

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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October 1969 — *Unusually warm; very dry in the south, changeable in the north*

High pressure affected the south and east of the British Isles for most of the month. In the north and west, however, low pressure sometimes brought changeable, occasionally stormy, weather.

N. Scotland

Weather — The weather was generally changeable. Rain or showers were heavy at times and on the 1st/2nd sleet (rain or drizzle and snow) fell in the Northern Isles and on high ground in Caithness and Sutherland. Light snow settled on the mountain peaks in these counties on the 28th/29th.

Wind — The frequency of gales was rather above average especially in the north of the region and over high ground. Gale-force winds were reported on 23 days at Cairngorm, 1090 m, (Inverness-shire) but, in general, gales occurred on about 16 days during the month. Stormiest periods were around the 7th, 15th and from the 24th to 31st; a gust of 85 kt was recorded at Cairngorm on the 7th.

Temperature — Monthly mean temperature was about 1 degC above the normal in northern counties and over 2 degC above average in other areas. Extreme temperatures recorded during the month included: 21.7°C at Balmacara (Ross and Cromarty) on the 18th and -3.9°C at Cairngorm on the 1st and 2nd.

Rainfall — Rainfall varied from over 50 per cent above average in the west of the area to just below average in the east and north. It was very wet in many areas on the 15th and 16th. A 'daily' fall of 102 mm was recorded at Kinlochhourn (Inverness-shire) on the 15th and 71 mm fell at Duntulm (Isle of Skye) on the same day.

Sunshine — Although sunshine amounts were near average in places, other areas were dull; only 71 per cent of the normal was recorded at Lerwick (Shetland).

E. and W. Scotland, England, Wales and N. Ireland

Weather — It was very dry generally but exceptionally so in south and east England; it is estimated that the general areal rainfall over England and Wales, although equalled in 1809 and 1947, has not been lower in October since 1784. Restrictions on the use of water were introduced in many urban areas as reservoirs became depleted. Winds were often from a southerly point bringing warm, though sometimes foggy, weather to most areas. New values of lowest rainfall and highest mean temperature for October were recorded at a number of long-established stations.

Wind — Gale frequency was, in general, about average, occurring on about 7 days in west Scotland, 5 days in North Wales but on only 1 or 2 days in a few other areas. However, gales were recorded on 16 days at Earl's Hill, 335 m, (Stirlingshire). The 24th was very windy in many areas and gusts over 60 kt occurred in west Scotland and northern England causing some damage to property.

Temperature — The monthly mean temperature was over 3 degC above average at a number of places. It exceeded the average by 3.3 degC at a few places including Balmoral, 283 m, (Aberdeenshire). In general, however, mean temperature was 2-3 degC above the normal. It was the mildest October at Durham since records commenced in 1847 and the mildest at Kew since continuous records began about 1868.

It was particularly warm on the 9th and 10th when temperatures exceeded 20°C in most areas and many places had their warmest October day since 1959. Maxima during the month included: 26.5°C at East Dereham (Norfolk) and 24.4°C at Ruthin (Denbighshire) on the 9th; 24.1°C at Strabane Convent (Co. Tyrone) and 23.3°C at Mertoun (Berwickshire) on the 10th.

Frost occurred in a few northern areas, including Northern Ireland, on the 1st and in a number of places in England and Wales on the 30th. Among minimum temperatures recorded during the month were: -4.4°C at Lacock (Wiltshire) and -0.5°C at Usk (Monmouthshire) on the 30th; -2.3°C at Knockmany Forest (Co. Tyrone) on the 1st.

Rainfall — Less than half the average amount of rain fell in eastern Scotland, the eastern counties of Northern Ireland and the whole of England and Wales (except in central areas of the Principality). Many places in the southern half of England recorded less than 10 per cent of average rainfall. Only 1 or 2 per cent occurred in some areas, notably on the Sussex coast, and no measurable rain was recorded at a rainfall station near Bedford. In the Southend (Essex) area rain on the 23rd ended a spell of 24 consecutive days with no measurable rainfall. It was the driest October ever at a number of places whose records began in the last century. Notable among these were Oxford (Radcliffe Observatory) and Durham where records commenced in 1815 and 1879 respectively.

Thunder was less frequent than normal in England and Wales where it was reported on 6 days. It also occurred in Scotland on 6 days, which is about average. There were isolated thunderstorms in Northern Ireland during the month and thunder was widespread in South Wales and south-west England on the 13th/14th.

Sunshine — Amounts were rather variable. In general they were below average in Northern Ireland, most of east and west Scotland and parts of eastern England. Tiree (Inner Hebrides) and Castle Archdale Forest (Co. Fermanagh) recorded only 64 per cent of average. South-east England was generally the sunniest district but the Firth of Forth area was also favoured. Dunbar (East Lothian) and London Weather Centre recorded 138 and 137 per cent of average respectively.

Fog — There were two main foggy periods during the month: from the 5th to 11th and during the third week. Widespread dense fog was mostly confined to nights and mornings but thick fog occasionally persisted all day in a few areas.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was observed on 8 nights in Scotland.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES, October 1969

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE °C					EARTH TEMP. °C		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUN-SHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 30 cm.	Mean 122 cm.			
	Difference from Average							% of Average		
0 SCOTLAND, N.	19.4	-1.0	+1.6	+1.6	+1.6	+1.4	+0.9	-1	98	79
1 SCOTLAND, E.	21.7	1.7	+2.8	+2.7	+2.7	+1.4	+0.7	-5	42	103
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	24.4	1.1	+2.5	+2.3	+2.4	+1.9	+1.1	-8	20	96
3 ENGLAND, E.	25.0	3.3	+2.8	+2.3	+2.5	+1.8	+0.8	-8	12	101
4 MIDLANDS	23.9	2.2	+2.6	+2.8	+2.7	+1.9	+0.9	-8	13	103
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	24.4	-1.2	+2.9	+2.1	+2.5	+1.5	+0.6	-10	6	114
6 SCOTLAND, W.	20.1	1.5	+2.5	+2.9	+2.7	+1.9	+0.8	-1	70	90
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales	22.8	1.1	+2.7	+3.1	+2.9	+2.3	+1.2	-5	22	111
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales	23.9	2.2	+2.1	+2.3	+2.1	+2.0	+1.1	-9	13	105
N. IRELAND	21.8	-0.6	+2.8	+2.8	+2.8	--	--	-3	53	79
SCOTLAND	21.7	-1.0	+2.3	+2.4	+2.3	--	--	-2	75	91
ENG. and WALES	25.0	-1.2	+2.6	+2.5	+2.5	--	--	-8	19	105

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