

Authority for the collection and analysis of vital statistics in Newfoundland is contained in "An Act to provide for Registration, Births, Marriages, and Deaths", passed in 1890, which now forms Chapter 19 of the Consolidated Statutes of Newfoundland (third series). The Act remained in abeyance until May 1, 1891, when it came into force. Prior to this Act, the law of England was applicable to the reporting of vital statistics.

The Act requires that all births, marriages and deaths in Newfoundland be registered in a public register to be kept in St. John's City and provides for the appointment of a Registrar General. Every clergyman or other person baptizing, celebrating marriage or performing funeral services is made a "Registering Officer" and is required to keep a register of the names and dates of birth of all persons baptized, and of all marriages and deaths at which he officiates. This information is to be reported quarterly (monthly in St. John's) to the Registrar General.

In the case of death the same provisions apply to the medical attendant or undertaker and failing these to the next of kin. In St. John's a death certificate, a copy of which is sent to the Registrar General, is required before a body can be accepted for burial but it has not always been possible to carry out this procedure in all parts of Newfoundland.

Section 2.—Summary of Vital Statistics

Tables 1 to 5 give a summary of the vital statistics of Canada and the provinces for the years 1941 to 1947.

In comparing the birth, death and marriage rates of the provinces, it is useful to bear in mind that part of the differences observed may be due to differences in the sex and age distribution of their populations. Similarly, changes in these rates may be due partly to changes in this distribution. These remarks also apply to international comparisons of birth, death and marriage rates. Over the past 15 years, the death rate in British Columbia has been rising, while in Ontario it has been more or less stable, with the result that, though 15 years ago the death rate in Ontario was considerably higher than in British Columbia, at present their rates are about equal. This does not mean, however, that the mortality rates at each age have risen in British Columbia. On the contrary, they have been falling. The death rate for the population as a whole has been rising because the increasing proportion of population in the higher age groups has more than outweighed the fall in the mortality rates at each age.

1.—Live Births and Birth Rates per 1,000 Population, by Provinces, 1944-47, with Averages, 1941-45

Year	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Canada ¹
LIVE BIRTHS										
Av. 1941-45....	2,187	15,082	12,961	98,153	77,506	15,782	18,492	18,908	17,685	276,756
1944.....	2,286	15,598	13,467	102,262	78,090	16,008	18,138	19,372	18,999	284,220
1945.....	2,258	15,527	13,693	104,283	78,974	16,253	18,926	19,939	18,877	288,730
1946.....	2,793	17,914	16,274	111,285	97,446	18,794	21,433	22,184	22,609	330,732
1947.....	2,992	19,265	17,771	115,553	108,853	20,409	23,334	24,631	26,286	359,094
RATES PER 1,000 POPULATION										
Av. 1941-45....	23.8	25.1	28.0	28.5	19.8	21.6	21.6	23.6	19.8	23.5
1944.....	25.1	25.5	29.1	29.2	19.7	21.9	21.4	23.7	20.4	23.8
1945.....	24.5	25.0	29.3	29.3	19.7	22.1	22.4	24.1	19.9	23.9
1946.....	29.7	29.3	33.9	30.7	23.8	25.9	25.7	27.6	22.5	26.9
1947.....	31.8	31.0	36.2	31.1	26.0	27.5	27.7	30.0	25.2	28.6

¹ Exclusive of the Territories.