

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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February 1965 — Dull, rather cold and very dry.

Weather throughout the month was dominated by well developed anticyclones over, or to the west of the British Isles.

The month began quiet and cold with good sunny periods, especially in the west, but there were a few scattered wintry showers over the high ground in Scotland and in eastern coastal districts of England. Overnight fog patches were slow to clear in some places on the 3rd and 4th.

On the 4th an anticyclone, which had been centred over northern England since the 1st, moved to the west of Scotland. Winds freshened from the north and weather which had been generally dull, became rather mild, especially in western districts, while feeble troughs moving around the periphery of the anticyclone brought light rain and drizzle to much of the eastern half of England.

The anticyclone began to move southwards on the 9th and winds in the north backed to north-west. A frontal system, associated with a deep depression in high latitudes, brought slight rain and drizzle to all districts the next day as it moved southward over the country. By the 11th the anti-cyclone had moved far enough south for mild westerly weather to become general.

Two stormy days followed. On the 12th a depression deepened considerably as it moved eastward between Scotland and Iceland. Winds increased generally becoming strong in the north and reaching gale force in parts of Scotland. Rain reached western districts during the morning and had spread to most other parts of the country by the evening; it was mainly slight though there were moderate to heavy falls locally. Winds veered to north-west during the night as the depression approached southern Scandinavia. The next day a strong northerly airstream covered the British Isles with wind increasing to gale force in many areas—at Durham a gust of 70 kt was recorded. Temperature fell sharply and the rain gave place to squally showers of sleet or snow, ground becoming snow-covered for a time in some eastern districts.

The anticyclonic regime was renewed on the 14th as pressure rose to the west of Ireland. Wintry showers became less frequent and winds moderated but remained mainly northerly for the next two or three days. There were long sunny periods on the 14th, but weather was mainly cloudy with light rain here and there on the 15th and 16th as weak fronts spread round the northern side of the anticyclone centred near southern Ireland. The anticyclone moved northward to the west of Scotland on the 17th and colder weather with east to north-east winds extended across southern and central England during the next day or two bringing light showers of snow or sleet to many districts. By the 19th the anticyclone was centred off the north of Scotland and a belt of rain and drizzle spread westwards across all districts of the British Isles but this turned to snow during the night and on the mornings of the 20th and 21st many parts of the country were snow-covered to a depth of 1-2 inches.

The anticyclone which had been drifting north-west was centred over Iceland on the 22nd and troughs in a northerly airstream brought sleet and snow to many parts of the country though falls were mainly light and snow did not settle except on the higher ground. Although it was not quite so cold as previously in southern England temperature

remained well below average and this type of weather continued with little change until the end of the month.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was considerably above the 1921-50 average everywhere, the excess at 9h ranging from 22.3 mb at Stornoway to 10.9 mb at Gorleston. Surface winds were mainly from a northerly point apart from light variable winds on the 1st-3rd, westerlies on the 11th-12th and easterlies around the 19th-24th. Winds reached gale force in Scotland on 8 days, and in England and Wales, apart from high level stations, on the 1st, 12th-14th and 20th (5 days). Gales were widespread on the 13th and severe in many northern districts; gusts of 87 kt and 83 kt were recorded at Lowther Hill (2412 ft.) and Stornoway respectively.

Temperature — In Scotland day temperatures were mainly above average except during the first and last few days of the month. The warmest days were around the 7th, 12th and 17th. Over the month as a whole temperatures were below the average in England and Wales, particularly during the day, and especially in the eastern half of the country. Day temperatures were a little above average around the 7th, 12th and 17th, but remained below average from the 17th until the end of the month. Extreme temperatures in each district are underlined in Table III.

Precipitation — Over Scotland as a whole it was the driest February for 30 years; only in restricted areas in the north-east was rainfall above the average while amounts of the order of only 10-20 per cent of average were reported from many districts. In England and Wales rainfall was above average only locally around Gorleston and over the North Yorkshire Moors. It was less than 25 per cent of the average west of the Pennines and south-west of a line Llandudno to Dungeness, and less than 10 per cent over most of south-west England, west of a line Southampton to Gloucester.

Two reports of thunder were received during the month, both from Scotland.

Snow or sleet was reported from Scotland on 16 days ground being snow-covered at 09h on 19 mornings. In England and Wales wintry showers occurred mainly during the second half of the month and ground was snow-covered in many places from the 19th to the 21st. Snow-cover during the first four days of the month, in places as far south as Dartmoor, was mainly associated with snowfall during the latter part of January.

Sunshine — In Scotland large deficits were reported from eastern and northern areas while there were excesses locally in the central belt and in the mid-west. At Rothesay sunshine was 152 per cent of the average, but at Stornoway it was the duller February since 1903. In England and Wales deficits were greater in the north-east and Midlands than in the west; percentages ranging from 25 at Newport, Shropshire to 93 at Weymouth.

Fog — In Scotland fog was reported at 9h at one place or another on 14 days and in England and Wales on 20 days mainly during the first and last 10 days of the month.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was observed on 7 nights in Scotland.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES— FEBRUARY, 1965

(1908, revised 1928, 1941, 1956 and 1964)

| DISTRICTS | AIR TEMPERATURE | | | | | EARTH TEMP. | | RAIN DAYS | RAIN-FALL | SUN-SHINE |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------|------|------|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | *Highest Max. | *Lowest Min. | Max. | Min. | Mean | Mean 1 ft. | Mean 4 ft. | | | |
| | | | Difference from Average | | | | | | | |
| 0 SCOTLAND, N. | 10.3 | -5.6 | +0.3 | +0.5 | +0.4 | - | - | -4 | 54 | 71 |
| 1 SCOTLAND, E. | 11.7 | -5.0 | 0.0 | +0.8 | +0.4 | - | - | -1 | 34 | 61 |
| 2 ENGLAND, N.E. | 10.6 | -3.8 | -0.5 | +0.7 | +0.1 | +0.1 | -0.1 | -1 | 51 | 46 |
| 3 ENGLAND, E. | 10.2 | -6.1 | -1.3 | -0.1 | -0.7 | -0.5 | -0.7 | +1 | 56 | 51 |
| 4 MIDLANDS | 10.0 | -7.4 | -1.1 | -0.2 | -0.7 | -0.7 | -0.6 | -6 | 19 | 40 |
| 5 ENGLAND, S.E. | 11.1 | -6.1 | -1.2 | -0.5 | -0.8 | 0.8 | -0.7 | -5 | 16 | 62 |

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

| DISTRICTS | AIR TEMPERATURE | | | | | EARTH TEMP. | | RAIN DAYS | RAIN-FALL | SUN-SHINE |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|------|------|------|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | *Highest Max. | *Lowest Min. | Max. | Min. | Mean | Mean 1 ft. | Mean 4 ft. | | | |
| | Difference from Average | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 SCOTLAND, W. | 10.7 | -8.2 | +0.4 | -0.6 | -0.1 | -1.1 | -0.7 | -9 | 21 | 104 |
| 7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales | 10.0 | -5.0 | -0.8 | -0.1 | -0.5 | -0.5 | -0.3 | -7 | 18 | 58 |
| 8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales | 10.0 | -8.3 | -1.5 | -1.5 | -1.5 | -1.2 | -1.1 | -11 | 4 | 59 |
| N. IRELAND | 10.3 | -7.2 | -0.5 | -1.0 | -0.8 | - | - | -8 | 17 | 73 |
| SCOTLAND | 11.7 | -8.2 | +0.2 | +0.2 | +0.2 | - | - | -5 | 37 | 79 |
| ENG. and WALES | 11.1 | -8.3 | -1.1 | -0.3 | -0.7 | - | - | -5 | 27 | 53 |