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BOROUGH OF BRIDGWATER

ANNUAL REPORT

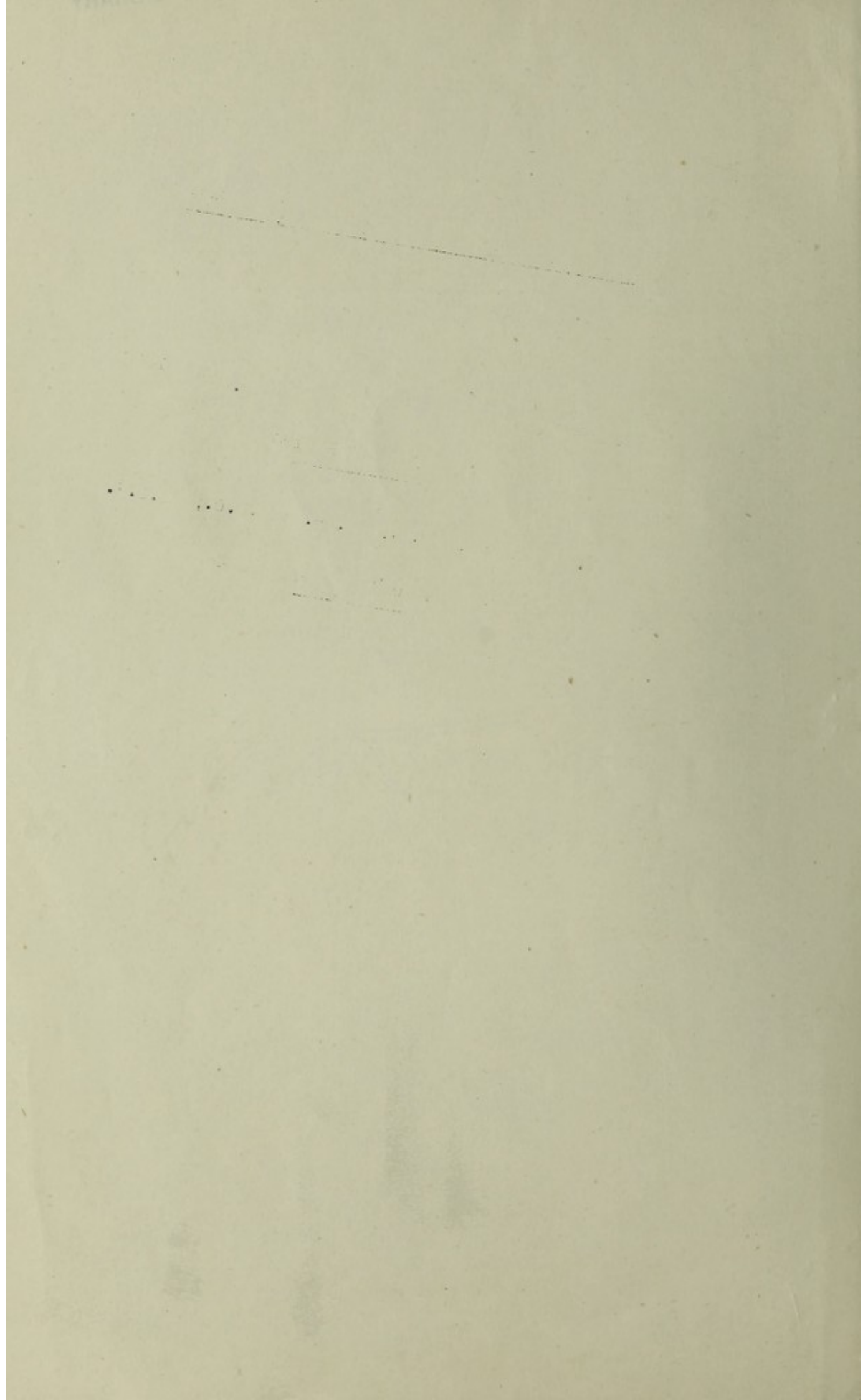
OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1948

R. H. WATSON, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH



BOROUGH OF BRIDGWATER

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1948

Health Department,
Albert Street,
BRIDGWATER.

August, 1949.

TO:

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Bridgwater
Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my Second Annual Report on the health of the Borough. The report is in the same abbreviated form as its predecessors.

The combined office of the Medical Officer of Health of the Bridgwater Borough and Rural District Councils and the Medical Officer of the Mid-Somerset (Bridgwater) Divisional Executive was established at the old School Clinic in Albert Street in July, 1948, and has greatly facilitated the co-ordination of the work of the different Authorities

Apart from a slight decrease in the birth rate, the vital statistics show little change on the previous years' figures.

I wish to thank the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee for their support, Mr. Lean and his assistants for their excellent cooperation, and the Heads of other Departments for their assistance during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

R. H. WATSON.

STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1948

Area (acres)	1,893
Population (Registrar General's estimate)	22,135
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1948.	5,724
Rateable value on 31st December, 1948.	£130,460
Sum represented by a 1d. rate on 31st December, 1948	£ 516

Live Births

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	206	207	413
Illegitimate	<u>16</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>38</u>
	(1) <u>222</u>	<u>229</u>	<u>451</u>

Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population 20.37

Still Births 10
 Still birth rate per 1,000 total (live & still births) 22.17

Death Rate - Total number of deaths 275
 Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 12.42

Puerperal Deaths

	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Rate per 1,000</u> <u>Births</u>
From Puerperal Sepsis	-	-
From other maternal causes	-	-

Infantile Mortality (Deaths of infants under one year of age)

Legitimate	15
Illegitimate	<u>2</u>
	<u>17</u>

(1)

Rate of all infants per 1,000 live births 37.69
 Rate for all legitimate infants per 1,000
 legitimate live births 36.32
 Rate for all illegitimate infants per 1,000
 illegitimate live births 52.63

Other Deaths

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	39
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	-
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	-
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	-

Causes of Death during 1948.

Cause of Death	M	F	Total
All causes	129	145	274
1. Typhoid and Paratyphoid fevers	-	-	-
2. Cerebro-spinal fever	-	-	-
3. Scarlet fever	-	-	-
4. Whooping Cough	-	-	-
5. Diphtheria	-	-	-
6. Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	9	5	14
7. Other forms of tuberculosis	-	-	-
8. Syphilitic diseases	-	1	1
9. Influenza	-	-	-
10. Measles	-	-	-
11. Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	-	-	-
12. Acute Infectious Encephalitis	-	-	-
13. Cancer of buccal cavity, Oesophagus (m) Uterus (f)	2	4	6
14. Cancer of stomach and duodenum	6	7	13
15. Cancer of breast	-	9	9
16. Cancer of all other sites	10	11	21
17. Diabetes	2	-	2
18. Intra-cranial vascular lesions	16	25	41
19. Heart disease	32	45	77
20. Other diseases of the circulatory System	4	4	8
21. Bronchitis	4	1	5
22. Pneumonia	6	6	12
23. Other respiratory diseases	2	-	2
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	3	2	5
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years	-	-	-
26. Appendicitis	-	-	-
27. Other digestive diseases	1	3	4
28. Nephritis	5	4	9
29. Puerperal and post abortion sepsis	-	-	-
30. Other maternal causes	-	-	-
31. Premature birth	3	1	4
32. Congenital malformation, birth injuries etc.	4	2	6
33. Suicide	1	-	1
34. Road Traffic Accidents	2	-	2
35. Other Violent causes	5	6	11
36. All other causes	12	9	21

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the cases of notifiable diseases that occurred in the Borough during 1948. The table is drawn up after making the necessary amendments to the original notifications owing to the corrections in diagnosis by either the practitioners or the Medical Officers at the Isolation Hospitals.

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total No. of Cases</u>
Acute Poliomyelitis	7
Acute Polioencephalitis	2
Scarlet Fever	6
Whooping Cough	40
Measles	8
Acute pneumonia	4
Erysipelas	2
Puerperal Typhemia	1
	<u>70</u>

Apart from the seven cases of Acute Poliomyelitis the incidence of notifiable infectious diseases was negligible. The cases of Acute Poliomyelitis were limited to one small area, and there was considerable intermingling between many of the cases.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The following table shows the number of children who completed a course of immunisation during the year:-

Age under 5 years	Age 5 - 15 years	Total
288	168	456

The method of protection commonly in use is to give each child two immunising injections at the age of one year and a third reinforcing injection early in school life. The reinforcing injection is most important to ensure protection during the early school years, and 356 such injections were given during the year.

In addition to immunisation against diphtheria a prophylactic, which combines immunisation against diphtheria with immunisation against whooping cough, was taken into use, and was made available to parents on request. The combined prophylactic differs from the usual one, in that initially three injections are required instead of two. It produces a very good immunity to diphtheria and, although its value against whooping cough has yet to be accurately assessed, large scale surveys are being carried out by the Ministry of Health, and there is already sufficient evidence to show that it is of undoubted value in preventing or lessening the severity of the disease.

As in previous years the Council, in conjunction with the Bridgwater Rural District Council, carried out a combined publicity campaign to encourage diphtheria prophylaxis.

Tuberculosis

There were 35 cases of respiratory and 10 cases of non-respiratory tuberculosis notified during the year. The figure for respiratory cases is 38 less than the previous year and is to some extent due to the fact that many early cases were brought to light in 1947 as a result of a visit by the Mass. Radiography Unit to the town.

Scabies

Very few cases have come to the notice of the Health Department during the year.

Vermineous Conditions

The Cleansing Station attendances were as follows:-

	Number of Individuals	Attendances
Adults	1	2
Children of school age	282	749
Children under 5 years of age	2	3
Total	285	754

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948

The following particulars indicate the action taken under Part 1 of the Factories Act, 1937

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Insp.	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	68	12	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	72	30	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out workers' premises)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	140	42	-	-

Other provisions in which defect were found (iii)
 is referred to in the report of the

Particulars	No. of cases in which defect were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)					
Overcrowding (S.2)					
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)					
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)					
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)					
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	4	2		3	
(b) unsuitable or defective	2	2		2	
(c) not separate for sexes					
Other offences against the Act (Net including offences relating to Outwork)	1		1		
TOTAL	7	4	1	5	

Nature of Work	No. of out-workers in Aug. list required by Sect.110(1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council.	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Prosecutions
Wearing apparel (making)	70	1			

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. Water Supply

Regular bacteriological examinations have been made of both the raw water and the water going into supply.

Results obtained are as follows:-

Ashford Reservoir

(a) Untreated water: Five samples were examined, all of which showed evidence of contamination

(b) Water after treatment: Twelve samples were examined, and all but two gave excellent results.

Durloign Reservoir

(a) Untreated water: Five samples were examined and all showed evidence of contamination

(b) Water after treatment: Ten samples were taken and in all cases excellent results were obtained.

Arrangements have been made to ensure that all persons working in connection with the water supply are medically examined before commencing their duties. All possible steps are taken to exclude carriers of the enteric group of fevers.

Drainage and Sewerage.

No new works have been carried out during the year.

Swimming Baths.

Supervision has been maintained over the condition of the water in the swimming baths. Samples of the water from both baths have been submitted for bacteriological examination and have given only fair results.

The existing method of sterilisation is extremely crude and cannot be compared with the filtration and chlorination plants which exist in modern swimming baths.

Housing.

The following table shows the progress made during the year:-

	Houses erected during year		Houses in course of erection		Conversion to flats or dwellings
	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Temp.	
Local Authority	182	-	145	-	4
Private Enterprise	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	182	-	145	-	4

Houses required:-

(a) To replace those unfit 320
(b) To abate overcrowding 50
(c) Where conditions are unsatisfactory, e.g. two families living in same house, but not included in (a) or (b) .. -

Total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of the year 1,403

5. Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Details of this work are shown in the Chief Sanitary Inspector's report.

TO: (7)
 The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Bridgwater.
 Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1948. This report is still of necessity very curtailed.

Complaints

During the year 150 complaints were received and dealt with under the Public Health or Housing Acts, and in addition there were 91 complaints of rat infestation.

In 33 cases Statutory Notices were served but in no instance was it necessary to take legal proceedings.

CUA, 1 Housing.. ...

231 houses were inspected for the purpose of having housing defects remedied, whilst 24 houses were systematically inspected under the Housing Regulations. Demolition Orders were made in respect of 18 of these houses. Undertakings not to use for human habitation were accepted in 3 cases.

It is still difficult to obtain adequate repairs to existing houses although more labour and materials are available. The high cost of repairs is the main drawback and in many cases owners of low rented houses are receiving no return on their capital outlay. The schedule at the end of the report shows, however, that there was a considerable increase in the amount of repairs carried out to houses during the year.

Overcrowding.

9 cases of overcrowding were abated during the year as compared with 11 during 1947. 9 new cases were investigated and the total number of known cases remaining unabated at the end of the year was 10. No systematic inspections were carried out during the year, however, and the number of actual cases must be far in excess of the number known.

Vermineous Premises.

The number of houses found to be vermineous was 12, a slight increase on the figure for 1947.

CUA, 1 Meat and Foods. ...

Under the Government Scheme, slaughtering is carried out at Weston-super-Mare, and therefore the only meat inspection is that of pigs for home consumption, casualties and the inspection of meat at the butchers' shops.

A large quantity of other foods have been condemned and in this connection over 280 visits have been paid to grocers and similar shops. The following is a list of food condemned:-

Beef	1 cwt. 32 lbs.
Wet Fish	7 cwt.
Canned Fish	398 Tins
Canned Meat	185 Tins
Canned Fruit	260 Tins
Canned Vegetables	452 Tins
Canned Soup	28 Tins

Canned Milk	314	Tins
Fish and Meat Paste	12	Jars
Pickles and Sauces	329	Jars
Bacon	4	cwt.
Tea	91	lbs.
Cheese	62	lbs.
Jam	1	cwt. 24 lbs.
Dried Fruit	1	cwt.
Fresh Fruit	106	lbs.
Sugar	28	lbs.
Sweets and Chocolate	50 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.
Crumpets	163	doz.
Apricot Pulp	5	cwt.
Cereal	5	cwt. 50 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.
Milk Powder	1	cwt. 7 lbs.
Other Foods	2	cwt. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.

The number of persons retailing milk in the Borough is now 40, whilst there are 36 dairies, cowsheds and milkshops. This is a considerable decrease on the pre-war figures.

The quantity of Graded milk sold in the Borough is still increasing, there being 6 retailers selling Tuberculin Tested milk and 1 selling Pasteurised milk.

Ice-cream.

The number of premises registered for the manufacture or sale of ice-cream is as follows:-

Registered for manufacture and sale	13
Registered for sale only	<u>22</u>
Total	<u>35</u>

The above figures are, however, somewhat misleading as in 8 cases the manufacture or sale of ice-cream has not been resumed since the restrictions on the sale of ice-cream were removed.

52 samples of ice-cream were submitted for bacteriological examination during the year and these were provisional graded as follows:-

Grade 1 10, Grade 2 17, Grade 3 12 and Grade 4 13.

These results are a considerable improvement on those obtained in 1947 but there are still far too many graded in classes 3 and 4. It must be remembered that these classifications are only provisional and in my opinion the methods of sampling and testing will have to be improved before the standard can be made legal.

Rats and Mice Destruction Act.

The systematic destruction of rats and mice is carried out satisfactorily. There are two fully trained Rodent Operators on the staff and the system of block control is being operated.

Two maintenance treatments of the sewers were carried out with excellent results.

Public Relations

Several requests were received during the year for talks and lectures to be given to various organisations in the Borough. All these requests were acceded to and it was very encouraging to note the interest shown and the questions asked at these meetings.

SUMMARY

Inspections made during the year

General Sanitation

Water Supply	38
Drainage	188
Common Lodging Houses	2
Houses let in lodgings	2
Factories	42
Rats and Mice	42
Shops	112
Swimming Baths	64
Public Conveniences	17
Smoke	19
Miscellaneous	101

Housing

Houses inspected under Public Health Acts	231
Visits paid to the above houses	724
Houses inspected under Housing Acts	24
Visits paid to the above houses	38
Houses inspected in connection with overcrowding	187
Visits paid to the above houses	200
Verminous premises inspected	12
Visits paid to the above premises	16
Miscellaneous	30

Infectious Diseases

Inquiries in cases of Infectious Diseases	18
Visits re disinfection	2
Miscellaneous	1

Meat and Food Inspection

Visits to Slaughterhouses	57
Visits to Shops and stalls	5
Visits to other premises for meat inspection	7
Visits to Butchers	24
Visits to Fishmongers and Poulterers	11
Visits to Grocers	128
Visits to Greengrocers and Fruiterers	7
Visits to Confectioners	2
Visits to Bakehouses	19
Visits to Fried Fish Shops	14
Visits to Cowsheds	12
Visits to Dairies and Milkshops	26
Visits to Ice Cream premises	81
Visits to Restaurants	11
Visits to Food Preparing premises	24
Miscellaneous	14

Explosives

Visits in connection with explosives	39
Visits in connection with Petroleum Spirit	6

Work Done.

Complaints investigated	150
Rat complaints investigated	91
Choked Drains and sewers cleared	35
Choked wastepipes cleared	1
Drains relaid	1
Drains or sewers repaired	11
Inspection chambers provided	2
Defective water closets repaired	18
Defective roofs repaired	47
Defective windows repaired	48
Additional windows or ventilators provided	3
Defective eavesgutters and downpipes repaired	14
Defective walls repaired	21
Defective plastering repaired	52
Defective firegrates and ranges repaired	16
Defective coppers repaired	10
Defective doors repaired	14
Defective chimneys repaired	8
Defective flushing cisterns repaired or renewed	7
Defective ceilings repaired	43
Defective staircases repaired	2
Defective handrails to staircases repaired	1
Defective scullery troughs repaired or renewed	8
Defective scullery wastepipes repaired	2
Defective floors repaired	17
Defective yard paving repaired	3
Defective washhouses repaired	2
Dampness remedied	8
Ceilings whitened	25
Rooms distempered or papered	26
Foul accumulations removed	5
Overcrowding abated	9
Vermineous premises cleansed	13
Premises disinfected from rats or mice	61
Premises cleansed	1
Ditches cleared or filled in	1
Other nuisances abated	1

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

R. K. LEAN,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

