



April 1988

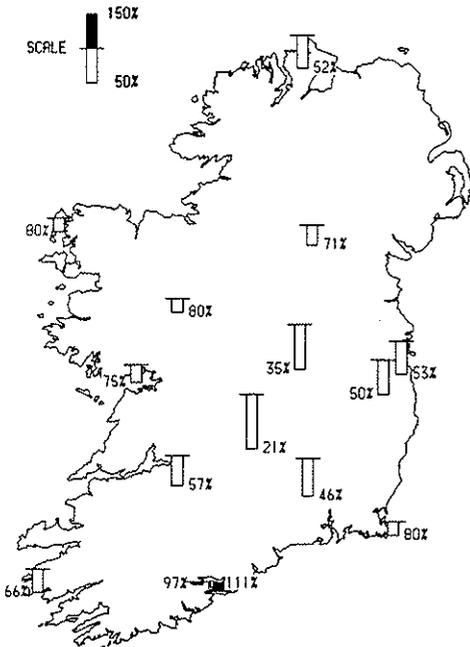
Good Dry Spells

Above Normal Temperatures

A rainbelt moved south on Friday 1st and behind it we had a cool showery northwesterly airflow. With winds veering northerly to northeasterly and pressure rising, the remainder of the Easter week-end was dry and sunny with daytime temperatures rising gradually. Light northerly winds prevailed until 9th but the winds then became variable. In the vicinity of Ireland high pressure cells continued to dominate the weather charts, with the main centre shifting gradually to the northeast of us but remaining an important feature of our weather for the remainder of the month as it blocked the west - east movement of the Atlantic rainbelts. Between 14th and 21st southerly winds were dominant and with the warm - frontal rainbelts moving northwards over the country all areas had rain at times but it was mild. During 22nd a more easterly wind developed and while the Atlantic rainbelts occasionally affected the west and south, especially on 23rd and 24th, it was not until the high pressure area to the east had weakened considerably and moved into Scandinavia that the influence of the Atlantic low-pressure systems began to dominate our weather and rain spread slowly north during 30th.

Rainfall

Except for 1st when we had showers, some of hail, the first thirteen days were largely dry. Between 14th and 21st the warm southerlies brought rain at times to all parts and between 18th and 20th thunder was recorded at some stations. Between 22nd and 24th there was occasional rain in the south and west, some of it heavy. The 25th was dry everywhere while on 26th there were occasional showers. The Atlantic rainbelts affected the south and west only marginally between 27th to 29th and amounts of rain were small. During 30th, with a deep depression slowly approaching from the southwest, rainbelts moved northwards to affect all areas; over much of the country rainfall amounts were less than 1 millimetre but Cork Airport had 16mm, its heaviest fall of the month. Only at Roche's Point (111%) did the total rainfall for the month exceed normal. In most areas totals were 80% of normal or less and over much of the midlands and east were less than 50% of normal. At Kilkenny it was the driest April since 1976 but at Birr it was the driest since the remarkably low 3.9mm recorded in 1938. Birr had only 4 days with rainfall of 1mm or more, compared with an average of 11 days.



Rainfall percentage of (1951-1980) normals

Temperatures

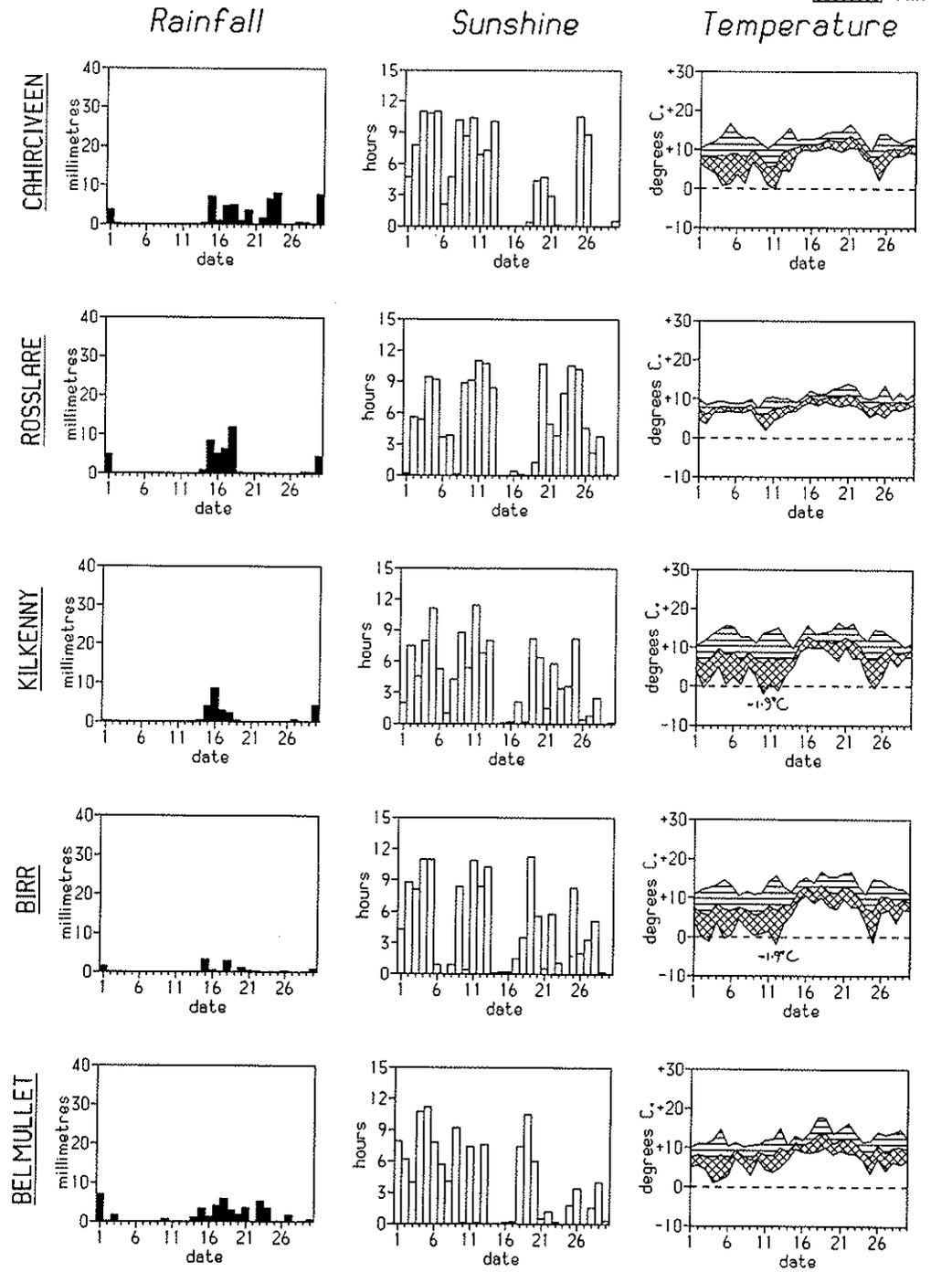
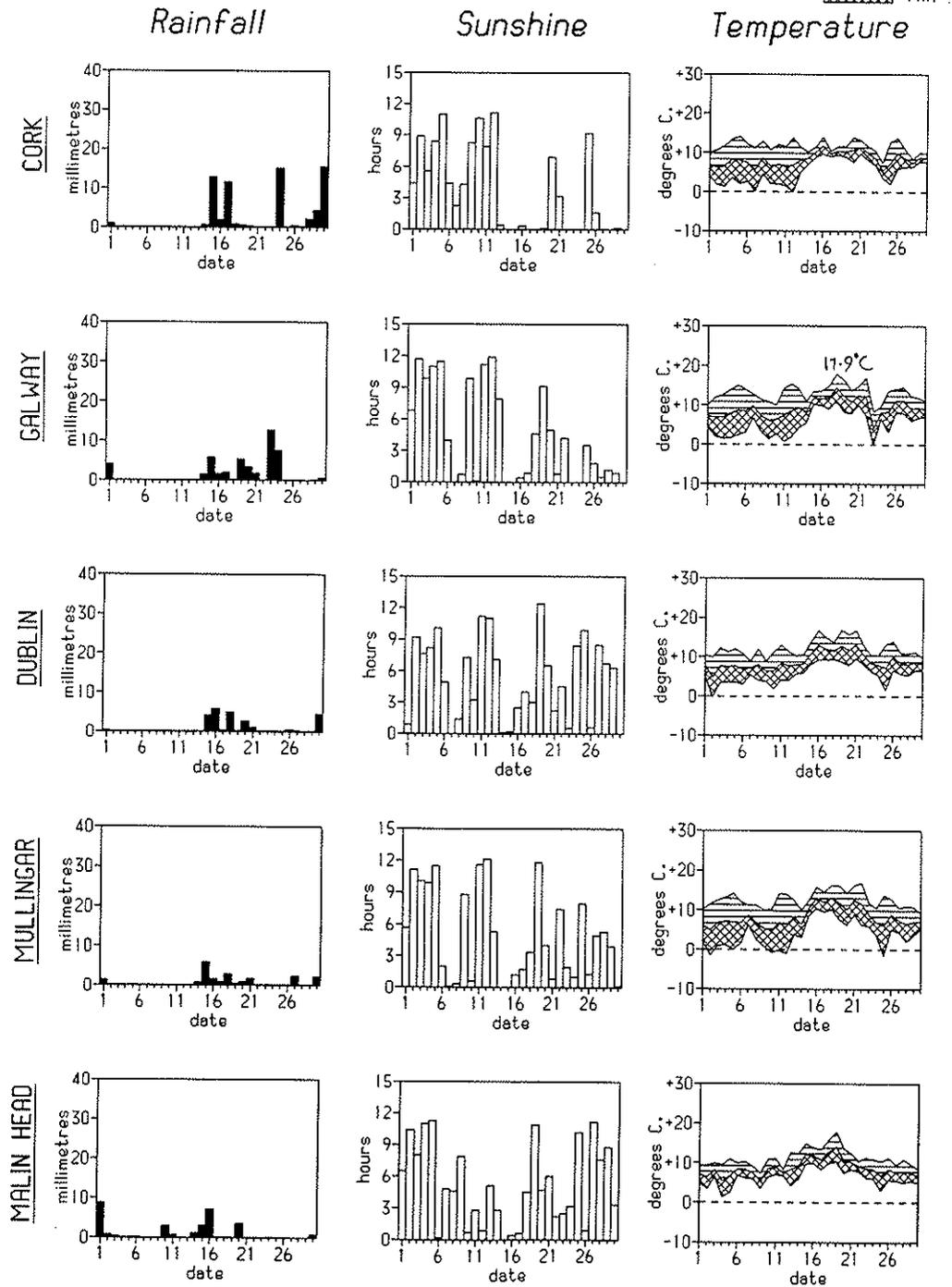
The Easter week-end holiday was marked by cool nights with air frost in places. Daytime temperatures rose from below normal on 1st and 2nd to above normal on 5th and 6th. Maximum temperatures were

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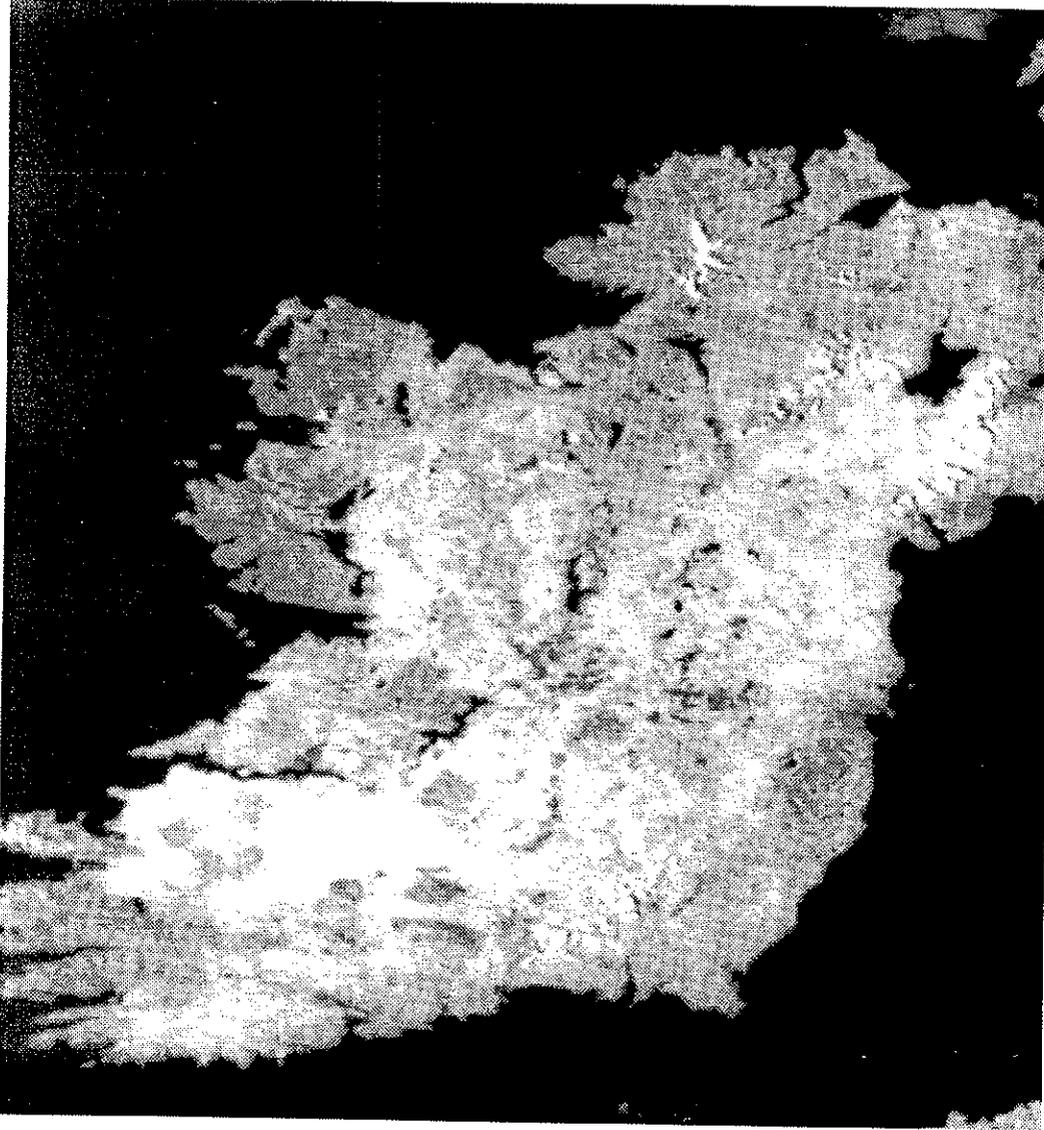
Distribution of daily values

Max
Mean
Min

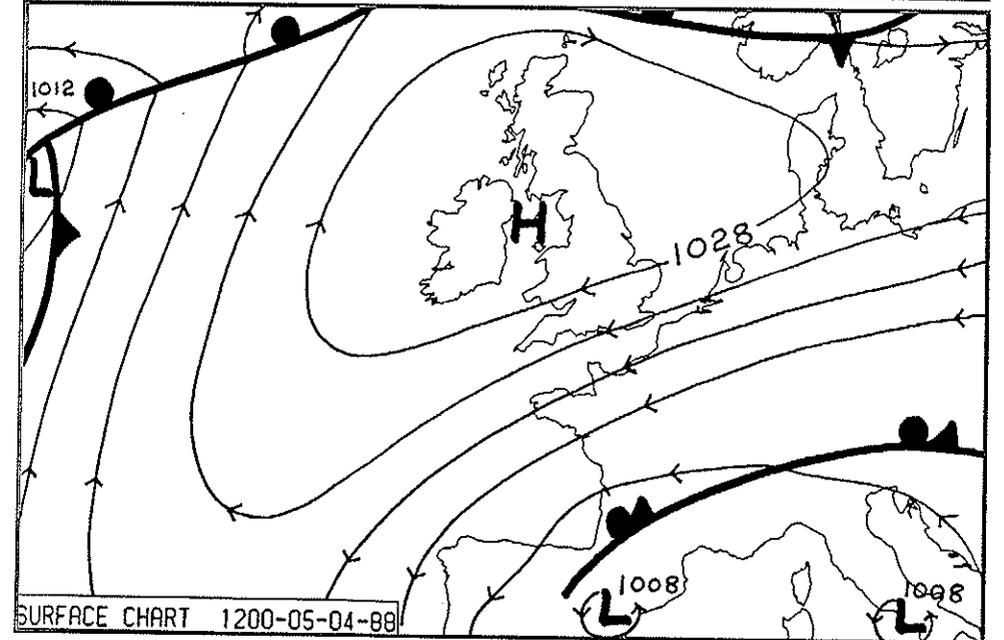
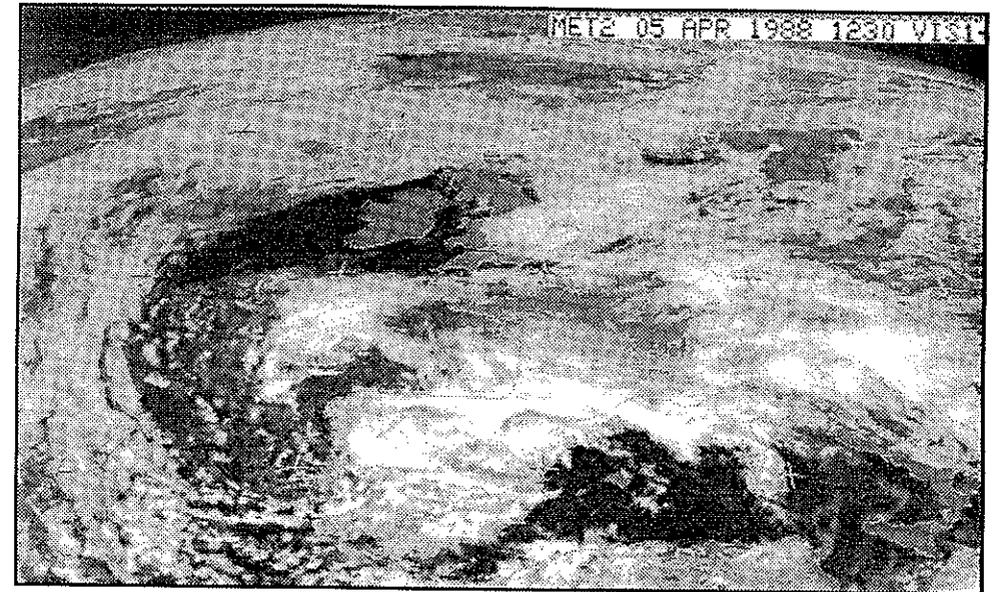
Max
Mean
Min



Ireland cloud-free on Tuesday the 5th

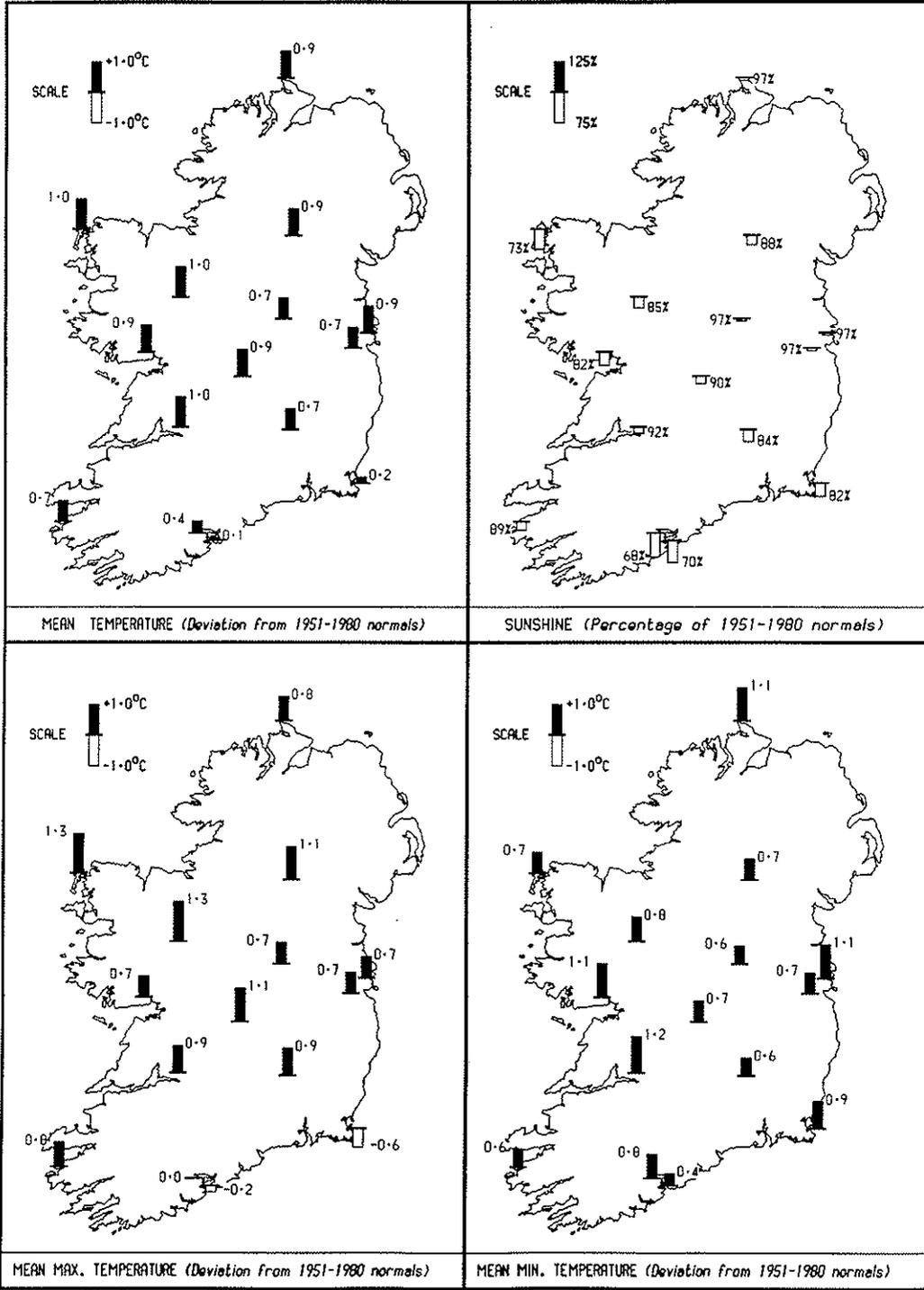


The satellite picture above, taken by the polar-orbiting satellite NOAA-9, shows a close-up of Ireland at 1530 GMT on Tuesday the 5th. Most of Ireland's major physical characteristics can be seen in the picture as the country is virtually cloud-free (the intense white area to the south of the Shannon estuary is in fact caused by over-exposure). All areas recorded a good deal of sunshine (around 11 hours) for the day.



The satellite picture on this page is a European sector taken by METEOSAT, just three hours earlier than the previous picture. It is a typical fine weather situation with a low in the Mediterranean and a high pressure area with its centre just to the east of Ireland. Winds are light and variable or northeasterly in direction. Ireland is in a zone of subsidence where air from the higher levels descends and flows outward near the surface. In these situations cloud tends to break up but it may be hazy. Note that in the North Sea, to the south of the band of frontal cloud near Scandinavia, there is a band of haze and stratocumulus cloud which has been advected in over the southeast of England by the northeasterly winds.

Differences from average



METEOROLOGICAL SUMMARY

APRIL

1988

Station	Rainfall		Air Temperature				Sunshine		Wind	Number of days with							
	Total	Most in a Day Amount Date(s)	Mean	Means of		Extreme Temperature		Total	Most in a Day Amount Date(s)	Max Gale Gust	Rain*	Snow	Air Frost	Hail	Thunder	Fog	Gale Gusts
				Max	Min	Highest Date(s)	Lowest Date(s)										
Belmullet	45.4	7.0	9.6	12.9	6.2	17.7	18	4	119.2	5	35	16	-	-	2	2	2
Birr	11.5	3.3	9.0	13.4	4.5	16.8	18	12	132.1	19	-	10	-	-	1	-	-
Cahiriveen	52.5	8.1	9.8	13.1	6.4	16.7	5	11	138.0	3, 5	48	15	-	-	2	-	6
Casement	23.5	8.7	8.4	12.6	4.2	17.4	18	2	149.2	19	-	9	-	-	-	-	-
Claremorris	49.7	10.2	8.9	13.3	4.5	16.9	22	11	118.9	5	-	13	-	1	1	-	-
Clones	37.6	14.5	8.6	12.8	4.3	16.7	19	3	124.0	2	-	12	-	4	1	-	-
Cork Airport	67.6	15.6	8.4	11.5	5.2	14.0	5	7, 12	109.0	11, 12	-	14	-	-	-	11	-
Dublin Airport	24.9	5.9	8.9	12.2	5.6	16.8	19	2	158.4	19	-	11	-	1	2	-	-
Galway	46.6	12.7	9.4	13.2	5.5	17.9	18	23	129.5	12	-	12	-	-	3	-	-
Kilkenney	23.8	8.6	8.9	13.3	4.5	16.4	20	10	127.6	11, 4	-	9	-	-	1	-	-
Malin Head	29.8	8.7	8.7	11.2	6.2	17.8	19	4	154.0	11, 3	44	12	-	-	1	-	-
Mullingar	20.7	5.9	8.3	12.6	3.9	16.8	22	25	145.6	12, 1	37	11	-	-	3	-	-
Roche's Point	58.9	13.1	8.8	11.3	6.3	13.1	5, 20	10	114.6	12	40	13	-	-	1	-	-
Rosslare	43.3	11.9	8.7	10.5	6.8	13.9	21	10	146.3	11, 0	39	10	-	-	5	-	-
Shannon Airport	32.5	13.8	9.9	13.8	6.0	17.4	21	3	139.8	10, 11	-	13	-	-	3	-	-

NOTES: Rainfall in millimetres. Temperatures in Degrees Celsius. Sunshine in Hours and Wind in Knots. Gale Gust = Gust of > 33.5 knots. * = days with 0.2mm or more

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above normal between 11th and 22nd with the period 15th to 22nd being marked by high temperatures both by day and night. Thereafter daytime temperatures were above normal only on 25th and 26th. Besides the period 2nd to 5th, air frost occurred during the period 10th to 12th and on 25th.

Mean maximum temperatures were above normal except near the south and southeast coasts where on-shore winds prevailed and prevented the rise in temperature which caused mean maxima to be 0.9°C above normal at Kilkenny when they were 0.6°C below normal at Rosslare. At Belmullet and Claremorris the mean maximum was 1.3°C above normal. Mean minimum temperatures ranged from 0.4°C above normal at Roche's Point to 1.2°C above normal at Shannon Airport. Thus mean temperatures were about 1°C above over much of the north and west but were only 0.1°C above normal at Roche's Point. The mean of 9.6°C recorded at Belmullet made it the warmest April there since recording began in 1957. Near the south and southwest coasts the highest temperatures of the month were recorded on 5th but elsewhere the period 18th to 22nd was warmest.

Highest temperature of the month was 17.9°C recorded at Galway on 18th while the lowest temperatures were -1.9°C recorded at Birr on 12th and at Kilkenny on Sunday the 10th.

Sunshine

Over the Easter holiday period, 1st to 5th, many areas in the north, west and midlands had totals of between 40 and 50 hours of sun and nearly all stations had more than 30 hours of sunshine. Thereafter such generally sunny conditions occurred only on 11th, 12th, 19th and 25th. Totals for the month ranged from 158 hours at Dublin Airport to 109 hours at Cork Airport while percentages of normal varied between 68% at Cork Airport and 97% at a number of stations in the midlands, east and north. The period 14th - 17th was dull nearly everywhere but on 19th the highest daily total of the month, 12.4 hours, was recorded at Dublin Airport.

Wind

There was a marked absence of strong winds; indeed nine of our fifteen stations had no gale gusts during April. Malin Head had the highest number of days with gale gusts - eight, but this compares with its average of twelve. Highest gust was 48 knots (55 m.p.h.) recorded at Valentia Observatory (Cahiriveen) on 30th.

Fog

There was patchy and usually quite short-lived radiation fog between 3rd and 7th and again on 11th and 12th. During the warm sector conditions there was some hill and coastal fog between 14th and 19th chiefly near the south and to a lesser extent near the west coast. Thereafter while it was hazy at times there was very little fog.

PERCENTAGE OF POSSIBLE SUNSHINE

With summer approaching and the length of day increasing it is possible to have up to 15 hours of sunshine during May. Unfortunately days with unbroken sunshine are rare, and on average less than 10 days with over 75 percent of possible sunshine are recorded each summer.

The following diagram is based on average sunshine (30 year period) at 13 locations around Ireland. The month of May gets the highest percentage of possible sunshine - around 40%, while the winter months record around 20% of possible.

Percentage of Possible Sunshine

