

Monthly Weather Report

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

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April, 1952 - Warm and sunny on the whole.

The weather of the month was mainly warm after the first week. It was sunny in most areas and, broadly speaking, dry in Scotland, Northern Ireland and eastern districts of England but wet over most of western and central England. A very warm spell occurred from the 16th to the 19th.

On the 1st a small depression moved south from a position north of the Hebrides; cold, northerly winds prevailed over the British Isles during the 1st and 2nd with snow or sleet showers and keen night frosts locally. On the 4th and 5th a trough of low pressure moved east across the country causing considerable rainfall and local thunder. Thereafter a depression off north-west Scotland moved slowly east, while a secondary off our south-west coasts moved east-north-east; strong winds and local gales prevailed in England on the 6th and rather heavy rain occurred in the south, but in the north it was showery with some sleet or snow in places. On the following day a trough of low pressure lay over southern England causing rain in this area. On the 9th and 10th a trough of low pressure associated with an Atlantic depression moved east over the British Isles; a sharp temporary rise in temperature occurred over England, Wales and north Ireland on the 9th, and thunderstorms developed locally during the day and the following night. On the 12th and 13th a depression over the Bay of Biscay spread slowly north and some rain occurred in the south-west of England and Wales. On the 14th a weak trough of low pressure lay over the English Channel and north France; rain (heavy locally) occurred at most places in England and Wales, with rather widespread thunderstorms. Thereafter an anticyclone over Iceland moved south-east to a position north-east of Scotland and subsequently moved south; this system maintained mainly fair, warm weather over most of the country until the 18th but in the south-west of England and Wales thunderstorms, with heavy rain and flooding, occurred locally on the 16th. On the 19th a trough off our western seaboard moved east over the country causing rain in many places and rather widespread thunderstorms in England. On the 20th a depression south of Iceland moved a little eastward and on the 21st associated secondary depressions crossed the British Isles. Rain, heavy locally, fell widely on the 20th and 21st and showers occurred on the 22nd and 23rd, while thunderstorms were recorded from the 20th to the 23rd. Temperature fell considerably in the cooler air behind the depressions. Subsequently a ridge of high pressure developed over the British Isles and maintained mainly fair weather, with varying amounts of sunshine, until the 28th, though there was some local rain at times, particularly on the 27th. On the last day of the month troughs associated with a deep depression off the south-west of Ireland moved north-east across the British Isles; widespread thunderstorms occurred, particularly in England and Wales, and temperature rose to 70°F. or above at many places in England.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure somewhat exceeded the average except at Stornoway in the extreme north-west. At 9h. the deviation from the average ranged from -1.0 mb. at Stornoway to +3.4 mb. at Gorleston and Lympne. The month was quieter than usual, the total run of the wind being appreciably below the average in most parts. Gales occurred locally at times at exposed stations, mainly on the 4th, 6th-7th, 9th-12th, 21st and 30th. Among the highest gusts registered in knots were 51 at Eskdalemuir on the 4th and at Cranwell on the 6th and 59 at Scilly on the 21st.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average for the period 1906-35 by 3.1°F. in England and Wales, 3.2°F. in Scotland and 3.3°F. in Northern Ireland. The first six days were mainly cool, the first two or three being cold with night frost, keen in places. A warm spell occurred from about the 7th to the 20th and high maxima were registered also at many places in England on the 30th; the period 16th-19th was very warm, with day temperatures reaching or exceeding 70°F. at a large number of stations.

Extreme temperatures for the month included:—(England and Wales) 79°F. in London (Camden Square) on the 30th, 21°F. at Trawscoed on the 1st and at Barnstaple on the 2nd; (Scotland) 73°F. at Achnashellach on the 18th, 22°F. at Tongland on the 1st; (Northern Ireland) 68°F. at Castlerock on the 16th, 28°F. at Aldergrove and Hillsborough on the 1st.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 107 over England and Wales, 79 over Scotland and 60 over Northern Ireland. In Scotland and Northern Ireland it was the driest April since 1946. In Scotland, less than the average occurred over most of the country but somewhat more than the average was received in parts of Dumfriesshire, Lanarkshire, Midlothian and at Broadford, Isle of Skye. Less than 50 per cent. was registered in an area in the north-east, while Wick, with only 25 per cent. of the average, had its driest April since 1894. In England and Wales, broadly speaking, more than the average occurred in most central and western districts, while less than the average was received in eastern districts. In parts of central and north Wales and locally in Somerset, however, less than the average was registered, while Gorleston and a few places in north-east England had more than the average. In Northern Ireland a deficit was general.

Among the heavier falls in 24 hours were:—

14th 2.08 in. at Stanley Moor, Buxton.

21st 2.42 in. at Cwm Dyli, Snowdon, 2.41 in. at Kippen House, Perthshire and 2.25 in. at Ridge End, Kielder, Northumberland.

Local thunderstorms occurred rather frequently, mainly on the 5th, 9th-11th, 14th-23rd and 30th. They were rather widespread at times and were accompanied locally by heavy rain on the 14th, 16th and 21st.

Snow or sleet showers fell rather widely on the 1st and 2nd and locally from the 5th to the 8th; on the 2nd snow lay 4 in. deep at Glenlivet, in Banffshire.

Sunshine.—The duration of bright sunshine expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1906-35 was 110 over England and Wales, 116 over Scotland and 98 over Northern Ireland. In Scotland, except at a few stations in the west, there was a marked excess; at Craibstone, near Aberdeen, it was the sunniest April since records began in 1925. In all eastern and Midland districts of England an excess occurred but in Wales and locally in western districts of England less than the average was registered.

Fog.—Fog, mainly at night and in the morning, occurred locally at times, chiefly on the 8th-9th, 12th-16th, 18th-19th, 21st, 25th-27th and 29th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 18 nights. Solar halos were noted at Oxford on 10 days.