

Monthly Weather Report

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

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January, 1951 - Unsettled and wet on the whole; rather cold.

The weather of the month was rather cold except in the south-east, though not nearly as cold as the previous month. It was unsettled and wet on the whole, with considerable snowfall at times, but sunshine appreciably exceeded the average in Northern Ireland and locally in the east and north of Scotland and north-east England.

In the early hours of the 1st a secondary depression over North Wales moved slowly north and was associated with rather heavy snowfall in Northern Ireland, north Wales, the west Midlands and north-west England. During the 1st another centre of low pressure moved along the English Channel and on the 2nd, yet another moved east over the south of England to Holland and then turned north-east. This period was very cold generally and snow occurred, particularly in southern England and the Midlands and lay nearly 1 foot deep locally in the south Midlands on the morning of the 3rd. A gale occurred at the mouth of the English Channel on the 1st. On the 4th and 5th a trough to a depression south-westward of the British Isles moved north over southern England causing heavy rain, and, on the 6th, the main depression, now centred south of Ireland, moved quickly north-east giving further rain. Gales were recorded locally on the south-west coasts and temperature rose in southern districts but remained rather low in the north. Thereafter a trough of low pressure moved east across the country giving more rain. On the 10th a depression, which had developed over the south of Ireland, moved north-east across Scotland, while an associated trough crossed England. Heavy precipitation occurred in the west and north on the 9th and more generally on the 10th; in Scotland snow fell up to a foot deep in places on the 10th. On the 11th a deep depression south-west of Iceland moved a little south-east and a trough crossed England; more precipitation occurred and rainfall was moderately heavy locally; gales were registered at times at exposed places from the 10th to the 12th. Subsequently a depression south of Iceland moved east and a spell of showery weather ensued, snow showers occurring in more northerly districts. A ridge of high pressure moving east on the 15th was associated with a mainly fair day. The ridge was quickly followed by a trough which caused heavy rain in the west and north on the 16th and 17th, while temperature rose considerably throughout the country. The mild weather persisted during the ensuing days with pressure high off Spain and depressions moving east off the north of Scotland. Rainfall was generally slight over most of England, Wales and Ireland but heavier in parts of Scotland; gales were registered locally at times on the 17th and 18th. On the 22nd and 23rd a depression moved from north-westward of Ireland to the Bay of Biscay; rain fell in Ireland and southern England.

Subsequently pressure became high in a belt across Great Britain; temperature fell and there was fog on the 23rd and 24th. On the 25th and 26th a trough moved slowly across the country giving precipitation in most areas, heavy locally in the west. On the 27th a depression off our south-west coasts moved away south-east giving some precipitation in the west, and another ridge built up over the British Isles; temperature fell still more and there was considerable fog and severe frost. In the closing days a trough moved over our western districts but weather continued mainly cold except in the west.

Pressure and wind.—Mean pressure was considerably below the average, the deviation at 9h. ranging from -6.9 mb. at Lerwick to -9.8 mb. at Eskdalemuir. Broadly speaking the predominating winds were from between south and west. Local gales occurred at times at exposed stations, namely on the 1st, 5th, 6th, 10th–12th, 14th, 17th–19th, 21st, 22nd, 25th, 26th and 29th–31st. The total run of the wind was, however, below the average in most areas. Among the highest gusts registered in knots were, 74 at Scilly and 68 at the Lizard on the 1st and 63 at Manchester on the 11th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature was below the average except in the south-east of the country, the deviations for the districts ranging

from -2.3°F . in Scotland, E. to $+0.8^{\circ}\text{F}$. in England, S.E. (See Table I). Cold spells occurred during the first few days and towards the end of the month but in northern districts it remained rather cold also until about the 17th. The mildest spell occurred on the whole from the 16th or 17th to 22nd or 23rd. Extreme temperatures in the screen included:—(England and Wales) 58°F . at Colwyn Bay on the 16th, 8°F . at Houghall on the 2nd; (Scotland) 54°F . at Prestwick Airfield on the 17th, 11°F . at Dalwhinnie on the 13th; (Northern Ireland) 54°F . at Armagh on the 17th, 16°F . at Aldergrove on the 3rd.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 127 over England and Wales, 130 over Scotland and 112 over Northern Ireland. In Scotland less than the average occurred in a central area covering much of Inverness-shire and Perthshire and locally on the south coast of Ayrshire. More than twice the average was registered at Tiree, in the western Isles, and locally on the coast of Angus. In England and Wales, somewhat less than the average occurred over a large, mainly inland area in the northern half of the country and in the west Midlands. Less than 75 per cent. was measured over part of County Durham. On the other hand more than 150 per cent. of the average was received over much of an area extending over east Hampshire, Surrey, and the Thames Valley and stretching north-east over part of Suffolk, Norfolk and south Lincolnshire, as well as locally on the south coast from Bude round to Dover and in a few isolated places elsewhere. More than twice the average occurred at Boston, Lincs. In Northern Ireland somewhat less than the average was registered in a central area across the middle of Tyrone and the southern half of Antrim, while more than the average occurred elsewhere.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

- 1st 1.50 in. at Farnham, Surrey.
- 9th 2.04 in. at Kilsyth (Stirlingshire).
- 16th 3.85 in. at Kinlochquoich (Inverness-shire), 2.50 in. at Loch Sloy Power Station (Dumbartonshire), 2.40 in. at Swaledale (Yorkshire).
- 17th 2.87 in. at Kinlochquoich.

Thunderstorms occurred locally on the 1st, 8th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 20th and 27th.

Snow or sleet occurred frequently; for example on the 1st–4th, 6th, 8th–15th and 25th–31st. Snow lay 12 in. deep at Buxton, 10 in. at Malham Tarn and 8 in. at Lake Vyrnwy on the morning of the 1st and $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. at Whipsnade and 9 in. at Birmingham on the morning of the 3rd. On high ground snow lay locally in decreasing depths up to the 15th, for example at Malham Tarn, in Yorkshire. In Scotland snow fell up to 1 foot deep on the 10th and fresh falls occurred on the 13th.

Sunshine.—The general sunshine expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1906–35 was 93 in England and Wales, 104 in Scotland and 121 in Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland and locally in north and east Scotland and north-east England there was a considerable excess, while in western districts of England there was, on the whole, a marked deficiency. Percentages at individual stations were variable.

Fog.—Fog developed rather frequently, chiefly from the 1st–9th, 16th–17th and 19th–31st. It was considerable at times; for example on the 5th, 6th, 8th, 19th, 21st, 23rd, 24th and 28th–30th. The worst fog in the Forth-Clyde area occurred on the 24th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 14 nights. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on 11 days. A sun pillar was observed at Llangynhafal towards sunset on the 2nd and the zodiacal light at Trefnant on the 28th.