

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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October 1953—Dry in most areas; mainly rather dull; mild in Scotland; unusually quiet in England.

Mainly dry anticyclonic weather prevailed until the 11th but it was unsettled in the north-west during the first few days and from the 9th to the 11th. Heavy rain fell in many districts on the 12th–13th. There were some further anticyclonic periods till the 21st, with a good deal of fog, but in the last ten days a changeable south to south-west type of weather prevailed with frequent rain, heavy at times in some areas. Fog recurred fairly frequently and was sometimes slow to clear.

At the beginning of the month pressure was high on the Continent and very low in Iceland and a warm south-west airstream covered most of the British Isles; a gale occurred in northern districts on the 1st. A cold front moved slowly south-east across the country from the 1st to 3rd and gave some rain, which was considerable locally in north-western districts. On the 3rd–4th an anticyclone moved in from the Atlantic and mainly dry, cooler weather prevailed over much of the country until the 11th although some heavy rain occurred locally in north Scotland from the 9th to the 11th. A complex trough of low pressure came in from the west and south-west on the 12th and during that night and the next day there were some rather heavy falls of rain. A ridge of high pressure followed giving a short spell of mainly dry weather but another trough moving east across the country brought more rain between the 15th and 17th. Subsequently a large anticyclone moved quickly north-east from south-westward of Ireland to reach southern Scandinavia by the 19th; dry weather prevailed over most of the country until the 19th and over much of England and Wales until the 21st. From the 22nd to the end of the month an unsettled southerly to south-westerly type of weather prevailed with frequent rain, which was sometimes heavy from the 23rd or 24th onward; thunder occurred locally on several days.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure everywhere exceeded the average for the period 1901–30, the deviation from the average at 9h. ranging from +4.0 mb. at Stornoway to +5.9 mb. at Spurn Head and Douglas, Isle of Man. In England and Wales the month was much less windy than usual; at Oxford, in a record going back to 1881, only one October, namely 1951, had a lower total run of wind, at Kew Observatory the total run was the lowest in any October since before 1930 and at Southport only in October 1946 was the total run lower since before 1930. A widespread gale, severe on the west and north-east coasts, occurred on the 26th–27th and wind reached gale force locally also on the 1st, 9th, 10th, 24th, 29th, 30th and 31st. During the gale of the 26th–27th the Arbroath lifeboat capsized at the entrance to the harbour with the loss of all but one of the crew. Among the highest gusts, registered in knots, were 65 at Tiree and 60 at Aldergrove on the 26th and 67 at Bell Rock Lighthouse and 63 at Holyhead on the 27th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature differed from the average for the period 1921–50 by –0.4°F. in England and Wales, +1.8°F. in Scotland and +0.5°F. in Northern Ireland; the deviation from the average for the districts ranged from +2.7°F. in north Scotland to –1.0°F. in south-west England and south Wales. The opening days were warm generally and in Scotland the weather was mainly mild apart from rather cold spells around the middle of the month and during the last few days. Over much of England and Wales it was rather cold from the 4th to the 17th and again in the last four or five days. Rather low minimum temperatures were registered locally on the 5th, from the 13th to 15th and at times from the 26th

to 31st. Temperature on the grass fell to 16°F. at Dalwhinnie on the 15th.

Extreme temperatures for the month included:—(England and Wales) 73°F. at Ipswich and Raunds on the 1st, 25°F. at Driffield on the 31st; (Scotland) 69°F. at Inverness, Elgin and Forres on the 1st, and at Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh on the 2nd, 24°F. at Dalwhinnie on the 15th; (Northern Ireland) 66°F. at Garvagh on the 1st, 32°F. at Garvagh and Castle Archdale on the 15th and at Garvagh on the 29th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 72 over England and Wales and 73 over both Scotland and Northern Ireland. It was more than average over parts of west and south-west Scotland, in much of a fairly large area stretching across Wiltshire to west Kent, with an extension northward to Cambridge, locally inland in south Wales, and in the Isle of Man. Rainfall was less than half the average over north-east and part of south-east Scotland, in a belt extending from the Firth of Forth across Northumberland and the Lake District to Montgomeryshire and locally on the east coast of Yorkshire. At Inverness and Gordon Castle less than 25 per cent of the average was registered. In Northern Ireland the deficiency was general.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

10th	3.05 in. at Glenquoich and 2.03 in. at Kinlochhourn, both in Inverness-shire.
20th	2.00 in. at Loch Harport, Isle of Skye.
26th	2.05 in. at Llyn Fawr Reservoir, Glamorgan and 2.00 in. at Princetown, Devonshire.
29th	2.00 in. at Gruline, Isle of Mull.
31st	2.82 in. at Southampton, 2.30 in. at Ardvorlich, Loch Earn, 2.26 in. at Patterdale, Westmorland and 2.22 in. at Winchester.

Thunderstorms occurred locally on the 13th, 15th, 17th, 23rd–25th and 27th–31st; they were rather widespread in south-west England on the 24th.

Snow. Little snow fell during the month; sleet showers occurred at Lerwick on the 3rd, Glenlivet on the 14th and 15th and at Leverburgh, Isle of Harris on the 26th–29th. Snow lay on some of the mountains in central and western Scotland, mainly at heights above 2,500 ft., at times between the 27th and 31st and on Ben Nevis on the 25th also.

Sunshine.—The general sunshine expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1921–50 was 91 in England and Wales, 92 in Scotland and 91 in Northern Ireland. In Scotland more than the average was registered only in the Fortrose, Inverness, Nairn area. In England and Wales it was dull almost everywhere in eastern and Midland districts but very sunny at most places in the north-west and locally in the south-west. At Aberystwyth it was the sunniest October, apart from October 1947, since before 1921 and at Ilfracombe the sunniest since 1921, though 1951 was almost as sunny.

Fog.—Fog occurred frequently at night and in the morning and was sometimes slow to clear; it was recorded at 9h. on 17 days at Whitworth Park, Manchester and at Chesterfield and on 15 days at Bingley, Funningley, Pontefract and Wakefield.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 11 nights. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on eight days.