

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

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

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APRIL 1932.—Wet and cool. Dull in England.

Unsettled wet weather with cool days and in most places less than the normal sunshine prevailed during April.

Depressions off north-east England on the 1st and over southern England on the 3rd and 4th caused cold northerly to north-easterly winds and wintry precipitation, snow and sleet occurring as far south as Birmingham and Ross-on-Wye on the 3rd and 4th. Low minima were recorded in northern districts on the morning of the 3rd (22° F. at West Linton) accompanied by severe ground frost; amongst low grass minima recorded were 9° F. at Dalwhinnie and 16° F. at Renfrew. In southern England the 5th was dry and sunny with sunshine records exceeding 10 hours in places (11 hours at Winchester and Plymouth). From the 6th to the 11th very unsettled and windy conditions prevailed widely with frequent wintry showers, the heaviest falls, exceeding 25 mm. locally in western Scotland, occurring generally on the 9th. Over 10 hours sunshine were recorded in several places on the 7th and 8th. A temporary rise in temperature occurred on the 9th under the influence of south-westerly wind and in parts of Ireland maxima of 60° F. and over were recorded.

A wedge of high pressure gave a brilliantly fine day on the 12th, but weather deteriorated again in the west and north on the 13th at the approach of a fresh Atlantic disturbance.

A change of type occurred about the 16th with pressure high to the north and north-west and low over the Continent. Bright, sunny weather was enjoyed in Scotland and Ireland, but mainly dull, rainy conditions were experienced in England.

Unsettled weather was renewed in the north on the 18th and, later throughout the country, by a depression off north-west Iceland which moved first south-east and then very slowly south-south-east. The weather for the ensuing four or five days was showery with local thunder and hail and some sleet or snow in Scotland, but good sunshine records were also obtained. Snow fell in Yorkshire on the 26th.

Ultimately a depression approached our south-west coasts from the Atlantic and remained almost stationary while secondary disturbances moved round the main centre. Conditions became much milder and although rain fell at times there were bright intervals.

Pressure and Winds.—Numerous depressions passed eastwards between Iceland and Norway or south-eastwards across Scotland. At times depressions were centred over southern districts as on 3rd–4th, and to the south-west as during the last few days of the month. In all districts mean pressures were well below the normal. Westerly winds predominated with less than the normal seasonal frequency of easterly winds. Strong winds or gales were experienced widely between the 7th and 11th and in a gust 79 m.p.h. was recorded at Dunfanaghy (Donegal) on the 7th.

Temperature.—Apart from a relatively mild spell during the last three days, the days were cool. Minimum temperatures at night, however, frequently exceeded the normal. The cool character of the month was reflected in the mean temperatures which were generally from 1° F. to 3° F. below the normal. In many places the month was the coldest April since 1922. On one or more of the last four days maximum temperatures of 60° F. and over were recorded in several places. Ground frost occurred frequently in northern districts.

The extreme temperatures for the month were:—(England and Wales) 66° F. at London (Camden Square), Rickmansworth, Canterbury on the 30th, 23° F. at Castleton on the 3rd and at Rickmansworth on the 25th; (Scotland) 62° F. at Onich on the 30th, 19° F. at Dalwhinnie on the 17th; (Ireland) 62° F. at Newcastle on the 9th, 26° F. at Dublin (Glasnevin and Phoenix Park) on the 3rd.

Precipitation.—Precipitation occurred frequently during the month, but daily amounts exceeding 1 inch were rare. In almost all districts there was a pronounced excess of precipitation, monthly totals exceeding twice the normal locally in England and Scotland and over a large area in Wales. Amidst the general large excess, the deficiency recorded over a small area in East Lothian, in parts of Durham and York, N. Riding and locally in south-east Ireland was in sharp contrast. Snow, sleet and hail with local thunder occurred during the first fortnight and between the 20th and 26th, most frequently in northern districts. The falls of snow, however, were light.

The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the normal for the period 1881–1915 was 149; the values for the constituent countries were: England and Wales 156, Scotland 160, Ireland 118.

Sunshine.—The unsettled wet conditions which prevailed during the month resulted in a marked deficiency of sunshine in most districts. In southern Scotland, however, there was an excess. The following places had a daily average exceeding 6 hours: Tiree, Douglas, Abroath and Berwick-on-Tweed. Representative totals for districts, expressed as a percentage of the normal, ranged from 75 per cent. in England E. and Midland Counties to 110 per cent. in Scotland W.

Fog.—Little fog was reported during the month. Dense fog occurred in the Firth of Forth on the 29th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—Aurora was observed in northern districts in Scotland on each night from the 1st to 4th and on the 6th, 7th, 11th and 21st. Halo phenomena observed at Armagh Observatory on the 27th included the halo of 22° with parhelia and part of the mock sun ring, the halo of 46°, and traces of the upper arc of contact to the 46° halo [which was described as very brilliant at the point of contact.