurred on 21 days and were widespread during the first and last weeks.

Snow and sleet showers were widespread on the 1st and 2nd, ground becoming snow-covered for a time to a depth of 3 cm at Speke and 5 cm at Aberdeen.

Sunshine — Sunshine was below the 1931-60 average almost everywhere. In Scotland many places from Braemar southwards recorded their lowest May sunshine for over 30 years with deficits of 60 to 80 hours. Over north and west Scotland and over England south of a line from the Humber to Plymouth, sunshine was 80-100 per cent of the average, but it was less than 70 per cent in parts of north-west England.

Fog — Fog at 0900 GMT was reported at one place or another in Scotland on 8 days, and in England and Wales on 14 days; it was fairly widespread on the 13th and 14th. In southern England dense fog patches formed during the night of the 9th/10th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was visible in Scotland on 9 nights.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES, MAY, 1967

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE °C					EARTH TEMP. °C		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUN-SHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 30 cm.	Mean 121 cm.			
Difference from Average								% of Average		
0 SCOTLAND, N.	20.0	-2.6	-1.0	-0.9	-0.9	+0.1	-0.1	+3	106	92
1 SCOTLAND, E.	17.8	-1.7	-1.9	-0.4	-1.2	-0.8	-0.3	+8	184	78
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	22.7	-3.9	-1.7	-0.8	-1.3	-0.8	-0.5	+12	247	99
3 ENGLAND, E.	25.0	-2.8	-0.8	+0.1	-0.4	-0.2	0.0	+9	192	90
4 MIDLANDS	25.6	-2.4	-1.3	-0.7	-0.9	-0.4	-0.1	+11	211	89
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	25.3	-3.3	-1.2	+0.3	-0.5	-0.9	-0.2	+10	198	94
6 SCOTLAND, W.	20.0	-3.2	-2.3	-0.6	-1.4	-0.9	-0.5	+6	167	78
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales	21.3	-4.4	-2.1	-0.5	-1.3	-1.2	-0.8	+11	238	79
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales	23.9	-2.8	-1.7	-0.3	-1.0	-0.8	-0.2	+11	214	87
N. IRELAND	20.0	-3.4	-1.8	-1.4	-1.7	-	-	+6	166	86
SCOTLAND	20.0	-3.2	-1.7	-0.6	-1.2	-	-	+6	151	83
ENG. and WALES	25.6	-4.4	-1.5	-0.3	-0.9	-	-	+11	218	90

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