

Monthly Weather Report

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OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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October 1965 — Exceptionally dry in England and Wales

The Weather was predominantly anticyclonic in character.

The cool unsettled weather of September continued into the early days of October, a small depression over central England giving widespread and locally heavy rain (some places in Wales recorded more than 1 inch) on the 1st. The rain continued in the west on 2nd and 3rd as the depression became absorbed into the circulation of another vigorous disturbance moving south-eastwards from off the west of Ireland to the Bay of Biscay.

A ridge of high pressure brought 10 hours of sunshine to parts of southern England on both the 4th and the 5th, and thereafter for the next few days a complex low pressure area to the west of the British Isles maintained a warm south-easterly airstream which had become established over most of England. Afternoon temperatures reached 23°C at places as far apart as St. Mawgan, Mildenhall and Manchester on the 5th. Fog became widespread that night with visibility down to 5 yards locally in eastern England. The fog was most extensive on the 6th when much of the east coast from Caithness to Lincolnshire remained cool and foggy all day.

On the 7th an intensifying anticyclone near Iceland moved south-eastwards and the next day freshening easterly winds brought much cooler weather to all districts and occasional drizzle to south-east England. The anticyclone remained centred near the north of Scotland during the next two days and weather everywhere was dry and sunny with temperatures about normal. By the 11th cloud from the North Sea affected many north-eastern districts, and this cloud extended over much of the country on the 12th and 13th.

By the 13th the anticyclone had moved eastwards into Europe as a vigorous depression approached Iceland and the next day an associated slow-moving cold front brought a belt of rain across the country. This proved to be only a temporary break in the dry weather as after a showery day in a northwesterly airstream behind the cold front on the 15th, pressure quickly rose again as an anticyclone from the Atlantic approached the British Isles.

This new anticyclone was centred over southern England on the 16th and 17th and thereafter moved slowly eastwards into Europe but the British Isles remained under its influence until the 25th and many stations had no measurable rain until after that date. Afternoon temperatures rose above average in many places towards the end of the period and there were long spells of sunshine, particularly on the south-east coast where Southend averaged 8 hours of sunshine per day between the 16th and 25th. Local air frost and fog developed at night especially on the 22nd and 23rd when some parts of the Midlands stayed cold and foggy all day. Air temperature at Gatwick fell to -4°C early on the 23rd and in parts of Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire it failed to rise above 7°C all day.

The fine spell was brought to an end on the night of the 26th/27th as rain on a slow-moving cold front, associated with a deep depression near Iceland, spread across Scotland. The rain was heavy in some western districts on the 27th and reached most other districts that night. On the 28th a wave depression on the cold front deepened as it reached Scotland and wind rose to gale force in many districts. Rain was heavy for a time but soon gave place to showers which were only scattered

on the 29th. The month ended wet and stormy as deep depressions skirted the north coast of Scotland. Wind reached 80 kt in gusts on the 31st and many places in western Scotland recorded more than 2 inches of rain.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was everywhere above the 1921-60 average the excess at 9 hr ranging from +7.2 mb at Lerwick Observatory to +2.6 mb at St. Mary's, Scilly. Surface winds, mainly between south and south-east at first became generally easterly on the 8th-13th and then rather variable and mainly light until the 18th apart from northwesterlies on the 15th. From the 19th to the 26th winds were mainly south to south-east but were west to south-west during the last few days of the month. Winds reached gale force on 11 days in Scotland and on the 1st, 9th, 10th and 28th-31st (7 days) in England and Wales. Gales were widespread on the 31st. A gust of 82 kt was recorded at Lerwick on the 28th and one of 80 kt at Kirkwall on the 31st.

Temperature — Day temperatures were highest during the first week, being as much as 7°-8°C above the average in some places on the 5th-7th. They were also above the average (about 4°C) during the fourth week of the month. Ground frost was prevalent during the third week and air frost was recorded at many places on the 17th, 18th and 22nd-24th.

Extremes included: (England and Wales) 26.1°C at Hampton on the 7th, -3.8°C at Gatwick on the 23rd; (Scotland) 22.2°C at Cape Wrath on the 22nd and at Mertoun on the 5th, -8.8°C at Happendon Station on the 24th; (Northern Ireland) 18.9°C at Lisnafillan on the 6th and at Reagh Island on the 5th; -2.2°C at Somerset Forest on the 18th.

Rainfall — It was an exceptionally dry month in many places: in England and Wales it was the driest October since 1809 apart from 1947. Rainfall was less than 25 per cent of the average over most of the country south-east of a line from the Severn to the Humber and below 15 per cent in parts of Devon and north-west England but exceeded 100 per cent near Carlisle. Western and central Scotland had near or above average rainfall but in north-west Scotland rainfall was only 50 per cent of the average.

Sleet or snow showers were reported in Scotland on the 28th-31st.

Thunder was heard in Scotland on the 28th-31st (4 days) and in England and Wales on the 1st, 7th, 15th and 30th.

Sunshine — In England and Wales sunshine was mainly above the average in the south-east and north-west; percentages ranged from 173 near Aberystwyth to 75 at Newport (Shropshire) and at Watnall. In Scotland it was above the average in the north and at a few places in the south and south-west but was below the average elsewhere. At Gordon Castle it was the sunniest October since 1920.

Fog — In Scotland fog was reported at 9 hr in one place or another on 22 days and in England and Wales (except for high level stations) it occurred daily until the 27th apart from the 9th-11th and 15th. Fog was dense and persisted throughout the day in parts of the Midlands on the 6th, 22nd and 23rd.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was visible in Scotland on 6 nights.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES— OCTOBER,

1965

(1908, revised 1928, 1941, 1956 and 1964)

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE					EARTH TEMP.		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUNSHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 1 ft.	Mean 4 ft.			
	Difference from Average									
0 SCOTLAND, N.	18.3	0.0	+0.6	+0.7	+0.7	-	-	-7	93	117
1 SCOTLAND, E.	19.4	-2.8	+0.2	+0.4	+0.3	-	-	-5	69	88
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	20.3	-0.6	+0.6	+0.8	+0.7	+1.1	-0.1	-7	37	91
3 ENGLAND, E.	22.8	-1.7	+0.7	+0.4	+0.6	+0.4	-0.3	-9	28	125
4 MIDLANDS	22.8	1.0	+0.8	+0.8	+0.8	+0.6	0.0	-7	39	97
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	24.4	-1.7	+1.4	+0.7	+1.0	+0.1	-0.5	-9	24	133

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

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE					EARTH TEMP.		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUNSHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 1 ft.	Mean 4 ft.			
	Difference from Average									
6 SCOTLAND, W.	19.9	-0.6	+0.7	+0.5	+0.6	+0.5	+0.1	-7	93	108
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales	22.7	-0.4	+1.3	+0.8	+1.0	+0.9	+0.4	-9	57	138
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales	21.7	1.1	+0.5	+0.7	+0.6	+0.4	0.0	-9	29	89
N. IRELAND	18.3	-1.0	+0.6	+0.7	+0.7	-	-	-6	77	72
SCOTLAND	19.9	-2.8	+0.5	+0.5	+0.5	-	-	-6	85	104
ENG. and WALES	24.4	-1.7	+0.9	+0.7	+0.8	-	-	-8	33	112