BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S REPORT

for

1945.

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BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Battle Rural District Council,

I have the honour of presenting my twelfth Annual Report as Medical Officer of your District.

It has the form of Reports made during the War, being typed and not printed, and somewhat shortened by direction of the Ministry of Health. Little however, that would have been in it has been left out in consequence except such records as details of water-analysis and some lists; of Nursing Associations, for instance.

In accordance with the resolution of the Council of October 7th, 1943, Minute No. 136, a preliminary report on the general health and incidence of notified disease in the District was sent to Members of the Public Health Committee in February.

In 1945, except for an epidemic of measles, nothing striking in the way of notifiable disease occurred.

650 cases of measles were notified including a non-civilian (W.A.A.F.) whose home was in the District.

In 1944 the measles cases notified were only 49, but in 1943 were 544.

Whooping cough in these years shewed an opposite tendency. The cases notified numbering 51 in 1945, 122 in 1944, and 5 in 1943.

It must, however, be borne in mind that cases of both diseases are not always notified.

Only one death of a measles patient occurred in 1945. The patient had broncho-pneumonia as well.

One case of diphtheria was notified. The patient, a hoppicker from Bethnal Green, had not received inoculations intended to immunise against the disease.

As far as notified illness shews it the trend was towards better health; and it must be remembered that many houses were overcrowded.

As everyone knows the demand for houses was and is great: how very great is surprising if the population figures only are the guide; for, though 258 houses were destroyed or severely damaged by the enemy, the population in 1945, 25,300 according to the Registrar General, was less by 1,500 than at the census of 1931, when it was 26,883, and less by above 3,000 than the Registrar's figure for 1938, viz. 28,312*

Several factors contributed to the demand. Houses near the coast, which was a closed area, could not be inhabited till May, 1945. Repairs and replacements were and are in arrear. Young people have grown up and want houses of their own and better ones than many of those that still exist. Above all, families are smaller and in reckoning for houses the family is the unit.

* The Food Office gave 26,389 for September, 1945.

Not only are families smaller but many houses are occupied by only married couples and single persons no longer young, who have retired to pleasant surroundings in our District.

Twenty years ago five inmates to a house was the accepted average: the number to-day is said to be 3.5.

The drought continued. Lack of water was serious. Of samples taken by the Department, mostly from suspected sources, 35 out of 44 were unsatisfactory.

Scabies shewed no improvement and was widespread. Seeing how few families were infected, perhaps a couple of dozen, its prevalance is something of a mystery.

In May, following information that two patients with typhus had reached East Sussex by air, at the suggestion of the County Medical Officer of Health, a circular letter was sent to all medical men practising in the District warning them to be on the look-out and noting the characteristic features of a disease which few have met.

Air-travel and the return of troops and others from Countries where typhus, small-pox, the plague, cholera and yellow fever are still found demand increased watchfulness.

Insulin, in accordance with Circular 2734 of the Ministry of Health, was supplied to four people.

Diphtheria Immunization is the most directly important medical work of the Public Health Department. The Council, and at least one member of the Department, owe much to the hon. Deputy Medical Officer of Health, Col. J.E.H.Sawyer, M.D.,M.R.C.P., who held 158 clinics during the year, and to the members of the Burwash Branch of the Red Cross Society who assisted.

The death of Mr. A. E. Harris, Senior Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor, and of Mr. Nelson Campany were noted in the report for 1944 with sincere tributes.

Miss E. V. Whatley, the Temporary Clerk in the Public Health and Surveyor's Departments retired on February 20th, 1945, and Mr. Campany pluckily resumed till April 10th.

Then Miss Marion Hearnshaw took up the work. I cannot pay too high a tribute to her intelligence, minute care, industry, foresight and accuracy.

The whole of the elaborate tabulating of diphtheria immunization required both for arranging clinics and keeping accurate reocrds has been in her hands; and that is only one of many activities in two departments.

As heretofore I am indebted to the Acting Clerk, Mr. R. A. Lusty, and to members of all Departments for help frequently asked and freely given, but must specially record the unfailing cheerful assistance and admirable example of Mr. W. Francis, the Chief Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector. Busy as he has always been, how busy his colleagues can best appreciate, he has at all times been ready to discuss or explain any matter of Public Health and, if asked, to give sound advice informed by strong commonsense.

In maintaining the high standard he has set he has been ably seconded by his Assistants.

That this preface is more than usually personal will, I hope, be condoned since it accompanies the last full Annual Report of

Your obedient servant,

Alan Moore,

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,
The Watch Oak,
Battle,
Sussex.

12th August, 1946.

Statistics & Social Conditions

Area in acres	117,059
Population in 1945	25,300
No. of inhabited dwellinghouses	9,540 i.e. inhabitable
No. of rateable premises in the year ending March 31st, 1945	11,079
Rateable Value, April 1st, 1945	£192,494
Sum represented by a penny rate in the Financial year ending March 31st, 1945	£736. 4. 7d.

Occupation & Industry

The chief industries are agriculture, dairy farming and sea fishing.

The Gypsum Mine in Mountfield parish was employing in 1945:-

English employees		Italians before August 4.		Germans by end of year	
Surface	108 male 13 female	Surface	25	Surface	57
Underground	167 male	Underground	45	Underground	144

Other important industries are, at Battle, a jam factory employing on an average 30 men and 65 women, a steel window-frame factory employing besides 5 men and 3 women in the office, 31 men, 28 women and 2 boys, and a tannery employing 13 men and 2 women.

Near Rye, in the parish of Icklesham, are two factories where piles, pipes, curbs and other things are made from concrete mixed with the local beach. One employs 70 men and 6 women besides an office staff of 8 men and 5 women, and the other 18 men.

A factory of the same kind at Camber employs 8 men and 1 woman, and an engineering works at Camber in October was employing 11 men and 2 women.

Port of Rye

Two trading vessels entered to unload. 206 Fishing Craft were dealt with during the year of which not more than 50 were berthed in the Borough of Rye.

Unemployment

Very little is reported.

Live Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	178	156	334
Illegitimate	27	15	42

Live Birth-Rate per 1,000 of Resident Population 10.45

Live Birth-Rate per 1,000 for England and Wales 16.1

Stillbirths	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	6	4	10
Illegitimate	3	3	6

Stillbirthrate per 1,000 total births, live and still 40.81

Deaths	Male	Female	Total
	148	153	301

Nett death-rate per 1,000 of estimated population 11.89

The corrected death-rate cannot be given. The Areal comparability factor for 1943 is not available.

Death-rate for England and Wales 11.4

Maternal Mortality

Deaths from puerperal infection	0
Deaths from other maternal causes	1

Maternal Mortality Rate for England & Wales (all causes, but not abortion) 1.22

Infant Mortality	Male	Female
Deaths of Infants under one year of age		
Legitimate	1	3
Illegitimate	2	1

Infant Death-Rate per 1,000 live births 18.61

Infant Death-Rate for England and Wales 46.00

Death-Rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births 11.97

Death-Rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births 71.40

Death from diarrhoea, under 2 years of age 1

Death-Rate from diarrhoea of children under 2 per 1,000 live births 2.65

Death-Rate from diarrhoea and enteritis of children under 2 years of age per 1,000 live births in England and Wales 5.6

One death, male, occurred from measles with broncho-pneumonia.

No deaths occurred from diphtheria, scarlet fever or whoopingcough

Death-rates for England and Wales, per 1,000 of civilians		
	Diphtheria	0.02
	scarlet fever	0.00
	measles	0.02
	whooping cough	0.02

Deaths from or with Cancer

All deaths are included for which any form of cancer, including sarcoma, was mentioned in the Death Certificate.

The primary seat of disease is given where known.

Ages	Alimentary Canal including oesophagus but not pharynx		Breast		Lungs & Bronchi		Other	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
35 - 39		1						
40 - 44								1
45 - 49								
50 - 54	1	2						3
55 - 59		1			1			2
60 - 64	2	1		1			2	1
65 - 69	3	2			1		1	3
70 - 74	5	1		2			1	3
75 & over	4	5		1.			6	2

A neoplasm of the lung in a man aged 63 may have been a cancer.

General Provision of Health Services

Medical Officer of Health, part-time, also Assistant County School Medical Officer and Medical Officer of Health for the Borough of Rye.	Alan Moore, M.B., D.P.H.
Deputy Medical Officer of Health	Col. J. E. H. Sawyer, M.D., M.R.C.P.
Senior Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor, since March 16th, 1945, when Mr.A.E.Harris died.	W.Francis, C.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.
Sanitary Inspectors and Assistant Surveyors.	W.Ramsden, Cert. S.I.B., M.S.I.A.,
	W. T. Dunford, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A., resumed duty July 16th, after war service.
Works Engineer, Water Engineer, and Housing Manager.	G. A. Bramley, F.I.A.S., M.Inst.R.A.
Acting Chief Clerk in the Public Health and Surveyor's Department, from April 10th	Miss M. H. Hearnshaw.

Adoptive Acts

Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890.

Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24.

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1890.

Sections 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46 are in force in the whole District, and Section 37 under the Battle Rural (Urban Powers) Order, 1935, is in force in the contributory places of Battle, Broomhill, Crowhurst, Fairlight, Guestling, Icklesham, Ore, Pett, St. Thomas the Apostle Winchelsea, Salehurst and Westfield.

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1907.

Sections 17, 22, 27, 30, 32, and 33.

Section 33 is repealed as far as Byelaws are concerned.

Public Health Act, 1925.

Sections 14 and 24 are in force in the whole District.

Sections 21 and 22, now exercisable exclusively by the County Council are in force in the Parish of Battle.

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1934.

Section 1 was adopted on November 1st, 1934.

The Battle Rural (Urban Powers) Order, 1937.

In operation since January 9th, 1937. It deals with special expenses for fireplugs in certain parishes.

The Battle Rural District Council has urban powers by virtue of the following sections of the Public Health Act, 1936:-

Section 46 deals with sanitary conveniences in factories, workshops and workplaces. In force throughout the District.

Section 263: water courses in urban districts not to be culverted except in accordance with approved plans. In force in the contributory places of Battle, Brede, Burwash, Etchingham, Fairlight, Guestling, Icklesham, Northiam, Pett, Salehurst, Ticehurst and Westfield.

Section 264: Urban Authorities may require repair and cleansing of culverts. In force as Section 263.

Byelaws.

New Building Byelaws came into force on April 1st, 1939.

New Byelaws for New Streets came into force on June 1st, 1939.

New Byelaws for Hop and Fruit Pickers came into force on June 1st, 1939.

Byelaws for slaughter houses, adopted on or after January 1st, 1934, by the Battle Urban District Council.

Diphtheria Immunization.

Col. J.E.H. Sawyer, M.D., M.R.C.P., hon. Deputy Medical Officer of Health, held immunization clinics throughout the year.

He was assisted at each by the Burwash Branch of the Red Cross Society.

District Nurses and Teachers helped actively. By the middle of the year 921 children under 5 had received the two injections, giving a percentage of 46.71 according to figures of population recently supplied by the General Register Office. This percentage is better than it looks because normally babies under one year of age are not treated. It is not, however, high enough.

Of children aged 5 - 14, 2920 had received the two injections by the middle of 1945 giving a satisfactory percentage of 86.90.

These percentages include a few children privately immunized.

Completed primary inoculations in the first six months of 1945 were

	under 5	aged 5 - 14
	153	40
and in the second 6 months	158	33

In addition during the year Col. Sawyer gave 224 children who had received the two primary injections when very young the third injection that has been found advisable in such cases.

He also applied the Schick-test to 83 children.

Posters are put up in each village announcing a clinic about a week before it is to be held.

District Nurses and Head Teachers are notified of all clinics and are sent consent forms. Leaflets for distribution are also sent to Nurses.

The Medical Officer of Health being also a School Medical Officer is able to talk to mothers about immunization when they attend the Routine Medical Inspections at the Schools.

More parents attend than formerly and most of them shew a gratifyingly intelligent appreciation of the importance of immunization.

It is impressed upon them that the protection is not certain because, so to speak, Nature never completely obeys her own laws, but is sure enough to make diphtheria a rare curiosity if enough children are inoculated.

The parent of every child to be immunized is notified when a clinic is to be held in the parish. If after several notifications the child has not attended a letter is sent to the District Nurse who visits and tries to persuade the mother to bring the child.

When children leave the District before they have received both injections a letter is sent asking the Medical Officer of the District to which they go to arrange for the second to be given.

Schools.

None was closed for infectious illness in 1945.

The standard of general health was good.

The increase in the average weight of children since school dinners were provided is remarkable. School dinners were provided at every Public Elementary School except Etchingham.

In 1941 the Report of the County Medical Officer of Health included a table of average weights for heights compiled by Dr. W. R. Dunstan, then Medical Officer of Health for Lewes. The table has been very useful in determining the state of nutrition but now the average weight has increased so much that the table no longer states the truth.

Every child can have milk at school if its parents wish and nearly all the children have it.

Cases of disease other than tuberculosis notified in 1945 and the two years before, civilians only.

	1943	1944	1945	Admissions to Isolation Hospitals in 1945
scarlet fever	33	34	18	15
diphtheria	4	2	1	1
puerperal pyrexia	3	3	5	
ophthalmia neonatorum	1	2	0	
anterior poliomyelitis	0	1	1	
cerebro spinal meningitis	0	0	2	2
dysentery	0	0	1	
pneumonia	28	24	15	
erysipelas	5	4	4	
measles	544	49	649	8
whooping cough	5	122	51	1

Four of the 15 cases of pneumonia in 1945 were noted as influenzal.
12 cases of malaria relapses were notified. The patients were in the Army.
In 1944 one malaria relapse was notified.

A member of the W.A.A.F. aged 20 was notified for measles. Her home was in the District.

The diphtheria patient who was a hoppicker from Bethnal Green, had not had injections intended to immunize.

AGE GROUPS.

	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-34	35-44	45-64	65& over	Ur-known.
scarlet fever	2	1		1	1	8	1	1	1	2			
diphtheria							1						
puerperal pyrexia									5				
ophthalmia neonatorum													
anterior poliomyelitis									1				
cerebro-spinal meningitis						1			1				
dysentery										1			
pneumonia			2					3	2		3	5	
erysipelas										1	2	1	
measles	12	36	44	44	53	280	115	40	24	1	4	3	
whooping cough	3	6	4	7	8	20	1	1	1				

Cases of measles were numerous enough to make the sexes in the age groups worth recording.

Under 1		1		2		3		4		5-9		10-14		15-19		20-34		35-44		45-64		65 & over.	
m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.	m.	f.
5	7	20	16	27	17	21.	23	14	19	14	34	56	59	15	23	5	19	7	7	3	1	0	3

Totals males 319, females 330.

Scarlet Fever in 1945.

Incidence in parishes for each month, Civilians only.

Month.	Parishes and number of cases in each.	
January	Battle	1 case
	Brightling	1 case
	Burwash	3 cases
	Guestling	1 case
February	No cases.	
March	Icklesham	1 case
April	Crowhurst	1 case
May	Brightling	2 cases
June	No cases.	
July	Salehurst	1 case
	Westfield	1 case
August	Battle	1 case
	Salehurst	1 case
September	Icklesham	1 case
	Ticehurst	1 case
October	Ticehurst	1 case
November	Ticehurst	1 case
December	No cases.	

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By resolution of the Council of October 4th, 1945, payment of £3. 10. Od. per annum for each Nurse was to be made to each of the fifteen Nursing Associations in the District for nursing patients with infectious illness.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Cases in Register December 31st, 1943, 1944 and 1945.

	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	male	female	male	female.
1943	45	67	25	31
1944	50	74	27	32
1945	52	70	30	31

Cases notified for the first time and 4 cases of patients in the Respiratory Group, notified before elsewhere, who were reported to have come into the District. 4 Service men are noted who lived in the District. They also were in the Respiratory Group.

Age Groups	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory.	
	male	female.	male	female.
Under 1				
1 - 4				
5 - 14	1		1	1
15 - 24	4	1	1	
25 - 34	2	4	1	
35 - 44				
45 - 54	1	3		
55 - 64	1	1		
65 & above.		1		1

Tuberculosis Deaths.

That is to say, deaths of people who lived in the District and died there, and deaths of those who belonged or had till recently belonged to the District but died outside it, in Hospital or elsewhere.

	Respiratory		Non-respiratory	
Age groups	male	female	male	female
5 - 14				1
15 - 24		1		
25 - 34		1		
35 - 44	1			
45 - 54	1	2		
55 - 64		1		
65 and above		2		1

Notifications under the Food & Drugs Act, 1938.
of Food-poisoning or suspected Food-poisoning.

1945	1944
0	16

SCABIES.

Scabies seemed to occur about as often as in 1944 but since it is not a notifiable disease, every case may not have been discovered.

Cases some of them not new, were found or reported as follows:

Month.	Parish.
January	Ticehurst
February	Brede
March	Ashburnham Battle Guestling (2 households)
May	Salehurst. Mountfield.
June	Ewhurst - 2 families of hop-pickers. Ashburnham same family as in March.
July	Brede - 2 families.
August	Burwash Westfield.
September	Ashburnham - 3 families. Battle Dallington
October	Brede Catsfield Ore Whatlington
November	Northiam.

5 patients were admitted for the complaint to the Hastings Municipal Hospital.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1945

of the CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

and SURVEYOR.

I submit herewith a report upon the work of the Public Health Department during the year ending 31st December, 1945.

The year under review saw a number of changes in the staff of the Department, notably the loss of Mr. A.E. Harris, former Surveyor and Chief Sanitary Inspector, who passed away suddenly on the 16th March after a brief illness, and Mr. A.N. Campany, former Chief Clerk in the Surveyor's and Public Health Department, who died at an early age in July, after a long and serious illness. Both were highly respected colleagues and their loss, which was deeply mourned, reduced the already depleted staff to an absolute minimum. In March, the total staff of the combined Surveyor's and Public Health Department consisted of two technical officers, a shorthand typist and a junior male clerk.

In April Mr. A.T. Braley was appointed Temporary Additional Sanitary Inspector for duties primarily concerned with the Rural Housing Survey. He made good progress until he was taken seriously ill and was admitted to hospital towards the end of the year. Mr. Whittaker, formerly a full time member of the Civil Defence Control Staff, was appointed as a non-technical officer to assist with the survey.

After many delays, Mr. Dunford returned to duty in July, after an absence of almost 6 years with H.M. Forces. His return at so vital a time was extremely welcome, but it became necessary to transfer him to special duties in relation to the requisitioning of unoccupied dwellings. Whilst he carried out admirable work in this connection it was not possible for him to assist materially in the ordinary routine duties of the department, or the Rural Housing Survey for which the Council had sought his release from service with H.M. Forces.

There is no doubt that these circumstances had a serious affect upon the working of the department, but there is however reason to hope that once a full staff becomes wholly engaged upon the tasks ahead the Committee can look forward to good progress being made.

I am, Mr. Chairman Ladies & Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

M. Francis

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Analysis of Inspections made during 1945.

	Inspections.
Drainage and Sanitary Accommodation	423
Water Supply	183
Milk and dairies	140
Building Inspections including work under Licences	227
Hop Pickers accommodation	53
Infectious Diseases	45
Salvage	118
Public Cleansing Service	84
Feedshops	77
Housing and Public Health Acts	1602
Town Planning	119
House Requisitioning	309
Moveable Dwellings	58
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal	149
Nuisances	61
Verminous premises	25
Factories and Workshops	12
Schools	5
Miscellaneous	35
Housing Survey Total number of houses inspected in detail to 31.12.45.	**1218**

Notices served under Public Health Acts.

Number of Informal Notices served	64
" " " " complied with	38
Number of Statutory Notices served	7
" " " " complied with	-
Work carried out in default	7

Notices served under Housing Acts.

Number of Informal Notices served	42
" " " " complied with	25
Number of Statutory Notices served	1
" " " " complied with	-
Demolition Orders made.	2

Milk and Dairies.

It was quite impossible to devote as much time to these duties as in previous years. Labour difficulties prevented all but the most urgent work of improvement to cowsheds and dairies being carried out, practically the whole of the available labour being engaged on bomb damage repair much of which was in connection with farm and dairy premises.

Only 9 samples of milk were submitted for bacteriological examination all of which proved satisfactory.

I am assured however, that under the terms of the National Milk Testing Scheme, all registered producers' and retailers' supplies are tested fortnightly.

Meat Inspection.

No animals were slaughtered for sale for human food at the private slaughter-houses in the district during the year 1945, all slaughtering having been transferred to the Government slaughter-house at Hastings in August, 1941.

Other Foods:-

During the year the following food was found to be unfit for food and was withold from sale for human consumption.

45¾	lbs.	Luncheon Meat
1	Tin	Meat Roll
172½	lbs.	Corned Beef
12	lbs.	Corned Mutton
4	Tins	Steak
2	lbs.	Sausage Meat
150	lbs.	Bacon
6	Tins	Meat and Vegetables
51	Tins	Baked Beans
14	lbs.	Beans
3	Tins	Peas
6	Tins	Soup
56	lbs.	Fish
67	Tins	Pilchards
16	Tins	Sardines
10	Tins	Mackeral
21	Tins	Herrings
4	Tins	Salmon
30	Tins	Milk
364	lbs.	Bread
28	lbs.	Cheese
3	lbs.	Oats
5	lbs.	Semolina
92	Pkts.	Glenmar Pudding
3	lbs.	Honey
2	Tins	Syrup
26	lbs.	Jam
50	lbs.	Marmalade.

Factories and Workshops.

No routine inspections of factories or workshops were made during the year, the work under this heading being confined to dealing with Notices received from H.M. Inspector of Factories, chiefly in relation to sanitary accommodation.

Number of notices outstanding 31.12.45 ... 2

Number of notices served 1

Number of notices complied with 2

Number of notices outstanding .. .. .. 1.

HOP-PICKERS ACCOMMODATION.

Owing to the extreme shortage of labour, practically no improvements in the accommodation provided for hop-pickers in the 36 encampments within the district, were made during the year.

The usual inspections were made, and it was found that there was little change in the conditions as compared with previous seasons. There is still room for improvement in the general tidiness of the camps, and the facilities provided in relation to water supply, cooking facilities, and sanitary accommodation, despite the efforts of the Department during the past few years.

It is feared that until such time as the building industry is able to undertake constructional work other than housing little progress can be expected.

WATER SUPPLY.

Reasons for the precarious position of the district in regardto public water supplies were given in the report for 1944.

Further representations were made to the County Borough of Hastings with a view to accelerating the work on the Darwell Hole Reservoir Scheme, but owing to manpower difficulties, this was not possible, and it is unlikely that the Corporation will be able to supply water to the coastal areas for some time.

Following numerous complaints from the parishes of Pett, Icklesham and Fairlight a deputation appeared before a special meeting of the Public Health Committee and as a result a deputation was received at the Ministry of Health. Arising therefrom the Council decided to formulate a scheme for carting drinking water on payment to the necessitous areas.

After considerable difficulty, all the preparatory work in connection with the sinking of the additional borehole at Battle water-works was completed and the work was due to commence early in 1946.

At very short notice the military authorities de-requisitioned parts of the coastal areas i.e. Pett Level, Winchelsea Beach and Camber, which had been held since the early days of the war. As these areas rely almost wholly upon stored rainwater as a means of water supply, the Council was gravely concerned that the supply had become polluted and even dangerous over the course of years. Posters were printed, drawing attention to the dangers and advising the public to boil all water before using for domestic purposes. These were displayed in conspicuous positions in these areas immediately prior to their re-opening on the 18th May, 1945.

At the close of the year the Council's staff was actively engaged in the preparation of schemes and the drafting of proposals to improve the position of the district in relation to both water supplies and sewerage.

Water Samples.

During the year, 44 samples of water were submitted for chemical analysis and/or bacteriological examination, mostly from suspected supplies. Of these samples, 35 were reported to be polluted or otherwise unsatisfactory and appropriate action has been taken.

56 houses were connected to main supplies during the year.

Analyses of Public Supplies.

Five reports were received from the statutory water undertakings, all of which satisfied the Analysts in regard to both chemical and bacteriological purity.

A number of complaints were however received during the year regarding the periodical discolouration of the water supplied from one of a Company's mains. Two samples were obtained and submitted to the Analyst, who reported on each occasion that an excess of iron was the only objectionable feature of the samples. The matter was taken up with the Company, who expressed a willingness to do everything possible under the present difficult circumstances to eliminate the excess iron. No further complaints have been received.

Private Estate Water Supplies.

During the late summer and early autumn numerous complaints were received from properties in the Fairlight area which derive their water from private estate supplies.

The matter was discussed with the agents to the Firehills Estate, who own the private water undertaking, when it was admitted that the yield of the waterworks was insufficient to meet their consumers' demands.

With regard to Pett Level, the position was even more serious. The properties there were formerly served from the mains of the Pett Level Water Co., which derived its water from a well at Toot Rock, Pett Level. This well was so polluted that an Order of the Court was sought and obtained by the Council for the closing of the well shortly after the outbreak of war. The Estate having changed hands, the new owner expressed a desire to re-open the well. A sample of the water was obtained, which upon examination was found to be polluted. The matter was discussed with the Regional Water Engineer to the Ministry of Health and the owner advised to consult a specialist firm of water purification engineers.

At the end of the year no progress had been made in this matter.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

For obvious reasons it was not possible during the year under review to carry out any improvements in the sewerage of the district.

The existence of old and obsolete types of sewage disposal works in various parts of the area, has from time to time given rise to many complaints. The needs of the various parishes in this respect are becoming a matter of urgency.

Robertsbridge Sewerage.

In the last Annual Report, it was stated that further investigations were being carried out in connection with the infiltration of surface water into the sewers, and following the receipt of further complaints relative to the flooding of the house drains of certain premises in Station Road, a Sub-Committee was appointed to deal with the matter.

It was thought that the surface water drains in the Bellhurst and Langham Road area were discharging into the Council's foul sewer, but extensive tests revealed that this was not the case. Having eliminated this possibility, further investigations were undertaken with a view to ascertaining whether any considerable volume of roof water was gaining access to the sewer.

When this matter was under consideration in 1943, it was decided by the Public Health Committee that no action be taken except that of raising "fender walls" in the flood areas only, and the provision of a storm water overflow near the Ostrich Hotel. Some 42 properties above flood level were then known to be discharging surface water and/or roof water into the house drains. In the majority of cases no effective steps had been taken to discontinue this practice. In one instance, it was found that as much as 2,000 gallons of roof water could quite easily be discharged into the Council's sewer during the course of 24 hours. Cases such as this could therefore result in 30,000 to 40,000 gallons of rain water gaining access to the sewers within 24 hours, with a consequent increase in the load at the Pumping Station.

It had been contended in the past, that most of the trouble originated from the older sewers in the Brightling Road area, but it is quite clear that a considerable quantity of water emanates from other parts of the village.

Undoubtedly a considerable amount of storm water diversion will have to be undertaken to prevent recurrences of this most objectionable nuisance during times of very heavy rainfall.

With a view to abating the nuisance at certain property in Station Road, two screw down inspection chamber covers were fixed at the Council's expense, since when no further complaints have been received.

Sewer Outfalls.

After a number of years without any attention whatever, it was possible to obtain contracts for the cleaning out of the many sewer ditches in the area. The necessary work has been completed in most instances.

Inspections revealed that the fencing of many of the ditches had become defective, rendering it dangerous for cattle, and a considerable amount of new fencing was provided during the year.

RURAL HOUSING SURVEY.

In accordance with Circular 64/44 of the Ministry of Health, following the recommendation contained in the Hobhouse Report on "Rural Housing", the preliminary survey of all dwellings in the district with a rateable value not exceeding £20 was commenced.

At the 31.12.45, 1218 houses had been inspected in detail and classified according to the standard of fitness as follows:

Category 1	(reasonably fit)	140
2	(minor repairs required)	265
3	(serious sanitary defects but capable of repair)	515
5	(incapable of repair at reasonable cost)	298

Whilst it is very difficult to come to a conclusion based upon the above, it does appear that a very high percentage will fall to be dealt with as being incapable of being rendered fit at a reasonable cost.

HOUSE REQUISITIONING.

In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health, the Council embarked vigorously upon a campaign with a view to securing unoccupied houses in the district for the use of inadequately housed families.

A survey of all unoccupied premises was undertaken, and a special Committee of the Council was set up to deal with the matter. From September to 31.12.45, 54 notices were affixed, resulting in 7 houses being taken over by the Council.

This number would appear to be small compensation for the enormous amount of work which has been necessary, and it must be admitted that the results, as calculated in premises actually taken over, are out of all proportion to the work involved. Further, from the point of view of the Public Health Department, it is somewhat unfortunate that practically the whole-time services of a Sanitary Inspector should be required for this work alone when there are so many urgent public health duties requiring attention.

SALVAGE.

There was again a drop in the quantity of salvage collected during the year. This was probably due to the exhaustion of stocks of waste material and waning public interest, consequent upon the termination of hostilites. Nevertheless the total of 245 tons 13 cwts. collected can be regarded as satisfactory.

There seems little doubt that most types of salvage, particularly paper, rags, bones etc, will be required for some considerable time to come, and whether or not it is a self-supporting scheme, it will remain an obligation upon local authorities.

The following table shows the amount and value of salvage dealt with during the year:-

	t.	c.	q.	lbs.	£.	s.	d.
Waste Paper	80	2	0	0	565	18	7
Ferrous Metal	127	4	2	1	346	7	1
Non-ferrous Metal	3	16	1	7	75	14	5
Bottles and Jars	22	4	1	25	78	19	6
Rags	6	0	0	0	127	8	0
Rubber	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bones	5	2	2	0	25	0	7
Sundries		15	3	20	1	4	1
Cullet		8	0	0	-	-	-
	245	13	2	25	1220	12	3

Total collected since commencement of scheme to 31.12.45 : 2105 tons 14 cwt 1 qr 6lbs.

Cash value of salvage dealt with: £9673 - 2 - 8.

PUBLIC CLEANSING SERVICE.

The year 1945 saw some improvement in the Public Cleansing Service, but notwithstanding, it was still not possible to collect all house refuse monthly. Labour difficulties in the early part of the year, together with the use of two worn-out vehicles, resulted in the Department being inundated with complaints from all parts of the district. Two of the worn-out vehicles were replaced by new vehicles of approved type in March, 1945. This, together with the return of some of the Council's pre-war loading staff, and certain re-adjustments of collecting areas, contributed to the improvement referred to.

I am, however, still far from satisfied with this Service. The public is entitled to a much more frequent collection than that provided, and complaints will continue to be received until this is achieved. The existing drivers and loaders are working well, but the size and character of the district are such as to make it impossible for these men to cover the district more frequently.

NEW DWELLINGS.

During the year new dwellings were erected as under:-

Fairlight	(Over £19 rateable value)	1
Dwellings incomplete at 31.12.45.		13

Infestation Order 1943.

During the year no less than 130 written complaints were received from the public concerning rat infestation. These and many others were dealt with by Mr. Dixon the Council's Rodent Officer.

The Council's refuse tips, sewage disposal works and sewer outfalls received regular treatment. A preliminary survey of all the Council's sewers revealed only two minor infestations, but in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Food , routine tests were arranged. These were not completed during the year. Mr Dixon dealt with 16 major infestations.

The Ministry of Food's formula for poisoning was used in every case and its recommendation as to procedure strictly followed. The poisons used include zinc phosphide, red squill and arsenic.

Councillor Mighall as the Council's representative and Mr. Dixon attended the quarterly meetings of No.3 Workable Area Committee.

Infestation Order, 1943 (Continued).

Total number of premises inspected	572
Number of premises cleared of Rats	184
Number of written complaints	130
Total number of visits	1507

Public Health (Shellfish) Regulations, 1934.

Polluted Mussels at Rye Harbour.

According to information received, mussel beds at Rye Harbour were polluted. These beds extended for a considerable distance on both sides of the River Rother, and the mussels were particularly plentiful near the point where the Council's sewer effluent discharges.

At the request of the Medical Officer of Health, samples of the mussels were obtained and submitted to Dr. L. Barlow, Bacteriologist, who reported that they were unfit for human consumption. On the report of the Medical Officer of Health, an Order prohibiting the sale for human consumption of mussels from the estuary of the River Rother was made in accordance with the Public Health (Shellfish) Regulations, 1934.

THE END.