

# 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 1954—Unsettled and mild; notably wet in the west and north; dull in the west.

The weather was generally mild and unsettled; on nearly every day a large part of the country was affected by cyclonic systems from the Atlantic and the intervening ridges of high pressure were transitory. Winds from some south-westerly point predominated and reached gale force locally at times. Temperature considerably exceeded the average and sunshine was markedly below the average at some places in the west. Rainfall was heavy in the west and north but it was less than average over much of south and east England. Severe flooding occurred at times in north-west England, north Wales and south Scotland.

The month opened with the arrival of moist air from the Atlantic bringing fog to the Channel coasts and cloudy, close weather inland. In southern districts temperature reached 70°F. locally on each of the first three days. A temporary influx of cooler air on the 3rd was marked by local thunderstorms and considerable rainfall in places. The return of a south-westerly air stream on the 4th and 5th was accompanied by heavy rain in some areas, particularly in Wales on the 4th. An anticyclone moved in from the Atlantic on the 6th and gave 7–10 hr. sunshine in most districts, with frost here and there in the early hours of the following day. In some southern and western districts, even as far north as Prestwick, Ayrshire, night temperature fell below 50°F. for the first time this month. On the 8th a belt of rain and drizzle was followed by the development of fog, which became widespread in the Midlands and north of England on the morning of the 10th. By the 9th a low pressure area, reinforced by a tropical cyclone from 2000 miles further south, had moved north-east from south Greenland and this maintained fresh or strong west-south-westerly winds and changeable weather over the British Isles for several days; there was some sunshine and occasional rain or showers on most days and hail was recorded in the north of Scotland on the 10th. During the 13th cold air penetrated southward to northern England and small depressions moving along its boundary gave unsettled, rainy weather for nearly a week. Rainfall was heavy and prolonged in north Wales, north England and south Scotland causing floods in these districts. In south-east and east England, however, rainfall during this period was mainly slight. Weather was mainly cloudy, though warm: temperature reached 70°F. in East Anglia on the 17th and was nearly as high on the following day. From the 19th weather became somewhat brighter and cooler with westerly winds but there was also substantial rainfall, particularly in Wales and northern England, on the 22nd and 23rd. Cool northerly winds spread over the country on the 24th and 25th and in spite of 7–10 hr. sunshine on the 25th the temperature did not exceed 50°F. in most places, and the arrival of an anticyclone from the Atlantic was accompanied by the most widespread frost of the autumn on the morning of the 26th. During the 26th, however, rain and strong south-easterly winds spread in from the Atlantic over the whole country. From the 27th to the 30th a mild westerly type of weather prevailed with bright periods and showers, which were heavy in the north and west.

**Pressure and Wind.**—Mean pressure was below the average for the period 1921–50 except in the extreme south-west, the deviation from the average at 9h. ranging from +0.3 mb. at Plymouth to -6.1 mb. at Lerwick. The mean pressure gradient was thus considerably stronger than the average, particularly in England and Wales. Winds from some south-westerly point predominated and in southern districts the total run of the wind considerably exceeded the average; at Kew and Oxford it was the windiest October since before 1930. There were gales at times at exposed places, mainly on the 12th–13th, 16th–21st, 23rd–27th and 29th. Among the highest gusts, in knots, were 63 at Stornoway and 58 at Lerwick on the 13th, 60 at Bell Rock on the 27th and 64 at Sellafield and 58 at Scilly on the 29th.

**Temperature.**—Mean temperature exceeded the average for the period 1921–50 by 3.2°F. over England and Wales, 1.0°F. over Scotland and 1.9°F. over Northern Ireland. Apart from the exceptionally mild October of 1921, it was the mildest October in England and Wales since before 1901. It was particularly mild in many places during the first few days and from about the 13th to the 24th. Low minimum temperatures occurred on the 7th and 26th.

Extreme temperatures include—(England and Wales) 73°F. at Lowestoft on the 17th, 23°F. at Eastwick Lodge, Hertfordshire, on the 26th; (Scotland) 68°F. at Inverness and Forres on the 2nd, 23°F. at Eskdalemuir on the 26th; (Northern Ireland) 65°F. at Garvagh on the 1st and at Ballykelly and Armagh on the 18th, 25°F. at Aldergrove on the 26th.

**Precipitation.**—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 122 over England and Wales, 190 over Scotland and 191 over Northern Ireland. In Scotland it was the wettest October since records are available in 1869, apart from October 1903; in Northern Ireland it was the wettest since 1938. Rainfall was less than average over much of south and east England; it was more than twice the average over most of Northern Ireland, Wales, north Lancashire, the Lake District, south Scotland and a broad strip running north-east from Oban to the Moray Firth; it was more than three times the average at Blaenau Festiniog, in north Wales.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

4th	3.95 in. at Blaenau Festiniog, Merionethshire and 2.84 in. at Corris, Montgomeryshire.
14th	4.00 in. at Blaenau Festiniog, 3.28 in. at Corris and 2.57 in. at Swansea Waterworks, Brecknockshire.
15th	3.28 in. at Borrowdale, Cumberland, 2.53 in. at Craiglough, near Langholm.
16th	2.44 in. at Blaenau Festiniog.
17th	2.93 in. at Borrowdale and 2.78 in. at Omagh, County Tyrone.
18th	3.25 in. at Glenshiel, Ross-shire and 2.98 in. at Patterdale, Westmorland.
23rd	3.84 in. at Blaenau Festiniog and 3.00 in. at Wet Sleddale, Westmorland.
28th	4.50 in. at Kettleton, Dumfriesshire.

The various downpours of heavy rain caused widespread flooding. A landslide occurred on the Holyhead road in the Nant Ffrancon pass on the 23rd.

Thunderstorms occurred in some places on a number of days, mainly 3rd, 4th, 6th, 10th, 15th, 23rd, 24th and 27th–29th.

Snow or sleet showers were reported locally mainly on the 17th, 21st–25th, 27th and 30th. Snow lay on Ben Nevis throughout the month and on some of the Scottish Hills, mainly at 2,500 ft. and above from the 21st onwards.

**Sunshine.**—Sunshine was less than average except at Lerwick and at a few places in the east of Great Britain; at some places in the west it was the dullest October for many years; at Holyhead and Aldergrove it was the dullest October since records were first taken in 1914 and 1927 respectively and at Douglas, Isle of Man and at Aberystwyth the dullest since before 1921. At Holyhead there was no sunshine from the 12th to 18th inclusive apart from a trace on the 14th.

**Fog.**—Fog occurred at times mainly on the 1st, 2nd, 5th, 7th–13th, 16th–18th, 26th and 30th. It was rather persistent locally on some days, chiefly on the south-west and west coasts of England and Wales.

**Miscellaneous Phenomena.**—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 14 nights. During a thunderstorm with the passage of a cold front early on the 6th, high winds caused some local damage at Sprowston.