

AGE OF OFFENDERS

The following table shows the number of offenders qualified in age-groups over the past ten years:—

Age-group.	1936.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.
Under 20 ..	96	115	123	178	203	201	308	354	283	254
20-25 ..	185	303	362	424	348	478	749	639	506	524
25-30 ..	254	282	321	413	322	405	531	396	354	343
30-40 ..	437	456	555	612	492	533	709	490	461	470
40 and upwards	715	831	861	875	833	745	732	603	495	473
Not stated ..	3	4	2	3	3	7	..	..	..	1
Totals ..	1,790	1,991	2,224	2,505	2,201	2,369	3,029	2,482	2,099	2,065

MISCELLANEOUS

Deaths.—There were 6 deaths recorded during the year. With one exception all were due to natural causes resulting from senescence or physical disability to which the prisoners were subject when admitted. One death resulted from toxæmia following an abscess caused through a prisoner swallowing foreign bodies.

Escapes.—During the year 21 prisoners and 23 Borstal detainees escaped from custody. All were recaptured. Of the 23 escapees from Borstal, 12 were from the Arohata women's institution. This is a considerable drop from last year's figures, when, due to extremely unsettled conditions, the escapes from that institution and Point Halswell totalled 56.

Having regard to the character and dispositions of those in the Department's care, under a system where the reposing of trust is an important element, escapes are bound to occur. Those whose lapse into crime has largely been due to a life of indiscipline naturally chafe under restraint. Some in the early stages are unsettled and restive, whilst with others it is simply a manifestation of instability and independability, characterial traits which it is the purpose of imprisonment to correct.

Escapes occasion serious inconvenience in institution management and dislocation of work, besides often causing grave anxiety to the civilian population in the particular locality. The Courts generally take a grave view of these violations of trust when escapes do occur, but the Prisons Board gives close attention to these cases, and if the offender later shows he sees the folly of his ways and settles down, the practice is to remit a substantial portion of the added penalty.

Mental Defectives.—A total of 21 persons were transferred from prisons and Borstal institutions to the various mental hospitals—1 under section 34 of the Mental Defectives Act, 1911, 4 under section 37, and 16 under section 38.

Borstal Receptions.—A total of 154 male and 19 female Borstal detainees were received direct from the Courts, and 8 females were transferred to Borstal from other institutions, 4 being transferred from the prison reformatory to Borstal.

Military Defaulters.—The following table shows the number of military defaulters transferred from detention camps on Magisterial orders or under direct sentence of imprisonment to prisons during the years 1942 to 1945 inclusive:—

Year.	(a) For Duration.	(b) For a Definite Term.	Total.
1942	28	11	39
1943	2	11	13
1944	18	38	56
1945	10	6	16