

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL STATIONS AND VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS

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APRIL, 1936.—Rather cold, with northerly winds.

The weather of April was distinguished by persistent, cold, northerly winds during the first three weeks, and by deficient rainfall and excessive sunshine in Scotland, northern England and north-east Ireland.

On the 1st and 2nd a depression off southern Ireland moved east-north-east causing rain in England and south Ireland and, on the 3rd, a secondary depression over the Bay of Biscay moving east, caused further rain in southern districts. Meanwhile an anticyclone moved south-east from Greenland and dominated conditions over most of the British Isles until the 10th or 11th. At first the anticyclone was centred northward of Scotland, it then moved to a position westward of the British Isles and on the 9th and 10th it was situated over Scotland. Mainly dry weather prevailed from the 4th–10th, with good sunshine records at times, particularly in the north and west. On the 11th the anticyclone began to retreat northward, while a depression over north Germany moved slowly westward; weather deteriorated and during the next few days cold north-easterly winds prevailed with showers and snow in many places. Subsequently, pressure became high over Greenland and low over Germany and Scandinavia. The prevailing winds were from some northerly point and were accompanied by local wintry showers. Much bright sunshine was recorded from the 17th–19th inclusive. Deep depressions moving east across southern districts on the 20th and 21st caused fairly heavy rain in the south and a ridge of high pressure gave a sunny day on the 22nd.

A change to mild unsettled conditions with southerly to south-westerly winds occurred around the 23rd–24th when a depression approached Iceland from the south-west. A wedge of high pressure crossed the British Isles on the 27th and subsequently the Azores anticyclone spread north-east over England giving fair, rather warm weather over most of the country.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure somewhat exceeded the average generally, the excess being greatest in the north-west and varying at 7 h. from 4.6 mb. at Stornoway and 4.5 mb. at Malin Head to 0.3 mb. at Kew Observatory.

Winds from some northerly point were unusually persistent during the first three weeks, but a mild south-westerly current set in on the 24th. Few gales were reported but gale force was reached locally in the north and west of Scotland at times between the 13th and 15th and 23rd and 25th. Strong winds occurred in southern England on the 3rd and 4th and strong winds and local gales in the south around the 21st and 22nd. No notably high speeds were registered in gusts, among the highest being 63 m.p.h. at Lerwick on the 14th, 59 m.p.h. at Pendennis Castle on the 3rd and 58 m.p.h. at Dunfanaghy Road, Donegal, on the 24th.

Temperature.—Mean temperature was below the average in all districts, the deficiency varying from 1.1°F. in the Channel Islands to 2.4°F. in England, S.E. (see Table I). It was the coldest April at West Kirby since 1917, and at Hampstead, Ross-on-Wye, and Teignmouth since 1922. Winds from some northerly point were responsible for the cold conditions which prevailed for the most part from the 2nd to the 23rd, although day temperatures were fairly high in some localities between the 8th and 10th. The lowest minima occurred as a rule on one of the days from the 12th to 23rd. A change to milder weather occurred on the 24th and maxima of 60°F. or above were registered at the majority of the stations on one

or other of the last 7 days, while 65°F. was reached, or exceeded, locally in England on the 25th, 28th and 29th.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 69°F. at Newport, Isle of Wight, on the 29th, 16°F. at Rickmansworth on the 23rd; (Scotland) 63°F. at Stirling on the 8th and at Perth on the 30th, 14°F. at Dalwhinnie on the 21st; (Ireland) 62°F. at Glasnevin and Trinity College, Dublin, on the 28th and at Foynes on the 30th, and 24°F. at Markree Castle on the 13th and 19th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles, expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915, was 81, the values for the constituent countries being England and Wales 96, Scotland 54 and Ireland 73.

In Scotland the deficiency was almost universal; in Angus, parts of Aberdeenshire and Perthshire, and locally in the south-west, the fall was only about one-third of the average. In Ireland the deficiency was greatest in the north-east; elsewhere totals were variable, more than the average occurring locally south of a line joining Balbriggan to Clew Bay, but considerably less than the average in the extreme south. Over most of northern England (particularly the north-west) there was a considerable deficiency but in Lincolnshire, the Midlands, southern and south-western England, falls were usually excessive.

Snow or sleet occurred at times, particularly between the 11th and 22nd, and thunderstorms were reported at a few stations at times mainly between the 11th and 16th and on the 20th, 22nd, 25th and 26th.

Among the heaviest falls in 24 hours were:—

3rd. 40 mm. at Swansea, and 31 mm. at Ipplepen (s. Devon).
21st. 31 mm. at Cardigan.
23rd. 49 mm. at Fofanny (Co. Down).
24th. 31 mm. at Ardgour (Argyll).

Sunshine.—A noteworthy feature of the weather of the month was the excessive sunshine enjoyed in Scotland, northern England and at certain stations in northern Ireland. On the other hand, in southern and eastern England and southern Ireland there was, on the whole, a deficiency, which was greatest in England, S.E., and England, E. (see Table I).

At Wakefield it was the sunniest April since 1921 and at Inchkeith and Aldergrove, the sunniest on record. (Sunshine was first recorded at the last two stations in 1923 and 1927 respectively.) The period 17th–19th was generally sunny, and on the west and south-west coast of Scotland abundant sunshine was registered during the longer spell from the 17th–22nd. For example, at Tiree an average of rather more than 12 hours per day was enjoyed during these 6 days.

Fog.—Local fog occurred at times, mainly from the 1st–3rd, 8th, 14th, 21st, 24th–25th and 28th–29th. It occurred at isolated places on a few other days. In some parts the month was practically free from fog.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on the 1st, 6th, 8th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 15th, 17th–23rd, 25th, 29th and 30th and at Holyhead on the 20th. Solar haloes were noted at Oxford on 7 days.