

Monthly Weather Report

MO 754

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

Volume 81 Number 5

Published by HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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May 1964 — *Changeable; warm spells.*

Until the 13th weather was of a westerly cyclonic type with a series of troughs and ridges crossing the country. After a mainly anticyclonic spell on the 14th-20th weather again became cyclonic in character over most of the country with south-west to south winds backing to east on the 23rd as depressions to the west of Ireland became slow-moving over the Bay of Biscay and France.

Depressions between Scotland and Iceland during the first five days maintained a westerly airstream over the British Isles; most districts had long sunny periods and scattered showers except on the 2nd when fronts from the Atlantic brought more general rain. Winds backed towards the south early on the 6th as a small depression formed to the west of Ireland; warm-front rain spread from Cornwall over much of the country during the day and the night was very close with rain in most districts. Winds reached gale force in many places on the 7th as the depression deepened and moved north-east near western Scotland. Rain was widespread and heavy at times in the west with scattered thunderstorms in Scotland where falls exceeded 1 inch locally.

An anticyclone covering the Bay of Biscay or western Europe gave mainly dry sunny weather in southern and eastern England by day during the second week although some rain spread over the area at night. Depressions moving north-east near the north of Scotland, however, brought gales with more cloudy showery weather and periods of more continuous rain to the north and north-west. Frontal rain spread from the Atlantic to all districts on the night of the 9th-10th, and after a sunny day the following night was also wet with heavy rain locally in the north-west, as a wave depression moved east across Scotland. The 12th was very warm in southern England with afternoon temperatures exceeding 26°C in places, but further north a deep depression brought renewed rain and gales to western Scotland; gusts of 68 kt were recorded at Benbecula and Duirinish. Cloudy cooler weather spread to southern England also on the 13th.

The weather pattern changed on the 14th as an anticyclone from the south of Ireland slowly drifted across southern England to the continent giving four or five days of fine quiet weather over most of the country with progressively rising day temperatures; 27°C was recorded at some places in southern England on the 17th. Whit Monday (18th) remained generally fine and warm in the south but a thundery trough gave rain and scattered thunderstorms in the north, and rain spread over the whole country during the night persisting in south-east England for much of the following day.

After a generally bright showery day with normal temperature on the 20th, the 21st was dull and wet as a depression moved south-east to the west coast of Ireland and thence to the Bay of Biscay. Widespread overnight rain continued in parts of southern England on the 22nd becoming general again at night.

An easterly airstream became established over the British Isles on the 23rd as pressure rose to the north of Scotland and over Scandinavia. Depressions in the Bay of Biscay and over northern France maintained generally cloudy weather with occasional rain and scattered thunderstorms over southern England until the 25th but it was fine and very warm over most of the remainder of the country away from the east coast. Winds became rather variable on the 26th, and from then until the 28th dry and fine weather with day and night temperatures considerably above the

average extended to most of the country, although overnight fog in many southern and eastern districts was slow to clear during the mornings.

Fronts associated with a deepening depression to the west of the British Isles gave a wet day in Cornwall on the 28th but apart from heavy thunderstorms which broke out in London and the Home Counties during the evening it was fine elsewhere. The next day thunderstorms accompanied by torrential rain caused flooding in central and northern England and thundery rain and thunderstorms occurred in many parts of the country during the last two days of the month.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was below the 1921-50 average in the north and above in the south, the deviation at 9 h ranging from -4.1 mb at Stornoway to +1.6 mb at Shoeburyness. Surface winds were predominantly between west and south-west until the 20th except for an interlude of variable winds on the 14th-15th and of southerlies on the 16th-17th. Winds were mainly southerly on the 21st-22nd as well and then easterly or variable until the end of the month. Winds reached gale force on thirteen days in Scotland and on the 1st, 3rd-5th, 7th-12th and 30th (eleven days) in England and Wales. Gales were fairly widespread, especially in the north, on the 7th-9th: a gust of 70 kt was recorded at Edinburgh, Blackford Hill on the 9th.

Temperature — Day temperatures were mostly about average during the first half of the month in Scotland and the first ten days in England and Wales. They were considerably above average during the second half, maxima being 4°-8°C above normal over wide areas on the 12th, 17th and 22nd-30th. Night temperatures were mostly above average except on the 15th when air frost was reported at a few places. In Scotland temperature fell to -2.2°C at Cairngorm (3,600 ft above MSL) on the 14th; at lower levels 0.0 was recorded at Blackbridge on the 2nd and at Fyvie Castle on the 14th.

Rainfall — In Scotland rainfall was more than 150 per cent of the average in the north and north west and more than 200 per cent near the Great Glen, but below the average in the east. In England and Wales amounts exceeded twice the average in parts of Wiltshire, Hampshire and Sussex, but was less than half the average over much of the country east of the Pennines and in the east Midlands.

Snow or sleet was reported on six days in Scotland.

Thunder was heard on fourteen days in Scotland and on the 3rd, 4th, 7th, 8th, 10th, 13th, 17th, 18th and 23rd-31st (seventeen days) in England and Wales. Thunderstorms were widespread and heavy during the last three days of the month.

Sunshine — Sunshine was mostly above average in east and north-east England but below elsewhere. At Tiree it was the dulllest May since at least 1927 and at Ross-on-Wye it was the 15th successive month with less than average sunshine.

Fog — Fog was observed in Scotland at one place or another at 9 h on twenty-five days in England and Wales on the 2nd, 6th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, 18th, 20th and 23rd-31st (seventeen days) and was widespread on the 24th and 27th-29th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was reported in Scotland on only one night (1st).

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES— May

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.	24.4	-2.2	+0.5	+1.3	+0.9	-	-	+2	138	75
1 SCOTLAND, E.	23.9	0.0	+1.0	+1.3	+1.1	-	-	-1	57	91
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	25.6	0.0	+2.1	+1.8	+2.0	+1.2	+0.5	-3	43	121
3 ENGLAND, E.	27.2	-0.6	+2.5	+1.9	+2.2	+1.2	+0.3	0	69	110
4 MIDLANDS	26.1	-0.6	+1.9	+1.8	+1.9	+1.4	+0.7	0	74	106
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	26.1	0.0	+1.6	+2.1	+1.8	+1.3	+0.9	+2	140	99
6 SCOTLAND, W.	25.0	-0.3	+0.4	+1.8	+1.1	+1.4	+0.1	+3	131	87

1964 (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		
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales	26.1	0.0	+1.5	+2.2	+1.8	+1.0	+0.8	+1	108	100
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales	26.7	-1.7	+0.8	+1.4	+1.2	+0.9	+0.3	+1	98	87
N. IRELAND	22.8	0.0	+1.1	+1.3	+1.2	-	-	+2	92	88
SCOTLAND	25.0	-2.2	+0.6	+1.5	+1.0	-	-	+1	116	84
ENG. and WALES	27.2	-1.7	+1.7	+1.9	+1.8	-	-	0	95	104
SEA										