

# Monthly Weather Report

## OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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### February, 1951 - Rather cold; wet, except in the north-west; rather frequent snow.

The month was unsettled and rather cold, with frequent snow or sleet showers in some parts, particularly on high ground. It was wet except in the north-west, the rainfall being exceptionally heavy in the south-east.

Unsettled conditions prevailed generally until the last two days. From the 1st to the 3rd a depression moved north-north-east from the south of Iceland, while troughs of low pressure crossed the British Isles. Rain, sleet or snow occurred, and rainfall was moderately heavy in some areas on the 2nd and 3rd. On the 4th an exceptionally deep depression moved over Ireland to the Irish Sea and then turned north-north-west to the south of Iceland. Widespread severe gales occurred in the British Isles on the 4th-5th and precipitation was heavy on the 4th, while showery weather, with long sunny periods locally, prevailed on the 5th and 6th. On the 7th another depression west of Ireland moved east and subsequently turned north-east and on the 8th a secondary disturbance off our south-west coasts moved east-north-east. Further precipitation occurred, heavy locally in the south of England on the 8th. Between the 10th and the 15th a depression situated initially off Brittany moved a little south, while troughs or secondary depressions moved north-north-west or north from the south of France. Rain, sleet or snow occurred at times and thunder was recorded locally on the 12th and 15th. Thereafter a trough off our south-west coasts moving east caused considerable rain and local thunder. On the 16th a depression developed off north-west Ireland and subsequently moved north-east and deepened; meanwhile, on the 17th, a wave depression approached the mouth of the English Channel and moved quickly east-north-east. Gales were recorded in the west and north and precipitation was heavy in some areas; snow blizzards swept the counties of Perth, Inverness and Argyll. Showers and local thunderstorms occurred on the 18th and 19th. On the 20th a small depression off south-west Ireland moved east-north-east causing moderately heavy rainfall in the south of England.

Subsequently a complex low pressure area to the west and north-west of the British Isles moved east to the North Sea and showery weather prevailed, with long sunny periods. On the 23rd and 24th a small depression off our north-west coasts moving south-east in the northerly air-stream was associated with more showers, and, on the 25th and 26th, a trough of low pressure off our north-west coasts moved south-east across the country and caused further precipitation. In the rear of the trough a ridge of high pressure built up over the British Isles and moved south and the closing days of the month were mainly fair, apart from local fog.

**Pressure and Wind.**—The mean pressure for the month was very low; at 9h. the mean was roughly between 10 and 14 mb. below the average. The depression which moved over Ireland on the 4th was exceptionally deep, the pressure at Cork at 15h., 942.3 mb., being the lowest ever recorded in the British Isles in February, while the readings 951.7 mb. and 961 mb. respectively at Ross-on-Wye and Kew Observatory were the lowest recorded in February in their long records. The predominating winds were from between south and west. Gales occurred locally, chiefly on the 1st-6th, 9th and 17th-21st. The gale on the 4th-5th was widespread and severe locally. Among the highest gusts registered in knots were 75 at Scilly and 71 at Rye on the 4th, 72 at St. Ann's Head on the 5th and 75 at Tiree on the 17th.

**Temperature.**—Mean temperature was below the average for the period 1906-35 by 0.9°F. in England and Wales, 2.1°F. in Scotland and 3.3°F. in Northern Ireland. This was the fourth consecutive month with a mean temperature below the average; in England and Wales the deficiency was small except in December but in Scotland

and Northern Ireland it was appreciable in each month, although it was by far the greatest in December. There were few mild days in February though the maximum temperature rose at times above the average for the month. Minimum temperatures below 25°F. were registered locally on numerous occasions.

Extreme temperatures for the month included:—(England and Wales) 54°F. at Llandudno on the 1st, Chivenor on the 2nd and Torquay and East Budleigh on the 16th, 20°F. at Kielder Castle on the 21st; (Scotland) 54°F. at Fort William on the 1st, 15°F. at Dalwhinnie on the 3rd; (Northern Ireland) 53°F. at Ballykelly on the 1st and 28th and at Garvagh on the 28th, 24°F. at Aldergrove on the 10th and Ballykelly on the 15th.

**Precipitation.**—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 186 over England and Wales, 103 over Scotland and 113 over Northern Ireland. In Scotland more than the average occurred over most of the eastern half of the country and less than the average on the whole in the western half. In the Shetlands, at Wick, in Caithness, and over much of east Scotland from the Forth to the Spey, more than 150 per cent. of the average was registered, while Lerwick and Lossiemouth had more than 175 per cent. On the other hand less than 75 per cent. was received over much of the Western Highlands and at Stornoway in the northern Hebrides. In England and Wales an excess was practically general. More than twice the average occurred south-east of an irregular line from Norwich to Teignmouth as well as in small areas in south Lincolnshire and the south-west Midlands. The excess was exceptional in the Thames Estuary, the London area and the neighbouring parts of Essex, Kent and Surrey and in a smaller area covering the Isle of Wight and stretching north-west to south-east Wiltshire, where more than three times the average was measured; at Kew Observatory it was the wettest February since records began in 1870. In Northern Ireland less than the average occurred in County Antrim; percentages at individual stations ranged from 84 at Aldergrove to 139 at Seaforde, County Down.

Among the largest falls in 24 hours were:—

4th 2.35 inches at Glen Tanar, near Aboyne, on Deeside.  
17th 2.65 inches at Dundonnell House, 2.39 inches at Glackour (both in north-west Ross-shire) and 2.45 inches at Kinlochquoich (Inverness-shire).

Local thunderstorms occurred rather frequently for the time of year, for example on the 5th, 6th, 12th, 15th, 16th and 18th-21st.

Snow or sleet showers occurred frequently, particularly on high ground in the west and north, where it lay for long periods. A blizzard swept the counties of Perth, Inverness and Argyll on the 17th blocking many main roads; a train was isolated in the Moor of Rannoch for 30 hours and vehicles were stranded in Glencoe.

**Sunshine.**—The general sunshine expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1906-35 was 96 both in England and Wales and Scotland and 120 in Northern Ireland. Broadly speaking it exceeded the average in the west and was less than the average in the east and Midland Counties. On the whole the sunniest weeks were those ending on the 10th and 24th. In some areas the 12th and 28th were also very sunny days, for example, 9.6 hours at Holyhead on the 28th and 9.2 at Sandown and Ventnor, Isle of Wight, on the 12th.

**Fog.**—The most considerable fog occurred from the 1st-3rd, 10th-16th, 24th and 26th-28th, but local fog occurred at times outside these periods.

**Miscellaneous Phenomena.**—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 15 nights. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on eight days.