

Monthly Weather Report

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

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February, 1952 - Dry and sunny on the whole; cold 1st-16th

The weather of the month was dry except locally in the north of Scotland, and sunny in most districts. The cold, wintry weather experienced in the latter half of January persisted during the first sixteen days of February, but the week ending on the 23rd was mild, particularly in Scotland where the deviation from the average for the week was $+5.3^{\circ}\text{F}$.

In the opening days a complex depression was situated near Denmark and South Norway, while secondary disturbances moved east-south-east across the British Isles; rather cold westerly winds prevailed with wintry showers and long bright periods in most areas. On the 4th an anticyclone off our south-west coasts moved north-east and subsequently withdrew southward. Meanwhile a depression moved north-north-east to Iceland and turned north-east, while an associated trough moved across Scotland giving precipitation in northern districts of the British Isles on the 5th, and scattered rain or showers on the 6th. On the 7th the main depression moved south and then south-east to southern Scandinavia; showery weather occurred, with scattered thunderstorms. Gales were recorded in the north of Scotland on the 6th and 7th. Behind the depression cold northerly winds prevailed over the British Isles, with scattered, mainly wintry, showers but long sunny periods. On the 10th a depression off north-west Scotland moved south-east to Denmark; further precipitation, mainly rain, occurred and it was heavy locally. There was another break through of polar air behind this depression and cold weather prevailed on the 11th and 12th with widespread sleet or snow showers but long bright periods in some parts. On the 13th and 14th another depression moved from east Iceland across the British Isles to France; further precipitation occurred and temperature continued low. On the 16th and 17th a depression moved from west of Iceland to the Shetlands and thence to the southern North Sea and was associated with slight rain or drizzle in many places.

Subsequently an anticyclone westward of Ireland moved south-east to the English Channel by the 21st and thereafter moved slowly north and dominated conditions over the British Isles until the 28th. Temperature rose considerably, the week ending on the 23rd being unusually mild in the northern half of the country. On the 28th to 29th a trough of low pressure moved south-east across Scotland, causing some rain, chiefly in the northern half of the British Isles. Considerable fog developed from the 24th to the 29th, mainly at night and in the morning, but it persisted at times locally; fairly severe frost also occurred locally on some nights during this period.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure exceeded the average, the excess being greatest in the west; at 9h. the deviation from the average ranged from $+9.8$ mb. at Tiree and Armagh to $+3.7$ mb. at Lerwick and Gorleston. The predominating winds were between south-west and north through west. The total run of the wind was less than the average on the whole. Gales occurred at times at exposed stations, chiefly in northern districts, mainly on the 1st, 3rd, 5th-8th, 11th and 20th-22nd. Among the highest gusts registered in knots were 52 at Kete on the 1st, 59 at Scilly on the 3rd, 59 at Stornoway, 58 at Lerwick, 55 at Bell Rock Lighthouse, and 54 at Eskdalemuir on the 6th, and 53 at Tiree on the 7th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature was below the average by 1.5°F . in England and Wales, 0.7°F . in Scotland and 1.3°F . in Northern Ireland. The first sixteen days were mainly cold, particularly the week ending on the 16th. The remainder of the month was mild on the whole, though some low minima were registered on the 26th, 27th and 28th. The week ending on the 23rd was very mild in the

northern half of the country, the deviation from the average for the week being as much as $+5.3^{\circ}\text{F}$. in Scotland.

Extreme temperatures for the month included:—(England and Wales) 56°F . at Dishforth on the 23rd, Chivenor on the 28th and Poole on the 29th, 10°F . at Bellingham on the 13th; (Scotland) 57°F . at Stonehaven on the 18th, Dyce on the 23rd and Montrose on the 24th, 12°F . at Dalwhinnie on the 12th; (Northern Ireland) 53°F . at Holywood on the 24th, 20°F . at Aldergrove on the 13th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 43 over England and Wales, 55 over Scotland and 46 over Northern Ireland. Rainfall was less than the average practically everywhere except at some places in the north of Scotland, where there was a small excess. Less than 25 per cent. of the average occurred in small areas in south-east and south Scotland, locally in the Lake District, in parts of south-west England and the Midlands and at Seaforde, County Down.

Among the largest falls in 24 hours were:—

5th. 2.11 in. at Glenleven and 2.10 in. at Ardgor, both in Argyll.

10th. 2.87 in. at Cwm Dyli, Snowdon, 2.46 in. at Bod Talog (Montgomery) and 2.30 in. at Blaenau Festiniog (Merioneth).

Thunderstorms occurred locally on the 1st, 3rd, 7th, 8th, 14th and 18th.

Snow or sleet occurred rather frequently during the first 15 days. Locally in Scotland and on high ground in the north of England and Wales snow lay on the ground on most days until the 15th. The deep snow which was recorded at high level stations at the end of January persisted during the opening days of February; for example, at Bwlchgwyn level snow was 13 in. deep on the 1st, decreasing to 5 in. on the 5th, with drifts 4 ft. 4 in. deep on the 1st; at Malham Tarn snow lay 10 in. deep from the 1st to 5th; at Braemar 9 in. deep on the 1st, decreasing to 7 in. on the 3rd and 4th; at Glenlivet 8 in. on the 1st-3rd, 10 in. on the 4th and 11 in. on the 5th; at Balmoral 8 to 10 in. on 1st-5th.

Sunshine.—The general sunshine expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1906-35 was 115 over England and Wales, 114 over Scotland and 92 over Northern Ireland; the percentage for the districts ranged from 86 in north Scotland, 92 in Northern Ireland and 94 in east England to 129 in north-east England and the Midlands and 138 in west Scotland.

Fog.—Fog, mainly at night and in the morning, occurred fairly frequently, chiefly on the 5th, 13th-20th and 23rd-29th. During the period 25th-29th fog was rather widespread and somewhat persistent locally.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 17 days. At Oxford solar halos were noted on 10 days and a lunar halo and a mock moon were seen on the evening of the 12th. An unusually complete solar halo phenomenon was recorded at Alston on the 12th.