

Monthly Weather Report

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December 1967 — Sunny. Heavy snowfall in Wales

Anticyclonic weather predominated during December apart from cyclonic interludes with pressure low to the north or east of the British Isles on the 5th-8th, 21st-25th and 27th-31st.

An anticyclone moving slowly eastwards across the British Isles maintained generally mild, dull weather with widespread and locally dense fog on the 1st and 2nd, which persisted for much of both days. A deep depression moving south-eastwards on the 3rd and 4th from the region of Jan Mayen towards the Baltic, brought gale force winds and occasional rain to northern Scotland, but in England and Wales weather was dry with good sunny periods. On the 5th a belt of rain, associated with a complex depression over the Baltic, moved slowly southwards over the British Isles clearing southern England during the morning of the 6th.

The cold northerly airstream behind the rain persisted for several days, pressure for most of the time being high from Greenland to the coast of Portugal. Frost was widespread and severe at night but the days were sunny. Snow spread to all areas, and small polar depressions moving SSE from western Scotland in the airstream brought moderate falls to many western districts on the 7th and 8th. On the morning of the 9th snow lay 17 to 20 inches deep in parts of northern and central Wales and 6 to 9 inches deep in the west Midlands and Devon. The cold weather continued in most districts throughout the 10th, but by then pressure was falling rapidly in the region of Iceland, and on the 11th mild air from the Atlantic spread round the northern side of an anticyclone situated off south-west England bringing rain, preceded by snow, to many districts.

There was little snow left, except over high ground, on the 12th, but the rain and rapid thaw led to floods in the west. The anticyclone off south-west England moved across southern England on the 13th and 14th, and weather became mainly dry apart from some overnight fog and coastal drizzle.

A fresh outbreak of northerly winds from high latitudes on the 15th was preceded by the movement of a deep depression across the Norwegian Sea to Scandinavia and the subsequent rapid increase of pressure to the west of Ireland. Cold-front rain moving southwards over the country cleared most of southern England early on the 16th, which was a generally sunny but cold day. By the 17th an anticyclone covered most of the British Isles, but later that day mild south-westerly winds from the Atlantic brought rain to south-west England. There were scattered snow showers in many northern and eastern districts on the 17th and 18th, but rain spread across southern England during the night of the 18th/19th. The high pressure over the country was very persistent, however, and the 19th and 20th were mainly dry and cold.

The cold spell came to an end on the 21st as frontal rain, associated with a deep depression approaching Iceland, spread over the British Isles. Winds freshened from the south-west and temperatures increased rapidly. The mild Atlantic airstream with drizzle and coastal fog continued over England and Wales throughout the 22nd making this the mildest day of the month at many places. Scotland had some heavy frontal rain.

A belt of cold-front rain moving south-eastwards across the country on the 23rd was followed by north-westerly winds and showers on the 24th and 25th, though a depression in the North Sea gave more continuous rain in eastern districts. The 26th was dry in most areas, but another outbreak of northerly winds on the 27th brought temperatures, which had been decreasing during the previous few days, below the average again. Showers in the northerly airstream on the 28th and 29th were of snow in some eastern districts, and a trough moving southwards over the country brought further falls of rain and snow during the last two days of the month.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was everywhere above the 1931-1960 average, the excess at 0900 GMT ranging from 2.8 mb at Gorleston to 9.0 mb at Scilly. Surface winds were mainly north or north-west apart

from light variable winds on the 1st, 2nd and 20th-24th, and south-westerly on the 14th-19th. The predominating north to north-westerly airstream is probably responsible for the marked lee-trough along the English Channel in the pressure map.

Temperature — Mild spells alternated with cold periods. The first major cold spell was centred around the 9th when Worthing had its coldest December night since 1908.

Extremes included: (England and Wales) 14.4°C at Durham and Houghall on the 1st and at Gillingham on the 22nd, -13.3°C at Wallingford on the 9th and at Corwen on the 10th; (Scotland) 13.9°C at several places on the 1st and at Glenlee on the 2nd, -14.4°C at Carnworth on the 10th and at Grantown-on-Spey on the 20th; (Northern Ireland) 13.9°C at several places on the 22nd, -12.2°C at Lisnafillan on the 9th.

Rainfall — In England and Wales rainfall was generally below the average, but was above the average in a wide corridor from the London area extending north-westwards and covering the northern half of Wales and parts of Northern Ireland. In Scotland a few places in the extreme north-west had twice the December average, but rainfall was less than half the average over large areas of central Scotland, and less than a quarter in central Perthshire.

Snow fell over much of the country from the 6th until the 11th, and drifting in gale force winds caused many blocked roads. There was further snow around mid-month and towards the end of the month.

Thunder was heard on 9 days somewhere in England and Wales.

Sunshine — A feature of the month was the large amount of sunshine. In Scotland, although it was below average north and west of a line from Rattray Head to Fort William, sunshine was more than twice the December average elsewhere and three times the average in the Glasgow area. At Paisley it was the sunniest December since records began in 1885. In England and Wales percentages of the local average ranged from 229 at Huddersfield to 75 at Aber and Penzance.

Fog — Fog at 0900 GMT was reported on 8 days in Scotland but was very local. In England and Wales it was fairly widespread on the 1st, 2nd, 12th and 13.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was seen in Scotland on 13 nights.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES, DECEMBER, 1967

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE °C					EARTH TEMP. °C		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUNSHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 30 cm.	Mean 122 cm.			
	Difference from Average							% of Average		
0 SCOTLAND, N.	12.2	-10.6	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	+0.5	+0.6	+2	112	84
1 SCOTLAND, E.	13.3	-6.1	0.0	+0.2	+0.1	+0.1	-0.1	0	80	134
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	14.4	-5.6	-0.3	-1.2	-0.7	-0.7	-0.3	-4	68	146
3 ENGLAND, E.	13.3	-7.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.1	-0.2	+2	90	140
4 MIDLANDS	13.1	-8.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.2	-0.2	-1	83	163
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	13.9	-9.5	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.4	+2	85	117
6 SCOTLAND, W.	13.4	-10.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-2	60	171
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales	12.8	-7.2	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	+0.1	-0.1	-1	84	159
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales	13.3	-8.9	-0.3	-0.1	-0.2	+0.3	-0.2	+1	74	110
N. IRELAND	13.4	-10.2	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	-	-	-1	94	110
SCOTLAND	13.4	-10.6	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-	-	0	81	130
ENG. and WALES	14.4	-9.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.5	-	-	0	88	139

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