

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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Summary of observations compiled from returns of official stations and voluntary observers

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March 1967 — Generally mild, unusually stormy in Scotland

Weather was mainly cyclonic in character until the 12th and from the 25th to the 30th, although pressure was high to the south of the country for most of the first week. Anticyclones off our south-west coasts dominated the weather for most of the remainder of the month.

During the first four days a series of deep Atlantic depressions moved rapidly north-eastwards in the region of Iceland. In Scotland weather was stormy with westerly gales and heavy thundery showers or with periods of more continuous rain, but in England and Wales it was mainly sunny and dry. Temperature everywhere was well above average. A trough moving eastwards across the country brought slight rain or drizzle to most districts on the night of the 4th/5th. After a generally sunny day in the ridge following the trough, with more than 8 hours of sunshine in parts of the south-west, another Atlantic depression, on a somewhat more southerly track than recent disturbances, deepened during the night of the 5th/6th as it moved north-eastwards towards the Faroes, and stormy weather was renewed in Scotland. Wind reached 80 kt in gusts in the Hebrides and a fall of as much as 68 mm of rain was recorded at Sloy, Dunbartonshire. On the 7th a cold front associated with another depression on a similar track brought rain to most districts as it moved eastwards across the country.

The next day stormy weather began to affect southern England as a depression deepened in the Bay of Biscay. Rainfall exceeded 30 mm in parts of Cornwall on the 8th, and rain became widespread on the 9th as the depression moved northwards over the British Isles reaching eastern Scotland around midnight. Gales were widespread in the English Channel and in southern districts on the 9th and they continued on the 10th and 11th in the showery westerly airstream behind the depression. By this time temperature in most districts was slightly below the seasonal normal. Another depression deepened rapidly as it approached the western English Channel on the 12th but this moved eastwards into northern France bringing rain and snow to much of southern England.

After a showery day with north-westerly winds on the 13th, weather over most of England and Wales became fine and rather warm as an anticyclone from our South-West Approaches moved eastwards into France, although troughs associated with a deep depression near Iceland brought heavy rain to western Scotland late on the 14th. Behind the troughs there were scattered showers on the 15th. Thereafter until the 23rd, an anticyclone became almost stationary off our south-west coasts, and weather over England and Wales was generally sunny and dry for most of this time except for some rain and drizzle on the 17th and 22nd as weak troughs crossed the country. Temperatures were generally above the average and at many places in eastern England afternoon temperatures were as much as 9°C above average on the 21st. In Scotland and Northern Ireland, however, weather was rather changeable with occasional rain and with wind reaching gale force at times.

The weather pattern changed on the 24th as the anticyclone off our south-west coasts moved eastwards into Europe. A trough approaching Scotland from the Atlantic gave exceptionally heavy rain in parts of Inverness-shire and Wester Ross; Kinlochewe recorded 88 mm in 24 hours. Rain spread to most of the country the next day, and by the 26th a complex low-pressure system had become established to the north and north-east of the British Isles and a northerly airstream from high latitudes brought a progressive fall of temperature in all districts with wintry showers of hail or snow.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was below the 1931-60 average in the north but above in the south of the British Isles, the deviation at 09h ranging from -16.4 mb at Lerwick to +5.9 mb at Scilly. Surface winds, westerly at first, were mainly west to south-west from the 4th to the 14th and then mainly west to north-west until the 23rd. South-westerlies on the 24th and 25th slowly veered to north during the remainder of the month. It was an exceptionally windy month in Scotland with wind reaching gale force nearly every day. On the 6th a gust of 125 kt

was recorded in the Cairngorms (1074 m) the highest wind speed ever recorded in the United Kingdom. Gales were widespread in southern England on the 9th and 10th.

Temperature — Mean temperature was generally above the 1931-60 average but it was below around the 13th and during the last week of the month; early morning frost was recorded at a number of places. The warmest days were around the 21st.

Extremes included: (England and Wales) 19.4°C at Caldecott and Monkswood on the 21st, -7.3°C at Great Dun Fell on the 31st; (Scotland) 17.2°C at Dyce on the 21st, -7.2°C at Balmoral on the 13th and at Leadhills on the 31st; (Northern Ireland) 16.1°C at Stormont Castle and Armagh on the 21st, -3.9°C at Loughermore Forest, Lisnafillan and Greenmount on the 31st.

Rainfall — A feature of the month was the unusually heavy rainfall in north-west Scotland where parts of Inverness-shire and Wester Ross had more than four times their average. In eastern Scotland rainfall was below the average as it was over most of England and Wales except parts of the north-west and south of an approximate line from Bristol to London.

Snow and sleet showers were observed in Scotland on most days during the first half of the month and also during the last week. They fell in England and Wales mainly around the 11th and between the 26th and 31st when some of the higher ground became snow-covered for a time.

Thunder was heard in England and Wales on the 1st, 8th-11th, 15th and 26th-30th (11 days). Thunderstorms were fairly widespread on the 10th. They were reported in Scotland on 13 days.

Sunshine — Sunshine was above average except in the north-west of the United Kingdom. In parts of west and north-west Scotland there were deficits of 50 hours whereas in the east and south excesses of the same magnitude were recorded. In England and Wales sunshine was greater in the east and Midlands than in the west, percentages of the local average ranging from 189 at Sheffield to 91 at Morecambe. It was the sunniest March at Rotherham since records began there in 1948.

Fog — Fog at 09h occurred in Scotland on only two days. In England and Wales it was reported from one place or another on 11 days, but was frequently hill fog associated with low cloud and drizzle.

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

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES, MARCH, 1967

| DISTRICTS | AIR TEMPERATURE °C | | | | | EARTH TEMP. °C | | RAIN DAYS | RAIN-FALL | SUN-SHINE |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|------|------|------|----------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | *Highest Max. | *Lowest Min. | Max. | Min. | Mean | Mean 30 cm. | Mean 121 cm. | | | |
| | Difference from Average | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 SCOTLAND, N. | 13.1 | -3.9 | +0.3 | +0.1 | +0.2 | +0.6 | +0.8 | +9 | 259 | 91 |
| 1 SCOTLAND, E. | 16.7 | -2.2 | +1.0 | +1.2 | +1.0 | +0.8 | +0.5 | 0 | 91 | 133 |
| 2 ENGLAND, N.E. | 17.8 | -2.2 | +1.5 | +1.7 | +1.6 | +1.3 | +0.6 | -2 | 71 | 122 |
| 3 ENGLAND, E. | 17.8 | -1.7 | +1.9 | +1.8 | +1.8 | +1.3 | +0.9 | -3 | 63 | 141 |
| 4 MIDLANDS | 18.4 | -1.1 | +1.3 | +1.6 | +1.5 | +1.2 | +1.0 | -1 | 87 | 158 |
| 5 ENGLAND, S.E. | 17.8 | -3.7 | +1.3 | +1.4 | +1.3 | +1.1 | +0.9 | -1 | 112 | 136 |
| 6 SCOTLAND, W. | 13.9 | -4.4 | 0.0 | +1.0 | +0.5 | +1.0 | +0.4 | +8 | 149 | 104 |
| 7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales | 17.4 | -3.3 | +0.3 | +1.6 | +0.9 | +1.2 | +0.9 | +1 | 80 | 128 |
| 8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales | 16.1 | -1.7 | +0.4 | +1.0 | +0.7 | +0.9 | +0.8 | +1 | 105 | 132 |
| N. IRELAND | 16.1 | -3.1 | -0.2 | +0.8 | +0.3 | - | - | +7 | 131 | 100 |
| SCOTLAND | 16.7 | -4.4 | +0.4 | +0.8 | +0.6 | - | - | +6 | 205 | 109 |
| ENG. and WALES | 18.4 | -3.7 | +1.1 | +1.5 | +1.3 | - | - | -1 | 97 | 136 |

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