

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

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

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APRIL, 1928: Changeable and showery with considerable fine periods. Wintry spell 14th to 21st.

The weather during April was on the whole changeable and showery with considerable fair periods. There were two periods of warm sunny weather from about the 4th to the 10th and around the 26th, with an intervening spell of wintry weather from the 14th to the 21st. Monthly totals of precipitation were mostly below the normal, although a well marked excess occurred in the south-east of England, the south of Ireland and locally in the west and south-west of Scotland. Sunshine totals were deficient except in the north of Ireland and the north-west of Scotland, where they exceeded slightly the normal.

During the first few days of the month the weather was unsettled with day temperature rather below the normal; much rain occurred widely on the night of the 2nd-3rd, 3rd, 4th and 5th. In the west of Scotland there were some heavy falls on the 2nd (30 mm. at Inveraray). By the 6th high pressure became established over Germany while pressure was low over the eastern Atlantic, and warm southerly winds from the western Mediterranean spread over the British Isles. There was a gradual rise in temperature, culminating on the 9th and 10th, when day temperature exceeded 65° F. in many places; at this time the nights were also mild, that of the 9th-10th being unusually warm, temperature not falling below 50° F. at several stations. Thunderstorms occurred locally on the 10th and in many parts on the 11th.

By the 12th the winds had backed to the east, the change being accompanied by a marked fall in temperature at first in eastern districts and subsequently over the country generally, cold conditions with severe ground frost continuing until the 21st. Strong winds, reaching gale force at exposed places, and heavy rain, associated with a secondary depression over the English Channel, occurred in southern districts on the 14th, rainfall amounts exceeding 60 mm. in the neighbourhood of Cork, and 50 mm. in the Scilly Isles. There were some heavy falls in southern districts on the 15th and 16th, and in Scotland on the 18th and 19th. Precipitation frequently took the form of snow or sleet. By the 19th the winds had backed to north and from then until the 21st bright cold weather with showers of rain or hail were experienced in all districts.

On the 22nd the winds changed to south-west and temperature rose above the normal, reaching its highest point on the 26th, when temperatures exceeding 70° F. were registered locally in England and as far north as Kelso. Strong winds with moderate rain occurred at times in the western districts of Ireland and Scotland and the south-west of England from the 24th to the 27th. There were, however, considerable fine periods, abundant sunshine being recorded widely on the 28th and in western districts on the 29th and 30th.

Pressure and Winds.—Monthly means of atmospheric pressure were everywhere below the normal. Pressure was relatively low to the west of Ireland and high to the east of Great Britain. Isobars trended from south to north over Ireland and the western districts of Great Britain, the prevailing winds being southerly and mainly light to moderate in force. Over the greater part of England pressure was more uniform and winds were variable and mostly moderate to light. Gales occurred in a few places on the 8th and 9th and around the 15th, the highest wind velocity recorded in a gust at an anemograph station being 69 m.p.h. at Pendennis Castle during a gale on the 14th.

Temperature.—Monthly mean temperatures were generally about or above the normal in Great Britain and about or slightly below the normal in Ireland. Day temperatures were mostly above the normal between the 4th and the 11th and exceeded 65° F. in many places on the 9th and 10th (68° F. at Tottenham and at Greenwich, London, on the 9th). The night of the 9th-10th was unusually warm, the screen minimum of 55° F. at Richmond (Kew Observatory) constituting a record there for April. From the 11th to the 21st cold weather prevailed widely with severe ground frosts. During the period 14th to the 17th day temperatures not exceeding 40° F. occurred in some places in the inland and eastern districts of Great Britain. Frost in the screen and severe frost on the ground occurred widely at night during the period 16th to the 21st. A grass minimum temperature of 13° F. was recorded at Rhayader on the 17th, 18th and 20th and at Huddersfield on the 18th. After the 22nd temperature rose and in most districts remained about or above the normal until the end of the

month reaching its highest point on the 26th when the maximum temperature exceeded 70° F. in many districts and reached 76° F. at Worksop, 75° F. at Southport and Cranwell and 74° F. at Richmond (Kew Observatory) Manchester and Hoylake.

The extreme temperatures for the month were:—(England and Wales) 76° F. at Worksop on the 26th and 22° F. at Luton and Woburn on the 18th. (Scotland) 73° F. at Kelso on the 26th and 18° F. at Braemar on the 16th. (Ireland) 68° F. at Birr Castle on the 29th and at Kilkenny and Killarney on the 30th and 25° F. at Markree and Newtownforbes on the 21st and at Markree on the 22nd.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the normal was 83, the lowest value recorded in April since 1921. The values for the constituent countries were:—England and Wales 81, Scotland 72, Ireland 102.

In England and Wales monthly aggregates of precipitation exceeding the normal were mostly confined to the south-eastern districts, more than one and a half times the normal being recorded in parts of Sussex and Kent. At Brighton the total precipitation for the month amounted to 234 per cent. of the normal. In the northern districts monthly totals did not generally exceed 50 per cent. and at Holyhead only 38 per cent. of the normal was recorded. Heavy falls were recorded in southern England on the 14th, 15th and 16th and at Scilly rather less than half the month's total of 114 mm. (233 per cent. of the normal) fell on the 14th.

In Scotland precipitation was fully equal to the normal in one or two areas, as in Wigtownshire and around Loch Katrine, and Aberdeen had an appreciable excess. In general, however, there was a well-marked deficiency, notably in Fife and Midlothian which had less than half the normal. At Edinburgh the month was the driest April since 1912. Heavy rain fell in the west on the 2nd (30 mm. at Inveraray) and in the north-west about the 9th (61 mm. at Ardtornish on the 9th). After the 12th many areas had only trifling falls but in the north-east and north there were rather heavy falls, partly accounted for by snow from the 17th to 20th.

In Ireland precipitation exceeded the normal in the south, south-east and west and was deficient in the northern, eastern and central districts. In the neighbourhood of Cork precipitation exceeded twice the normal, heavy falls, exceeding 60 mm., occurring on the 14th.

During the wintry conditions which prevailed during the third week of the month snow and hail fell on several days in most districts.

Thunderstorms occurred in one or two days in most districts.

Sunshine.—Monthly totals of sunshine were below the normal except in northern Ireland, the Hebrides and the north-west coast of Scotland. Representative totals for Districts expressed as a percentage of the normal ranged from 103 in Ireland N. to 76 in Scotland E. Although monthly totals were generally deficient there were many bright periods when good sunshine records were obtained, notably about the 5th, on the 8th, 11th, from the 17th to 22nd and on the 24th and 28th. The 19th, 24th and 28th were the sunniest days in the month when between 12 and 14 hours of bright sunshine were recorded in many southern districts, e.g. 14.0 hr. at Bude and 13.9 hr. at Hastings and Ilfracombe on the 28th.

Fog.—Fog occurred on a few days only, mostly at coastal stations.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—Halo phenomena were observed at various stations on several days. A solar halo with lower contact arc was observed at Oxford on the 26th, and a solar halo with upper contact arc on the 27th and 29th. A solar halo was observed at Purley (near London) on the 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th. Aurora was observed at Baltasound, Shetland, on the 15th, at Lerwick on the 16th and at Aberdeen on the 15th, 16th and 17th. The Zodiacal Light was seen at Ross-on-Wye on the 8th and 18th and at Deerness on the 16th and 22nd.

An observer of Barcombe (near Lewes) reported that at 7.50 p.m. on April 27th he saw what appeared to be a small waterspout reaching about a quarter of the way to earth. After about ten minutes it suddenly broke up and disappeared. The weather was very thundery at the time and a heavy shower had just fallen.