

# Monthly Weather Report

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### October, 1948—Mild until the 25th, then cold; very wet in the west of Scotland.

Mild weather prevailed on the whole until the 25th but it was cold with some severe frost from the 26th onward. The month was very wet in the west of Scotland but dry over much of England and Wales. Unusually severe gales occurred in the north of Scotland on the 22nd and 25th.

During the opening days an anticyclone over southern England and northern France moved slowly east-south-east. Meanwhile secondary troughs of low pressure moved north-north-east along our north-west seaboard causing rain in the west and north, heavy in the west of Scotland on the 1st. Subsequently an anticyclone moved slowly east across the British Isles and a spell of mainly fair weather prevailed apart from fog, and some rain in the south-west on the 6th. By the 8th a complex area of low pressure covered the North Atlantic and troughs of low pressure approached our western districts; strong winds and a gale locally occurred on the north-west coasts and considerable rain fell in Scotland and Ireland. In England and Wales conditions continued fair, apart from fog. On the 11th a small secondary moved north-north-east from south-west of Ireland; rain and local thunderstorms occurred on the 11th and showers and rather widespread thunder on the 12th. A very unsettled period ensued with secondary depressions or troughs of low pressure moving eastward over the British Isles; rain fell daily in most areas. On the 17th a small but vigorous depression south-westward of Ireland moved rapidly north-east across England giving heavy rain, while the main depression south of Iceland moved east-south-east. In the rear of these disturbances westerly gales were recorded locally in the English Channel. On the 21st and 22nd a small, very vigorous depression moved east across Iceland and associated troughs crossed the British Isles; widespread gales occurred in Scotland on the 22nd and they were very severe in the extreme north. Another intense disturbance moved east to the north of Scotland on the 24th and then turned north-east. Severe gales were again recorded in the extreme north of Scotland, hurricane force being reached at Wick at 6h. on the 25th. Rain occurred at times in most districts, though it was slight and scattered in the south until the 24th or 25th.

In the rear of this disturbance a wedge of high pressure moved east over the British Isles and subsequently high pressure was established over southern Scandinavia. The last six days of the month were cold. On the 27th and 28th a depression off the west of Ireland moved south-east and was associated with heavy rain in the south-west on the 27th, and on the 31st a trough of low pressure moving slowly east caused fairly general rain but it did not reach most of England until the night.

**Pressure and Wind.**—Mean pressure exceeded the average except in the Shetlands. The deviation from the average at 9h. ranged from  $-1.5$  mb. at Lerwick to  $+4.8$  mb. at Portland Bill. Southerly and westerly winds predominated and over much of the country the total run of the wind was below the average. Wind reached gale force locally at times, namely on the 1st, 8th–9th, 13th, 18th–19th, 22nd–25th, 27th–28th and 31st. A widespread and severe gale occurred in Scotland on the 22nd, Beaufort force 11 being reached at Lerwick at 12h. Another severe gale occurred in the north of Scotland on the 25th, when force 12 was recorded at Wick at 6h. Among the highest speeds registered in gusts at anemometer stations were 81 m.p.h. at Lerwick on the 22nd, 71 m.p.h. at Scilly on the 18th and 69 m.p.h. at Kew Observatory on the 17th.

**Temperature.**—Broadly speaking mean temperature was about

average in Scotland and somewhat above the average in England and Wales and Northern Ireland. The warmest days occurred generally on the 1st, 2nd and 9th–11th. The last week was cold and severe frost was registered, notably on the 27th and 28th. In some northern districts of Scotland day temperature failed to reach  $40^{\circ}\text{F}$  on the 26th–28th. The screen minimum,  $11^{\circ}\text{F}$ . at Dalwhinnie on the 28th, is the lowest screen temperature in Scotland in any October since 1880, while the grass minimum at Oxford on the 27th, namely  $16.6^{\circ}\text{F}$ ., is the lowest on record there in October, the previous lowest being  $16.7^{\circ}\text{F}$ . in 1905.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales)  $75^{\circ}\text{F}$  at Whitstable on the 2nd,  $21^{\circ}\text{F}$ . at Thetford, Askham Bryan, Goudhurst, Marlborough and Rhayader on the 27th and at Houghall on the 28th; (Scotland)  $67^{\circ}\text{F}$ . at St. Abbs Head on the 2nd,  $11^{\circ}\text{F}$ . at Dalwhinnie on the 28th; (Northern Ireland),  $70^{\circ}\text{F}$ . at Lisburn on the 2nd,  $28^{\circ}\text{F}$ . at Armagh on the 27th.

**Precipitation.**—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 75 over England and Wales, 130 over Scotland and 100 over Northern Ireland. In Scotland, less than the average occurred in the south-east, south of the Firth of Forth, in an area around Balmoral and Braemar and in the neighbourhood of the Solway Firth. On the other hand more than twice the average was received over part of Argyllshire. In England and Wales, more than the average occurred in an irregular area covering part of south Wales and the borders of the Bristol Channel and extending north to Birmingham and south-west over Cornwall and west Devon. More than the average was received also in small isolated areas in north Cambridgeshire and around Hatfield, Essex. Less than 50 per cent. was measured over most of north-east England, locally on the coast of East Anglia and at many places on the south-east coast. In Northern Ireland the percentage of the average ranged from 74 at Seaford in the south-east to 128 at Ballymena in the north-east.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

- 1st 3.60 in. at Ardour House (Argyllshire), 3.48 in. at Kinlochquoich and 3.15 in. at Gairloch (both in Inverness-shire).
- 9th 3.43 in. at Helensburgh, 2.68 in. at Stronachlachar (Stirling), 2.65 in. at Dunoon and 2.60 in. at Loch Vennachar (Perthshire).
- 27th 2.37 in. at St. Austell (Cornwall).

**Sunshine.**—Broadly speaking sunshine somewhat exceeded the average in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The duration was less than the average, however, at a few inland stations in Scotland. In England and Wales the duration was less than the average on the whole but more than the average was registered at a number of places, particularly in the south. The week ending on the 30th was notably sunny in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

**Fog.**—Fog occurred at times chiefly on the 1st–3rd, 5th–11th, 16th, 17th, 21st, 22nd, 27th, 30th and 31st.

**Miscellaneous Phenomena.**—The aurora was observed in Scotland, chiefly from northern stations, on 22 nights, the highest frequency in October for at least 15 years. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on 16 days.