

Weather Front

March 2021/1921

March 2021

Observers' Notes.

Mountsorrel: A milder, and drier, month than usual with below average sunshine figures. A remarkable heatwave at the end of the month produced the warmest March day on the 20-year station record.

Bablake: The late month maximum temperature of 23.0 C was the warmest March day in Coventry since before 1892; the previous warmest March day was 22.0 C in 1929.

Derby: The maxima of 211.5 C and 23.2 C were the 14th and 15th examples of 20 C maxima in March on the combined 1952-2021 records of Littleover and Derby.

Middleton: The maximum of 20.6 C and the minimum of 10.9 C were both the highest in March since local records began in 1962. The monthly range of 22.8 C was the largest on the March records, at the current site, since 1977.

Mickleover: The maximum temperature for March was the highest on the local record since 1952.

Coton-in-the-Elms: The maxima of 21.9 C and 24.1 C, on the 30th and 31st, were consecutive records for March. It was a very dry month; the total of 26.6 mm was just over half the average, and the driest March since 2011 (7.4 mm). The wettest day of the month was the 11th (5.2 mm) and was the lowest for March since 1977.

Lincoln (non-instrumental observations): Days of Fog at 0900; 1, Days of Frost; 1.

Desford: A dry and mild month that ended with some early spring, record breaking, warmth. A new maximum temperature record of 23.6 C was set on the 31st, beating the previous 20-year, local record, of 22.7 C set in 2012.

Saltfleetby: Gusts of 57 and 61 mph, from the SW, were recorded on the 11th. An unseasonal maximum temperature of 23.7 C was noted on the 31st.

Pitsford: A changeable month, alternating between cyclonic and anticyclonic conditions at generally weekly intervals. Turning unseasonably mild in the final days.

March 1921

Observers' Notes.

Derby/Burton on Trent: In terms of total rainfall and mean temperature, March 1921 was similar to March 2021. The rainfall yielded between 25 mm and 35 mm generally, while the mean temperature was around 7.6 C; this mean would rate at 2 C warmer than the average at that time. Individual notable temperatures were: maxima around 19 C on the 24th, and minima around -2 C on the 7th and 8th. There were 3 or 4 frosts in the Burton area, depending on station location.ⁱⁱ

Copdock (Ipswich): The month at this station was extraordinarily dry, the total rainfall (22 mm) being the lowest for March, except for 1918 when there was only 21 mm. The mean temperature [7.6 C] was identical with that of 1920 and was the highest yet recorded here in March. There was a sharp thunderstorm during the afternoon of the 20th, making it the second during the winter season, a phenomenon which I do not remember occurring previously in my 20 years' observations. Ponds, which usually are at their fullest now, are in many cases in this district completely empty; some are emptier than they commonly are even at the end of a dry summer.

Belper (Quarry Bank): The mean temperature was [7.0 C], and only once during [the last] 44 years has this been exceeded at this station, namely in 1893 [7.2 C].

Totland Bay (Isle of Wight): March nights this year have been unusually warm, equal to those commonly experienced during the last week of April. Only one March at this station, during-35 years, has been warmer at night, namely in 1912 when the mean temperature for the month was [6.2 C]. Only once this year has the screened minimum thermometer fallen below the freezing point.

Southport (Lancashire): A very mild, cloudy, and showery month, winds from southerly directions being remarkably prevalent for March.

Sheepstor (Dartmoor): From December 19th to March 29th, a period of exactly 100 days, not a flake of snow fell at this high-level station, an event unprecedented in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

Dublin (Fitzwilliam Square): A generally mild and favourable month. Very constant southwest and west winds were noted, while the traditional easterly winds of March were conspicuously absent. There was a remarkable coincidence in the means of the instruments at 9hrs and 21hrs. For the first time this year snow fell in Dublin, and this happened twice, namely on the 14th and 28th. iii

Overview of March 1921.

March 1921 saw a change to the general circulation, back to a well-marked westerly, from the mainly anticyclonic of February. Depressions were numerous but located generally towards the north of the British Isles, while relatively high pressure dominated the area between the Azores and Central Europe. To the west and north the weather was unsettled with a good deal of rain. Rainfall totals of more than 100% of average were confined to the west of a line Dartmoor, Welsh Border, western side of the Pennines and north into Scotland. In Scotland rainfall total of more than 200 mm were widespread in the Highlands, with some places receiving over 500 mm locally. To the east of the 100% demarcation line rainfall was less than 50 mm; in East Anglia totals less than 50% of average were recorded, while in the Midlands totals were around 70% of average. This appears to have been reflected on the near continent where the weather was mostly fair and dry. There was also a marked absence of severe wintry weather generally over Western Europe.

Over the British Isles brief bursts of Arctic air, accompanied by snow, were noted in the north of Scotland, particularly on the 2nd and 5th. However, the cold snap was very brief. A secondary depression, which crossed England on the following day, produced rain and sleet but, by the 8th, mild weather became established and was the beginning of a spell of mild weather. South East England was generally fair, but to the west and north a series of secondaries produced gales, heavy rain, and occasional thunder and hail. By the 18th, the general circulation became more westerly with more moderate falls of rain in all areas. On the 20th a cold north-westerly air stream produced thunderstorms at Felixstowe and Yarmouth, but the following day mild weather became re-established.

Temperatures at South Farnborough reached [18 C] on the 24th and 25th but fell to [-4 C] on the night of the 24th. From the 26th the anticyclone over Europe increased its domination over the southern British Isles, but a deep depression on the 28th produced gales in Scotland, Ireland, and the extreme western parts of England. This depression became stationary, but a secondary centre produced snow in Ireland, Wales, and parts of western England during the night, with showers of rain, hail, and localised thunder elsewhere in England on the 29th. Mild weather became re-established, and temperatures reached [17 C] at Ross-on-Wye and Aberdeen on the 31st.

Fog was almost entirely absent, except in the early hours locally on the 25th. Low cloud was prevalent in the west but not in the east, and in the south-east of England there was no day with persistent low stratus.

The mean monthly temperature was above average in all areas and ranged from [+2.4 C] in eastern England to [+0.9 C] in northern Scotland. At some stations, the variation was especially large; [+5.3 C] at Yarmouth, [+5.2 C] at Skegness and [+5.1 C] at Clacton and Hull.

In general, March 1921 was mild and showery.^v

[A comparison of Central England temperatures and rainfall for March 1921 with the, provisional, data for March 2021, shows a remarkably close similarity. Does this foretell a replay of the drought of 1921?^{vi}]

Central England Data (Averaging period is 1891-1920):vii

Mean Maximum Temperature: 10.9 C. Average: 9.1 C.

Mean Minimum Temperature: 3.9 C. Average: 1.8 C.

Mean Temperature: 7.4 C. Average: 5.3 C.

England and Wales Rainfall: 58.5 mm. Average: 70.5 mm.

Midlands Mean Maximum Temperature: 10.6 C.

Midlands Mean Minimum Temperature: 2.9 C.

Midlands Mean Temperature: 6.7 C.

Midlands Rainfall: 43.1 mm.

March 2021 (provisional). (Averaging period is 1991-2020).

Mean Maximum Temperature: 10.9 C. Average: 10.4 C.

Mean Minimum Temperature: 3.5 C. Average: 3.1 C.

Mean Temperature: 7.2 C. Average: 6.7 C.

England and Wales Rainfall: 50.9 mm Average: 68.0 mm.

¹ Monthly Weather Report March 2021, Pitsford, Headline, p.3.

[&]quot;D J Stanier, by email, 2 April 2021.

iii Monthly Weather Report, March 1921, Meteorological Office, May 1921, HMSO, p. 29 Observers Notes.

iv British Rainfall, March 1921, Meteorological Office, 1922, HMSO, pp. 96-98.

^v MWR, March 1921, Meteorological Office, May 1921, HMSO, p.29, General summary. Also, Meteorological Magazine, April 1921, Douglas, C K M, HMSO, p. 77.

vi Hadley Centre, Central England data.

vii Hadley Centre Central England data.