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Somerset County Council.



REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1943

J. F. DAVIDSON,

O.B.E., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.,

County Medical Officer of Health.

**To the Chairman and Members of the Public Health and Housing Committee,
Somerset County Council.**

THE CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Seventh Annual Report upon the Health Administration of the County. Owing to the present circumstances, this report is reduced in size, and it is, in fact, mainly a summary.

Considering the various difficulties and abnormal circumstances, the health of the County has been remarkably good.

The health statistics are not so satisfactory as they were in the exceptional return for 1942, but nevertheless they are quite good. The two conditions which have caused particular concern are venereal diseases and tuberculosis, and both show material increases in cases.

Notwithstanding the continual strain on our general resources, together with a grave shortage of staff in several sections of the department, every effort has been made to meet all the many calls, routine and special, that have arisen during the year.

I must point out, however, that shortage of staff through various reasons—call-up for military service, illness, inability to fill important vacancies, and so forth, is giving rise to several serious situations, with resulting grave arrears in some parts of our work.

I continue to be greatly indebted to Sir William Savage for his assistance which includes the responsibility for the detail of this Report.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. F. DAVIDSON,

County Medical Officer of Health.

Taunton.

September, 1944.

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STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres): 1,028,992.

Population (1943) omitted at the request of the Ministry of Health.

Live Births:—Total 7,475; Legitimate 6,992; Illegitimate 483; Still births 202.

Rateable Value:—£2,716,294 (1943).

Sum represented by a penny rate:—£10,979 (1943-44); £11,140 (1944-45).

Birth rate:—16.23. Illegitimate births 6.46 per cent.

Death rate:—12.30.

Deaths under 1 year of age:—303. Rate of infantile mortality:—40.5.

Although there were actually fewer births than in the previous year, with a lower population the birth rate continues to rise and is higher than for any period since 1924. Unfortunately the percentage of illegitimate births has also risen greatly. The normal is between 3 and 4 per cent.; for 1942 it was 5.68 and for 1943 it was 6.46, nearly double the usual rate. The death rate is still low, 12.30 for an uncorrected death rate, but higher than for the previous year (11.85). This is largely accounted for by the increase of 55 deaths under one year of age. The rate of infantile mortality is only 40.5 but is above the remarkably low figure of 32.85 for 1942.

The infantile mortality rates for each district are given in Tables IV and V, but for a single year the figures are far too small for any comparative deductions. Over a period of 10 years it is justifiable to regard differences as of some significance and the figures for the different areas for the 10 year period 1934-43 inclusive are shown in the following table.

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

Infantile Mortality Rate over a period of 10 years (1934-43).

Urban Districts.	Infantile Mortality Rate.	Rural Districts.	Infantile Mortality Rate.
Bridgwater	49.8	Axbridge	42.8
Burnham	39.7	Bathavon	43.9
Chard	31.3	Bridgwater	48.0
Clevedon	50.8	Chard	44.9
Crewkerne	42.7	Clutton	48.7
Frome	44.0	Dulverton	47.3
Glastonbury	25.9	Frome	41.5
Ilminster	23.7	Langport	35.9
Keynsham (6 years only)	36.4	Long Ashton	37.3
Minehead	40.5	Shepton Mallet	48.1
Norton-Radstock	39.7	Taunton	53.5
Portishead	20.4	Wellington	34.1
Shepton Mallet	39.2	Wells	50.9
Street	43.2	Williton	45.5
Taunton	49.2	Wincanton	35.6
Watchet	55.1	Yeovil	43.8
Wellington	50.3	Urban Districts	43.3
Wells	39.9	Rural ,,	43.8
Weston-super-Mare	47.1	County Rate	43.6
Yeovil	35.8		

It is of interest that the Urban and Rural rates are practically identical.

The rates in the rural districts are fairly uniform and all except 6 fall between 40 and 50. Four are below, *i.e.*, Langport, Long Ashton, Wellington and Wincanton, while two are above, *i.e.*, Wells Rural and Taunton Rural. There are more variations in the urban districts and rates above 50 are shown for Clevedon, Watchet and Wellington, while exceptionally low rates are for Chard, Glastonbury, Ilminster and Portishead. On the whole the figures do not disclose any areas with an exceptionally high rate of infantile mortality.

The causes of death are set out in the Tables, the chief causes of death being heart diseases (1,415 deaths), cancer and other forms of malignant disease (823 deaths), bronchitis and pneumonia (465 deaths), and tuberculosis (215 deaths).

The essential statistical returns covering births, infantile mortality, and deaths are given in the following Tables from I to V.

TABLE I.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the Year 1943.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	NETT DEATHS AT THE SUBJOINED AGES OF "RESIDENTS" WHETHER OCCURRING WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE DISTRICT.						
	All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5 years	5 and under 15 years	15 and under 45 years	45 and under 65 years	65 and up-wards.
Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cerebro spinal fever	7	1	3	1	2	0	0
Scarlet fever	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Whooping cough	5	2	3	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Tuberculosis of respir. system..	159	1	0	0	96	52	10
Other forms of tuberculosis ...	56	6	13	7	17	8	5
Syphilitic diseases	16	0	0	1	4	8	3
Influenza	210	3	3	5	19	45	135
Measles	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Acute poliomyelitis and polio-encephalitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acute inf. encephalitis	7	0	1	0	3	3	0
Cancer of buc. cavity & œsoph. (M), uterus (F)	83	0	0	0	7	35	41
Cancer of stomach & duodenum	151	0	1	0	5	50	95
Cancer of breast	92	0	0	0	13	38	41
Cancer of all other sites	497	2	2	1	29	142	321
Diabetes	62	0	0	0	8	21	33
Intra-cranial vascular lesions ...	629	1	1	2	13	136	476
Heart disease	1415	1	0	4	38	264	1108
Other diseases of circ. system...	146	0	0	0	5	24	117
Bronchitis	266	7	2	2	7	44	204
Pneumonia	199	33	7	2	17	35	105
Other respiratory disease	71	2	0	0	6	26	37
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	51	0	0	0	4	24	23
Diarrhœa, under 2 years	15	15	0	0	0	0	0
Appendicitis	30	0	3	4	7	4	12
Other digestive diseases	161	3	2	3	17	49	87
Nephritis	197	0	0	1	15	37	144
Puerperal and post-abort. sepsis	6	0	0	0	6	0	0
Other maternal causes	18	0	0	0	18	0	0
Premature birth	79	79	0	0	0	0	0
Congenital malformations, birth injuries, infantile diseases ...	133	116	2	4	7	3	1
Suicide	35	0	0	0	9	16	10
Road traffic accidents	46	0	1	7	10	17	11
Other violent causes	137	14	7	7	26	27	56
All other causes	680	17	9	5	57	95	497
	5662	303	62	56	466	1203	3572

TABLE II.

Causes of Death at all Ages in each District during the Year 1943.

RURAL DISTRICTS.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	AXBRIDGE.	BATHAVON.	BRIDGWATER.	CHARD.	CLUTTON.	DULVERTON.	FROME.	LANGPORT.	LONG ASHTON.	SHEPTON MALLET.	TAUNTON.	WELLINGTON.	WELLS.	WILLITON.	WINCANTON.	YEOVIL.	TOTAL RURAL DISTRICTS.
Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cerebro spinal fever ...	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Scarlet fever ...	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Whooping cough ...	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Diphtheria ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Tuberculosis of respir. system..	14	2	10	1	2	0	4	5	13	2	8	1	4	3	5	2	76
Other forms of tuberculosis ...	5	2	3	6	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	2	34
Syphilitic diseases ...	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Influenza ...	9	9	21	7	12	2	4	0	11	4	8	2	1	5	11	6	112
Measles ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acute poliomyelitis and polio-encephalitis ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acute inf. encephalitis ...	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	5
Cancer of buc. cavity & œsoph. (M), uterus (F) ...	6	4	5	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	2	5	3	44
Cancer of stomach & duodenum	6	3	9	7	1	1	1	5	12	1	6	0	4	4	8	8	76
Cancer of breast ...	6	2	2	3	7	1	1	3	6	1	3	1	0	2	1	6	45
Cancer of all other sites ...	23	24	18	9	16	6	10	11	20	9	17	12	9	9	24	16	233
Diabetes ...	8	0	1	0	3	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	0	2	4	30
Intra-cranial vascular lesions ...	32	32	36	16	37	14	11	18	28	21	31	10	20	20	21	21	368
Heart disease ...	89	62	43	32	50	17	32	46	70	33	57	25	39	45	40	37	717
Other diseases of circ. system...	6	6	3	7	5	4	2	4	10	3	5	7	7	3	3	5	80
Bronchitis ...	6	8	9	7	11	3	8	10	14	4	17	4	2	5	9	12	129
Pneumonia ...	6	8	12	9	12	2	5	7	13	6	4	7	1	9	12	5	118
Other respiratory disease ...	3	3	2	1	2	0	3	4	2	3	0	1	2	1	3	3	33
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	2	2	1	1	1	0	2	3	2	0	2	0	0	2	1	4	23
Diarrhœa, under 2 years ...	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	8
Appendicitis ...	2	3	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	19
Other digestive diseases ...	4	3	8	5	3	3	4	3	6	5	6	2	1	8	8	4	73
Nephritis ...	10	6	8	2	5	1	3	11	2	2	7	1	5	5	8	8	84
Puerperal and post-abortion. sepsis	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other maternal causes ...	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	8
Premature birth ...	5	2	4	4	6	0	0	1	7	2	3	1	1	0	2	3	41
Congenital malformations, birth injuries, infantile diseases ...	3	8	9	4	4	2	3	7	10	3	2	2	3	3	6	2	71
Suicide ...	3	0	1	1	3	0	0	2	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	19
Road traffic accidents ...	4	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	3	3	3	0	2	28
Other violent causes ...	6	8	4	0	3	6	2	4	10	8	4	2	0	10	5	5	77
All other causes ...	30	29	27	22	20	3	11	18	25	17	16	6	11	25	40	29	329
All causes ...	291	234	245	150	209	69	111	171	277	134	209	94	121	169	221	190	2895

TABLE III.

Causes of Death at all Ages in each District during the Year 1943.

URBAN DISTRICTS.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	BRIDGWATER.	BURNHAM.	CHARD.	CLEVEDON.	CREWKERNE.	FROME.	GLASTONBURY.	ILMINSTER.	KEYNSHAM.	MINEHEAD.	NORTON-RADSTOCK.	PORTISHEAD.	SHEPTON MALLET.	STREET.	TAUNTON.	WATCHET.	WELLINGTON.	WELLS.	WESTON-SUPER-MARE.	YEovil.	TOTAL URBAN DISTRICTS.	COUNTY TOTAL.	
Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Cerebro spinal fever ...	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Scarlet fever ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Whooping cough ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	5
Diphtheria ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Tuberculosis of respir. system..	14	4	5	6	0	2	1	1	1	4	2	1	1	1	12	0	2	2	12	6	83	159	
Other forms of tuberculosis ...	2	0	2	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	0	4	3	22	56	
Syphilitic diseases ...	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	6	1	0	0	5	1	12	16	
Influenza ...	8	5	2	4	0	7	4	1	2	6	10	2	3	3	14	0	4	1	12	10	98	210	
Measles ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	
Acute poliomyelitis and polio-encephalitis ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Acute inf. encephalitis ...	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	
Cancer of buc. cavity & œsoph. (M), uterus (F) ...	5	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	5	2	0	0	1	6	0	2	2	8	2	39	83	
Cancer of stomach & duodenum	5	3	3	4	3	3	0	0	2	2	5	1	1	0	13	0	4	1	17	8	75	151	
Cancer of breast ...	5	1	2	5	0	5	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	7	1	0	0	11	4	47	92	
Cancer of all other sites ...	21	14	7	23	4	11	4	4	7	13	8	7	2	9	33	5	7	7	63	15	264	497	
Diabetes ...	2	1	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	1	3	1	0	2	2	2	0	0	7	6	32	62	
Intra-cranial vascular lesions ...	26	11	6	14	1	15	9	3	7	9	9	2	6	6	43	6	8	11	52	17	261	629	
Heart disease ...	68	39	16	47	20	30	23	3	27	30	31	14	8	14	90	8	26	16	148	40	698	1415	
Other diseases of circ. system...	9	4	2	3	0	3	3	0	2	4	1	0	0	2	13	1	2	1	12	4	66	146	
Bronchitis ...	12	3	1	4	1	6	1	0	6	6	10	4	6	0	30	2	6	4	26	9	137	266	
Pneumonia ...	9	5	1	1	1	6	1	0	1	3	9	0	4	1	11	1	1	2	16	8	81	199	
Other respiratory disease ...	3	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	9	0	1	0	10	3	38	71	
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	4	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	2	2	0	2	1	4	2	28	51	
Diarrhœa, under 2 years ...	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	7	15	
Appendicitis ...	2	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	11	30	
Other digestive diseases ...	10	3	2	6	1	9	0	0	6	4	5	0	0	1	15	1	3	0	15	7	88	161	
Nephritis ...	5	7	1	11	1	4	3	2	2	6	12	2	1	3	11	0	3	4	31	4	113	197	
Puerperal and post-abort. sepsis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	6
Other maternal causes ...	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	10	18	
Premature birth ...	8	3	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	1	5	0	0	0	8	0	2	0	4	2	38	79	
Congenital malformations, birth injuries, infantile diseases ...	2	3	2	4	0	5	0	1	1	2	4	0	1	2	5	3	1	1	15	10	62	133	
Suicide ...	2	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	1	2	1	16	35	
Road traffic accidents ...	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	4	0	0	0	3	0	18	46	
Other violent causes ...	5	0	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	3	4	2	2	1	12	2	3	0	10	5	60	137	
All other causes ...	27	17	17	33	15	27	3	2	10	9	22	8	12	5	39	5	11	5	62	22	351	680	
All causes	258	134	71	180	49	152	64	21	80	119	150	47	52	57	399	37	88	59	556	194	2767	5662	

TABLE IV.

Table showing, for each Rural District, the number of Deaths of Infants, also the Birth Rate, Death Rate, and Rate of Infantile Mortality.

DISTRICT.	Area. Acres.	No. of Deaths under 1 Year.	Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Rate of Infantile Mortality.
RURAL:—					
1. Axbridge	90,551	11	14.94	11.59	29.3
2. Bathavon	42,106	14	17.94	11.22	37.4
3. Bridgwater	86,769	19	18.69	12.48	51.8
4. Chard	54,600	11	13.59	11.39	61.5
5. Clutton	42,641	19	17.37	11.49	60.1
6. Dulverton	78,980	3	11.96	12.90	46.9
7. Frome	51,933	5	17.49	10.72	27.6
8. Langport	59,407	11	15.06	13.28	56.7
9. Long Ashton	46,515	18	14.94	11.56	50.3
10. Shepton Mallet	47,777	8	15.96	12.29	46.0
11. Taunton	70,682	9	13.66	11.42	36.0
12. Wellington	37,911	3	14.88	11.56	24.8
13. Wells	57,175	5	17.06	11.86	28.7
14. Williton	97,364	7	14.63	13.30	37.6
15. Wincanton	64,540	14	15.61	12.83	52.0
16. Yeovil	53,495	10	16.88	9.72	30.3
Totals of Rural Districts	982,446	167	15.87	11.74	42.7

TABLE V.

Table showing, for each Urban District, the number of Deaths of Infants, also the Birth Rate, Death Rate, and Rate of Infantile Mortality.

DISTRICT.	Area. Acres.	No. of Deaths under 1 Year.	Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Rate of Infantile Mortality.
URBAN:—					
1. Bridgwater	1,677	15	18.43	12.65	39.9
2. Burnham	2,246	8	15.35	15.12	58.8
3. Chard	1,030	2	21.68	14.25	18.5
4. Clevedon	3,296	7	13.53	18.74	53.8
5. Crewkerne	1,291	1	15.27	12.47	16.7
6. Frome	1,194	9	19.00	12.56	39.1
7. Glastonbury	5,019	2	21.20	12.92	19.0
8. Ilminster	531	2	15.42	7.71	47.6
9. Keynsham	4,170	2	20.26	11.10	13.7
10. Minehead	2,816	3	12.03	15.07	31.6
11. Norton-Radstock	3,370	13	17.65	12.97	63.7
12. Portishead	911	0	19.66	12.32	0.0
13. Shepton Mallet	2,278	1	11.73	10.52	17.2
14. Street	3,069	2	13.96	11.05	27.8
15. Taunton	2,428	14	16.07	13.09	28.6
16. Watchet	493	3	15.76	14.58	75.0
17. Wellington	2,211	4	14.62	12.61	39.2
18. Wells	1,336	2	12.09	9.90	27.8
19. Weston-super-Mare .	4,923	29	15.59	14.59	48.8
20. Yeovil	2,257	17	19.71	8.93	39.7
Totals of Urban Districts	46,546	136	16.66	12.93	38.2
Administrative County ...	1,028,992	303	16.23	12.30	40.5
England and Wales, 1943	—	—	16.50	12.10	49.0

Mental Treatment Act, 1930.

The clinics are held regularly at the following centres:—

Name of Clinic.	Started.	Medical Officer.	No. of Sessions.	New cases seen.	Average attendance per Session.
Taunton and Somerset Hospital	April, 1931	Dr. J. Mackay ...	48	92	12.8
Shepton Mallet and District Hospital ...	April, 1931	Dr. A. Darlington ...	24	2	—
Weston-super-Mare Hospital	Dec., 1932	Dr. J. McGarvey ...	24	27	3.0
Bridgwater Health Centre	May, 1938	Dr. J. Mackay ...	22	15	3.5

The above Table shows that the facilities available are being comparatively little used by medical practitioners. The Yeovil centre has been closed.

Blind Persons Acts, 1920 and 1938.

The general work under these Acts is carried out by the Somerset Blind Association on behalf of, and with a grant from, the County Council. This Association also deals with necessitous Blind and their dependents. Six Home Teachers were employed by the County Blind Association during 1943. There are 21 Home Workers under the supervision of the Bristol Royal Blind Asylum Workshops. At the end of 1943 there were 895 persons in the County registered as blind, compared with 901 at the end of 1942. Certification by a medical practitioner with special experience in ophthalmology is required before registration. Where possible we make use of the County Oculist, Dr. I. B. Georgeson, for certification purposes and during 1943 he examined 38 cases, 29 of whom were admitted to the register.

Prevalence and Control over Infectious and other Diseases.

The Isolation Hospital beds available were the same as for the previous year. The cases of notifiable infectious disease and their distribution are set out in the tables.

The hospital accommodation was found adequate for needs. On the whole the amount of notifiable infectious disease was low, but scarlet fever and whooping cough were at one time prevalent over considerable parts of the County. The most fatal infectious disease was influenza with 210 deaths, but only certain types are notifiable.

Scarlet Fever. 903 cases were notified and, as shown on Table VI, they were fairly widely distributed. There was only one death giving a case mortality of 0.1 per cent. Scarlet fever has been considerably more prevalent during the last four years than previously, the number of cases being respectively 1,253 (1940), 994, 639, 903 (1943) while the yearly average for the previous four years was only 468 per year.

There is urgent need for a reorientation of ideas amongst medical men about this disease and its hospitalisation. In the first place it is not a separate entity at all. The condition is due to infection with a hæmolytic streptococcus and there are many strains which may be responsible. If the strain is one which forms a rash-producing toxin the disease will take the form of the condition known as scarlet fever, but if this toxin is not produced then sore throat with fever, etc., but without any rash may be the manifestations and the condition will not be diagnosed as scarlet fever. In outbreaks both forms may occur and the removal of the cases with a rash (so-called scarlet fever) to hospital leaving the sore throat cases, which may be equally infective, unnotified and unisolated obviously can have no influence upon the spread of infection.

The fact that cases with the same label of scarlet fever may be, and are, caused by different strains of streptococcus makes it definitely detrimental to treat cases in open wards of isolation hospitals. Careful typing of strains shows that the majority of the complications of this disease met with in hospital are due to the infection anew of the patient by a different strain acquired from another case of scarlet fever in the same ward. This cross infection does not occur (or very rarely) in patients treated at home and is markedly reduced when cases in hospital are only treated and isolated in cubicle wards.

A third factor to consider is the extreme mildness of the present type of the disease. Of the 6,732 cases notified during the last 10 years only 16 died, a case mortality of 0.24 per cent., *i.e.*, less than one death per 420 cases. Complications have been much fewer and scarlet fever is now only comparable in seriousness to whooping cough.

In scarlet fever the main indications of treatment are to prevent complications which may permanently affect health and these secondary infections are less liable to occur with home-nursed cases.

From these well-attested facts certain deductions stand out clearly.

- (1) Removal to an isolation hospital has little or no influence on the prevention of spread of the disease as compared with home isolation except in special cases.
- (2) There is an added danger to the patient in being nursed in open wards in an isolation hospital.
- (3) That the normal procedure with scarlet fever should be to nurse all cases at home *unless* there are special circumstances indicating removal.

Such special circumstances are:—

- (a) Possibility of specific contamination of food supply, especially milk.
- (b) A severe type of the disease (very rare).
- (c) Difficult home conditions, such as an approaching confinement, impracticability of even partial home isolation, definite overcrowding and the like.
- (d) Interference with occupation and source of living. This may arise in towns dependent upon letting rooms for holidays and when retention at home would prevent usage.

Unfortunately these lines of action do not prevail in Somerset as shown by the fact that for the year over 75 per cent. of the cases were admitted to hospital, while in some areas, including Bridgwater Borough, Bridgwater Rural, Taunton Rural, Yeovil Rural, Wellington Urban and Rural, Wells and Weston-super-Mare the removals were about 90 per cent. No doubt the existing overcrowding is partially accountable.

Measles always occurs in epidemic waves and 1943 was a year of prevalence with 5,845 cases. With all these cases it is most satisfactory that there was only 1 death.

Whooping Cough with 1,063 notified cases showed moderate prevalence, fortunately with only 5 deaths.

Diphtheria. There were only 111 notified cases with 1 death, a case mortality of only 0.9. This low case mortality is quite remarkable, while the number of cases is very low. The only areas with any considerable number of cases (see Table VI) were Taunton (25) and Axbridge Rural (17). Diphtheria immunisation is now on a scale considerable enough to have an effect on the prevalence of the disease. During 1941 and 1942 the pre-school and school children immunised totalled 61,980 and the figures for immunisations during 1943 are as follows:—

(a) School Children.	Urban.	Rural.	All.
County	1,419	2,230	3,649*
Bridgwater Borough	269	—	269
Taunton Borough	134	—	134
Yeovil Borough	31	—	31
(b) Pre-School Children.			
County	1,318	3,106	4,424†
Taunton Borough	323	—	323
Weston-super-Mare Borough	531	—	531
Yeovil Borough	279	—	279

* Includes 126 evacuees.

† Includes a few evacuees.

The total number immunised during the year was 9,640.

Enteric Diseases (including typhoid and paratyphoid fevers). Only 5 cases in all were notified, with no deaths; again extremely satisfactory figures.

Dysentery. Rather more cases were notified, mainly due to an outbreak at Weston-super-Mare in a local hospital and another smaller epidemic at Long Ashton. Both were of mild type and there were no deaths.

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

TABLE VI. (Registrar General's Figures.)

	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Enteric and Paratyphoid Fevers.	Puerperal Fever and Puerperal Pyrexia.	Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	Cerebro-spinal Meningitis.	Dysentery.	Whooping Cough.	Pneumonia.	Acute Poliomyelitis.	Encephalitis Lethargica.
URBAN												
Bridgwater	250	53	1	0	5	2	8	0	68	27	0	0
Burnham	157	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	39	3	0	0
Chard	65	7	0	0	8	1	0	0	4	6	0	0
Clevedon	199	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	32	20	0	0
Crewkerne	3	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Frome	17	32	1	0	2	0	0	0	14	10	1	0
Glastonbury	52	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	0	0
Ilminster	22	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0
Keynsham	246	25	4	3	2	0	1	3	9	9	0	0
Minehead	39	7	1	0	1	0	0	0	8	1	0	0
Norton-Radstock	192	56	0	0	2	1	0	0	107	12	0	0
Portishead	100	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shepton Mallet	178	12	1	0	0	1	0	0	25	18	0	0
Street	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	17	0	0
Taunton	490	43	25	0	12	3	5	4	46	11	0	0
Watchet	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wellington	8	14	1	0	4	0	4	0	14	0	0	0
Wells	47	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
Weston-super-Mare	365	101	13	0	5	2	2	31	164	27	0	1
Yeovil	400	10	1	0	7	1	0	0	18	9	2	0
RURAL												
Axbridge	202	123	17	0	0	2	6	0	39	11	0	0
Bathavon	223	47	8	0	2	8	1	1	48	5	1	0
Bridgwater	139	41	3	0	1	1	3	0	15	9	1	0
Chard	176	24	0	0	1	1	0	2	10	15	0	0
Clutton	325	64	3	0	1	—	—	—	82	15	—	—
Dulverton	54	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	35	0	0
Frome	28	8	0	0	2	0	0	1	14	2	0	0
Langport	42	5	2	0	3	0	0	0	7	2	0	0
Long Ashton	753	53	12	0	0	0	2	16	96	22	0	0
Shepton Mallet	156	38	3	0	6	0	2	0	78	6	0	1
Taunton	90	26	1	1	1	1	1	1	17	14	0	0
Wellington	23	22	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	4	0	0
Wells	12	4	3	1	2	0	0	0	10	3	0	0
Williton	39	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	7	2	0	0
Wincanton	296	33	3	0	2	1	1	1	42	31	0	0
Yeovil	407	27	1	0	6	3	0	2	24	15	0	0
Urban Districts	2880	380	52	3	56	12	20	38	565	181	3	1
Rural Districts	2965	523	59	2	28	17	17	24	498	191	2	1
Administrative County	5845	903	111	5	84	29	37	62	1063	372	5	2

VENEREAL DISEASES.

The attendances of Somerset cases at the various clinics for the past three years have been as follows:—

Clinic.	New Cases.				Attendances.			
	1941	1942	1943	Increase or decrease during 1943.	1941	1942	1943	Increase or decrease during 1943.
Bath	37 (17)	59 (30)	79 (48)	+ 20	442	440	664	+224
Bristol	45 (20)	87 (27)	92 (45)	+ 5	640	910	1,001	+ 91
Taunton	43 (27)	47 (25)	92 (37)	+ 45	1,169	1,348	1,337	- 11
Yeovil	56 (34)	78 (34)	141 (80)	+ 63	729	909	998	+ 89
Bridgwater	42 (19)	103 (64)	143 (80)	+ 40	589	772	1,049	+277
Frome	7 (5)	41 (24)	67 (30)	+ 26	332	428	550	+122
Minehead	8 (6)	13 (8)	22 (16)	+ 9	86	85	178	+ 93
Weston-super-Mare ...	60 (27)	64 (43)	83 (63)	+ 19	1,233	1,028	1,303	+275
All Clinics ...	298(155)	492(255)	719(399)	+227	5,220	5,920	7,080	+1,160

The table now distinguishes between the cases which are definitely venereal and those non-venereal who attended for investigation and diagnosis, the second group figures being in brackets. It will be seen that the figures show a material increase both in cases and attendances. The increases are both for gonorrhœa and for syphilis.

During the year the following examinations were made:—

Samples.	For Clinics and Hospitals.	For Medical Practitioners.	Total.
Wasserman ...	794	597	1,391
Gonococcus ...	7	17	24
Spirochetes ...	2	0	2
Fixation and other tests ...	300	20	320
	1,103	634	1,737

TUBERCULOSIS.

Year.	Phthisis Death rates.			Other Tuberculous Diseases			Tuberculosis Death-rate.	Deaths in a population of 406,000.	
	Rural.	Urban.	County.	Rural.	Urban.	County.	County.	Phthisis.	All Tuberculosis
1943	0.31	0.39	0.35	0.14	0.10	0.12	0.467	140	190

TABLE VII.

New cases of tuberculosis and deaths from the disease in the County during 1943.

Age Periods.	New cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0-1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	4
1-5	2	0	9	5	0	0	9	4
5-10	2	2	23	12	0	0	5	2
10-15	5	13	10	5	49	47	11	6
15-20	18	25	4	10				
20-25	40	44	6	7				
25-35	69	63	8	12				
35-45	50	33	5	6	41	11	5	3
45-55	33	11	4	5				
55-65	23	14	2	0	5	5	3	2
65 and upwards	4	10	1	1	5	5	3	2
Totals	246	215	73	64	96	63	35	21

This table shows there were 15 fewer pulmonary and 10 more non-pulmonary notifications over the previous year. There were 9 fewer pulmonary but 5 more non-pulmonary deaths. The tuberculosis death rate was slightly higher, *i.e.* 0.467, for 1943 than for 1942 which was 0.454.

TABLE VIII.
Tuberculosis Notifications and Deaths.

URBAN DISTRICTS.	Number of primary cases notified.		Number of Deaths during the year from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.	Number of Deaths during the year from other varieties of Tuberculosis.	RURAL DISTRICTS.	Number of primary cases notified.		Number of Deaths during the year from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.	Number of Deaths during the year from other varieties of Tuberculosis.
	Pulm.	Non-Pulm.				Pulm.	Non-Pulm.		
Bridgwater	53	6	14	2	Axbridge	17	7	14	5
Burnham	14	3	4	0	Bathavon	16	5	2	2
Chard	5	4	5	2	Bridgwater	29	10	10	3
Clevedon	12	5	6	3	Chard	10	6	1	6
Crewkerne	4	0	0	0	Clutton	14	6	2	1
Frome	11	1	2	1	Dulverton	1	1	0	1
Glastonbury	2	1	1	0	Frome	5	1	4	1
Ilminster	6	1	1	0	Langport	13	1	5	1
Keynsham	11	5	1	0	Long Ashton	23	10	13	1
Minehead	21	3	4	0	Shepton Mallet	2	2	2	2
Norton-Radstock	3	3	2	0	Taunton	19	6	8	2
Portishead	7	0	1	1	Wellington	7	3	1	1
Shepton Mallet	4	3	1	0	Wells	6	1	4	1
Street	0	4	1	0	Williton	16	3	3	2
Taunton	29	12	18	6	Wincanton	14	6	5	3
Watchet	1	2	0	0	Yeovil	17	5	2	2
Wellington	5	2	2	0					
Wells	7	0	2	0					
Weston-s-Mare	33	6	12	4					
Yeovil	24	3	6	3					
Totals	252	64	83	22	Totals	209	73	76	34

TABLE IX.
Admissions to Sanatoria during 1943.

Sanatorium.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
Quantock	77	71	2	150
Chard	10	48	1	59
Taunton	20	11	1	32
Wincanton	21	—	—	21
Compton Bishop	—	—	41	41
Alton Hospital	1	—	11	12
Bath Orthopædic Hospital	—	2	7	9
Papworth Hall	1	—	—	1
Grosvenor Sanatorium	1	—	—	1
Winford Orthopædic Hospital	3	1	1	5
South Wales Sanatorium	1	—	—	1
Beckford Lodge Sanatorium	1	—	—	1
University College Hospital..	—	1	—	1
	136	134	64	334

TABLE X.

Cases treated through the County Dispensaries.

Dispensary.	Persons treated at Dispensaries during 1943.		Under treatment at Dispensaries December 31st, 1943.		Total Dispensary Attendances 1943.	Total Persons examined 1943.
	Insured.	Uninsured.	Insured.	Uninsured.		
Bath (County) ...	3	29	1	9	296	131
Bridgwater ...	278	185	18	20	1,284	536
Bristol ...	13	21	2	7	395	171
Chard ...	23	38	20	13	494	127
Clevedon ...	72	66	25	25	573	218
Frome ...	6	8	1	7	157	92
Glastonbury ...	4	5	2	3	175	105
Minehead ...	77	103	305	192	739	307
Radstock ...	18	16	5	11	204	74
Shepton Mallet ...	2	3	1	1	110	76
Taunton ...	288	250	44	59	1,820	725
Weston-super-Mare ...	43	93	18	33	1,063	302
Wincanton ...	15	32	0	1	73	47
Yeovil ...	25	47	7	11	736	326
	867	896	449	392	8,119	3,237
	1,763		841			

Quantock Summer Camp. The Camp was not held this year.

The Ministry of Health Tuberculosis Allowances Scheme was adopted in Somerset as from 4th July, 1943. The scheme applies to cases of respiratory tuberculosis only and the cost is reimbursed in full by the Ministry. Payments are made to patients fortnightly by cheque, and up to the end of the year 130 cases had been accepted at an expenditure of approximately £3,000.

Tuberculosis Officer's Clinical Report for 1943.

Dr. Short, County Tuberculosis Officer, has written the following report:—

During 1943 there was no increase in the number but a maintenance in the severity of new cases of tuberculosis, particularly in the civil population, and for this the continual war strain and unnatural conditions of work may be largely responsible.

The tragic "Stage 3" cases have risen nearly 50% above 1942 and our accommodation for serious and advanced cases has become inadequate to provide for them. There is also serious delay in obtaining beds for cases recommended for thoracoplasty, owing to shortage of hospital staff. All this means that patients carefully sought out and diagnosed early sometimes deteriorate until treatment is unavailing to cure them.

The brighter side of the picture is the large number of patients who have responded well to treatment and have kept "well and working" all through the year.

The Government Treatment Allowance Scheme was made available from the earliest day, but its scope is too restricted to have much influence on the control of tuberculosis. The County Voluntary Care Committees have done their best to alleviate the situation and they have been most generous both of time and money wherever they are working.

Sanatorium or hospital treatment was given to 334 cases. In addition many open-air shelters were provided, those in actual use on December 31st, 1943, being 32. The number of shelters available is 35. Milk, for a period of six or eight weeks was provided in 49 cases, dental treatment for 3 cases, X-ray examinations for 549.

Treatment by the use of artificial pneumothorax has been continued and the cases dealt with are shewn in the following table:—

	At Dispensary or home of patient.	At Institutions.	Total.
Primary inductions	0	8	8
Refills	337	606	943

The new cases seen numbered 1,999, and were classified as follows:—

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.	T.B. Negative	193	
	T.B. Positive Stage 1	9	
	T.B. Positive Stage 2	125	
	T.B. Positive Stage 3	47	
		—	374
NON-PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.	Bones and Joints	27	
	Abdominal	12	
	Other Organs	6	
	Peripheral Glands	33	
		—	78
Not Tuberculous			1,521
Diagnosis not completed on 31st December, 1943			26
			—
			1,999
			==

Quantock Sanatorium. The Medical Superintendent, Dr. V. C. Martyn, has furnished the following report:—

The Sanatorium has been open for the reception of 97 cases (55 males and 42 females) throughout the year. During this time 150 cases have been admitted, of whom 79 were males and 71 females. 135 patients were discharged, 66 males and 69 females. One of these cases was not tuberculous. There were also 10 deaths. The average stay for male patients was 228 days and for female patients 185 days. This is an average of 30 weeks for each patient.

Artificial pneumothorax treatment was carried out in all suitable cases. There were 24 inductions, 337 refills for in-patients and 25 for out-patients.

X-ray. 260 films were taken and 338 cases were screened.

9 cases were operated on for Phrenic Evulsion at Minehead Hospital. 10 cases received Sanocrysin treatment. There were 3 aspirations and replacements by air.

RESULTS OF TREATMENT.

WEIGHTS.

Increase in weights in Kilos. (1 Kilo=2.2 lbs.)

	<i>Less than 6.</i>	<i>6-12.</i>	<i>12 and over.</i>	Total.
Males	37	17	2	56
Females	34	22	1	57

The average gain in weight of 113 patients weighed on discharge	=	5.00 kilos.
" " 56 male patients weighed on discharge	=	4.87 "
" " 57 female patients weighed on discharge	=	5.11 "
The average loss in weight of 16 patients weighed on discharge	=	2.01 "

16 patients were not weighed on discharge, including 5 who died.

Working capacity of patients on admission and discharge.

	<i>Full Working Capacity.</i>		<i>Fit for light work.</i>		<i>Unfit for work.</i>	
	Admission.	Discharge.	Admission.	Discharge.	Admission.	Discharge.
Males	0	21	0	11	73	41
Females	0	25	0	8	72	39

On admission all patients were unfit for any work. On discharge 31.73 per cent. of all patients were fit for full work; 13.1 per cent. for light work; and 55.2 per cent. were unfit for work.

Classification on admission of patients discharged during 1943.

Classification.	M.	F.	Total.	%	Tubercle Bacilli.			
					Positive.		Negative.	
					M.	F.	M.	F.
Early	25	41	66	45.52	0	0	25	41
Intermediate	28	21	49	33.79	5	17	23	4
Advanced	20	10	30	20.69	20	10	0	0

Complications presented by patients were:—Larynx infection, Pleura.

Chard Sanatorium. During the year the cases admitted were 39 pulmonary cases and 20 non-pulmonary (9 female, 11 male).

From the pulmonary wards there were 26 discharged and 7 deaths, from the female surgical ward 11 discharged, and from the male surgical ward 12 discharged and 3 deaths.

X-ray: 166 films were taken and 379 screenings made. Collapse treatment was again used, and was the greatest single aid to treatment. 8 inductions and 457 refills were done during the year.

Compton Bishop Children's Home. During the year 19 boys and 22 girls were admitted, and of these 14 boys and 13 girls were under 10 years of age. The average stay for "definite" (notified) cases was 39 weeks, and for observation cases 33 weeks. The discharges numbered 36, 17 boys and 19 girls, who will be kept under regular supervision at the County Clinics.

TABLE XI.

QUANTOCK SANATORIUM.

Duration of Treatment and Condition on Discharge.

	Under 3 months.									3-6 months.									6-12 months.									More than 12 months.									Totals.			Grand Totals.
	M.			F.			Ch.			M.			F.			Ch.			M.			F.			Ch.			M.	F.	Ch.										
	M.	F.	Ch.	M.	F.	Ch.	M.	F.	Ch.	M.	F.	Ch.	M.	F.	Ch.	M.	F.	Ch.	M.	F.	Ch.	M.	F.	Ch.																
Class TB + Class TB - Minus.	Quiescent	0	4	0	7	15	0	16	18	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	37	1	63																		
	Not quiescent	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	4																		
	Died in Institution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																	
Class TB +	Quiescent	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	4																			
	Not quiescent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																		
	Died in Institution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																		
Class TB +	Quiescent	0	0	0	1	0	0	9	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	6	0	16																			
	Not quiescent	0	1	0	2	2	0	11	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	14	7	0	21																				
	Died in Institution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																		
Class TB +	Quiescent	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1																			
	Not quiescent	1	3	0	0	3	0	7	4	0	1	1	1	0	0	9	11	0	20																					
	Died in Institution	2	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	6																					

In 38 out of 67 men discharged the disease was quiescent=56.72 per cent. In 45 out of 67 women discharged the disease was quiescent=67.16 per cent. 2 cases, who had been admitted for observation, were discharged as tuberculous and are included in the above figures. No cases who were at the Sanatorium less than 28 days have been included in the above figures.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The Midwifery Service. 350 certified midwives notified their intention to practise during the year, 304 working under Committees and 46 independent.

Out of the 225 midwives who worked under the S.C.N.A., 31 resigned and 7 notified for emergency work only, leaving 187 still at work. Of the 47 who notified under independent Associations 6 resigned and one died, leaving 40 still at work. Of the 46 trained midwives working on their own 8 had no midwifery or maternity cases, which left 38 actually at work. 13 worked only as maternity nurse under a medical man. The percentage of 1943 births in the County attended by the nurses as midwives was 58.1.

Summary for all Midwives during the Year.

Cases attended as midwife	4,458
Cases attended as monthly nurse	2,552
Doctor sent for for mother	1,769
Doctor sent for for child	294
Stillbirths	54
Death of mother	9
Death of child	32

The midwives working under Committees attended 3,531 midwifery and 2,132 maternity cases, those working independently 85 midwifery and 420 maternity cases. The Association midwives showed a decrease of 31 midwifery and 58 maternity cases, the independent midwives a decrease of 35 midwifery and an increase of 214 maternity cases.

No independent midwife had more than 25 midwifery cases. 13 of these midwives had no midwifery cases but between them attended 84 maternity cases, while 8 had no cases at all. The 32 midwives in the Maternity Units attended 842 cases. Doctors were called in 1,769 times for the mother and 294 for the child; a percentage of 46.3.

Nine deaths of mothers were recorded during the year in which midwives were in attendance as midwives.

Ante-Natal and Post-Natal Work. Under the ante-natal and post-natal scheme the total numbers of Somerset mothers ante-natally examined and of cases post-natally examined were respectively 1,381 and 167, at a total cost to the County estimated at £478 8s. 6d. The corresponding figures for evacuee women are 245 and 110, at a cost of £107 16s. 0d.

Consultants for Midwifery Scheme. Under the County scheme 84 cases were accepted and dealt with by the four consultant officers.

Assisted Admissions to Maternity Homes or Hospitals. During the year 532 applications were received for assisted admissions to a maternity home or hospital. The County Council accepted responsibility for 321 of these cases, a decrease of two over the previous year. The reasons for need of institutional treatment were:—

Actual or anticipated obstetric difficulty	119
Intercurrent disease	19
Housing or social	78
Toxæmia	77
Abortions	28
	<hr/>
	321
	<hr/> <hr/>

Treatment:—

(1) Viable pregnancies:	
Normal delivery	110
Medical treatment (normal delivery)	45
do. (medical induction)	14
Pre-Natal treatment only (returned home)	9
Surgical obstetric treatment:	
Cæsarean	24
Induction	40
Forceps	27
Manipulation	10
Craniotomy	3
	<hr/>
	104
Post-Natal treatment:	
Surgical	6
Medical	5
	<hr/>
	11
(2) Non-Viable:	
Routine care	13
Surgical treatment	15
	<hr/>
	321
	<hr/> <hr/>

Results:—

	Mothers.	Babies.
Well	307	238
Fair	8	6
Born at home, later	—	14
Non-Viable	—	28
Died	6	38
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	321	324
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Of the above Somerset women 21 were admitted to emergency maternity units in the County for their confinement, and the County Council has had the total use of the Unit at 14 Castle Street, Bridgwater, since 1st July, 1943. 38 maternity cases (included in above totals) were admitted in the six months.

Dental Scheme for Expectant and Nursing Mothers.

This Scheme operates partly through private dental practitioners and partly through dental clinics staffed by officers of the County Council.

Private Practitioners' Cases. Of the 9 denture cases uncompleted at the end of 1942, 2 were satisfactorily fitted and the patients are making proper use of the dentures. 1 patient attended for extractions only, and the remaining 6 did not attend for further treatment. During

1943, 65 applications were received. 33 full dentures and 7 part dentures were fitted, and in every case a report has been received from a Medical Officer or Health Visitor that the dentures were satisfactory and in use. Six patients attended for extractions and fillings only. In the remaining 19 cases dentures are not completed and the patients are still attending for treatment.

Under the main scheme clinics were held at Glastonbury, Frome and Bridgwater. The work done is shown in brief in the following table:—

	Glastonbury.	Frome.	Bridgwater.
No. of new patients	29	21	42
No. of sessions	25	22	24
No. of attendances for general treatment ...	79	55	105
Extractions	238	146	318
Fillings	5	13	12
Other treatment	19	17	14
No. of attendances for dentures	111	29	127
Impressions	59	12	79
Bites	43	12	26
Try-Ins	41	13	26
Plates inserted	26	12	52
Other treatment	13	—	5
Cases recommended for dentures	21	13	31

Maternal Mortality.

	1918	1928	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Puerperal Sepsis	8	14	4	3	5	6	3	6
Other Accidents and Diseases of Pregnancy and Parturition	20	12	10	1	10	15	16	18
TOTAL	28	26	14	4	15	21	19	24
Rate per 1,000 Births ...	5.14	4.36	2.59	0.71	2.57	2.72	2.44	3.13

Puerperal Sepsis.

During the year 86 cases of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified. Arrangements have been made with different Hospitals to take in County cases, and facilities are offered. During 1943 37 cases were so admitted. The special unit at the Taunton Isolation Hospital again was of very great service.

Care of Infants and Children under School Age.

The work has been maintained but while the infant visiting work continues the amount of direct medical supervision has decreased, partly from the practical cessation of "Flying Clinics" and partly because all reports connected with milk grants and extra nourishment have now ceased as these are dealt with through the local Food Offices.

(a) **Visits and Advice in the Homes.** During the year 6,698 births were referred to the Infant Visitors, 3,916 being in rural and 2,782 in urban areas. The service is a most important part of the scheme.

(b) **Infant Welfare Centres.** At the end of 1943 the Centres in the County, exclusive of those at Yeovil, Taunton and Weston-super-Mare which are outside the County Scheme, were the following:—Banwell, Bishop Sutton, Bridgwater, Burnham, Chard, Chew Magna, Chew Stoke, Chewton Mendip, Cleeve and Wraxall, Clevedon, Coleford, Compton Martin, Crewkerne, Curry Rivel, Farmborough, Frome, Glastonbury, Harptree, Highbridge, High Littleton, Kewstoke, Keynsham, Leigh-on-Mendip, Long Ashton, Mells, Midsomer Norton, Minehead, Nailsea, Paulton, Pill, Portishead, Priddy, Radstock, Shepton Beauchamp, Shepton Mallet, Street, Timsbury and Tunley, Wellington, Wells, West Hunstpill, Westbury-sub-Mendip, Wraxall, and Yatton.

The Centres at Bridgwater, Midsomer Norton and Radstock are directly controlled by the Council with the valuable assistance of local Committees; and the County Council also make grants towards the expenses of most of the others. Dr. Evans of the County Health Department also holds two small centres at Banwell and Kewstoke. Dr. Yates of the County staff is the Medical Officer for the Timsbury, Chew Magna and Farmborough centres, Dr. Cooke for those at Chewton Mendip, Westbury and Highbridge, and Dr. Denham for Mells.

Bridgwater Infant Welfare Work.

During 1943, the number of births notified in the Borough (including still-births and cases later transferred to other districts) was 783; of these 775 were attended by midwives. A doctor was called in to help the midwives in 288 cases. 15 babies died during the year, a rate of 39.9 deaths per 1,000 births. Number of children on visiting list 1,692; total visits paid to infants 6,620.

Centre. Number of individual children who attended, 701; individual mothers, 665; average attendance per session—children under 1 year 32, 1 to 5 years 11; average attendance per session of mothers, 24; number of attendances—children 4,061, mothers 2,302; number of medical consultations for infants, 1,601; for women (excluding ante-natal), 204; sessions held, 94. The medical work was carried out by Dr. Halliday. No regular ante-natal examinations are now carried out at this centre, but 22 women not covered by the County scheme presented themselves for advice and were seen, making in all 38 attendances. The figures show a decrease in the amount of work undertaken by the Centre, due mainly to the return of many evacuees, and other mothers having gone out to work their children are seen at the wartime nurseries.

Radstock and Midsomer Norton Infant Welfare Centres.

These centres are managed by the County Council with voluntary assistance. Sessions are held twice monthly in each centre, *i.e.*, at the Victoria Hall, Radstock, and the Women's Institute Hut, Welton, Midsomer Norton. Medical consultations are held alternate sessions and educational programmes are arranged for intermediate dates. Dr. Hilda Ashworth, a local practitioner, acts as Medical Officer, attending once a month. The appointed Infant Visitors (the district nurses) attend and the work is carried on in direct relation to the existing Infant Welfare schemes.

The figures for these centres are as follows:—

	Radstock.	Midsomer Norton
Sessions held	24	22
Individual children who attended	235	239
Individual mothers who attended	226	213
Average fortnightly attendance of children		
{ under 1 year... ..	44	15
{ 1—5 years	24	92
Average fortnightly attendance of mothers	65	90
Number of attendances of children		
{ under 1 year	1,048	330
{ 1—5 years	582	2,022
Number of attendances of mothers	1,556	1,980
Number of medical consultations		
{ children	239	203
{ mothers		—
Number of individual children attending centre born in 1943	68	50
Number of individual children attending centre born previous to 1943	163	175
Number of infants attending for the <i>first time</i> during 1943 ...	161	96
Under 1 year on first attendance	132	68
Aged 1—5 years on first attendance	29	28

Banwell and Kewstoke Infant Welfare Centres.

	Banwell.	Kewstoke.
Sessions held	11	11
Attendances of children under 1 year	170	88
New cases under 1 year	36	11
Attendances of children 1—5 years	155	131
New cases 1—5 years	10	6

(c) **Treatment and Supervision of Abnormal Children.** 466 reports were received, including a few from doctors or through the Orthopædic Centres. They include a miscellaneous series of conditions and no scientific classification is possible. They have been grouped as follows to give an idea of the conditions to be dealt with:—Malnutrition 34, Rickets 40, Debility 13, Catarrhal 7, Minor Postural Defects 88, Orthopædic 75, Eye Defects 63, Tonsils, Otorrhœa, etc., 32, other defects 114.

The figures show that many children get treatment with maltoline, oil and malt, etc., or are given treatment through one or more of the various County Schemes. For others it is only necessary to keep them under special observation.

The following is a summary of this work:—

Condition.	No. Reported.	Extra Nourishment Grant.	Treated at I.W.C. or S.M.O.	Treated Privately or Hospital.	Treated by County.
Malnutrition	34	32	19	3	2(a); 1(d); 1(e).
Rickets (early)	18	8	2	4	4(c); 2(d).
Rickets with deformity	22	—	14	9	19(c).
Debility	13	8	3	6	1(i).
Catarrhal	7	7	4	1	—
Tonsils & Adenoids, Otorrhœa, etc.	32	—	14	20	22(g).
Minor Postural	88	—	47	27	69(c).
Orthopædic	75	1	22	40	70(c); 1(d).
Eye defects (Squint)	63	—	13	10	39(b).
Miscellaneous	114	2	19	61	22(a); 1(b); 4(c); 3(d); 5(e); 1(f); 1(i); 1(k); 3(m).
	466	58	157	181	272

(a) Mary Stanley Home 24; (b) County Oculist 40; (c) Orthopædic Clinic 166; (d) Tuberculosis Clinic 7; (e) Public Assistance Institution 6; (f) Nursery Treatment 1; (g) Tonsils and Adenoids Operation 22; (h) U.V. Light 8; (i) Hostel or Sick Bay 2; (k) Dentist 1; (l) S.C.A.W.B. 0; (m) Psychologist 3.

(d) **Baby Hospital, Bridgwater.** The following is a summary of the year's work:—Number in Ward, January 1st, 5; admitted during 1943, 24; total 29. The reasons for admission were, as before, mainly nutritional difficulties and prematurity. All made satisfactory improvement except one who died. Average length of stay of cases discharged in 1943—10 weeks.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

During 1943, 35 cases were notified. Of these 13 cases were sent to hospital. The distribution of the cases is shown in Table VI. All the cases in which treatment was completed showed vision unimpaired at the time of the report. Five children returned to London before treatment was completed, and one case removed to Bristol.

Flying Clinics.

Medical Officers were unable to include in their programme of work any "flying clinic" visits in 1943. The routine consultations at established Welfare Centres were, however, continued.

Birth Control.

During the year the number of applications received by Dr. Halliday from various sources for advice and assistance was 12. These cases were all referred to clinics or to private doctors.

Nursing and Maternity Homes.

At the end of the year the number of homes on the Register was 50. They were all visited from time to time by Dr. Halliday or Miss Nobes to see that the premises were in order and the requirements of the County Council complied with as regards management.

Child Life Protection.

The children on our Register at the end of 1943 numbered 246, and as regards methods of payment may be grouped as follows:—Weekly payments 157, single lump sum payment 0, otherwise paid for (mostly monthly or irregularly) 8, not stated 81.

The number of foster mothers with one child only is 106, with two children—20, with three children—5, with four children—3, with over four children—6.

The foster mothers who run a regular baby home are therefore few, and those with over four infants are one at Congresbury with 15 at the end of 1943 (authorised for 20); one at Ashbottle with 17 (authorised for 17); one at Milborne Port with 14; one at Galhampton with 13; one at Brean with 6; and one at Trull with 8.

Residential Nurseries. The war has caused a great increase in the number of these nurseries in the County. This has meant much extra supervision on the part of the County Staff. They fall into 3 groups:—

- (a) Nurseries started during the war mainly for evacuee children but also taking some local children. There are seven such nurseries.
- (b) Nurseries evacuated into the County and taken over and administered by the County Council. There are three such nurseries.
- (c) Nurseries in the County and mostly transferred from other areas, which are private or under various local bodies and which are not supervised by the County Council. We know of thirteen such nurseries.

In addition, two nurseries (Yarlington and Martock) will be taken over by the Health Department from Public Assistance.

War-time Non-Residential Nurseries. At the end of 1943 there were thirteen such nurseries. Of these four were for children from 3—5 years only, at Frome, Clevedon, Wedmore and Dulverton. Nine are for children 0—5, at Bridgwater (three nurseries), Chard, Clevedon, Keynsham, Paulton, Street and Wells.

ORTHOPÆDIC SCHEME.

The County Scheme, and the results of working during 1943, are described in considerable detail in my report for 1943 as School Medical Officer. 506 new cases were seen and dealt with through the Clinics.

WATER SUPPLIES.

No new schemes of any magnitude were commenced during the year. Supplies in various parts were augmented mainly by the provision of new pumping plant.

Owing to abnormally dry weather, shortage has been experienced in a few districts and this has been especially felt in the Yeovil Rural District, due to greatly increased demands. Many districts are finding difficulty in meeting domestic needs apart from the pressing requirements of agriculture and industry. Consumption is rising generally and a broad view of the position is desirable. Co-ordination between water undertaking authorities will, in the future, be necessary to prevent overlapping and wastage of labour and plant.

In order to ensure that the County will be comprehensively covered all the authorities should prepare post-war schemes as quickly as possible ready to take advantage of the liberation of labour and materials as soon as the war ends.

Improvements to water services carried out during the year were as follows:—

Urban Areas.

GLASTONBURY. The supplies to Baltonsborough and West Pennard, which are served by Glastonbury, has been assisted by water taken from a borehole at North Wootton in the Wells Rural District. The installation of a chlorinating plant at North Wootton (low level supply) was commenced.

STREET. Reconditioning of pumps has been carried out.

Rural Districts.

AXBRIDGE. Extensions carried out for essential services.

BRIDGWATER. Two 13,000 gallon service reservoirs were provided at Middlezoy and Othery to afford a constant supply to these villages during peak draw-off periods.

CHARD. Works to augment the District's Regional Water Scheme were put in hand in July and practically completed by the end of the year. These included the sinking of a borehole at Pole Rue, Combe St. Nicholas, the laying of approximately three miles of 8in., 7in. and 5in. mains and the provision of a 50,000 gallon reservoir at Combe Beacon. The borehole is yielding 10,000 gallons per hour.

LONG ASHTON. A slight extension by the Bristol Water Works Company of the main off Station Road, Long Ashton.

SHEPTON MALLET. Extension of 4in. mains for a distance of approximately 900 yards on the Ditcheat system.

WELLS. New electric pump provided with increased capacity over the old pump at the North Wootton borehole supply. A new rising main was laid and connected to the Glastonbury Borough main. The additional water has permitted a constant supply to the parish of West Pennard and has also assisted the supply to Baltonsborough.

WILLITON. Steps are being taken to provide a new supply to Monksilver.

WINCANTON. A temporary chlorinating apparatus was installed on the Penselwood system ensuring that all areas supplied from this source have now a chlorinated supply, with the exception of Penselwood village.

RIVER POLLUTION AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

No new disposal works were constructed during the year, but a number of improvements were carried out as follows:—

CREWKERNE. Preliminary improvements to the Eastern Outfall Works which will form part of a new scheme to be carried out at a later date.

FROME. Three of the large filter beds of the disposal works have been reconditioned and provided with new media. A new electrical pumping plant has been installed to replace worn out pumps.

ILMINSTER. Additional land has been acquired for sewage treatment, making the total area now available for such purposes 36½ acres. Small works of a technical nature have also been carried out to further improve the method of treatment.

PORTISHEAD. Damage to the outfall sewer is being repaired and air compressor improvements have been carried out.

WILLITON RURAL. Extension of sewer at Monksilver.

Some of the purification works in the County show signs of maintenance neglect due, in the main, to labour shortage. Treatment is thus not as efficient as it normally should be. A few others are becoming out of date or worn out. Most works have had to deal with an abnormal volume of domestic and trade waste far exceeding the amount for which they were originally designed. A number of authorities have plans prepared for new works which will be started as soon as circumstances permit.

Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered by shortage of maintenance staff, the increased volume of waste sewage works have had to deal with, and the very dry weather reducing the volume of water in the rivers and water courses, there have been comparatively few cases of pollution of a serious nature that could be attributed to treatment works under the control of local authorities. Many inspections of disposal works belonging both to local authorities and commercial undertakings were made, and many samples of effluents taken. It is partly due to such visits that so few complaints of pollution were received during the year.

The most serious cases of river pollution concerned the River Tone and the River Axe.

RIVER TONE. This was due to the draining of the river to enable an electric cable to be laid across the bed near the Tone Bridge at Taunton. Due regard had not been given to the possible consequences and there was a considerable loss of fish life as a result. Both the River Tone and the Bridgwater-Taunton Canal were affected. It is hoped the steps taken will prevent any recurrence.

RIVER AXE. Owing to war conditions straw had largely to be used in manufacture at one of the paper works and this greatly increased the difficulties of providing a satisfactory effluent. The existing works broke down and the river became badly polluted. Energetic steps were taken against the owners and new methods of treatment have been installed with considerable reduction in the pollution. Further improved treatment is in hand.

Some other cases of pollution dealt with were as follows:—

RIVER TONE. From a slaughter house at Fideoak—abated.

RIVER BRUE. From trade waste from two leather dressing factories. Conditions have improved, but not until labour and materials are more plentiful to provide the treatment plant necessary can the position be considered satisfactory.

RHYNES at Puriton, due to the existing works being insufficient to deal with waste from the village. The R.D.C. are taking steps to improve the works.

There are well over 200 straw pulp plants erected in the County and as the liquor from these is of a highly polluting nature, over 70% have been inspected in reference to their discharging points. There is close co-operation between the responsible officers of the County War Agriculture Executive Committee (who arrange for the erection of the plants) and the County Council respecting the possible danger of pollution from them, and as a result a number of applications for plants have been turned down.

HOUSING.

Owing to war restrictions the building of new houses is largely at a standstill. Out of 76 allotted to the County under the Housing of Agricultural Workers Wartime Emergency Programme, the building of 32 was commenced and 7 of these were completed by the end of the year. The houses are being erected in the rural districts.

Overcrowding is still marked in certain parts of the County, mainly in the urbanised parts. In the rural areas there has been some decline in overcrowding, but conditions are bound to fluctuate according to war demands. Many condemned houses are occupied under licence owing to the housing shortage.

The majority of authorities have received preliminary approval from the Ministry of Health respecting the number of houses to be erected in their first year programme, and a good many have completed their proposals for the first five post-war years. Others have their plans well advanced, sites have been selected and the ground acquired.

The waiting list for new council houses in the County is considerable, apart from the great number of houses that will be required to replace those condemned as unfit and those overcrowded. The approximate number of houses to be erected by local authorities in their first year programme is between 3,000 and 4,000, and it is anticipated that this number will be stepped up in the second and third years.

Housing (Rural Workers) Acts. A few applications were received during the year; some of the proposals were authorised and the work completed. The tenancy of reconstructed cottages is still restricted to farm workers only.

SUPERVISION OVER THE FOOD SUPPLY.

A. Slaughter Houses and Meat Supervision.

The slaughter houses in use in the County are under the control of the Ministry of Food, and District Sanitary Inspectors are carrying out the inspection of meat.

B. Milk Supply.

As is shown in the table below, Tuberculin Tested milk producers increased by 60, whilst those issued with a licence to use the designation "Accredited" decreased by 31.

Year. (at end of)	T.T.	Accredited.	Total.
1936 ...	126	285	411
1937 ...	159	506	665
1938 ...	264	623	887
1939 ...	320	800	1,120
1940 ...	305	849	1,154
1941 ...	275	817	1,092
1942 ...	297	871	1,168
1943 ...	357	840	1,197

Routine inspection and sampling has been maintained as near normal as possible. A number of producers had their licences suspended during the year owing to adverse reports and a continued failure of samples to pass the official test. Following improvement in conditions some licences were restored.

Generally speaking, inspections show that standards of cleanliness, whilst below peace-time level, have been fairly well maintained.

All milk depots were visited during the year and samples of churn washings taken with a view to checking the sterility of churns. Suitable action was taken concerning those depots that had unsatisfactory results. Many of the receiving dairies have great difficulty in staffing satisfactorily and, although the Regulations state that all churns must be returned to the producer thoroughly cleansed, dairy farmers are advised to again sterilise them before use.

The County Laboratory examined 2,337 Accredited and 1,272 T.T. and Pasteurised milk samples. The total number of all milk samples examined for various purposes was 4,638.

Special Sampling of Herds. During the year 490 samples of the mixed milk of herds in the County were examined. In 8 the test period was insufficient (the guinea-pig dying prematurely); in 18 tubercle bacilli were found. Investigation of these herds involved the examination of 105 samples from groups of cows and 49 samples from individual cows, from which 19 cows in 15 herds giving tuberculous milk were found and destroyed. In 2 herds the infected animal had probably been removed. One herd is still under investigation.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

During the year 958 samples were examined. Of these, 18 were submitted by private individuals and Medical Officers of Health, and 6 were "Appeal to Cow" samples. The percentage found adulterated was 3.2. The following Table shows the nature of the 940 samples submitted by the Inspectors, excluding the 6 "Appeal to Cow" samples.

TABLE XII.

Nature of Samples submitted by Inspectors.

Article.	Number examined.	Number genuine.	Number adulterated.	Per cent. adulterated.
Dairy Products—Milk	464	449	15	3.2
Cheese	17	17	0	0
Butter	43	43	0	0
Condensed Milk	6	6	0	0
Dried Milk	10	8	2	20.0
Edible Fats	24	24	0	0
Cereals	19	19	0	0
Meat and Fish Products	41	39	2	4.9
Tea, Coffee, Cocoa	25	25	0	0
Condiments	31	31	0	0
Sugar Products	24	24	0	0
Food Substitutes—Egg, Lemons, Orange	10	8	2	20.0
Miscellaneous Groceries	100	100	0	0
Beer, Spirits and Wine	54	53	1	1.8
Drugs	72	64	8	1.1
TOTAL	940	910	30	3.2

Six prosecutions were instituted, 4 for milk, 1 for spirit and 1 for sausages. There were 3 convictions, with one of which (milk containing 31 per cent. of added water) a fine of £50 with £5 5s. 0d. costs was imposed. Two cases were dismissed outright and one was dismissed on the Probation of Offenders Act on payment of costs. Fines amounted to £56 and costs to £12 16s. 0d.

