



Weather Front

December 2018/1918

Observers Notes 2018.

Pitsford Weather Centre: Apart from a few cold days towards the end of the second week, December 2018 remained relatively mild. Rain fell on most days, but with a dry end to the month.

Mountsorrel: Quite dull, with 73% of average sunshine, in marked contrast to some local stations. The first three weeks of the month were mild and wet; the final week however was cooler and drier. December 2018 was the second mildest December on the station record (2000).

Mickleover: The mean air temperature was the second mildest for December since 1988.

Coton in the Elms: December 2018 was the second mildest December since 1988. There were few frosts, and even these were generally slight. It was a wet December (142%), with frequent spells of rain but becoming drier in the last few days. December 15th was the only day with “snow falling” when the rain turned briefly to “rain and snow mixed” as warm air collided with the cold.

Desford: A mild month for the time of year with normal rainfall.

Middleton: A mild and rather wet and foggy, but rather uneventful, month. The two days of “snow falling” were “rain and snow mixed”.

Derby: December 2018 was the fourth mildest December on the station record (1952).

December 1918.

Observers Notes.

Derby/burton on Trent: Rainfall was between 95 and 115 mm; a rather wet month overall. Maximum temperatures were around 15 C on the 12th, 28th, and 29th, with a minimum of -4 C on the 26th.ⁱ

Kenninghall, Norfolk: A very wet and exceptionally mild month.

Norwich, Norfolk: The temperature registered on the 3rd [15 C] was the highest recorded here in December [in] thirty-three years.

Copdock, Suffolk: A dull, damp and very mild month. The highest maximum [14 C], and the highest minimum [11 C] both being [1.1 C] above any previous December readings in the past eighteen years.

Meltham, Yorkshire: The first half of the month was warmer than in any other corresponding period [in] thirty-eight years.

Tenbury, Worcestershire: A damp, changeable, and very mild month. The maximum temperature [15 C] was the highest recorded in December for more than eighteen years, and the mean temperature was [3.3 C] warmer than usual. The number of rain-days was nearly double the normal, the total rainfall was however, nearly 25 mm deficient [71%]

Totland Bay, Isle of Wight: It was the warmest December [in] thirty-three years here. The mean temperature was [8.7 C]; the nearest approach to this being [8.6 C] in 1898.

Sheepstor, Dartmoor: The wettest month I ever experienced. Other Decembers had more rain, but certainly during the twelve years I have taken records here there has been nothing like the incessant rain of the last six weeks of the year, for it has done little but rain day and night. [The rainfall total was 346 mm, the maximum in one day was 42 mm on the 4th.]

Dublin (Fitzwilliam Square): A very open month of south-west and west winds, much cloud, and frequent rain. No snow, sleet or hail was observed. Lightning seen on the 11th and 19th.

Carrigoran, Co. Clare: A very gloomy and muggy month. Rain fell persistently from the beginning to the end of the month, and the sun was rarely seen. There was a particularly bad spell of weather about the 18th, with much distant thunder. No snow fell, and there was only an occasional light frost.ⁱⁱ

Many Rain-Days and Abnormally Mild.ⁱⁱⁱ

The weather of December 1918., like the two preceding months, was influenced by south-westerly and westerly winds. As can be seen from the observers notes the month was mild, rainy and generally unsettled. There was an unusually high frequency of rain which, at some stations, fell every day; "twenty-eight or twenty-nine rain-days were recorded at an unusually large number of places."^{iv}

Rainfall distribution around the country varied markedly. In Scotland North and East the total was 14 mm below normal (91% and 82% respectively); in England South-East 18 mm below normal (77%) and in the English Channel a small deficiency of 3 mm (97%). Elsewhere totals ranged from 286% in England North to 124% in England East and 120% in the Midland Counties. The greatest rainfall totals occurred in the northern counties with the Lancashire stations of Blundellsands and Southport recording the wettest December for more than

forty years. At Beddgelert the total fall was 570 mm, with ten individual daily falls of over 25 mm and floods resulting.

Temperature was mainly above average and ranged from [2.8 C] in the Midlands to [0.7 C] in northern Scotland. The highest was [17 C], at Dublin (Trinity College) and Hawarden Bridge, on the 4th, and the lowest at Leadnothie [-11 C] on the 26th. Temperatures at Buxton [-5 C], Belper [-3 C], Belvoir Castle [-6 C] and Rauceby [-3 C], all on the 26th, illustrate how widespread the cold air was across the East Midlands. At Kew observatory the maximum on the 3rd was [14 C] and was the highest recorded in December [in] forty-seven years. "The abnormal character of the month as regards temperature may also be illustrated by the fact that during the week ended the 7th the mean temperature at West Linton, on the Pentland Hills, was [6.8 C] above the normal, at Edinburgh [6.2 C] above, and at Newton Rigg (Cumberland) and Ross-on-Wye [6.1 C] above".^v

From the 19th to 23rd the weather was exceptionally cold, and very stormy around the 23rd and 26th, with snow, sleet and hail being recorded on various days from the 22nd onwards. Fog was comparatively rare.^{vi}

Central England Data, December 1918:

Mean Maximum Temperature: 9.3 C. Average: 6.4 C.

Mean Minimum Temperature: 4.5 C. Average: 1.6 C.

Mean Temperature: 6.9 C. Average 4.0 C.

England and Wales Rainfall: 122.5 mm. Average: 90.7 mm.

Midlands Mean Maximum Temperature: 9.1 C.

Midlands Mean Minimum Temperature: 3.5 C.

Midlands Mean Temperature: 6.3 C.

Midlands Rainfall: 99.5 mm.

ⁱ D J Stanier, by email.

ⁱⁱ Monthly Weather Report, December 1918, Summary page, HMSO, 1919.

ⁱⁱⁱ MWR, December 1918, Headline, HMSO, 1919.

^{iv} MWR, December 1918, Summary, HMSO, 1919.

^v MWR, December 1918, Summary, HMSO, 1919.

^{vi} MWR, December 1918, Summary, HMSO, 1919.