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COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING

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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1956

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## HEALTH COMMITTEE

December 31st, 1956

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR (Councillor A. Lockwood)

### Aldermen :

ARTHUR FRANK CLARK  
ALFRED LOVELL

ALFRED HASLAM  
LILIAN MARY MILLER  
THOMAS STEPHEN WILLIAM SMART

### Councillors :

WILLIAM JOHN ALLUM  
ALICE JEANETTE BURROWS  
JAMES CYRIL HARRY BUTCHER (*Chairman*)  
EDWARD WILLIAM LEWIS  
EDITH MORRIS  
HENRY GEORGE WHEELER

PERCY BELCHER (*Vice-Chairman*)  
IRIS BOSIER BUTCHER  
GEORGE GRIMSHAW HAMMOND  
JAMES PHILLIP WALLACE  
JOHN STANLEY WOODROW

### Non-Members of the Council :

NANCY A. SHARP  
EDWARD BASIL BERRY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

CLAUD VERITY GLEDHILL, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.  
CYRIL FRANCIS WRIGHT, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.  
E. E. LOCKER

## STAFF AT DECEMBER 31st, 1956

### Medical Officer of Health :

E. HUGHES, M.D., D.P.H., D.P.A.

### Deputy Medical Officer of Health :

G. M. O'DONNELL, B.A., M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.

### Assistant Medical Officers of Health and Assistant School Medical Officers :

VIOLET FRASER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

ETHEL A. FISHER, M.B., B.Ch., D.R.C.O.G.

ELIZABETH M. SEFTON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.C.H., L.M. (Rotunda)

BRIAN ARTHUR SMITH, M.B., B.S., D.P.H. (commenced 9th July, 1956)

DAVID TINGLE, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.R.C.O.G.

(commenced 24th September, 1956)

### Medical Officers (Part-time) Maternity and Child Welfare :

A. J. H. HARDY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.O.G.

P. W. F. McILVENNA, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., L.R.F.P.S.

### Public Analyst :

T. McLACHLAN, A.C.G.F.C., F.I.C.

### Chief Public Health Inspector :

J. GREEN, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

### Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector :

H. SYRAD, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

### Public Health Inspectors :

R. W. BASHFORD

M. CARTER

D. V. C. COOPER

D. BROOK

P. McCANDLISH

H. MORTIMORE

A. D. E. HARDING (commenced 24th September, 1956) W. C. WAGG

### Superintendent Health Visitor :

Miss M. WEBBER, S.R.N., S.C.M., H.V.

### Health Visitors :

\*Miss H. A. MORTIMER

\*Miss R. M. UPTON

\*Miss F. CLARK

\*Miss R. BROMLEY

\*Miss M. J. M. WILLIAMSON

\*Miss O. M. JARVIS

\*Miss P. K. HART

\*Mrs. A. ALLISON

Miss M. V. PALMER

\*Miss B. O. BRUNDLE

\*Mrs. KINGSLEY (part-time)

\*Combined Health Visitor and School Nurse

### Tuberculosis Visitors :

Miss E. V. GAGGIOTTI

Mrs. L. E. MEDWAY

### Tuberculosis Welfare Officer :

Miss B. I. HARTLEY

### Family Caseworkers :

Miss N. D. R. CALVELEY

Miss H. M. HARRISON (commenced 1st November, 1956)

### Non-Medical Supervisor of Midwives :

Miss L. F. MEACHAM, S.R.N., S.C.M.



**Municipal Midwives :**

Miss E. J. ODELL  
Miss M. P. W. DEARLOVE

Mrs. R. M. TEAL  
Mrs. Y. M. TROTTER

Miss V. GARRIGAN  
Miss M. HALL

**Premature Baby Nurse :**

Miss S. K. BARRACK, S.R.N., S.C.M.

**Mental Deficiency Officer :**

Miss J. M. ROBB

**Psychiatric Welfare Officer :**

Mrs. A. J. TREGILLUS

**Duly Authorised Officers :**

C. E. HOUSE    P. W. ARTHUR (relief)(commenced 13th February, 1956)    Miss J. M. ROBB (relief)

**Chief Clerk :**

C. I. AUST

**Domestic Help Service :**

(Assistant Organisers)

Mrs. D. M. JONES

Mrs. L. R. RUSSELL (Part Time)

Mrs. H. A. FINCH

**Occupation Centre :**

Miss E. M. BARKAS (Supervisor)

**Superintendent, Queen Victoria Institute :**

Miss A. M. EDWARDS (commenced 11th October, 1956)

**Day Nurseries:**

*Holybrook House :* Mrs. M. MORRIS (Matron)

*Victoria Square :* Mrs. E. S. MABEY (Matron)

**Blind Welfare Officer :**

Miss M. L. LOWE

**Home Teachers for the Blind :**

Miss A. E. SMITH

Mrs. M. E. P. HODGE

**Administrative Officer for the Purposes of the National Assistance Act, 1948 :**

G. E. TURNBULL A.I.S.W.

**Administrative Assistant for the Purposes of the National Assistance Act, 1948**

D. H. COMERFORD

**"Woodlands" Old People's Home :**

G. HOGG (Superintendent)

Mrs. H. M. HOGG (Matron)

**"Wychcotes" and "Warren House" Old People's Homes :**

Mrs. E. J. ABLETT (Matron)

**"Parkhurst" Old People's Home :**

Mrs. F. B. McADAM (Superintendent)

**"Southern Hill" Old People's Home :**

Miss A. T. KEEGAN

**"Arthur Clark" Home, 3 Albert Road :**

Mrs. A. K. DALE

**"Dysons Wood" Home, Toker's Green :**

Mrs. G. R. MEREDITH

**Welfare Officer ("Other Classes" of Handicapped Persons) :**

Mrs. J. D. SNOW

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S DEPARTMENT,  
BRISTOL & WEST HOUSE,  
173/4 FRIAR STREET,  
READING.

**To the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee**

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to present by Annual Report for 1956.

The vital statistics for the year correspond closely with those of the country as a whole and it will be seen that the infantile mortality rate is the lowest on record.

In view of the fact that detailed comments on various aspects of the Department's work are made in the body of the Report I will not refer to them in this introduction.

There is one matter to which I would like to make special reference. It has been well known that we have had difficulties in obtaining satisfactory office accommodation for many years and it was a great joy to me to move into our new premises (173/4 Friar Street) in December. This has meant that I have been able to concentrate the greater part of my staff under one roof with a corresponding increase in the integration of the work of the various sections of the Department. I am very grateful to the Council for providing this new accommodation.

Last year I made reference to the shortage of staff, especially Public Health Inspectors and Health Visitors. Unfortunately this has continued but we are not alone in these difficulties.

Good relations have been maintained with the medical and non medical staff of the Reading & District Hospital Management Committee, with



general practitioners, and with officers of the Local Executive Council. I would also like to express my appreciation of the support which has been given to me by all members of the Committee; we may not have been able to do all that we would like to have done in a year but this has been due to factors outside the Committee's control and not due to any reluctance on their part. Finally I would like to express my appreciation of the support which has been given to me by all members of the staff.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

E. HUGHES,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

## STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

							1956	1955
Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,106	9,106
Population (estimated June, 1956)	...	...	...	...	...	...	117,900	118,100
Area Comparability Factor—								
Births	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.01	1.01
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.97	0.91
Number of inhabited houses according to rate books at								
31.3.56	...	...	...	...	...	...	33,319	32,918
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	...	£1,988,899	£1,211,497
Product of a Penny Rate (31.3.56)	...	...	...	...	...	...	£5090	£4844
Total cost of Services administered by the Health Committee and the Welfare Services Sub-Committee of the Education Committee (Medical Services only) for the year ended March 31st, 1956 :—								
Expenditure (Revenue)	...	...	...	...	...	...	£284,675	£241,563

										<i>Birth Rate</i>
*Live Births :—	<i>Total</i>			<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>		<i>per 1,000 pop.</i>		
Legitimate	...	1,651	(1,592)	853	(832)	798	(760)	14.0	(13.48)	
Illegitimate	...	114	(103)	59	(54)	55	(49)	0.96	(0.87)	
Total	...	1,765	(1,695)	912	(886)	853	(809)	14.97	(14.35)	

## \*Infant deaths under one year :—

Legitimate	...	...	...	...	...	...	29	(38)
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	(2)
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	32	(40)

## \*Death-rate of infants under one year per 1,000 live births :—

Legitimate	...	...	...	...	...	...	17.56	(23.87)
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	...	...	26.31	(19.42)
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	18.13	(23.60)
Deaths of infants under one month	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	(27)
Neo-natal mortality rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	...	...	...	11.33	(15.93)
*Number of stillbirths	...	...	...	...	...	...	34	(39)
*Rate per 1,000 births (total births)	...	...	...	...	...	...	18.00	(23.00)
*Number of domiciliary stillbirths	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(7)
*Deaths—Net	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,348	(1,358)
Rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	...	...	11.43	(11.50)
Number of Marriages	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,070	(1,109)



## Number of women dying in or in consequence of childbirth :—

From sepsis ... ..	—	(—)
From other causes ... ..	—	(—)
Total ... ..	—	(—)
Maternal Mortality Rate ... ..	—	(—)
Deaths from cancer (all ages) ... ..	230	(223)
Deaths from measles (all ages) ... ..	—	(—)
Deaths from whooping cough (all ages) ... ..	1	(—)
Deaths from diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ... ..	2	(—)

## Tuberculosis deaths :—

Pulmonary ... ..	9	(6)
Non-pulmonary ... ..	1	(1)
All forms ... ..	10	(7)

## Tuberculosis death rate (per 1,000 population) :—

Pulmonary ... ..	0·07	(0·05)
Non-pulmonary ... ..	0·01	(0·01)
All forms ... ..	0·08	(0·06)

---

**Comparison of Vital Statistics for Reading with those for other Areas**

	Reading	England and Wales
<b>Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population—</b>		
Births—		
Live births ... ..	14·97	15·70
Stillbirths per 1,000 total births ... ..	18·00	23·00
Deaths—		
All causes ... ..	11·43	11·7
<b>Rates per 1,000 Live Births—</b>		
Deaths—		
All causes under 1 year of age ... ..	18·13	23·8

## METEOROLOGICAL REPORT, 1956

MONTH	Rainfall and Temperature as Recorded at Forbury Gardens					Sunshine Hours as Recorded at Sutton's Seed Trial Grounds		
	Rainfall in inches	Temperature			Mean Humidity*	Monthly Aggregate of Sunshine Hours	Daily Mean Sunshine Hours	Daily Mean expressed as a percentage of Possible Sunshine
January ...	3.24	Maximum 54	Minimum 25	Mean Maximum 45.39	Mean Minimum 32.9	92.61	1.42	17
February ...	.19	54	14	37.89	24.38	97.83	2.64	27
March ...	.42	65	25	53.03	35.19	83.52	4.28	36
April ...	1.59	66	29	55.33	36.07	79.27	4.83	35
May ...	.19	81	33	68.29	44.23	85.9	8.11	52
June ...	2.19	79	41	66.7	48.9	84.8	4.90	30
July ...	2.23	85	49	72.03	54.32	77.87	5.53	34
August ...	4.76	74	43	67.45	50.26	86.49	5.02	34
September ...	2.65	80	46	67.47	51.43	90.27	3.22	25
October ...	1.55	69	30	58.61	41.76	91.58	3.55	33
November ...	.63	61	21	49.03	35.73	93.57	2.10	24
December ...	3.57	57	27	47.23	36.9	94.77	0.32	4
	23.21							

\* As recorded at 9.0 a.m. daily



[illegible]



**Employment.** I am indebted to the Manager of the Employment Exchange for the following information :—

There was estimated to be approximately 58,000 insured workpeople in the Reading area in June, 1955 (this is the latest figure available). They are employed in a wide variety of industries of which the main ones are :—

Agriculture and horticulture  
 Biscuit manufacture  
 Brewing and malting  
 Building  
 Distributive Trades  
 Engineering (including aircraft, metal goods and  
                   vehicle manufacture)  
 Furniture and shop fittings  
 Government Services (National and Local)  
 Hotel and Catering  
 Printing and Publishing  
 Tailoring  
 Transport (Road and Rail)

The employment position continued to be good and basically sound. There was some lessening in demands for labour and increase in unemployment in the latter half of year, chiefly due to the "credit squeeze" policy and other economic factors. However, this adverse trend was not of serious proportions ; unemployment remained well under 1% of the working population, and the level of employment was, therefore, high.

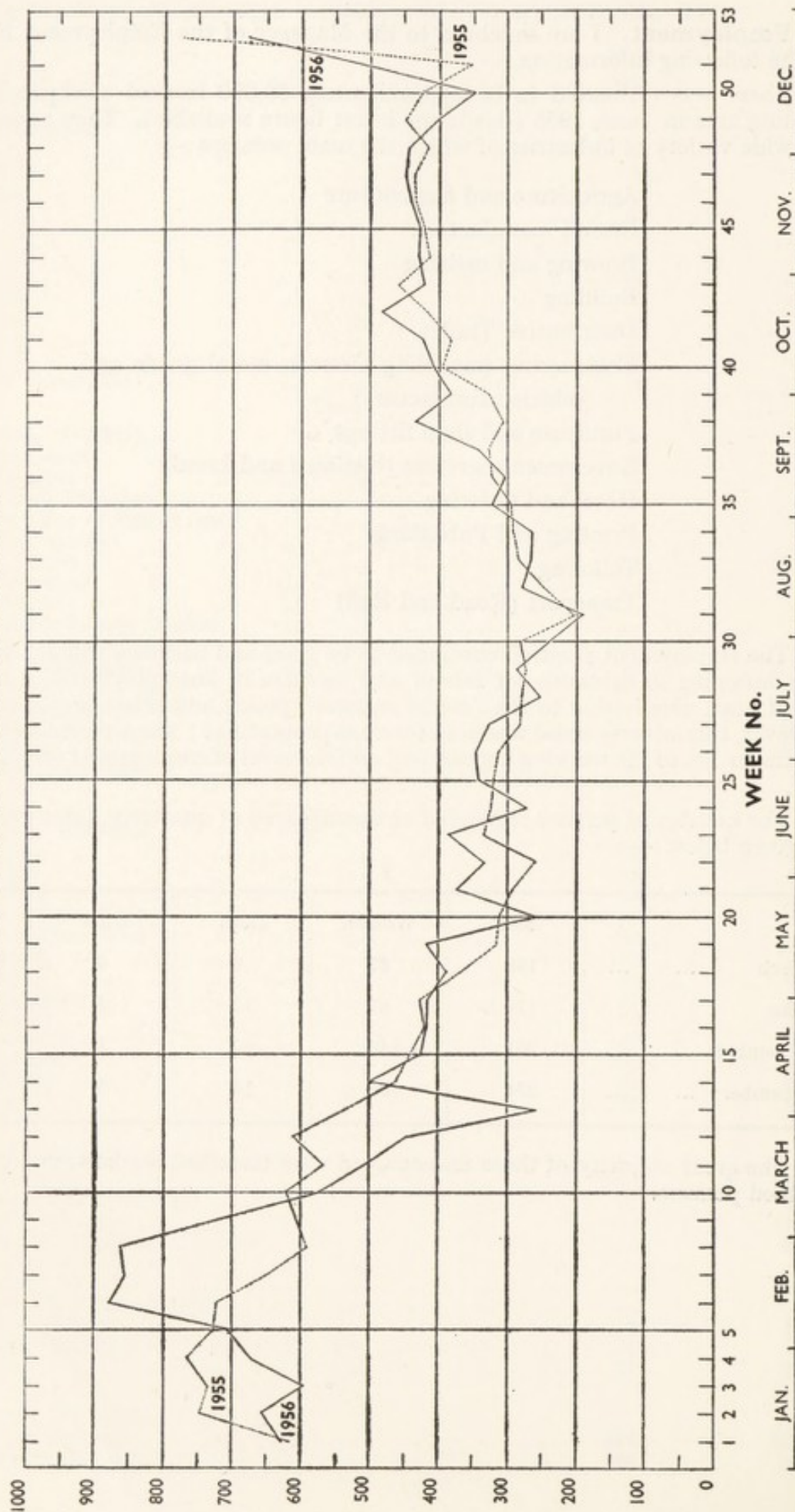
The number of persons registered as unemployed at quarterly dates during 1956 are given below :—

			Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
March	...	...	183	87	6	9	285
June	...	...	174	67	14	5	260
September	...	...	201	140	50	8	399
December	...	...	271	131	18	3	423

The great majority of those unemployed were unskilled workers, many of them disabled persons.

# NUMBER OF NEW CLAIMS FOR SICKNESS BENEFIT PER WEEK, 1956

(Ministry of National Insurance Returns)





## CAUSES AND AGES AT DEATH. (Registrar-General's Return)

CAUSES OF DEATH	All ages	All ages		0-1		1-4		5-14		15-24		25-44		45-64		65-74		75 and Over	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1-Tuberculosis (respiratory)	7	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	1	2	—	—	1	1
2-Tuberculosis (other)	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
3-Syphilitic disease	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4-Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-Whooping Cough	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-Meningococcal Infections	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7-Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
8-Measles	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
9-Other infective and parasitic diseases	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
10-Malignant neoplasm, Stomach	29	20	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	1	7	4	6	4
11- " " Lung, bronchus	52	44	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24	4	19	1	1	2
12- " " Breast	31	—	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—
13- " " Uterus	9	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—
14-Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	109	58	51	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3	16	13	21	13	18	22
15-Leukaemia, leukaemia	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
16-Diabetes	12	1	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
17-Vascular lesions of nervous system	213	75	138	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	15	21	45	39	78
18-Coronary disease, angina	180	113	67	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	46	8	31	22	34	37
19-Hypertension with heart disease	23	12	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	4	3	5	8
20-Other heart disease	203	83	120	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	6	18	31	48	83
21-Other circulatory disease	66	30	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	5	11	18	23
22-Influenza	6	3	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—
23-Pneumonia	101	59	42	4	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	13	4	19	6	20	30
24-Bronchitis	81	51	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	5	16	7	22	18
25-Other diseases of respiratory system	10	8	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	3	1
26-Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	9	4	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	3
27-Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	10	4	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	2	3
28-Nephritis and nephrosis	8	2	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	—
29-Hyperplasia of prostate	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
30-Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
31-Congenital malformations	14	10	4	5	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
32-Other defined and ill-defined diseases	109	46	63	8	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	12	8	11	14	33
33-Motor vehicle accidents	12	9	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
34-All other accidents	22	11	11	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	1	1
35-Suicide	13	7	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	2	6
36-Homicide and operation of war	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS..	1348	668	680	19	13	4	2	6	2	6	2	23	14	190	96	178	177	242	374
				32		6		8		8		37		286		355		616	



## NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946

### (A) GENERAL

There have been no material changes in the allocation of work to the various Committees since this matter was fully reported in my Annual Report for 1952. In the past one of my difficulties has been the degree to which sections of my Department have been scattered in various buildings in various parts of the town. In December, 1956, we moved into new offices on the second and third floors of Bristol & West House, Friar Street. It was thus possible for the first time to bring the majority of the department under one roof and further concentration will proceed gradually throughout 1957. This move has greatly eased problems of administration and makes contact with individual members of my staff very much easier. I am grateful to the Council for arranging this transfer of accommodation.

### (B) PARTICULAR SERVICES

#### SECTION 21—PROVISION OF HEALTH CENTRES

No steps have been taken to provide health centres in accordance with Section 21 of the Act. Unfortunately, owing to the country's financial position the Ministry of Health has been unable to allow us to proceed with our plans for a new welfare clinic to serve the Tilehurst area although outline plans for this have been agreed with the Ministry.

#### SECTION 22—CARE OF EXPECTANT AND NURSING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN UNDER SCHOOL AGE

##### (a) *Infant Mortality and Stillbirths*

It will be seen that the infantile mortality rate was 18.13 per thousand live births and the neo-natal mortality was 11.33. The stillbirth rate was 18.00 per thousand total births.

The following figures give the pre-natal mortality in recent years :—

	I.M.R.	S.B.R.	P.N.R.
1948	34.6	24.76	41.90
1949	26.2	21.42	36.57
1950	26.1	22.75	38.84
1951	28.95	20.19	34.91
1952	23.19	26.52	34.98
1953	19.70	22.75	32.67
1954	29.20	17.28	33.39
1955	23.60	23.00	37.48
1956	18.13	18.00	30.01

The table on page 18 gives particulars of the infantile mortality rate for the last fifty years. The table on page 37 gives the cause of death of infants during the first year of life. One feature which I think merits special consideration in connection with the infantile mortality rate. I am told that a number of viable babies under 28 weeks are born at Battle Hospital. Unfortunately all these have died in spite of transfer to the Premature Baby Unit. In turn this has had an adverse effect on the infantile mortality rate.

(b) *Ante-natal Clinics*

The decrease in attendance at medical sessions was maintained throughout and their main function appears now to be the extremely useful one of taking samples of blood on behalf of general practitioners for examination at the Pathological Laboratory.

On the other hand, midwives' sessions continued to flourish and are held as follows :—

Star Lane	Monday afternoons Friday afternoons (for Q.V.I.) Saturday afternoons (ante-natal exercises)
Southcote	Tuesday and Thursday afternoons
Whitley	Thursday afternoons—alternatively for Q.V.I. midwives and municipal midwives

The following table gives particulars of the attendances throughout the year at the medical sessions.

Clinic	Number of Sessions held	Ante-natal		Post-natal
		New Patients	Re-attendances	
Star Lane ...	51	7	40	2
Whitley ...	49	54	289	29
Total ...	100	61	329	31

The attendance at midwives' sessions were as follows :—

	No. of Sessions held	New Patients	Reattendances
Star Lane	44	128	707
Whitley	41	61	254
Southcote	51	51	395
	—	—	—
Total	136	240	1,356
	—	—	—



# SUMMARY OF INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES SINCE 1907

Year	Population	No. of Births	Birth-rate per 1,000 Living	No. of Infant Deaths	Infant Mortality	Maternal Mortality			Total No. of Deaths	Death-rate per 1,000 Living
						Sepsis	Others	Rate per 1,000 Births		
1907	81,040	1,806	22.28	164	90.8	4	8	6.6	983	12.13
1908	82,549	1,847	22.37	182	98.5	1	4	2.7	963	11.66
1909	84,085	1,744	20.74	166	95.2	4	4	4.6	962	11.44
1910	84,355	1,673	19.83	126	75.3	3	4	4.2	844	10.00
1911	87,693	1,605	21.32	164	102.2	5	3	4.9	911	12.10
1912	88,603	1,896	21.40	160	84.4	3	3	3.2	1,015	11.45
1913	89,339	1,871	20.94	150	80.2	4	4	4.3	1,035	11.58
1914	90,083	1,819	20.19	161	88.5	1	6	3.9	1,082	12.01
1915	86,299	1,792	19.89	147	82.0	3	3	3.4	1,199	13.89
1916	92,563	1,794	19.38	145	80.8	4	—	2.2	1,230	14.46
1917	91,936	1,420	15.44	140	98.6	3	4	4.9	1,172	14.21
1918	92,320	1,582	17.14	115	72.7	3	4	4.4	1,317	15.98
1919	95,175	1,593	16.7	109	68.4	1	3	2.5	1,091	11.9
1920	95,387	2,278	24.8	152	66.7	4	7	3.9	1,016	11.04
1921	92,274	1,892	20.4	114	60.2	—	1	0.5	1,069	10.7
1922	92,990	1,729	18.5	109	63.04	—	2	1.16	1,135	12.2
1923	93,160	1,705	18.3	88	51.6	3	8	6.4	1,036	11.12
1924	93,680	1,603	17.1	86	53.6	—	5	3.1	1,006	10.7
1925	93,910	1,509	16.07	85	56.3	2	5	4.6	1,042	11.12
1926	93,290	1,624	17.6	83	50.5	4	1	3.0	1,139	12.2
1927	94,890	1,456	15.3	62	42.5	1	2	2.0	1,165	12.3
1928	97,190	1,489	15.48	80	53.6	4	6	6.7	1,147	11.9
1929	97,050	1,446	14.9	75	50.5	1	3	2.8	1,373	14.1
1930	97,050	1,404	14.4	77	54.8	—	3	2.1	1,114	11.4
1931	97,149	1,477	15.1	66	44.6	1	3	2.7	1,169	12.0
1932	97,636	1,396	14.3	77	55.2	1	5	4.29	1,253	12.8
1933	98,950	1,380	13.9	87	63.0	1	4	2.9	1,370	13.6
1934	99,250	1,414	14.25	58	41.02	3	1	2.8	1,183	11.9
1935	99,600	1,475	14.8	76	51.5	2	1	1.9	1,230	12.3
1936	100,000	1,436	14.3	73	51.0	1	2	2.1	1,275	12.8
1937	100,200	1,581	15.8	79	49.7	—	3	1.8	1,306	13.0
1938	100,400	1,582	15.7	60	39.9	1	6	4.4	1,259	12.5
1939	100,600	1,564	15.5	79	50.5	1	5	3.9	1,327	13.2
1940	114,600	1,725	15.0	88	51.0	—	1	0.5	1,606	14.1
1941	124,800	1,913	15.3	113	59.0	2	5	3.7	1,532	12.2
1942	117,800	1,833	15.0	70	38.2	1	1	1.1	1,298	11.0
1943	113,000	1,925	17.03	83	43.1	1	4	2.6	1,385	12.2
1944	111,340	2,139	19.2	87	40.7	—	4	1.8	1,311	12.0
1945	108,830	2,066	18.8	98	47.4	1	3	1.9	1,400	12.8
1946	111,340	2,226	20.0	98	44.0	—	2	0.89	1,382	12.4
1947	112,960	2,533	22.4	89	35.1	—	2	0.77	1,395	12.3
1948	114,500	2,100	17.88	71	34.6	2	2	1.9	1,311	11.45
1949	115,500	1,873	16.26	47	26.2	—	1	0.52	1,260	10.93
1950	115,770	1,761	15.21	46	26.1	—	—	—	1,344	11.61
1951	115,100	1,833	15.93	52	28.95	—	1	0.55	1,402	12.18
1952	115,800	1,772	15.30	40	23.19	—	—	—	1,285	11.09
1953	117,700	1,714	14.56	33	19.70	—	3	1.75	1,255	10.66
1954	118,300	1,678	14.18	49	29.20	—	1	0.58	1,246	10.53
1955	118,100	1,695	14.35	40	23.60	—	—	—	1,358	11.5
1956	117,900	1,765	14.97	32	18.13	—	—	—	1,348	11.43



Arrangements continue for the use of maternity outfits of an approved pattern for all mothers who are to be confined at home.

Comments on the mothercraft class will be found under the work of the health visitors.

**Blood Tests.** Our practice of performing venepuncture for the purpose of carrying out blood tests for Rhesus factor and Kahn tests for general practitioners has continued.

The following table gives particulars :—

Blood tests on—

Clinic patients at Star Lane	...	...	...	...	7
General practitioner patients at Star Lane	...	...	...	...	727
Clinic patients at Whitley	...	...	...	...	88
General practitioner patients at Whitley	...	...	...	...	122

**Post-natal Clinics.** There are no special sessions for post-natal examinations. The work is carried out in conjunction with the ante-natal sessions. During the year 31 women attended municipal clinics for post-natal examinations.

**Care of Unmarried Mothers and Children.** This work continues to be carried out in collaboration with the Reading and Bradfield Association for Moral Welfare and other agencies. If necessary, cases can be dealt with by the Department's own staff. We have also collaborated closely with the Children's Officer, more especially when there was any question of adoption or fostering of the child when the mother was ready to resume work. The Welfare Worker of this Association has been good enough to supply the following information :—

During 1956 there were 77 new cases in Reading involving illegitimate children and their parents. In addition 14 other new cases concerned with other problems were dealt with during the year; 35 cases involving illegitimate children were brought forward from 1955 as they were still receiving help.

There were 509 interviews at St. Mary's Gate, and 516 home visits were made, these figures include people from the Bradfield Deanery as well as from Reading County Borough.

Nine hundred and forty-one letters were received and 1,182 were written during the year.

Dr. Barnardo's Homes have continued to make grants to several unmarried mothers to help with the maintenance of their children.

Once again friends have made it possible by their gifts of clothing, cots and prams to help some mothers who were in need of these things.

The girls who have been to Mother and Baby Homes have been greatly helped and they are appreciative of the help afforded them.

The following statistics apply to Reading cases :—

<i>Annual Record of Cases</i>					<i>New</i>	<i>Old</i>	<i>Total</i>
(A)	Involving illegitimate children and their parents				77	35	112

*\*Ages of Mothers on referral*

14 and under	...	...	—
15	...	...	2
16	...	...	5
17	...	...	8
18 and over	...	...	62

*\*Domicile (Mothers)*

Home in area	...	...	60
Home elsewhere	...	...	17

*\*Marital Status (Mothers)*

Single	...	...	66
Married	...	...	10
Widowed	...	...	—
Divorced	...	...	1

*\*Nationality (Mothers)*

British Isles	...	...	75
Commonwealth	...	...	2
U.S.A.	...	...	—
Others	...	...	—

*\*Marital Status (Putative Fathers)*

Single	...	...	57
Married	...	...	17
Widowed	...	...	—
Divorced	...	...	3

*\*Nationality (P.F.)*

British Isles	...	...	45
Commonwealth	...	...	4
U.S.A.	...	...	27
Others	...	...	1

†Details of Maternity Cases (A) above—					<i>New</i>	<i>Old</i>	<i>Total</i>
Children in care of mother (at home, in family, with her in post, etc.)...					23	21	44
Children in touch with mother (fostered, in nursery, etc.)					2	—	2
Children taken into care by L.A.					3	4	7
Children taken by Voluntary Societies					4	—	4
Children adopted or placed for adoption					15	10	25
Mothers placed in Voluntary Homes					19	11	30
Mothers placed in L.A. Homes, Burnell House					2	—	2
Mothers with children still in Home					3	—	3
No. of Maintenance grants from L.A.					18	11	29

*\*New Cases only*

†Current cases, new and old, on which any work has been done during the year.

*Summary of New Cases for 1956—*

Children in care of mother	...	...	23
„ „ touch with mother	...	...	2
„ „ care of L.A.	...	...	3
„ taken by Vol. Societies	...	...	4
„ placed for adoption	...	...	15
Mothers with children still in Home	...	...	3
„ moved before birth of child	...	...	5
Miscarriages, abortions, died	...	...	1
Babies not yet born	...	...	21
			—
			77
			—

Workers of the Oxford Diocesan Council have taken part in a national survey of the position of illegitimate children in their later years. A survey of the later



histories of girls sent to Burnell House revealed much greater stability for babies whose mothers had had time to make plans and effect good adoptions or reconciliations with the relatives than occurred in a random sample of cases helped with or without residential care.

**Infant Welfare Clinics.** There was no change in the clinic arrangements during 1956.

It is estimated that 83.8% of children born during the year attended these clinics at least once during 1956.

The following table gives a summary of the attendances at the clinics during the year :—

#### INFANT WELFARE CLINICS

Centre	No. of Sessions	New attendances under 1 year	Total attendances	Average Attendances
St. Mary Magdalen, Oxford Road, Reading— Tuesday p.m. ... ..	52	107	3,210	61
Elm Park Hall, Oxford Road, Reading— Tuesday a.m. ... ..	51	38	1,394	27
Tuesday p.m. ... ..	51	99	2,650	52
Thursday p.m. ... ..	52	85	2,387	46
Tilehurst Village Hall, Tilehurst— Monday p.m. ... ..	50	88	2,556	51
Thursday, p.m. ... ..	52	47	1,663	32
Star Lane, London Street, Reading— Tuesday p.m. ... ..	51	135	2,841	55
Wednesday p.m. ... ..	51	133	2,909	57
Whitley Clinic— Wednesday p.m. ... ..	51	152	2,925	57
Friday p.m. ... ..	51	107	2,286	45
Tynedale Free Church Hall, Shinfield— Thursday p.m. ... ..	52	84	2,125	41
West Memorial Institute, Caversham— Tuesday p.m. ... ..	52	124	2,626	51
Thursday p.m. ... ..	52	91	2,079	40
Park Institute, Wokingham Road, Reading— Monday p.m. ... ..	49	104	2,871	57
Friday p.m. ... ..	50	132	3,199	64
St. Barnabas' Hall, Emmer Green Wednesday (alt.) p.m.	26	22	595	23
Southcote Clinic— Wednesday p.m. ... ..	51	67	1,732	33
Friday p.m. ... ..	51	43	1,308	25
Totals ... ..	895	1,658	41,356	46



## NUMBER OF ATTENDANCES AT INFANT WELFARE CLINICS, 1956

Centres provided by	Number of centres provided at end of year	Number of child welfare sessions now held per month at centres in col. 2	Number of children who first attended a centre of this Local Health Authority during the year and who at their first attendance were under 1 year of age (4)	Number of children who attended during the year and who were born in :			Total number of children who attended during the year	Number of attendances during the year made by children who at the date of attendance were :			Total attendances during the year
				1956	1955	1954-51		Under 1 year	1 but under 2	2 but under 5	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
(a) L.H.A.	10	74	1,658	1,497	1,134	1,402	4,033	29,654	6,981	4,721	41,356

**Welfare Foods.** This service continued to work satisfactorily for the distribution of welfare foods. One Supervisor is responsible for the ordering and issuing of supplies of Ministry of Health and proprietary brands of welfare foods. He is assisted by two part-time assistants at the Central Depot, a storekeeper, part-time clerks employed on a sessional basis at certain clinics, and whole-time clerks at the central office who attend certain of the other clinic sessions. During 1956 we distributed the following from the main depot at 22, The Forbury :—

National Dried Milk Half-Cream (20-oz. tin)	...	...	...	594
National Dried Milk Full Cream (20-oz. tin)	...	...	...	23,450
Orange Juice (bottles)	...	...	...	61,196
Cod Liver Oil Compound (bottles)	...	...	...	6,803
Vitamin Capsules (packets)	...	...	...	4,847

The following figures relate to the main items distributed from the clinics during the year and are in addition to the preceding :—

National Dried Milk Half-Cream (20-oz. tin)	...	...	...	232
Proprietary brands of Dried Milk Half-Cream (16-oz. packets)	...	...	...	1,872
National Dried Milk Full Cream (20-oz. tin)	...	...	...	17,459
Proprietary brands of Dried Milk Full Cream (16-oz. packets)	...	...	...	25,008
Ministry of Food Orange Juice (bottles)	...	...	...	59,645
Proprietary brands of Fruit Juice (bottles)	...	...	...	3,744
Ministry of Food Cod Liver Oil Compound (bottles)	...	...	...	7,729
Ministry of Food Vitamin Capsules (packets)	...	...	...	3,016
Proprietary brands of Vitamin Preparations (8 c.c. bottles of Adexolin)	...	...	...	4,800

**Women's Advisory Clinic.** Arrangements continued as previously, viz., the clinic is administered by a voluntary body which has free use of Corporation clinic premises and receives a small financial subsidy from the Council. An additional session was opened at the Whitley Clinic and is being held twice a month. The following table gives particulars :—

Patients who attended the clinic	...	...	...	2,686
Patients examined by Medical Officer	...	...	...	1,694
New patients	...	...	...	522
Patients sent by doctors	...	...	...	200

**Care of Premature Infants.** The arrangements whereby the special Premature Baby Nurse carried out her work continued as previously, and I am pleased to report the same good results and the same good co-operation from the staff of Battle Hospital. Altogether 111 infants were under her supervision during the year ; 58 of these were transferred from hospital, of whom 57 were normal and 1 hydrocephalic ; all were discharged to the health visitor's care in a satisfactory condition.

Twenty-eight infants were transferred from nursing homes, including H.M.C. nursing homes. All these were discharged as normal and satisfactory into the care of the health visitors ; 25 infants were born at home and nursed entirely at home, all of whom were discharged into the health visitors' care normal and well.

In view of the comments which have been made about the future condition of premature babies, a follow-up has been carried out of babies who have been born since 1953. The following table gives particulars : it has not been possible to obtain details of every one of the premature babies born during the particular year in question :—



Weight at birth	PREMATURE LIVE BIRTHS														PREMATURE STILLBIRTHS			
	Born in Hospital			Born at home and nursed entirely at home			Born at home and transferred to hospital on or before 28th day			Born in nursing home and nursed entirely there			Born in nursing home and transferred to hospital on or before 28th day			Born in hospital	Born at home	Born nursing home
	Total	Died within 24 hrs. of birth	Survived 28 days	Total	Died within 24 hrs. of birth	Survived 28 days	Total	Died within 24 hrs. of birth	Survived 28 days	Total	Died within 24 hrs. of birth	Survived 28 days	Total	Died within 24 hrs. of birth	Survived 28 days			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
(a) 3-lb. 4-oz. or less (1,500 gms. or less)	11	5	6	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	4	—	—
(b) Over 3-lb. 4-oz. up to and including 4-lb. 6-oz. (1,500-2,000 gms.)	9	1	7	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	4	—	—
(c) Over 4-lb. 6-oz. up to and including 4-lb. 15-oz. (2,000-2,250 gms.)	13	—	13	6	—	5	—	—	—	8	—	8	—	—	—	3	—	—
(d) Over 4-lb. 15-oz. up to and including 5-lb. 8-oz. (2,250-2,500 gms.)	23	—	23	18	—	18	4	—	3	18	1	17	—	—	—	2	1	—
Totals	56	6	49	26	—	25	5	—	4	29	1	28	—	—	—	13	1	—

\* The Group under this heading will include cases which may be born in one hospital and transferred to another



## Born February to December, 1953

## REPORT AT THREE YEARS OF AGE

Follow-up of 69 of the 82 premature babies born during this period

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Wt./Ht.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	10	9	10	10	1	—	—	1 below average weight; had congenital cataract. Operation performed for same successful
Group B	13	12	12	13	1	1	—	1 spastic
Group C	13	13	13	13	—	—	—	
Group D	33	33	33	33	—	—	—	1 lymphangioma. Operation performed for same successful

## Born January to December, 1954

## REPORT AT TWO YEARS OF AGE

Follow-up of 97 out of 125 total

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Wt./Ht.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	6	4	5	5	2	1	1	1 Mongol
Group B	27	24	26	26	3	1	1	1 Mongol
Group C	17	16	17	17	1	—	—	
Group D	47	46	46	46	1	1	1	1 Mongol (1 with skeletal abnormalities; died in January)

## Born January to December, 1955

## REPORT AT ONE YEAR OF AGE

Follow-up of 72 out of 103 total

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Wt./Ht.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	8	6	7	8	1	1	1	1 with poor sight, improving
Group B	14	12	14	14	2	—	—	
Group C	20	18	20	20	2	—	—	1 had enlarged thymus—no longer obvious
Group D	30	24	30	30	6	—	—	

**Born January to June, 1956**  
**REPORT AT SIX MONTHS OF AGE**  
 Follow-up of 55 out of 58 total

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Wt./Ht.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	6	3	6	6	3	—	—	
Group B	6	4	6	6	2	—	—	
Group C	13	10	13	13	3	—	—	
Group D	30	25	30	30	5	—	—	

The table on page 24 gives particulars of the immediate history of small babies born during the year.

It will be seen from this table that most of the very small babies who are born in Reading are born in Battle Hospital. It is our policy to transfer babies under 3½-lb. who are born at home to hospital. The decision as to whether the baby is transferred to hospital or not rests with the general practitioner. It is pleasing to report that of all the premature babies who were born at home and nursed entirely at home, everyone survived.

*Day Nurseries.* Our general policy in respect of the selection of children for admission to day nurseries continued, viz., we only admit the children whose mothers have to go out to work for some reason or other, or where there is temporary illness in the home.

*Holybrook House.* The future of this nursery remains uncertain since we are not sure whether the Education Committee will require the premises in 1958. We have been informed that the Ministry of Health are unlikely to agree to the building of alternative premises and therefore if we have to move it will mean purchasing and adapting some existing premises. Suitable premises which are conveniently situated are not easy to find and I hope that it will be possible for us to continue at Holybrook House.

*Victoria Square Nursery.* Certain improvements to the nursery were carried out during the year and these have been continued early in 1957. Extensive re-decoration has been carried out, a hard playground has been erected at the rear of the premises and there are alterations to the sanitary arrangements:—

**Daily Average Attendance for each month of the year, 1956**  
**(Monday to Friday)**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Totals
Holybrook House ...	34	31	* 32	35	* 18	* 38	* 35	* 29	* 35	36	* 36	34	393
Victoria Square ...	23	23	22	17	18	† 20	† 18	† 16	21	24	24	19	245
Totals ...	57	54	54	52	36	58	53	45	56	60	60	53	638

\* German Measles    † Chicken Pox



The following details relate to the position as at 31st December, 1956 :—

Number of Approved Places		Number of Children on the Register at the end of the year		Average daily attendance for year	
0-2 yrs.	2-5 yrs.	0-2 yrs.	2-5 yrs.	0-2 yrs.	2-5 yrs.
30	60	27	39	19	33

**Dental Care of Expectant Mothers and Young Children.** Mr. J. Campbell, L.D.S., Principal Dental Officer, reports as follows :—

**Pre-School Children.** I am pleased to report that there has been an increase in the number of pre-school children, inspected and treated this year. This increase is gratifying in view of the fact that Whitley Dental Clinic was closed on October 15th. The closure of the clinic was due to the absence of the Dental Officer, on special leave. I feel sure that with an improvement in the staffing position, much more could be done, in this direction.

**Expectant and Nursing Mothers.** There has been an increase of work in this section, also, the figures being fully double the number, who attended in 1955. At Whitley Clinic, as I have pointed out, previously, arrangements have been in force, since 1953, for the dental examination and treatment of any mother, attending the clinic if referred by the Medical Officer. The ante-natal, welfare and dental clinics are in the same building.

There are a number of cases being carried forward to 1957, for completion of their treatment, several being for the supply of dentures. At the same time, it must be regretted, there are quite a number of mothers who do not return for completion of their treatment, once the initial dental trouble has been removed.



## NUMBERS PROVIDED WITH DENTAL CARE, 1956

	Examined	Needing Treatment	Treated	Made Dentally Fit
Expectant and Nursing Mothers ...	32	32	32	19
Children under five ...	327	199	199	180

## FORMS OF DENTAL TREATMENT PROVIDED

	Scalings and gum treatment	Fillings	Silver Nitrate Treatment	Crowns or Inlays	Extractions	General Anaesthetics	Dentures provided Full upper or lower	Partial upper or lower	Radio-graphs
Expectant and nursing mothers ...	11	61	—	—	62	7	5	2	4
Children under five ...	13	68	282	—	197	58	—	—	—

## MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE, 1956

## DENTAL TREATMENT

	Pre-school	Ante-natal	Post-natal
Inspected ... ..	327	18	14
Found to require treatment ...	199	18	14
Treated ... ..	199	18	14
Attendances ... ..	320	47	45
Extractions ... ..	197	23	39
Local Anaesthetics ... ..	33	13	6
General Anaesthetics ... ..	58	2	5
Fillings ... ..	68	54	7
Clean and Polish ... ..	13	7	4
Dressings ... ..	32	9	9
Silver Nitrate ... ..	282	—	—
Full Dentures ... ..	—	—	5
Part Dentures ... ..	—	—	2
Discharged ... ..	180	13	6

### ENVIROMENTAL SURVEY OF CHILDREN DYING FROM LEUKAEMIA OR OTHER MALIGNANT DISEASE BEFORE THE AGE OF 10 YEARS

An investigation was started in December, 1955, to enquire into the increasing number of deaths from Leukaemia and other malignant diseases occurring in children under the age of 10 years. The investigation was initiated by Dr. Alice Stewart, Reader in Social Medicine, at Oxford, with the approval of the Medical Research Council and with a grant from the Lady Tata Memorial Trust.

The survey covers the whole of England and the field work in all cases has been undertaken by the Local Authority Health Departments. The addresses of all children certified as dying from Leukaemia or malignant disease during the three years, 1953-1955 were collected with the help of the General Register Office and the attendant doctor was then asked for permission to approach the parents. In all cases this request was granted and the parents were then invited by letter to co-operate by allowing one of the Assistant Medical Officers to call and interview them. A similar interview was also arranged with the parents of a control child of the same age and sex, chosen at random from the local birth register of the district in which the other child's parents were living when the death occurred. The names and addresses of the first six children of like sex who were born during the month and year in question, were recorded, and invitations to co-operate sent to their parents in the order in which they appeared on the list. This selection of control cases proved to be the most time consuming part of the investigation, many families had moved, tracing them was sometimes fruitless, and many parents did not reply to the invitation. Only one refusal was given. I would like, at this point, to thank the Health Visitors for their help in tracing these control cases, a very tedious chore, as in some cases the parent in question had made several moves and the original address had been noted as far back as 1945.

Twelve families were interviewed in Reading, and in each case standard questionnaires were used. These were designed to elicit information about the child's health before the onset of the fatal illness, and the mother's health before and during the relative pregnancy. Hospital investigations were checked with the hospital notes. The schedules for the controls ensured that the same facts were



obtained up to the age when the corresponding case first showed signs of the fatal illness.

The preliminary analysis of the completed schedules was focussed mainly on the X-ray histories. Initial reports show that the number of mothers who had an X-ray of the abdomen during the relative pregnancy was 85 for the cases and 45 for the controls. This large difference between cases and controls can hardly be fortuitous and the investigation so far suggests that irradiation of the infant in utero may occasionally cause leukaemia or cancer in the unborn child.

In Reading the following facts were noted during the investigation. It must be pointed out, however, that this small selection of cases is not representative of the total for the whole country.

The investigation is still proceeding and more definite facts are now being collected concerning more detailed Radiological data.

	SEX	CAUSE OF DEATH		RADIATION EXPOSURE		AGE AT DEATH	
		Survey	Control	Survey	Control	Survey	Control
Case 1	Female	Thymic Lymphosarcoma	Healthy	In utero 1 Diagnostic X-ray	None	2 yrs. 2 mths.	Alive
Case 2	Male	Aclymphatic Leukaemia	"	In utero 1 Diagnostic X-ray	In utero 1 Diagnostic X-ray	5 yrs. 10 mths.	"
Case 3	Male	Wilms Tumour	"	None	In utero 1 Diagnostic X-ray	2 yrs. 6 mths.	"
Case 4	Female	Cerebellar Glioma	"	In utero 6-10 Diagnostic X-rays	In utero 1 Diagnostic X-ray	5 yrs. 1 mth.	"
Case 5	Male	Retroperitoneal Sarcoma	"	None (Mother worked in Radar in war)	None	7 yrs. 7 mths.	"
Case 6	Male	Neuroblastoma	"	None	None	8 yrs.	"



## SECTION 23—DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY

Arrangements for this service continued on the lines previously described, i.e., there are six Q.V.I. midwives assisted by pupils from Battle Hospital taking part of the C.M.B. examination. Towards the end of the year a sixth municipal midwife was engaged to work on the growing St. Michael's Estate at Tilehurst. For the first time we engaged a whole-time non-Medical Supervisor of Midwives (Miss L. F. Meacham) who commenced duties on 1st March, 1956.

The demand for institutional accommodation of one type or another continued throughout the year. All "vetting" of applications for admission to general practitioner nursing homes on social grounds was carried out personally by Miss Meacham. Altogether 660 mothers were visited in connection with these applications; of these 282 were considered suitable for domiciliary confinement. The following table shows the trend of confinements during recent years. Particulars of the births in other institutions will also be found in the following pages:—

Year	Total Confinements	Domiciliary Confinements	Percentage of Total
1938	1,552	1,000	64.4
1939	1,564	897	57.7
1940	1,725	931	54.0
1941	1,913	931	49.0
1942	1,833	858	46.8
1943	1,925	907	47.0
1944	2,139	925	43.2
1945	2,066	806	39.0
1946	2,226	791	35.5
1947	2,250	765	34.0
1948	2,100	645	30.7
1949	1,855	603	32.5
1950	1,809	559	30.9
1951	1,805	635	35.1
1952	1,767	614	34.7
1953	1,700	601	35.3
1954	1,678	615	36.6
1955	1,707	603	35.2
1956	1,784	699	39.2

**Stillbirths.** Thirty-four stillbirths were reported during the year as compared with 39 in the previous year. The stillbirth rate per 1,000 births during recent years has been as follows:—

1954	...	...	17.28
1955	...	...	23
1956	...	...	19

An analysis of these 34 stillbirths revealed the following :—

18 took place in Battle Hospital, 5 of them being patients referred from Dellwood and 1 from a patient who was referred from the Chiltern Nursing Home

4 occurred in Dellwood

7 were domiciliary cases delivered on the districts

2 occurred at the Chiltern Maternity Home

The probable causes of the 34 stillbirths were as follows :—

Maternal toxæmia	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Post maturity	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
A.P.H.	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Congenital malformation	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Placental insufficiency	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Caesarian section	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Impacted foetus	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Breech presentation	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
B.B.A.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Malpresentation	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Cord strangulation in utero	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cord separated in utero	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cause unknown	...	...	...	...	...	...	5

**Maternal Deaths.** There were no maternal deaths during the year.

**Puerperal Pyrexia.** Of 16 cases investigated, 4 occurred in nursing homes, 10 in domiciliary practice, and 4 in hospital practice.

It should be reported that the new definition of puerperal pyrexia has not been altogether satisfactory. In agreement with the consultant obstetrician, the hospital does not notify cases where there is one flick of temperature.

Investigation of 14 cases revealed the following :—

Mastitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Uterine infection	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Tonsillitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Urinary infection	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Retained products of conception	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Pyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Recto Vaginal fistula	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cause undetected	...	...	...	...	...	...	4

**Ophthalmia Neonatorum.** No cases were reported during the year. The following analysis of 240 medical aid forms may be of interest :—

240 Medical Aid notifications : 239 Booked, 1 Unbooked

<i>Infant</i>	<i>Mother</i>
1 vomiting	31 laceration of perinium or labia
1 prolapsed cord	1 patient telephoned doctor
2 abnormality	14 toxæmia
21 sticky eyes	1 dermatitis
1 cough	5 phlebitis
15 foetal distress	3 breech
1 jaundice	18 pyrexia
8 asphyxia	1 early rupture of membranes
1 S.B.	1 glycosuria



*Infant*  
9 infection

*Mother*  
1 vomiting in pregnancy  
1 pyelitis  
14 prolonged labour  
4 mastitis  
6 premature labour  
1 low H.B.  
2 obstructed labour  
2 retained placenta  
3 high head  
1 raised B.P.  
11 P.P.H.  
6 A.P.H.  
1 cough  
1 prolapsed cord  
1 malpresentation

### Staphylococcal infection of the newborn

We got the impression that there might be some increase in staphylococcal infection of the newborn in babies who were born at home. With the agreement of the general practitioners arrangements were made for swabs to be taken of the baby's lesion (often a sticky eye), baby's hands, nose, and umbilicus. Swabs were also taken from the nose and throat of the mother and also from the nose and throat of the midwife. Steps are also taken to ascertain the penicillin sensitivity of any staphylococci found and, if necessary, to have them phage typed.

### Total Births [which occurred in the Borough—Reading and Non-Reading Residents (based on notifications)]

#### Births

Male	... 1,360	Legitimate	... 2,475	Live	... 2,535
Female	... 1,243	Illegitimate	... 128	Still	... 68

#### Weights

2-lb. 3-oz. or under	...	...	...	...	...	21
2-lb. 4-oz.-3-lb. 4-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	29
3-lb. 5-oz.-4-lb. 6-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	47
4-lb. 7-oz.-4-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	53
5-lb. 0-oz.-5-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	109
5-lb. 8-oz.-5-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	119
6-lb. 0-oz.-6-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	278
6-lb. 8-oz.-6-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	365
7-lb. 0-oz.-7-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	513
7-lb. 8-oz. or over	...	...	...	...	...	1,069

#### Place of Birth

Domiciliary	...	...	...	...	...	702
Hospital	...	...	...	...	...	1,087
Private Nursing Home	...	...	...	...	...	90
H.M.C. Maternity Homes	...	...	...	...	...	499
Contractual	...	...	...	...	...	225

#### Dellwood

Number of patients delivered by midwives	...	...	414
Number of patients delivered by doctors	...	...	76*
Number of infants wholly breast-fed	...	...	472
Maternal Deaths	...	...	Nil

\* 12 of these were forceps deliveries





## PERIOD OF GESTATION

No. of Weeks	Total Borough Births	Other Area Births in the Borough	All Births in the Borough
24	1	1	2
25	—	—	—
26	1	2	3
27	1	2	3
28	1	8	9
29	1	2	3
30	4	4	8
31	5	4	9
32	13	5	18
33	2	4	6
34	7	24	31
35	14	13	27
36	43	34	77
37	33	15	48
38	128	79	207
39	110	69	179
40	1,352	576	1,928
41	29	29	58
42	32	16	48
43	5	9	14
44	1	2	3
46	1	—	1
	1,784	898	2,682

## CAUSES OF INFANT DEATHS, 1956

Cause	Under 1 week	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks	3-4 weeks	Total under 1 month	1-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	Total under 1 year
Whooping cough ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Other heart disease ... ..	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Influenza ... ..	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Pneumonia ... ..	1	—	1	—	2	1	1	1	1	6
Congenital Malformations ... ..	10	—	—	1	11	—	—	—	—	11
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	8
All other Accidents ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	2
Totals ... ..	23	—	1	1	25	2	2	1	2	32



		Number of Midwives practising in the area of the Local Super- vising Authority at the end of the year		
		Domiciliary Midwives	Midwives in Institutions	Total
(a)	Midwives employed by the Authority ... ..	6	—	6
(b)	Midwives employed by Voluntary Organisations—			
(i)	Under arrangements with the Local Health Authority in pursuance of Section 23 of the National Health Service Act, 1946 ... ..	6	—	6
(ii)	Otherwise (including Hospi- tals not transferred to the Minister under the National Health Service Act) ...	—	—	—
(c)	Midwives employed by Hospital Management Committees or Boards of Governors under the National Health Service Act, 1946—			
(i)	Under arrangements with the Local Health Authority in pursuance of Section 23 of the National Health Service Act, 1946 ... ..	—	24	24
(ii)	Otherwise ... ..	—	—	—
(d)	Midwives in Private Practice (in- cluding Midwives employed in Nursing Homes) ... ..	—	8	8
Total ...		12	32	44

Number of Deliveries attended by Midwives in the Area during the year

	Domiciliary Cases				Totals	Cases in Institutions
	Doctor not booked		Doctor booked			
	Doctor present at time of delivery of child (2)	Doctor not present at time of delivery of child (3)	Doctor present at time of delivery of child (either the booked Doctor or another) (4)	Doctor not present at time of delivery of child (5)		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(a) Midwives employed by the Authority ...	—	4	87	209	300	—
(b) Midwives employed by Voluntary Organisations :—						
(i) Under arrangements with the Local Health Authority in pursuance of Section 23 of the National Health Service Act, 1946 ...	1	5	75	316	397	—
(ii) Otherwise (including Hospitals not transferred to the Minister under the National Health Service Act) ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Midwives employed by Hospital Management Committees or Boards of Governors under the National Health Service Act ...	—	—	—	—	—	1,604
(d) Midwives in Private Practice (including Midwives employed in Nursing Homes) ...	—	—	—	—	—	318
Totals ...	1	9	162	525	697	1,922



	(1) Number of Domiciliary Midwives practising in the area at end of year who were qualified to administer inhalational analgesics in accordance with the requirements of the Central Midwives Board (2)	Number of sets of apparatus for the administration of inhalational analgesics in use at end of year		Number of cases in which inhalational analgesics were administered by midwives in domiciliary practice during the year				Number of cases in which pethidine was administered by midwives in domiciliary practice during the year	
		Gas and air (3)	"Trilene" (4)	When doctor was present at time of delivery of child		When doctor was not present at time of delivery of child		When doctor was present at time of delivery of child	When doctor was not present at time of delivery of child
				Gas and air (5)	"Trilene" (6)	Gas and air (7)	"Trilene" (8)		
(a) Domiciliary Midwives employed directly by the Local Health Authority	6	7	5	56	37	155	88	44	106
(b) Domiciliary Midwives employed under Section 23 by voluntary organisations as agents of Local Health Authority ...	5	6	4	56	20	200	92	41	108
(c) Domiciliary Midwives employed under Section 23 by hospital authorities as agents of Local Health Authority ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(d) Domiciliary Midwives in private practice or employed by organisations not acting as agents of Local Health Authority	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	11	13	9	112	57	355	180	85	214

## SECTION 24—HEALTH VISITING

During the year, one School Nurse has been away on an assisted scheme to train as a health visitor, and will be returning to duty in July, 1957.

One School Nurse (Miss Edgar) retired in October after twenty-five years' service in Reading.

One Health Visitor : School Nurse, retired on marriage in March.

Number of staff at the end of the year :—

Whole-time Health Visitors : School Nurses	...	...	9
Part-time Health Visitors : School Nurses	...	...	1
Whole-time Health Visitor	...	...	1
Whole-time School Nurses	...	...	2
Part-time School Nurses	...	...	1
Part-time Clinic Nurse	...	...	1
Part-time Vacancies	...	...	5

The co-operation between the health visiting staff and the hospital almoners has become very complete ; this has been greatly helped by the interchange of reports of patients discharged from hospital and by the follow-up visits paid by the health visitors as and when requested by the hospital concerned.

Records are kept on adult visiting cards.

The liaison between general practitioners has become more evident and has been greatly helped by the increased visits paid to the geriatric patients in their area, whether for hospitalization assessment or for the after-care of their patients. The Home Help Service has greatly helped and eased the work of the health visitor amongst the care of the aged, ante-natal mothers requiring special rest, and in many other instances.

Primary visits to children under 1 year of age	...	1,755
Total visits to children under 1 year of age	...	6,955
Total visits to children aged 1-2 years	...	4,617
Total visits to children aged 2-5 years	...	9,868
Total No. of children visited under 5 years of age	...	7,735
Total number of families visited	...	5,530
First visits to expectant mothers	...	344
Total visits to expectant mothers	...	384
Total number of visits to old people for hospital assessment	...	250
Total number of visits for care and after-care	...	196

During the year family cards were introduced for recording the family as a whole including other members who actually form part of that family.

Visiting cards are brought forward at the appropriate interval (infants every two months up to the first year ; from 1-2 years every four months ; and from 2-5 years every six months).

### Mothercraft Classes

In late June, Mothercraft Classes were commenced in the town's central welfare clinic. These consisted of seven talks, two given by the Supervisor of Midwives on that pertaining to the birth mechanism and the giving of gas and air. The remaining five talks were given by those Health Visitors particularly interested in health teaching.

The general practitioners were advised that these classes were taking place and were invited to send along any of their expectant mothers. Many have taken advantage of the offer and the classes have been appreciated by the mothers attending.

Thirty classes have been given and 84 mothers have completed the course up to the end of the year.



### Parentcraft Courses for Schoolchildren

In April the above classes were commenced in Alfred Sutton Secondary Modern Girls' School as an experiment for the 14-15 year old age groups. These classes were given in conjunction with the housecraft course so that the students, during the course, were able to carry out what had been taught in their practical work. A visit to a welfare clinic, day nursery and nursery school is paid at the end of the course. The experiment proved worth while and was then asked for by the Education Department for other secondary modern schools. A syllabus has been drawn up by the Health Visitors/School Nurses so that there is some definite uniformity in each school, though some thought is given to the capabilities of the students attending each school. The course itself has now become an integrated part of the home craft teaching and practical demonstrations.

By the end of the year four Health Visitors/School Nurses were taking part in these classes and 60 classes had been given. There were five schools taking advantage of the course.

I would like some appreciation to be paid for the help and guidance we have received from Miss Mason, Housecraft Organiser and to the Headmistress of Alfred Sutton School who assisted us greatly in the early trial days.

### SECTION 25—HOME NURSING

The Queen Victoria Institute continued to act as the agent of the Council in respect of home nursing as well as part of the domiciliary Midwifery Service. Towards the end of the year Miss Hinksman, who had been Superintendent for many years, retired on her marriage. She was succeeded by Miss Edwards, the Senior Assistant Superintendent. The number of staff at the end of the year was :—

Superintendent	...	...	...	...	...	1
Assistant Superintendents	...	...	...	...	...	2
Q.V.I. district nurses who have completed their period of contract	...	...	...	...	...	22
Q.V.I. district nurses completing their contract of service	...	...	...	...	...	2
Student nurses (1 male)	...	...	...	...	...	1
Male nurses (completing their contract of service)	...	...	...	...	...	
Non-Q.V.I. nurses—						
Full-time	...	...	...	...	...	5
Part-time	...	...	...	...	...	Nil

The following table gives the statistical summary of the visits paid by nurses to various types of cases during the year :—

					<i>Number of Cases</i>	<i>Number of Visits</i>
Medical	...	...	...	...	1,704	64,173
Surgical	...	...	...	...	85	8,616
Infectious disease	...	...	...	...	28	312
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	59	3,618
Maternal complications	...	...	...	...	145	1,367
Others	...	...	...	...	359	1,652
					<hr/> 2,380	<hr/> 79,738

The following information is also of interest :—1,335 of the 2,380 patients were over 65 years of age at the time of the first visit and they received the total of 53,883 visits out of a total of 79,738, i.e., well over half of the patients visited were over the age of 65 and they received nearly two-thirds of the total visits paid. One hundred and ninety-six patients received more than 24 visits during the year—a total of 30,795. One hundred and seventeen children were attended and they received 1,019 visits.

Injections of various sorts form about 10% of the treatments given by district nurses.

Year	Number of cases nursed	Total number of visits
1949	2,741	92,000
1950	2,761	84,029
1951	2,831	66,937
1952	3,082	74,168
1953	3,490	77,717
1954	3,294	81,089
1955	3,443	79,088
1956	2,380	79,738

The arrangements for the issue of nursing requisites continued satisfactorily throughout the year. The Queen Victoria Institute now hold only a small supply for emergency use at their Homes and issues are made mainly from the central depot at Star Lane on the production of a note of authorisation signed by a district nurse. It is also the responsibility of the staff of this central depot to make sure that equipment is returned when it is no longer required.

## SECTION 26 — VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION (excluding B.C.G.)

Arrangements for immunisation against diphtheria and against whooping cough continued to be carried out on the lines described in previous reports. The following tables give the position as at 31st December, 1956. The figures include children who were given combined injections against whooping cough and diphtheria.



**Immunisation in relation to Child Population :—**

Number of children who had completed a course of Immunisation at any time between 1st January, 1942 and 31st December, 1956.

Age at 31/12/56 i.e. born in the year ...	Under 1 1956	1-4 1952-1955	5-9 1947-1951	10-14 1942-1946	Under 15 Total
Last complete course of injections (whether prim- ary or booster)					
A 1952-1956 ...	317	4,653	2,724	233	7,915
B 1951 or earlier ...	—	—	4,322	6,336	10,670
C Estimated mid-year child population ...	1,750	6,250	18,000		26,000
Immunity Index	18.11	74.44	75.64		74.48

Booster Doses—For Diphtheria alone ... 252  
For Diphtheria and Whooping Cough ... 818

The number of children who completed the course of inoculation with Pertussis Vaccines (including combined diphtheria/pertussis vaccines) during 1956 was as follows :—

Age at Date of Final Injection			
Under 1 year	1-4 years	5-14 years	Total
951	398	56	1,405

Booster Doses—Combined Whooping Cough and Diphtheria ... 818  
Whooping Cough ... 12

IMMUNISATION FIGURES FOR PERIOD JANUARY 1st to DECEMBER 31st, 1956

Clinic	Sess- ions	No. of children who completed a course of Immunisation against Diphtheria	No. of children who completed a course of Immunisation against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough	No. of children who completed a course of Immunisation against Whooping Cough	No. of children who received a reinforcing injection against Diphtheria	No. of children who received a reinforcing injection against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough	No. of children who received a reinforcing injection against Whooping Cough	Total
Grovelands	26	9	129	2	50	17	—	261
Whitley	26	11	152	2	32	149	6	352
Tilehurst	13	2	76	2	19	54	—	153
Caversham	13	11	100	3	35	60	1	210
School, Queen's Road	26	13	186	—	21	130	—	350
Southcote	23	3	66	—	13	110	—	192
Emmer Green Primary School	24	5	39	—	14	41	—	99
St. Michael's Primary School	1	—	—	—	2	8	—	10
Carried out by Private Practitioners	...	18	642	6	66	195	5	932
Totals	...	72	1,390	15	252	818	12	2,559



## Vaccinations performed during 1956

Age at 31/12/56 i.e., born in year	Under 1 1956	1 year 1955	2-4 1952-54	5-14 1942-51	15 or over before 1942	Total
Number Vaccinated	852	27	20	14	86	999
Number Re-vaccinated	52	2	—	16	87	157

## Vaccination Figures for Period 1st January to 31st December, 1956

Clinic	Sessions	0-6 months	7-12 months	Over 12 months	Totals
Grovelands ...	26	50	14	2	66 (11)
Whitley ...	26	74	16	8	98 (8)
Tilehurst ...	13	54	17	6	77 (5)
Caversham School	13	57	21	8	86 (7)
Queen's Road ...	26	86	34	26	146 (24)
Southcote ...	23	46	6	1	53 (11)
Emmer Green ...	24	27	—	3	30 (10)
Carried out by Private Prac- titioners ...	—	307	95	198	600 (81)
Totals ...		701	203	252	1,156 (157)

Figures in parenthesis denote re-vaccination

**Poliomyelitis Vaccine.** A subject of particular interest during the year was the introduction of vaccination against poliomyelitis. The plan behind this scheme was controlled by the Medical Research Council. Owing to shortage of supplies, vaccination was offered to children who were born during the years 1947-54 inclusive. Furthermore, it could only be given to selected children in these age groups. Altogether 3,027 children registered for immunisation and of these 329 were vaccinated. Vaccination was suspended at the end of June because of the possible risk of provoked poliomyelitis but it is hoped to resume vaccination during 1957. No untoward reactions were reported. There was considerable public interest in this scheme and, in view of the American experience, an understandable degree of nervousness. Now that events in this country have shown the absence of untoward effects in vaccinated children there does seem to be an increasing desire on the part of the public for vaccination against poliomyelitis. Unfortunately, manufacture of the vaccine on a large scale is not free from difficulties. A number of delays have occurred in resuming the scheme.

## SECTION 27—AMBULANCE SERVICE

The day-to-day supervision of the Ambulance Service continued under the ægis of the Transport Manager and Engineer, to whom I am indebted for the



following information :—A full-time Assistant Ambulance Officer was appointed in February of this year.

Great credit is due to these officers and their staff for the excellent work of the service.

The following table gives particulars of the work carried out since 1949 for Borough and non-Borough cases :—

<i>Year</i>		<i>Journeys</i>	<i>Patients</i>	<i>Mileage</i>
1949	...	8,797	10,098	88,884
1950	...	10,702	12,165	106,256
1951	...	12,176	14,097	119,839
1952	...	15,649	18,096	139,596
1953	...	19,357	23,482	155,528
1954	...	21,361	24,453	159,361
1955	...	22,224	26,207	162,369
1956	...	23,681	27,296	152,241

Summary of work carried out during 1956 is tabulated below :—

		CALLS		PATIENTS		MILES	
		Total All Areas	Borough Cases only	Total All Areas	Borough Cases only	Total All Areas	Borough Cases Only
Emergency (i.e., 999 Calls)	...	1,523	1,282	1,484	1,218	7,793	5,157
Urgent and Non-urgent Cases	...	22,081	19,802	25,762	23,477	143,136	116,837
Midwifery Flying Squad	...	77	39	50	22	1,312	242
Departmental	Stretcher Cases	12,870	11,170	13,891	12,183	90,998	70,551
Ambulances	Sitting/Walking Cases	10,811	9,953	13,405	12,534	61,243	51,685
St. John Ambulances	...	2	2	2	2	550	550
British Red Cross Ambulance	...	1	1	1	1	176	176

**Ambulance Fleet.** The fleet at the end of the year was comprised of eight large ambulances and two sitting/walking case ambulances. Of the large ambulances four are diesel powered and a fifth is shortly to be fitted with a diesel engine. The results in increased miles per gallon are satisfactory.

**Battle Hospital Patients.** On the 1st April, 1956, the ambulance service took over the responsibility for conveying to and from Battle Hospital all patients (residing in the Borough of Reading) who had previously been conveyed by the Hospital Car Service. This has resulted in an overall reduction in mileage for the two services, in addition to showing a reduction in the miles travelled per patient for the Ambulance Service (see table below) :—

	<i>Patients</i>		<i>Miles</i>		<i>M.P.P.</i>	
	1955	1956	1955	1956	1955	1956
Ambulance Service	26,207	27,296	162,369	152,241	6.19	5.57
Hospital Car Service	7,304	6,943	75,282	70,112	10.30	10.09
	<u>33,511</u>	<u>34,239</u>	<u>237,651</u>	<u>222,353</u>	<u>7.09</u>	<u>6.49</u>



**General.** Both the British Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Brigade have assisted the Ambulance Service during the past year in providing volunteers as escorts for patients attending Fairmile Hospital and on long train journeys.

Full advantage was taken during 1956 to convey both stretcher and sitting/walking patients by train to various parts of the country, in this connection 176 journeys were arranged.

At the request of the Oxford Regional Hospital Board, a Flying Squad for the transport of cases of threatened bulbar paralysis has been formed to serve the area of the Reading and District Hospital Management Committee. The unit is based on Prospect Park Hospital. The Ambulance Service is required to immediately answer any call for the Flying Squad Polio Unit and convey this unit and, if necessary, the patient, to any destination required. During the past year the ambulance service has been called upon three times to carry out this duty. This is an additional Flying Squad duty to those already undertaken by the department, i.e., Flying Squad Premature Baby Unit and Flying Squad Blood Transfusion Unit.

## SECTION 28—PREVENTION OF ILLNESS, CARE AND AFTER-CARE

**A. Tuberculosis** (see also Section *re* Infectious Disease). The arrangements for the care and after-care of tuberculous patients continued to work well. The Council's Tuberculosis Welfare Officer acted as Hon. Secretary for the Reading Tuberculosis Care Association. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking members of the R.T.C.A. for the time and thought they give to this work. Also a very special word of thanks to the Seal Sale Committee which, once again, organised a highly successful sale to provide the bulk of the money from which the Care Association meets its expenses.

(a) *Report of the Tuberculosis Welfare Officer.* The year 1956 has shown an increase of 39 in the number of new patients seen by the Welfare Officer, making the entire case load for the year in the region of 350. This increase was to be expected in view of the five month period in 1955 when the department was without a Welfare Officer.

Illness, in particular long term illness, accentuates existing stresses and weaknesses in an individual and in a family, thus tuberculosis can cause serious disruption in the life of a person, necessitating a considerable amount of case work help.

Close co-operation is maintained with other organisations statutory and voluntary in the community, as for example the National Assistance Board; the Probation Department; Children's Department; Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Families Association, and many others. The following shows the main types of help given through the Public Health Department :—

Recuperative Holidays	...	10
Free Milk	... ..	130
Meals on Wheels	... ..	3
Boarding out of contacts	...	1

Under the Christmas Parcels Scheme organised by the Care Association, 91 parcels were distributed. Two-thirds of the cost was paid for by the Public Health Department. The remainder being met by the Care Association.

(b) *Reading Tuberculosis Care Association.* The Honorary Secretary reports the work of the Reading Tuberculosis Care Association continues to adapt itself to supplement the statutory resources, meeting individual needs and cases of hardship which arise from living for a long period on slender resources.

Grants for the past year have been made for such needs as :—re-decorating a sitting room of a chronic tuberculous patient, cooking utensils, driving lessons for a



patient to obtain work as a driver, and many others. The following is the summary of grants given during the year :—

Provision of clothing ... ..	17
Radios (repairs, batteries and licences) ... ..	6
Home Help ... ..	6
Bedding ... ..	3
Travelling Expenses ... ..	4
Fuel ... ..	14
Groceries ... ..	16
Other ... ..	11

The Association wishing to make the patients' stay in hospital less tedious, purchased a television set for the tuberculous patients in Park Hospital. This was installed by the Hospital Management Committee.

A consignment of vegetable seeds were once again provided by Messrs. Suttons. This enabled 30 patients to grow their own vegetables. Under the Association's Gardening Scheme two old age pensioners dug and planted seeds in the gardens of 16 patients from March to June.

The Fuel Scheme provided 84 patients with 4 cwt. of coal at Christmas.

Supplementing the Christmas Parcel Scheme, already mentioned, toys were given to 60 children and a small gift to each of the 23 patients in Park Hospital.

St. John Ambulance and British Red Cross Library Service continued to deliver books fortnightly to home-bound patients; 1,290 books were issued during the year.

This year for the first time a float of £10, to be used at the discretion of the Occupational Therapist, was made. This enables materials to be bought for patients with limited financial means, so that any profit will benefit the patient. Previously, in cases of financial hardship, materials were bought by the Corporation which received any profit made.

(c) *Tuberculosis Christmas Seal Sale.* The seventh successive Christmas Seal Sale within the County Borough of Reading organised by the Reading Tuberculosis Care Association was held during a period of national and international crisis. Public attention was focused on the unrest in the Suez Canal zone and to the strife in Hungary and the plight of refugees from that country. For these unfortunate victims a nation wide appeal was made for their financial relief. There is a limit to the extent of public benefaction. It is surprising therefore, that the Seal Sale which has now become a regular local feature, was able to raise an amount equal to that of the previous record breaking year. The comparable figures are :—

	Year 1955-56			Year 1956-57		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Gross receipts ... ..	767	9	1	756	14	3
Contribution to N.A.P.T. (5%) ...	29	19	11	30	8	9
Net receipts for local patients ...	569	18	0	578	5	8

This year's sale was managed by a committee of 22 volunteers, with Alderman T. S. W. Smart as chairman, Mr. W. Ramsdale as honorary treasurer, Mr. E. T. Bowman as manager of selling centres and Mr. C. E. House as seal sale organiser. It was introduced by the President of the Association—His Worship the Mayor of Reading—Councillor A. Lockwood, J.P., in a communication addressed to 3,486 residents,



294 places of employment and 50 licensed premises. The publicity through press report, letter and adverts and by poster on public hoardings were similar to that of previous years.

Seals were on sale at various selling centres, viz., Chest Clinic, Health Welfare Office, Messrs. Heelas Limited, Messrs. Wellsteeds Limited, Messrs. Tutty Limited, the Reading Cattle Market, the Reading Co-operative Society (Cheapside, London Road, Prospect Street and Caversham Stores), the Salvation Army Citadel, Messrs. Littlewoods Limited, and the Premier Supermarket. The Committee are grateful for the facilities placed at their disposal by the various managements and to the many individuals who acted as seal sellers.

Committee Member—Mrs. M. Aubrey arranged a concert in the Waylen Hall, Reading, given by the Salvation Army (Central Home League) Singers, in conjunction with a bring and buy stall and a Christmas Seal Stall. This was a new and successful venture.

(d) *Occupational Therapy.* Miss L. D. Saunders, Occupational Therapist, has continued her good work. She reports as follows :—

During the year 124 tuberculous patients have been visited both in hospital and at home for the purpose of instruction and supply of materials for use in their occupational therapy.

About one-third of these who, having commenced in hospital and were subsequently discharged for home treatment, carried on their work and were visited frequently in their own homes, together with 29 others whose treatment had been taken entirely at home.

Approximately 488 visits were made to these home-bound patients until they were able to call at the department for further help and supplies.

Most of the work has been pursued for its usefulness—for instance, wool of one kind or another—rugs, woollen garments in a great variety and some weaving, accounts for nearly one-half of the materials issued to patients this year. The other useful materials were leather, canework, woven topped stools and embroideries, while the more decorative pursuits were painting, marquetry and necklaces in gay coloured plastic cord providing attractive gifts at Christmas time.

Only about 30 articles made were returned completed for the Helping Hand shops but 72 of the existing ones were sold during the year.

Naturally those completed and returned in future will be sent to our local Helping Hand Shop.

The total amount of materials issued was £425—£400 remitted by patients during the year.

Reference to the setting up of a Helping Hand Shop in Reading will be found in the section of this report which deals with the welfare of handicapped persons under Section 29 of the National Assistance Act.

(e) *B.C.G. Vaccination.* During the year 285 contacts were vaccinated with B.C.G. and 623 school leavers completed the full course of vaccination including the post-vaccination Mantoux Test.

The figures for school leavers are as follows :—

Number skin tested	...	...	...	...	...	741
Number found negative	...	...	...	...	...	624
Number vaccinated	...	...	...	...	...	623

**B. Provision of Nursing Equipment and Apparatus.** During the year we were able to establish a central store for nursing equipment. The district nursing homes now hold only a small stock of equipment for emergency use. As a general rule relatives are referred to the central store from which they draw the appropriate nursing equipment as recommended by the district nurse. We have found this



arrangement to work very satisfactorily in progress and relieves the district nursing section of a great deal of routine clerical work. Altogether 2,520 articles were supplied.

C. During the year 37 patients, including 26 adults and 6 children, 2 mothers and 3 children, were sent away for periods of convalescence under the Council's scheme. One was assisted with fares only.

D. **Health Education** (see also report of Chief Public Health Inspector). The main feature of the year was our participation in the Mental Health Exhibition organised by the Berkshire Mental Hospitals Committee. We had a stand which portrayed the activities of the Local Health Authority. This stand attracted favourable comment from many people and we were honoured by a visit from Her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Kent, on the second day of the Exhibition.

(E) **WORK OF THE FAMILY CASE WORKERS—PREVENTION OF BREAK-UP OF FAMILIES** (*Circular 27/54*)

In previous years I have commented at some length on the above subject. On this occasion my comments will be briefer for there is little to add to the general impression and views which I have expressed in previous Annual Reports.

At the end of September, Miss Ross left us to undertake training as a Psychiatric Social Worker. Miss Ross was the first Family Case Worker to be appointed in Reading and I am sure that the foundations of this particular section of the department were well and truly laid by her. We wish her the best of luck in her new type of work. Miss H. Harrison was appointed in her place and commenced duties the 1st November, 1956. Miss Calveley, the senior of the two Family Case Workers, reports that intensive case work continues with visits to 25 families and, together with the voluntary workers of the Reading Family Aid Group, 160 children under 15 years of age were dealt with during the year. Seven new families have come under supervision in 1956.

This particular kind of work does not produce quick or spectacular results. In fact, success can perhaps be more fairly judged when family life is gently "ticking over" and there is nothing special to report. The temptation remains, however, to try to have something to show for effort expended and there is a danger of helping in too many directions at once. As in previous years there has been close co-operation with other workers in the town, both statutory and voluntary.

**Reading Family Aid Group.** Throughout the year the Reading Family Aid Group has continued its work amongst 18 families. Although the group has no direct financial grant from the Council it has been generously helped with funds from the Reading Dispensary Trust, Inner Wheel, University Rag Committee, the Sunday Cinema Profits Fund, and others, in addition to gifts of clothing and bedding from private donors. With this help they have been able to send two families and several adolescent children on summer holidays and to meet the cost of a domestic help where the mother was in poor health and the father's interest in his home needed stimulating. It may be mentioned here that the Council provided the services of one of its regular home helps and the woman was assessed on the normal Council's assessment scale, the cost of which was met by the Family Aid Group.

**Homeless Families** (to be read in conjunction with the Section on temporary accommodation under the National Assistance Act, 1948). The majority of admissions into temporary Part III accommodation have been people who were homeless for the night and is generally arranged through the police. The majority of other cases, given warning of impending eviction, are encouraged to make their own arrangements with suggestions and assistance from the Family Case Workers unless there are special reasons which make the families concerned unacceptable to people who



let rooms. The number of enquiries concerning alternative accommodation as distinguished from genuine eviction cases, has become very large. It is interesting to note that the enquiries have increased considerably in number since the office has become more accessible. I must confess that this is a doubtful blessing since a lot of the workers' time is taken up in dealing with what are really normal housing enquiries.

## SECTION 29—DOMESTIC HELP SERVICE

This Service has continued with its good work through the year although this has involved an increase in the number of helps employed. About 88% of the cases helped are old people. Of these 273 were living entirely alone in addition to 154 couples living on their own. Frequent visits of the helps and the supervisors has meant that the unexpressed needs of many old folk are discovered and arrangements can frequently be made to relieve the situation, e.g., by putting them into touch with a chiropodist at a reduced charge where their income warrants this; arranging for friendly visitation, for meals on wheels; for loan of nursing equipment such as mackintosh sheets, commodes, bed rests; approach to the National Assistance officer, hospital almoner, the blind welfare officer. The nature of assistance provided varies with the individual needs. If the patient is alone in bed the home help will often have the key of the house and will make up the fire, help to wash the patient, prepare meals, do the shopping and collect the pension. The help does not stay in the house all day but returns at intervals as required by the needs of the patient. Special mention might be made of the night attendant service where an attendant can be provided for two or three nights a week in order to relieve relatives when this is considered essential or when removal to hospital is thought undesirable. This service has often enabled an aged couple to stay together until the end. The service provided for laundering of soiled linen has, although not in great numerical demand, been extremely useful in particular cases. We have continued to supply routine help in maternity cases or in other instances where the mother has been ill.

The following thumbnail sketches may be of interest to committee members, as illustrating the type of help which can be given :—

- 1—The matron of a remote hospital rang up to say that an injured child was not expected to live. The mother and father were enabled to stay the night at hospital because a home help was sent in to stay with the four remaining children at their home.
- 2—A mother suffering from tuberculosis was not making progress in hospital and this lack of progress was thought to be due to the fact that her four small children were scattered among relatives. Arrangements were made for her to return home and to have domiciliary treatment with the aid of a home help. The home help has been working in this house for some months and the patient's progress has been very satisfactory. It is expected that before long she will be able to dispense with the services of the home help.
- 3—An aged couple were having regular assistance in order to enable them to cope with the housework. The wife was taken critically ill and admitted to hospital. The amount of help to the arthritic husband was increased. Meals were cooked for him and he was given general attention while his wife was away. This meant that the wife's mind was very much more at rest while she was in hospital.
- 4—A woman over 80 years of age had been in hospital for over a year but was pining for her own home. The doctor would allow her to come home if the house could be prepared and regular home help supplied. This was done, the house was cleaned, and



the bed was moved downstairs. The patient has now been home for five months, is no longer bed-ridden and does her own cooking. The cleaning and shopping are done by a home help.

- 5—Two old women, one of whom was nearly 90 years of age, were found to be living alone almost at starvation level with their clothes seriously depleted. On investigation by a supervisor, it was found that a neighbour had been defrauding them of some of their pension, leaving only a small amount of the money due. The fraud was stopped, arrangements were made for the help to collect the pension, to do the shopping, etc. Under regular supervision these two old ladies became well fed, were kept warm, and were made generally comfortable.

An experiment has been tried whereby a group of aged persons, some solitary, some married couples, who occupy one bedroom bungalows at the end of a close on a Corporation housing estate, have been provided with the services of a home help who is resident in a Council house nearby. Not all of the old people need the services of the help regularly but there is sufficient demand to keep her busy and she is on the spot to cope with emergencies. Such emergencies have indeed occurred.

- (1) Number of domestic helps employed at the end of the year :

Whole-time	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Part-time	...	...	...	...	...	...	172

- (2) Number of cases where domestic help was provided during the year :

Maternity cases	...	...	...	...	...	...	155
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Chronic sick (including aged and infirm)	...	...	...	...	...	...	922
Others	...	...	...	...	...	...	260
							<hr/>
							1,349
							<hr/>

Again I would make special mention of the number of meals which are supplied by the Home Helps. These average just under 1,000 meals per week and are in addition to those supplied by the W.V.S. under their Meals on Wheels scheme.



## SECTION 29—DOMESTIC HELP SERVICE

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Number of Householders helped at first day of period—												
(a) Part-time .. .. .	579	576	624	634	645	640	654	642	662	669	671	696
(b) Full-time .. .. .	2	4	4	2	2	3	1	3	2	3	1	1
Number of Householders helped at last day of period :—												
(a) Part-time .. .. .	583	627	639	648	654	647	661	642	668	662	694	705
(b) Full-time .. .. .	3	5	4	1	2	1	3	3	2	3	3	1
Source of New Applications :—												
(a) Direct application by Doctor .. .. .	7	39	10	23	14	7	14	12	15	15	17	16
(b) .. .. . Hospital .. .. .	9	11	11	9	14	11	11	9	6	13	6	12
(c) .. .. . Midwife .. .. .	21	31	17	36	13	21	16	20	15	17	49	15
(d) .. .. . Householder .. .. .	15	24	28	17	17	8	12	12	14	20	14	18
(e) .. .. . Welfare Worker .. .. .	8	23	9	12	13	10	7	8	8	12	9	8
Classification of reasons for help being sought :—												
(a) Old age, infirmity and chronic sickness .. .. .	29	57	37	38	39	22	23	26	26	34	29	30
(b) Acute sickness and convalescence .. .. .	11	40	19	19	18	14	18	11	11	20	17	20
(c) Maternity cases (including miscarriages and discharges from hospital) .. .. .	20	31	19	40	14	21	18	23	21	23	49	19
(d) Miscellaneous .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
Number of cases where Helps unnecessary .. .. .												
(a) Part-time .. .. .	13	17	14	9	11	8	6	22	6	9	7	11
(b) Full-time .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Number of Householders receiving help for the first time during period :—												
(a) Part-time .. .. .	52	132	70	66	68	45	46	45	54	67	56	63
(b) Full-time .. .. .	11	9	9	4	6	5	7	7	6	7	2	4
Classification of reasons why Householders had received help for over one month at the end of period :—												
(a) Old age and infirmity and chronic sickness .. .. .	535	495	520	556	564	569	574	576	578	586	595	603
(b) Acute sickness and convalescence .. .. .	32	29	41	37	36	41	35	40	40	40	43	51
(c) Maternity cases (including miscarriages and discharges from hospital) .. .. .	—	—	1	2	2	2	6	—	3	3	4	3
(d) Miscellaneous .. .. .	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Number of hours worked by part-time Helps during period .. .. .												
(a) Part-time .. .. .	14384	15811	13229	12657	16482	12796	12763	13570	11897	16209	12992	15710
(b) Full-time .. .. .	151	180	165	168	172	168	168	173	172	171	173	173
Number of part-time Helps employed at last day of period .. .. .												
(a) New cases .. .. .	76	143	110	106	100	56	62	96	76	94	67	93
(b) Re-visits .. .. .	372	476	345	279	380	246	310	362	236	369	381	397
Meals by Home Helps (1 week) .. .. .												
(a) Part-time .. .. .	816	956	880	832	855	904	866	873	837	821	846	864

## SECTION 51—MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

## 1. Mental Illness

(a) *Administration.* The general arrangements continued as outlined in previous reports, viz., Mr. C. E. House acts as Duly Authorised Officer. He is relieved by Miss J. M. Robb, Mental Deficiency Officer, and by Mr. P. Arthur, Clerical Assistant in the Welfare Section.

(b) *Report by Duly Authorised Officer.* Mr. House has submitted the following particulars about his work under the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts.

During the year the following have been received into various Mental Hospitals from Reading :—

<i>Lunacy Act, 1890</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Section 6—Order for Reception upon Petition ...	—	1	1
Section 16—Certified under Summary Reception Order	12	20	32
Section 20—Removed under Duly Authorised Officers' Order—3 days ...	9	9	18
Section 21—Removed under Justices' Order—14 days	—	2	2
Section 21a—Persons removed under Section 20, whose Orders were extended for a further period of 14 days by Certificate of Hospital Medical Officer ...	5	7	12
Section 16—Certified under Summary Reception Order at expiration of Section 20 and Section 21a Orders...	1	3	4
Persons Examined by Justice but no Order made...	4	1	5

*Mental Treatment Act, 1930*

Section 1—Voluntary Patients ...	58	130	188
Section 5—Temporary Patients ...	1	4	5

The following Reading patients have been regraded during their in-patient stay at Mental Hospitals :—

*From Lunacy Act, 1890*

Section 16—to Voluntary Class ...	2	4	6
Section 20—to Voluntary Class ...	3	1	4
Section 21a—to Voluntary Class ...	2	2	4

*From Mental Treatment Act, 1930*

Section 5—to Voluntary Class ...	1	1	2
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The following Reading patients have left Mental Hospitals :—

<i>Lunacy Act, 1890</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Left hospital on trial period prior to discharge for a period of one month (4 or 5 weeks) ...	1	6	7
Extension of trial period for one month ...	—	1	1
Returned to hospital before expiration of initial trial period ...	—	1	1
Discharged recovered at expiration of trial period ...	1	5	6
Discharged recovered without trial period ...	—	3	3
Discharged recovered at expiration of Section 20 Order	1	—	1
Discharged recovered at expiration of Section 21a Order	1	2	3
Discharged recovered at expiration of Section 21 Order	—	2	2
Discharged relieved ...	1	2	3
Discharged not improved ...	—	—	—



<i>Mental Treatment Act, 1930</i>						<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Voluntary Patients—left hospital	...	...	...	...	...	58	122	180
Temporary Patients—left hospital	...	...	...	...	...	—	3	3

The following Reading patients were transferred elsewhere :—

*Lunacy Act, 1890*

Section 21a—to Mental Deficiency Hospital	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Section 21a—to Broadmoor Hospital	...	...	...	...	...	—	1	1

*Mental Treatment Act, 1930*

Section 1—to General Hospital	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
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The following deaths have occurred amongst Reading patients in Mental Hospitals :—

<i>Lunacy Act, 1890</i>						<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Section 16	...	...	...	...	...	8	5	13
Section 21a	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1

*Mental Treatment Act, 1930*

Section 1	...	...	...	...	...	7	6	13
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Admissions from within the County Borough to Mental hospitals during 1956, show an increase of 33% over those of the previous year. I need hardly comment on the scale of the problem of the psychological disorders.

There is, however, an increasing reorientation of the mental health services towards normality in attitude in respect of the mental patient, that is to say, towards treating him like any other sick person—in a manner appropriate to his disease, but not otherwise, as far as possible, differently from other sick people—is part of the general movement towards greater concentration on the positive and preventive side of medicine. From this follows the increasing interest taken in the closer association between hospital and community care and the realisation that the after-care of the convalescent mental patient is just as important in its own sphere as clinical treatment in the mental hospital. Thus the circle of activity involves preventive work in the community; intensive study of young children in the light of the factors which may cause mental illness later; treatment in hospital in necessary cases with a view to the normal reintegration of the patient in the community care and supervision of the discharged patient in the community, involving and including suitable occupation, home visiting, etc., and so back again to community preventive work. Throughout all these stages close liaison must be maintained between the several services involved: the health service, mental and physical, both in hospital and community, the general practitioner service, the social welfare services of all kinds, together with those of education. Education in the widest sense has a particularly important part to play, not only directly in the schools, but in the education of the community in itself. Only through the spread of knowledge amongst the general public can that fully sympathetic understanding be obtained without which no services can satisfactorily procure a normal reintegration in the community of a convalescent or cured mental patient.

Until now, there has probably never before been such an intensive and combined attempt by all the various statutory and voluntary bodies associated with mental health, to encourage, broaden, enlighten and educate the public on the problems of mental ill-health. These problems have and are still in the course of being presented on a national basis through the medium of television and sound radio.



Irrespective of individual opinions, this dissemination of knowledge of the facts has aroused public interest and discussion.

There has also been a similar attempt to "educate" the local community of Reading and its neighbourhood in the "Battle for Mental Health." This took the form of an exhibition depicting various aspects of work in the mental health field, and had as its objective the removal of the stigma that still persists in the public mind regarding mental illness. This exhibition was staged in the Reading Town Halls for the week December 3rd-8th, 1956. Among the display "stands" was one presented by the Reading Local Health Authority. The exhibition which was officially opened by Viscountess Hambleden, and visited on the second day by the Duchess of Kent, was fairly well patronised.

The aim of all this publicity must be to end in the public mind the differentiation between physical and mental illness. Only then can be harnessed to the full the force of public opinion to the task of providing the kind of mental health service that we all want to see.

## 2. Mental Deficiency

I am pleased to report that during 1956 we have been successful in reducing our waiting list for admission to hospital and we have now only a very small list of such cases. During the year 8 patients were taken into the hospital on a short term basis when emergencies have arisen in the homes, and I am very grateful to the Physician Superintendents of the Mental Deficiency hospitals in the area for the help they have given us with these particular cases. The social clubs for patients on licence from Borocourt and also some of the pupils at the Occupation Centre continued throughout the year and was very much appreciated. Owing to the large number of patients who were discharged from Order under the Mental Deficiency Act, the numbers tended to fall off towards the end of the year and it is not quite clear whether the attendance will return to the previous numbers. The number of patients employed in Reading is high and until the end of the year it could be truthfully said that practically every mental defective who was employable was at work. By the end of the year, however, some difficulty was experienced in finding employment for certain patients—no doubt associated with the slight trade recession in the district. Again I must thank the Youth Employment Officer, the Disabled Rehabilitation Officer, the Ministry of Labour and the employers in the district for their sympathetic help.



## (1) Particulars of cases reported during 1956 :—

							Under age 16		Aged 16 and over	
							M.	F.	M.	F.
(a) Cases ascertained to be defectives "subject to be dealt with"										
Number in which action taken on reports by:—										
(1) Local Education Authorities on children—										
(i)	While at school or liable to attend school	...	...	...	...	...	4	7	—	—
(ii)	On leaving special schools	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	1	4
(iii)	On leaving ordinary schools	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(2)	Police or by Courts	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(3)	Other sources	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	—	1
Total of 1 (a)							5	8	1	5
(b) Cases reported who were found to be defectives but were not regarded as "subject to be dealt with" on any ground							—	—	—	—
(c) Cases reported who were not regarded as defectives and are thus excluded from (a) or (b)							—	—	1	—
(d) Cases reported in which action was incomplete at 31st December, 1956, and are thus excluded from (a) or (b)							1	1	—	—
Total of 1 (a)–(d) inc.							6	9	2	5

## (2) Disposal of cases reported during 1956 :—

(The total of 2 (a), (b) and (c) must agree with that of 1 (a) and (b) above)

(a) Of the cases ascertained to be defectives "subject to be dealt with" (i.e., at 1 (a)), number :

(i)	Placed under Statutory Supervision	...	...	...	...	...	3	6	1	5
(ii)	Placed under Guardianship	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iii)	Taken to "Places of Safety"	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iv)	Admitted to Hospitals	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	—	—
Total of 2 (a)							5	8	1	5
(b) Of the cases not ascertained to be defectives "subject to be dealt with" (i.e., at 1 (b)), number—										
(i)	Placed under Voluntary Supervision	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(ii)	Action unnecessary	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	1	—
Total of 2 (b)							—	—	1	—
(c) Cases reported at 1 (a) or (b) above who removed from the area or died before disposal was arranged							—	—	—	—
Total of 2 (a)–(c) inc.							5	8	2	5

## (3) Number of mental defectives for whom care was arranged by the Local Health Authority under Circular 5/52 during 1956 and admitted to :—

(a)	National Health Service Hospitals	...	...	...	...	...	—	2	3	3
(b)	Elsewhere	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Total							—	2	3	3

## (4) Total cases on Authority's Registers at 31st December, 1956 :—

						Under age 16		Aged 16 and over	
						M.	F.	M.	F.
(i)	Under Statutory Supervision	...	...	...	...	12	21	91	86
(ii)	Under Guardianship	...	...	...	...	—	—	7	2
(iii)	In "Places of Safety"	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iv)	In Hospitals	...	...	...	...	20	13	73	79
Total of 4 (i)–(iv) inc.						32	34	171	167
(v)	Under Voluntary Supervision	...	...	...	...	—	—	17	21
Total of 4 (i)–(v) inc.						32	34	188	188

## (5) Number of defectives under Guardianship on 31st December, 1956, who were dealt with under the provisions of Section 8 or 9, Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 (Included in 4 (ii)) :—

## (6) Classification of Defectives in the Community on 31st December, 1956 (according to need at that date) :—

## (a) Cases included in 4 (i)–(iii) in need of hospital care and reported accordingly to the hospital authority :—

## (1) In urgent need of hospital care—

(i)	"Cot and chair" cases	...	...	...	...	—	—	1	—
(ii)	Ambulant low grade cases	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iii)	Medium grade cases	...	...	...	...	1	—	1	—
(iv)	High grade cases	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Total urgent cases						1	—	2	—

## (2) Not in urgent need of hospital care—

(i)	"Cot and chair" cases	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(ii)	Ambulant low grade cases	...	...	...	...	—	—	3	—
(iii)	Medium grade cases	...	...	...	...	1	—	4	5
(iv)	High grade cases	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	1
Total non-urgent cases						1	—	7	6
Total of Urgent and Non-urgent Cases						2	—	9	6

## (b) Of the cases included in items 4 (i), (ii) and (v) number considered suitable for :—

(i)	Occupation centre	...	...	...	...	10	13	25	34
(ii)	Industrial centre	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iii)	Home training	...	...	...	...	—	3	—	—
Total of 6(b)						10	16	25	34

## (c) Of the cases included in 6(b) number receiving training on 31st December, 1956

(i)	In occupation centre (including voluntary centres)	...	...	...	...	8	11	19	23
(ii)	From a home teacher in groups	...	...	...	...	—	2	—	—
(iii)	From a home teacher at home (not in groups)	...	...	...	...	—	1	—	—
Total of 6 (c)						8	14	19	23



## Particulars of Mental Defectives as on 31st December, 1956 :—

(1) Cases "subject to be dealt with"	M.	F.	Total
(a) Borocourt, 66; Brentry Colony, 5; Wayland House, 28; St. Mary's, Alton, 1; Pewsey Hospital, 35; Winslow, 3; Botley's Park, 2; Manor House, Aylesbury, 10; St. Agnes, Grove Hill, Reading, 1; State Institutions, 8; Normansfield, Teddington, 1; Purley Park, 1; Agricultural Hostel, Newent, 1; Wokingham Hospital, 2; Ravenswood, Crowthorne, 1; Smith's Hospital, 1; Royal Berkshire Hospital, 1	84	83	167
(b) On Licence from Institution Employed away from home, 9; Employed living at home, 4; not employed, 5	10	8	18
(c) Under Guardianship Receiving National Assistance, 7; in employment, 2	7	2	9
(d) Under Statutory Supervision	103	107	210
(e) Action not yet taken	1	1	2

## (2) Disposal of cases during 1956

(a) Granted Licence from Institution	7	3	10
Returned from Licence to Institution	2	1	3
Died	7	—	7
Left the district	1	—	1
Discharged from Order	6	6	12
Released from Supervision	—	5	5
Admitted to Institutions	6	9	15
(b) Awaiting removal to Institution			
Cases of some urgency	2	3	5
On waiting list for care in the future	6	6	12

## (3) Number of cases ascertained during 1956

(a) Cases reported by Local Education Authority (Section 57 Education Act, 1944)			
(1) Under Section 57 (3)	4	7	11
(2) Under Section 57 (5) on leaving Special School	1	4	5
on leaving Ordinary School	—	—	—
(b) Other ascertained defectives reported during 1956 and found "subject to be dealt with"	2	2	4

## (4) Cases not at present "subject to be dealt with"

(a) Under Friendly Supervision	17	21	38
--------------------------------	----	----	----

## (5) Supervised on behalf of other authorities

...	2	9	11
-----	---	---	----

(b) **Occupation Centre** (Beeches). Classes have been held during the school terms from Mondays till Fridays.

Numbers attending as at 31st December, 1956	Males	Females	Total
From Borough	28	34	62
County	—	—	—
Berkshire	2	—	2
Oxfordshire	—	—	—
			64

*Staff*

Supervisor

Five Assistants (including one away on a year's course of training)

One Domestic Help, part-time, 16½ hours weekly

One Boot Repairing Instructor, 2 sessions weekly

Caretaker giving part-time gardening instruction and assistance with games and boys' camp.

*Transport.* The same facilities have been provided as before, namely two special buses operating in :—

- (a) Whitley area ;
- (b) Oxford Road and Lower Caversham area.

Free bus tickets have been issued to four pupils living in districts not covered by our buses.

*Meals.* A mid-day meal has been provided daily from Mondays till Fridays by means of the School Meals Service at a total cost of 1/8 per meal. Pupils have been contributing 10d. per meal unless poor financial circumstances have justified free meals. The eligibility for free meals has been calculated on the School Assessment basis. As at December 31st, 1956, 11 pupils were in receipt of free meals.

*School Milk.* All children under the age of 18 have been receiving ½-pint of pasteurised milk daily when present. Twenty-three children from the Centre have been participating in this scheme.

*Use of School Clinic.* As before we have been indebted to the staff of the School Clinic for the following services :—

- (a) a routine medical inspection
- (b) a monthly cleanliness inspection
- (c) dental treatment and other necessary treatment
- (d) speech therapy

*Curriculum.* Instruction has been given in the following subjects :—

- (a) Religious knowledge
- (b) Handwork planned to meet requirements of all grades
- (c) Music and movement. Folk dancing. Physical training
- (d) Percussion band and singing
- (e) Speech training
- (f) Cookery : one session weekly for senior girls
- (g) Games : one session weekly at Palmer Park
- (h) Wood chopping and bundling

*Practical Training Scheme.* In September, 1956, a wood sawing, chopping and bundling "industry" was begun. After a short practice period twelve of the senior boys were able to cope with this work quite well. Orders have been coming in continuously and the boys have been paid a little pocket money.

For those boys not engaged in the scheme we have allowed them a small percentage on the sale of their goods. This arrangement applies also to the senior girls.



*Special Activities.* The boys had a successful week in camp for the second year in succession. The girls had their first experience of a week in camp and this was enjoyed by everybody in spite of bad weather conditions.

I am also pleased to report that a Parents' Association has been formed and I feel that mutual benefit will be derived by the formation of this Association.

*Students.* During the year we have been pleased to accept students in training for the Diploma for Teachers of the Mentally Handicapped.

(c) *Wakefield Lodge.* I am pleased to report that work in converting Wakefield Lodge, 40 Christchurch Road, proceeded during the year. Pupils were admitted early in 1957. Wakefield Lodge has nominal accommodation for 50 pupils of approximately school age. It should prove of very great help to us by providing better accommodation for the younger children and relieving the pressure on the accommodation at the Beeches.

## PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The table on page 64 gives particulars of notifications of infectious diseases received during the year. These figures include patients who are not normally resident in the Borough.

**Diphtheria.** For the eighth year in succession there has been no case of diphtheria in the Borough.

**Scarlet Fever.** The number of notifications is slightly less than in 1955. From the information received even these cases were of a very mild type. This decline in the incidence and virulence of scarlet fever is a most remarkable phenomenon, especially to those of us who can remember its severity some twenty or thirty years ago. To counteract this decrease in virulence of the streptococcus there does seem to be some evidence that the staphylococcus is increasing in virulence for we are now receiving reports of staphylococcal pneumonia; mention is made in another part of the report about staphylococcal infection of young children.

**Whooping Cough.** It is probably true to say that whooping cough is now the most serious disease which affects young children and the number of cases notified showed an increase on preceding years. We have investigated the immunisation history of notified cases. We find that the majority of them have not been immunised and of those who have been immunised, the majority have had an incomplete course of injections. Because of this evidence, plus the weighty evidence of the Medical Research Council investigation, parents would be well advised to have their children immunised against whooping cough early in life and to have the recommended number of booster doses.

**Measles.** 1956 was not a measles year.

**Food Poisoning** (see also Report of Chief Public Health Inspector). No outbreaks of food poisoning were reported during the year. The 7 cases notified appeared to be isolated cases.

**Typhoid Fever.** Two cases of confirmed typhoid fever were reported during the year. In view of certain features of interest, the following details are given:—

1. (a) Miss C. E., aged 54. This lady arrived in Reading on the evening of the 27th July and was obviously very ill with gastro-intestinal symptoms. She had come here from London and there was a history of a recent tour of Italy at which time she, along with other members of the touring party, had gastro-intestinal symptoms. There were strong grounds for assuming that she had been infected abroad. She came to Reading to help the housekeeper of an enclosed Order of Nuns. Fortunately the housekeeper had dealt with soiled linen by immersing it in disinfectant; in fact she had established a system of barrier nursing. The housekeeper was inoculated with T.A.B. and close supervision of the convent was maintained. There were no secondary cases although the housekeeper was admitted to hospital as a suspected case;





fortunately the diagnosis was not confirmed and it was thought that her symptoms were due to other factors.

The patient made a good recovery.

(b) The second case was a boy (D.J.L.) who came to Reading after being on holiday on Merseyside. Shortly after his return he contracted gastro-intestinal symptoms and was admitted to hospital on the 3rd October. A firm diagnosis of typhoid was made on the 7th October. No other members of the family were infected. The interesting thing about this case is that the organism proved to be Vi phage type C. We were informed that this particular type of organism was uncommon in this country and that all previous cases had been reported from the Merseyside district. Investigation of the boy's possible contacts by the M.O.H. of the district concerned revealed no source of infection. No local sources of infection were detected and it is a fair presumption to say that this boy was infected while he was away from Reading. Routine steps were taken in respect of school and the home, and no secondary cases occurred.

**Poliomyelitis.** During 1956 four cases of poliomyelitis affecting Reading residents were notified within the Borough, but one of these was not confirmed and so is not included in the tables. The other three were very mild and although one was paralytic there was complete recovery in each case.

The incidence of poliomyelitis, fortunately, has been so slight during the past five years that the usual tables, showing distribution by age and sex, have been simplified. Of all cases included in these tables only one (adult—female, 1952) is still seriously disabled and can walk only a few steps with a stick, nevertheless she had a normal pregnancy and confinement during 1956. A case from 1941, a boy of 16 years, has now left the Special School (P.H. Department) to go to St. Loyes College for the Training and Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Exeter.

TABLE 1

1952

Age Group	Non-Paralytic	Paralytic	Deaths	Total
0-14+ years ...	1	5	1	7
15 years and over	1	4	1	6
Grand Total	2	9	2	13

TABLE 2

1953

Age Group	Non-Paralytic	Paralytic	Deaths	Total
0-14+ years ...	—	2	—	2
15 years and over	1	2	—	3
Grand Total	1	4	—	5



1954—No Cases

TABLE 3

1955

Age Group	Non-Paralytic	Paralytic	Deaths	Total
0-14+ years ...	1	—	—	1
15 years and over	3	—	1	4
Grand Total	4	—	1	5

TABLE 4

1956

Age Group	Non-Paralytic	Paralytic	Deaths	Total
0-14+ years ...	2	—	—	2
15 years and over	—	1	—	1
Grand Total	2	1	—	3

TABLE 5

Year	1952		1953		1954		1955		1956	
Age Group	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-5+ months ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-11+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-4+ years ...	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9+ years ...	3*	2	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	2
10-14+ years ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-19+ years ...	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	—
20-24+ years ...	—	3	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 years and over	1	1*	—	1	—	—	1	1*	—	—
Total males and females in each year ...	6	7	1	4	—	—	3	2	1	2
Grand Total	13		5		—		5		3	

\* Includes 1 death

## TUBERCULOSIS

These remarks should be read in conjunction with those under Section 28 of the National Health Service Act and with comments made in my report as Principal School Medical Officer.

The following table shows the number of primary notifications of cases of tuberculosis and the number of deaths due to the disease since 1938 :—

Year	Number of Cases notified		Notification Rate per 100,000 of population		Number of deaths		Death Rate per 1,000 of population		Population
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	
1928-37 Average	117	22	—	—	76	15	0.76	0.15	—
1938	91	31	90.63	30.87	58	6	0.58	0.05	100,400
1939	95	40	94.43	39.76	52	12	0.50	0.10	100,600
1940	117	30	102.09	26.18	74	18	0.66	0.16	114,600
1941	137	50	109.77	40.06	68	16	0.54	0.13	124,800
1942	186	40	157.89	33.95	60	10	0.51	0.08	117,800
1943	185	30	163.71	26.54	57	13	0.51	0.11	113,000
1944	135	29	121.25	26.04	55	14	0.49	0.13	111,340
1945	119	16	109.34	14.69	60	12	0.55	0.11	108,830
1946	152	25	136.51	22.49	73	11	0.65	0.09	111,340
1947	168	27	148.72	23.90	70	6	0.62	0.05	112,960
1948	132	24	115.28	20.92	50	12	0.43	0.10	114,500
1949	130	9	112.65	7.80	35	6	0.30	0.05	115,500
1950	143	10	123.52	8.64	39	3	0.34	0.03	115,770
1951	115	3	99.91	2.61	34	—	0.29	0.00	115,100
1952	128	12	110.54	10.36	22	2	0.19	0.02	115,800
1953	96	26	81.56	22.09	20	4	0.17	0.03	117,700
1954	85	5	71.85	4.22	6	2	0.05	0.02	118,300
1955	131	7	110.92	5.92	9	1	0.07	0.01	118,100
1956	109	11	92.45	9.33	9	1	0.07	0.01	117,900

Once again I am glad to thank Dr. Karlsh, Consultant Chest Physician, for the very great help he has given me in connection with tuberculosis and diseases of the chest. I am indebted to him for most of the information which appears in the following pages of this report.

Primary notifications in 1956 were 120 as compared with 138 in 1955 ; 109 of these 120 were cases of respiratory tuberculosis and of these 67 were sputum positive. The following tables give a summary of the primary notifications in 1956 and the age group of the cases notified :—



	M.M.R.	Contact	Odelca Camera	Doctors' Cases	Hospitals	Other Sources	Totals
<b>Respiratory Tuberculosis :</b>							
<i>Primary Tuberculosis :</i>							
Positive ... ..	—	1	1	—	—	1	3
Negative ... ..	—	3	4	2	2	—	11
<i>Tuberculous Pleural Effusion:</i>							
Positive ... ..	—	—	3	—	1	—	4
Negative ... ..	—	—	2	—	1	—	3
<i>Pulmonary Tuberculosis:</i>							
R.B. 1 ... ..	6	3	7	8	2	7	33
R.B. 2 ... ..	1	1	12	1	4	5	24
R.B. 3 ... ..	—	1	7	—	1	1	10
R.A. 1 ... ..	—	1	1	2	1	5	10
R.A. 2 ... ..	—	—	3	1	2	4	10
R.A. 3 ... ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
<b>Total Respiratory Tuberculosis</b>	7	10	41	14	14	23	109
<b>Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis</b>	—	1	4	2	4	—	11
	7	11	45	16	18	23	120

The following table gives the source and type of the new cases of tuberculosis which were seen at the Chest Clinic in 1956 :—

	M.M.R.	Contact	Odelca Camera	Doctors' Cases	Hospitals	Transfers from other areas	Other Sources	Totals
<b>Respiratory Tuberculosis :</b>								
<i>Primary Tuberculosis :</i>								
Positive ... ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	3
Negative ... ..	1	4	12	2	2	2	1	24
Healed ... ..	—	—	13	2	—	—	3	18
<i>Tuberculous Pleural Effusion :</i>								
Positive ... ..	—	—	3	—	1	1	—	5
Negative ... ..	—	—	3	1	1	1	—	6
<i>Pulmonary Tuberculosis :</i>								
Positive ... ..	7	5	26	10	6	26	13	93
Negative ... ..	—	1	5	5	5	7	9	32
" Observation " ... ..	1	6	26	11	7	5	4	60
Total ...	9	17	89	31	22	42	31	241
<b>Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis</b>	—	1	5	4	4	3	—	17
<b>Total Tuberculous Cases ...</b>	9	18	94	35	26	45	31	258*





Of the 213 cases of tuberculous infections (excluding transfers) first seen during 1956, only 120 were considered notifiable as suffering from tuberculosis within the definitions laid down by the Ministry of Health; 60% of all primary notifications were A.F.B. positive.

Ninety-four of these 213 cases seen during the year were from the open chest X-ray clinic (Odelca camera) and 45 of these were notified.

Primary notifications were 95 in 1954 and 138 in 1955. The exceptionally large number of notifications in 1955 was due to the intensive M.M.R. survey carried out. In 1956 the share of M.M.R. was relatively slight, amounting to only 7 out of 120 cases.

I am pleased to report that the Odelca Clinic service continues to be very popular amongst general practitioners. This Clinic also dealt with routine chest X-rays of expectant mothers who were either referred from the hospital maternity unit or by general practitioners; 730 expectant mothers were examined of whom 375 were sent by general practitioners and 355 from the Battle Hospital Ante-natal Clinic. Of this number two cases were notified as suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis and classified R.B.1 (positive) and R.A.1 (negative). Four more cases were retained under observation but not notified. Dr. Karlsh comments that it is too early to pronounce on this scheme. The ratio of notifications (2 out of 730) is only slightly above the general mass radiography figures and perhaps the dose of radiation administered during an Odelca X-ray examination should not be disregarded.

I realise that the future use of mass radiography units is very much under discussion at the moment and I would not wish to comment at length on this subject. However, it does seem that chest X-ray of patients suffering from some form of ill-health, whether symptoms are referable to the respiratory system or not, is well worth while and possibly merits the expenditure of more money and staff than chest X-ray of a large number of people who are symptom free.

**New Contacts Examined.** The number of new contacts examined went up from 444 in 1955 to 709 in 1956, a rate of 6 contacts per new notification. Of this number 18 new cases of tuberculous infection, comprising 11 notifications, were diagnosed.

**B.C.G. Vaccinations.** As a result of the increased contact figures reported above, the number of B.C.G. vaccinations increased by about one-third, from 203 to 286, bringing the total number of contacts vaccinated since 1950 up to 1,597.

**Cases of Tuberculosis Positive, July-December, 1956.** Cases on the register which had positive sputum during the six months ended 31st December, 1956, were :—

Males	...	...	...	...	81
Females	...	...	...	...	29
Children	...	...	...	...	1
<hr/>					
Total	...	...	...	...	111
<hr/>					



## BACTERIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS, 1956

	Positive	Negative	Total
Gastric lavage—			
Clinic ... ..	16	48	64
Park Hospital ... ..	21	62	83
Laryngeal Swab Culture—			
Clinic ... ..	11	284	295
Park Hospital ... ..	4	107	111
Sputum—			
Clinic—Film Culture ... ..	34 } 22 }	430	486 *
Park Hospital—Film Culture ...	29	78	107
Total Investigations ...	137	1,009	1,146

\* Includes 397 for pathogenic organisms

**Number of Deaths due to Tuberculosis.** There were 18 deaths from *all* causes of tuberculous patients; only 9 of them were directly attributable to pulmonary T.B., 15 were men and 3 women. The average age of the men was 60, with a range of 33 to 75. The 3 women were 52, 58, and 62.

**Domiciliary Treatment.** An average of 80 patients per week received chemotherapy at home, compared with 59 in 1955. This reflects the growing practice of long term drug treatment of tuberculous patients. The scheme, which saves an estimated 20 beds per year, is run in conjunction with the Tuberculosis Pavilion at Prospect Park Hospital, without which it would not be practicable.

One hundred and sixty-nine home visits were made by the medical staff and 2,504 visits by the two tuberculosis visitors.

## SOURCE AND TYPE OF NON-TUBERCULOUS CASES SEEN IN 1956

	M.M.R	Contact	Odelca Camera	Doctors' Cases	Hospitals	Transfers from other areas	Other Sources	Totals
No. Organic Disease ... ..	-	6	117	28	4	-	10	165
Asthma ... ..	-	-	18	11	1	-	2	32
Pneumonias ... ..	1	-	110	38	12	-	2	163
Chronic Bronchitis and Emphysema ...	1	1	213	95	4	1	5	320
Unexplained Haemoptysis ... ..	-	-	18	6	-	-	1	25
Bronchiectasis ... ..	2	-	28	14	1	-	1	46
Carcinoma of the Lung... ..	1	1	10	11	4	-	-	27
Pleurisy ... ..	-	-	11	3	-	-	-	14
Spontaneous Pneumothorax ... ..	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	5
Other Pulmonary Conditions ... ..	1	-	18	10	3	2	1	35
Acute Resp. Infections... ..	-	-	36	16	-	-	3	55
Cardiac Disease ... ..	-	-	22	8	4	-	1	35
Other Diseases ... ..	-	-	45	14	2	-	-	61
Diagnoses not completed ... ..	-	1	13	6	3	-	3	26
Totals ...	6	9	659	262	41	3	29	1009



A feature increasingly evident during the last five years is the steady rise in non-tuberculous cases referred to the clinic. They totalled 1,009 and were up by one-third over the previous year.

It will be seen that the largest single group consists of chronic bronchitis, closely followed by pneumonias, bronchiectasis and carcinoma of the lung; 320 new cases of chronic bronchitis were seen, constituting in practice a large bronchitis clinic. In most of these cases sputum was tested for pathogenic organisms, and appropriate antibiotic treatment was instituted where necessary. In other cases physiotherapy proved beneficial. Routine X-ray examination following recovery from pneumonia has been encouraged and many underlying conditions were diagnosed in cases of slow resolution. Altogether 476 non-tuberculous cases were under observation on 31st December, 1956.

#### Discharges from the Tuberculosis Register

Recovered	...	...	...	30
Died (all causes)	...	...	...	18
Transferred	...	...	...	30
Other	...	...	...	29
Total				107

**Care and After-Care.** Reference to this important subject will be found in my remarks on our work under Section 8 of the National Health Service Act.

#### VENEREAL DISEASE

Patients suffering from venereal disease in Reading are treated at the Clinic of the Royal Berkshire Hospital which also serves a large part of the surrounding countryside. The following are details of patients from Reading who attended for the first time in 1956:—

					<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Syphilis—						
Primary	...	...	...	...	1	—
Secondary	...	...	...	...	2	—
All other late or latent stages	...	...	...	...	6	9
Congenital, under 1 year of age	...	...	...	...	1	—
Gonorrhoea	...	...	...	...	47	13
Other conditions	...	...	...	...	114	40

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

**Water.** Mr. O. Kean, M.I.C.E., M.I.Mech.E., M.I.W.E., Water Engineer, has been good enough to supply the following information :—

1. During the year ended 31st December, 1956, the water supply of the area and of its several parts has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity.

2. There were no instances of abnormal contamination or pollution of the sources from which water is abstracted and the routine measures of filtration, chlorination, tests for residual chlorine and regular analyses were adequate to maintain a satisfactory standard of purity.

3. The chemical and bacteriological examination of water was continued in the accommodation at Tilehurst until August, 1956, when the equipment was transferred to the new laboratories incorporated in the Water Department's Depot at Berkeley Avenue. There was no interruption in the scheme of water analysis, with samples taken at all stages in the treatment processes, and from the distribution system. In addition, samples were submitted at regular intervals for independent examination by the Counties Public Health Laboratories. The numbers of samples from each point, together with the type of examination made, are set out below :—

### A. By the Counties Public Health Laboratories

Source	Type of Water	Number of Samples	
		Full Bact.	Full Chemical
Fobney Works ...	Final water chlorinated ...	5	5
Southcote Works	Final water, chlorinated ...	5	5
Pangbourne Works	Raw water ...	5	5
Pangbourne Works	Final water, chlorinated ...	5	—
		20	15

### B. By the Water Department Laboratory

Source	Type of Water	Number of Samples		
		Full Bact.	Full Chem.	Partial Chem.
Fobney Works ...	Raw River water ...	24	11	13
	After prefilters ...	2	2	—
	Bulked filtrate, unchlorinated ...	50	11	39
	Final water, chlorinated ...	103	11	92
Southcote Works ...	Final water, chlorinated ...	104	11	93
Pangbourne Works	Raw water ...	73	46	27
	Final water, chlorinated ...	96	11	85
Bath Road Reservoir	As distributed ...	51	11	40
Tilehurst Water Tower	As distributed ...	21	—	21
Parfitt Reservoirs ...	As distributed ...	16	—	16
Hill Reservoirs ...	As distributed ...	8	—	8
Tap Samples ...	As distributed ...	39	1	38
	Totals ...	587	115	472



All final water samples proved satisfactory, with coliform organisms Absent from 100 mls.

In addition to the 1,209 water examinations shown in the above tables, a series of samples taken during the chlorination of a small swimming bath were analysed for the Medical Officer of Health's Department; the sampling of water from new mains after chlorination was also carried out.

The following are submitted as being typical reports.

The well supply is clear and bright in appearance, and of a high standard of organic and bacterial purity, requiring only precautionary chlorination in the way of treatment.

In contrast, the river source, which is greatly affected by rainfall and seasonal conditions, requires carefully controlled treatment by filtration and chlorination to produce a pure and wholesome final water.

#### RIVER KENNET SOURCE

	Raw Water				Final Water
Appearance ... ..	Fairly clear, with little colour or suspended matter, and with a small deposit, mainly diatoms, with some protozoa and chalk particles				Clear and bright
Colour (Hazen) ... ..	Filtered : 8				Less than 5
Turbidity (Silica Scale) ... ..	13	...	...	...	Nil
Odour ... ..	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
pH ... ..	8.0	...	...	...	7.6
Chlorides ... ..	15.0	...	...	...	15.5
Hardness : Total ... ..	245	...	...	...	240
" Carbonate (temporary) ... ..	210	...	...	...	205
" Non-Carbonate (permanent) ... ..	35	...	...	...	35
Nitrates ... ..	2.7	...	...	...	2.7
Nitrites ... ..	0.01	...	...	...	Absent
Free Ammonia (N) ... ..	0.035	...	...	...	0.000
Albuminoid Ammonia (N) ... ..	0.150	...	...	...	0.055
Iron ... ..	0.12	...	...	...	Less than 0.02
Other metals ... ..	Absent	...	...	...	Absent
Free Carbon Dioxide ... ..	1	...	...	...	4
Total Solids, dried at 180° C. ... ..	285	...	...	...	280
Alkalinity ... ..	210	...	...	...	205
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27° C. ... ..	1.55	...	...	...	0.60
Residual Chlorine ... ..	—	...	...	...	0.45
Fluoride ... ..	—	...	...	...	Less than 0.1
<i>Bacteriological Results—</i>					
No. of colonies developing per ml. on Agar in :—					
1 day at 37° C. ... ..	450	...	...	...	8
2 days at 37° C. ... ..	1,100	...	...	...	12
3 days at 22° C. ... ..	15,000	...	...	...	10
<i>Presumptive Coliform Reaction—</i>					
Present in ... ..	0.1 mls.	...	...	...	—
Absent from ... ..	0.01 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.
Probable No. per 100 mls. ... ..	1,400	...	...	...	0
<i>Bact. Coli (Type I)—</i>					
Present in ... ..	0.1 mls.	...	...	...	—
Absent from ... ..	0.01 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.
Probable No. per 100 mls. ... ..	350	...	...	...	0

## PANGBOURNE WELL SOURCE

	Raw Water				Final Water
Appearance ... ..	Clear and bright	...	...	...	Clear and bright
Colour (Hazen) ... ..	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
Turbidity (Silica Scale) ... ..	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
Odour ... ..	Nil	...	...	...	Faint, chlorinous
pH ... ..	7.0	...	...	...	7.0
Chlorides ... ..	13.0	...	...	...	13.0
Hardness : Total ... ..	290	...	...	...	290
„ Carbonate (temporary) ... ..	250	...	...	...	250
„ Non-Carbonate (permanent) ... ..	40	...	...	...	40
Nitrates ... ..	4.8	...	...	...	4.8
Nitrites ... ..	Absent	...	...	...	Absent
Free Ammonia (N) ... ..	0.000	...	...	...	0.000
Albuminoid Ammonia (N) ... ..	0.005	...	...	...	0.000
Iron ... ..	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
Other metals ... ..	Absent	...	...	...	Absent
Free Carbon Dioxide ... ..	35	...	...	...	35
Total Solids, dried at 180° C. ... ..	345	...	...	...	345
Alkalinity ... ..	250	...	...	...	250
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27° C. ... ..	0.05	...	...	...	0.00
Residual Chlorine ... ..	—	...	...	...	0.3
Fluoride ... ..	—	...	...	...	Less than 0.1
<i>Bacteriological Results—</i>					
No. of colonies developing per ml. on Agar in :—					
1 day at 37° C. ... ..	1	...	...	...	0
2 days at 37° C. ... ..	2	...	...	...	1
3 days at 22° C. ... ..	2	...	...	...	1
<i>Presumptive Coliform Reaction—</i>					
Present in ... ..	—	...	...	...	—
Absent from ... ..	100 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.
<i>Bact. Coli. (Type I)—</i>					
Present in ... ..	—	...	...	...	—
Absent from ... ..	100 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.

4. The water has no plumbo-solvent action and no special precautions are required in this respect.

5. The estimated population supplied from the Corporation's mains in the whole area of supply was 128,099 as at 31st December, 1956, and the total quantity of water supplied for all purposes during the year was 2,384,073,000 gallons.

The number of dwellinghouses, together with other premises having domestic occupation, supplied from the Corporation's mains was 36,572 at 31st March, 1956. Of this number, 36,505 were supplied direct and the remaining 67 were supplied by standpipes.

My records show that 19 houses within the Borough do not take a supply from the Corporation's mains but are supplied from private wells.

6. *Capital Expenditure.* Stage 1 of the Scheme approved by the Council for the alteration and improvement of the distribution system was commenced during the year. This Stage includes the construction of a new Reservoir, Water Tower



and Booster Station at Emmer Green and the laying of two lengths of trunk mains. By the end of 1956 the 12-in. main to the Reservoir had been completed and good progress had been made with the construction works.

The remainder of the scheme was reviewed in April 1956, when it became apparent that Stage 3 works should take precedence and the Council approved in principle that this Stage should commence before Stage 2. The total cost of constructing the Balancing Reservoir and some  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles of large diameter trunk mains, comprised in Stage 3, is estimated to be £202,000.

A brief reference to the Department's new Depot has already been made in paragraph 3. Construction of the new premises, which are situated in Berkeley Avenue, was completed by mid-summer and the Laboratory, Stores, Garages, Workshops and Costing Office of the Department are now housed in the new building.

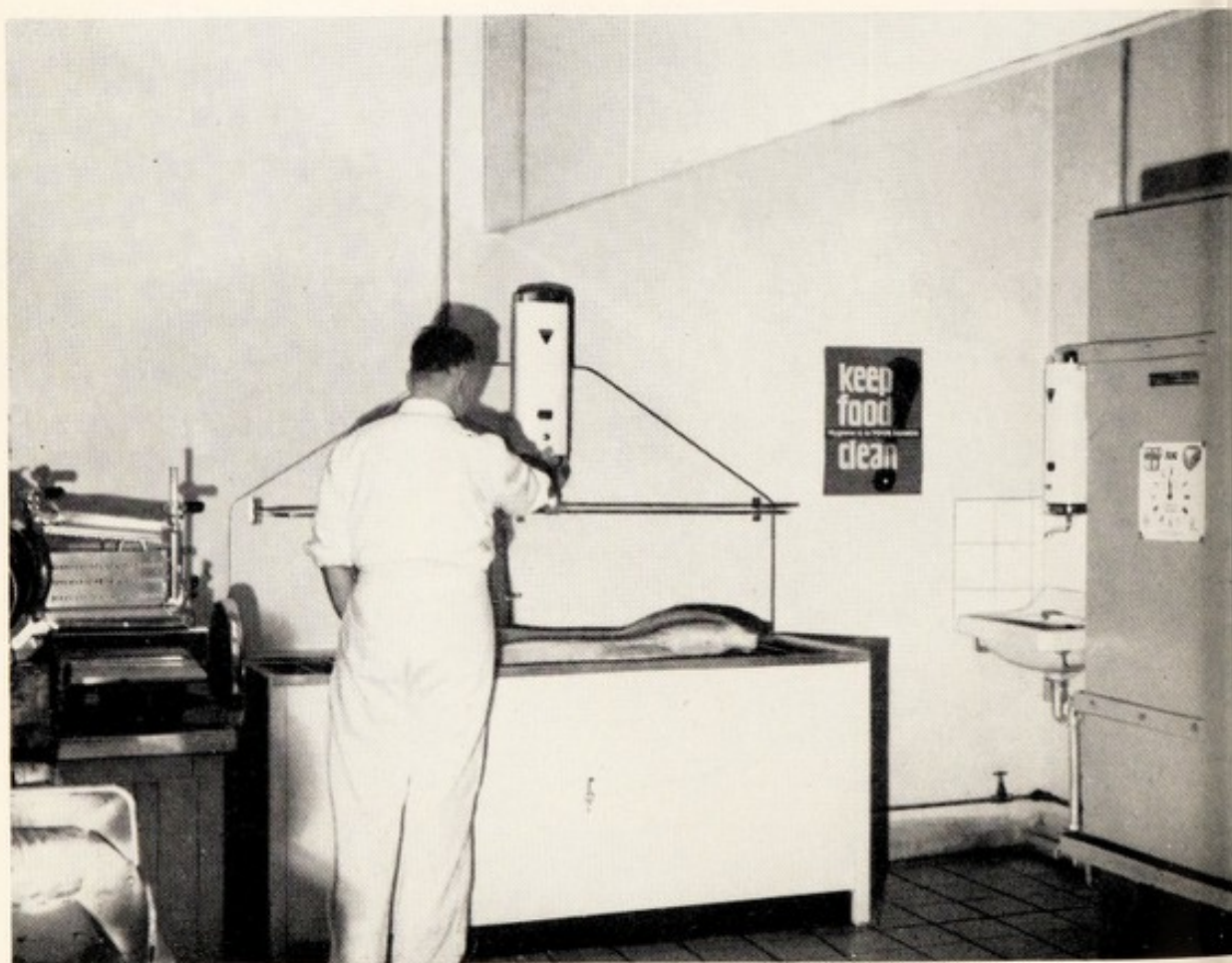
The Department were thus able to relinquish the obsolete and inadequate Thorn Lane premises.







Martin's Court Clearance Area



Food Hygiene in Operation at a Bacon Factory



## REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

Mr. J. Green, M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H., Chief Public Health Inspector, reports as follows :—

As anticipated, 1956 was a busy year for this section of the Department, and having regard to all the circumstances, progress can be considered as satisfactory. Every effort was made to maintain the services operated by this section, but housing matters, meat and food inspection, and the investigation of complaints absorbed an unduly large proportion of time from the limited staff available.

A start was made on slum clearance and the Council's programme for the year was successfully completed. Some headway was also made in preparation for the heavier programme for 1957. The removal of slum properties and the rehousing of people who dwell there deserves every attention, and no effort was spared in dealing with this problem. It was not possible to give as much attention as desired to other aspects of housing, basement dwellings and houses let-in-lodgings, in particular, but these will be dealt with as opportunity affords.

Through-put at the Abattoir followed the upward trend of the previous year, mainly due to the greater slaughtering capacity of the Abattoir, and increased figures for export. It meant a seven-day-week meat inspection service for practically the whole of the year, and a heavy burden fell upon the resources of the Department.

In addition to routine inspections particular attention was given early in the year to the introduction of the new Regulations relating to food premises and food handling. A number of lectures and demonstrations were given in this connection.

The problem of depleted technical staff remains with us. The only staff changes being the departure of a District Inspector to an adjoining rural district, the appointment of a Senior Public Health Inspector (Housing) and the recruitment of a pupil inspector. There is, of course, a national shortage of Public Health Inspectors and a part-solution appears to lie in the adoption by most Local Authorities of a pupillage scheme, such as we have here.

The results obtained by the Section are due in no small measure, to the efforts of all members of the staff who have worked most willingly and hard during the year.

### 1. HOUSING

**Slum Clearance.** During the course of the year a start was made on the clearance of the unfit houses included in the council's five-year slum clearance programme. A total of 53 unfit houses was dealt with by clearance or individual unfit procedure under the Housing Act, 1936, and a further 14 houses, the property of the Local Authority, were officially certified as being unfit for human habitation.

Additional to the programme, 1 house and 5 parts of buildings were found to be unfit for human habitation and were accordingly dealt with under Section 11 and Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

As far as possible the housing conditions in the marginal class of properties in areas where slum clearance action is proposed, were kept under review. The passage of time and lack of proper maintenance are clearly taking their toll and this is bound to result in some amendment to the original proposals when the time comes to deal with particular areas.

**Proceedings under the Housing Act, 1936—Section 25—Clearance Areas.** The following clearance areas were represented during the year by the Medical Officer of Health :—

Clearance Area No. 1/56 (Silver Street and Martin Court) comprising 8 houses.

Clearance Area No. 2/56 (Katesgrove Terrace) comprising 12 houses.



Clearance Area No. 3/56 (Katesgrove Terrace and Katesgrove Lane) comprising 14 houses.

Clearance Area No. 4/56 (Hosier Street) comprising 5 houses.

Clearance Area No. 5/56 (Hope Street and Hope Place) comprising 4 houses.

A Clearance Order was made in respect of the Silver Street and Martin Court Area. The owner of the properties 18 and 20 Silver Street objected to the Order on the grounds that the two houses could be made fit for human habitation at reasonable expense. The Minister of Housing and Local Government ordered a Local Hearing to take place on the 6th November, 1956, at which evidence was given on behalf of the owner and the Local Authority before the Minister's Inspector, who afterwards visited the area. The Clearance Order was confirmed by the Minister at the time of writing this report.

In the case of both the Katesgrove Areas, Clearance Orders were made and subsequently confirmed by the Minister. All the houses were vacated and by the end of the year five houses in Clearance Area No. 2/56 had been demolished.

Compulsory Purchase Orders were made in respect of the Hosier Street, Hope Street and Hope Place Areas for the purpose of future redevelopment by the Local Authority. At the same time, Nos. 2/20 Cambridge Place, 1/5 Hope Place and 6 Hope Street, all owned by the Local Authority and adjoining the above mentioned Clearance Areas, were officially certified unfit for human habitation and recommended for demolition.

**Section 11—Individual Unfit Houses.** The undermentioned houses were represented during the year by the Medical Officer of Health as being unfit for human habitation and not capable of being repaired at reasonable expense :—

3, 5 and 7 Albert Terrace, 123 and 125 Chatham Street, 37 Coley Place, 79 Field Road, 4 Garrard Street, 3 Hope Street, 80 Hosier Street, 11 Southampton Street.

In seven cases the houses were closed in accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953, as it was considered inexpedient at the time to require their demolition because of the possible effect on adjoining houses. Demolition Orders were placed on the three houses in Albert Terrace and these were demolished later in the year. A Demolition Order was made in respect of No. 123 Chatham Street and at the same time the Closing Order operative on number 125 Chatham Street was revoked and a Demolition Order substituted.

Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 Garrard Square and 195 Wokingham Road, houses which were subject to Demolition Orders made in 1955, were all demolished during the year.

**Section 12—Closing of Parts of Buildings.** The following parts of buildings were represented during the year by the Medical Officer of Health as being unfit for human habitation :—

3 Beaconsfield Buildings, 111 Castle Hill (Basement Flat), 205 King's Road (Basement Room), 601 Oxford Road (First Floor), 21 Southcote Road (Basement Flat).

Closing Orders were made in each case and all but two of the premises were closed by the end of the year.

Three of the premises dealt with were underground basements of large houses. The houses themselves were by no means slum property but to attempt any repair or improvement of the basement accommodation would have been both structurally difficult and expensive, owing to situation and resultant inadequacy of lighting and ventilation and the inherent dampness which becomes more apparent with the advancing age of the buildings. There are quite a number of basement dwelling houses in Reading. The precise number will not be known until a more comprehensive



housing survey has been completed. It is anticipated, however, that in the years to come we shall be called upon to deal with an increasing number of these premises.

**Repair of Houses.** Many of the complaints received by the Department were in respect of housing defects. In this connection 640 dwelling houses were inspected during the year and 345 preliminary notices were served. There were 2,781 re-inspections for the purpose of supervising works in progress, interviewing owners and builders and generally securing compliance with the notices served. Property owners continued to respond well on the service of intimation notices, although it was necessary to serve statutory notices in 91 cases. Thirty-six of the notices were served under the Housing Act, 1936, and 55 under the Public Health Act, 1936. Some 305 houses were made fit during the year either by the owner or by the Corporation in default. There were twelve instances where it was necessary for the Corporation to do the work in default of the owner where statutory notices had not been complied with. The cost of works involved was £218 0s. 6d.

The enforcement of anything like extensive repairs under the Housing Act becomes increasingly difficult each year, since action is limited to houses which can be repaired at reasonable expense—a restricting factor in present day circumstances when repair costs are high and rents remain static. During the year under review, therefore, increased use was made of the Public Health Act to secure the execution of urgent repairs, but action under this Act is also limited so far as repair work is concerned to such conditions as cause nuisance or are prejudicial to the health of the occupants. The repair of houses has now become a national problem, and since it is apparent that the relevant provisions of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, have failed in their purpose, it is now evident that more effective action will have to be taken if the pool of rented houses is not to continue as a wasting asset.

Routine house-to-house inspection, together with the ability to enforce essential repairs, although not a complete answer to this problem, would have the effect of introducing remedial action before many houses reached the dilapidated stage—but we are far from this position at the present time.

**Certificates of Disrepair.** During the year 8 applications were received for certificates of disrepair. Certificates were granted in all cases. During the year 3 certificates were revoked.

**Information *re* Local Land Charges, etc.** Information relating to dwelling houses as regards outstanding notices and their position with respect to slum clearance was supplied in many cases, upon request for official search of the Land Charges Register—some 1,173 forms were dealt with during the year. Details of properties were also supplied in connection with mortgages being arranged under the Housing Act, 1949, with respect to the purchase of small dwellings.

**Overcrowding.** Many complaints were investigated, particularly from people on the housing list, alleging conditions of overcrowding. The cases of statutory overcrowding, however, were comparatively small and the trend seems to be for a gradual improvement in the housing position from that point of view, probably a reflection of an improving general housing situation brought about by house building. Numerous reports on housing conditions were submitted to the Housing Department for their information and subsequent action. Reports were also furnished to other Local Authorities in respect of applicants on their list who resided in the County Borough of Reading.

**Houses let-in-lodgings.** It has not been possible because of staff difficulties to make any real progress with the investigation into the houses let-in-lodgings position. It is apparent, however, that until the housing situation improves it is going to be difficult to deal with this problem in so far as it now exists. A number of complaints were received during the year from establishments of this kind—action was taken in these cases.



### A Summary of Housing repair work under the Housing and Public Health Acts

Number of inspections for the purpose of the Housing Consolidated Regulations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	394
Number of general inspections	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	640
Number of revisits	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,781
Number of Preliminary Notices served	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	345
Number of Preliminary Notices complied with	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	344
Number of Statutory Notices served under the Housing Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36
Number of Statutory Notices (Housing Act) complied with by :—								
Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	28
Local Authority in default	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Number of Statutory Notices served under the Public Health Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	55
Number of Statutory Notices (Public Health Act) complied with by :—								
Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	41
Local Authority in default	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Number of Houses made fit	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	305

## 2. FOOD ADMINISTRATION

This Section deals with the inspection and sampling of all kinds of food between the point of production to the consumer, and the inspection of food premises. Food hygiene is also dealt with and details of the Public Analyst's reports together with action taken on deficient samples are also discussed. Particulars of the work of the Department in respect of these matters have been arranged in the same way as last year.

- (a) Slaughterhouses and Inspection of Meat
- (b) Unwholesome Food Condemned
- (c) Milk
- (d) Ice Cream
- (e) Food Handling
- (f) Sampling, Food and Drugs Act, 1955

### (a) SLAUGHTERHOUSES AND INSPECTION OF MEAT

The new annexe to the Abattoirs, completed by the Ministry of Food in March, 1955, and used experimentally for twelve months or so by the Corporation's Slaughtering Contractor, was taken over officially by the Local Authority in May, 1956. The annexe is designed especially for the slaughter of small animals on the "line" system and this together with the main Abattoir building reconstructed in 1949 to deal with cattle, also on the "line" system, satisfies the town's need so far as slaughtering facilities are concerned. Indeed, the slaughtering capacity of the Abattoir as a whole is capable of not only supplying Reading and the large surrounding area it serves, with fresh meat but provides for a large export market as well, partly for the Continent.

The period between the completion of the new annexe and the date of take-over gave a useful opportunity to correct the early teething troubles both as regards slaughtering and meat inspection.

During 1956 besides the Public Abattoir, four private slaughterhouses were in use, a further one was licensed but no slaughtering was done there. Shortly after



the take-over by the Corporation of the annexe in Abattoirs Road the private slaughterhouse used by the Corporation for the slaughter of animals ceased to operate, so that at the end of the year, the effective slaughtering establishments comprised :—the Public Abattoir, a slaughterhouse connected with a bacon factory, one attached to a small pork and bacon business and a small slaughterhouse in Tilehurst where a few smalls were killed. With the discontinuation of the London Street establishment, kosher killing in the town also ceased.

Towards the end of the year the Corporation applied to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food to give effect to the Council's resolution of redundancy in respect of two private slaughterhouses. There was an objection to the resolution by the Jewish community and the Minister ordered a local hearing, the result of which has not yet been made known.

At the Abattoir long needed improvements to the lairage accommodation were carried out together with other work including interior painting. The facilities at the Abattoirs for the meat inspectors were also improved upon, an event which is very much appreciated by the meat inspection staff. There is now suitable office accommodation together with elementary laboratory facilities, which help to alleviate the arduous duties and trying conditions which are associated with meat inspection and assist the meat inspectors in their work. The accommodation is also more suitable for the many interviews which take place with owners of cattle, veterinarians, and others.

**Meat for Export.** It seems appropriate to comment at this point on the export of meat from animals slaughtered at the Abattoir. In view of the shortage of fresh meat on the Continent and the lifting of export restrictions by the Government, a sudden demand arose for dead meat from this country. Reading, besides having an efficient slaughtering centre with an unusually large capacity is conveniently situated for this business. As a result what was in the nature of a new trade began. Visits were made by officials from the Ministry of Food here, and from the importing countries to see whether a satisfactory system of meat inspection was being carried out, since it was necessary in the case of exports to the Continent to certify that the animals had been inspected both ante-mortem and post-mortem, and were found to be free from disease and fit for human consumption.

Whilst the trade had the effect of considerably increasing at times the throughput at the Abattoir, it also created difficulty from the point of view of inspection because of the shortage of staff. These difficulties, however, were overcome. Some 95 certificates involving 3,343 beef carcasses, 204 beef forequarters, 404 beef hind-quarters, and 970 lambs were issued in connection with export consignments.

**Meat Marking.** With the export business there arose the question of a meat marking scheme under the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924. This matter was considered by the Health Committee, but in view of the staff position and the very long hours being worked at the Abattoirs throughout the week, including Saturdays and Sundays, it was felt the resources of the Department were not sufficient to maintain the requirements of such a scheme. The matter was therefore deferred. It is desirable, however, and indeed it was a recommendation in 1951 of the Government Inter-Departmental Committee set up to investigate the circumstances of meat inspection in this country, that a meat inspection service should be sufficient to comply with the requirements of a meat marking scheme. A scheme of this kind is a guarantee to the consumer that meat officially marked in accordance with the Regulations has been satisfactorily inspected. It is also a safeguard to the producer in that the marking is an indication that the meat has passed through the hands of an official of the Local Authority engaged for the purpose of meat inspection. It is hoped that some time in the near future it may be possible to introduce a meat marking scheme in Reading.



**Casualty Animals.** There was an increase in the number of casualty animals inspected during the year, particularly sows and pigs. These casualties are sent in from time to time by owners of animals which have suffered accident or are sent in for slaughtering because of illness. The recommendations laid down in Memo. 3 Meat, issued by the Ministry of Food, were followed in these cases. In the case of dressed carcasses, it is necessary that the essential organs should accompany the carcasses, while in other cases, a Veterinary Surgeon's Certificate or a written declaration by the owner in the case of sheep, is required. These precautions are necessary when it is considered that such animals may not be in a good state of health when they are sent in to the Abattoir. There was, therefore, need on occasion for consultation with Veterinarians and owners in connection with this matter.

In dealing with the question of practical meat inspection, although their help was not restricted entirely to this aspect of our work, mention should be made of the valuable assistance given by Mr. R. M. Loosmore, Veterinary Investigation Officer to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries who gave advice on many occasions. Co-operation has been constantly available and readily given at all times.

The position with regard to casualty animals inspected during the year, is as follows :—

Cows	Heifers and Steers	Bulls	Sheep	Calves	Pigs
117	Nil	Nil	6	13	273

It is pleasing to record that there is no need this year to call attention to the savaging of sheep by roving dogs, there being no incidents of this kind during 1956. It will be interesting to note, also, that damage and consequent condemnation of meat as a result of injury of animals during transit is also absent.

**Inspection of Dressed Carcasses.** The number of dressed carcasses received at the Abattoir and slaughterhouse during the year was slightly more than in previous years. The details of the dressed carcasses which were received from a Veterinary Research Establishment in an adjoining area are as follows :—

Sides of beef, nil ; 27 calves ; 6 sheep ; and 2 sows

**Meat Inspection.** The number of animals slaughtered in Reading during 1956 was again considerably higher than that of the previous year. This follows the trend of increased through-put since 1951, more especially at the Public Abattoir. 134,628 animals of various kinds were slaughtered during the year, this being a new record figure. Inspection details for 1955/56 are again compiled graphically and the graph on page 85 illustrates quite clearly how slaughtering has increased. The amount of meat inspected in Reading is far in excess of the needs of the town and surrounding districts. It is estimated that something approaching 70% of the meat inspected in Reading is consumed outside the Borough. This means that a heavy burden is placed on the Reading Authority in having to provide a meat inspection service considerably greater than is required for the needs of the town itself. The Public Health inspection service is particularly affected here by reason of the shortage of staff and if the demands of meat inspection are to be adequately met, some neglect of other duties is obvious. It is hoped that the Government, who have been considering the question of reimbursement to those Authorities who inspect meat for export will come to a decision soon.

The Council were good enough to review the meat inspection facilities in the department again this year, and provided in the Establishment for an additional Senior Inspector for meat inspection, but it was not possible to fill the post. Neither was it possible to fully augment the arrangement to give meat inspectors a spell on



other work free from meat inspection duties. But the staff have responded well to the demands of meat inspection, and we have been able to keep the service going so far. The co-operation of the slaughtering contractor has been most helpful in this respect.

It will be noted from the statistics that there has again been a heavy increase in cattle and cows slaughtered which are the types of animals requiring most attention from the meat inspection staff.

It was made known at the end of the year that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food was intending to apply a Tuberculosis (Eradication Order) to a large part of the South of England, of which Reading is part. There will undoubtedly be an increase in the number of Tuberculin-test reactors passing through the Abattoirs with a consequent need for an efficient meat inspection service.

**Calves affected with Congenital Tuberculosis.** The number of calves affected with congenital tuberculosis found during the year, was again encouragingly small. Details of calves found to be affected with tuberculosis are forwarded to the Animal Health Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries so that investigation may be made at the source from which the calf was obtained. It is not always possible to trace the animal back to its first home where the calf has changed hands several times since leaving it, but the Ministry are often able to investigate the circumstances on the farm when it may be necessary to deal with the dam or sire under the Tuberculosis Order.

**Cysticercus Bovis.** There continues to be a number of cases of cysticercus bovis found at the Abattoirs, details of the incidence are given in table 84. Cysticercus bovis is the cystic stage of a tape worm for which man is a host and the special procedure of inspection of bovines is laid down by the Ministry of Food which was followed. All affected offal was condemned and after careful examination of muscles appropriate action was taken. Where viable cysts were found carcasses were refrigerated for the recommended period of 21 days so as to ensure the meat was safe for human consumption before release.

**Diseases of Animals Acts, 1894 to 1950.** The Meat Inspectors are authorised officers for the purposes of the Diseases of Animals Acts, and are responsible for ensuring the proper disposal of the diseased carcasses and the disinfection of infected premises. During the year 16 cases of swine fever were reported on 13 separate premises, of which only 7 cases were confirmed. In one instance from a batch of 40 pigs sent into the Abattoir, 5 carcasses were found to show symptoms of swine fever, but this was not confirmed. The confirmed cases of swine fever all occurred at piggeries in the Borough. Disinfection of premises was carried out under the supervision of the Public Health Inspectors and the infected carcasses were disposed of at the Ministry of Agriculture's premises in Coley Park, where an incinerator is available. The Ministry have kindly consented for their incinerator to be used since the Corporation has no such equipment available.

One case of Anthrax was reported and confirmed. In this case, the carcass of a calf had been brought a considerable distance by road to the Ministry of Agriculture's research establishment in Reading. The carcass was incinerated on the premises and the vehicle concerned was suitably disinfected under the supervision of the meat inspector.

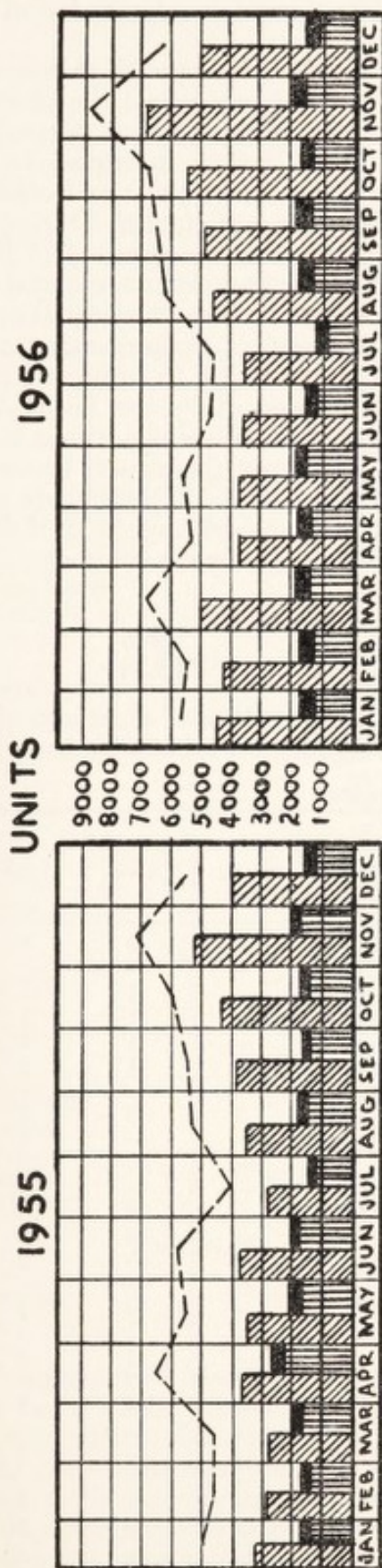
A number of cattle were sent into the Abattoirs for slaughtering under the Tuberculosis (Slaughter of Reactors) Order, 1950, and dealt with by the meat inspectors and the Divisional Veterinary Officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.



**Slaughter of Animals Acts, 1933 to 1954.** The number of persons requiring licences to slaughter increased again this year, a total of 67 licences have been issued compared with 59 last year and 43 in 1953. Both the captive bolt pistol and the electric lethaler are used in the Abattoirs and other slaughterhouses and a number of animals are killed by Jewish Ritual. No infringements of the Acts were reported.

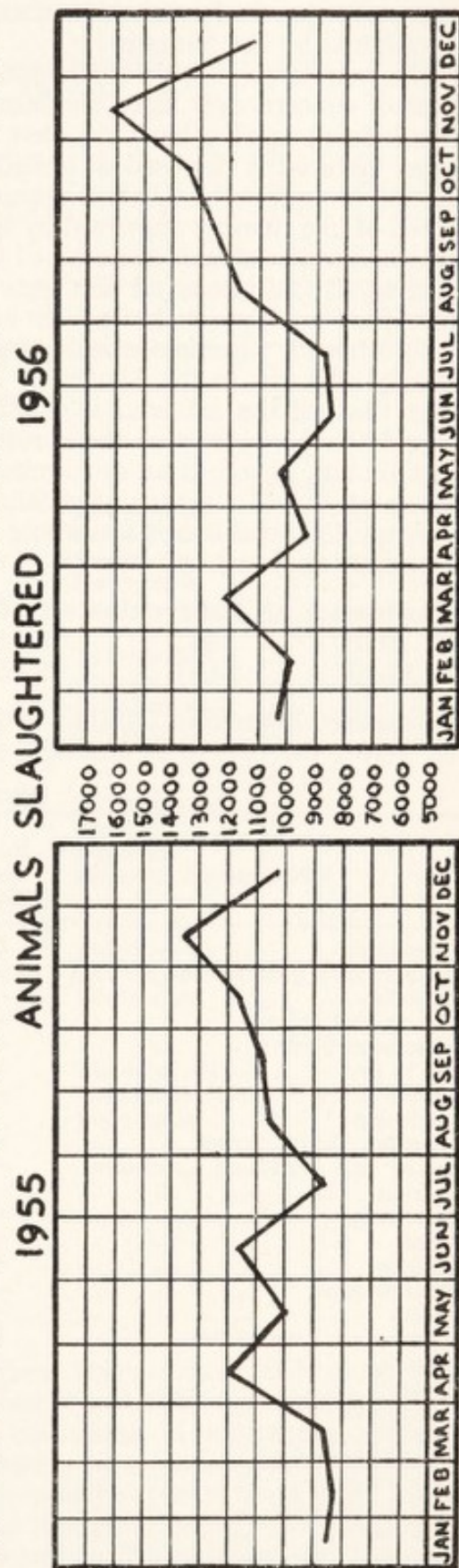
	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed ... ..	12,873	18,350	23,736	21,784	57,885	Nil
Number inspected ... ..	12,873	18,350	23,736	21,784	57,885	Nil
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci. Whole carcasses con- demned ... ..	16	190	66	51	104	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ... ..	2,781	7,832	41	251	6,093	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci ...	21.73	43.71	0.45	1.38	10.70	Nil
<i>Tuberculosis only :</i>						
Whole carcasses condemned ...	14	242	9	—	3	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ... ..	447	3,501	4	—	440	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	3.58	20.39	0.06	—	0.76	Nil
<i>Cysticercosis :</i>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ... ..	11	—	—	—	—	Nil
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration ... ..	6	—	—	—	—	Nil
Generalised and totally condemned	Nil	—	—	—	—	Nil

# MEAT INSPECTION



KEY

PUBLIC ABATTOIRS   
 BACON FACTORY   
 OTHER SLAUGHTERHOUSES   
 TOTAL





**Condemned Meat.** Some 223½ tons of meat were condemned during the year. This is a record figure. The table below sets out the number of carcasses inspected together with particulars of the carcasses, or parts thereof, condemned, and is in the form required by the Ministry.

The manner in which condemned meat should be disposed of has been the subject of concern ever since the Ministry of Food discontinued the processing of all condemned meat other than that required for pharmaceutical purposes. Condemned material is disposed of in different ways in various districts. In Reading the terms of user at the Abattoir require that all condemned meat and offal shall be disposed of in a manner approved by the Medical Officer of Health. During the year condemned material was disposed of to a processor who converted it to fertilizers, feeding stuffs and industrial fats, etc., a quantity of non-infected material was sent to an animal food establishment. In some towns all condemned material other than that suitable for pharmaceutical purposes is disposed of by processing on or immediately adjacent to the Abattoir. This method has a lot to commend it since it ensures that all the material is satisfactorily disposed of by the Local Authority staff and the possibility of the spread of disease and other conditions is reduced to a minimum. There is an economical factor, of course, the owners concerned like to see as profitable a return as possible on condemned meat, since there can often be a severe financial loss if the whole animal is condemned, especially if the trader is in a small way, and the animals in which he deals are few in number.

#### Incidence of Tuberculosis in Cows

1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
36.46	24.61	23.95	18.76	15.74	20.39

**Diseased Meat and Offals.** The following quantities of meat and offals were found during the year to be diseased, unsound or unfit for human consumption :—

#### Whole Carcasses

Disease	Heifers and Steers	Cows	Bulls	Calves	Pigs	Sheep
Tuberculosis ... ..	14	242	—	9	3	—
Actinomycosis, generalised ...	—	1	—	—	—	—
Asphyxia ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	—
Bruising and injuries ... ..	—	14	—	1	1	3
Congestion ... ..	—	—	—	1	2	—
Dead in pen ... ..	—	—	—	1	2	1
Distopia ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	1
Emaciation ... ..	2	16	1	3	7	11
Erysipelas, Acute Swine ... ..	—	—	—	—	8	—
Fevered and Moribund Condition ...	—	3	—	10	18	2
Gangrene ... ..	—	2	—	—	—	—
Immaturity ... ..	—	—	—	18	14	—
Ill-bled ... ..	—	3	—	4	1	2
Jaundice ... ..	—	2	—	—	2	—
Johnes Disease ... ..	—	7	—	—	—	—
Oedema ... ..	—	11	—	5	1	3
Oedema and Emaciation ... ..	10	120	—	1	1	12
Pyæmia ... ..	—	—	—	1	4	3
Pyrexia ... ..	3	1	—	17	24	12
Septicæmia ... ..	—	5	—	4	3	—
Septic Pericarditis ... ..	1	—	—	—	—	—
Septic Peritonitis ... ..	—	4	—	—	3	—
Septic Pleurisy ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	1
Septic Pneumonia ... ..	—	—	—	1	7	—
Swine Fever ... ..	—	—	—	—	5	—
Tetanus ... ..	—	—	—	—	1	—
Traumatic Pericarditis ... ..	—	1	—	—	—	—
	30	432	1	77	107	51



## Part Carcases

Disease	Heifers and Steers	Cows	Bulls	Calves	Pigs	Sheep
Tuberculosis ... ..	19	256	3	4	2	—
Abscess ... ..	1	9	—	—	6	2
Arthritis ... ..	—	2	—	—	31	1
Bruising and injuries ... ..	2	14	—	3	14	5
Melanosis ... ..	—	1	—	—	—	—
Oedema ... ..	—	6	1	—	—	—
Osteomyelitis ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	1
Urticaria ... ..	—	—	—	—	1	—
	22	288	4	7	54	9

## Organs, etc.

<i>Heads and Tongues</i>				<i>Hearts</i>			
Tuberculosis ... ..	1,910			Tuberculosis ... ..	30		
Abscess ... ..	93			Cysticercus Bovis ... ..	2		
Actinomycosis ... ..	238			Erysipelas ... ..	1		
Cysticercus Bovis ... ..	9			Pericarditis ... ..	1,718		
Injuries ... ..	1						
<i>Lungs</i>				<i>Spleens</i>			
Tuberculosis ... ..	2,631			Tuberculosis ... ..	30		
Abscess ... ..	112			Abscess ... ..	4		
Congestion ... ..	376			Inflammation ... ..	10		
Cysts ... ..	502			Rupture ... ..	8		
Distomatosis ... ..	26						
Emphysema ... ..	10			<i>Kidneys</i>			
Melanosis... ..	4			Tuberculosis ... ..	12		
Parasites ... ..	77			Cysts ... ..	578		
Pleurisy ... ..	1,168			Nephritis ... ..	555		
Pneumonia ... ..	2,232			Petechial Haemorrhage ... ..	12		
<i>Livers</i>				<i>Skirts</i>			
Tuberculosis ... ..	362			Tuberculosis ... ..	103		
Abscess ... ..	135			Bloodsplash ... ..	6		
Angioma ... ..	827			Peritonitis ... ..	30		
Cirrhosis ... ..	575						
Cysts ... ..	71			<i>Intestines</i>			
Degenerations ... ..	102			Tuberculosis ... ..	113		
Distomatosis ... ..	11,669			Johnes Disease ... ..	17		
Milkspots... ..	2,230			Peritonitis ... ..	81		
Necrosis ... ..	1						
Peritonitis ... ..	18						
<i>Part Livers</i>							
Angioma ... ..	22						
Distomatosis ... ..	1,648						

**Transport of Meat.** The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, came into force during the year and these affected the transport and carrying of meat. The regulations referred to vehicle construction, the cleanliness of equipment, vehicles, etc., and the use of clean overalls and head covering by meat handlers. Offals are now required to be transported in a suitable receptacle separate from other meat. The trade was circularised regarding the changes brought about by the new Regulations and there has been a considerable improvement in the handling and transportation of meat in the town. Metal lined vehicles are now used by the larger firms, one refrigerated van is in use and another is available for carrying meat in sides. Although



the hanging of meat in vehicles is inclined to be a more expensive way of transportation it does facilitate handling ; it reduces the risk of contamination, and the appearance and condition of the meat is better preserved when it is transported in this way.

It was necessary during the year to draw the attention of vehicle owners to certain infringements of the regulations, but no serious cases were reported and the traders have in general responded in meeting the new requirements.

**Knacker's Yard.** There is one Knacker's Yard in the Borough which is subject to annual licensing by the Council. These premises were reconstructed during 1955 and are of a good standard. The register kept in accordance with the Knacker's Yard Orders shows 149 bovine and 24 equine cases were dealt with on the premises during the year. No complaints were received in respect of this establishment and it was carried on satisfactorily during the year. The Public Health Inspectors made 58 visits to the premises during 1956.

#### (b) UNWHOLESOME FOOD CONDEMNED

Some 537 visits were made to food establishments throughout the year for the purpose of dealing with unwholesome food. Approximately  $5\frac{1}{4}$  tons of food were condemned, and 2,030 certificates issued to the traders concerned. Brief particulars of the food condemned are given below :—

Arrowroot	...	...	...	...	...	7 lbs.
Bacon	...	...	...	...	...	1,297 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Biscuits	...	...	...	...	...	18 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.
Butter	...	...	...	...	...	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Cake	...	...	...	...	...	123 lbs.
Cheese	...	...	...	...	...	505 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Currants	...	...	...	...	...	58 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Eggs	...	...	...	...	...	60 dozen
Fish	...	...	...	...	...	409 lbs.
Fruit	...	...	...	...	...	2,505 lbs.
Ham	...	...	...	...	...	409 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Jam	...	...	...	...	...	50 lbs.
Liver	...	...	...	...	...	50 lbs.
Margarine	...	...	...	...	...	56 lbs.
Meat	...	...	...	...	...	689 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Offal	...	...	...	...	...	433 lbs.
Prunes	...	...	...	...	...	168 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Raisins	...	...	...	...	...	40 lbs.
Sausages	...	...	...	...	...	146 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Syrup	...	...	...	...	...	11 lbs.
Tins	...	...	...	...	...	5,337 tins
Tomatoes	...	...	...	...	...	13 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

#### (c) MILK

The Dairy Establishments in the town were visited regularly during the year both for the purpose of milk sampling at the time of delivery of farm supplies, and for general inspection. Compliance with the relevant statutes has been reasonably satisfactory. The numbers of licences issued during the year under the Milk (Special



Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949, and the Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949, were as follows :—

Plant licences for milk pasteurisation	...	4
Dealers' licences for sale of :—		
Pasteurised Milk	... ..	59
Pasteurised Tuberculin Tested Milk	... ..	10
Tuberculin Tested Milk	... ..	25
Sterilised Milk	... ..	78

A number of firms distributing milk in the town were from districts outside. Supplementary licences issued to these distributors were as follows :—

Pasteurised Milk	... ..	3
Pasteurised Tuberculin Tested Milk	... ..	1
Tuberculin Tested Milk	... ..	7
Sterilised Milk	... ..	2

The additional plant licensed during the year is one used in the Dairy Department at the Reading University and which has been made available to one of the dairy firms for processing milk, on the rare occasions the firm is unable to cope with requirements on its own premises and it is convenient for the University to deal with the milk. The plant is of the H.T.S.T. type.

There has been a gradual reduction in the number of dairies and processing plants year by year, with the result that greater quantities of milk have been dealt with at the remaining establishments. The types of plants in use in the town are of the H.T.S.T. and Batch types. From the public health point of view the two processes are equally effective, but there is a matter of individual choice as to which is the better for trade purposes. The main advantage of the H.T.S.T. method is rapid through-put compared with processing floor space required, whilst with the Holder method it is claimed by users that the cream line on the milk is better preserved. Processing plants were inspected throughout the year and tested on occasions, to ensure that the requirements of the Milk Regulations were being complied with. Only milk to which a "special designation" is applied, can be sold by retail in Reading, since the town is part of a specified area, i.e., an area in which the sale by retail of raw milk, other than Tuberculin Tested Milk, is prohibited.

**Samples : Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) and (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949.** The results of samples submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations are shown below :—

Class of Milk	No. of Samples Tested	Appropriate Tests	No. of Samples		
			Passed	Failed	Void
Pasteurised ...	337	Phosphatase	337	—	—
		Methylene Blue	239	4	94
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised)	208	Phosphatase	207	1	—
		Methylene Blue	140	—	68
Tuberculin Tested	31	Methylene Blue	28	3	—
Sterilised	22	Turbidity	22	—	—

Some 598 samples of various types of designated milks were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination by the prescribed tests ; 414 samples



of milk were examined by the Methylene Blue test which is designed to indicate keeping quality, and to some extent, the conditions under which the milk is produced, handled and transported; some 162 samples were declared void. Of the heat-treated milks examined by the Methylene Blue test, four failed, and three Tuberculin Tested Milk so examined were also reported unsatisfactory. The circumstances at the local dairies were investigated and in the case of the raw milks, particulars were reported to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food who are responsible for the conditions under which milk is produced on dairy farms. One sample only was reported to have failed the phosphatase test. The circumstances in this case were immediately investigated, no cause for the failure could be ascertained and all the subsequent samples proved satisfactory.

Investigations have been going on for some time concerning the possibility of amending the existing tests for phosphatase—the Kay-Graham test—with a view to reducing the time taken to obtain a result. The test under consideration is the Schaffenburgh-Mullen test which, if adopted, will enable the phosphatase results to be given fairly quickly. Prompt notification of a failure is very useful, in that investigations can immediately be made into the circumstances of a case and the possibility of inadequately heat treated milk being despatched from the dairy establishment considerably reduced. However, in the Reading establishments particular care is observed with regard to heat treatment, a fact reflected in the results again this year, and any query is rapidly investigated by the firm, to ensure that such remedial action as might be necessary is put into effect without delay. There is close liaison with the Public Health Laboratory, and the interval between submission of a sample by an inspector and a report on it is kept to a minimum.

The 22 sterilised milks submitted to the turbidity test all proved satisfactory. The sale of this type of milk in the town appears to be increasing.

The laboratory results for milk examination during the year are again reasonably satisfactory. The number of samples declared void was 162 which represented an unduly high proportion of the number of samples submitted. It may well be there was coincidence between the days on which samples were submitted and high atmospheric temperatures, but it does indicate the limitations of this test. The Regulations provided that, upon arrival at the laboratory, samples of pasteurised milk shall be removed from the insulated container and kept for a period at atmospheric temperature until the Methylene Blue test is begun, and if at any time the atmospheric shade temperature in the immediate vicinity of the samples exceeds 65° Fahrenheit the test shall be declared void. The test is mainly for ascertaining the likely condition of the milk as it will be when it gets into the hands of the consumer.

**Biological Tests.** The Laboratory facilities for the biological examination of milk were again very restricted during the year. Five samples were submitted for examination. All were reported negative. The test is applied for the purpose of seeing whether live tubercle bacilli are present in the milk and is carried out by means of guinea pig injections. As far as Reading is concerned, the tests are useful although they have a limited value, since all the milk consumed in the town is either tuberculin tested or is subject to heat treatment. It could, nevertheless, be a second line of defence against tuberculosis in milk since rare though they may be there are occasions, as will be noted in the report, when milk may not be adequately heat treated.

**Milk Bottles.** Having regard to the number of complaints, there does not seem to have been the same trouble this year regarding unclean milk bottles as was the case in 1955. The dairies in the town have given particular attention to this matter and it is possible that the remarks in the press on the subject have had effect too. When one considers the extent to which milk bottles are used for distributing this most important food, especially for children, their misuse is to be



deplored. The return of unrinsed milk bottles by householders also is a sign of bad house-keeping. It is hoped that there will be a continued improvement so far as this matter is concerned.

**School Milk Supply.** The milk supplied to all council schools is pasteurised and samples have been taken regularly for examination. All the results were satisfactory.

**Ice Cream.** The number of dealers registered in connection with the storage and sale of ice cream shows an increase on last year, there being 483 on the register on the 31st December. There was no change in the number of ice cream manufacturers in the town. Regular and frequent inspections were made throughout the year to all ice cream establishments and conditions were found to be satisfactory. Most of the ice cream in the town is sold pre-wrapped or in containers and the hygiene standards obtained are generally satisfactory. The indications are that where the provisions of the ice cream regulations are observed there is no reason why ice cream should not meet the standards required. Some 104 samples of ice cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination by the Methylene Blue Test. The results are as follows :—

Provisional Grade 1	...	...	...	...	90
Provisional Grade 2	...	...	...	...	12
Provisional Grade 3	...	...	...	...	Nil
Provisional Grade 4	...	...	...	...	2

The results of the examination in 1956 are again good ; only two samples being placed in Provisional Grade 4.

**The Methylene Blue Test** which has been operating for several years now is still only applied experimentally. The provisional gradings are as follows :—

<i>Provisional Grading</i>				<i>Time taken to reduce Methylene Blue</i>
1	...	...	...	4 hours or more
2	...	...	...	2½–4 hours
3	...	...	...	½–2 hours
4	...	...	...	0 hours (i.e., reduction end of incubation period)

Grades 1 and 2 are considered satisfactory, and Grades 3 and 4 unsatisfactory.

The standard suggested for manufacturers is that over a period of six months, 50% of the samples should fall in Grade 1, 80% in Grade 1 or 2, not more than 20% in Grade 3 and none in Grade 4.

The test has no legal significance, but it forms a very useful guide as to the conditions under which ice cream is produced. The circumstances and conditions of production of the samples falling within the provisional grades 3 and 4, were investigated and advice was given.

**Chemical Standards.** The food standard relating to ice cream as laid down in The Food Standards (Ice Cream) Order 1953, is briefly as follows :—

"Ice cream shall contain not less than 5% fat, 10% sugar and 7½% milk solids-non-fat. Certain adjustments are made in the standard for ice cream containing fruit, fruit pulp, etc., and also 'Parev' (Kosher) ice cream."

Eight samples of ice cream were submitted to the Public Analyst for chemical analysis, all of which proved satisfactory. It is understood that the Food Standards Committee are giving consideration to the standards for ice cream.

**Ice Cream Vehicles, Stalls, etc.** Vehicles operating in the town were periodically inspected, there being no reports of unsatisfactory conditions. Almost



without exception wrapped ice cream only is served. The vehicles were found to be generally satisfactory from the point of view of cleanliness and were of a good standard. Stalls erected in the parks and playing fields were also regularly inspected during the season of use.

### (e) *FOOD HANDLING*

The Food Hygiene Regulations made under the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, came into force on the 1st January, 1956. The main requirements relate to the provision in food establishments of adequate washing facilities by way of constant supplies of hot and cold water, wash basins, soap and towels, etc., the provision of sinks for the purpose of washing food and equipment in the establishments and the keeping at a suitable temperature of certain types of food intended for immediate consumption when not exposed for sale. The sink and washing facility requirements extend the previous powers under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, while the regulation as to temperature is somewhat new. Previously the Food & Drugs Act legislation has merely required that food shall be kept so as to avoid as far as practicable contamination, but it is in the last ten or fifteen years or so, that the importance of food storage temperatures have been more fully appreciated. Before refrigeration became an accepted part of food storage equipment in retail shops, it would undoubtedly have been difficult to comply with the temperature requirement, so that this regulation is an example as to how legislation follows—but not too closely perhaps in this case—technical and trade developments.

Another important provision in the Regulations is that it is now possible for magistrates to close a food business where it is being carried on in insanitary premises. This should prove a weighty deterrent to those people who may be indifferent to warnings or fines.

The new Regulations also extend the scope of food legislation in that most premises formerly exempted from the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act are now subject to inspection, hospital kitchens, school meals kitchens and local authority establishments where food is prepared—for instance old peoples' homes, included.

**Inspection of Food Premises.** Some progress was made by way of improvements to food premises and in food handling generally. There is, however, much still to be done in this connection. Restaurants, Cafés and Establishments where prepared meats were manufactured were given some degree of priority, and there has been an improvement in the standard of these premises. A number of traders, especially in the centre of the town, have followed modern trend in reorganising layouts. The Council gave consideration during the year to the need for improvement in the covered market, and discussions took place with a view to meeting the requirements of the regulations.

In the limited time available for this work emphasis was laid on the provision of adequate washing facilities with constant supplies of hot and cold water, soap, towels and nail brushes, sufficient not only to permit, but to encourage their use by food handlers. Notices are now prominently displayed in appropriate places in food premises requiring people to wash their hands. The practice of pre-wrapping food stuffs continued to increase, most of the goods being sold, especially in grocery establishments, are pre-packed. Many small goods, which, up to a few years ago were cut and wrapped after selection by the purchaser including bacon and ham, meat, etc., are now cut and pre-wrapped in preparation rooms behind the shop. Whilst pre-wrapping eliminates to a large extent the possibility of contamination when exposed for sale, it is very important that the cutting and pre-wrapping should be done in a room which conforms to the highest hygienic standards, and that the wrapping materials themselves are satisfactory. The export trade in pre-packed



goods seems to be partly responsible for a more extensive range of pre-packed goods, but householders themselves seem to prefer much of their food presented in this way.

Numerous requests were made to traders concerning improvements required and the response has been generally satisfactory. In one instance it was necessary to report infringements to the Council who authorised the institution of proceedings. The work was done, however, immediately after proceedings were authorised and legal action was not taken.

**Food Premises.** In addition to ice cream premises there are establishments registered in accordance with the provisions of Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, as follows :—

Fish Friers	...	...	...	...	...	50
Sausage Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	98
Pressed Meat Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	58
Jam Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	2
Pickles Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	3
Potato Crisp Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	1
Margarine Wholesale Stores	...	...	...	...	...	4
						<hr/> 216 <hr/>

In addition to the above, there are 879 other food premises recorded to which 2,713 visits were paid. The number of premises arranged in the various classes are as follows :—

Bakers Shops	...	...	...	...	...	12
Butchers Shops	...	...	...	...	...	92
Cafés	...	...	...	...	...	67
Cake Shops	...	...	...	...	...	49
Cooked Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	...	5
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	10
Fish Shops and Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	60
Greengrocers Shops	...	...	...	...	...	95
Grocers Shops	...	...	...	...	...	329
Sweet Shops	...	...	...	...	...	112
Wholesale Food Factories	...	...	...	...	...	48
						<hr/> 879 <hr/>

**School Kitchens.** Liaison with the School Meals Service continued throughout the year on matters of food hygiene in school kitchens. Numerous visits were paid to these establishments in connection with the quality and condition of food supplied to them. Improvements continue to be made in the kitchens ; all are now equipped with washing facilities, redecoration has been carried out in a number of cases and although there is progress still to be made conditions are generally satisfactory. Food stores attached to the kitchens were inspected throughout the year and action was taken as necessary.

**Licensed Premises.** Sixty-five visits were paid to licensed premises during the year.

**Extraneous Matter in Food.** Several complaints were received during the year concerning extraneous matter in food. Investigations were made into the circumstances of these complaints and appropriate action was taken.



**Insect Pests in Food and Food Premises.** There were a number of occasions during the year when advice was given concerning the steps to be taken in regard to the infestation of food premises by insect pests. The majority were of a minor character and it was possible to give appropriate advice or assistance to the trader concerned and so deal with the case satisfactorily. There is one instance, however, which merits special mention, and that occurred during August. We were informed by a large transport undertaking that a consignment of 6 tons of imported raisins to the value of several hundred pounds had been refused by a large food establishment in the town on the grounds that the raisins were infested with insects and larvae. The firm concerned have a competent internal organisation for dealing with this problem so far as their own premises are concerned, and a strict check is made on all food products before they are accepted, into the factory premises.

The consignment was therefore returned to the local transport depot and an inspection made by the Public Health Inspector. There appeared to be infestation by insects of various kinds. In view of the nature of the infestation, the amount of fruit involved and the circumstances of the case generally, it was referred to the Infestation Control Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, who are required to be notified of matters of this kind under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

Careful investigation into the case by the Ministry showed that the raisins, which were in boxes, were probably partly affected by insects from an infested quantity of groundnut expeller cake which was carried in the vehicle at the same time. There was evidence also that the dried raisins themselves were infested. In the groundnut expeller cake were found moderate numbers of the red rust flour beetle (*Tribolium Castaneum*) and a few saw tooth grain beetles (*Cryzaepphilus Surinamensis*), whilst evidence was found in the boxes of raisins of the larvae of the dried currants moth and the pupa of a Coleoptera, probably *Carpophilus*, which could not have come from the expeller cake.

On the boxes of the raisins themselves was a selection of insects, a very few *Anthicus Floralis* (a mould feeder) *Cacandra granaria* (grain weevil), *Lagmophloeus* (the lesser grain beetle) and *Ephestia Cautella* (the larva of the dried currant moth). It was suspected that these could have come from the cake, or from residual infestation in the warehouse, but inspection of the warehouse itself ruled out the latter supposition.

However, appropriate action was taken, both with regard to the groundnut expeller cake and raisins; premises and vehicles were also treated.

**Food Hygiene Education.** In introducing the Food Hygiene Regulations the Minister stressed the importance of food traders accepting the spirit behind them, as well as the letter of the law which they apply. Statutory regulations in themselves cannot hope to bring about the improvement in food handling that is desired, and continued effort is necessary with regard to publicity and other forms of education in order to acquaint food handlers with the principles involved.

Soon after the Food Hygiene Regulations came into effect, a food traders' meeting was held in St. Laurence's Hall, at which Mr. Morley Parry, the Food Hygiene Advisory Officer to the then Ministry of Food, gave an address. The food trade had been circularised regarding this meeting and it was gratifying to see the hall filled to capacity. The occasion was most useful in explaining various points to which the regulations applied, and although it was obvious that traders had not then had an opportunity of fully considering their obligations, they were able to ask questions and useful information was obtained. This meeting was followed by a number of food hygiene lectures, some of which were illustrated by films and in all something like 1,200 food handlers were addressed.

These talks, lectures and film shows were intended to form the introduction of a recognised course of instruction which would acquaint food handlers with the basic knowledge they need in order to best carry out their important responsibility to



the public. Attempt was made later in the year in collaboration with the St. John Ambulance Association to run a short course of instruction, but it is disappointing to report that the effort was not successful. It is intended, however, to seek greater co-operation from the larger food firms in the town to see if this most useful form of instruction can be better supported. A number of organisations were addressed on the subject during the year and on the whole the work involved was well worth-while.

**Sampling.** Mr. T. McLachlan, A.C.G.F.C., and Mr. F. A. Lyne, B.Sc., F.R.I.C., of Messrs. Thomas McLachlan & Partners, held the appointment of Public Analyst and Deputy Public Analyst respectively during the year.

The duties as to ensuring that food sold to the public is of the nature, substance and quality demanded are laid down in the Food & Drugs Acts, and other legislation. The proper labelling of food and advertising matter relating to it, is also the concern of this section.

A total of 520 samples of food and drugs were submitted for examination during the year compared with 507 last year. In 1956, 33 (6.34%) were reported to be not up to standard compared with 42 (8.28%) in 1955. Details of the samples procured and those found not to be up to standard, are shown in the table on page 96.

Of the samples obtained, 130 were of milk and of these 21 (16%) were not up to standard or were classified as genuine milks of poor quality. These figures compared with 14 (10%) out of a total of 141 samples of milk obtained last year.

The total number of producers sampled was 68, and 12 of these were responsible for the production of milk of low quality. It is interesting to note that there was no trouble this year from those producers showing poor results in 1955. It might well be that the advice given by the Advisory Service of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food had the desired results.

Although representations have been made by various bodies and careful consideration has been given to this matter, there is no legal standard as to the composition of milk apart from the fat requirement in respect of Channel Island Milk. Where, however, milk does not conform to the standard of 3% fat and 8.5% solids non-fat laid down in the Sale of Milk Regulations, 1939, there is a presumption until the contrary is proved, that the milk is adulterated. Therefore, where milk is reported as "poor quality" milk and is as received from the cow, no legal proceedings can be taken. There are, of course, many arguments that can be used as to why a legal standard should not be applied. With cows as with human beings, there are temperamental and physiological variances so that performance as to milk production both as regards quality and quantity may vary from week to week, or indeed from day to day. However, until producers are financially discouraged from marketing milk which fails to reach the presumptive standard, there will be no great improvement in the position. This fact has been recognised and the trade are introducing a system of payment related to quality and the situation is being closely watched to see what progress is made.

For some time now the Food Standards Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food have been requiring special information regarding the meat content in sausages sampled in all districts, but no legal standard has yet been introduced. Similar enquiries are to be made concerning the meat content of pies which is also a matter of concern to a number of Authorities. The standard relating to important constituents in ice cream are also being examined in the light of the improved food supplies position.

Action taken in respect of the samples reported as adulterated or below standard are shown on page 98.



## FOOD AND DRUGS SAMPLES

Article examined	Number of Samples	Number found to be genuine	Number not up to standard
Almonds, Ground	3	3	-
Almond Marzipan	1	1	-
Aspirin Tablets	2	2	-
Baked Beans	1	1	-
Beans in Tomato Sauce	1	1	-
Beans in Tomato Sauce with Pork	2	-	2
Beef, Minced, in Gravy	1	1	-
Beef Suet	4	4	-
Beetroot, Pickled	2	2	-
Bicarbonate of Soda	1	1	-
Bile Beans	1	1	-
Brawn	1	1	-
Bread and Butter	3	3	-
Bread Crumbs	1	1	-
Breakfast Sausage	1	1	-
Bronchial Catarrh Syrup	1	1	-
Bronchial Linctus	1	-	1
Butter	8	8	-
Buttered Rolls	2	2	-
Cake and Pudding Mixtures	11	10	1
Cakes and Tea Cakes	14	14	-
Camphorated Oil	1	1	-
Cheese	1	1	-
Cheese, Grated	1	1	-
Cheese Spreads	7	7	-
Chicken, Minced	1	1	-
Chicken and Ham Galantine	1	1	-
Chicken Spread	1	1	-
Chopped Bacon	1	1	-
Christmas Pudding	1	1	-
Cinnamon, Ground	1	1	-
Cinnamon and Quinine	1	1	-
Cocoa	1	1	-
Cod Liver Oil Compound	1	1	-
Coffee and Coffee Essence	7	7	-
Condiment and Condiment Concentrate	2	1	1
Cooking Fat	6	6	-
Cough Syrup	1	1	-
Cream	8	8	-
Cream Cakes	1	1	-
Cream Synthetic	4	4	-
Cream of Tartar	3	3	-
Curry Powder	2	2	-
Custard Powder	3	3	-
Desiccated Coconut	1	1	-
Dried Egg	6	6	-
Dried Fruit	1	1	-
Embrocation and Liniments	2	1	1
Fish, Canned	4	4	-
Fish Paste	3	3	-
Flavouring and Essences	7	7	-
Flour—Self-Raising	2	2	-
Friars Balsam	1	1	-
Fruit and Fruit Salad, Canned	14	14	-
Fullers Earth Cream	1	1	-
Gelatine	2	2	-
Glaze Cherries	2	2	-
Gravy Powder	1	1	-
Gravy Salt	1	1	-
Glycerine, Lemon and Honey with Ipecacuanha	2	1	1
Honey	1	1	-
Horseradish Sauce	1	1	-
Ice Cream	8	8	-

Article examined					Number of Samples	Number found to be genuine	Number not up to standard
Ice Lollies	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Jam	...	...	...	...	13	13	-
Jelly Crystals	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Jelly, Table	...	...	...	...	5	5	-
Jellied Veal	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Lard	...	...	...	...	5	5	-
Lemon Curd	...	...	...	...	6	6	-
Lemon Flavoured Crystals	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Lemon Icing	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Lemon Juice	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Lemonade Powder	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Margarine	...	...	...	...	8	8	-
Marmalade	...	...	...	...	4	4	-
Marzipan	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Meat and Fish Pastes	...	...	...	...	4	4	-
Meat Pudding	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Meat Roll	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Menthol and Wintergreen Cream, B.P.C.	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Milk	...	...	...	...	130	109	21
Milk, Condensed	...	...	...	...	5	5	-
Milk Powder	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Mincemeat	...	...	...	...	5	5	-
Mint and Mint Jelly	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Mixture	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Oil of Eucalyptus	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Olive Oil	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Onion Salt	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Onion Sauce	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Orange Juice Concentrated	...	...	...	...	1	-	1
Orange Curd	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Orangeade Powder	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Parsley and Thyme Stuffing	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Peas Processed	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Pea Flour	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Peanut Butter	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Pearl Barley	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Peel, Mixed	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Pepper	...	...	...	...	6	6	-
Pineapple, Canned	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Plum Puddings	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Pork Sausages with Beans	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Prunes	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Quinine Powder	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Rice, Creamed	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Rice, Flaked	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Saccharin Tablets	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Sage and Onion Stuffing	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Sago	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Salad Dressing	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Sauces and Ketchups	...	...	...	...	5	5	-
Sausages, Beef (Sausage Meat)	...	...	...	...	1	-	1
Sausage, Pork	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Sausage Rolls	...	...	...	...	3	3	-
Savoury Duck	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Savoury Spread	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
<i>Soft Drinks—</i>							
Applecham	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Chandy Drink	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Lime Juice Cordial	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Orangeade	...	...	...	...	1	1	-
Orange Juice	...	...	...	...	2	2	-
Orange Squash	...	...	...	...	3	2	1
Soft Drink Powder	...	...	...	...	4	4	-
Soup	...	...	...	...	7	7	-



Article examined	Number of Samples	Number found to be genuine	Number not up to standard
Spices ... ..	4	4	—
Steak and Kidney Pie ... ..	2	2	—
Stewed Steak ... ..	1	1	—
Sugar ... ..	1	1	—
Sugar, Demerara ... ..	1	1	—
Sweets and Sugar Confectionery ... ..	32	32	—
Tapioca ... ..	2	2	—
Tea ... ..	10	10	—
Thyme ... ..	1	1	—
Tomatoes, Canned ... ..	1	1	—
Vitamin Tablets ... ..	1	—	1
Vinegar, Malt ... ..	11	10	1
Welsh Rarebit ... ..	1	1	—
Wines—			
Cocktail ... ..	1	1	—
Sherry ... ..	2	2	—
Wintergreen Ointment, B.P.C. ... ..	1	1	—
Totals ...	520	487	33

**ACTION TAKEN IN RESPECT OF THE SAMPLES REPORTED  
AS ADULTERATED OR BELOW STANDARD**

No. of Sample	Article	Whether Formal or Informal	Nature of Adulteration	Observations
2	Bronchial Linctus	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Stock withdrawn, label suitably amended
63	Beef Sausage Meat	Formal	16% deficient in meat	No action
104	Vitamin Tablets	Informal	18% deficient in Vitamin "A"	Matter taken up with manufacturer
204	Cake Mixture	Formal	Incorrectly labelled	Label suitably amended
214	Milk	Formal	15% deficient in fat	} Appeal to cow samples indicated natural deficiency. Advice on how to improve supply taken from Ministry by farmer
224	Milk	Informal	Fat 2.80%	
230	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.70%	
231	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.70%	
232	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.65%	
233	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.75%	
186	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.80%	} Inferior quality but genuine milk
195	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.90%	
241	Beans in Tomato Sauce with Pork	Informal	Misleading label	Label suitably amended
260	Beans in Tomato Sauce with Pork	Formal	Misleading label	Label suitably amended
251	Concentrated Orange Juice	Informal	Fermenting	Remaining stock withdrawn
253	Liniment	Informal	Misleading label	Label suitably amended
259	Orange Squash	Formal	Deficient in fruit juice	Letter of warning to producer

No. of Sample	Article	Whether Formal or Informal	Nature of Adulteration	Observations
261	Milk	Informal	6.7% deficient in fat. 3.5% deficient in solids—not fat. 2.2% added water	Inferior quality but genuine milk. Advice on how to improve supply taken from Ministry by farmer
274	Milk	Informal	15% deficient in fat. 3.5% deficient in solids—not fat. 2.8% added water	
275	Milk	Informal	3.5% deficient solids—not fat. 2.8% added water	
276	Milk	Formal	16.6% deficient in fat. 3.9% deficient in solids—not fat. 2.4% added water	
277	Milk	Formal	4.1% deficient in solids—not fat. 2.6% added water	
284	Milk	Informal	Solids—not fat 8.25%	
291	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.65%	
292	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.60% Solids not fat 8.30%	
293	Milk	Formal	Solids—not fat 8.30%	
294	Milk	Formal	Solids—not fat 8.35%	
295	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.65% Solids—not fat 8.25%	
296	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.80% Solids—not fat 8.45%	
264	Milk	Informal	13.7% deficient in fat	Inferior quality but genuine milk
298	Glycerine, Lemon and Ipecacuanha Mixture	Formal	Incorrectly labelled	Matter taken up with manufacturers
358	Malt Vinegar	Formal	14.5% deficient in acetic acid	Manufacturers warned
480	Condiment	Formal	At least 55% deficient in acetic acid	Manufacturers warned

**Labelling of Food, etc.** Where samples were procured under the Food and Drugs Act, labels were carefully perused to see if they complied with the appropriate Labelling of Food Orders and other legislation. In five instances it was found necessary to draw the attention of manufacturers to infringements of various Acts and Orders; in all cases it was found possible to put matters right informally. Foods manufactured locally were also examined from the point of view of food standards.

**Merchandise Marks Act.** As much attention as possible was given to the enforcement of the Merchandise Marks Act during the year. The trades were circularised in 1955 calling their attention to marking provisions and it is pleasing to report improvement in regard to this matter.

### 3. NUISANCES AND WORK UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT

Five hundred and seventy-seven complaints were received by the Section from residents in the Borough concerning many matters; 834 informal notices were served during the year for the abatement of nuisances which were not concerned with housing defects, the latter notices being referred to under the Section on Housing. Some 651 of the notices served were complied with. Considerable attention has to be given to obstructed and defective sewers and drains in respect of which 231 complaints were received during the year. The Authority cleared 482 drains or sewers. Repairs also were carried out in a number of cases. In 42 cases the owners themselves carried out the necessary work; 1,723 visits were paid by the Public Health Inspectors in connection with drainage matters. With regard to drains and sewers, it is often the case that complaints are received at week-ends—Saturdays



and Sundays. All these complaints are investigated and, as far as possible, the necessary work is carried out forthwith by Corporation staff. In this regard, mention should again be made of the excellent co-operation given by the staff of the Borough Surveyor's Department who have so willingly dealt with these cases whenever required by this Department. Complaints were received during the year concerning the condition of the Kennet and Avon Canal. The matter was taken up with the Thames Conservancy Board, and the work of clearing the road section was attended to.

**Disinfestation and Disinfection—Insanitary Premises.** Work in connection with the treatment of verminous persons and premises continued throughout the year. In all the cases, some 79 in number, it was possible to do the necessary work on an informal basis. The treatment of verminous persons even in these days, is still necessary, the persons concerned being mainly itinerants taking temporary accommodation in the common lodging houses or old people in a state of neglect. With some cases, disinfestation or bathing is a matter of routine, but there are others which require much tact and understanding.

Appropriate action was taken in 49 instances of infestation by various types of insects—cockroaches, flies, ants, etc. The details of premises treated for bugs or fleas are as follows :—

No. of Complaints Received		No. of Houses Disinfected	No. of Rooms Disinfected
Council Houses	30	28	68
Private Houses	71	43	85

It is a practice for this Department to inspect houses from which people are being re-housed to council houses by the Corporation, the purpose being to ensure, as far as possible, that infestation from vermin or wood boring beetles is not transferred from the old property to the new; 639 inspections were made, only in one case was it found necessary to carry out disinfestation treatment.

**Common Lodging Houses.** The three common lodging houses in the town provide accommodation for 126 persons. The establishments were inspected regularly during the year, some 104 visits being made. The properties are showing obvious signs of dilapidation despite repair, but the respective keepers have maintained a reasonable standard of cleanliness. In all three cases, the properties are old and worn, and it is now a matter of continuing them in the best way practicable until more satisfactory accommodation is provided. Progress has been made in the preparation of plans for a hostel to accommodate people of the itinerant type and for others who prefer this way of living. Although details were not complete at the end of the year, the accommodation is to be of a good standard, providing for sleeping, both on dormitory and cubicle lines, facilities for meals, hot water, baths and other essential and social amenities. A visit was paid during the year, together with members of the Borough Architect's Department, to a hostel in Sheffield run by the Salvation Army. There can be no doubt as to the useful service such an establishment can give. It is expected that the Reading project will proceed from the drawing board and take a more tangible form before long.

During the year, as an expediency and until more suitable accommodation is available, fairly extensive repairs and improvements were carried out to the London Street establishment. A portion of the premises was re-roofed, hot water installed,



suitable hand washing facilities provided in the kitchen, and improvements made generally.

Apart from normal maintenance, these premises should serve until fresh accommodation is ready.

**Infectious Diseases.** Two hundred and sixteen inspections of premises following notification of infectious diseases, were made during the year. Defective conditions in houses were taken up with the owners concerned and defects put right. It was also necessary to visit food premises in connection with a number of cases, when advice was given regarding the preparation, storage and handling of food.

**Offensive Trades.** The offensive trades established within the Borough comprise 1 blood drier, 1 tripe boiler and dresser, and 1 rag and bone dealer. A tripe dressing establishment went out of business during the year. The three premises registered were regularly inspected and general conditions associated with the businesses investigated. Conditions were found to be reasonably satisfactory.

**Movable Dwellings.** There was a welcome reduction in the number of movable dwellings in the Borough during 1956. At the end of the year, 122 were on the register compared with 136 in 1955; 67 were associated with two sites licensed, 53 being situated in Tilehurst and 14 in Scours Lane. The remaining 55 are on small sites and constitute dwellings for individual applicants. In only one case was there difficulty as regards the condition in which the caravan was kept. Informal action was taken and a satisfactory improvement achieved.

One thousand one hundred and fifty visits were paid to caravans and sites, and to movable dwellings visiting the area with travelling fairs and shows.

The general picture of caravans used in the Borough, shows some being used as semi-permanent dwellings, particularly those on the licensed sites, some as accommodation for such time as may elapse until a house is forthcoming, whilst others are of a temporary nature, associated with large building sites or used by the owner-builder while he constructs his own house.

**Swimming Baths.** During the year, 67 satisfactory samples of water were taken from public swimming baths, and 34 obtained from school baths in the town.

A detailed investigation was carried out into the circumstances of use of the learner swimming pool at the Hill Primary School. The learner pool is an innovation so far as school recreation facilities are concerned and there is considerable interest in this idea amongst many Education Authorities. The object of the learner pool is to give swimming experience to children at an early age, make them familiar with water, and enlighten them upon the dangers which may be associated with it. The baths must, of course, be safe from a public health point of view, but for economy reasons, it would not be a practical proposition to install many swimming pools at schools if continual filtration and chlorination were to be insisted upon in all cases. Therefore, what is needed is a relatively simple pool with, if possible, a routine of chlorination which would keep the water safe without being too involved or time absorbing.

The results obtained were interesting and will prove useful as a basis for further inquiry. A paper was prepared on the investigations, which is reproduced in detail in the School Medical Officer's report. Consequently, brief reference only is made to it here.

**Drinking Water.** Fifty-one samples of water were obtained from private wells in the town which are used for drinking purposes or in connection with food



trade processes. Investigations were necessary in respect of 5 samples and appropriate action was taken ; 7 samples were obtained from the town's mains and submitted for examination. All were reported satisfactory.

**Atmospheric Pollution.** A number of investigations were made during the year concerning complaints of grit and smoke emission from fuel burning plant in the town. These involved numerous observations and visits to factories and in some cases reports to the Health (General Services) Sub-Committee. One statutory notice was served in connection with a nuisance from the chimneys of a brick manufacturing establishment which was ultimately abated. This branch of Ceramic industry is one of those associated with inevitable smoke emission when bituminous solid fuel is used, since there are stages in manufacture when combustion conditions in the kiln are not ideal. This is during the drying stage, and particular care is required on the part of the stokers if smoke production is to be kept to a minimum. In the case mentioned, it was considered that all practical steps had not been taken to reduce smoke emission, but following the statutory action, considerable improvements were made.

The reduction of smoke from brick and tile manufacture and other smoke producing sections of the Ceramic industry, is being investigated at national level. The manufacturers, in addition to Health Authorities are concerned with this matter and the technical resources of the industry are being applied to it.

The laundry which was concerned with one series of complaints completed conversion of its solid fuel burning plant to fuel oil burning during the year, since when there have been no complaints of nuisance.

Although oil cannot be considered as being a smokeless fuel, it is capable of being burned smokelessly in modern plants if efficiently applied and the plant is properly operated. Despite the oil crisis which occurred during the year, the indications are that oil will become more and more a fuel for steam raising plant and other types of furnaces, and much technical knowledge is being built up in connection with its use.

One other laundry with which there was some trouble during the year has undertaken to carry out improvements to their existing plant. Continued attention will be given to this case.

The Clean Air Act to which reference was made in the report last year was placed on the Statute Book in December, 1956, and part of the Act relating to smoke controlled areas came into force at the end of the year. Other provisions of the Act are expected to come into force in 1958. The Act was compiled following the revealing report made by the Beaver Committee in 1954, after careful investigation had been made into the circumstances of atmospheric pollution and smoke production generally in this country. Briefly the Act provides measures regarding the emission of dark smoke and requirements concerning grit and dust emission. One of the important provisions is that of the prior approval of fuel burning plant, introduced either in new buildings or as a replacement for existing furnaces. Means for minimising the emission of grit and dust from certain types of industrial plant are required by the Act, and there is now control over the height of chimneys which must be considered in the light of the neighbourhood in which it is being constructed, and other relevant circumstances.

The powers obtained by certain Local Authorities under private acts to enable smoke control areas to be made have now become part of general law, and this provision if applied as far as possible by most Local Authorities should prove an effective measure in reducing the amount of smoke from domestic premises. It is realised, of course, that the availability of smokeless fuel is the key to the problem,



but steps have already been taken by producers of these fuels to increase production and make more supplies available.

It seems clear that Local Authorities are to be encouraged to take vigorous action in the implementation of the Clean Air Act, which will mean an extension of existing duties relating to smoke abatement as the work gets under way.

The provisions of the Act, as a whole, were considered by the Council and are to be implemented as far as possible. The following points indicate how it is proposed to proceed with this work.

(1)—The examination of plans concerned with fuel burning plant so as to ensure that furnaces are satisfactory both as regards their smokelessness and ability to avoid grit or dust discharge.

(2)—Investigation is to be made into the conditions of the atmosphere of Reading. Atmospheric pollution measuring instruments are to be introduced and there will be collaboration with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in connection with this matter.

(3)—The possibility of introducing a smoke control area in a suitable district or districts in the town is to be investigated.

(4)—Efforts are to be made during 1957 to arrange for the publication of information on atmospheric pollution together with lectures or addresses to interested bodies.

(5)—The various Committees of the Corporation have been recommended to introduce smokeless types of fuel burning appliances in premises under their control and to burn smokeless fuel where practicable.

#### 4. GENERAL

**Factories Acts, 1937-1948.** There are 652 factories recorded in the register kept for this purpose ; 399 visits were paid by the Public Health Inspectors. These premises have been kept in a reasonably satisfactory manner during the year and requests by inspectors have, in the main, been promptly dealt with ; 17 complaints were received from H.M. Inspector of Factories. It was necessary to serve 23 written notices during the year. The list of outworkers received twice yearly from employers in accordance with Section 110 of the Act, returned 69 outworkers who were principally engaged in making wearing apparel. Of these 5 were referred to other Local Authorities, 64 were in the Borough and the premises were visited by the Public Health Inspectors.

The work carried out by the Public Health Inspectors in their inspection of factories is to ensure that the premises comply with the Factories Acts so far as the Local Authority's responsibilities extend, except in so far as means of escape in case of fire are concerned, which is the responsibility of the Fire Brigade. Visits were also made to factories, following complaints of nuisance which are dealt with under the Public Health Act.

All plans of proposed factory and other buildings submitted to the Borough Council for approval under the Planning and Building Byelaws, are examined by this department from the point of view of the Factories Acts and Public Health Act and as regards potential nuisance.

Canteens and kitchens, etc., which are now available in many factories, were also submitted to inspection by the District Public Health Inspectors. The standard of hygiene observed in these establishments, together with the structure of kitchens and amenities provided therewith, were matters also under supervision.



The tables shown below give details of inspections of factories and are the particulars contained in the annual return to the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections	Number of Written Notices
Factories without mechanical power ...	118	71	2
Factories with mechanical power ...	534	328	21
	652	399	23

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Referred by H.M. Inspector
Want of cleanliness ...	1	1	—	1
(a) Insufficient cleanliness	3	3	—	1
Sanitary Conveniences— (b) unsuitable or defective	19	17	—	15
	23	21	—	17

**Rag Flock and other Filling Materials Act, 1951.** There are 5 premises on the register where filling materials listed in Section 32 of the Act are used in the manufacture of bedding and other upholstered articles.

Eight inspections were made of these premises and 6 samples of filling materials submitted for examination. All the samples were reported satisfactory.

**Canal Boats.** Forty-five visits were made to the wharves on the Thames and Kennet. It would appear that the use of canal boats has been discontinued in this area now that the Kennet and Avon canal is no longer a principal means of transport. No canal boats were seen during the year and there are none on the register.

**Places of Entertainment.** Seven visits were paid to the various places of public entertainments. There were no complaints by the public in respect of these establishments during the year.

**Shops Acts.** Visits were paid to all types of shops in the town as a routine duty. A number of inspections were also made on receipt of complaint from the Shops Act Inspector responsible for hours of closing, etc. In 5 cases certificates of exemption were granted in respect of sanitary accommodation and washing facilities, and in 2 cases sanitary accommodation was provided.

**Burial Act, 1857, Section 25.** Two exhumations were attended and supervised by the Public Health Inspectors during the year.

**Pet Animals Act, 1951.** Seven licences were issued in 1956 under the above Act.

**Rodent Control. Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.** Rodent destruction is an aspect of the work of the department continually receiving attention,



and appears to be gradually achieving its object. During the year, 15,385 visits were made to premises in connection with the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, 159 business premises and 392 private dwellings being found to be infested with rats or mice. Warfarin baits have been used almost exclusively and have been proved to be very successful. In view of its toxicity towards certain domestic animals, particularly pigs, the rodent operatives have been instructed to pay particular attention in laying the baits.

Wherever necessary, proofing measures were recommended to the owners concerned, and some 18 premises both business and private were proofed during the year. The more important food establishments in the town have now been proofed against rodent infestation, and the success of this action has been borne out by the reduced number of complaints received from these particular premises.

Surface infestations are dealt with wherever practicable on the block system, which includes treatment of sewers and drains in the neighbourhood of the infestation. Where it was found that the primary cause of rat infestation was defective drains, representation was made to the owners concerned, and in 14 such cases, the drains were satisfactorily repaired.

The main sewers were again systematically treated twice during the year in order to reduce the rat population. The number of baits found to be untouched is evidence of the decreasing population in the sewers. As an example, in one section of the sewers in Reading, the number of baits taken has been reduced from 37% in 1947 to 8% in 1956.

The refuse tips have been inspected regularly during the year and it is noteworthy that the sites used for controlled tipping during 1956 have been virtually free from rodent infestation. Regular inspections have been made at the hospitals in the town; generally conditions have been found to be satisfactory, but wherever necessary, treatment has been carried out.

The treatment of domestic premises for rats and mice infestation is done free of charge, but payment is required when work is carried out in business establishments. During the financial year 1955-56, the income in respect of this work was £140.

**Other Pests.** In addition to the rodent control work carried out during the year, some 158 complaints were investigated concerning other pests including wasps, bees, moles, rabbits, pigeons, starlings, grey squirrels, etc.

Some 120 cases of wasps' nests were dealt with, it being possible to remove the combs completely in 115 instances. The complaints received in respect of rabbits indicate that there have been "pockets" of infestation which were missed when Myxomatosis was sweeping the country. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food has asked for an all-out effort to clear up the odd pockets where rabbits are still found, and the complaints received in this department have been passed to the County Pests Authority for Berkshire.

Pigeons have continued to be a nuisance in the town. The problem of dealing with wood pigeons was less acute in 1956 than in previous years, but the town pigeons which are usually the domestic pigeons "gone wild" have continued to create colonies in suitable buildings where access is difficult. A fair degree of success was obtained by trapping these pigeons and destroying the eggs, for example, in three cases alone 115 pigeons were trapped and 129 eggs destroyed. One building was treated with a solution as a pigeon deterrent, but this only met with limited success, the effects of the solution wearing off after a few weeks. It has been found that proofing the buildings by the erection of netting screens over suitable roosting places is most successful as a deterrent, and advice has been given to the owners and occupiers of the premises involved in regard to this work. In one or two instances the trouble is aggravated by well meaning citizens who make a practice of feeding these pests regularly. So long as there is a readily available food supply, and suitable nesting places on buildings are left unfenced the nuisance will be almost impossible to completely eliminate.



**RODENT CONTROL**

	Private Dwellings	Business Premises including Food Stores and Kitchens	Sewer Maintenance Treatment (Manholes)	Refuse Tips	Corporation Property	Total
Complaints received ... 499	392	159	—	3	29	583
Complaints on Survey, etc. 84	10,592	3,798	1,382	17	604	16,393
Visits ... ..	52	1	515	—	1	569
Premises found clear ... ..	340	157	71	3	28	599
Premises found infested ... ..	129	94	Nil	22	—	245
Number of Rats picked up ... ..	329	167	56	69	—	621
Estimated kill—Rats ... ..	166	236	—	—	34	436
Number of Mice picked up ... ..	661	702	—	—	90	1,453
Estimated kill—Mice ... ..						

## COLLECTION OF REFUSE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Mr. K. H. Thorpe, Borough Engineer and Surveyor, has supplied the following information :—

**House Refuse Collection.** During 1956, the collection of house refuse has continued once weekly. The service is maintained by 14 house refuse collection vehicles and 53 employees.

The following table shows the quantity of house refuse collected from premises within the Borough with the total mileage of vehicles used in this collection :—

Quarter ending :				1956		1955	
				<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>
31st March	...	...	...	8,917	32,081	9,255	29,392
30th June	...	...	...	8,884	31,122	8,977	28,242
30th September	...	...	...	7,487	30,043	8,521	28,065
31st December	...	...	...	8,626	32,280	7,669	29,135
Totals				33,914	125,526	34,422	114,834

Trade refuse is collected at the same time as domestic refuse and at such other times as arranged between the trader and the Corporation. Facilities are available for traders to deliver trade refuse direct to the Refuse Disposal Tip by arrangement with the Corporation.

**Kitchen Waste.** Collection of kitchen waste within the Borough was discontinued by this Section on 27th October, 1956.

Since that date it has become apparent that only a small percentage of kitchen waste is being disposed of by householders through normal refuse collection, and it seems, therefore, that disposal of it is being carried out through private collectors.

**House Refuse Disposal.** Controlled tipping was completed at Hill's Meadows during May, 1956, and normal tipping resumed at the site situated on the banks of the Kennet and Avon Canal.

**Street Cleansing.** The "beat" system of street cleansing by street orderlies has been maintained and proves to be a satisfactory method. Collection of street refuse is carried out by means of street orderly trucks which are visited by street cleansing freighters for the collection of accumulated refuse.

The following is a comparative table of the number of employees engaged on street cleansing :—

				1956	1955
Men	...	...	...	41	36
Boys	...	...	...	4	2

The following table shows the quantity of street sweepings collected within the Borough and the mileage of the collection vehicles (the table includes figures for the two mechanical sweeper collectors).

Quarter ending :				1956		1955	
				<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>
31st March	...	...	...	840	4,376	715	4,033
30th June	...	...	...	744	4,110	600	3,706
30th September	...	...	...	702	4,043	526	3,698
31st December	...	...	...	796	4,210	637	4,761
Totals				3,082	16,739	2,478	16,198



**Street Gulley Cleansing.** Eight thousand one hundred and eighty-seven gullies were emptied and sealed with fresh water by mechanically operated vehicles.

The following table shows the comparative tonnage removed during the years 1955-1956 :—

Quarter ending :	1956		1955	
	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>
31st March ... ..	432	2,092	428	1,962
30th June ... ..	354	1,970	491	2,066
30th September ... ..	311	1,830	287	1,120
31st December ... ..	405	2,010	312	1,330
Totals	1,502	7,902	1,518	6,478

**Cesspool Emptying.** All domestic cesspools are emptied by two mechanical cesspool emptying vehicles upon receipt of instructions from occupiers or owners of premises, within the Borough, within a minimum of inconvenience and nuisance to householders.

**Sewage Disposal.** *Manor Farm Sewage Works.* There was a further rise in the total volume of sewage received during the year ; 2,083,000,000 gallons of sewage were treated, i.e., some 5,664,000 gallons per day.

The final effluent was often unsatisfactory by Thames Conservancy Standards.

Experimental work on the control of odour nuisance by atomising counter-actants was carried out. The results were not conclusive but it is hoped that further work will be carried out during 1957.

Foam resulting from synthetic detergents has been an increasing problem during recent years, the activated sludge plant often being submerged below foam as much as 10 feet deep. This is most objectionable and early in 1957 an inhibitor will be fed into the plant to control the foam.

About 3,000 cubic yards of dried sludge was disposed of to agricultural and horticultural users.

Construction of the new sewage disposal works at Manor Farm and modifications to Blakes Lock Pumping Station commenced towards the end of the year.

*Caversham Sewage Works.* Large volumes of sewage had to be pumped from this works to Manor Farm to enable this works to function reasonably satisfactorily.

**Sewerage.** During the twelve months ended 31st December, 1956, 553 houses, flats, etc., were connected to the foul sewerage system. Of these properties, 271 were new Corporation houses, 236 were new private houses, 38 were flats (house conversions) and 8 were existing houses previously drained to cesspools. The number of houses with cesspools is now 508 compared with 510 at the end of 1955.

The only main foul drainage work during the year consisted of the site sewers for the new Coley Park Housing Estate, Brooksby Estate, and the extension to St. Michael's Estate.

**Swimming and Slipper Baths.** The slipper baths at Jesse Terrace and Arthur Hill Memorial Baths continue to be well patronised and the swimming pools were fully used.



## HOUSING

(These comments should be read in conjunction with the report of the Chief Public Health Inspector and the comments on the housing of old people.)

Mr. C. H. R. Willett, Borough Architect, has been good enough to supply the following information :—

During the calendar year 1956, 399 dwellings of all kinds were taken over ; these included bungalows and flatlets for aged persons.

Since the report for 1955 was published, both the Valley Estate and Brockley Close and shops in Coronation Square, Bath Road, have been completed whilst excellent progress has been made on the other schemes on the St. Michael's Estate as well as the commencement of a block of five shops which are expected to be completed by August of this year. Work has also started on the 230 dwellings to be erected on the extension of this estate and the major portion of these should be completed in 1958.

Of the more recent projects, work has begun on the following :—

**Coley Place.** Twenty-four flatlets, 16 of which are reserved for aged persons.

**Parkhurst (78 Bath Road).** This small scheme comprising 10 dwellings, of which 6 are bungalows shows that the Corporation is alive to the necessity to use all available land without spoiling the immediate surroundings.

**Bath Road Frontage.** The filling-in of this main approach to the town should be a matter of satisfaction and interest to the public at large and work has already begun on the scheme for 226 dwellings with comprises 6 five-storey blocks of two bedroom maisonettes with one-bedroom flats and bed-sitting rooms on the ground floor and 4 eight-storey blocks of one and two-bedroom flats. The one-bedroom and bed-sitting room type flats will be made available for childless couples and aged persons. Electric floor heating will be provided in both flats and maisonettes and this innovation has helped to reduce costs by the omission of a boiler house, large chimney, service ducts and accessories as well as a stoker attendant not to mention the elimination of smoke. When completed and the trees and shrubs established, it should present quite an imposing entrance to the Borough as well as an effective finishing touch and screen to the main estate.

**Lulworth Road, Whitley.** This is another example of the advantageous use of small sites whereon the erection of 30 non-traditional flats is now completed whilst work on 41 two-storey dwellings, including 16 flatlets for aged persons, is well under way.

Dealing with newer schemes, the time has come when the needs of more than one section of the community must be considered and one problem is that of the single person. Lodgings, as well as being difficult to obtain, are often very expensive and unsatisfactory for these members of the community and, after careful consideration, the Housing Committee has decided to erect 40 flats on a self-contained site in Brunswick Street. The accommodation will comprise living-dining room, bedroom, kitchen, bathroom and hall as well as electric floor heating ; the latter amenity will maintain a warm atmosphere in the dwellings where the occupants are out all day at business. These flats will have a common room to each block as well as 15 garages accommodated on a car park to each block within the site boundary. A resident caretaker will also be appointed.

**Coley Park.** The development of this pleasant site, which will eventually accommodate approximately 573 dwellings, is now in hand and building work on the first part of the scheme of 175 dwellings which includes bungalows and flatlets, will be started in the near future. Further schemes for blocks of multi-storey flats



and five-storey maisonettes incorporating flats on the ground floor for aged persons are under consideration. Shops with living accommodation over will also be provided on the eastern portion of the site.

**Northumberland Avenue, Whitley.** A scheme is in course of preparation for the erection of six shops with maisonettes over, together with garages. Work on this project will be commenced this summer.

**Out-Borough Sites.** It has long since been obvious there was not sufficient land remaining in the Borough to meet the Corporation's needs for house building and as the result of negotiations with neighbouring Authorities, sites are being acquired. London Road and Bulmershe Court, both in the Earley area, are two of such sites for which schemes are being prepared but further details are not at the moment available until the final layouts of the dwellings have been approved. On the London Road site it is proposed to erect two-storey 2 and 3-bedroom dwellings and on the Bulmershe Court site multi-storey flats and maisonettes together with two-storey and bungalow accommodation.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that in practically all schemes, thought has been given to the provision of accommodation for aged persons, an ever present problem. The general policy on this matter has however now been broadened to cover various classes of applicants and the periods in their lives. For instance, many elderly applicants can be suitably accommodated in flatlets whilst others over the age of 60 and younger people seriously incapacitated could be well catered for in bungalows, this type of dwelling also being useful for transfer purposes for the benefit of persons requiring smaller accommodation as they become older but do not wish to move from the estate on which they are living.





Official Opening of the Extension to Parkhurst, Friday, 18th May, 1956





# NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

## Parts III & IV

### SECTION 21—PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION

(a) **General Considerations** (to be read in conjunction with the report of the Housing Manager). In my last two reports I have mentioned the Liaison Committee which has been set up between the Housing and Health Committees to keep under review the accommodation to be provided for old people. During 1956 I was asked to report on the working of the scheme for allocation of housing accommodation for applicants who were not on Council housing estates, since all such applications are examined by the Health Department. A full report of our findings was submitted to the Liaison Committee and the recommendations contained therein were eventually adopted by the Council. Amongst the points to be mentioned are the following :—

(1) A high proportion of the applicants did not seem to need all the accommodation which a bungalow provides but would be content with "a room to themselves somewhere" with adequate cooking arrangements and security of tenure. Insecurity of tenure seems to be a major factor to many applicants of this group. In other words, their needs would apparently be well met by the provision of flatlets which, so far as possible, should be centrally situated. As a result of this report the Council has decided to proceed with the conversion of 36 Mansfield Road into six bed sitting rooms as a first step. It has also been decided to build special bed sitting room accommodation mainly for people of the older age group. These bed sitting rooms are not to be confused with the flatlets which are being provided for "business women."

(2) People who are occupying a house generally wish to transfer to a bungalow or to a smaller house. Obviously this applies in the case of married couples but I have the impression that it also applies to widows living in accommodation of their own. Once a person has had a house of his/her own the idea of a bed sitting room, under whatever name it may be provided, is not very acceptable. For this and other reasons I have suggested modification of the present ideas concerning bungalows and their occupants. I have suggested (and the Council has agreed) that instead of being termed "aged persons bungalow" these buildings should be termed simply "bungalows" and that they should be available to applicants (especially married applicants where both partners are alive) at a much earlier age than is at present the practice. It is felt that better use would be made of property and lead to better maintenance if married couples could be favourably considered, especially for bungalows, from about the age of 60 onwards, i.e., when retirement is being considered, when they have no family responsibilities and when they are no longer able to look after a bungalow and garden and adapt themselves to the new circumstances. In a number of cases re-housing in bungalows would also release a house which could be used for a family with young children.

(3) Our investigations revealed an appreciable number of "under-occupied" houses outside the Corporation estates. Some of these houses are occupied by owner occupiers who are willing to sell their houses to the Corporation if they can obtain smaller accommodation. I am pleased to report that the Council has agreed that any offers made to sell their house by owner occupiers will be sympathetically considered provided that any such offer is considered only after the applicant's need for rehousing has been properly established and the case approved.

(4) In last year's report I referred to the fact that a number of people did not wish their applications to stand when the time came. We found that this was due in



many instances to the fact that they did not wish to leave the neighbourhood in which they had lived for many years. A good example of this was found on the Whitley estate and steps are being taken to erect bungalows on any vacant plots of land on that estate. I hope that future estates will not have this same difficulty because it has been decided, as Council policy, that all such estates shall have a definite number of bungalows on them in addition to ground floor flats. When the present inhabitants of these estates arrive at the age of 60 we hope that they will be more willing to move into smaller accommodation since such accommodation will be near to the place where they have lived for a good part of their lives.

(b) **Part III Accommodation.** The demand for Part III accommodation seems to continue unabated. At the end of the year there were 65 (14 men and 41 women) applicants on the waiting list, 16 of them being from hospital. There is constant pressure from the hospitals to admit patients for whom hospital treatment is no longer required, but who have to remain in hospital owing to lack of accommodation at home or the unwillingness of relatives to receive them. One of our tasks has been to strike a balance between admissions from hospital and admissions from the patient's own home. I think it is undesirable to regard Part III accommodation as an alternative to discharge from hospital. The majority of our accommodation is in converted premises and we have found that many of the patients who are recommended for discharge are not really fit to cope with the steps which exist in much of our Part III accommodation. We have also found that many of them require a good deal of semi-skilled nursing attention and this, in turn, throws a great strain on our staff. In previous reports I have referred to the difficulty of recruiting staff—this difficulty shows no signs of abatement, especially as full employment continues in the town. As a matter of interest it can be recorded that we admitted 15 patients from hospital whose relatives were unwilling or unable to take them and 10 patients who had no relatives and no accommodation to which they could be discharged.

As a result of admissions from the patient's own home during the year, 19 houses or flats were released for other occupants.

The age group of admissions (including transfers) was as follows :—

					M.	W.
Under 65 years	...	...	...	...	2	—
65-70 years	...	...	...	...	3	1
70-80 years	...	...	...	...	30	22
80-90 years	...	...	...	...	20	24
Over 90	...	...	...	...	3	4

The marital status of patients admitted was as follows :—

					M.	W.
Single ...	...	...	...	...	10	16
Married	...	...	...	...	*4	3
Widow or Widower	...	...	...	...	44	32

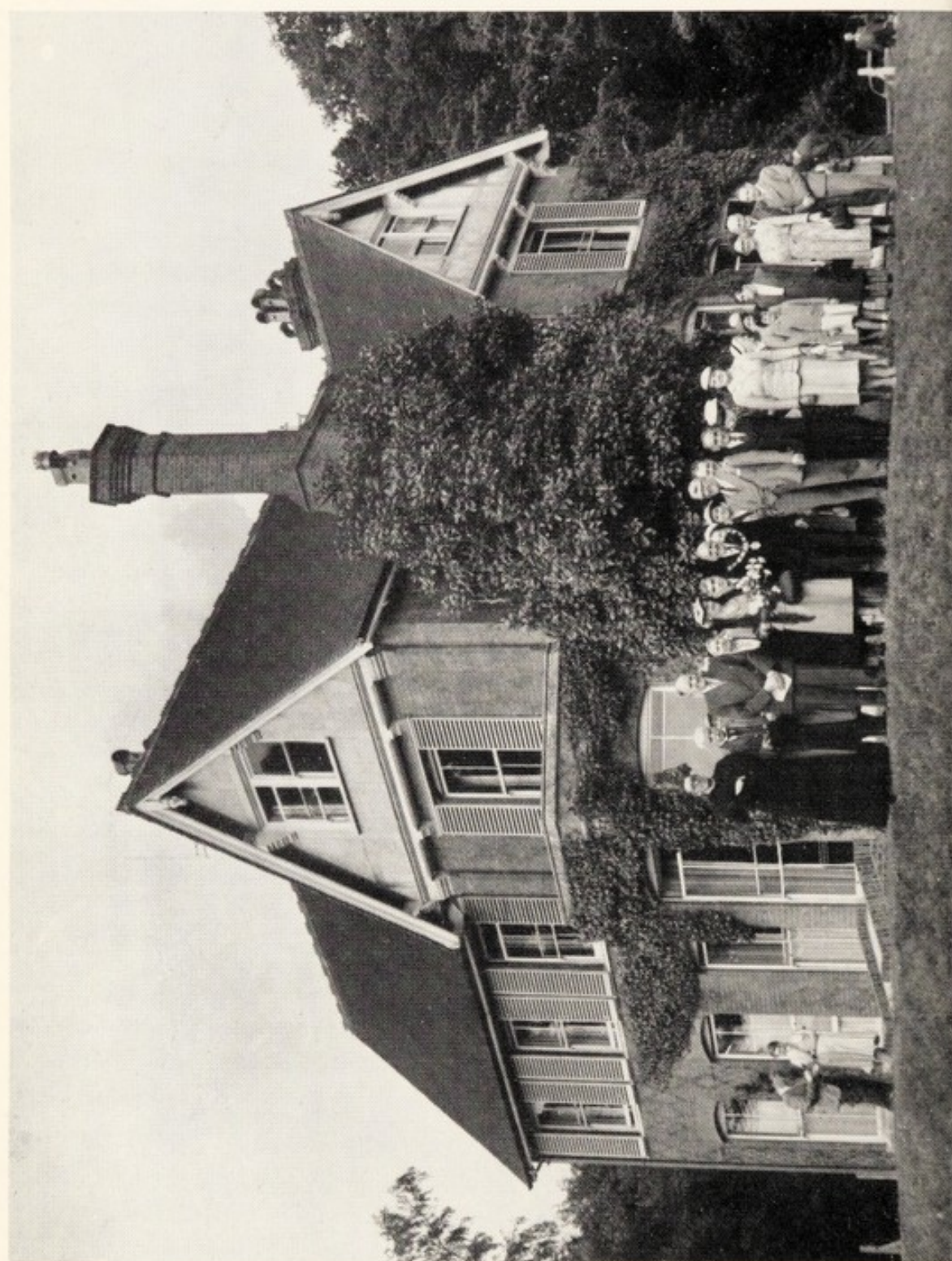
\* Two living apart





Opening of Helping Hand Shop on Tuesday, 27th November, 1956







The following table gives particulars of admissions during 1956 :—

	Transfers from other Homes		Source of Admissions						Total new admissions (permanent)	
			Hospital		Own Home		For Short Stay			
	M.	W.	M.	W.	M.	W.	M.	W.	M.	W.
"Woodlands"	1	1	5	14	9	6	—	—	14	20
"Wychcotes"	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
"Warren House"	—	1	—	3	—	5	—	—	—	8
"Southern Hill"	1	—	8	1	8	2	1	1	16	3
"Parkhurst"	7	—	10	—	15	—	2	—	25	—
"Arthur Clark" Home	—	2	—	3	—	1	—	—	—	4
"Dysons Wood"	—	7	—	1	—	13	—	—	—	14
	9	12	23	23	32	28	3	1	55	51
	21		46		60		4		106	

It will be seen from the above table that the turnover of new residents is really very small.

The total number of residents in hostels on 31st December, was as follows :—

	Nominal Accommodation		Actual Occupation	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
	...	...	...	...
Woodlands ...	23	44	19	47
Wychcotes ...	—	16	—	16
Warren House ...	—	19	—	22
Parkhurst ...	50	—	48	—
Southern Hill...	18	28	33	12
Arthur Clark Home ...	—	20	—	20
Dysons Wood ...	—	21	—	19

There were also two men and one woman resident in Homes under the control of our other local authorities.

An analysis of the various categories of residents is found in the table on page 114.

(c) **New Accommodation.** The Mayor (Councillor A. Lockwood, J.P.) opened Dysons Wood Hostel, Toker's Green on 28th August, 1956. This Hostel was purchased by the Council for use as a children's nursery by the Children's Department but was vacated during 1955. The Health Committee is renting these premises since it is not certain that the Children's Committee will not require them again at some later date. At the outset some concern was expressed as to the possible disadvantages of opening a Home which was a little distant outside the town but I am pleased to report that it has proved a great success. Naturally there has had to be some selection of residents but they seem to enjoy living in the country and arrangements are made (subject to petrol restrictions) for them to be provided with a conveyance to take them into town to do their shopping and to see to their personal affairs. Incidentally the purchase of this vehicle, which can take either passengers or goods, has been a great help to the running of all the Homes.

Approval was finally given for the Alice Jenkins Home to be built in Liebenrood Road and it is hoped that this work will start early in 1957.





(d) **Holidays for Residents of Hostels.** During the year a large party was taken from the Reading Hostels, and occupied a boarding house at Southsea for a week. Most seaside resorts now give special terms for pensioners, and every care is taken that should any resident require a holiday it should be provided for him at the very advantageous terms.

(e) **Temporary Accommodation** (to be read in conjunction with the report of the Family Case Worker). The following table gives particulars of the use of temporary accommodation at Woodlands during the year :—

	M.	W.	C.	Total
Admissions ... ..	—	35	21	56
Maintenance Days ... ..	—	115	120	235
Remaining on 31st Dec., 1956 ... ..	—	—	—	—

The bulk of these people were in for very short periods.

## SECTION 22—CHARGES FOR ACCOMMODATION

The standard charge for the year was £5 5s. 0d. per head per week. The following amounts were received on assessments made against residents according to the scale in use at the present time :—

	£	s.	d.
Woodlands ... ..	5,855	18	0
Wychcotes ... ..	1,248	0	0
Warren House ... ..	1,954	12	3
Parkhurst ... ..	3,520	14	8
Southern Hill ... ..	4,398	12	10
Arthur Clark Home ... ..	1,521	18	9
Dysons Wood ... ..	531	5	7

## SECTION 24—AUTHORITY LIABLE FOR THE PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION

A number of cases have been dealt with under this Section and arrangements made with the various authorities, except for one case which was referred to the Ministry of Health for decision and the decision given against Reading.

## SECTION 25—POWER OF NATIONAL ASSISTANCE BOARD TO ORDER THE PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION IN URGENT CASES

Relationship with officers of the National Assistance Board has again been entirely satisfactory. Officers of both Departments are in close co-operation and have been able to assist one another in providing accommodation in any cases that have arisen.

## SECTION 26—PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION IN PREMISES MAINTAINED BY VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

A number of persons were resident in special Homes and chargeable to the County Borough, as follows :—

	M.	F.
Aged Infirm ... ..	—	8
Blind ... ..	3	6
Cripples ... ..	—	3
Deaf and Dumb ... ..	1	—
Epileptic... ..	1	2
Spastic ... ..	1	—



## SECTION 29—WELFARE OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS

(a) **Deaf and Dumb.** Our arrangements with the Oxford Diocesan Association for the Deaf and Dumb continued to operate satisfactorily throughout the year. The following table gives particulars of the Register at 31st December, 1956.

	M.	F.
Children under 16 ... ..	7	2
Persons aged 16-64 ... ..	36	39
Persons aged 65 and over ... ..	3	5

Mr. C. Powell, the Missioner, reports as follows on his work throughout the year:—

*Religious.* Forty-eight church services were held. Holy Communion celebrated four times. Interpreted:—2 Baptism Services, 3 Marriage Services, 2 Funeral Services.

*Mothers' Union.* Twenty-two Mother's Union meetings have been held, and a small Sale of Work to dispose of the articles they have made in their handicrafts period. The Annual Outing was organised to Littlehampton.

*Placements.* Ten males were found employment; 10 females were found employment.

Visits have been paid regularly to factories to solve various troubles, i.e., discontent, wages, bonus, conditions, etc. To place the twenty people, many visits were made to different firms.

*Social.* Coach outings have been organised to the following places:—Littlehampton, Margate for old pupils' re-union at the Margate School, British Deaf and Dumb Association Rally at Leicester, Stoke-on-Trent Deaf Club, Week-end to Blackpool.

Parties were organised at St. John's Hall and the Town Hall, Reading. Members also attended parties in Newbury and Slough. One week's holiday at Eastbourne was organised for ten people from Reading Borough. The members were invited to several parties and functions organised by other bodies.

*Welfare.* Three houses were bought for deaf people. This necessitated inspecting numerous houses for sale.

Interpretation was provided in such places as hospital interviews, doctors' surgeries, dentists, courts, the housing department, solicitors' offices, and many other places.

The deaf have been visited in their homes and many problems, including those between man and wife, have been solved. The deaf have been visited in hospitals, nursing homes, and those sick at home.

(b) **Hard of Hearing.** Our arrangement with the Reading and District Hard of Hearing Association continued as on previous years. The register at 31st December, 1956, was as follows:—

	M.	F.
Children under 16 ... ..	3	5
Persons aged 16-64 ... ..	21	51
Persons aged 65 and over ... ..	10	24

This Association is a very active and self-reliant Association which undertakes a large programme of social activities and publishes a most interesting club magazine every quarter. We continue to make a contribution of 6/- per half-year for every Reading person who is on the Club's Register.

(c) **Blind.** The general arrangements for this work continued as previously in close collaboration with the Reading Association for the Welfare of the Blind. It



will be noticed that a very large number of blind people are in the older age groups and I am giving a purely personal opinion when I express doubts as to whether we should continue to administer our service for these older people as a separate service. I think a good deal could be said for looking after them in conjunction with our arrangements for other groups of elderly people; the younger blind could be dealt with as a separate group. There seems to be very little possibility of bringing about such a change in the near future.

Miss Lowe, the Blind Welfare Officer, who also acts as Secretary for the Reading Association for the Welfare of the Blind, reports as follows:—

On 31st December, there were 225 blind people on the register, 96 males and 129 females. The age groups are as follows:—

				Male	Female	Total
1-4 years	...	...	...	—	1	1
5-15 "	...	...	...	1	1	2
16-20 "	...	...	...	2	—	2
21-30 "	...	...	...	4	2	6
31-39 "	...	...	...	6	1	7
40-49 "	...	...	...	8	9	17
50-64 "	...	...	...	13	29	42
65 years and over	...	...	...	62	86	148
				96	129	225

*Age at which Blindness occurred*

				Male	Female	Total
Under 1 year	...	...	...	10	12	22
1-4 years	...	...	...	—	3	3
5-15 "	...	...	...	5	2	7
16-20 "	...	...	...	4	1	5
21-30 "	...	...	...	6	2	8
31-39 "	...	...	...	5	10	15
40-49 "	...	...	...	8	12	20
50-64 "	...	...	...	18	35	53
65 years and over	...	...	...	40	52	92
				96	129	225

During the year there were 22 new registrations, 6 transfers-in, 30 deaths, 4 transfers-out to other areas and 1 person was de-registered, resulting in a decrease of 7 on the total for 1955. Of the 22 persons registered blind during the year 17 were over 70 years of age, 3 were over 60 years, 1 aged 50 years and a girl of 4 years,

**Partially Sighted Register.** There are 90 persons on this register at the end of the year, 26 males and 64 females. The age groups are as follows:—

				Male	Female	Total
5-15 years	...	...	...	3	3	6
16-20 "	...	...	...	—	3	3
21-49 "	...	...	...	4	7	11
50-64 "	...	...	...	2	5	7
65 and over	...	...	...	17	46	63
				26	64	90



During the year there were 17 additions to the register including 1 girl who had been on the blind register but who was de-registered on leaving school. Two others moved into Reading from other areas. Four people died, 3 left the district and 2 were placed on the blind register after further eye tests.

The register is divided into the following groups for those aged 16 and over :—

Persons near and prospectively blind	...	...	9
Persons mainly industrially handicapped	...	...	10
Persons requiring observation only	...	...	65

A. Follow-up of Registered Blind and Partially-Sighted Persons :—

(1) Number of cases registered during the year in respect of which Section F (1) of Forms B.D.8 recommends :—	Cause of Disability			
	Cataract	Glaucoma	Retrolental Fibroplasia	Others
(a) No treatment... ..	4	1	—	5
(b) Treatment (Medical, Surgical or Optical) ...	13	7	1	8
(2) Number of cases at (1) (b) above which on follow-up action have received treatment ... ..	1	5	1	5

These twelve cases are analysed as follows :—

Waiting list—Cataracts not ready for operation	...	...	...	4
Had unsuccessful operation on one eye	...	...	...	1
Refused operation	...	...	...	1
Refused operation on doctor's advice	...	...	...	1
Carcinoma of lachrymal gland	...	...	...	1
Diabetic retinopathy	...	...	...	1
Age over 94 years	...	...	...	1
Deaths	...	...	...	2
				—
				12
				—

B. Ophthalmia neonatorum

(1) Total number of cases notified during the year	...	...	0
(2) Number of cases in which			
(a) Vision lost	...	...	0
(b) Vision impaired	...	...	0
(c) Treatment continuing at end of year	...	...	0

**Children.** The three children registered blind all have an additional disability. One is at Condoover Hall, one at the Sunshine Home at Leamington Spa and application has been made for the younger girl to be admitted to a Sunshine Home.

Five of the six partially-sighted children are away at school and the sixth is now attending a local school after being at a partially-sighted school until he was 11 years.

**Home Workers.** The machine-knitter and piano tuner have remained our only home workers for another year and are supervised by the Royal London Society for the Blind. Both find it a struggle to get sufficient work because of competition with



multiple firms who can produce cheaper socks, and television sets which are taking the place of the piano in many homes.

**Rehabilitation and Training.** Two people have had rehabilitation courses during the year. A young man who had been employed, but who had never received any industrial training and was finding it difficult to get employment again after being made redundant, went to the Rehabilitation Centre at Torquay where he was recommended as a suitable trainee for Letchworth. He was placed with a local firm the week after returning home trained as a capstan operator. The second man is very deaf and went for a course of social rehabilitation to The Kathleen Chambers Home for the Deaf-Blind, Burnham-on-Sea. He enjoyed his time there very much, especially the handicrafts, and came back very keen on seating stools with seagrass.

A boy of 17 spent the year at Hethersett, Reigate, the Royal National Institute for the Blind Centre for adolescents and he is now hoping to become a shorthand-typist and is to commence training for this in January 1957. Another boy of 19 years is at The Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead, where he does occupational handicrafts, but his standard of work is not very good as he also suffers some mental disability.

**Employed Persons.** Thirty blind and partially-sighted persons are employed as masseurs, shorthand-typists, telephone operators, factory operatives, domestic workers, etc. Two are employed by the Royal National Institute for the Blind, one doing placement work in Ireland and the other as Appeals Organiser for Reading and Berkshire.

There are 16 men of working age who are not capable of work and of the 23 women not working 7 are not capable and 16 are not available, being married women with homes to look after. No one capable of work is unemployed. One hundred and fifty-nine registered blind persons are of retirement age.

**The National Library and Talking Book Library.** Readers of Braille or Moon embossed type enjoy receiving their books from the library. Cost of membership is covered for them by the Council's subscriptions to the library.

Twenty-three of our people have Talking Books loaned to them and they give a great deal of pleasure to those who have been used to reading books. For those who have done little reading the wireless programmes provide as much as they want of this type of entertainment.

**Guide Dogs.** Two of our people have guide dogs, one accompanies his mistress to London each day, to her work in a Ministry office.

**Winter Coal.** Voluntary funds again supplied gifts of coal to all the blind people, ranging from 2 cwts. each for the younger ones to 10 cwts. for those over 70 years of age.

**Holiday Fund.** Seventy-four people have saved up for their holidays during the year and a total of £398 was paid out in bonus and towards the cost of fares. Two group holidays at Worthing and Paignton were arranged in May and special terms were granted by the proprietors of the hotels who did everything they could to ensure the blind folk had a good holiday. Both wrote to say how much they had enjoyed their visit and those who went came back with excellent reports of everything, including the weather.

**Shop Sales.** The amount from Shop sales totals £339 9s., an increase of £38 on last year's figures. We attribute this improvement to the efforts of the men in the basket class who have produced more small saleable articles.



**Social Activities.** The weekly Pastime Classes have continued throughout the year. The men's basket class meets on Mondays and Thursdays (morning and afternoon on each day) and the women's class on Monday afternoon. Wednesday afternoon is devoted to games, dominoes and lexicon proving the most popular.

The monthly social club has increased its membership and we are indebted to the members of the Round Table and Toc H for providing transport for this, and to the members of various concert parties who provide the entertainment.

During the summer outings were arranged to Southsea and Swanage and half-day trips to Wallingford and Kew Gardens and to Basildon at the invitation of the Women's Institute. The Garden Party was held in the grounds of Parkhurst Hostel and was attended by approximately 200 blind people and guides. The Mayor and Mayoress came to the opening and spent some time mingling with the people. The warden, staff and residents at the hostel all helped us to have an enjoyable afternoon in their garden.

We are indebted to a number of people and firms who render service to the blind folk of this County Borough in many and various ways all of which help to make life easier and brighter for them.

### (c) REPORT OF CONSULTING OPHTHALMIC SURGEON

Mr. G. T. Willoughby Cashell, F.R.C.S., has given the following report in connection with the work he has undertaken during the year:—

During 1956, 43 patients, as compared with 39 in 1955, were examined for admission to the Blind Register. Six of these had been previously examined.

	De-Certified	Blind	Not Blind	Partially Sighted	Total
Cataract ... ..	—	7	1	8	16
Glaucoma ... ..	—	4	—	1	5
Myopia ... ..	—	—	—	1	1
Retinal Conditions...	—	3	1	1	5
Congenital Conditions ...	—	1	—	2	3
Infective Conditions ...	—	—	—	3	3
Degenerative Conditions ...	—	7	—	2	9
Injury ... ..	1	—	—	—	1
	1	22	2	18	43

### Ages

Under 20	40-50	60-70	70-80	80-100
2	2	10	15	14

**Cataract.** Of the 7 patients blind from cataract 3 were recommended for operation, one of whom refused it. Two patients had lost one eye following cataract extraction and were therefore reluctant to have the cataract removed from the other eye. The remaining 2 patients had had cataract extraction complicated in one case by iritis and in the other by glaucoma. The patient found not blind in this category had a cataract in one eye and normal vision in the other.

Under the partially sighted heading 2 patients were awaiting operation, 1 had had an unsuccessful cataract extraction on one eye, 1 had had a successful decompress-



ion for glaucoma as well as a cataract extraction and 1 patient had carcinoma of the lachrymal gland as well as cataract.

**Glaucoma.** One of the patients blind from glaucoma had had operations on both eyes, 1 of them preserving 6/24 vision. One patient was not referred until the disease was in an advanced stage. One patient had lost both eyes from congestive glaucoma. The partially sighted patient had low tension glaucoma with contracted fields and had had a successful cataract extraction.

**Myopia.** This patient had a dislocated cataract and pigmentary retinal degeneration in addition to the myopia.

**Retinal Conditions.** One of the three patients registered as blind had lost one eye from a vitreous haemorrhage followed by secondary glaucoma and had glaucoma secondary to a retinal thrombosis in the other. The second patient had a diabetic retinopathy and the third bilateral retinal detachments one of which had been successfully replaced. The partially sighted patient had a diabetic retinopathy.

**Congenital Conditions.** The blind patient under this heading was a child with retrolental fibroplasia following premature birth. One of the partially sighted patients suffering from high myopia with nystagmus and albinism had been transferred from the Blind to the Partially Sighted Register. The other partially sighted patient had congenital cataract.

**Infective Conditions.** One patient was suffering from the results of keratitis, the second had had trachoma successfully treated and also had vascularising keratitis and the third had optic atrophy and nystagmus following meningitis.

**Degenerative Conditions.** All the patients in this category were suffering from senile macula degeneration.

**Injury.** One patient was removed from the Blind Register. She had recently moved to Reading and on attending hospital had been found to have 6/9 vision in one eye.

#### (d) OTHER CLASSES OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS

Mrs. Janet Snow, the Welfare Officer for this particular section of the Department, has submitted the following report :—

Total number on Register ... 266				Total number assisted ... 145		
				<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Children under 16	...	...	...	7	5	
Persons 16-64	...	...	...	52	63	
Persons 65 and over	...	...	...	10	8	
				69	76	
				Total	145	



<i>Detail of type of Assistance provided</i>	<i>Number of Cases</i>
Appliances (nursing equipment, aids, gadgets) ...	6
Alterations to Dwellings—Indoor ... ..	11
Outdoor ... ..	10
Employment and Training ... ..	5
Accommodation (Hostels, Homes) ... ..	3
Transport ... ..	24
Rehoused ... ..	11
Pending ... ..	3
Occupational Therapy Class ... ..	31
Domiciliary ... ..	22
Welfare Visits (general advice) ... ..	51
Referred to other Agencies (D.R.O., Toc H, British Red Cross Social Club) ... ..	55
Convalescence ... ..	5
Financial Help (fares, raw materials) ... ..	7

### Classification of Disabilities

							1956	Total on Register
A/E	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	17
F	...	...	...	...	...	...	32	42
G	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	15
H/L	...	...	...	...	...	...	17	35
Q/T	...	...	...	...	...	...	17	18
V	...	...	...	...	...	...	70	95
U/W	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	19
X	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Y	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	4
Z	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	4

### Grouping

A	...	...	...	...	...	6	18
B	...	...	...	...	...	24	39
C	...	...	...	...	...	12	16
D	...	...	...	...	...	88	135
E	...	...	...	...	...	11	17

The key to this classification is as follows :—

- A/E = Amputation  
F = Arthritis and Rheumatism  
G = Congenital Malformations and Deformities  
H/L = Diseases of the Digestive and Genito-Urinary systems: of the heart or circulatory system: of the respiratory system (other than tuberculosis) and of the skin  
Q/T = Injuries of the head, face, neck, thorax, abdomen, pelvis or trunk. Injuries or diseases (other than tuberculosis) of the upper and lower limbs and of the spine  
V = Organic nervous diseases—Epilepsy, disseminated sclerosis, poliomyelitis, hemiplegia, sciatica, etc.  
U/W = Neuroses—Psychoses and other Nervous and Mental Disorders not included in V  
X = Tuberculosis (Respiratory)  
Y = Tuberculosis (non-Respiratory)  
Z = Diseases and injuries not specified above



*Grouping*

Persons 16 and upwards :—

- A =Capable of work under ordinary industrial conditions
- B =Incapable of work under ordinary industrial conditions but mobile and capable of work in sheltered workshops
- C =Incapable of work under ordinary industrial conditions and insufficiently mobile for work in sheltered workshops but capable of work at home
- D =Incapable of or not available for work
- E =Child under the age of 16 years whose needs are likely to be met under other enactments but for whom the local authority have a general responsibility under Section 29 of the National Assistance Act, 1948

As was to be expected, the work among handicapped persons has increased. It is stimulating to record that increased numbers have been a challenge to provide increased services. A full time Occupational Therapist was appointed in March and this at once enabled the scope of the available service to be expanded. In addition to domiciliary visits, three classes are now held each week and it is hoped to increase these further. A part time instructor in woodwork was also appointed towards the close of the year. This has meant an extension in the type of work already carried out. It has proved most popular, particularly to the male patients, many of whom are able to occupy themselves at something akin to their normal job. This has been shown to have an improving effect in their mental attitude to their disability. This improvement has also been noted where a purely diversionary hobby has been introduced to a home-bound patient. The opening of a shop for the sale of goods made by handicapped persons has been welcomed by all persons working among this group. It is too early in its history to comment on its function, but initial sales have been encouraging.

A most worthy venture which has provided a new interest and enjoyment to the lives of the handicapped, was launched by the British Red Cross Society. A social club was opened and a considerable number of persons attend these meetings regularly every month. Both the Welfare Officer and the Occupational Therapist endeavour to be present at these meetings. It is very apparent that there is considerable scope for the voluntary associations in this field of welfare among the disabled. Many approaches to voluntary associations have again been made and as well as the one already mentioned, others include Toc H, The Handicapped Guides and Scouts, all of whom have willingly offered really practical help which is greatly appreciated. Several voluntary visitors have been enlisted and are in regular contact with home-bound people, but more are needed. Considerable numbers of books and magazines have been received and now circulate among patients.

In most fields an expansion of work has been revealed, but this is particularly so in matters appertaining to housing. Particular mention should be made of the speedy and practical help which is provided by the Borough Architect and members of his staff. Close co-operation is maintained and several disabled people have been enormously benefited by rehousing to a suitably adapted dwelling. It is most encouraging to note the increased ability to lead a normal life which is produced by such a change. Adjustments and the introduction of special features such as sliding doors, hand rails and ramps, etc., continue to be used in homes to overcome physical handicaps.

Mention must be made of the Appliance Section of the Ministry of Health, who through the year have maintained the closest contact with this Department over each handicapped person referred to them. Efforts are continually being made by both parties to speed up and simplify the method of application and provision of appliances.

What of further developments? An extension is needed in accommodation at the Occupational Therapy Centre. This also could provide an increase in social activities which are limited meantime by accommodation and transport. A start



has been made in producing a selection of everyday aids for the disabled made in the Occupational Therapy Department and available to doctors, nurses, etc., for the use of their patients.

Miss D. J. Turner, the Occupational Therapist for Other Classes of Handicapped Persons reports as follows :—

Nearly 60 handicapped patients have been visited during the course of the year; out of these about 36 have been doing occupational therapy regularly. Those who are able, attend a class one afternoon per week ; this is of great benefit to some who otherwise cannot go more than a few yards unless transport is provided. Others have been visited regularly and do some form of occupational therapy in their own homes.

The range of crafts is as wide as possible and includes basketry, stool-seating, weaving, embroidery, leatherwork, etc. We have recently had the help of a carpenter who instructs some of the men, not only the most capable, but also those with quite a severe disability.

In the autumn, a visit was made to the Everyman Theatre, when a production of Noel Coward's "This Happy Breed" was enjoyed by all who saw it.

At one time surplus goods made by the patients used to be sent to the Helping Hand Shop, Oxford, but now that there is a Helping Hand shop in Reading, this one is naturally being supported.

Space is, at the moment, our limiting factor and we look forward to the time when a larger department will be at our disposal and we can increase both our numbers and activities.

(e) **Helping Hand Shop.** Reference has been made in the reports of Mrs. Snow and Miss Turner to the Helping Hand Shop which has been set up in Reading. This deserves a special paragraph to itself. The Berkshire Association of the Helping Hand had been trying to arrange for the sale of goods produced by handicapped persons in premises loaned by the British Red Cross Society in London Road. These premises were not very convenient for the general public and as a result of consultations which took place, the Council undertook to provide the Association with a small shop in the Covered Market. This shop is equipped and maintained at the expense of the Council and placed at the disposal of the Association. At present it is opened two days a week and is staffed by voluntary workers. The shop was formally opened by His Worship The Mayor (Councillor A. Lockwood) at the end of 1956. Preliminary reports suggest that this experiment is going to be successful and provide a welcome outlet for the products by handicapped persons. The arrangements are due to be reviewed after twelve months operation.

## SECTION 31—CONTRIBUTIONS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

(a) **Meals on Wheels.** The following table shows the number of meals supplied by the W.V.S. during the year :—

January	...	...	...	759
February	...	...	...	990
March	...	...	...	970
April	...	...	...	799
May	...	...	...	946
June	...	...	...	799
July	...	...	...	746
August	...	...	...	746
September	...	...	...	683
October	...	...	...	831
November	...	...	...	844
December	...	...	...	605

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9,718

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Once again I would like to pay tribute to the manner in which the W.V.S. have carried out these duties. We were able to help them to purchase a certain number of insulated containers in which to convey the food to the old people and these have proved a great benefit.

(b) **Chiropody Service.** A Chiropody Service for elderly people, under the auspices of the Old People's Welfare Committee of the Council of Social Service, has been in operation at Star Lane Clinic since March, 1956.

The Service is designed to assist elderly people to have chiropody treatment for which they could not afford to pay in the normal way.

A qualified chiropodist is employed; since the Service started, 522 treatments have been given and each of the 176 elderly people who received the treatment paid the fee of 2/6 per treatment.

Applications for appointments are made to the Secretary of the Committee, who arranges and confirms them in writing. So far those who have taken advantage of the Service have mostly been referred by the various clubs in the Borough.

The free use of the premises at Star Lane is granted by the Borough Corporation to the Council of Social Service; grants-in-aid from The National Corporation for the Care of Old People and The Berkshire County Nursing Trust have been received, also donations from the Sunday Cinema Fund and others.

## SECTION 37—REGISTRATION OF HOMES FOR OLD PEOPLE

At the end of the year 9 Homes were registered in Reading as providing Homes for caring for aged and infirm people :—

107 Connaught Road	...	...	...	4 places
8 Southcote Road	...	...	...	18 „
106 Wokingham Road	...	...	...	4 „
51 Tilehurst Road	...	...	...	23 „
Springfield St. Luke's	...	...	...	28 „
272 Wokingham Road	...	...	...	6 „
4 College Road	...	...	...	14 „
31 Alexandra Road	...	...	...	6 „
62 Kidmore Road	...	...	...	3 „

## SECTION 47—REMOVAL TO SUITABLE PREMISES OF PEOPLE IN NEED OF CARE AND ATTENTION

The Department has, of course, had a number of extremely difficult cases to deal with during the past year, but it has not been necessary to take action in the Courts as allowed under this Section.

## SECTION 50—BURIAL OR CREMATION OF THE DEAD

During the year there have been 1 burial (male) and 4 cremations (all male).

A considerable portion of the cost has been recovered from estates, and a great deal of work has been involved under this Section in dealing with estates of deceased persons, tracing relatives, and making application for the recovery of expenses.

As a result of enquiries by the Department, relatives or friends prepared to undertake responsibility for funerals have been traced in a number of cases referred for burial.



### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

**Cremation.** The Medical Officer of Health is the Medical Referee to Reading Crematorium. The following table gives an idea of the steady increase in the number of cremations over the last twelve years :—

1956	...	...	...	...	1,210
1955	...	...	...	...	992
1954	...	...	...	...	869
1953	...	...	...	...	891
1952	...	...	...	...	675
1951	...	...	...	...	763
1950	...	...	...	...	576
1949	...	...	...	...	524
1948	...	...	...	...	444
1947	...	...	...	...	407
1946	...	...	...	...	344
1945	...	...	...	...	378

35.37% of the cremations were borough residents and 64.63% came from outside the borough. It will be seen that 428 of the 1,348 borough deaths (31%) were cremated.

**Public Health Laboratory Service.** The valuable work of the Public Health Laboratory Service continued throughout the year and I am very grateful to Dr. Wood, Director of the Reading Laboratory for his help and co-operation on many occasions. Unfortunately it is not possible to present particulars of examinations which applied only to Reading.

**Nursing Homes.** At the end of the year 5 nursing homes were registered providing accommodation for 13 maternity patients and 60 others. All homes were inspected during the year.

Dunedin	...	...	20 beds
Easterbrook	...	...	12 „
Helena Home	...	...	14 „
Whiteknights	...	...	14 „
Chiltern Maternity	...	...	13 „

**Nursery and Child Minders Act, 1948.** At the end of the year there were 3 child minders registered in the town in respect of 48 children. There is nothing special to report under this heading.

**International Certificates.** During the year 501 International Certificates of Vaccination were authenticated.