

SNOWFALL IN BRITISH COASTAL WATERS

It is with pleasure that we include this year abstracts of observations from Irish lighthouses, lightships and tenders, through the courtesy of the Commissioners of Irish Lights. Thanks are also due to the personnel of the lighthouses and lightships who have furnished us with observations through the courtesy of the Elder Brethren of Trinity House, as also to the masters of many merchant and other vessels.

No snowfall throughout the season was noted at *Sark* (Channel Islands), *Fastnet Rock*, *Roan-carraigmore*, *Balbriggan* and *Skelligs*. The greatest number of snow-days reported was 36 at *Rathlin Island East* lighthouse, 13 of them in January. The earliest observed snow was on *October 20th* at *South Stack* lighthouse, Anglesey, and at *Clare Island* and *Rotten Island* lighthouses in Ireland. The latest was on *April 23rd* at *Rathlin Island East* lighthouse.

Snowfalls were occasional, sporadic and mostly slight until *December 24th*, but from *December 25th* to *31st* were rather widely distributed north-east of a line from the Lizard to Lowestoft and locally substantial. Much more general and sometimes heavy in places were the snowfalls of the next two months, particularly during the last week of January, when they extended from the Hebrides to the Channel Islands, and during the period *February 9th-14th*. March brought little snow until its closing days; the outstanding wind-driven fall of the *29th-30th* on the mainland of southern England affected the adjoining sea areas, reaching as far west as *Mizen Head* (Kerry) and as far south as *Caskets* lighthouse (Channel Islands). Snow in April was confined to a few scattered showers.

SUMMARY

East Anglian Area. The distribution of days with snowfall during the season is shown on the map (Fig. 2, p. 227). It will be seen that the frequency exceeds 20 days at the *Cromer*, *Dowsing*, *Newarp* and *Smith's Knoll* lightships. As in 1950-51, the minimum is found at the *Galloper* lightship. A region of slightly higher frequency again stretches from the *Goodwins* to *Shipwash*, with lower frequencies both shoreward and seaward.

Bristol Channel Area. Fig. 3 (p. 227) indicates the distribution of snow-days in this area. The relatively high frequency at *Flatholm* lighthouse and *Scarweather* lightship is in marked contrast with the figures at adjacent stations on either side. Compared with 1950-51 the relative frequencies on *Lundy* are reversed, but the patch of higher frequency near *St. Ann's Head* is maintained.

English Channel. Down channel from the east the season's frequency of snow-days falls from 9 at the *Varne* lightship to 6 at the *Needles* lighthouse, and to only 1 at *Portland Bill*. Westward it increases again to 3 days at *Eddystone*, 4 at the *Lizard*, and then falls off to 2 days at *Bishop Rock*.

SEA ICE

Baily lighthouse reported sea ice on Sutton Strand, Co. Dublin, for a distance of about 700 yards and a width of from 20 to 40 yards to seaward on *January 27th*.

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