

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

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

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APRIL, 1929. Dry. Cold in Great Britain.

A decided deficiency of precipitation, a preponderance of northerly to easterly winds, and in Great Britain an absence of warmth and frequent severe ground frosts were the main features of the weather of April, 1929.

During the opening days of the month pressure was high to the westwards of the British Isles, while shallow depressions passed down the North Sea. Rain or showers of sleet, snow or hail occurred locally but most places had considerable sunny periods; 11 hours bright sunshine were recorded at Renfrew on the 1st, over 11 hours at Tiree on the 2nd and 3rd, and 10 hours at Malin Head on the 3rd. Associated with the passage of a depression down the North Sea on the 4th, rain fell over a wide area on the 4th and during the night of the 4th to 5th. By the 6th an anticyclone had moved in from the west and covered the British Isles and in all districts the day was dry and sunny. This anticyclone moved away south-eastwards and was followed by a new one which maintained fair conditions in Scotland and Ireland for some days, notably from the 9th to the 12th during which period abundant sunshine was recorded. In the west of Scotland temperature approached or exceeded 60° F. on the 9th and at Paisley attained 63° F., the highest temperature recorded in Scotland during the month. The fine weather continued locally in Scotland until the 16th, over 11 hours' sunshine being recorded daily at Stornoway during the four days 13th to 16th. Meanwhile rather cloudy weather with moderate rain from the 10th to the 12th prevailed in east and south-east England. On the 14th a depression off south-west Ireland spread in eastwards causing some moderately heavy rain in southern Ireland and the south-west of England on the 14th and during the night of the 14th-15th (Guernsey 15 mm., Scilly 12 mm., Falmouth 10 mm.).

A change in type occurred about the 16th-17th, when the weather became unsettled in the west and north while anticyclonic conditions prevailed in the south-east. Warm south-westerly winds spread over the country and by the 18th day temperature had risen above 60° F. in most places, reaching or exceeding 70° F. locally in the eastern and south-eastern districts of England on the 19th, the only really warm day of the month. On the 20th northerly winds in the rear of a depression over Norway spread southwards and occasioned a sharp fall in temperature with a return to rather unsettled conditions with moderately heavy precipitation on the 26th and 27th but considerable fine periods notably on the 21st and 22nd when over 13 hours' sunshine were recorded at Lympne.

On the 28th-29th a depression over the Bay of Biscay moved in eastwards across France and mainly dull weather prevailed generally on the 28th and 29th (except in the extreme north of Scotland) with occasional rain, which was heavy locally in the north-west of Scotland on the 28th. Except in the south-east of England, where there was much cloud, the last day of the month was fine but rather cold with some showers locally.

Pressure and Winds.—During the greater part of the month pressure was high to the north and west of the British Isles and over large areas anticyclonic conditions prevailed frequently between periods of unsettled weather associated with the passage of depressions over Northern France and down the North Sea. The mean pressure for the month exceeded the normal in all districts, the excess being greatest in the north-west and least in the south-east. There was a marked prevalence of northerly and easterly winds. Fresh to strong winds were experienced in many districts on the 1st and about the 12th, 14th, and in the north-east of Scotland about the 24th, but in only a few places was gale force attained and in general winds were light to moderate. The highest mean hourly wind velocity recorded at an anemograph station was 40 mi/hr at Southport on the 1st and the highest wind speed in a gust, 62 mi/hr at Birmingham and Liverpool (Bidston) also on the 1st.

Temperature.—Apart from two brief spells of warm weather about the 8th and from the 16th to the 18th in the north and to the 19th in the south, April, 1929, was cold in Great Britain, where day maxima and night minima were mostly below the normal. Mean temperatures for the month were below the normal except locally in the north of Scotland, the extreme south-west of England and in Ireland where they were about or slightly above the normal. Ground frost occurred frequently at night and in many districts was often severe. Amongst the low minima recorded on the grass were 9° F. at Rhayader on the 21st, 10° F. at Marlborough, 15° F. at Durham and Rothamsted and 16° F. at Cambridge on the 22nd.

Day temperatures in the neighbourhood of 60° F. were recorded in parts of England on the 7th and 8th and at Paisley on the 9th the temperature reached 63° F. Temperature again rose above 60° F. after the 15th and exceeded 70° F. in many parts of south-eastern England on the 19th, but on the 20th cold weather had again become general, day maximum temperature being generally about 50° F. or below. Screen minima below freezing point were recorded in many inland places on the 6th, 17th and 21st.

The extreme temperatures for the month were:—England and Wales, 75° F. at Wisley on the 19th and 14° F. at Castleton on the 22nd. Scotland, 63° F. at Paisley on the 9th and 19° F. at Balmoral on the 28th. Ireland, 68° F. at Kilkenny on the 19th and 23° F. at Hazelhatch (Dublin) on the 4th and 21st.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation for April over the British Isles as a whole, expressed as a percentage of the normal for the period 1881-1915, was 61; the values for the constituent countries were:—England and Wales, 57; Scotland, 76; Ireland, 51. Thus, for the sixth month in succession, the general precipitation over England and Wales and Scotland has been below the normal. Over the British Isles as a whole and over Ireland the month was the driest April since 1921, when the corresponding percentage values were 61 and 51 respectively. A few exceptions to the general deficiency occurred locally in the north and east of Scotland and in some central and eastern districts of England. In parts of the south and south-west of England the total precipitation for the month amounted to only about one-third of the normal. The deficiency relative to the normal was in general least in the eastern districts of Great Britain. Moderate falls occurred in most districts on the 4th, in eastern England on the 11th and 12th, in the south-west of England on the 14th, in Scotland from the 17th to the 19th and widely from about the 26th to the 29th. There were very few remarkable daily falls, the only outstanding daily amount being 41 mm. at Achnashealach on the 18th, on which day more than 25 mm. fell over a large area of the north-west of Scotland.

Snow and hail occurred on several occasions during the month, mostly in northern districts. Following steady rain some snow fell in London on the evening of the 11th. Slight snow fell on the Grampians and in Inverness-shire on 1st and on the Lammermoors on the 2nd; rather heavier amounts mainly in showers were experienced in East Lothian, Perthshire, Speyside and Orkney, and generally on higher ground from 24th to 28th. On 26th snow lay at Grandtully to a depth of 1½ inches and at Drumlanrig to a depth of 2 inches.

Sunshine.—Sunshine aggregates for the month were in general above the normal in the western districts of England and Wales and along the western seaboard of Ireland and below the normal elsewhere. Representative totals for Districts, expressed as a percentage of the normal for the period 1881-1915, ranged from 113 in England N.W. and the Channel Isles to 88 in England E. There were frequent bright periods during the month, abundant sunshine occurring widely on the 6th, in many parts of England on the 7th, from the 9th to the 10th or 11th in Ireland and from the 9th to the 16th in Scotland, in many districts on the 19th and from the 21st to the 23rd. More than 10 hours' sunshine was recorded daily at Cahirciveen during the period 9th to 12th and more than 11 hours daily at Stornoway during the period 13th to 16th. Over 12 hours' sunshine were recorded in many parts of southern England on the 19th. At Lympne (Kent) 13 hours' sunshine were recorded on both the 21st and 22nd.

Fog.—Little fog was experienced in most districts during the month; it occurred in many parts of the country on the 14th, 17th and 18th. In Scotland, fog was chiefly confined to the River Clyde area, occurring at Glasgow on six days and at Greenock on five days.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—Halo phenomena were observed at a few stations on various dates. Aurora was observed in Scotland on the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th to 11th, 16th, 17th, 20th and 30th. The Zodiacal Light was observed at Oxford on the 7th and 8th. Remarkable transparency of the atmosphere occurring in air of polar origin was reported by the observer at Ross-on-Wye on the afternoon of the 1st and 2nd and by the observer at Armagh on the 3rd.