

Monthly Weather Report

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

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March, 1950 - Mild; dry on the whole.

The weather of the month was mild generally; it was mainly dry except in parts of Scotland, particularly in a narrow belt along the east coast and in an area extending from the Firth of Forth to the Solway Firth.

In the opening days of the month pressure was high from Scandinavia to France, while troughs of low pressure, associated with depressions in the far north, moved north-east over the north-west districts of the British Isles; rain occurred, chiefly in the west and north, and there were local gales in the north of Scotland. In eastern and midland districts of England it was bright, with morning frost, on the 1st. On the 4th the Azores anticyclone moved north-east and subsequently became established over southern England and central Europe; a period of fair, warm weather, apart from considerable fog night and morning, ensued. On the 9th a shallow depression moved south-east from northward of Scotland down the North Sea giving slight rain locally.

Subsequently high pressure was established in a belt from Greenland to the Bay of Biscay, while a depression off the west of Norway moved south and then south-east to south Sweden. In the rear of this depression colder north-west to north winds prevailed, with snow or sleet showers locally.

A change to a mild, unsettled type set in on the 14th, when a deep Atlantic depression moved east-north-east towards the west of Ireland and troughs of low pressure crossed the British Isles. The main centre eventually moved north-east to the neighbourhood of Thorshavn and another very deep depression in mid Atlantic moved rather slowly north-east. On the 17th a small secondary developed off south-west Ireland and moved quickly north-east across the British Isles and on the 18th and 19th another secondary depression moved north-east across the country. Throughout the period 14th-19th rain fell daily and was heavy locally, particularly in the north-west on the 18th, while gales were recorded locally from the 15th-20th. From the 20th-23rd other shallow secondaries developed and crossed the country giving further rain at times.

Thereafter the Azores high moved north-east to the Baltic and later an anticyclone on the Atlantic moved to a position westward of the British Isles, and a period of anticyclonic weather ensued, with morning fog. On the 30th and 31st shallow troughs moving south-east caused some slight rain in the northern half of the country.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure exceeded the average generally, the excess being greatest in the south-east and least in the north. At 9h. the deviation ranged from +7.7 mb. at South Farnborough to +2.9 mb. at Lerwick. Over much of England the month was less windy than the average. Gales occurred locally on the 1st-4th, 6th, 11th and 15th-20th. They were most widespread from the 16th-18th. Among the highest gusts registered in knots were 59 at Stornoway and 56 at Lerwick on the 3rd, 56 at St. Ann's Head and Scilly on the 17th and 59 at Eskdalemuir and 63 at Pendennis Castle on the 18th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average for the period 1906-35 by 3.7°F. in England and Wales, 3.6°F. in Scotland and 3.8°F. in Northern Ireland. It was cold on the 1st and from about the 10th-14th, while the periods 5th-8th and about the 15th-26th were mainly warm.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 67°F. at Leeming on the 5th, Redcar on the 6th and Wisley on the 8th, 15°F. at Thetford on the 1st; (Scotland) 65°F. at Penicuik on the 26th, 17°F. at Dalwhinnie and Eskdalemuir on the 14th; (Northern Ireland) 62°F. at Lisburn and Castle Archdale on the 26th, 26°F. at Aldergrove on the 10th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage for the period 1881-1915 was 60 over England and Wales, 94 over Scotland and 65 over Northern Ireland. More than the average rainfall occurred in Skye and the neighbouring part of the mainland, on the east coast of Scotland, in an area extending from the Lothians to the Solway Firth and southward to the Isle of Man and the coast of Cumberland, and at Princetown, South Devon. On the other hand less than 25 per cent. of the average was received on the coast of Lincolnshire and over part of East Anglia.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

2nd 2.70 in. at Blaenau Festiniog (Merioneth).
18th 2.49 in. at Peden Reservoir (Lanarkshire), 2.46 in. at Glenkiln Reservoir (Kirkcudbright) and 2.25 in. at Ruthwell (Dumfries-shire).

Thunderstorms occurred locally in England on the 15th and 17th-22nd and locally in Scotland on the 16th and 17th.

Snow or sleet showers occurred from the 11th-14th; in the north of Scotland snow lay to a depth of about an inch.

Sunshine.—Broadly speaking sunshine was below the average in the west and north of Scotland and exceeded the average in Northern Ireland and much of England and Wales. The percentages of the average for the districts ranged from 80 in the north of Scotland to 119 in north-east England (see Table I). The distribution in England was variable, however, sunshine being somewhat below the average in the East Riding of Yorkshire, on the coast of East Anglia, in Cornwall and locally in north-west England. The mean daily duration in hours ranged from less than 2.5 in north-west Scotland to more than 4.5 locally on the coast of south-east Scotland and on or near the coast of Northumberland and Durham, and to 5.0 or slightly more locally on the south and south-east coast of England (see Chart 4).

Fog.—Fog, mainly in the morning and at night, occurred rather frequently, chiefly on the 1st, 2nd, 4th-11th, 14th, 15th and 21st-28th.

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