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Contributors

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PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices,
PORTLAND.

20th December, 1945.

Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report for the year 1944 on the health and sanitary circumstances of the area. The report is prepared in accordance with Ministry of Health Circular No. 49/1945 of 19th March, 1945.

Although the population was practically the same as in 1942 (6776 as compared with 6641), the number of births was substantially increased (147 as compared with 89). The number of deaths increased from 77 to 84.

The report includes extracts from the vital statistics for the year. With regard to the birth rate and various death rates it should be borne in mind that the population is a small one and that therefore the rates are not statistically significant, and have only a limited value.

The incidence of infectious disease was very low, and there was no outbreak of any particular disease. Dysentery appeared in the Island during the summer months, this was probably due to the large influx of troops and to the greatly increased fly population during the year.

Periodic examination of the water supply, both at the source and on supply has been continued. Chlorination was maintained throughout the year.

Your Sanitary Inspector has continued to give careful and close attention to all matters affecting the housing of the population and to all other matters in connection with his duty. He has also continued to take part in the inspection of meat at the Dorchester slaughter houses.

Milk sampling has also been continued and visits to cowsheds and dairies have been made frequently by your Sanitary Inspector and myself.

I wish to thank the members of the Council for their kindness and consideration during the year, and my fellow officials for their never-failing courtesy and help.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant.

Medical Officer of Health.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for 1944.

Estimated population, middle of 1944

6,776.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
<u>Live Births</u>	147	73	74	) Birth rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population = 21.9
Legitimate	138	69	69	
Illegitimate	9	4	5	
<u>Still Births</u> (all legitimate)	4	2	2	Rate per 1,000 total births = 26.4

Total Deaths 1944

(Registrar-General's Official Returns)

All Causes. 84.

Males 41

Females 43.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Total	Male	Female
Cancer	10	6	4
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	7	3	4
Heart Disease	24	10	14
Other diseases of circulatory system	1	0	1
Bronchitis	5	3	2
Pneumonia	3	2	1
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	2	2	0
Appendicitis	1	0	1
Other digestive disease	2	2	0
Nephritis	12	6	6
Puerperal causes	1	0	1
Premature birth	3	1	2
Congenital malformation	1	1	0
Road traffic accident	1	0	1
Other violent causes	2	1	1
All other causes	9	4	5
TOTAL	84	41	43

Crude death rate per 1,000 population 12.3

Infant mortality rate
(number of children dying at ages
under 1 year per 1,000 births in
the year) 40.8

Maternal Mortality rate per 1,000 total
births. 6.6

The birth rate, death rate, and infant mortality rate correspond closely with those for the 148 Smaller Towns of England and Wales, the figures being -

	Death rate.	Birth rate.	Infant mortality rate.
Smaller Towns	12.4	21.9	44
Portland	12.3	20.9	40.8

The corresponding rates for Portland for 1938 (the last year for which the annual report gave these figures), was

Death rate	8
Birth rate	11.4
Infant mortality rate	78.6

Of the six infants dying in the year at ages under 1 year, 4 were due to premature birth or congenital malformation.

Staff. There was no change in the staff of the Health Department during the year. Miss M. R. Truscott, County Council Health Visitor for Portland, continued her excellent work throughout the year, and her close co-operation with the Health Department has been most helpful.

Infectious Diseases notified during 1944.

Scarlet Fever	15
Pneumonia	5
Erysipelas	4
Measles	8
Whooping Cough	8
Pulmonary tuberculosis	9
Non-pulmonary tuberculosis	3
Scabies	39
Dysentery (Sonne)	8

General Provision of Health Services.

The general health services were maintained throughout the year, and were substantially the same as those outlined in the 1938 report. The sight-testing centre closed in 1941. The Orthopaedic Clinic was held at the First Aid Post, High Street, throughout the year. A clinic for the treatment of minor ailments in children of school age was held daily both in the Tophill and Underhill districts. The clinic was run by the nurse in charge of the First Aid Post, and did very valuable work in the treatment of impetigo and other minor ailments of children.

Water Supply. The water supply for the island is brought from bore-holes at Friar Waddon, in the Upwey Valley. The crude water is usually satisfactory from a bacteriological point of view, but shows occasional contamination, which is sometimes heavy. During the year, six samples were taken from the borehole, before chlorination. Of these, five were satisfactory, and one unsatisfactory. Five samples from supply, i.e. after chlorination, during the same period were uniformly satisfactory. One chemical analysis for the presence of lead (undertaken at the request of the R.A.F.) showed lead not exceeding 0.1 part per million.

As alternative sources in the event of emergency, three springs on the island were sampled. Two gave very unsatisfactory results, the third was reported as satisfactory. Arrangements were made by the Engineer and Surveyor to chlorinate these and other alternative sources of supply, should they be required. Fortunately the emergency did not arise, and the public supply was satisfactory in quality and quantity throughout the year.

Chemical analysis, undertaken in 1942, gave the following result.

Free ammonia	0.0001
Alluminoid ammonia	0.0003
Oxygen absorbed at 37°C in 15 mins.	0.0163
" " " " " 4 hrs.	0.0491

Nitrites	nil
Nitric hydrogen in Nitrates	0.3
Hardness Temporary	21.5
" Permanent	2.0
" Total	23.5
Chlorine as Chlorides	2.5
Total solids, dried at 180°C	28.0
Free Chlorine	nil
Free carbonic acid	nil
Metals (Lead, Zinc, Copper, Iron)	nil
P.H. reaction	7.3

When weather conditions were suitable, attempts were made, by coloration methods, to trace the source of the occasional contamination referred to above. The results were negative, but this is not regarded as conclusive, in view of uncertainty as to the total amount of water to be coloured, and experiments are being continued.

Milk. Samples of milk were taken periodically from all producers on the island, and visits were made to the cowsheds and dairies as necessary, in collaboration with your Sanitary Inspector. There are five milk producers on the island, one of whom produces accredited milk, the remainder producing undesignated milk. In general, it may be said that, with one exception, all milk produced on the island is of a good standard of cleanliness, and this reflects very creditably on the past and present work of your Sanitary Inspector in this connection. About 2/3 of the milk consumed on the island is produced on the mainland. 13 milk samples were taken during the year.

Diphtheria Immunisation. This work was continued throughout the year at the two Child Welfare Centres. On two occasions, a round of those who could not come to the Centre was made by car, and the children immunised in their homes. During the year 82 children under 5 years of age, and 9 children between the ages of 5 and 15, completed the full course of immunisation. At the end of the year it was estimated that 84.3% of all children under 5, and 89% of all between 5 and 15 were immunised.

Whooping Cough Immunisation. This was continued throughout the year, and 79 children, mainly between the ages of 6 months and 1 year, completed the course of injections. Among children notified as suffering from whooping cough during the year, two had previously been immunised. In both cases, the attack was a mild one.

Scabies & Verminous Conditions. These conditions were treated at the Cleansing Station attached to the First Aid Post, by the whole-time staff of the Post. In the case of scabies, all family contacts, whether infected or not, were treated. In the case of head infestation, all contacts were examined and when necessary (as it usually was), treated. As a rule, explanation of the mechanism of spread, and of the length of the scabies incubation period were sufficient to persuade the contacts to submit to treatment. In a few cases, notices served under the Scabies Order, 1941, were required to compel inspection and treatment. The number of cases of scabies notified was 39, the total number of cases and contacts treated during the year was 208. 107 cases of head infestation were dealt with.

SUMMARY of SANITARY INSPECTOR'S VISITS DURING YEAR 1944.

Visits in connection with -

Public Health & Housing Defects ...	...	...	...	...	...	88.
Number of Nuisance Visits ...	...	...	...	...	...	460.
Interviews with Owners, Builders, etc. ..	...	...	...	...	...	78.
Complaints attended to .	...	...	...	...	...	105.
Number of Notices Sent .	...	...	...	...	...	86.
Number of Notices complied with ...	...	...	...	...	...	80.
Visits to Meat & Food Shops..	...	...	...	...	...	202.
Visits to Fish & Fish Frying Shops.	...	...	...	...	...	39.
Visits to Bakehouses ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	38.
Visits to Factories ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	11.
Visits to Slaughterhouse (At Dorchester).	...	...	...	...	...	60.
Visits in connection with Rats Destruction	...	...	...	...	...	122.
Visits in connection with Infectious Disease...	...	...	...	...	...	62.
Premises Disinfected, Infectious Disease.	...	...	...	...	...	25.
Premises in connection with Infestations.	...	...	...	...	...	56.
Premises Disinfested...	...	...	...	...	...	40.
Premises Cleansed ....	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Accumulations removed..	...	...	...	...	...	8.
Visits to Cowsheds & Dairies.	...	...	...	...	...	68.
Drain Tests carried out	...	...	...	...	...	17.
Choked Drains unstopped	...	...	...	...	...	193.
