

# Monthly Weather Report

## OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL STATIONS AND VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS

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### January, 1950 - Dry and dull on the whole; very mild 1st—15th, then cold.

The weather was remarkable for a very mild spell during the first half of the month and a really cold spell in the second half. It was dry over most of the country, particularly over much of the southern half of England. Apart from a few scattered areas it was mainly dull, especially in the Midlands and eastern districts of England.

During the opening days of the month an anticyclone remained almost stationary off our south-west coasts, while Atlantic depressions moved north-east, and associated troughs moved east across the British Isles occasioning mild unsettled weather with rain at times, though falls were slight in the south. By the 6th the anticyclone had moved east and decreased somewhat in intensity, while the north Atlantic was covered by a complex, deep depression and a very mild airstream flowed over the British Isles; heavy rain fell in the north-west but little or none occurred in the south-east. Subsequently pressure continued low over the Atlantic and relatively high over Italy and the central Mediterranean; during the ensuing days mainly slight rain occurred, chiefly in the west and north. From the 10th-12th a very deep depression in mid Atlantic moved quickly north-east, while an anticyclone over the Bay of Biscay moved north-east and another over the Baltic moved south; further slight rain occurred in the west and north. After the 1st, temperature during this period was very high for the time of year, maxima of 55°F. or somewhat above being registered locally on a number of days. Minimum temperatures were also very high at times, being as much as 50°F. or slightly above in places.

On the 14th and 15th a depression near Iceland moved away east and was followed by a ridge of high pressure associated with an anticyclone off our south-west coasts. By the 16th winds over the British Isles were west to north-west veering to north, and cooler, showery weather prevailed on the 16th and 17th. By the 18th a fairly intense anticyclone was established over southern Scandinavia with a wedge extending over the British Isles. This distribution was maintained with little change until the 28th, with cold, mainly dry weather and considerable fog at times.

On the 28th a trough of low pressure associated with a depression near Iceland caused heavy rainfall in south-west Ireland. On the 29th the trough moved slowly east and caused considerable snowfall north of a line from about mid Wales to Norfolk early on the 30th. Later on the 30th a small depression off our south-west coasts moving north over western Ireland was associated with more snow in the northern half of the country. In the south, moderate rain fell on the 30th and fairly heavy rain occurred in London and parts of south-east England on the 31st. Gales were recorded locally in the west and north on the 28th-31st.

**Pressure and Wind.**—Mean pressure exceeded the average generally, the excess being greatest in the north; the deviation at 9h. ranged from +3.9 mb. at Scilly to +8.4 mb. at Lerwick. The month was quiet over most of England and Wales, the total run of the wind being considerably below the average. Winds from between south and west predominated during the first half of the month but during the last fortnight winds from some easterly quarter were frequent. At exposed stations in the west and north gales occurred fairly frequently; for example, on the 1st, 4th-6th, 11th-13th, 22nd-24th and 27th-31st. The gales of the 6th and 31st were severe locally. Among the highest gusts recorded in knots were 56 at Lerwick on the 6th, 63 at Stornoway on the 11th and 62 at Bell Rock Lighthouse on the 15th.

**Temperature.**—Mean temperature was about average in England and Wales and exceeded the average by 1.5°F. in Scotland and 2.0°F. in Northern Ireland; the deviations for the districts ranged from -0.8°F. in England, S.W. and S. Wales to +2.2°F. in Scotland, N. The first half of the month was unusually mild and the remainder cold, particularly the week ending on the 28th. Minima of 20°F. or below were registered locally on the 22nd, 23rd and 25th-30th. At some inland stations in the southern half of England temperature remained at 32°F. or below on the three consecutive days 24th-26th.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 61°F. at Aber on the 9th, 12°F. at Cantref on the 26th; (Scotland) 58°F. at Achnashellach on the 10th and at Auchincruive on the 11th, 7°F. at Glenlivet on the 22nd; (Northern Ireland) 57°F. at Ballykelly on the 8th and 11th and at Castlerock on the 10th, 25°F. at Garvagh on the 22nd and 23rd and at Hillsborough on the 25th.

**Precipitation.**—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 54 over England and Wales, 85 over Scotland and 71 over Northern Ireland. More than the average occurred in a mainly coastal belt from Caithness to Aberdeen, on the coast of Essex, locally on the Islands of south Argyllshire, in the neighbourhood of Londonderry and at a few isolated places in Lancashire, Cumberland, Ayrshire and Inverness-shire. Elsewhere less than the average was registered, while less than 25 per cent. of the average was received in an area extending from west Dorset to mid Warwickshire and south Worcestershire. At Ross-on-Wye it was the driest January since 1898 and at Southport since 1911.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

- 1st 1.60 in. at Dunsop Houses (Yorkshire).
- 2nd 1.71 in. at Bolton Water Works and 1.54 in. at Buxton.
- 6th 2.58 in. at Glenquoich (Inverness-shire), 2.53 in. at Kilmacolm (Renfrewshire) and 2.47 in. at Fort William.

Thunderstorms occurred at a few places, chiefly in Scotland, mainly on the 6th, 10th, 11th, 14th, 15th and 16th.

Considerable snowfall occurred roughly north of a line from mid Wales to Norfolk on the 30th and 31st. Snow was 9 in. deep at Forrest-in-Teasdale and 6 in. at Ambleside and Chopwellwood on the 30th and 8 in. at Huddersfield (Oakes) and 6 in. at Bellingham, Harrogate and Bingley on the 31st. There was fairly heavy drifting on high ground; at Malham Tarn (Yorkshire) drifts were 4 ft. deep. In Scotland many places had from two to six inches of snow on the 30th-31st and drifts of 2 ft. were reported near Drumochter on the border of Perthshire and Inverness-shire.

**Sunshine.**—On the whole sunshine totals were much below the average, particularly in the eastern and Midland districts of England (see Table I). Considerably more than the average occurred in the neighbourhood of the Moray Firth and in scattered places elsewhere. A mean daily duration of 2 hours or slightly more was recorded only at a few places on the border of the Moray Firth, locally on the south-east coast of England and at Aberporth on the coast of Cardigan Bay.

**Fog.**—Fog occurred rather frequently, mainly on the 1st-4th, 8th-14th, 17th-19th and 21st-31st.

**Miscellaneous Phenomena.**—The aurora was observed in Scotland on five nights. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on 10 days.