

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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APRIL, 1939.—Sunny; warm at times between the 9th and 21st; wet southern half of England.

The month was sunny on the whole and warm at times between the 9th and 21st, particularly on the 11th and 12th. Broadly speaking rainfall was deficient in Ireland, Scotland and northern England and markedly excessive in parts of eastern and southern England.

During the opening days secondary disturbances to a depression on the Atlantic moved north-east over the British Isles; rain fell in England and Ireland and, at times, in Scotland, though it was not so general there. On the 5th a depression off our south-west coasts moved eastward to the Bay of Biscay and widespread rain occurred in the southern districts of England. In the rear of this depression and of another disturbance over southern Scandinavia cold, northerly winds caused a considerable fall of temperature in this country. Between the 6th and 8th a wedge of high pressure moved eastward over the British Isles, and by the 10th pressure was high in a belt from east Greenland to Germany. Meanwhile a deep depression was situated on the Atlantic and a trough of low pressure extended south-east to the Bay of Biscay. A spell of very warm weather ensued with day temperatures of 70°F. or above at many places in Britain on the 11th and at numerous places in England on the 12th. Good sunshine records were obtained in England from the 9th to 12th inclusive. Rain was fairly general in Ireland, Scotland and the extreme west of England on the 12th. On the 13th a depression on the Atlantic moved north-east, and from the 15th–17th pressure was high off our south-west coasts, while depressions moved on an easterly track northward of Scotland. Rain occurred at times and local gales, and thunderstorms were reported locally on the 13th, 14th and 17th. On the 18th a large anticyclone centred off south-west Ireland moved east and anticyclonic conditions were maintained over most of the British Isles until the 20th; the period 18th–22nd was notably sunny in England. From the 21st–23rd a shallow depression off north-west Ireland moved eastward to the Skagerrak and deepened considerably, and on the 24th and 25th an associated depression moved southward over the British Isles; conditions became unsettled and cool. Subsequently pressure became high to the north-west of the British Isles and cool, showery weather prevailed with, however, long periods of bright sunshine. During the last two days pressure was high to the north and north-west of the British Isles and mainly fair, sunny weather was experienced in Scotland and Ireland; meanwhile a depression over central Europe caused rain over most of England which was heavy in the south on the 30th.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure was not very different from the average, the deviation at 7h. ranging from -0.9 mb. at Lerwick to $+0.4$ mb. at Malin Head. Local gales occurred at times mainly on the 13th, between the 15th and 17th and on the 22nd; the gales on the 22nd were the most widespread. Among the highest speeds registered in gusts were 65 m.p.h. at Lerwick on the 15th and at Stornoway and Tiree on the 16th, 65 m.p.h. at Leicester and 70 m.p.h. at Durham on the 17th, and 67 m.p.h. at Manchester and Bidston and 70 m.p.h. at Fleetwood on the 22nd.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average, the deviation for the districts ranging from $+0.7^{\circ}\text{F.}$ in Scotland, N. to $+1.9^{\circ}\text{F.}$ in England, N.E., England, E. and the Midland Counties. It was warm at times between the 9th and 21st, particularly around the 11th and 12th; at a large number of stations in England temperature reached or exceeded 75°F. on the 12th, while maxima of 70°F.

or above were registered at numerous places in England and south-west Scotland on the 11th. The last six days were cold and some low temperatures were also recorded between the 5th and 8th.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 78°F. at Cromer and Herne Bay on the 12th, 22°F. at Thetford on the 8th; (Scotland) 72°F. at Ruthwell on the 11th, 19°F. at Dalwhinnie on the 7th; (Ireland) 68°F. at Birr Castle on the 11th, 25°F. at Markree Castle on the 7th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 104, the values for the constituent countries being England and Wales 125, Scotland 81 and Ireland 76. In Scotland, slightly more than the average occurred over fairly large areas in the west and at a few places elsewhere; less than 50 per cent. of the average was measured over a part of eastern Scotland and at one or two other isolated stations. In Ireland the deficiency was almost general, though a small excess was received locally in the north-east, around Dublin, and at Ballynahinch Castle, County Galway; less than 50 per cent. was recorded locally in the south. In England and Wales a deficiency was practically confined to large areas in the north and part of the northern Midlands though less than the average was registered also in the Channel Islands; more than twice the average occurred over some areas in the east and south.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

- 5th 2.22 in. at Saundersfoot (Pembrokeshire).
- 14th 1.50 in. at Kinlochquoich (Inverness-shire).
- 16th 1.63 in. at Glenmoidart (Inverness-shire) and 1.52 in. at Kinlochquoich.
- 21st 1.56 in. at Knoydart (Inverness-shire).
- 22nd 1.66 in. at North Uist (Vallay).
- 23rd 1.62 in. at Glenmoidart.
- 30th 1.69 in. at Uppington (Berkshire) and 1.50 in. at Upton (Berkshire).

Local thunderstorms were reported on a number of occasions, mainly on the 1st, 4th, 5th, between the 11th and 14th, 17th, 24th–27th and 29th.

Snow or sleet occurred locally at times. In Scotland it was reported at one place or another on 16 days; on the 25th and 26th it fell generally in northern and central districts but did not lie to any appreciable depth.

Sunshine.—Sunshine exceeded the average on the whole except in parts of Scotland, the percentage of the average for districts 1–10 being 112. The percentages for the districts ranged from 101 in Scotland, W. to 118 in the Midlands and England, S.E., and 125 in the Channel Islands. In England, the periods 9th–12th and 17th–22nd were unusually sunny.

Fog.—Fog was reported locally on a number of occasions, mainly on the 1st–4th, 8th–10th, 12th, 15th, 19th–21st and 28th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 14 nights. It was seen at Holyhead on the night of the 19th–20th and at a number of stations in England on the night of the 24th–25th. Halos were noted at Oxford on 15 days.