

Monthly Weather Report

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SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL STATIONS AND VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS

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October, 1951 - A dry month.

The weather of the month was unusually dry; it was mild in the west and north, and rather sunny on the whole but fog developed frequently at night and in the early morning, particularly in England and Wales. In most areas the month was considerably less windy than is usual in October.

In the opening days an anticyclone was situated over Scandinavia, and subsequently it moved to the southern Baltic. This system maintained dry weather over much of the country until the 12th, though troughs of low pressure associated with depressions in the Atlantic caused rain at times in the west, for example on the 3rd, 4th, 8th and 9th, the rainfall being heavy on the north-west coast of Scotland and in the Hebrides on the 9th. Fog, mainly at night and in the morning, was fairly widespread in England from the 4th to the 11th, while ground frost was registered locally in Great Britain from the 8th to the 12th and was widely recorded in England and Wales on the 12th. Less settled conditions set in on the 12th, when a trough of low pressure moved across England from the south-west of Ireland; rather heavy rain fell in south-west Ireland and the Scilly Isles on the 12th and slight rain in England on the 13th. On the 14th and 15th another trough caused rain in the west and north; meanwhile widespread fog developed over England at night and in the early morning. On the 16th a trough, associated with a small secondary depression south of Iceland, moved across the British Isles; gales occurred in the north of Scotland and rain was recorded in many places but it was slight except locally in west and north Scotland. From the 19th to the 21st a deep depression over Iceland moved slowly south and then turned east to a position near the Shetlands; showers and local thunderstorms occurred but there were also bright periods. The depression subsequently moved away north-north-east, and temperature fell considerably with the influx of cold air in its rear, while showers of rain, hail, sleet or snow occurred with local thunderstorms. The 22nd was the coldest day of the month in most places, temperature failing to reach 45°F. at numerous stations. From the 23rd to the 26th an anticyclone moved from the south-west of Ireland across the southern districts of the British Isles to Germany; fair, frosty weather, apart from morning fog, prevailed in England but some rain occurred in west and north Scotland on the 23rd and 24th. On the 27th a depression moved quickly from south-westward of Iceland to the south-west of Ireland and later crossed the British Isles to the North Sea; appreciable rain fell in parts of Ireland and south-west England on the 27th and more general rain occurred on the 28th and 29th. On the 30th and 31st a shallow depression moving south-east from Iceland to the southern North Sea gave renewed rain and local thunderstorms.

Pressure and wind.—Mean pressure exceeded the average throughout the country, the deviation at 9h. ranging from +4.2 mb. at Scilly to +8.2 mb. at Tynemouth. The month was quieter than is usual in October, particularly in England; at Oxford it was the calmest October in a record going back to 1881 and at Southport, it was the calmest October, apart from those of 1946 and 1947, since 1915. Gales occurred at times at exposed stations, chiefly on the west and north coasts; for example, on the 7th–9th, 16th, 17th, 19th, 22nd and 27th. Among the highest gusts registered in knots were 53 at Stornoway and 51 at Tiree on the 9th, 51 at Lerwick on the 17th, 53 at Lizard on the 21st and 50 at South Shields on the 22nd. Winds from some southerly point predominated in the west and north, while those from an easterly point were rather frequent in the south.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average by 2.1°F. in both Scotland and Northern Ireland but was slightly below the average in southern districts of England and Wales. Warm days

occurred at times during the first sixteen days, particularly on the 16th when temperature approached 70°F. at a number of stations and touched 72°F. at Huddersfield. A cold spell occurred from about the 22nd to the 26th; the 22nd was a particularly cold day for the time of year, temperature failing to reach 45°F. at numerous places. Low minima were registered from the 22nd to the 26th.

Extreme temperatures for the month included:—(England and Wales) 72°F. at Huddersfield (Ravensknowle and Oakes) on the 16th, 19°F. at Kielder Castle, Northumberland on the 23rd; (Scotland) 69°F. at Nairn on the 16th, 19°F. at Peebles on the 23rd; (Northern Ireland) 68°F. at Armagh on the 16th, 31°F. at Aldergrove on the 23rd.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 31 over England and Wales, 42 over Scotland and 37 over Northern Ireland. In England and Wales it was the driest October, apart from October 1947, since 1869 and in Scotland it was the driest over the same period of years apart from October 1946. Edinburgh registered its lowest total for October since 1830. In Scotland less than 10 per cent of the average occurred locally in the south-east and in the Border districts, increasing to more than 50 per cent. in the west and north and to more than 100 per cent. in the neighbourhood of Duntulm, Isle of Skye. In England and Wales a deficiency was general, but percentages of the average varied considerably at individual stations. In Northern Ireland less than 25 per cent. of the average was received in the south-east increasing to somewhat more than 50 per cent. in the north-west. Fairly heavy rain occurred locally in Ireland and the Hebrides on the 9th, in parts of northern England on the 20th and 21st and locally in south-east England on the 28th and 29th.

Among the largest measurements in 24 hours were:—

- 9th 1.94 in. at Loch Harport (Skye), 1.89 in. at Grula, Loch Eynort (Hebrides) and 1.73 in. at Duntulm (Skye).
- 20th 1.02 in. at Malham Tarn, Yorkshire.
- 21st 1.57 in. at Kildale Hall, Yorkshire and 1.30 in. at Ampleforth.
- 28th 1.29 in. at Polegate, 1.15 in. at Eastbourne and Seaford.
- 29th 1.10 in. at Bodiam.

Thunderstorms occurred at times mainly from the 20th to the 23rd and on the 29th and 31st.

Snow or sleet was recorded locally from the 20th to the 22nd.

Sunshine.—The general sunshine expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1906–35 was 111 in England and Wales, 104 in Scotland and 100 in Northern Ireland. In Scotland more than the average occurred in the regions south of the central Lowlands, in the Outer Hebrides and around the Moray Firth. In England and Wales it was unusually sunny on the coasts of north and mid Wales, the coasts of Lincolnshire and East Anglia, on much of the south coast and in an area stretching northward across Wiltshire to Little Rissington in the Cotswolds. Over the country as a whole the sunniest weeks were those ending on the 13th and 27th. The 2nd was a notably sunny day in the extreme west and north-west but mainly dull elsewhere; at Stornoway a total of 10.0 hours was registered.

Fog.—Fog, mainly at night and in the morning, occurred frequently, particularly at inland stations in England. It was reported at 9h. on 20 occasions at Huddersfield and Wakefield, 17 at Pontefract and Nelson and 15 at Finningley. It developed most frequently from the 3rd to 17th, 19th, 24th to 26th and 29th to 30th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 13 days. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on four days.