

period since 1946-47, as noted in a later section of this report, the season under review must be classed as one of light to moderate snowfall over Great Britain as a whole. Records from the ten selected representative stations at altitudes between 400 ft. and 1200 ft. (five in England, one in Wales and four in Scotland) that have been used for inter-seasonal comparison since the post-war re-institution of the Survey give an average of only 15 days with "snow lying" from September 1949 to May 1950. Over the same nine months the corresponding number was 66 in 1946-47, 26 in 1947-48 and 13 in 1948-49.

It was for a few outstanding snowstorms, mostly of no very wide extent, rather than for general frequency or abundance of snowfall or for long duration of cover that the season achieved a modest measure of distinction. A noteworthy feature of the predominantly mild winter was the succession of falls during the first half of February which led to the blocking of upland roads in Scotland and northern England on several days and eventually produced accumulations ranging upwards in depth to an average of 36 in. at altitudes above 2000 ft. on the west Durham fells towards the middle of the month.

In early spring, March was snow-free to an exceptional degree at low and moderate levels, throughout the country. The snowstorm on the night of *April 25th-26th* in south-eastern England had not been rivalled at so late a date over this area since *April 27th 1919*, when a day-long fall deposited a cover 12 in. to 15 in. deep in the northern outskirts of London and adjoining districts of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The only other comparable late-April snowstorm of the twentieth century in southern England came on the *25th* of the month in 1908; on that occasion the average depth reached 18 in. or rather more locally in Berkshire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire and 16 in. as far south as the Isle of Wight.

The area of Great Britain that entirely escaped cover throughout the 1949-50 season was much smaller than in 1948-49, and complete freedom from snow or sleet appears to have been confined to the Scilly Isles and a few coast stations in the Devon-Cornwall peninsula.

E. L. H.

NOTE ON DURATION OF SNOW COVER ON BRITISH MOUNTAINS

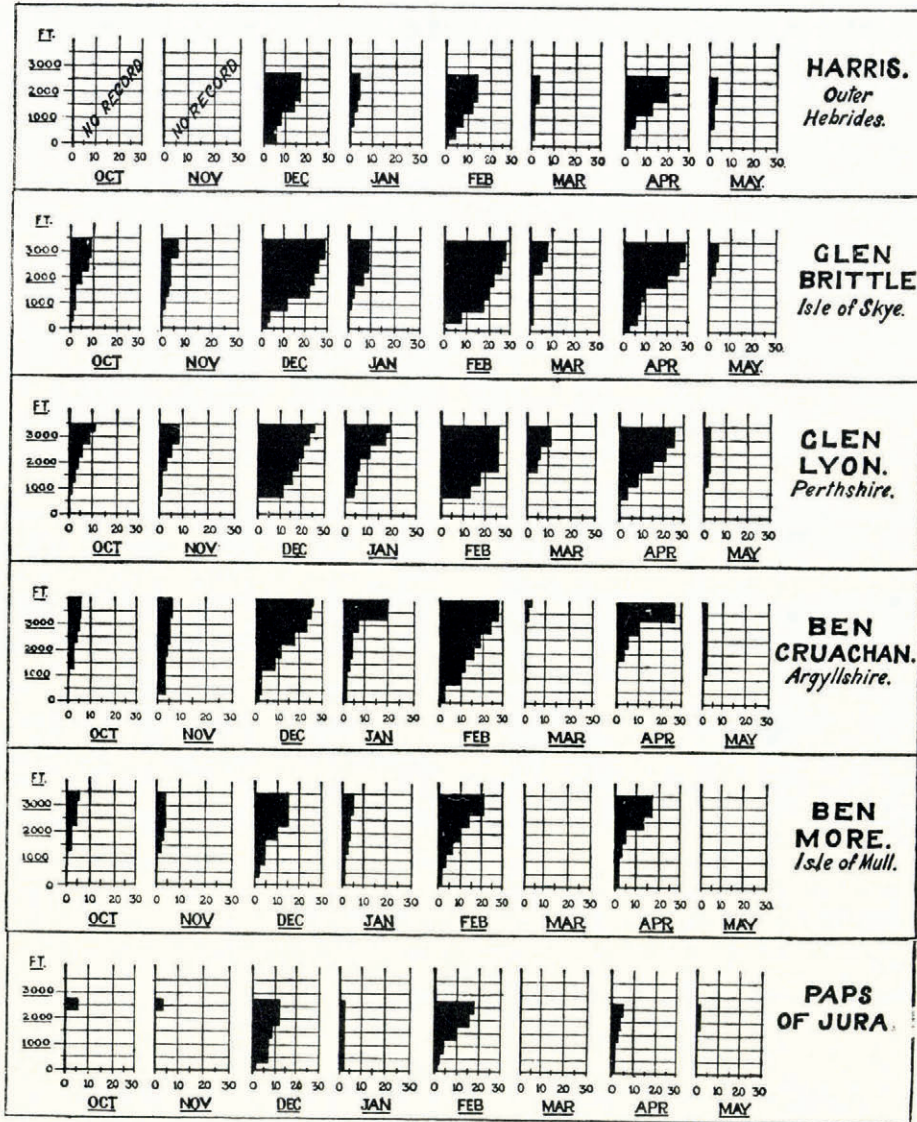
It is to be regretted that observations from Elphin, Sutherland and Glen Livet, Banffshire, are no longer available. On the other hand, data have been received from the Paps of Jura (2571 ft.) for the 1949-50 season and from Ben Cruachan (3689 ft.), Argyllshire; Ben More (3169 ft.), Isle of Mull and the Harris Hills (Clisham, 2622 ft.), Outer Hebrides as from 1 December, 1949.

Although snowfall in the south was not remarkable for its frequency, the duration of snow cover on mountains above 2000 ft., particularly in Scotland, was this season the longest since the abnormally heavy snow season of 1946-47.

Taking the same five representative mountains (two in Scotland, two in Wales and one in England), the average duration of snow cover at 2500 ft. was as follows: 1946-47, 91 days; 1947-48, 57; 1948-49, 41; and 1949-50, 64. The duration of snow cover was longest in December, February and April throughout the country. No snow was reported as lying at any level from any station during September, the first snow cover being observed from Glen Lyon on *October 19th*, when the snow line was down to about 3300 ft.; on the *21st* the snow line was down to 2000 ft. on the Cuillins and to 2500 ft. in Glen Lyon and on Ben More, Isle of Mull.

Diagrams showing the distribution of snow cover relative to height for ten stations are given on pages 523 and 524 on the basis set out on p. 131 of the 1946-47 Report (Vol. 1, No. 3, 1948).

On the Harris Hills the snow line came down to sea-level on 8 days during the period December to May; and in April the summits above 2000 ft. were snow-covered for a total of 20 days. From Glen Brittle, in the Cuillins, snow cover was reported in every month from October to May, with



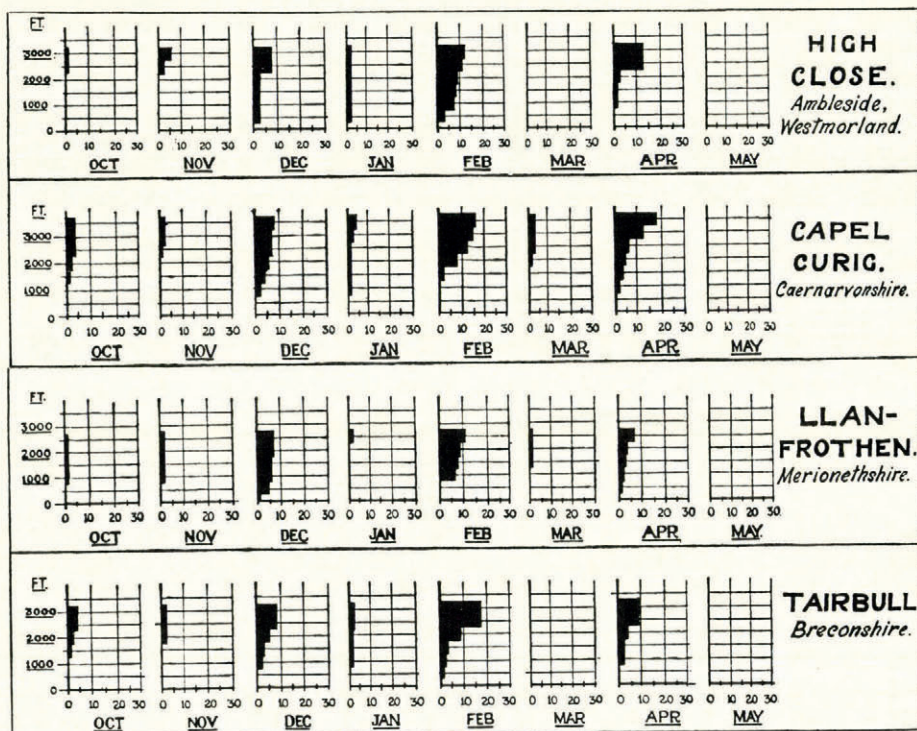
a maximum of 29 days at 3000 ft. in December and April. In February at and above this level the snow cover lasted throughout the month. The snow line fell to sea-level on two days in December and April respectively.

In Glen Lyon the snow line was down to 1500 ft. in every month of the season except September and March; and in February the snow cover lasted for 26 days down to the 2000 ft. level. On Ben

Cruachan the snow line was down to 2000 ft. in every month of the season except September and March, and at 3000 ft. the peak was covered during the whole of February.

Ben More, Mull, received no snow cover in September, March or May; but the duration reached or exceeded 14 days at 2500 ft. in December, February and April. In the Isle of Jura, the Paps had some snow cover on the summits in each month except September and March, with a maximum duration of 13 days at 2000 ft. in April.

In the Lake District, from High Close, snow cover was reported at 2500 ft. on at least one day in each month of the season except September, March and May, with a maximum of 13 days in April. The Caernarvonshire mountains, as observed from Capel Curig, were covered down to

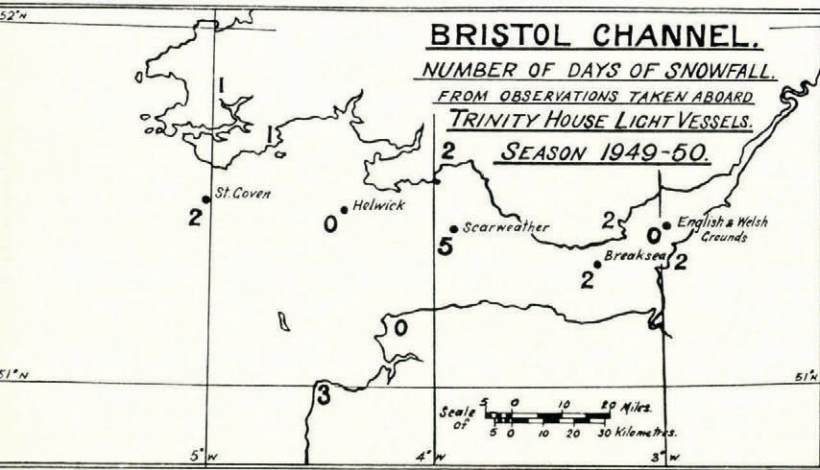
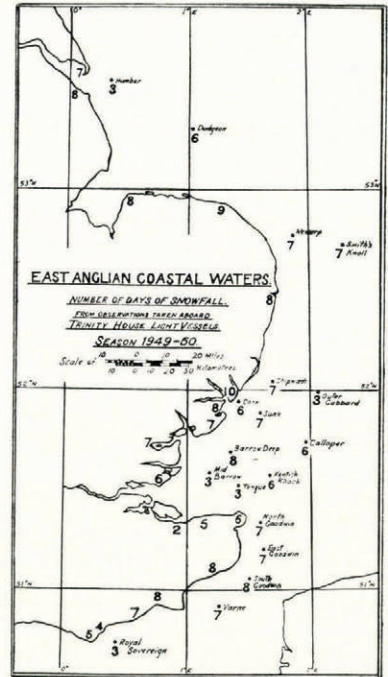
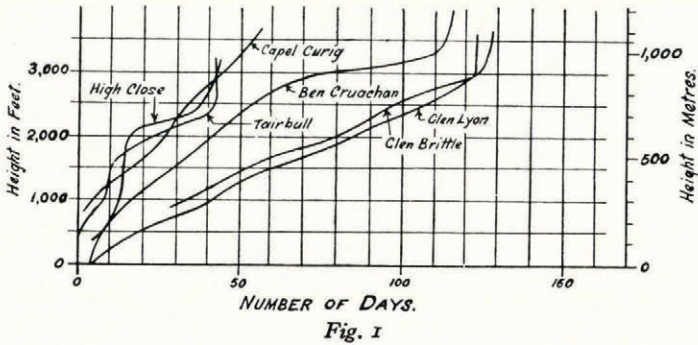


2500 ft. during the whole period except in September and May; and in February the cover exceeded 10 days down to 2000 ft. The summits above 3000 ft. had 13 days' cover in April. The distribution of snow cover on the peaks around Llanfrothen was very similar to that in Caernarvonshire, with a maximum of 11 days at 2500 ft. in February. The Brecon Beacons had a slightly more prolonged cover at all levels, with a maximum of 17 days at 2500 ft. in February.

Curves showing the total duration at all levels throughout the season at six representative stations are given in Fig. 1 (p. 525). It will be noted that for the Scottish stations the durations were of similar length to those of the 1946-47 season.

The duration in Glen Lyon exceeded that of other stations at all levels, reaching a maximum of 128 days on the summits. A duration of 100 days was exceeded in the Cuillins at 2500 ft. and on Ben Cruachan and the Glen Lyon peaks above the 3000 ft. level. Apart from the extreme summits in Caernarvonshire, no snow cover exceeded 50 days' duration at any level south of the Scottish border.

D. L. C.



SNOWFALL IN BRITISH COASTAL WATERS

Through the courtesy of the Elder Brethren of Trinity House and with the co-operation of the masters of twenty-six lightships, details of snowfall at sea are now available for the first time in these records.

No snowfall was reported during *September, October, November, May or June* at any ship station, and the *Seven Stones* lightship, off Cornwall, and the *Helwick* and *English and Welsh Grounds* vessels, in the Bristol Channel, reported an entirely snow-free season.

In *December* snow was reported on the *8th* by the *Morecombe Bay* lightship, and on the *9th* at *Breaksea* and *Scarweather* lightships in the Bristol Channel. Between the Humber and the Isle of Wight snowfall was reported on 3 days at the *South Goodwin* lightship, on 2 days at *Shipwash*, *North Goodwin* and *East Goodwin* lightships, and on one day at the *Sunk*, *Varne* and *Owers* lightships.

During *January* snowfall was reported from every lightship off the east coast from the Humber to the Isle of Wight, with a maximum of 5 days at the *Sunk* and *Barrow Deep* lightships, and but one day at the *Outer Gabbard*, *Royal Sovereign* and *Owers* lightships.

In *February* snowfalls were reported from all stations except the *Sunk*, *Royal Sovereign*, *Owers*, *Seven Stones*, *St. Goven*, *Helwick*, *Breaksea*, *English and Welsh Grounds* and *Morecombe Bay*,