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BOROUGH OF ABERGAVENNY

**Medical Officer
OF
Health's Report**

1954



S. M. R. HARVEY, B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.



HEALTH BOARD OF ABERGAVENNY
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Annual Report

1954

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the 72nd Annual Report on the state of the public health in Abergavenny Borough during 1954.

The estimated population of Abergavenny Borough at the middle of 1954 was 9140, in other words the population remains relatively static. But of recent years, there has been a change in its age distribution due to a falling birth-rate in the present century, and a relatively present day low mortality. Expectation of life of the infant at birth has been greatly increased. This does not mean that many old people are living much longer, but many more of us are reaching the age of 65—70 years, than was the case some decades ago. In this sense, Abergavenny presents an ageing population and the care of the aged and its associated problems demand increasing public attention.

The crude death-rate of 10.96 per 1000 population, remains at a satisfactory low level. When comparing the death-rate of one place with that of another, it is necessary first of all, to remove the influence of variable factors, such as differences in age and sex constitution of the populations. To do this the Registrar General provides a comparability factor which when multiplied with the crude death-rate provides an adjusted death-rate, namely 9.85 for Abergavenny Borough. This rate is significantly lower than the death-rates prevailing in the County of Monmouthshire and in England and Wales as a whole.

In recent years also, the pattern of disease, has changed remarkably. Infectious Diseases no longer rank as one of the principal causes of death. For example, in 1954 there were no deaths in Abergavenny, from such diseases as whooping cough, diphtheria, meningo-coccal infections and measles. This has been partly due to

effective preventive measures on the one hand, and on the other, to advances in methods of treatment. Today, the outstanding problems of disease and their prevention are attributed to Circulatory Diseases, Cancer and Respiratory Infections. In 1954, Circulatory diseases were responsible for 55% of deaths in Abergavenny Borough, and in this group, Coronary Thrombosis, as in 1953, took the heaviest toll, Cancer featured as the second most important cause of mortality and was responsible for 14% of all deaths. But is reassuring to find that during this last year, the number of deaths from Cancer have been reduced by one-half, and of the 14 deaths only 2 were attributed to Cancer of the Lung. To date, Cancer of the Lung in Abergavenny appears to be confined to the male population.

It seems highly suspicious that many cases of lung cancer are due to cigarette smoking and it has been suggested that this is responsible for the increasing incidence of this disease. Another possible causative factor is air pollution, but this hardly plays any appreciable part in this particular district due to its agricultural nature and the absence of any large industrial undertakings. Respiratory diseases are the third most important cause of death, and in 1954, were responsible for 9% of all deaths. In this group, Tuberculosis (all forms) was responsible for 4% of deaths from all causes. The death rate from Pulmonary Tuberculosis showed a slight increase as compared with 1953, but as this was based only 2 deaths, this rise is hardly significant.

In 1954 the town was comparatively free from Influenza and there were no deaths attributed to this disease.

Despite improved housing conditions, welfare facilities, increased family allowances, and other national insurance benefits, the birth-rate in the country generally, continues to decline but it has shown a very slight upward trend in Abergavenny during the past year. In view of the comparative low Birth-rate it becomes increasingly important that the Infant Mortality and Still-birth rates be lowered, both of which give rise to some anxiety. Indeed, the Infant Mortality rate in 1954 is more than double than in 1953 within the Borough of Abergavenny ; While the slow improvement in the

Still-birth rate calls for further examinations into the problems associated with child-birth. Most of the infant deaths have again occurred within the first week of life, and as the causes of neo-natal deaths and still-births are closely allied, the high still-birth rate gives rise to even more anxiety. These deaths were again more or less evenly distributed between hospital and home confinements. It is probable that more than one causative factor was involved, but it behoves all concerned with midwifery, and especially the mother herself, to do all in their power to reverse this lamentable trend.

During the past year there were no deaths in Abergavenny, of mothers from pregnancy, child-birth or abortion. As we still have no accurate means of measuring maternal morbidity one cannot assess ill-health after child-bearing. The social causes of such ill-health may be attributed to bad housing, poor nutrition, insufficient help in the home and mothers being obliged to work during late pregnancy and too soon afterwards. But post-war welfare services and health education have gone a long way towards promoting the health of the mother both during and after child-birth.

As already mentioned our ageing population continues to cause much anxiety. The Local Authority is very much aware of this problem. During this past year 6 bungalows have been erected in the town for old aged pensioners. Many more such houses and ground floor flats are required to meet present day requirements. It has been established that most elderly folk prefer to remain in their own homes, and with the aid of domestic help services, the district nursing service and voluntary services, many of them are able to do so. It is satisfactory to note the Women's Voluntary Service is contemplating a "Meals on wheels" service in the near future.

I am of the opinion that continued health education and the promotion of hygiene will do much to prevent the common disabilities associated with old age. The problem of admission to hospital of the chronic sick is ever increasing. More geriatric beds are urgently required, also, whereas it may be possible (though not probable) for the chronic sick to gain admission to hospital, and for the able-bodied, elderly person to be admitted to a "Home for the

aged," there still remains the problem of what is to be done for that section of the elderly which does not fall into either of these two groups. "Half-way" accommodation should be established for those who (a) cannot remain in their own homes, (b) are not sufficiently ill to require hospital treatment and (c) yet are not well enough to be classed as applicants for our present homes for the aged.

In previous reports I have mentioned the appalling nature of houses in such streets as Flannel Street, Mill Street, and Castle Street. Attention is now being given to Slum clearance and in the not too distant future all these areas, will, I hope, be dealt with satisfactorily. Meanwhile, new houses are continually being provided to meet the requirements of those still on the Local Authority's waiting list. In 1954, 60 new houses (52 Council, 8 private) became available ; and also the new Primary School on the Llwynu Estate was opened. Once again however, I wish to stress the need for providing shops on this estate before it can be regarded as a satisfactory neighbourhood unit.

Maternity and Child Welfare

The Infant Welfare Clinic is held on the Tuesday of each week and the Ante-natal Clinic on alternate Tuesdays. Mothers and children under 5 years of age from the Borough of Abergavenny and from the Rural District may attend at these Clinics. There are 2 Health Visitors and a Doctor in attendance.

Considering the prevailing Still-birth rate, I wish to stress, once more, the importance of early and regular attendance of expectant mothers at the Ante-natal clinic, so that any departure from the normal may be detected as soon as possible, and the necessary steps taken in respect of adequate care of the mothers. Unfortunately, too often, many expectant mothers delay attending until late in pregnancy, and there are some who never attend.

It is the practice in the Ante-natal Clinic to make a routine blood examination of all patients for the purpose of detecting venereal diseases and for determining the pregnant mother's blood group. The educational side of Ante-natal work is also of great importance and includes advice about general health, rest, diet, sleep and comfort.

In 1954, a monthly average of 156 babies attended the Infants Welfare Clinic. During this year, the Local Health Authority undertook the distribution of National Dried Milk, Cod Liver Oil and Orange Juice, so that these may now be obtained at the Infant Welfare Centre. Voluntary Associations provide personnel to help with the distribution of these foods.

Routine skin testing of children under 5 years, with tuberculin was introduced at the Infant Welfare Centre in 1951. The Mantoux and Jelly tests are employed. The mothers now appreciate the value of this test and are generally most anxious to have their children so tested. Any positive reactors are referred to the Chest Physician and all efforts are then concentrated in determining the source of infection. This aspect of Infant Welfare forms part of the Anti-tuberculosis scheme in operation throughout the County of Monmouthshire.

Vaccination against Small Pox and Immunisation against Diphtheria are also undertaken at this clinic, and from May of this year a diphtheria-pertussis prophylactic has been used, so that children may, in addition, be protected from that most dreaded disease of childhood, Whooping Cough.

Vaccination against Small Pox is advised when the child attains the age of 3 months. Since compulsory vaccination has been abolished, the Borough of Abergavenny, like the rest of the county, has followed a downward trend in the numbers vaccinated, from the public health point of view, this is regrettable. In Wales, in 1954, the percentage of infants, under the age of one year, who were vaccinated, was approximately 22.6 (for Abergavenny Town it was roughly 10.5). This is far below what may be regarded as satisfactory. Small Pox continues to occur sporadically in various parts of the country and we are never free from the possibility of an outbreak of this disease. Healthy living conditions, good sanitation and general public health services are no substitute for vaccination in connection with the prevention and control of Small Pox. The aim should be to see that every healthy infant is vaccinated.

The percentage of children immunised against Diphtheria (approximately 50% in Abergavenny) is more satisfactory but is no ground for complacency if an adequate level of immunity is to be maintained. The fall in incidence of Diphtheria, in recent years, is beyond reasonable doubt a remarkable preventive triumph mainly attributable to immunisation. Since the National Health Service Act, 1946, came into operation, Vaccination against Small Pox and Immunisation against Diphtheria (and now Whooping Cough) is carried out free of charge at the surgeries of General Practitioners and at Maternity and Child Welfare Centres.

“An organised system of personal persuasion in which doctors, health visitors, district nurses, sanitary inspectors, staffs of welfare centres and voluntary workers play their part is still the most powerful element in any local Immunisation campaign and will benefit from the background publicity afforded by the Local Press advertisements, posters and cinema plates, etc.”

Vaccination against Small Pox

Age Groups	Nos. vaccinated in 1951	Nos. vaccinated in 1952	Nos. vaccinated in 1953	Nos. vaccinated in 1954
Under 1 year ...	9	19	36	15
1-4 years ...	20	8	19	4
5-14 years ...	6	—	2	3
15 plus ...	13	12	24	9
Totals ...	46	39	81	31

Immunisation against Diphtheria

Age Groups	Nos. immunised in 1951	Nos. immunised in 1952	Nos. immunised in 1953	Nos. immunised in 1954
Under 5 years ...	83	44	93	64
5-14 years ...	19	6	25	26
Totals ...	102	50	118	90

Domiciliary Midwifery Service.

Under the re-allocation of the District Midwifery Service, one District Midwife is resident in the Borough. The monthly average of nursing visits was 115. The upward trend in the number of institutional confinements continues either for social or obstetric

reasons and domiciliary midwifery has of necessity gradually declined.

There is one District Nurse resident in the Borough. The monthly average of nursing visits was 455. There has been an increasing call made on the District Nurse especially in relation to the Chronic sick and the tuberculosis patient treated at home.

Domestic Help Service.

The County Council provides a Domestic Help Service for those cases where there is illness and where there is no able-bodied relative to give the necessary assistance in the household.

The service has been useful in providing assistance to aged persons and cases of Chronic Sick, who otherwise would have had to be admitted to Hospital, thereby helping to relieve the pressure upon hospital administration.

The Service is under the direction of the Area Committee Clerk (Mr. D. A. Lewis). Applicants for the Service are assessed to repay the cost of the service in relation to their income ; persons considered to be in financial difficulties receive Service free of charge.

The hours allocated to each case are recommended after personal investigation by the District Nurse, Midwife or Health Visitor, and are submitted to me for approval. Cases where recommendation exceeds 30 hours per week have to be submitted by the Area Committee Clerk to the County Health Committee for investigation, except maternity cases.

There are approximately 51 Domestic Helps in the area of which approximately 36 are working in the Borough. All are engaged on a Temporary part-time basis. The number of cases attended in the area was 143 ; the average weekly number of hours worked was 963.

Ambulance Service.

Abergavenny Borough is served by two St. John Ambulances with four drivers, and they provide the Ambulance Services for the

Borough and adjacent area, under the control of the County Ambulance Officer at Caerleon. This system seems to work reasonably well. Control aims at making the most economic use of ambulances, and mutual assistance between local Health Authorities, avoids, as far as possible, ambulances running empty. In previous annual reports I have stressed the desirability of an attendant with some nursing training to travel with the ambulance driver when transporting the sick by ambulance. I understand, that for this purpose, it is now being considered that the services of the Red Cross and St. John Ambulance Association be enlisted.

Health Education.

The close of the 19th century saw the Public Health environmental services established on a reasonably satisfactory basis. During the last fifty years, these have been improved and the personal health services developed. At first, the importance of Health Education was not fully appreciated but it is now realised that disease cannot be prevented or health promoted by social action alone, there must be full co-operation from an enlightened public.

To-day, it is second nature for the appropriately trained staff of a Health Department, whether they be Health Visitors, Home Nurses, Sanitary Inspectors or Doctors to spread the gospel of good hygiene and healthy living. Informal talks are constantly given in the home, the place of work and in the Clinic.

Mental Health Service.

A County Psychiatrist was appointed in 1948 for the purpose of a Mental Health Service. This service now operates from Newport County Hall and is co-ordinated with the Regional Hospital Board, and Hospital Management Committees.

No adult Guidance Clinics are held in Abergavenny, but individual cases, patients suffering from nervous strain, and who are finding difficulty in adjusting themselves either in their homes or at their work are seen by Dr. Cochrane-Dyatt, the County Psychiatrist. Cases considered too far advanced are referred to the Regional Hospital Board Psychiatrist.

Medical Appliances.

The location of the Medical Appliances Depot for the Borough is St. John Ambulance Hall, Abergavenny.

Welfare Services.

The Welfare Officer of No 10 Area caters for the needs of Abergavenny Borough as regards Welfare Services, which come with the provisions of the National Assistance Act (1948-1951).

National Assistance Act, 1948-51. Section 47.

During 1954, it was not found necessary to take action under Section 47 of the National Assistance Act, 1948-51.

VITAL STATISTICS

	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
Area in Acres ...	2398	2398	2398	2398	2398	2398	2398	2398
Population (Est.)	8427	8532	8597	8534	8908	9058	9070	9140
Inhabited Houses (according to Rate Book) ...	2388	2455	2495	2518	2594	2783	2765	2796
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Rateable Value	51658	53028	55296	56000	56831	58733	60191	60673
ld. Rate ...	202	203	203	207	208	222	230	234

1954	Total	M.	F.	1954	<i>Borough County E.&W</i>			
Live Births.								
Legitimate	140	69	71	} Birthrate per 1,000 of estimated resident population	...	15·6	16·26	15·2
Illegitimate	3	1	2					
Total	143	70	73					

Still Births.

Legitimate	7	5	2	} Rate per 1,000 total (Live & Still Births) Births ...	...	52·3	24·0
Illegitimate	1	1	0				
Total	8	6	2				
				} Rate per 1,000 popul'n	...	0·85	0·47

Deaths.

All Causes	100	46	54	} Death rate per 1,000 estimated resident population	...	10·94	11·61	11·3

Deaths from Cancer— all ages ...	14	6	8	}
Lung ...	2	2	0	

Deaths due to Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion ...	0
Maternity Mortality Rate (Rate per 1,000 births)	0

Infant Mortality.

Infant Deaths from Measles	...	Nil
Whooping Cough	...	Nil
Diarrhoea	...	Nil
All causes	...	5 (1 m. 4 f.)

Deaths of Children under 1 year of age in Age Groups.

Age Group	Number of Deaths.	
Under 1 week	...	3
1 - 3 weeks	...	1
1 - 2 months	...	0
3 - 5 months	...	1
6 - 8 months	...	0
9 - 12 months	...	0
Total	...	5

Borough County E.&W.

Infant Mortality Rate

(Rate per 1,000 Live Births)	...	34.97	39.67	25.5
(Legitimate)	„ „	34.97		
(Illegitimate)	„ „	Nil		

Year.	Population.	Live Births.	Deaths.	Birth Rate.	Death Rate
1931...	8490 (Estimated)	137	119	16.10	14.01
	8608 (Census)				
1938...	7925 (New Borough)	115	108	14.50	13.6
1939...	7832 do.	118	144	15.10	18.38
1940...	8407 do.	122	149	14.50	17.7
1941...	8769 do.	130	135	14.60	15.39
1942..	8468 do.	134	113	18.80	13.34
1943..	8174 do.	127	122	15.56	14.68
1944...	7931 do.	139	104	17.50	13.11
1945...	8275 do.	141	120	17.0	14.5
1946...	8439 do.	147	110	17.5	13.03
1947...	8427 do.	152	115	18.0	13.64
1948...	8532 do.	146	138	17.1	16.17
1949...	8597 do.	134	94	15.6	10.9
1950...	8534 do.	130	145	14.4	16.99
1951...	8904 do.	161	157	18.1	17.63
1952...	9058 do.	154	108	17.0	11.9
1953...	9070 do.	140	93	15.4	10.26
1954...	9140 do.	143	100	15.6	10.94

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever	...	During the year	4 cases were notified.
Whooping Cough	...	do.	30 cases were notified.
Measles	...	do.	No cases were notified.
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	...	do.	1 case was notified
Infantile Paralysis	...	do.	No cases were notified
Erysipelas	...	do.	1 case was notified
Diphtheria	...	do.	No cases were notified
Dysentery	...	do.	No cases were notified
Encephalitis	...	do.	No cases were notified
Acute Primary Pneumonia	...	do.	No cases were notified
Salmonella Typhimurium	...	do.	No cases were notified

TUBERCULOSIS.

Notified :	Pulmonary -	M 5	F 7	Non-Pulmonary -	M 0	F 0
Deaths :	do.	M 2	F 0	do.	M 0	F 1

Notifiable Infectious Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) classified according to sex and age groups

Disease	Sex	Age					Total
		0-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25 plus	
Diphtheria	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	Male	1	2	...	...	...	3
	Female	...	1	...	...	...	1
Meningococcal Infection	Male	1	...	...	...	...	1
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	Male	15	5	...	...	...	20
	Female	3	7	...	...	...	10
Enteric Fever	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Infantile Paralysis	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dysentery	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas	Male	...	...	...	...	1	1
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Encephalitis	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Acute Primary Pneumonia	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
Salmonella Typhimurium	Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Female	...	...	...	...	...	...
							63

Tuberculosis.
New Cases and Mortality during 1954.

Age	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1—4 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5—9 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—14 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15—19 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20—29 years	2	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
30—39 years	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
40—49 years	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
50—59 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
60 and over	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	4	1	...	...	2	...	...	1

Infectious Diseases.

During 1954, the Borough of Abergavenny was again remarkably free from any outbreaks of Infectious Diseases.

Diphtheria.

The incidence of Diphtheria in England and Wales has steadily declined since the national immunisation campaign was extensively undertaken in 1942. There were no notifications of this disease in Abergavenny during 1954, but there is still danger—especially if immunisation is neglected. Children still die of it and even if a child does not die the illness may be long and painful. The object of immunisation is to afford each child the maximum degree of protection, and unless an adequate level of immunisation is maintained there may be a return of diphtheria outbreaks such as experienced in an outbreak in the Midlands in 1953. Parents should see that their children have this protection and should avail themselves of the facilities provided.

Scarlet Fever.

Although the number of notifications of Scarlet Fever remains at the low figure of 3, it is possible that they were incomplete. All the cases continue to be mild in character and carry no fatality. Females appeared to be more susceptible than males, with a maximum age incidence of 5 to 9 years. It is probable that the improvement in the disease has been due not only to the mild type of the attacking haemolytic streptococcus but also to the introduction in recent years of sulphanamides and antibiotics in the treatment of Scarlet Fever.

Measles and Whooping Cough.

The incidence of measles has ebbed and flowed at intervals of 2 years, 1954 being an inter-epidemic year with 170 notifications.

There were 20 notifications of Whooping Cough ; Advances in therapeutic agents with improved nursing care in recent years have helped to lower the fatality from these diseases. Less overcrowding in the houses through reduction in family size, and in some cases improved housing may also have contributed to the decline in mortality. As already mentioned, immunisation with Whooping Cough prophylactic is now being undertaken at the Infant Welfare Centre.

Infantile Paralysis.

Infantile Paralysis was again conspicuous by its absence from the Borough of Abergavenny.

Food Poisoning.

We have been fortunate that there have been no large outbreaks of Food Poisoning in Abergavenny Borough of recent years.

Food Poisoning would largely be eliminated if good kitchen hygiene was observed by all food handlers and only freshly cooked food served at all times.

Tuberculosis.

Mortality from Tuberculosis has steadily declined of recent years. In 1954, there were 4 deaths from this disease registered in Abergavenny, only 2 of which were attributed to Pulmonary Tuberculosis. There has also been a fall in the number of notifications, 5 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis being notified for the first time in 1954.

There were 6 inward transfers from other areas, having been primarily notified elsewhere. On receipt of all notifications, family contacts are followed up, and unless they have already attended a Chest Clinic or Mass Radiography unit, they are strongly advised to do so at the earliest opportunity. Health Education is stressed by the personal approach.

The decline both in morbidity and mortality from Tuberculosis is largely attributable to the admirable work of the medical profession and the new methods of treatment in Tuberculosis. An appreciable part has also been played by the improvement in housing, the rise in the standard of living, and in the better education of the population both generally and in the prevention of disease.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

S. M. R. HARVEY, B.Sc., M.B., B.C.H., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health.

Water Supply

The town is supplied with water derived from springs situated in the Llwyndu Mountain, and collected in a covered holding reservoir of some six millions gallons capacity.

Here the water is purified by subjecting it to storage and chlorination before being discharged into the service mains. Routine tests of the water by the Waterworks Attendant with the chloroscope ensures that complete chlorination of the water is carried out. This action was supplemented by samples taken from service taps being submitted for bacteriological examination by the Public Health Laboratory Service.

Samples were taken of raw water and treated water, and the results give ample evidence of the efficiency of the system of purification, each of the samples of treated water showing no Bacteria per 100 ml.

A Chemical analysis of the supply shows that while low in fluorine (0.04 parts per million) it is safe and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes. It is also indicated that it does have action on galvanised pipes and in 24 hours standing took up 5 parts per million of zinc.

The yield of the springs average some 500,000 gallons per day. This can be supplemented by water from a borehole with vertical shaft electrical pump which could provided up to 100,000 gallons per day. In any event an adequate supply is ensured by drawing on the mains supply of the Newport Corporation at Llanfoist.

Samples taken from private supplies showed in some cases the water was unfit, but works carried out under advice have greatly improved the quality of the supply.

The consumption of water remained fairly static at the high figure of some 55 gallons per head per day.

FOOD.

Milk Supplies.

13 retailers operate within the Borough. 10 Licences have been granted for Tuberculin Tested (Raw) Milk, 4 for Pasteurised Milk and 1 for Raw Milk.

6 samples taken during the year all proved satisfactory, and the high standard of milk distribution was maintained.

There is one Pasteurising and Bottling Plant establishment in the Borough, viz. : F. Franklyn, Usk Vale Dairy. These premises are, of course, under the supervision of the Monmouthshire County Council.

No milk diseases were reported during the year, and the co-operation of the retailers in respect of matters drawn to their notice was such that no legal action was necessary.

Other Foods.

156 visits were made to shop premises, and a high standard of cleanliness both in premises, staff and methods of handling were apparent.

Inspection at Food Premises During the Year.

	No. of Shops.	No. of Inspections.
Butchers Shops	11	56
Retail Food Shops	39	95
Restaurants (including Cafes and Snack Bars)	17	35
Bakeries	8	37
Market	1	48
Slaughterhouses	1	348
Greengrocers and Wet Fish Sales	7	25

There is, in the town, one large food factory, viz. : Usk Vale Food Factory, a smaller Mineral Water Factory, Messrs. Hansards (Whittings) Ltd., a progressive outside Caterer, Messrs. R. H. Stevens and Sons, also a Grade 1 Bacon Factory, Messrs. Bonds (Cardiff) Ltd. In other small establishments, Bakery and Flour Confectionery are carried out, and 9 butchers manufacture meat preparations.

Routine inspections are carried out at all the above, and also at the 3 Fried Fish Shops established in the town.

Generally, a satisfactory standard is maintained in all the premises.

Inspection of Food Stuffs other than Meat.

During routine inspections or by request, the following food-stuffs were examined, and found to be unfit for human consumption, after voluntary surrender by the Retailers :-

Canned Foods including Tinned Jams and Meats	...	638
Bottled Foods including Jam and Sauces	...	15
Canned Fruit	... ..	425
Food in Packets including Cereals, Cake Mixtures	...	23
Canned Milk, including Canned and Bottled Cream	...	151
Tinned Imported Cooked Hams	... ..	24
Canned Fish	... ..	33
Wet Fish	... ..	28 lbs.
Meat and Sausages	... ..	39 lbs.
Cheese (processed)	... ..	13 boxes
Cereals and including Biscuits	... ..	19 lbs.
Dried Fruit	... ..	7 lbs.

No instance of such food being exposed for sale was encountered.

Ice Cream.

Of the 31 premises registered with this authority under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, only 3 are used for the manufacture of ice-cream.

One of these uses the Heat Treatment, the other two adopting the cold mix method. All the manufacturers comply with the Ice-cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations, 1947.

In the case of the other retailers the practice is to purchase wrapped ice-cream from outside firms who mass-produce the product and who provide refrigerated conservers for the use of the retailers.

8 samples were taken during the year, and were found to be of satisfactory standard. Frequent inspections were carried out and the co-operation of the retailers and manufacturers was most commendable.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

Throughout the year the work was carried out in a very satisfactory manner according to the Act.

Owing to the fact that the Rodent operator left the employment of this Authority in January, only one maintenance treatment of the sewers was carried out.

Treatment— November 1st to 6th, 1954.

Number of Manholes test baited	...	43
Number showing complete takes	...	12
Number showing partial takes	...	28
Number showing no takes	...	3

The method adopted was the placing of bait on the "benching" in manholes or on trays fixed into the brickwork, and provided with thick rope to allow rodents to climb to the trays, the poison being deposited wherever a prebait take had been visited. The results were satisfactory and a lessening of surface infestation noted after each treatment.

This routine was followed by treatment at the Sewage Works and Refuse Tips. This, apart from other visits made at more frequent intervals.

The attention given to this particular part of the town is justified when one considers that while some years ago it proved a prolific source of infestation for the town, the rat population has now been reduced to almost a negligible number.

Surface Infestation.

Routine surveying of the town area is maintained, and all complaints investigated without delay. There are now no heavy major infestations in town.

The following is a summary of the work carried out :—

Total number of premises in the area	...	...	3071
do. do. inspected	...	...	160
do. inspections made for this purpose	...	...	395
do. of premises infested by rats	...	...	41
do. do. treated by the Local Authority...			4
do. do. lightly infested by Mice	...	...	13
Number of block control schemes carried out		...	1

The Rodent operator left the authority in January, and until June no operator was employed.

Factories Act, 1937 & 1948.

The following represents the distribution of trades in the factories in the Borough :—

	Number of Factories	Mechanical Power used	With Power not used
Agricultural Machinery Repairs ...	2	2	0
Bakehouses ...	8	7	1
Bacon Curing ...	1	1	0
Beer Bottling ...	1	1	0
Blacksmith ...	2	1	1
Boot and Shoe Repairs ...	6	6	0
Cellulose Spraying ...	4	4	0
Cement Products ...	1	0	1
Egg Grading ...	1	1	0
Electrical Repairs (including Radio)	7	1	6
Firewood ...	2	2	0
Florist (Wreaths) ...	3	0	3
Gas Undertaking ...	1	1	0
Ice-Cream ...	3	3	0
Ironworkers and Engineers ...	1	1	0
Leather Products ...	2	2	0
Locomotive Repairs ...	1	1	0
Meat—Small Goods ...	9	9	0
Milk Pasteurisation and Bottling ...	1	1	0
Mineral Waters ...	1	1	0
Monumental Masonry ...	1	1	0
Motor Repairs ...	9	8	1
Printing ...	2	2	0
Soft Toy Manufacturing ...	1	1	0
Sugar Confectionery ...	1	1	0
Tailoring and Dressmaking ...	3	1	2
Upholstery and French Polishing ...	1	1	0
Welding (Acetylene & Electrical)...	2	2	0
Wool Staplers ...	2	0	2

Outworkers:— 12 outworkers are listed, and they are all concerned with the altering and repairing of wearing apparel.

32 Inspections were carried out, and the following is a statement of cases from which defects were found.

Number of cases in which defects were found.

Particulars.	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Inspector	Prosecutions Instituted
Want of Cleanliness ...	8	8	0	5	0
Overcrowding ...	0	0	0	0	0
Unreasonable Temperature ...	0	0	0	0	0
Inadequate Ventilation	0	0	0	0	0
Ineffective Floor and Drainage ...	1	0	0	0	0
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient ...	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Unsuitable or Defective ...	3	3	0	1	0
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	0	0	0	0	0
Escape in case of fire—					
(a) No certificate	2	2	0	1	0
(b) Inadequate	0	0	0	0	0

Housing.

The local authority exercised its functions as a Housing Authority with continued vigour. During the year a further 52 houses were built to bring the number of post-war houses to 513. 39 houses were in course of erection on 31st December, and sanction had been given for a further 110.

Private enterprise was responsible for a further 8 houses.

The Authority's scheme for the Allocation of Houses still carries about 475 applicants. During 1954, 40 families in apartments were provided with accommodation, and 30 families from houses, either by reason of the fact that the dwellings were sub-standard or overcrowded, because there existed some specific disease which was

brought about or aggravated by the conditions of the living accommodation, or because they were cases requiring the special consideration of the Committee.

No action was taken in respect of grants or loans available under the Housing Act, 1949.

A great deal of time continues to be devoted to visits and interviews with applicants, and for the maintaining of records.

Housing Statistics.

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year.

(a) Total number of Dwelling houses inspected for Housing Defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	172
--	-----

(b) Number of Inspections made for that purpose ...	209
---	-----

2.

(a) Number of Dwellings (included under Sub-heading (1) above which are inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	32
--	----

(b) Inspections made for that purpose ...	40
---	----

Number of dwellings found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation *See below*

(In this respect a preliminary survey of the town has revealed some 150 houses which will be considered by the Authority when the housing situation improves or when the opportunity arises by reason of the property becoming vacant).

Number of dwellings (exclusive to those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	62
--	----

Remedy of Defects during the year without service of Formal Notice.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of Informal Notice action by the local Authority or their officers ...	27
--	----

Action under Statutory Powers during the year.

(a) Proceedings under Section 9, 10 & 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

- | | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| 1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | ... | Nil |
| 2. Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices | ... | Nil |
| (a) By Owners. | | |
| (b) By local Authority in default of Owners. | | |

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- | | | |
|---|--------|-----|
| 1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | ... .. | 19 |
| 2. Number of dwellings in respect of which defects were remedied after service of formal notices. | | |
| (a) By Owners | ... .. | 2 |
| (b) By local Authority in default of Owners | ... | Nil |

(c) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

- | | | |
|--|--------|-----|
| 1. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made | ... .. | 1 |
| 2. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit | ... .. | Nil |

(d) Proceedings under Section 11 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.

- | | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| 1. Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | ... | Nil |
| 2. (a) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | ... | Nil |
| (b) Undertakings accepted that the house will not be used for human habitation | ... | 1 |

(e) Proceedings under Section 3, Housing Act, 1949 :—

1. Closing Order is made under Section 3 (1)	...	Nil
2. Demolition Orders determined and Closing Orders substituted under Section 3 (2)	...	Nil

(f) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953		
Closing Orders made under Section 10 (1)	...	5

House to House Inspection Council Owned Houses.

Many visits were made to Council Houses for matters affecting housing management. With repairs to dwellings now being the responsibility of the Borough Engineers Department, the problems brought to this office are more personal and very often require a very diplomatic settlement of family relationships and disagreements among neighbours.

Routine inspections of 507 houses were carried out and details entered up in a card filing system.

70% of all Council houses were inspected during the year for the purpose of providing the Council with information relating to the conditions prevailing in their properties. It was found that generally the premises are kept in very good condition, only 2 of the houses being unsatisfactory, while 4% of the premises inspected require supervision.

In 19.5% of houses examined it was found that erections had been constructed which were either unsatisfactory, or had been constructed without the permission of the Authority.

I am of the opinion that unsatisfactory erections put up by tenants contribute more than any other factor to an unsightly estate.

An interesting result of the survey was that of the number of houses visited, a few industries seemed to be represented by the tenants to a marked degree, viz.: British Railways 13%; Penyval Hospital 9%; British Nylon Spinners 11%; Coopers Mechanical Joints 3%. 11% were occupied by tenants engaged in the building trade.

Housing.

Slum Clearance.

During August, the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, was passed. This much awaited Act provides the Statutory powers needed to implement the proposals made in the White Paper—"Houses"—"The Next Step" published in November, 1953.

The new act amongst other things requires the Council to submit for the Minister's approval within the next twelve months proposals for dealing in one way or another with the houses in their area which appear to them to be unfit for human habitation and liable to demolition.

In order that the Council may decide upon their proposals for the next five years a preliminary survey has been made for the purpose of submitting a report.

It would appear that the main areas to be considered by the Authority will be the older areas of the town in the Tudor Street, Castle Street and Mill Street Areas.

Meat Inspection.

On July 4th of this year the Ministry of Food ceased to be responsible for the distribution of meat in the Country and it reverted to the Meat Trade.

Several applications for the exclusive use of the Public Abattoir were received by the Authority. It was eventually decided in favour of the newly formed Abergavenny and District Farmers Meat Marketing Association.

While allowing this body to lease the whole of the slaughterhouse the Authority were anxious to preserve the public facilities for slaughtering for which the abattoir was constructed. To this end a clause was inserted in the lease allowing for this. The service is carried out by the lessees and appears to be functioning successfully.

For this year the following statistics show details from January 1st to July 4th, and also for the period July 5th to December 31st, 1954.

During the year daily visits were made to the Abattoir for the purpose of carrying out a 100% inspection of all animals slaughtered.

The table given below show the number of animals killed, particulars of meat condemnation and incidence of disease.

Number killed :

Cattle excl. Cows.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
362	405	3631	2133
Cows 255			

Number Inspected :

362	405	3661	2133
-----	-----	------	------

All Diseases except Tuberculosis :

Whole carcasses condemned—

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
13	8	26	8

Part carcasses condemned—

12	Nil	11	6
----	-----	----	---

Carcase of which some organ was condemned—

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
155	4	309	4

Percentage of the number inspected with disease other than Tuberculosis—

49.17	2.96	9.86	0.84
-------	------	------	------

Tuberculosis only :

Whole carcasses condemned—

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
3	Nil	Nil	Nil

Part carcass condemned—

Nil	Nil	Nil	1
-----	-----	-----	---

Carcase of which some organ was condemned—

Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
8	Nil	Nil	39

Percentage of the number of animals killed with Tuberculosis—

0.19

Percentage of the number of cattle killed affected with
Tuberculosis—

3.04

Total Weight of carcase meat condemned—1910 lbs.

Total Weight of offal condemned—439 lbs.

Period July 5th to December 31st. 1954.

Number killed :

Cattle (excl. Cows).	Cows & Bulls.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Rams & Ewes.	Pigs.	Sows & Boars.
494	35	392	5461	443	1671	47

Number Inspected :

494	35	392	5461	443	1671	47
-----	----	-----	------	-----	------	----

All Diseases except Tuberculosis :

Whole carcasses condemned—

Nil	2	1	7	2	1	1
-----	---	---	---	---	---	---

Part carcasses condemned—

5	3	Nil	2	1	Nil	Nil
---	---	-----	---	---	-----	-----

Carcasses of which some organ or part was condemned—

109	14	Nil	162	95	3	2
-----	----	-----	-----	----	---	---

Percentage of the number inspected with disease other
than Tuberculosis—

23	54.3	Nil	3.1	21.4	0.24	
----	------	-----	-----	------	------	--

Tuberculosis only :

Whole carcasses condemned—

1	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
---	---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Part carcasses condemned—

1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	8	3
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	---	---

Percentage of the number of animals killed affected with
Tuberculosis— 0.16

Percentage of the number of cattle killed affected with
Tuberculosis— 0.57

Total weight of carcase meat condemned :- 1 ton 11 cwts. 1 qr. 6 lbs.

Total weight of offal condemned :- 1 ton 3 cwts. 1 qr. 6 lbs.

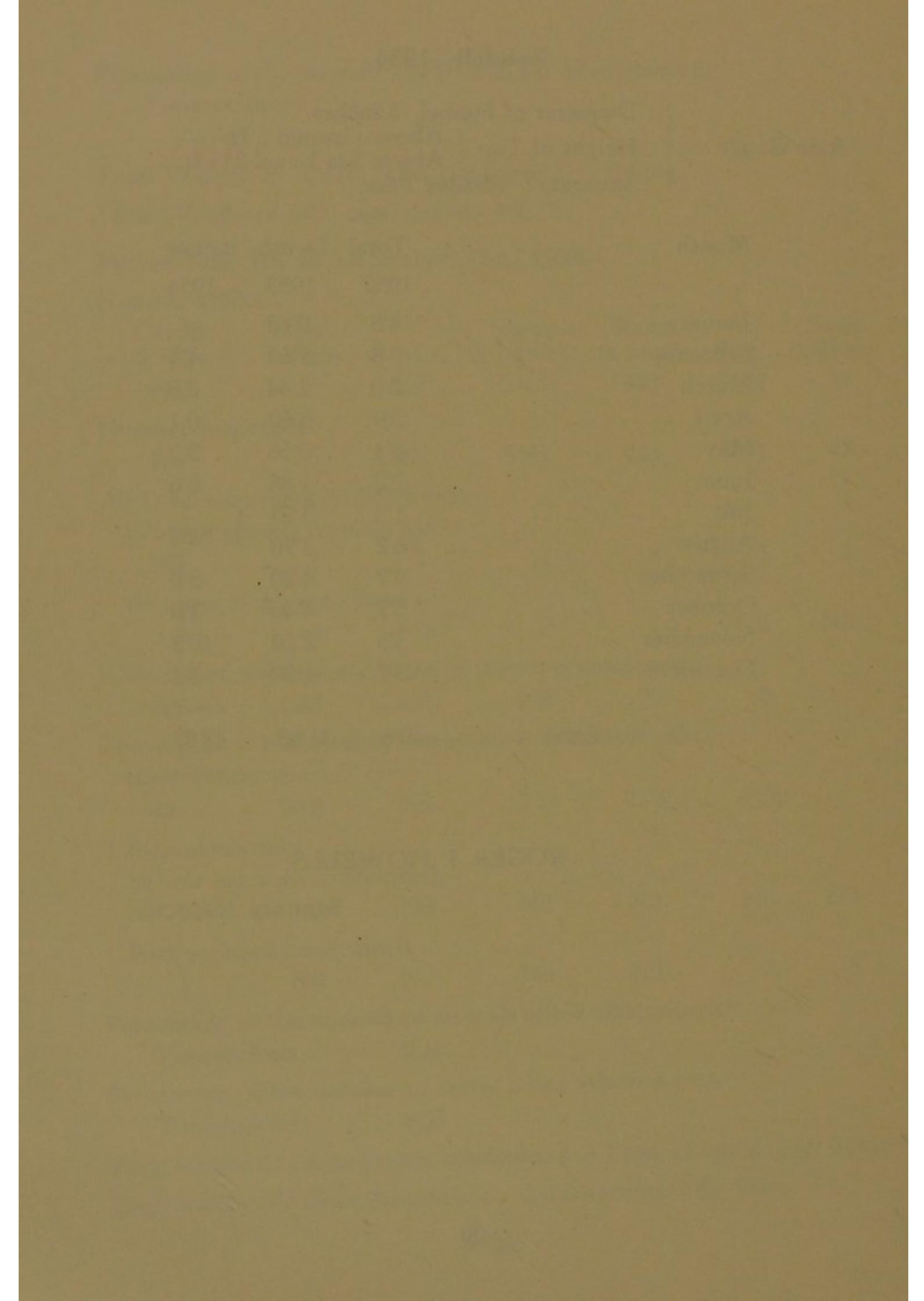
Rainfall—1954.

Rain Gauge ... { Diameter of Funnel, 5 inches.
 Height of Top { Above Ground 1 ft.
 { Above Sea Level 215 ft.
 Situation :— Bailey Park.

Month	Total Depth inches		
	1952	1953	1954
January	4.5	0.63	—
February	0.8	1.64	4.4
March	2.0	1.44	3.6
April	2.9	3.60	0.1
May	3.1	2.56	3.2
June	2.2	1.86	5.6
July	1.3	3.25	} 5.87
August	6.2	4.70	
September	4.7	4.20	3.0
October	5.7	4.40	4.0
November	3.5	2.20	10.7
December	3.7	1.20	3.1
Total	40.6	31.68	43.57

ROGER J. HOWELLS,

Sanitary Inspector.









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