

Monthly Weather Report

M.O. 722

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

Summary of observations compiled from returns of official stations and voluntary observers

Volume 79 Number 4

Published by HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

© Crown copyright 1962

April 1962 — *Rather cold, exceptionally sunny in north-west Scotland.*

The first eleven days of April were mainly cyclonic with depressions moving across or to the north of the British Isles, but on the 12th-16th the country came under the influence of an anticyclone moving from Iceland to southern Scandinavia. Thereafter, weak troughs maintained generally cyclonic conditions until the 22nd when anticyclonic conditions were again restored, the anticyclone being centred to the north of Scotland for much of the last week.

The stormy weather of late March continued well into April. Rain was widespread and locally heavy on the 2nd, 4th and 7th but there were bright periods and showers, with hail and thunder at times, during the remaining days of the first week. On the 2nd, which was the wettest day of the month with rainfall in excess of 1 in. in many western districts, several places in north-west England reported more than 2 in. Winds reached gale force, and snow or sleet fell somewhere or other every day during the week.

Showers with scattered thunderstorms on the 8th gave way to warm-front rain which spread from the north-west to the Midlands on the 9th; southern England remained fine, however, as pressure rose ahead of an anticyclone moving east towards the Bay of Biscay. On the 10th the frontal system of a depression to the north of Scotland brought rain to all districts as it moved across the country.

The weather pattern changed slowly on the 12th as the upper air flow in the eastern Atlantic became more meridional and a block to the normal westerly flow formed over Europe. An anticyclone became established off the north-east of Scotland and north-easterly winds spread over the British Isles; the 13th and 14th were cool sunny days with over 12 hours of sunshine in most western districts. On the 15th the anticyclone moved to southern Scandinavia and winds over the British Isles freshened and veered further towards the east. In the east, weather became cloudy and colder with day temperatures only reaching 5°C, but in the west, sunshine was almost uninterrupted with 13 hr in parts of western Scotland and the Hebrides.

A shallow depression moved from France to the southern North Sea and by the evening of the 16th rain from the continent had spread to most of the British Isles; it continued throughout the following day as a trough of low pressure moved west over England. Behind the trough warmer southerlies replaced the easterlies in south-east England; day temperature rose to 16°C at Herne Bay, 10°C higher than in the north of England.

The 18th-21st was very changeable. Rain was widespread on the 18th as a depression from France moved north-east to the Midlands and a second formed at the mouth of the English Channel. On the 19th winds became southerly and weather milder with sporadic outbreaks of rain as a depression formed off western Scotland. On the 21st, Easter Saturday, a trough of low pressure moved slowly east across the country giving widespread rain which was often heavy; afternoon temperature reached 20°C in places.

The weather pattern changed again on the 22nd as a developing anticyclone from the Bay of Biscay moved north; weather was warm and sunny over much of the country on Easter Sunday and Monday, and for the next three or four days, but extensive sea fog formed in the English Channel and Irish Sea; 23°C was recorded at Southampton on the 26th whereas in the persistent fog on the channel coast temperatures reached only 7°C.

On the 27th the anticyclone became centred to the north-west

of Scotland and north-easterly winds were re-established over the British Isles quickly dispersing the sea fog and bringing rather cold cloudy weather to eastern districts during the last few days of the month; in western and northern districts, however, it was mostly sunny.

Pressure and Wind — Mean pressure was generally above the average, the excess at 9 hr ranging from 1.3 mb at Gorleston to 3.1 mb at Stornoway. Surface winds were mainly between west and north-west until the 11th becoming between east and north-east until the 18th and thereafter variable over most of the country until the end of the month, although easterly winds predominated in southern England. Winds reached gale force in Scotland on 9 days and in England and Wales on the 1st-8th, 15th and 16th (10 days). Gales were widespread on the 2nd and 8th. Gusts exceeded 60 kt at Kirkwall on the 1st, at Jersey and Aberporth on the 5th and at the Lizard on the 8th.

Temperature — Mean temperatures were generally below the 1921-50 average, the deficit being 0.6°C in England and Wales, 0.5°C in Scotland and 0.3°C in Northern Ireland. Day temperatures were below average except on the 20th-26th in England and during the last ten days of the month in Scotland.

Extremes included: (England and Wales) 22.8°C at Southampton on the 26th, -7.8°C at Alwen on the 14th; (Scotland) 21.1°C at Paisley on the 26th, -7.8°C at Balmoral on the 14th, at Logie Coldstone on the 14th and 15th and at Achnagoican on the 15th; (Northern Ireland) 20.0°C at Lislip Forest on the 30th, -3.9°C at Pubble Forest and Aldergrove on the 13th and Garvagh Forest on the 16th.

Precipitation — The general precipitation expressed as a percentage of the 1916-50 average was 113 over England and Wales, (where it ranged from 75 per cent of the average in Hampshire and Somerset to more than 175 per cent in parts of Central Wales and north-west England), 89 over Scotland (where it ranged from less than 50 per cent of the average in parts of Inverness-shire and Perthshire to more than twice the average locally in Roxburgh), and 81 over Northern Ireland.

Thunder was heard on 7 days in Scotland and on the 1st, 3rd-6th, 8th, 9th and 19th-21st (10 days) in England and Wales. Thunderstorms were widespread on the 3rd and 8th.

Snow and sleet was reported from one place or another on 14 days in Scotland with snow lying on 11 days. In England and Wales it fell on the 1st-10th and 14th-17th (14 days); it lay 1-2 in. deep in parts of the Midlands and northern England on the 1st and 1 in. locally in northern England on the 4th.

Sunshine — In Scotland sunshine was above the average everywhere and many records were set up. At Stornoway the amount measured was 230 hr, the highest April total since records began in 1880. In England it was rather dull in the east and south-east; amounts ranged from 73 per cent of the average at Hastings to 136 per cent at Manchester Airport.

Fog — Early morning fog was observed at 9 hr on 12 days in Scotland and 15 days in England and Wales; it occurred most widely on the 19th-25th. There was extensive sea fog in the Irish Sea and English Channel on the 22nd-26th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was visible in Scotland on 16 nights.