

# Diagnosing the Weather



## ‘Introducing Dr. Moore’

### Records from Fitzwilliam Square

The Met Éireann library holds a collection of meteorological manuscripts from Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin dating from 1869.

These manuscripts record measurements of humidity, temperature, wind direction and speed, cloud type and rainfall.

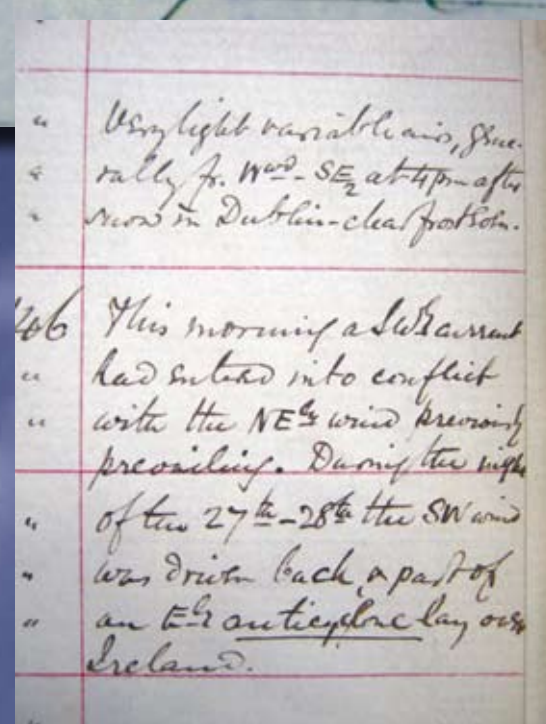
The measurements are accompanied by a daily weather diary, which allows for more detailed comments. The following is an excerpt from a diary recording on 15th December 1869:

‘Clear moonlight with cirrus and cirrostratus at times. Wind backing and rainy at 10pm.’

The Fitzwilliam Square manuscripts are somewhat different to most of the other meteorological records that have survived from the time. In the late 1800s, meteorological readings were taken at the famous observatories of Markree Castle and Birr Castle as part of a well-established programme of scientific research and activity at these locations. The records from Fitzwilliam Square are unique in that they were a personal record of a medical doctor who had a special interest in meteorology and its links to his profession.



by <u>John William Moore, M.B.</u>		DATE		BAROMETER		TEMPERATURE (and V)			
Day	Hour	Uncorrected	Air Therm.	Reduced to 32° F. at the Mean Sea Level.	Dry Bulb. (in shade)	Wet Bulb. (in shade)	Tension of Vapour.	Lat.	Long.
17	9am	28.670	53	28.667	38.6	36.7	.82		
	3pm	28.780	58	28.735	46.5	38.4	.211		
	7pm	28.880	59	28.871	37.5	36.4	.203		



Excerpt from the weather diary

## ‘The Weather Doctor’

### J.W. Moore

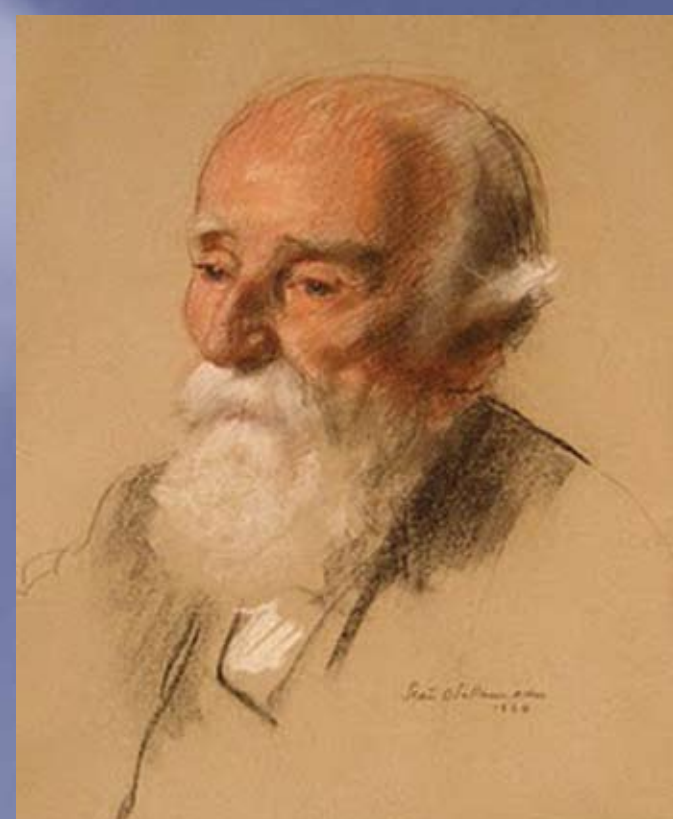
In 1869, 40 Fitzwilliam Square was home to an accomplished physician, John William Moore.

A fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society, Moore enjoyed an esteemed medical career for which he was knighted. He was also appointed President of the Royal College of Physicians Ireland.

J.W. Moore’s passion for meteorology was based on his interest in the relationship between climate and public health. He was especially interested in the importance of the environment in the treatment of disease.

The results of his research were reported in a number of publications. In a text entitled *Meteorology Practical and Applied* he included a section on ‘The influence of season and weather on disease’, which is one of the most valuable early publications on climate and health.

He also contributed to a publication entitled *Climate and Baths of Great Britain and Ireland*, in which he presented detailed information on the climate of all the major cities and towns on the island of Ireland.



Portrait of Sir John William Moore, by Sean O'Sullivan, signed and dated 1934. © Royal College of Physicians Ireland

## ‘Dissecting the results’

### J.W. Moore and R.H. Scott

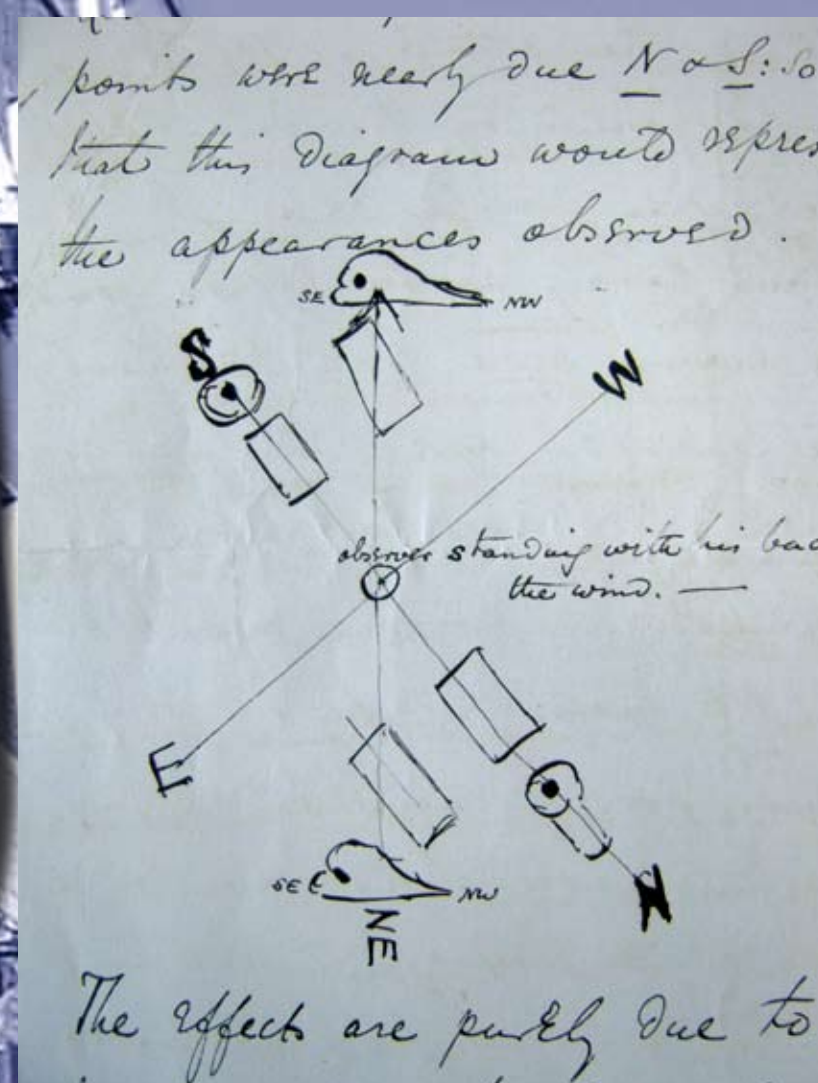
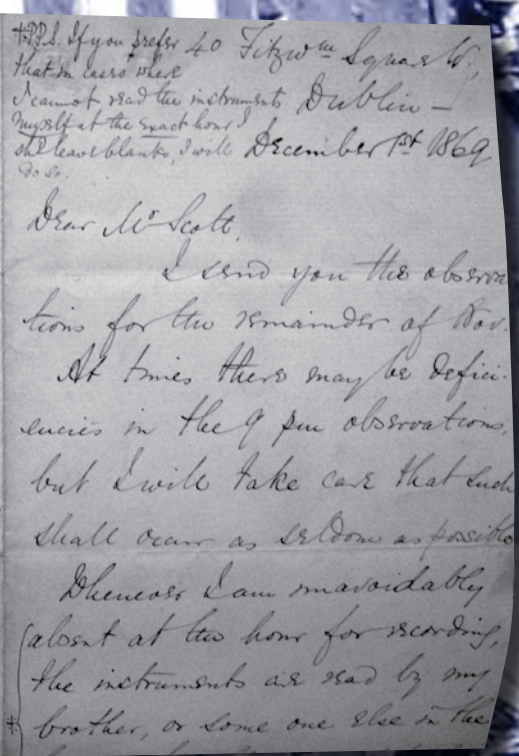
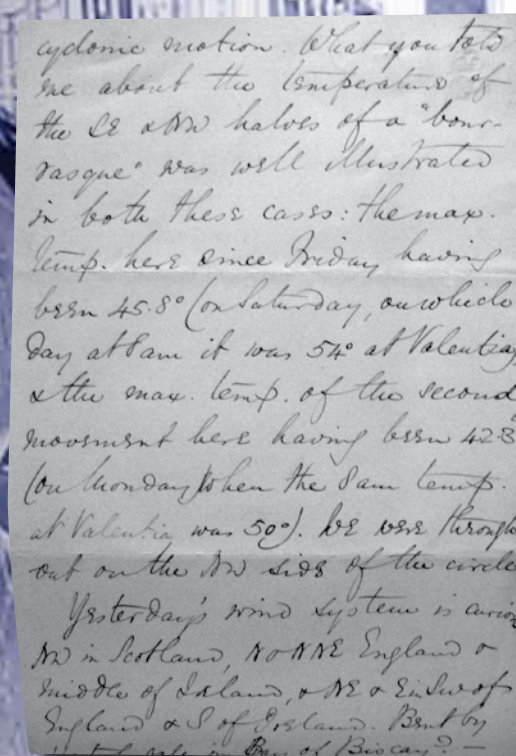
Together with the meteorological records, the Met Éireann Library holds a collection of letters from J.W. Moore to Robert H. Scott, the Meteorological Office, London.

These letters give us an insight into J.W. Moore’s research interests. He regularly refers to the meteorological records he sends to London and often discusses recent weather occurrences in some detail.

In some instances, Moore supplements his letters with diagrams and sketches to illustrate his observances.

In one letter, written on the 28th March 1871, Moore describes the cloud and wind observed in Dublin, which he refers to as an ‘anticyclonic cloud slope’.

He draws a detailed diagram to illustrate his discussion.



J.W. Moore’s sketch of an ‘anticyclonic cloud slope’ (28th March 1871)

## ‘Hidden Gems’

### Library Treasures

As well as providing important climate data, our manuscripts offer other, valuable ‘hidden gems’ of information about the world in which the observations were taken.

In one letter, J.W. Moore confesses that owing to his busy career, readings were sometimes taken by his siblings.

He writes,

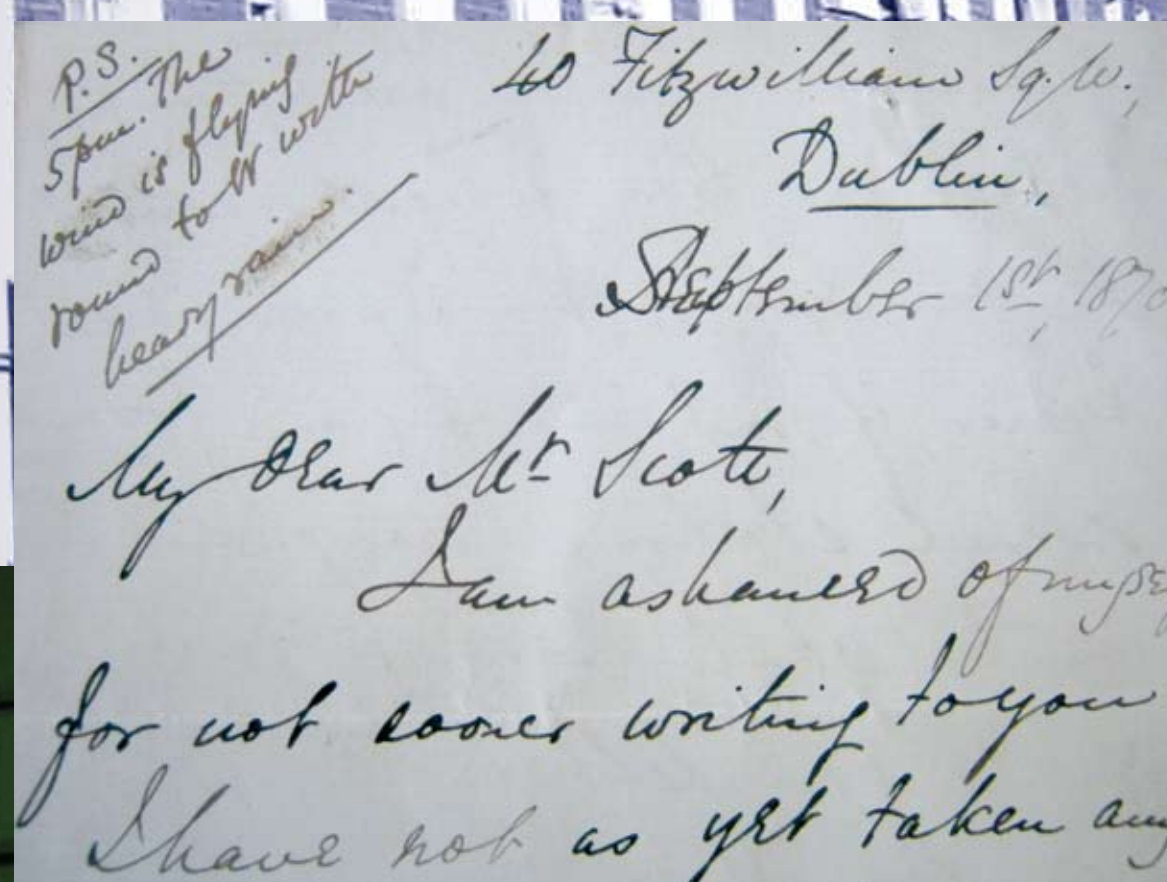
‘...because I am unavoidably absent at the hour for recording, the instruments are read by my brother, or someone else in the house: for all are competent as I have taught my sisters the way of using the different thermometers...’

Quite often, Moore’s letters end with a postscript which gave a snippet of information about the weather in Dublin at the time of writing.

In a postscript to a letter written on 1st of September 1870, Moore scribbles,

‘P.S. 5p.m. The wind is flying round to W with heavy rain.’

J.W. Moore supplied continuous meteorological records until his death in 1937 at the age of 92.



A postscript to a letter dated 1st September 1870 noting weather conditions on that day.

