

Monthly Weather Report

OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

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

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April 1970 — Cold, wintry at first changeable later

During the first 10 days of the month and again on the last 5 days, pressure was relatively high to the west of the British Isles and low to the east giving a mainly northerly airflow. At other times low pressure and high pressure centred respectively to the north and south of the country resulted in a generally westerly airstream.

Weather — April began cold and wintry showers or periods of snow occurred in most areas at times during the first 10 days. There followed a milder, changeable spell with heavy rain at times. After prolonged rain on the 12th/13th swollen rivers in northern England and the Midlands caused local flooding, especially in Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Colder weather returned on the 26th with more wintry showers in the north.

Wind — The frequency of gales was about average but was rather below average in north Scotland. Gales were seldom widespread but they occurred locally on 16 days in England and on 8 days in Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland gales occurred on 4 days but they were reported locally on 7 days in the north-east of the region. A windy period occurred in all areas from the 21st to 26th but gust speeds were not exceptionally high. Gusts reached 55 kt along the Channel coast on the 21st and a gust of 67 kt was recorded at Kirkwall (Orkney) on the 23rd.

Temperature — Monthly mean temperature in most districts was 1-2 degC below average but the deficit reached 2-3 degC in some northern areas.

Colder than average weather during the first fortnight was followed by a milder interlude but, on the 26th, cold weather returned and persisted until almost the end of the month. Night frost was widespread during the first two weeks, more especially in the north and east, and it recurred in places on the last few days. Although frost was mainly slight some places had a moderate frost from the 9th to 13th. Among the lowest temperatures recorded during the month were the following: -11.1°C at Malham Tarn (Yorkshire) and -7.2°C at Alwen (Denbighshire) on the 2nd; -8.9°C at Braemar (Aberdeenshire) on the 12th; -5.8°C at Loughermore Forest (Co. Londonderry) on the 13th.

During the third week and at the beginning of the fourth week, temperatures fluctuated above and below average. Maxima during the month included: 18.3°C at a number of places along the Humber/Ouse and at Hawarden Bridge (Flintshire) on the 17th; 17.2°C at a few places in north-east Scotland on the 22nd; 16.7°C at Murlough (Co. Down) and Lurgan (Co. Armagh) on the 22nd and 30th respectively.

Rainfall — Rainfall (including melted snow) was above average in most areas. Over much of Lancashire more than twice the average rainfall occurred (including nearly three times the average at Preston) and a number of places in the county had their wettest April on record. Some of these records began during the last century, notably at Stonyhurst where there has been no greater rainfall total in April since records commenced in 1848. Twice the average rainfall was exceeded also in North Wales (by a substantial amount in the mountains) and in a few places in the Isle of Man, the north Midlands and Lincolnshire but, at the other extreme, barely 50 per cent of average occurred in south Devon and parts of Angus, Fife and Perthshire.

There were a number of widespread heavy rainstorms during the period 12th to 25th. On the 12th/13th rainfall was prolonged in the north Midlands where 'daily' falls exceeded 50 mm in many places including over 86 mm at Coldgreave (Lancashire). On the 15th numerous places in Wales had more than 50 mm of rain and 75 mm fell at Ceinws (Montgomeryshire). Heavy rain occurred again in central Wales overnight on the 20th/21st when 58 mm fell at Pant Mawr (Montgomeryshire) in the 24 hours ending 0900 GMT on the 21st. This rainfall heralded a very wet spell in general but especially in the north and west. Rain fell almost continuously in north-west England from

the evening of the 21st to the morning of the 23rd. It was often moderate and occasionally heavy on the highest ground where aggregates over the two days 21st and 22nd exceeded 100 mm in places. Among the heaviest 'daily' falls during this period was nearly 108 mm at Grasmere (Westmorland) on the 22nd.

Occurrences of thunder were mostly isolated except in Scotland on the 20th and in the Midlands and eastern England on the 25th. Thunderstorms occurred on about the average number of days for April and were reported locally on 15 days in England, 8 days in Scotland, 4 days in Wales and 1 day in Northern Ireland.

Snow — Snow occurred in England and Wales on about 5 times the average number of days for April while farther north snow fell on about twice the average number of days but was more frequent in the mountains. This high frequency was due mainly to a period of 10 wintry days at the beginning of the month when snow or sleet occurred almost daily. Wintry showers returned to the north around the 26th. However, despite the high frequency of wintry precipitation, amounts of snow were mostly small and showers mainly scattered although they were more frequent at altitudes above about 250m. On the 1st drifting snow blocked some roads in Scotland and northern England and isolated villages in North Wales. Snow, accompanied by strong winds, occurred on the 12th and 13th on high ground in northern England and the Midlands and resulted in deep drifts which blocked roads across the North Pennine Moors.

Sunshine — It was generally a dull month in England and Wales especially in the east and south but a few places in the west and north recorded near average amounts of sunshine. In Scotland, the north and parts of the east were slightly sunnier than average but elsewhere in Scotland, and also in most of Northern Ireland, sunshine was near or below average.

Fog — Morning fog, freezing in places, occurred at times from the 8th to 14th. Fog was extensive on hills and coasts in the south and west from the 15th to 17th and on the 22nd.

Miscellaneous Phenomena — The aurora was seen by observers in Scotland on 5 nights.

TABLE I—DISTRICT VALUES, April 1970

DISTRICTS	AIR TEMPERATURE °C					EARTH TEMP. °C		RAIN DAYS	RAIN-FALL	SUNSHINE
	*Highest Max.	*Lowest Min.	Max.	Min.	Mean	Mean 30 cm.	Mean 122 cm.			
	Difference from Average					% of Average				
0 SCOTLAND, N.	14.2	-2.2	-1.3	-1.9	-1.5	-1.3	-1.2	+4	113	116
1 SCOTLAND, E.	16.1	-3.3	-1.7	-1.3	-1.5	-1.5	-1.0	+5	96	105
2 ENGLAND, N.E.	18.3	-4.4	-2.1	-1.3	-1.7	-1.1	-0.8	+6	151	100
3 ENGLAND, E.	16.4	-3.9	-2.4	-1.2	-1.8	-1.5	-1.2	+8	135	78
4 MIDLANDS	17.2	-2.8	-2.2	-1.0	-1.6	-1.2	-1.0	+6	136	86
5 ENGLAND, S.E.	16.5	-5.2	-2.6	-1.2	-1.8	-1.5	-1.1	+7	122	74
6 SCOTLAND, W.	15.1	-5.6	-1.8	-1.6	-1.7	-1.3	-0.9	+3	119	99
7 ENGLAND, N.W. and N. Wales	16.2	-3.3	-2.3	-1.1	-1.7	-1.5	-1.1	+6	185	94
8 ENGLAND, S.W. and S. Wales	16.7	-4.4	-2.0	-1.1	-1.6	-1.5	-1.0	+5	110	81
N. IRELAND	16.5	-4.4	-1.6	-0.9	-1.3	-	-	+7	127	94
SCOTLAND	16.1	-5.6	-1.6	-1.6	-1.6	-	-	+4	107	107
ENG. and WALES	18.3	-5.2	-2.3	-1.1	-1.7	-	-	+6	142	85

*Highest Max. and Lowest Min. of the District Value Stations.