

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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March 1965 — Wintry weather at first, very warm at end of month

Weather was mainly cyclonic in character except during the periods 6th-11th and 26th-31st.

The very cold weather at the end of February continued during the first week of March. On the 1st strong north-easterly winds, associated with a small trough of low pressure over the Irish Sea, brought widespread snow showers, falls being heavy over large areas of northern England; over parts of the north-east and the northern Pennines level snow accumulated to a depth of 10-12 inches. The next day a ridge of high pressure moved southwards over the country maintaining generally sunny weather over England and Wales. Winds backed towards south in Scotland that evening, and southerly winds reached gale force in most areas on the 3rd as a vigorous depression moved from the west of Scotland southwards across Ireland. Associated with this depression a broad belt of snow, heavy at times in the west and Midlands, spread slowly southwards over the country; it continued in most districts throughout the night, and, in the south, for much of the 4th. High winds caused considerable drifting. On the morning of the 4th level snow lay 9 inches deep in the Somerset-Wiltshire-Hampshire area with drifts in places 6-10 feet deep.

An improvement began on the 5th as the depression, then over France, filled rapidly. In the north temperatures returned to normal on the 7th in a light south-westerly airstream, but in the south weather remained cold for another day or so. It was generally sunny for about six days in the south, after the clearance of overnight mist or fog patches, as an anticyclone moved from south-west England to Germany. Winds, which were light and variable at first, became progressively more southerly and temperatures in this warmer airstream rose above average towards the end of the week.

Rain from the Atlantic brought a change on the night of the 12th/13th, the weather during the next few days being generally dull and wet as a series of troughs moved eastwards across the country in rapid succession. The 16th was a showery day with sunny periods, but with scattered thunderstorms in the south and Midlands. The break, however, was only temporary, rain becoming general again on the 17th and 18th as a depression from the Atlantic moved eastwards across southern England.

On the 19th pressure became almost uniform over the British Isles and a trough moving southwards became stationary over southern England. There was occasional light rain or drizzle in the region of the trough and weather was dull and wet during the next four or five days as this and a series of other troughs associated with a large depression approaching the British Isles from the Atlantic, moved slowly northwards over the country. Cold easterly winds on their northern side brought renewed snowfall to the Midlands and the north, and rain was heavy at times in the frontal areas as milder air moved slowly northward from the south-west. Snow lay 4-6 inches deep at a number of places in the Midlands on the 21st and a heavy snow storm gave 14 inches at Buxton on the 22nd.

The month ended with an exceptionally warm, sunny spell. On the 27th an anticyclone was centred over the Bay of Biscay and as this moved north-eastwards towards southern England winds backed to the south in western districts. Warm air from low latitudes spread over the country and most of England and Wales became sunny and dry with

temperatures rising very rapidly and exceeding 21°C on the 28th and 29th over wide areas in almost unbroken sunshine.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was about the 1921-50 average in the north-east but below elsewhere, the deviation at 9h ranging from +0.6 at Lerwick to -3.2 at Scilly, St. Mary's. Surface winds were rather variable apart from east to south-east winds on the 1st-4th, south-east to south winds on the 9th-14th and west to south-west winds on the 15th, 16th, 25th and in the north on the 27th and 28th. Winds reached gale force in Scotland on 21 days, and in England and Wales on the 1st-5th, 15th-17th, 25th, 26th, 30th and 31st (12 days). Gales were widespread on the 3rd and 25th, gusts of 73 kt and 69 kt being recorded at Tiree and Stornoway respectively on the 3rd, and one of 67 kt at Portland Bill on the 25th.

Temperature — An outstanding feature was the great difference between the maximum day temperatures at the beginning and end of the month; at many places they ranged from 0°C during the first week to 22°C around the 28th. Over the month as a whole day temperatures were below the average but exceeded the average during the third and last weeks, the excess at many places in the south and Midlands being 5°-7°C around the 13th and 10°-12°C around the 28th.

Extremes included (England and Wales) 25.0°C at Wakefield on the 29th, -21.7°C at Corwen on the 3rd; (Scotland) 20.6°C at Kinlochewe on the 31st, -20.0°C at Braemar on the 2nd; (Northern Ireland) 21.7°C at Armagh on the 28th and 29th, -12.8°C at Newry Abbey on the 2nd.

Rainfall — In Scotland total precipitation exceeded the average in the south-east, central and Clyde districts and also in the Outer Hebrides. Parts of the north-east had less than half the average. At Wick it was the driest March since 1929. In England and Wales, rainfall was less than half the average over most of England north of a line from the Humber to the Mersey except over the Pennines: it was more than 175 per cent of the average in parts of central southern England and locally near the Wash.

Thunder was heard on 3 days in Scotland and on the 15th-18th, 21st and 23rd-25th (8 days) in England and Wales where thunderstorms were widespread on the 16th and 24th.

Snow or sleet fell on 26 days in Scotland, ground being snow-covered on 22 days. In England and Wales it fell on the 1st-9th, and 19th-26th (17 days); parts of northern England and the Midlands were snow-covered on the 1st-9th and 20th-24th. Snow lay 9-12 inches deep locally in north-east England on the 1st and 2nd and 6-8 inches deep locally in the Midlands on the 21st and 22nd.

Sunshine — In Scotland there were deficits at stations on the east coast from Aberdeen to the Firth of Forth and good excesses around Auchincruive and Dumfries. In England and Wales sunshine was generally above the average percentages ranging from 151 at Huddersfield to 83 at Sprowston.

Fog — In Scotland fog at 9h was reported on 21 days. In England and Wales it occurred on the 1st, 3rd-11th, 17th-20th and 22nd-28th (21 days) and was widespread on the 3rd.

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

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES— MARCH, 1965 (1908, revised 1928, 1941, 1956 and 1964)

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE					EARTH TEMP.		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUNSHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 1 ft.	Mean 4 ft.			
	Difference from Average									
0 SCOTLAND, N.	16.0	-7.8	-0.7	-0.9	-0.8	-	-	-4	80	106
1 SCOTLAND, E.	20.0	-11.1	-0.9	-1.2	-1.0	-	-	-2	107	99
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	23.7	-12.2	-0.8	-1.3	-1.1	-0.7	-0.4	+1	122	107
3 ENGLAND, E.	23.3	-12.2	-0.5	-0.6	-0.5	-0.7	-0.7	+2	127	100
4 MIDLANDS	22.8	-9.4	-0.2	-0.9	-0.6	-0.7	-0.7	+2	138	127
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	22.2	-10.5	-0.2	-0.4	-0.3	-0.5	-0.6	+4	142	108

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

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE					EARTH TEMP.		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUNSHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 1 ft.	Mean 4 ft.			
	Difference from Average									
6 SCOTLAND, W.	17.2	-14.7	-0.8	-1.2	-1.0	-0.8	-0.7	-1	100	106
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales	21.7	-13.9	-0.3	-1.1	-0.7	-0.9	-0.7	-1	97	124
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales	21.7	-13.9	-0.6	-1.2	-0.8	-0.7	-0.9	+2	121	107
N. IRELAND	21.7	-10.0	-0.7	-1.2	-0.9	-	-	+1	141	105
SCOTLAND	20.0	-14.7	-0.8	-1.1	-0.9	-	-	-2	92	104
ENG. and WALES	23.7	-13.9	-0.4	-0.9	-0.7	-	-	+2	127	112