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Contributors

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B O R O U G H O F P O N T E F R A C T

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1944.



To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Pontefract.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present for your information and consideration an Interim Report on the Health of the Borough during the year 1944. It is my twenty-third Annual Report; and on account of the abnormal circumstances prevailing, it has been curtailed in accordance with the requirements of the Minister of Health.

The Report is confined to essential matters and, as in my Reports of 1939 to 1943, much of the statistical information normally given has been omitted. A Report will be made later dealing fully with the period from the beginning of 1939 to the end of the last complete year.

P A R T O N E

S T A T I S T I C S A N D S O C I A L C O N D I T I O N S

Area of the Borough: 4,865 acres

Registrar-General's estimate of civilian population: 19,730

Number of Inhabited Houses (end of 1944) according to
Rate Books: 5,557

Rateable Value: £123,632

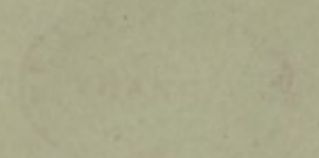
Sum represented by penny rate: £499

Vital Statistics.

Live Births:	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ..	215	211	426
Illegitimate ..	23	21	44
Total ..	238	232	470

Birth rate per 1,000 estimated civilian population: 23.8
(Rate for England and Wales: 17.6)

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Stillbirths:	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ..	8	1	9
Illegitimate ..	0	0	0
Total ..	8	1	9

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births: 18.8
 Rate per 1,000 estimated civilian population: .45
 (Rate for England and Wales: .50)

Deaths:	Male	Female	Total
All age groups	115	105	220
Infants under 1 year:			
Legitimate	12	5	17
Illegitimate	1	0	1
Total	13	5	18
Maternal deaths		0	

Death Rates:

General rate per 1,000 population: 11.2
 All infants per 1,000 live births: 38
 Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births: 36
 Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births: 23
 Maternal deaths per 1,000 live and still births: 0
 (Rate for England and Wales: 1.93)

The principal causes of death are set out in the following table:

Table I.

Causes of death	Male	Female	Total
Cerebro-spinal fever	1	0	1
Diphtheria	0	1	1
Tuberculosis, pulmonary	8	3	11
Tuberculosis, non-pulmonary	0	1	1
Syphilitic diseases	3	0	3
Measles	0	1	1
Cancer	16	31	47
Diabetes	1	0	1
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	14	10	24
Heart disease	31	32	63
Other circulatory diseases	1	2	3
Bronchitis	10	3	13
Pneumonia	7	3	10
Other respiratory diseases	1	0	1
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1	0	1
Appendicitis	1	0	1
Other digestive diseases	0	2	2
Nephritis	0	1	1
Premature birth	5	1	6
Congenital causes, etc.	2	4	6
Suicide	1	0	1
Road traffic accidents	1	1	2
Other violent causes	4	1	5
All other causes	7	8	15
Totals	115	105	220

The number of deaths registered during the year was 220, 24 less than in the previous year: this yields a death rate of 11.2 per thousand of the estimated civilian population, a reduction of 1.0 on the figure for 1943. The rate for England and Wales is 11.6. The mean local rate for the decade 1934-44 is 12.2, and that for the previous decade 13.3.

Disease of the heart again provides the highest death rate for individual causes, 63 deaths having been attributed to such disease. Cancer was reported as the cause of death in 47 cases, an increase of 21 on the previous year. The average age at death was 67 years. It is true that 1943 was a rather low year for cancer, only 26 deaths being registered; but the present figure is definitely high, and represents 21% of deaths from all causes. The corresponding percentage for the preceding decade was a little under 13.

The third highest individual cause of death was the group of diseases classified under the heading of intracranial vascular lesions, which includes cerebral haemorrhage, thrombosis, and allied conditions. 24 deaths were recorded, a decrease of 10 on the previous year's total.

Diseases of the respiratory system (excluding tuberculosis) caused death in 24 cases, 19 less than in 1943; and deaths due to diseases of the digestive system declined to 4, 9 less than were recorded in the previous year. It is interesting to note that the number of deaths from digestive disease during the war years is rather less than the number returned in the five years immediately preceding the war.

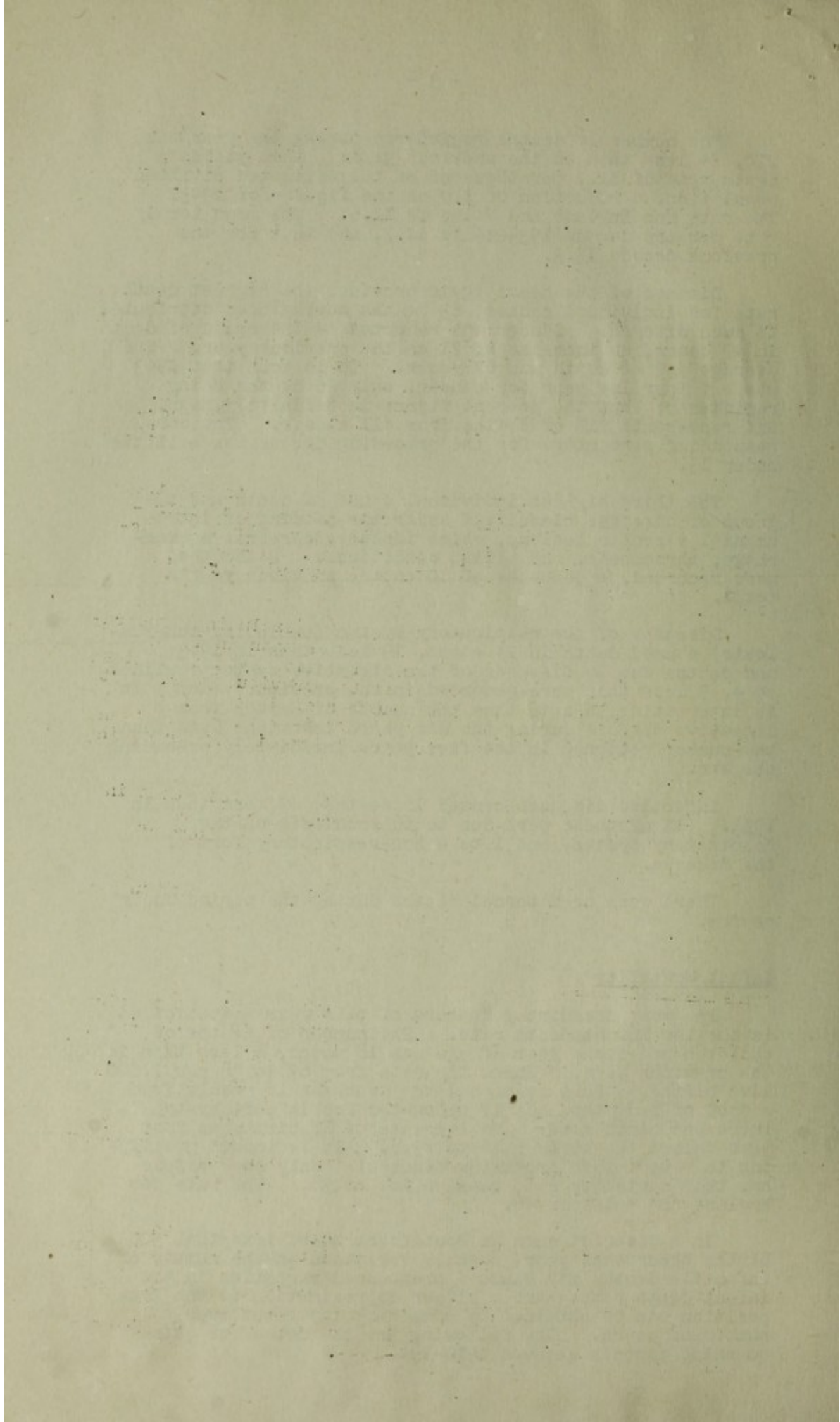
Infective diseases caused 18 deaths; 2 less than in 1943. 11 of these were due to tuberculosis of the respiratory system, and 1 to a non-respiratory form of the disease.

There were no maternal deaths during the period under review.

Infant Mortality

The most noteworthy feature of this year's statistics is the low infant death rate. The number of deaths of children under one year of age was 18 which, 8 less than in the previous year, reduces the rate from 67 to 38 per 1,000 live births. This seems a large decrease to result from a drop of 8 deaths, but is accounted for in part by the increased birth rate: an increase of 81 births on last year raised the birth rate to 23.8. It is indeed gratifying to report such promising figures: only once before has this mortality rate been as low as 38. The rate for England and Wales is 46.

In a district such as Pontefract where less than 500 births occur each year, a small variation in the number of infantile deaths may cause a pronounced variation in the infant death rate; and a closer approximation to the true position can be obtained by comparing the rates over a number of years. The following are the rates for quinquennial periods between 1920-1944.



<u>Period</u>	<u>Infant Mortality Rate</u>
1920-4	113
1925-9	90
1930-4	70
1935-9	59
1940-4	61

The slight rise in the last quinquennial period was due to a big increase in 1940 and in 1941, when the rate rose to 79. During these two years there were 19 infantile deaths attributed to Pneumonia.

The following table gives the causes of infant deaths classified into age-groups.

Table II

Causes of death	Age groups							All ages under 1 year			
	Under 1 week	1 and under 2 weeks	2 and under 3 weeks	3 and under 4 weeks	1 and under 3 months	3 and under 6 months	6 and under 9 months	9 and under 12 months	Males	Females	Totals
Congenital syphilis						1			1		1
Pneumonia						3			4		4
Infective enteritis						1	1		1	1	2
Spina bifida		2			1				2	1	3
Inanition	1								1		1
Prematurity	5	1							5	1	6
Asphyxia	1								1	1	2
Atelectasis	1									1	1
Totals	8	3			1	5	1		14	4	18

P A R T T W O

M A T E R N I T Y A N D C H I L D W E L F A R E

Health Visiting

Two Health Visitors are employed by the Council, the equivalent of whole-time services devoted by them to health visiting and attendance at the Child Welfare Centre being 1½. No health visiting is done by voluntary agencies. The numbers of visits paid by Health Visitors were as follows:-

	<u>First Visits</u>	<u>Total Visits</u>
To expectant mothers	157	331
To children under 1 year	460	3,586
To children of 1 to 5 years		6,699

The Welfare Centre

The premises at Headlands Road, centre of all Maternity and Child Welfare activities are, of course, quite inadequate for the increasing numbers of people who attend the various clinics. This is a matter which has already been considered by you, and I hope it will be given due priority.

Child Welfare Clinics were held weekly, and attendances were as follows:-

Total number of children under five years of age who first attended at the Centre during the year, and who, on the date of their first attendance were:-

Under 1 year of age	369	
Over 1 year of age	27	
Total	396,	an increase of 76 on last year.

Total number of children under five years of age who attended at the Centre during the year, and who, at the end of the year were:-

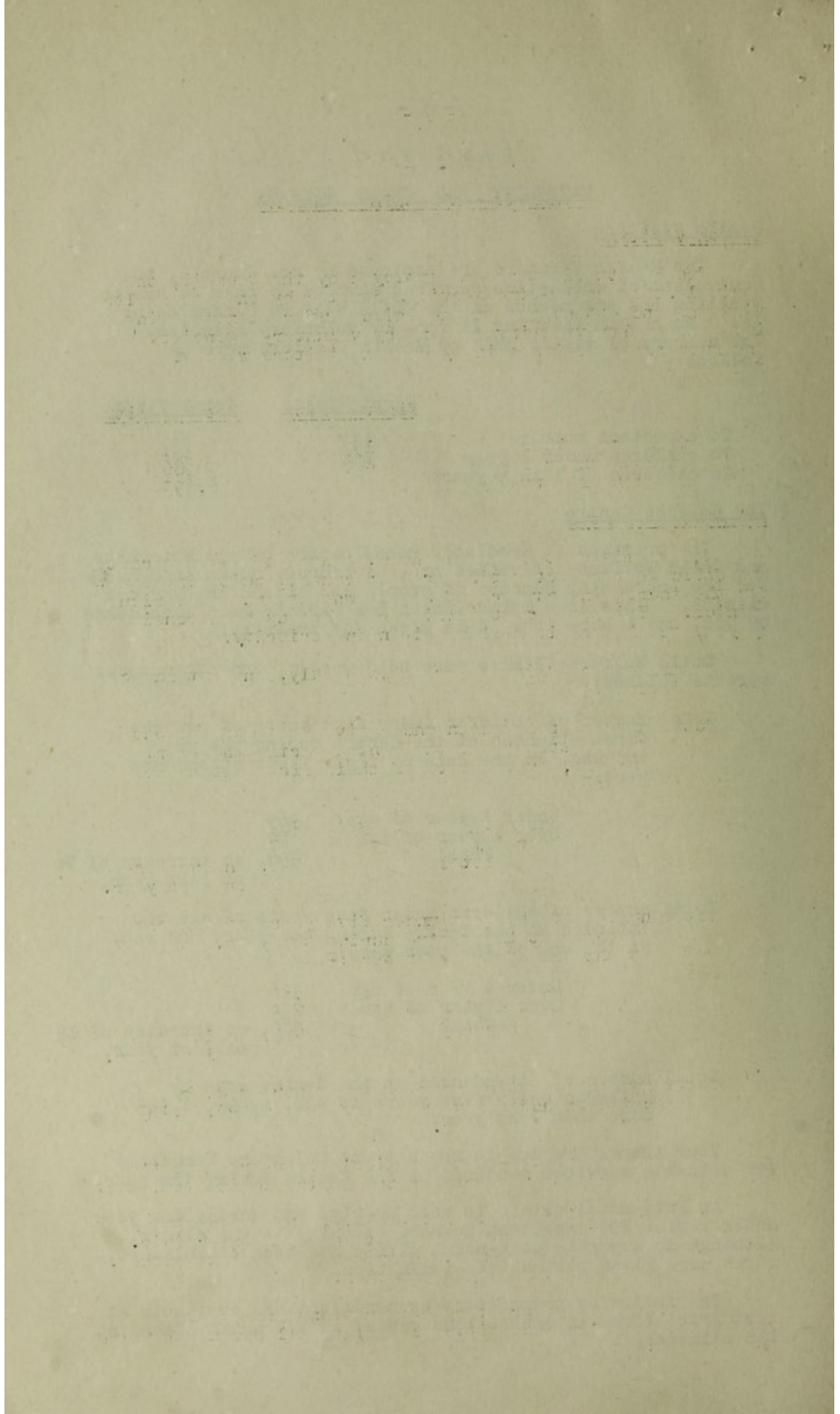
Under 1 year of age	316	
Over 1 year of age	254	
Total	570,	an increase of 19 on last year.

Total number of attendances at the Centre made by children under five years of age, 6,699, 1,403 more than last year.

Your thanks are due to the Ladies' Voluntary Committee for valuable services rendered at the Centre during the year.

An Ante-natal clinic is held weekly, and during the year under review 299 expectant mothers attended at the clinic. Although no separate post-natal clinic has been established, cases were given post-natal examination.

The following proprietary preparations are available at cost price (free in necessitous cases) to all women attending the clinics:-



Ostermilk (Nos. 1 and 2)	Glucodin
Humanised Trufood	Bemax
Lactogol	Virol
Ovaltine	Virolax

The following are distributed free of charge:-

I. C. D. tablets
Ferrous Sulphate tablets
Viteolin tablets

Maternity

During the year, 27 women were sent to the Maternity Hospital at Leeds, 5 to Hazlewood Castle Emergency Maternity Home, 17 to Walton Hall Emergency Maternity Home and 1 to Staincliffe County Hospital Dewsbury; but in the great majority of normal cases domiciliary arrangements were made. The County Council is the Local Supervising Authority under the Midwives Acts, and details of births notified by the local midwives and others are forwarded weekly to the County Authority.

Care of Premature Infants

Upon receipt in March of Ministry of Health Circular 20/44 special consideration was given to the question of the care of the premature infant. Midwives and doctors are now required to notify the weight of a baby at birth, when this is 5½ lbs. or less. The facilities of your Maternity and Child Welfare Services can then be made available in such instances sooner than is normally the case. When necessary, premature babies are taken by ambulance to the Leeds Maternity Hospital where specialised treatment is available.

WAR NURSERIES

Two war-nurseries continued to operate throughout the year, Baghill Day Nursery, and Beechwood Residential Nursery.

Baghill

6,290 attendances were made by children at the Nursery, which represents a little under 50% of the total accommodation provided. The average number of children on the register was 29, of which 13 were under 2 years of age. The average number of women released for full-time work was 25.

Beechwood

The Nursery provided accommodation for 26 children although by the time of writing this report the number had been reduced to 22.

The average number of children on the register was 22, of which 7 were under 2 years of age; the average attendance was 19 (6, under 2; 13 over). The average number of women released for full-time work was 16.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
5800 S. UNIVERSITY AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637

TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
DATE: [illegible]

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P A R T T H R E E

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER

INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

303 cases of disease were notified during 1944, a decrease of 661 on the previous year's figure which was very high due to the 440 cases of measles occurring in that year. Fortunately, only 8 cases of measles were notified during the period under review. This, together with considerable reductions in the figures for chickenpox and whooping cough is mainly responsible for the large decrease; although figures for scarlet fever, diphtheria, pneumonia, puerperal pyrexia, ophthalmia neonatorum, erysipelas and tuberculosis also show lower incidence. Cerebro-spinal fever only has increased; 5 cases, as against two in the previous year.

The reduced incidence of scarlet fever and diphtheria is gratifying: the former dropped from 60 to 36, and 20 cases of diphtheria is a decrease of 32 cases on the 1943 figure. Prompt isolation of cases; investigations into home conditions and possible sources of infection; recording of contacts and exclusion of children from school and certain types of workers from work places, all helped to control the spread of infection.

In the case of diphtheria, however, medical science has provided a means of protection of which, strangely enough, many parents fail to take advantage: immunisation could be the complete answer to diphtheria if every child in the Borough received this protective treatment.

At the beginning of the year it was estimated that 39.1% of children under five years, and 78.7% of children between five and fifteen years were immunised. During the year 375 children received protective treatment, 303 of these being under five years of age. At the close of the year the above-mentioned percentages had risen to 42.1 and 79.3 respectively. As children under 1 year are not generally immunised, 42.1% of all the under fives represents 53% of those available for treatment. There was 1 death from diphtheria: the child had not been immunised.

When comparing the percentages in the different age-groups, it must be remembered that the percentage of school children immunised is contributed to annually by under fives graduating into the 5-15 years group.

Every endeavour is made to increase the percentage of children immunised, and particular attention has been directed during the past year to the under fives. There is need for constant publicity, and by means of posters, press notices, leaflets, etc., the claims of immunisation are kept constantly before the public. Each child in the Borough, on attaining the age of 1 year, receives a birthday card from the Department, which includes a reminder to the mother that it is time for the child to be immunised. These efforts will be maintained.

1914

1915

1916

1917

The following table gives particulars of the incidence of notifiable diseases (other than Tuberculosis) among the civilian population.

Table III

Diseases	Total notified cases	Cases admitted to hospital	Total deaths
Scarlet fever	36	36	0
Diphtheria	20	20	1
Pneumonia	27	0	3
Puerperal pyrexia	4	3	0
Cerebro-spinal fever	5	5	1
Ophthalmia neonatorum	2	0	0
Erysipelas	13	0	0
Chickenpox	113	0	0
Measles	8	0	1
Whooping cough	44	0	0

TUBERCULOSIS

In the following table new cases and mortality are classified.

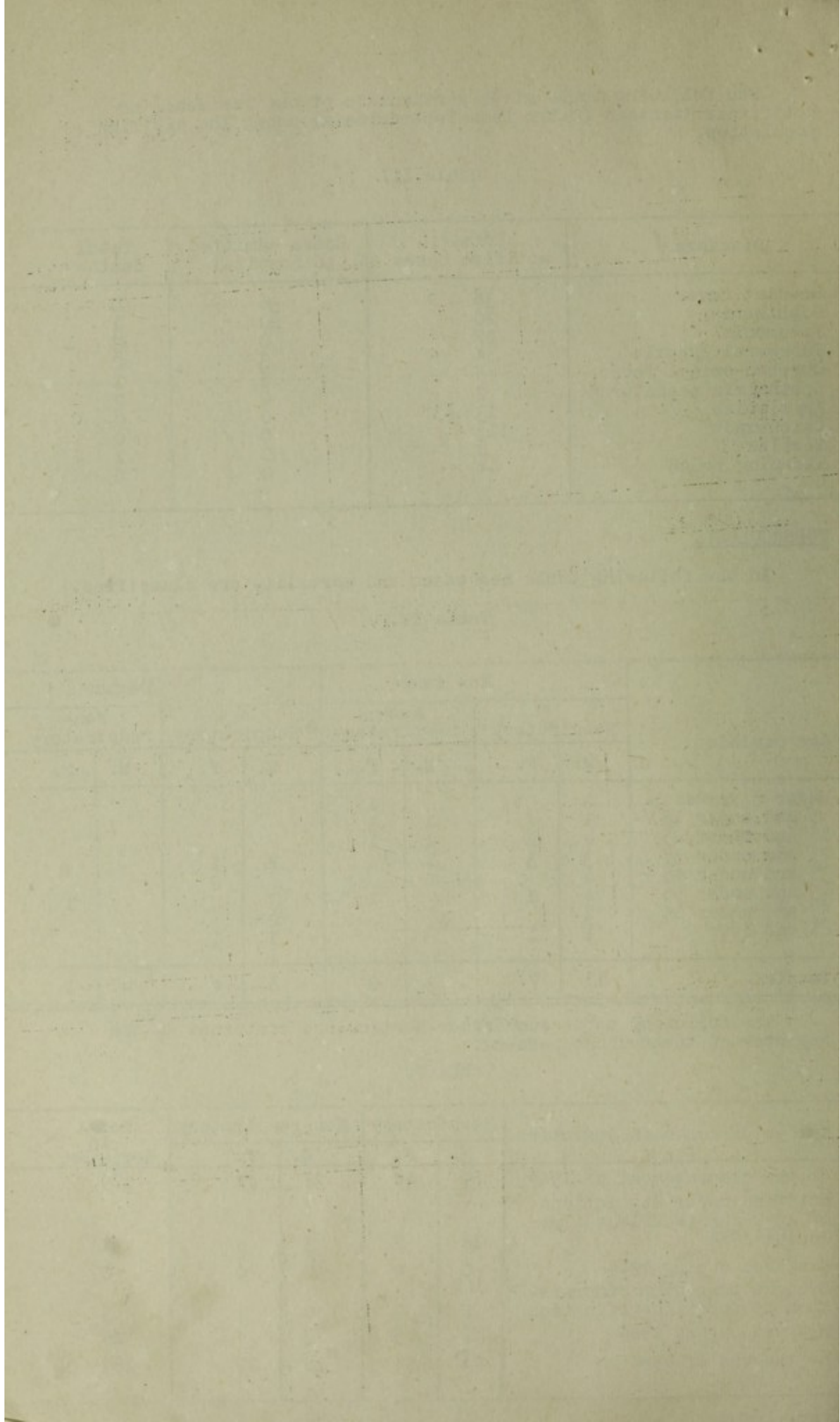
Table IV.

Age periods	New cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Respiratory		Non-respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 5 years	2			1				
5 and under 15	1		1	3				
15 and under 25	2	2	1	1				
25 and under 35	3	3	1		2	1		
35 and under 45	2					2		
45 and under 55	4	1		1	3			1
55 and under 65	3				2			
65 and over	1	1			1	1		
Totals	18	7	3	6	8	4	-	1

The following table summarises particulars contained in the register of tuberculous persons.

Table V.

Number of cases in Register	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Total in Register
	M.	F.	M.	F.	
At the commencement of 1944	65	49	38	27	179
Notified under Regulations of 1930 for the first time during 1944	16	7	3	5	31
Restored during 1944	0	0	0	0	0
Brought to notice otherwise than by formal notification	2	0	0	1	3
Removed during 1944	12	5	3	4	24
At the end of 1944	71	51	38	29	189



The reasons for removal of cases from the register are given in the following table.

Table VI.

Entries relating to -	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Totals
	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Persons who have died	8	4	0	1	13
Persons certified by the medical practitioner in attendance to have recovered	3	0	2	2	7
Persons who have ceased to reside permanently in the district	1	1	1	1	4
Totals	12	5	3	4	24

Scabies

Facilities for the out-patient treatment of scabies are provided at the School Clinic, Headlands Road, and at the Baghill Isolation Hospital. This provision has proved adequate for dealing with all cases occurring among women and children. Adult males are normally advised to have domiciliary treatment; but where such is likely to prove inadequate, the patient is admitted to a County Institution in accordance with an arrangement made with the County Council.

The Annual Report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector dealing with Sanitary Circumstances, Housing, and the Inspection and Supervision of Food is submitted along with this Report.

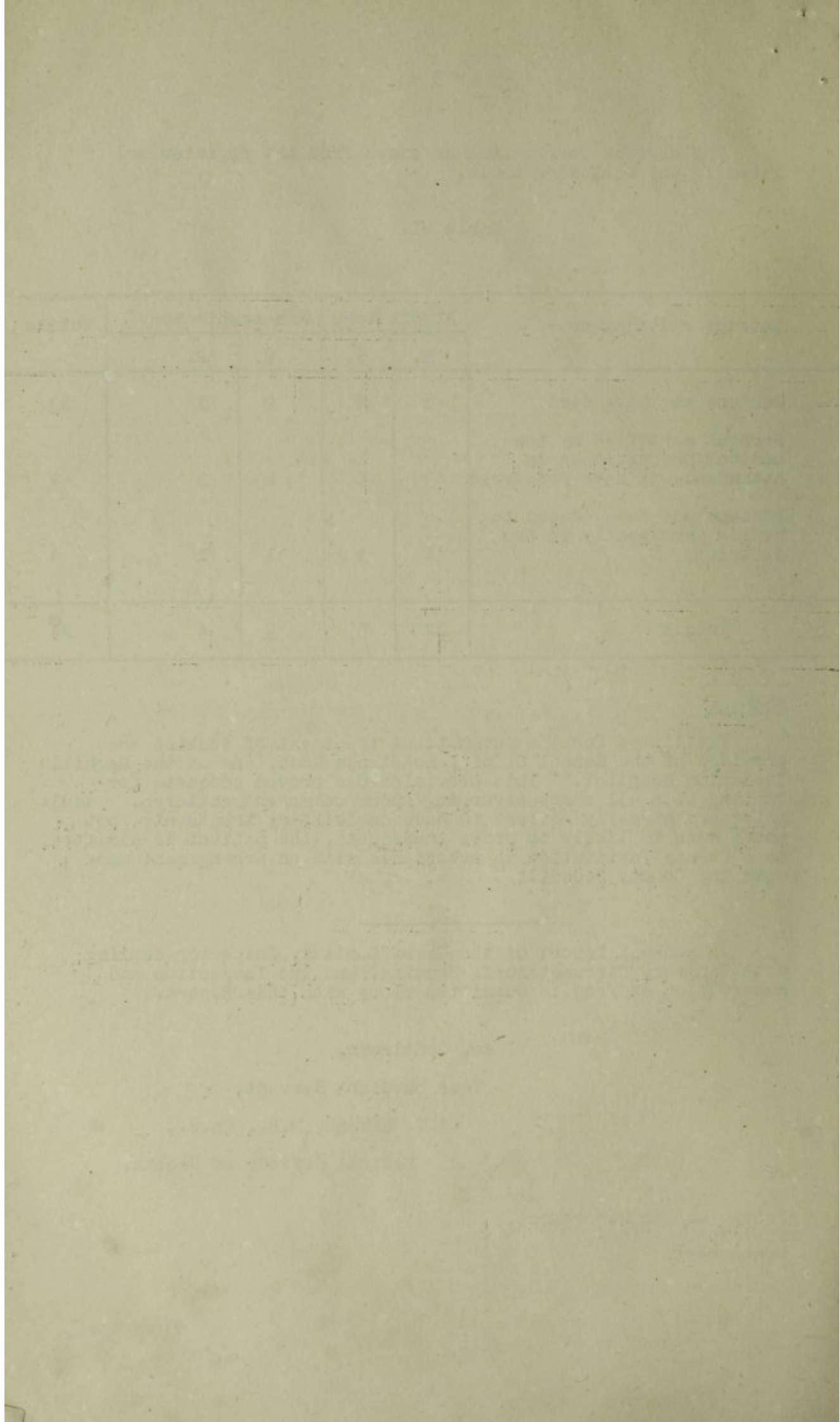
I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W.T. HESSEL, M.B., Ch.B.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,
Municipal Offices,
Pontefract.



REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR
TO THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
for the
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1944.

Sir,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report for the year 1944; an Interim Report from which much of the statistical information normally given has been omitted. A Report will be submitted in due course dealing fully with the war period.

P A R T O N E

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

Water Supply

A sufficient and constant supply of wholesome water was distributed by the Corporation throughout the year, the consumption for domestic purposes being of the order of 28 gallons per head per day.

Samples are submitted to chemical analysis, and the following report on water submitted in October, is typical:

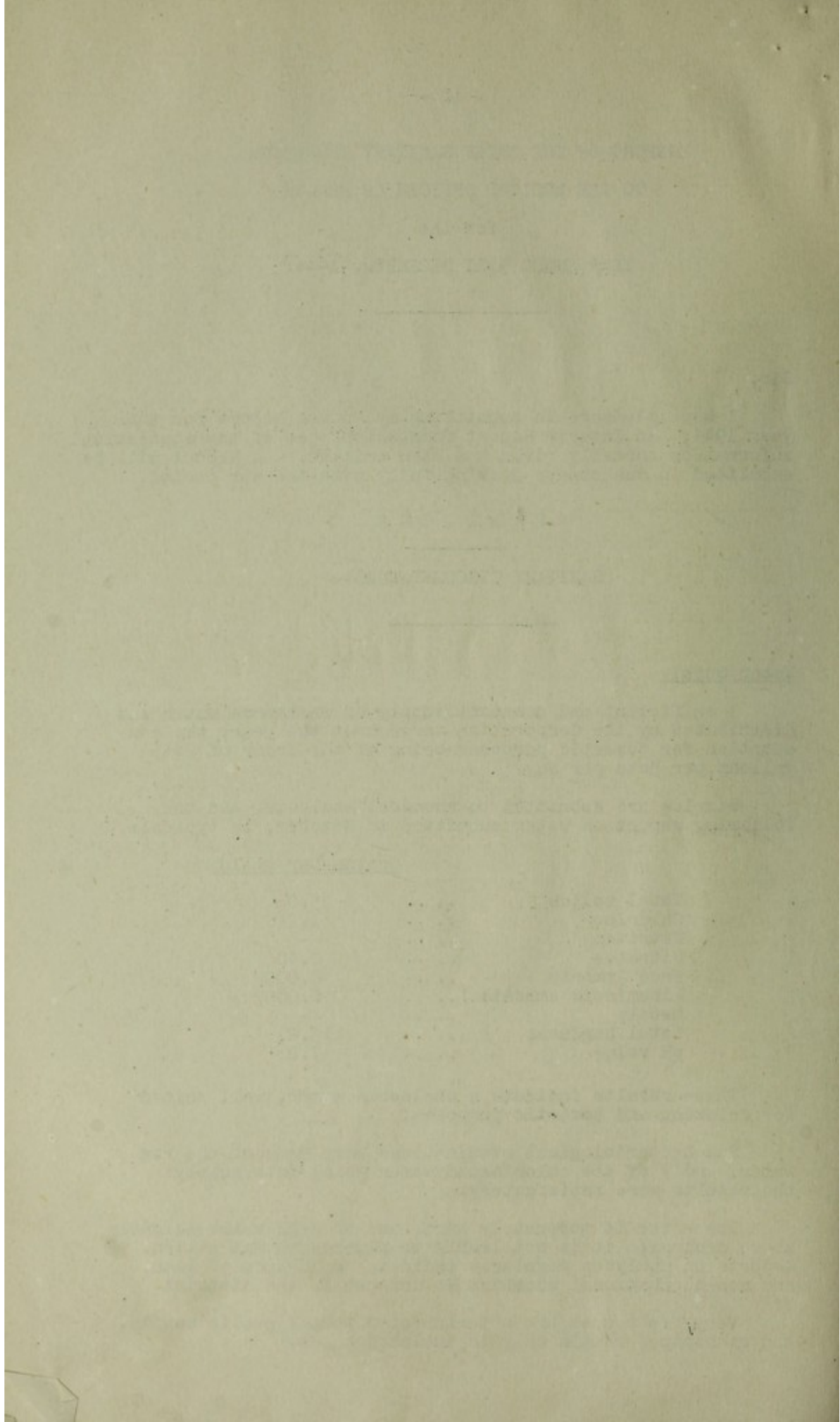
		<u>Grains per gallon</u>
Total solids	..	25.0
Chlorine	..	1.2
Nitrites	..	-
Nitrates	..	0.40
Free Ammonia	..	0.0007
Albuminoid ammonia	..	0.0007
Metals	..	-
Total hardness	..	15.0
pH value	..	7.2

These results indicate a wholesome water, well suited for drinking and domestic purposes.

Six bacteriological examinations were made of the raw water, and 7 of the chlorinated water going into supply: the results were satisfactory.

The water is moderately hard, and of a pH value slightly above neutral; it is not liable to plumbo-solvent action. Reports on analyses regularly indicate an absence of lead, and non-occupational plumbism is unknown in the district.

Very few houses are not connected to the public supply, and standpipes remain only in isolated cases.



Sanitary Accommodation and Drainage

All built up areas in the Borough are sewered, and almost all houses are on the water-carriage system: less than 1% remain on the conservancy system, and these will be abolished as circumstances allow. Whilst there is little room for improvement in type, the maintenance of existing accommodation at a high level of efficiency is a matter which is receiving constant attention, and although labour difficulties have caused delays in many cases, a reasonable standard of fitness has been maintained.

A considerable amount of drainage work of an urgent nature has been done, although plans for many desirable but less urgent improvements have been postponed until a more favourable time.

Nuisances, and Control of Regulated Trades

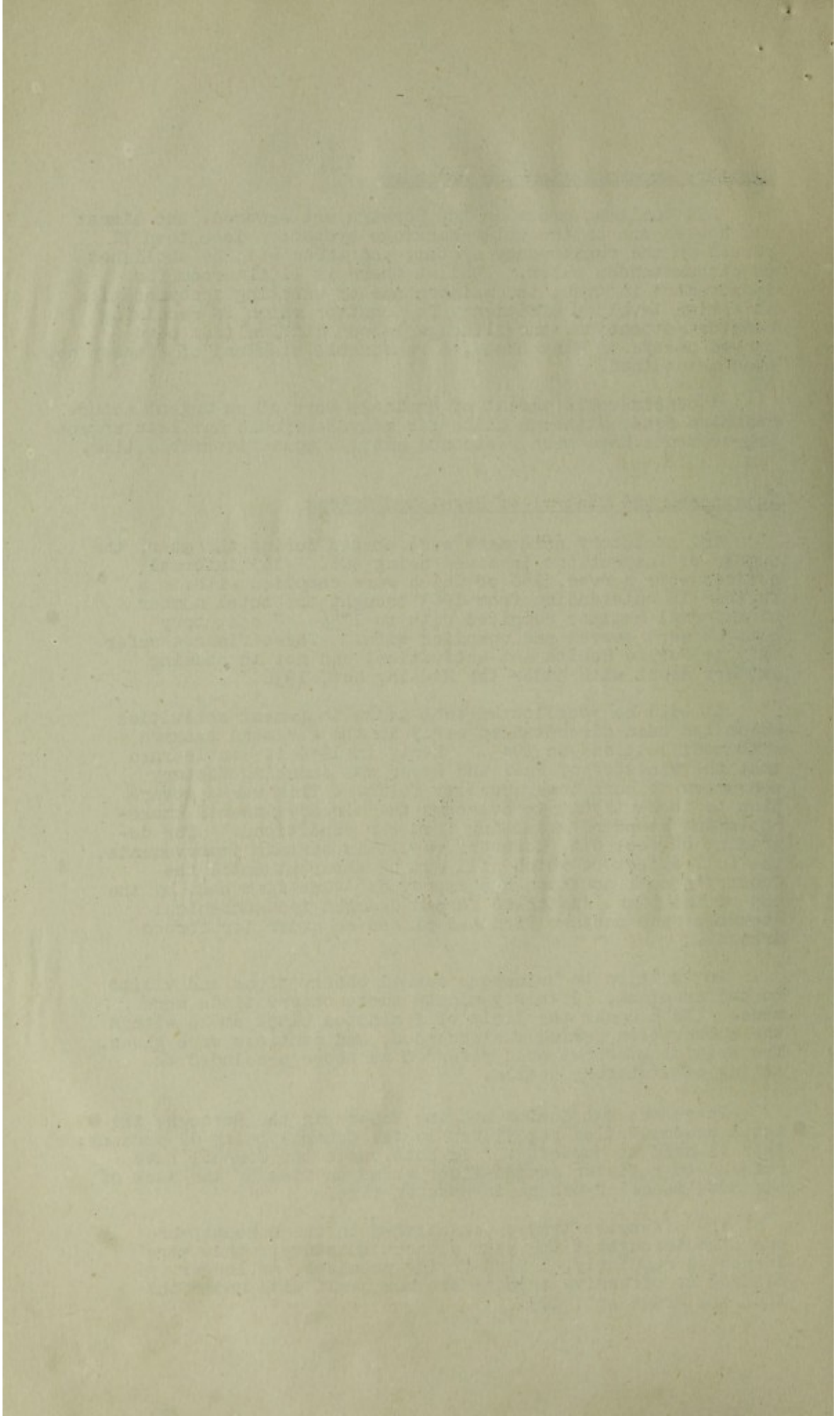
182 statutory nuisances were abated during the year, the number of inspections involved being 406. 167 informal notices were served, 160 of which were complied with: a further 15 outstanding from 1943 brought the total number of informal notices complied with to 175. 7 statutory notices were served and complied with. These figures refer only to Public Health Act activities, and not to housing matters dealt with under the Housing Act, 1936.

It will be recollected that smoke abatement activities which had been discontinued early in the war were resumed with modifications in 1943. Early in 1944 it was learned that the Minister of Fuel and Power was inducing factory consumers to burn lower quality fuels. This was a severe blow to those trying to overcome the already lowered smoke-abatement standard resulting from war conditions. The degrading of fuel did, however, result in certain improvements, the full effect of which will not be apparent until the Country's coal position has improved: One firm had, by the end of the year, installed forced draught and mechanical stoking; and another firm had placed an order for forced draught.

In addition to numerous casual observations and visits to boiler plant, 55 thirty-minute smoke observations were made. In 6 cases the limit of 2 minutes black smoke within the observation period was exceeded, and cautions were given. The special circumstances referred to above precluded the taking of statutory action.

There are two Common Lodging Houses in the Borough, the total accommodation registered by the Council being 42 persons; this is used to capacity. In both cases the Council have refused to register second-floor rooms in view of the lack of adequate means of escape in case of fire.

The offensive trades established in the Borough were operated throughout the year without nuisance; they were inspected regularly. Fish-frying premises, no longer classed as offensive trades, are now dealt with under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.



Factories

The term 'factory' is comprehensive, and includes premises large and small where articles are made, altered, or repaired for purposes of gain. There are 89 such premises in the Borough, at 68 of which mechanical power is employed. Conditions generally were fairly satisfactory. Staffing difficulties were again responsible for some deterioration in the high standard of cleanliness usual to many premises; but in few instances was there failure to maintain the essential minimum of cleanliness. Other matters dealt with were the provisions of the Factories Act, 1937, relating to sanitation, overcrowding, temperature and ventilation. All defects were remedied as the result of informal action.

Premises, machinery, utensils, methods, and personnel at food factories and bakehouses were also inspected under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

Rats and Mice Destruction

During the year under review the ratcatcher employed by the Corporation accounted for some 2,000 rats. He paid 495 visits to privately owned property and 284 to properties owned by the Corporation. Some 7,000 baits (prebait and poison) were laid, excluding sewer treatments; and other methods employed were gassing, trapping and hunting.

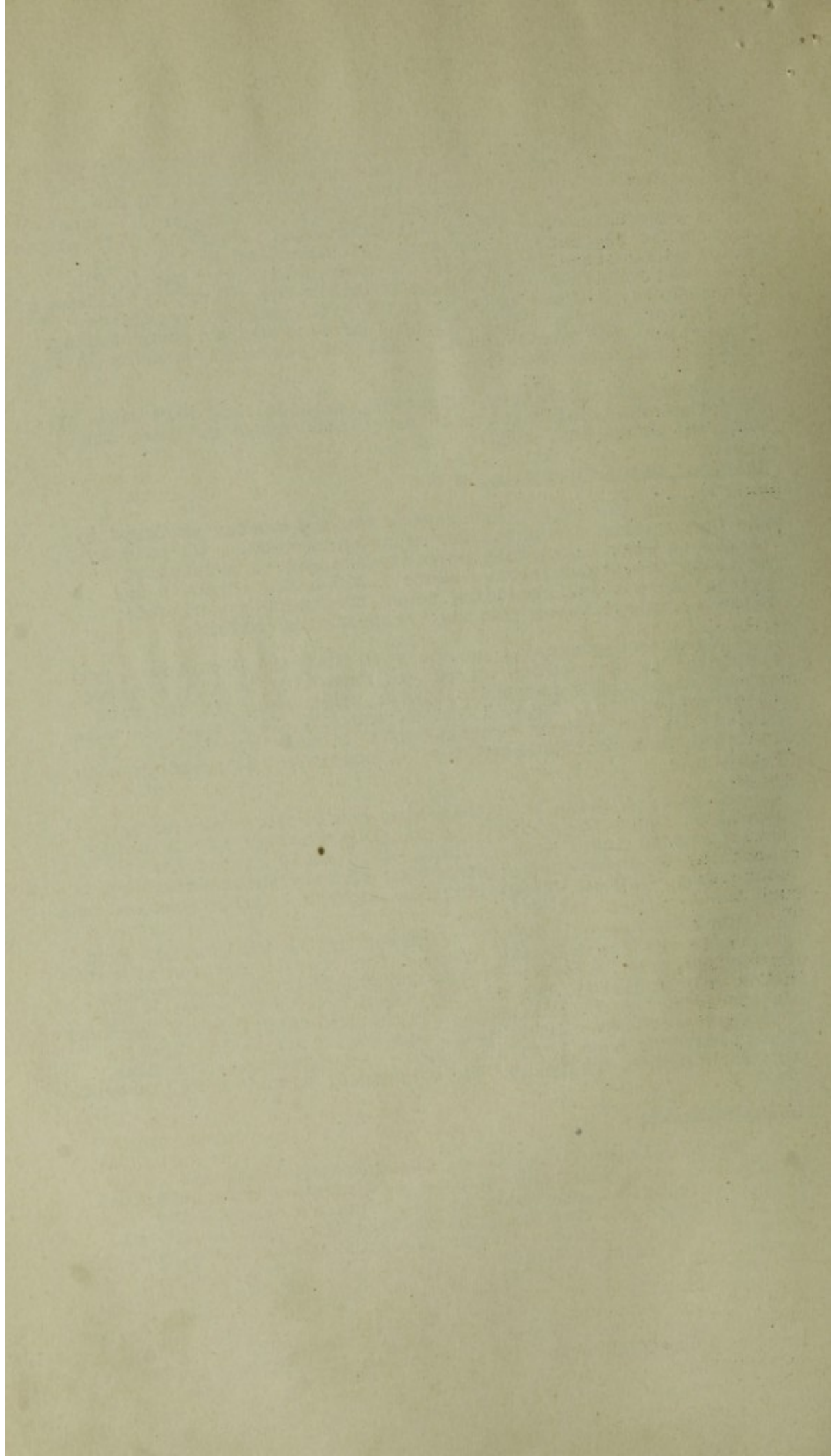
Occupiers generally co-operated with the Department, and responded to the posters displayed from time to time drawing attention to their responsibilities under the Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919. Rat destruction is recognised more readily in war time as a matter of National importance; it is vital that as little wastage as possible is caused by such pests.

I am of opinion that threshing contractors and farmers should be under the obligation of giving notice of threshing operations to local authorities; this would enable the authority to ensure the destruction of rats which escape at such times - often in considerable numbers - unless precautions are taken.

Under a general direction issued by the Ministry of Food sewers in the Borough were treated for the destruction of rats in May and June, 1944. It was thought that the sewers were not highly infested, but the treatment had to be carried out as specified by the Ministry, and the treatment, which involved the laying of some 6,000 baits, was completed in 10 weeks; the result was less than 600 rats. Arrangements were made for maintenance treatments on, of course, a much less elaborate scale.

Swimming Baths

Bacteriological control of the swimming baths was maintained throughout the season. 22 samples were submitted to bacteriological examination, all of which reached the required standard, the presumptive coliform count in 100 ml. being nil in each case. Chemical examinations showed that in 5 cases free chlorine content was not up to the requisite minimum standard of 0.2 parts per million, and that pH value was persistently low; the Ministry of Health's standard of 7.6 to 8.0 being recorded on only 6 occasions. The mean of the pH values recorded was, however, 7.5, an increase of 0.4 on the corresponding figure for 1943, which is indicative of some improvement.



P A R T T W O

HOUSING

That there is need for some 700 houses as quickly as war-circumstances will allow, seems to be a reasonable estimate of the town's housing shortage. Half this number could readily be used to replace unfit houses and to abate overcrowding; whilst the needs of newly-married couples will undoubtedly be high. By far the greatest proportion of enquiries made at the Department are concerning housing, especially new housing accommodation; and although very little can be done until the houses are within sight of being available, much information has been collected which will help in selecting the special cases envisaged by section 85(2) of the Housing Act, 1936.

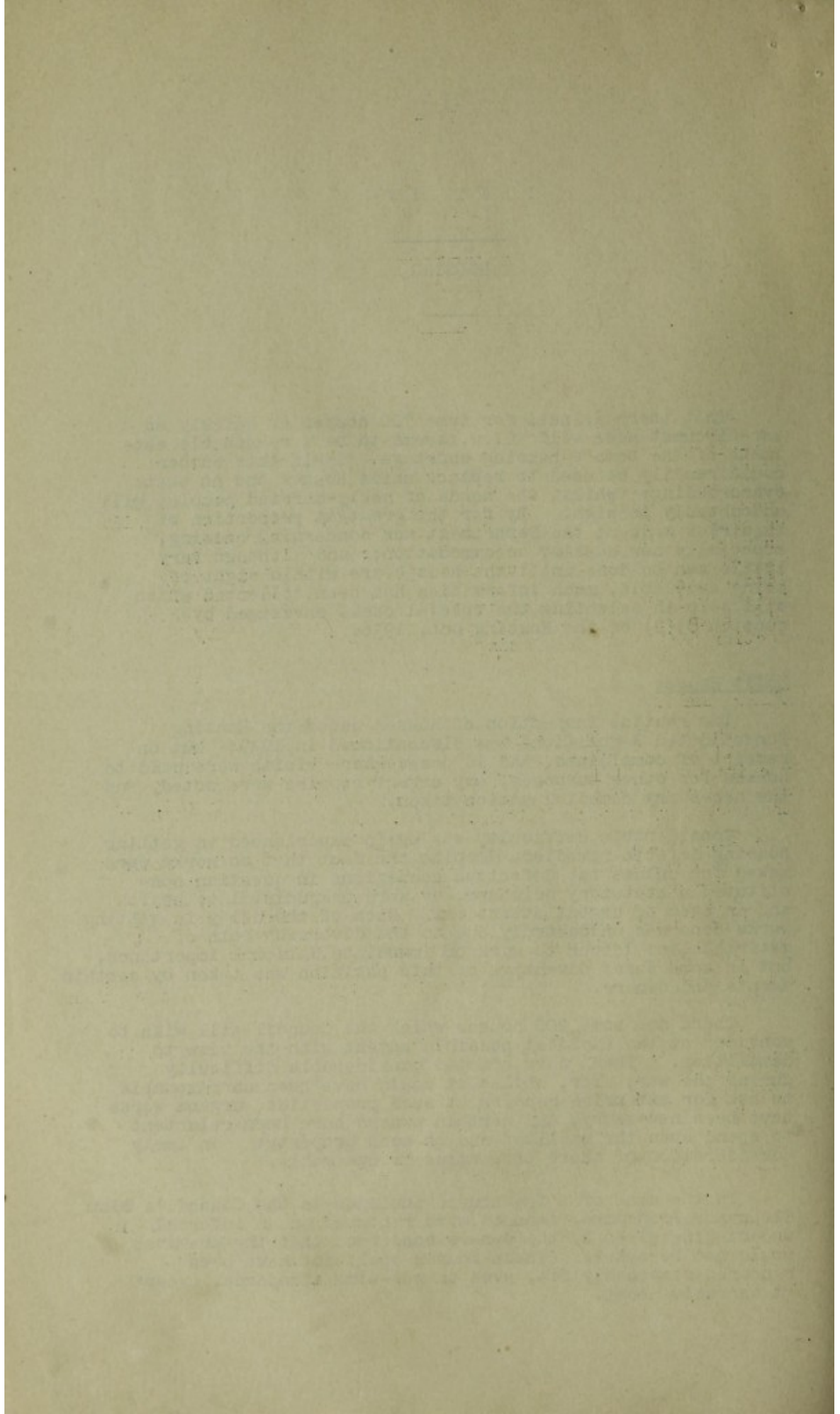
Unfit Houses

The routine inspection of houses under the Housing Consolidated Regulations was discontinued in 1939; but on receipt of complaints, and in cases where visits were paid to houses for other purposes, any urgent repairs were noted, and the necessary remedial action taken.

Considerable difficulty was again experienced in getting housing defects remedied, despite the fact that no works were asked for unless the defective conditions in question constituted a statutory nuisance, or were prejudicial to health and in need of urgent attention. Much of the delay in getting works done was undoubtedly due to the diversion both of materials and labour to work of immediate National importance, but in some cases advantage of this position was taken by certain agents and owners.

There are some 200 houses which the Council will wish to consider at the earliest possible moment with the view to demolition. These have created considerable difficulty during the war; for, whilst it would have been unreasonable to ask for extensive repairs at such properties, urgent works have been necessary, and certain owners have been reluctant to spend even the smallest sum on such property: an early consideration of these properties is desirable.

In the case of a few houses included in the Council's Slum Clearance Programme, tenants were rehoused on an informal undertaking given by the owners concerned that the premises would not be relet. These houses could not have been rendered reasonably fit, even on war-time standards, except at excessive cost.



Vermin Infestation

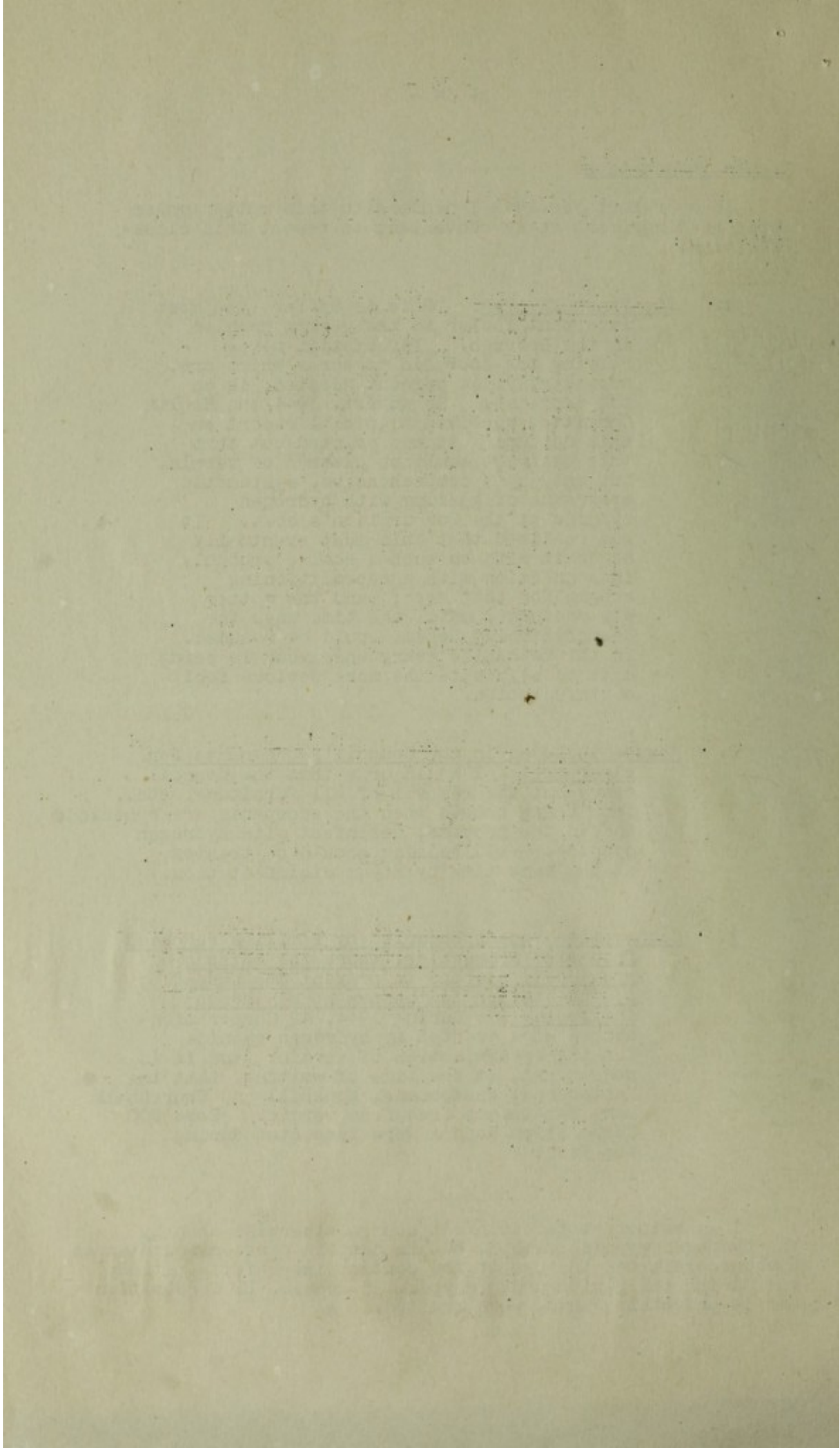
In my report for 1943 I dealt with this matter under three headings, and it is convenient to repeat this classification:

1. The Tanshelf area. This is by far the most important factor in the vermin problem in the Borough. Infestation here, defying the sporadic measures which are, necessarily, at present adopted, is on the increase. In August, 1944 the Health Committee received a special report on this matter: it was pointed out that this district could be cleared of vermin, but only by a comprehensive, systematic programme of gassing with hydrogen cyanide at the Corporation's cost. It was realised that this must eventually be dealt with on such a scale, probably in connection with a reconditioning scheme for that area; and the matter was postponed until the time when the Reconditioning Scheme could be resumed. In the meanwhile every endeavour is being made to eliminate the more serious foci of infestation.

2. Houses included in the Council's programme for clearance. I would urge that the Council carry out the removal of all furniture, etc., from these houses when the occupants are rehoused; and in the process, disinfest with hydrogen cyanide. All bedding should be treated at the same time by steam disinfestation.

3. Corporation houses occupied by families rehoused from slum properties, where the methods previously adopted to prevent the spread of infestation to the new houses proved ineffective. During 1944, 42 Corporation houses were treated by hydrogen cyanide for the extermination of vermin; and it is considered, at the time of writing, that the Eastbourne, Westbourne, Monkhill and Churchbalk Lane Estates are free from vermin. Some 700 Corporation houses were inspected during the year.

I am reluctant to disinfest houses otherwise than by the hydrogen cyanide method, but in certain cases circumstances have necessitated the use of the contact insecticide method; and during the period under review, 25 houses, 11 Corporation and 14 privately owned, were treated.



PART THREE

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Meat Supply

The Ministry of Food continued to use the Abattoir at Newtown for the preparation of meat for distribution to retailers in the Borough and surrounding districts, covering a population of some 52,000. The whole of the meat slaughtered at the abattoir was inspected by Officers of the Department.

The numbers of carcasses examined during the year were:-

Beasts ..	2,162	(including 459 cows)
Calves ..	825	
Sheep ..	5,873	
Pigs ..	554	

the total number being 9,414.

The numbers of carcasses found to be unfit for human consumption were:-

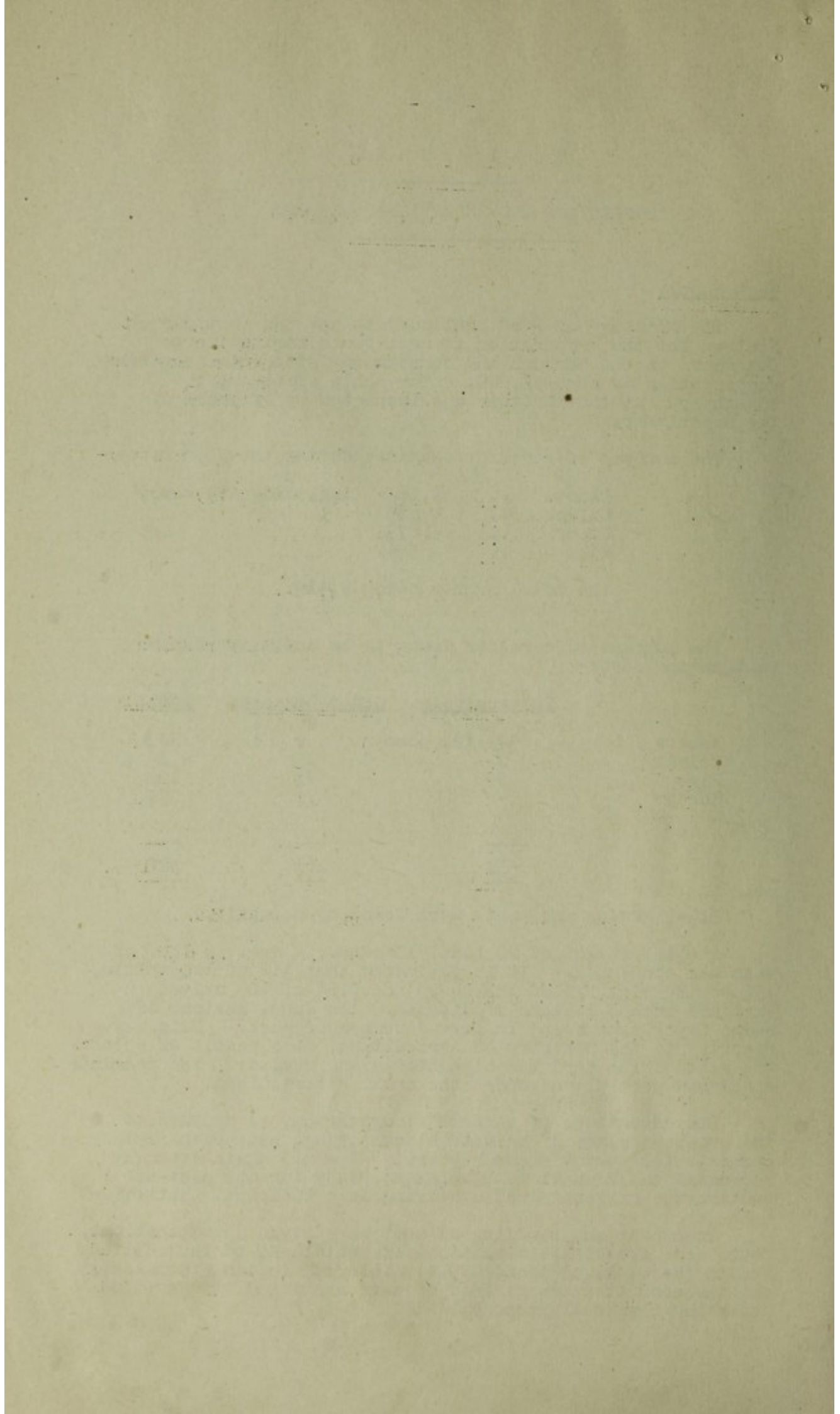
	<u>Tuberculosis</u>	<u>Other Diseases</u>	<u>Total</u>
Beasts	30½ (22 cows)	¼	30¾
Calves	0	1	1
Pigs	5	7½	12½
Sheep	-	7½	7½
	<u>35½</u>	<u>16¼</u>	<u>51¾</u>

2,341 organs and parts were found to be unfit.

A total weight of 20 tons, 10 cwts., 2 qrs., 6 lbs. of meat was condemned. It is estimated that 31% of the cattle, 15% of the pigs, 2% of the sheep and 0.6% of the calves examined showed lesions of disease. In June, lesions of swine fever were found in five carcasses of pork. This was reported to the Ministry of Agriculture, as a result of which the rest of the herd was slaughtered and buried. The premises concerned were placed under the usual restrictions.

The advantages of central slaughtering, as opposed to the pre-war system of private slaughtering, have been amply demonstrated during the war years. I would again strongly recommend the Council to have plans ready for the post-war continuance of central slaughtering in a Municipal Abattoir.

Transport and handling of meat were given due attention. There were occasional violations of article 21 of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924; informal action was taken, and the conditions complained of were rectified. Conditions generally were satisfactory.



Milk Supply

The Nation's milk supply was a much debated problem during the year, and it is obvious that the health of dairy herds leaves much to be desired; conditions seen at the Central Abattoir are often revealing in this respect. It is fortunate that at least half of the milk consumed in the Borough is protected by pasteurisation before it reaches the consumer: and the Government White Paper envisages an extension of heat treatment.

Only 150 dairy cattle are kept in the Borough; and much of our supply now comes from sources very considerable distances away. The number of registered producers in the Borough is 16; there are 10 wholesale traders, and 15 retail milk sellers. There are 19 cowsheds, which have been inspected at intervals throughout the year. Samples taken from each farm at the end of the year, and submitted to the Methylene Blue Reduction Test, were reported as being of 'accredited' standard.

One Pasteuriser's Licence is in force in the Borough. The plant was examined weekly by an Officer of the Department, and conditions generally were satisfactory. 38 samples were submitted to the Plate Count Examination, the statutory test for Pasteurised milk: 8 samples, 21% of the total examined were below standard, there being little doubt that these were the result of unsatisfactory 'accommodation' milk received from Cheshire: the percentage of unsatisfactory samples in the whole of the West Riding area was 27%. 38 samples also were submitted to the Phosphate Test which, although it has no statutory force, indicates whether or not the milk has been adequately pasteurised in accordance with the conditions for temperature and holding period prescribed by the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations: 33 samples were shown to have been sufficiently heat treated, whilst 5 were slightly below the required standard.

Every endeavour is made by the firm concerned to maintain the plant in efficient action, and thereby produce an efficiently pasteurised milk. They have largely succeeded in doing this.

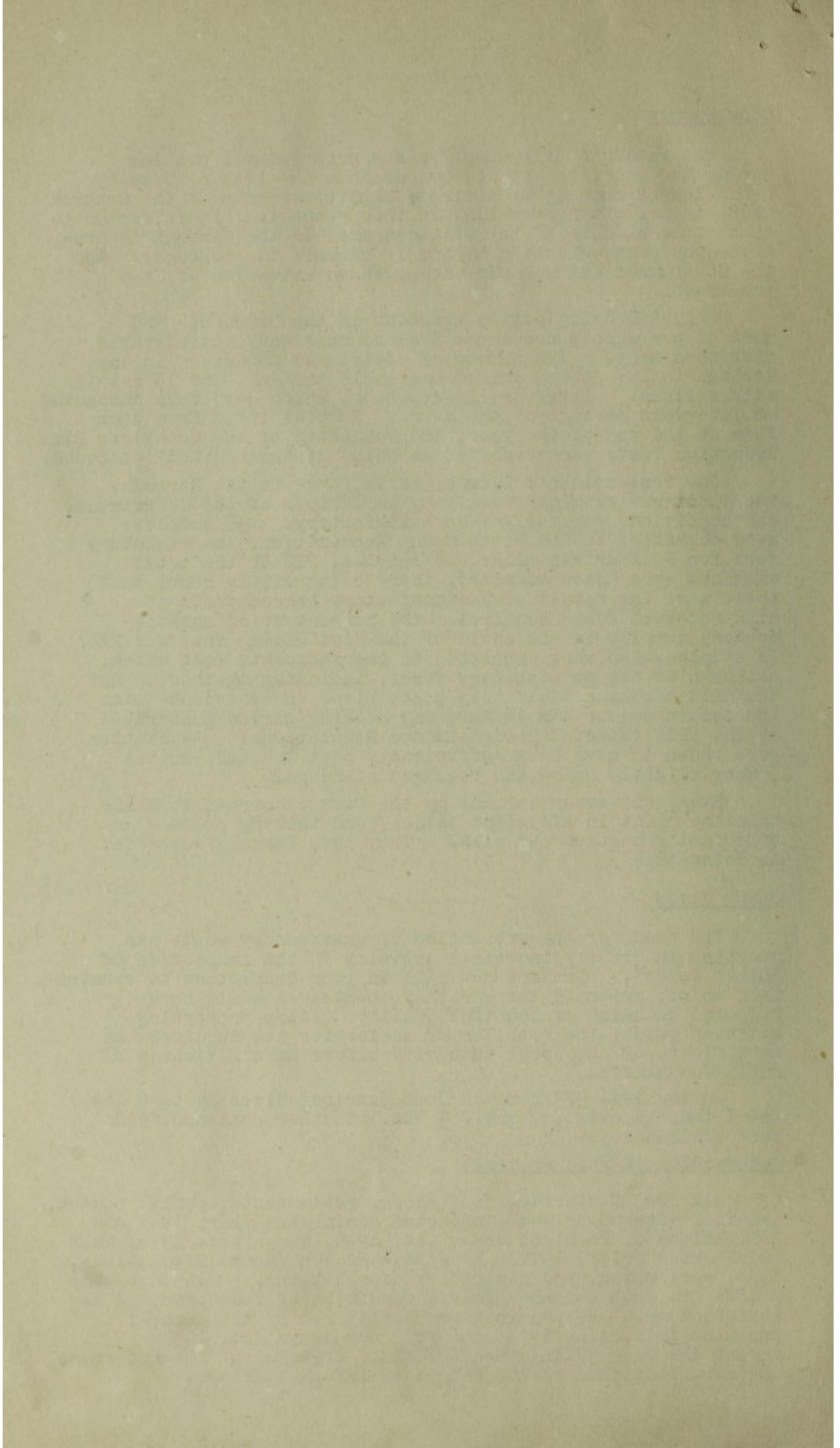
Other Foods

The need for the prevention of unnecessary waste has resulted in greatly increased activity in the inspection of 'other foods'. Traders now call in your Inspectors to examine food which, prior to the war they themselves would have rejected as being of doubtful quality. Also, regarding rationed goods, the retailer or wholesaler now requires the certificate of the local authority before he can dispose of unfit foodstuffs.

During 1944 373 cans of food (various sizes up to 6 lbs.) and 1 ton, 14 cwts., 2 qrs., 3 lbs. of other rationed food were condemned.

Supervision of Food Premises

All food factories, food shops, restaurants, public houses, and food warehouses were inspected during the year; any contraventions of Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Shops Act, 1934, Milk and Dairies Order, 1926, and Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, were noted, and remedial measures taken. Although many staffs are depleted the general condition of food premises is satisfactory. 57 premises are registered by the Council pursuant to section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938: during the year 37 instances of minor breaches of the Act arose, and were rectified as the result of informal action.



PART FOUR

SPECIAL DUTIES

At the end of the year under review I held the following war-time appointments, although only billeting was actively engaging my attention:-

Civil Defence Ambulance Service Officer,
Civil Defence Mortuary Service Officer,
Food Decontamination Officer,
Chief Billeting Officer,
Officer-in-Charge, Casualty Information Bureau,
Food Salvage Officer,

Billeting Service

This Service provides for the billeting of Civil Defence personnel, homeless persons, war workers, and other persons falling into any of the priority classes prescribed by the Ministry of Health; and for the issue of billeting certificates to persons rendered homeless by enemy action. The present year was the heaviest experienced since the outbreak of war; the big increase of evacuees during this period being consequent upon the advent of the V1 and V2 weapons.

At the beginning of 1944, 33 evacuees (19 adults and 14 children) were billeted in the Borough. During the year, 546 further evacuees were received (comprising 246 adults and 300 children) whilst during the same period 445 evacuees (209 adults and 236 children) ceased to be officially billeted. At the end of the year, the number of evacuees billeted in the Borough was 134 (58 adults and 76 children).

During the year 681 billets were found for war workers and trainees at the request of the Ministry of Labour.

At the beginning of the year the town was already housing a large number of war-time trainees, workers, and evacuated persons of various types; and in order to meet a new demand for 500 billets, a postal survey was made. The survey covered 5,468 houses, and a return was obtained from each. In addition to providing information as to the disposition of available accommodation the survey revealed some interesting information; for example, the townspeople were providing billets for 2,574 persons not normally resident in the Borough; furthermore, there were 200 houses where persons were at a density of two or more persons per habitable room, and further investigation of these showed 47 cases of statutory overcrowding, and 18 of 'sex separation' overcrowding.

Advice and information were given on innumerable problems on evacuation, billeting, and allied matters. Every endeavour was again made to prevent the occurrence of overcrowding due to billeting.

Yours faithfully,

L. WALSH, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Public Health Department,
Municipal Offices,
Pontefract.

