

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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APRIL, 1946.—Warm; sunny; dry on the whole.

The weather of the month was warm, with a very warm spell at the beginning of the month. It was also sunny and dry over the country as a whole.

The month opened with an anticyclone over the North Sea which moved east-south-east and intensified and maintained fair, very warm weather over the British Isles. Temperature rose to 75°F. or above at many places in England and Wales on the 3rd and 4th and reached the outstanding value of 80°F. in London (Greenwich) on the 4th.

On the 4th and 5th a cold front off our north-west seaboard moved south-east giving rain in many parts and a rapid fall of temperature; the difference in the maximum temperature on the 4th and 5th was more than 20°F. locally. By the 6th an anticyclone was situated off south-west Ireland; meanwhile a depression south of Greenland moved north-east and an associated cold front approached our north-west seaboard and subsequently moved south-east over the British Isles. Rain fell in the north and west between the 6th and 8th. Thereafter an anticyclone west of Scotland moved east and then south and maintained fair, sunny conditions in the southern half of the country until the 16th. Meanwhile troughs of low pressure moving east or south-east across Scotland were associated with some rain at times in the north and west. On the 16th and 17th a depression moved quickly north-east from mid-Atlantic to Norway and rain fell in most parts of the British Isles. On the 18th and 19th a wedge of high pressure moved south-east over the country and was associated with another spell of fair weather, but further rain occurred in the north and west on the 19th when a trough moved south-east over Scotland and Ireland. Subsequently an intense anticyclone situated south-west of Ireland maintained fair weather over most of England and Wales until the 23rd, while troughs of low pressure moving south-east caused some rain in the north and west of the British Isles.

Thereafter unsettled conditions set in and lasted over the southern districts of the British Isles until the 30th, when a ridge of high pressure off north-west Scotland moved slowly south-east. On the 23rd a depression east of Iceland moved east-south-east and a cold front moved south-east across the British Isles and slight rain or showers occurred. On the 24th and 25th a shallow secondary depression moved south-east to the Irish Sea, then slowly east-north-east and finally south to north-east France; fairly heavy rainfall was reported locally in southern England. From the 27th–29th pressure was low to the south and south-west of the British Isles and mainly dull, rainy weather prevailed in England, with local thunderstorms in southern districts, but fairer conditions were experienced in Scotland.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure exceeded the average in Great Britain and Northern Ireland by about 4 to 7 mb. In the Shetland Islands, however, the excess was much less, only 1.6 mb. at Lerwick. The pressure gradient was thus fairly steep in the north of Scotland but rather uniform over much of England and Wales, and, except in the north of Scotland, where the total run of the wind was above the average, the month was less windy than usual; from available information the percentage of the average "run of wind" in east Scotland and England, was roughly 75 to 80. Gales occurred fairly

frequently for the season in the north of Scotland; at Lerwick a mean hourly velocity of more than 38 m.p.h. was registered on five days, namely the 3rd, 6th and 7th, 8th and 11th. Among the highest speeds registered in gusts were 57 m.p.h. at Scilly and 56 m.p.h. at Lizard on the 5th, 75 m.p.h. at Lerwick on the 8th, 57 m.p.h. at Edinburgh on the 16th, 68 m.p.h. at Bell Rock Lighthouse and 55 m.p.h. at Aberdeen on the 17th.

Temperature.—For the fifth April in succession mean temperature was appreciably in excess of the average, the excess being 3.7°F. in England and Wales, 3.2°F. in Scotland and 2.9°F. in Northern Ireland. The first four days and the 14th–16th were very warm, particularly the 2nd–4th. Day temperature rose to 75°F. or above at many places in England on the 3rd and 4th. Minimum temperatures fell to 25°F. or below locally on the 10th, 11th and 18th. The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 80°F. in London (Greenwich) on the 4th, 21°F. at Santon Downham on the 10th and 11th and at Milford (Surrey) on the 11th; (Scotland) 72°F. at Edinburgh (Blackford Hill), Marchmont and Kelso, on the 3rd, 21°F. at West Linton and Wolfelee on the 10th; (Northern Ireland) 72°F. at Lisburn on the 2nd, 27°F. at Aldergrove on the 9th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881–1915 was 88 over England and Wales, 65 over Scotland and 44 over Northern Ireland. In Scotland rainfall exceeded the average on the mainland in the north-west, while less than 25 per cent. of the average was received at many places in the east. Locally in Sutherland more than twice the average occurred as a result of heavy rain on the 10th and 11th. Low totals included 0.17 in. at North Berwick, 0.25 in. at Dunbar and 0.28 in. at Leuchars, while at Aberdeen the total 0.37 in. was the lowest April rainfall since records began in 1871. In England and Wales more than the average was received in an area extending from north of the Tees to the Humber and over an area covering south-east England, the west Midlands and part of south-west England. In Northern Ireland the deficiency was general.

Among the heaviest falls in 24 hours were:—

6th 2.40 in. at Ardgour (Argyll) and 1.58 in. at Achnashellach.
25th 1.24 in. at Ryton-on-Dunsmore (Warwick).
27th 1.37 in. at Yeovilton and 1.30 in. at Shaftesbury.

Thunderstorms were rather infrequent but they occurred locally on the 4th and 17th and from the 26th–30th. In Scotland small amounts of snow fell on several days, particularly on high ground in the west.

Sunshine.—Sunshine exceeded the average on the whole in Great Britain, particularly in England and Wales, but was below the average in Northern Ireland. The excess was greatest in east and south-east England and the Midlands (See Table I). Locally in these areas more than 150 per cent. of the average was registered.

Fog.—Fog was reported at times, mainly from the 1st–4th, 7th–8th, 13th–18th and 28th–30th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 11 nights; it was widely observed during the early hours of the 24th and was seen as far south as Exeter. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on 10 days.