

**[Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Lambeth Borough].**

**Contributors**

Lambeth (London, England).

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*M.H.*

REPORT

The annual report on the health of the borough during 1943 is again short and also is again lacking in certain essential information which might be useful to the enemy had he been able to obtain separate instructions have been given by higher authority.

The pulling up of staff continued on a much reduced scale merely because there was no one else to call up but the fact that other Government departments from asking for more staff to be undertaken and more responsibility to be accepted.

The longer hours worked coupled with a reduction in staff and the anticipated effect of causing sickness to an extent which more than offset the extra time worked. All the knowledge acquired since 1918 as to the effect of long hours, fatigue and stress on the human body was overlooked when the Ministry of Health and National Service decided the introduction of longer hours for the Council with intent to counteract reduction in staff.

R E P O R T

on the

H E A L T H

of the

B O R O U G H O F L A M B E T H

during the year

1 9 4 3

(87th Annual Report)

By

A.G.G. THOMPSON, M.A., M.D., B.C., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

July, 1944.

London the mothers did not avail themselves of the Evacuation Scheme to any great extent, also as the raid damaged houses were repaired more families returned to live in London, and the number of births in England and Wales in 1942 was the highest for 15 years. As a result the work increased and in December, 1941, the single Vaccination Officer was given 2 hours clerical assistance a day. In April, 1942, this assistance was found to be insufficient and it has been necessary to employ a whole time assistant to the Vaccination Officer since the 1st May, 1942.

There were 1,949 successful primary vaccinations in infants and 84 in persons over the age of one year. Successful revaccinations numbered 61. The total number vaccinated was 1,393 compared with 650 in the previous year.

#### Disinfection Department.

There has been a marked fall again in disinfection owing to the smaller number of infectious diseases notified. Early in the year a team composed of medical officers, sanitary inspectors, health visitors and disinfectors was formed to deal with house visits and fever. The team of M.O.S.S.H. were equipped with special protective clothing and obtained for their use. 9,000 disinfectants were distributed and on 5,000 occasions were provided for various purposes in connection with disinfection compared with 12,731 articles from 3,352 houses in the previous year.

#### Bacteriological Laboratory.

745,1 specimens were received bacteriologically in the Laboratory during the year.

Specimens	Negative	Positive	Total
(67th Annual Report) 287	1		288
287	28		315
2 A.G.G. THOMPSON, M.A., M.D., B.O., D.P. Rivers			3
Medical Officer of Health, Wallington	28		110
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
1,393	154		1,547

The miscellaneous specimens consisted of 287 swabs (mostly for eye and ear) 7 swabs of streptococci, 7 swabs of eye and ear, 2 swabs of eye and ear, 2 swabs of eye and ear, 2 swabs of eye and ear.

PREFACE.

The annual report on the health of the borough during 1943 is again short and also is again lacking in certain statistical information which might be useful to the enemy upon both of which aspects instructions have been given by higher authority.

The calling up of staff continued on a much reduced scale merely because there were much fewer to call up but that did not deter other Government departments from asking for more work to be undertaken and more responsibility to be accepted.

The longer hours worked coupled with a reduction in holidays had the anticipated effect of causing sickness to an extent which more than offset the extra time worked. All the knowledge acquired since 1918 about the effect of long hours, fatigue and output in industry was overlooked when the Ministry of Labour and National Service forced the introduction of longer hours upon the Council with intent to counteract reductions in staff due to call up.

Over and above this the public health department suffered a great loss in the retirement on account of ill health of the Chief Administrative Assistant, Mr. A.E. Ruel who had served the Council for forty years.

For the whole year, the second in succession, the district suffered no damage from bombing and such alerts as there were, were both few in number and short. There was on occasion a little damage from A.A. shellfire which also caused one or two incidents.

Cordial gratitude is due to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors for their assistance and forbearance during the year, while the friendly help and co-operation from the chief officers have been a welcome encouragement.

The staff of the public health department have struggled gamely against odds throughout the year despite the one-sided Government game of "put and take". Putting extra duties upon the local authority and taking away their staff have been carried to a point beyond commonsense and it is a happy relief to know that the Council have approved the suggestion of the Joint Industrial Council to increase the annual holidays from a fortnight to three weeks.

A.G.G.T.

July, 1944.



STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Summary of Vital and Mortal Statistics, Etc.

(The comparable figures for the previous year appear in brackets.)

Area of Borough. 4,083 statute acres (inclusive of land and inland water, but exclusive of tidal water and foreshore), divided into 4 Registration Sub-Districts, 4 Parliamentary Divisions, and 12 Wards. The Parliamentary Divisions and Registration Sub-Districts have been adjusted so that they and Wards are co-terminous.

Births.

Birth rate per 1,000 estimated resident population corrected 18.97 (17.41)

Notification of births.

Total number of births notified - 3,022 (2,504)

Deaths.

Death rate per 1,000 estimated resident population 16.87 (16.24)

From puerperal causes per 1,000 total births (live and still) 2.81 (0.36)

Infantile Mortality rate 60 (60)

Zymotic Death Rate (corrected) per 1,000 population 0.38 (0.41)

Marriages.

Marriage rate per 1,000 population 9.18 (12.41)

Comparable rates for England and Wales and London.

	<u>England and Wales.</u>		<u>London.</u>	
Birth rate	16.5	(15.8)	15.8	(14.0)
Death rate	12.1	(11.6)	15.0	(13.9)
Infantile mortality	49	(49)	58	(60)
Puerperal causes			not available	



CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH (CORRECTED) DURING THE YEAR, 1943.

Mortality 16.87 (16.24) IN THE AREA.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	AGES - BOTH SEXES.							Totals	
	Under 1 Year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 45	45 and under 65	65 and upwards	M	F	
1. Typhoid and paratyphoid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2. Cerebro-spinal fever	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	
3. Scarlet Fever	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	
4. Whooping Cough	8	2	-	-	-	-	4	6	
5. Diphtheria	1	2	2	-	-	-	2	3	
6. Tuberculosis, Resp. Syst.	-	1	4	90	64	18	118	59	
7. Other Tuberculosis	1	3	2	4	2	2	7	7	
8. Syphilitic diseases	-	-	-	4	18	7	17	12	
9. Influenza	1	-	1	6	18	32	33	25	
10. Measles	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	2	
11. Ac. Poliomyelitis and Polioccephalitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
12. Ac. Infectious Encephalitis (Lethargic)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
13. Cancer, Buccal Cavity and Oesophagus (M) Uterus (F)	-	-	-	4	28	36	40	28	
14. Cancer, Stomach and Duodenum	-	-	-	4	24	34	38	24	
15. Cancer, Breast	-	-	-	5	21	15	1	40	
16. Cancer, All other sites	-	1	-	19	103	130	158	95	
17. Diabetes	-	-	-	4	5	5	5	9	
18. Cerebral Vascular Lesions	1	-	-	3	58	166	106	122	
19. Heart Diseases	-	-	1	25	119	608	347	406	
20. Other Circulatory diseases	-	-	-	3	23	61	32	55	
21. Bronchitis	4	1	1	4	47	133	104	86	
22. Pneumonia	39	5	-	11	41	82	99	79	
23. Other Respiratory diseases	-	1	-	4	11	16	19	13	
24. Ulcer, Stomach and Duodenum	-	-	-	6	19	12	23	14	
25. Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	42	1	-	-	-	-	26	17	
26. Appendicitis	-	1	-	2	4	3	5	5	
27. Other Digestive diseases	5	3	1	9	21	24	40	23	
28. Nephritis	1	-	-	5	12	29	25	22	
29. Puerperal and Post Abortive Sepsis	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	5	
30. Other Maternal Causes	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4	
31. Premature Birth	46	-	-	-	-	-	27	19	
32. Congenital Malformations, Birth Injury, Infantile diseases	28	-	1	2	1	-	16	16	
33. Suicide	-	-	-	5	7	4	12	4	
34. Road Traffic Accidents	-	2	2	2	5	5	14	2	
35. Other Violent Causes	6	5	3	11	12	27	40	24	
36. All other causes	3	3	4	23	43	87	89	74	
<b>TOTAL ALL CAUSES</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>1536</b>	<b>1449</b>	<b>1303</b>	





## GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

### Nursing in the Home.

The number of visits paid to children under five years of age was 4,403 (3,762) and to persons over five years of age 1,671 (913).

### Welfare Centres.

Total individual cases dealt with	16,350	(16,140)
" sessions held	2,573	(2,636)
" ante-natal cases	3,235	(3,566)
" post-natal cases	890	(888)
" nursing mothers	3,402	(4,600)
" infants under 1	4,797	(3,800)
" children 1 - 5	4,114	(3,286)
Visits paid to A/N cases	7,303	(7,232)
" " " P/N cases	2,857	(2,377)
" " " nursing mothers	22,225	(22,417)
" " " infants under 1	21,267	(19,564)
" " " children 1 -5	41,752	(41,927)

Welfare work has always laboured under the two disadvantages that attendance at a welfare centre unlike that at school is voluntary and that the health visitor enters a home only by invitation. Before the war most mothers went to the welfare centres as they do now because they believed the advice and help given was good for their children as well as for themselves. In present times with so many mothers at work attendance is in consequence less regular and some who get the extra vitamins from a food control centre do so in preference to attending the welfare centre in order to avoid meeting the health visitor.

There is still a good deal of movement of population from one area to another much of which cannot be followed so that many nursing mothers are counted twice or even more times corresponding to the number of changes of address requiring changes of welfare centre. The lack of voluntary help compared with pre-war days is a noticeable feature at all welfare centres although a few voluntary workers are able to give their time and energy as freely now as ever they did before the war.

The post natal clinic attendances continue their slow increase although this does not imply that the attitude towards post natal care is apathetic since most mothers attend the hospital where they went to be confined for post natal care and advice, and not necessarily the local welfare centre.

### Child Life Protection.

1,142 visits and re-visits were made to foster mothers and nurse children.

Foster mothers on Register at 31.12.43.	29	(34)
Nurse children on Register at 31.12.43.	34	(41)

The demand for foster mothers far outstrips the supply because with part time factory employment so easy to obtain, there is a greater financial incentive for a woman to undertake work of national importance in a factory than the equally urgent work also of national importance in caring for the children of those who are unable to look after them. Bombing also appears to be a deterrent from undertaking the responsibility.

### Assistance towards cost of Midwives.



### Home Helps.

187 (151) applications and home helps provided -  
cost to Council £257.6s.2d.

Again it is possible to record that there has been no failure in finding a home help but the position is becoming increasingly difficult and the rate of remuneration asked is much higher, up £3 for the fortnight compared with £1 to £1.10.0. for the fortnight before the war.

There has been much talk of home helps and a home help service which obviously lacks a detailed knowledge of what is required. A home help is needed to take the mother's place when she is confined either at home or in hospital, or is ill or for any other reason unable to look after the home and family. Among other duties the children have to be given breakfast and got ready for school, rations have to be purchased and so on which for all practical purposes limit a home help's activities to one family with children, as she cannot easily get two lots of children ready for school at the same time in two separate homes. Again the home help has usually some domestic ties of her own or she would have been found employment by the Ministry of Labour long before.

She will therefore desire to work near her home and incidentally be able to draw her own rations as well as her patient to avoid queueing twice. More important still if she shops as a stranger in a strange neighbourhood her chances of marketing well are likely to be poor. A whole time home help is not therefore the easy solution to a difficult problem which some would have people to believe. The best guarantee of success in a home help is to get the friend or neighbour or relative who is prepared to stay away from work for a couple of weeks to look after the home, somebody well known to the applicant and somebody who must have monetary compensation towards her loss of wages. Where no such friend, neighbour or relative is available there can usually be found in each welfare district one or two older women known to the health visitor who are ready in emergency "to oblige"

The uniformed, well paid, whole time, official, home help envisaged by many is an expensive luxury for whom work of some sort must be found between the times when she is not doing the housework for the disabled mother. Whole time too means so many hours work a week, and who will be in a position to certify a wages sheet with scattered work, with such infinite possibilities of fraud, and be able to satisfy the district auditor as well?

### Dentures for expectant and nursing mothers.

39 (22) applications received and dentures provided -  
cost to Council £138.12s.6d.

The increase in the scale of assessment which entitles many more women to apply for help has led to a considerable interest on the part of expectant and nursing mothers who are gradually beginning to take advantage of the generous assistance now provided.

### Sterile Maternity Outfits.

Nil (Nil)

### Obstetric and Gynaecological Consultants.

1 call (No calls)



Convalescent Home for children between 2 and 5 years of age.

The Council's four beds at the Byfleet Home for toddlers have been kept full without any difficulty throughout the year. Now and again the home has been in quarantine for infectious disease which fortunately has never meant an empty bed. There is a demand for an extension of the service to give mothers convalescence with children but there is little chance of this while the war continues.

Wartime Nurseries.

<u>Wartime Nursery.</u>	<u>Accommodation.</u>		<u>Date opened.</u>
	<u>under 2 yrs.</u>	<u>2-5 yrs.</u>	
Cowley	20	40	14.7.1941
Tulse Hill	30	40	17.12.1941
Black Prince	20	40	4.2.1942
Elder Road	-	40	30.3.1942
Annie McCall	36	39	5.8.1942
St. John's	25	20	24.9.1942
Coldharbour Lane	40	40	12.7.1943
Oval	20	25	4.11.1943

Nursery places are always full and waiting lists are so long at the older nurseries that many will be too old before the place they have on the list is reached. Eight nurseries were open at the end of the year with three more getting ready and the total places in the eleven nurseries including the 20% addition will number 808. The number of children in the district under 5 years of age on the 31st December was 12,600.

Suggestions have appeared from various sources that nurseries such as these should be continued after the war is over for the purpose of providing a safe and pleasant dumping ground where an overwrought mother or a mother wanting an afternoon off to shop or go to the pictures, could leave her child in safety till she returned for him. Such a scheme is not only thoughtlessly cruel to the child who is deliberately left with strangers but he is exposed to all manner of chance infections before he has acquired much immunity. In the normal routine a child is exposed to infection from a limited number of people outside the family, a few aunts and uncles and friends, but in a nursery the child is exposed to infection from say thirty to forty children and adults each of whom will have a few aunts and uncles and friends any or all of whom they may see when they go home at night and whose infections are there to be taken to the nursery next day.

The extent of sickness is sufficient for the Ministry to permit a 20% addition to the net number of places available at each nursery because it is found that for various reasons, most of them sickness the average child is away for 1/5th of the year. A healthy child of 15 months will catch cold after cold at a nursery ending with bronchitis or broncho-pneumonia and perhaps an acute mastoid as well. This sequence is too frequent to pass unnoticed, the alleged cause being the early morning journey to the nursery.

There would be a real danger to health if nursery places were made available for large numbers of mothers each to park their young children say for one half day a week while they had the time off. It is to be hoped that this kind of nursery will never become popular as it may be a hot bed for cctarrhal infections particularly, although gastro intestinal maladies as well as the notifiable infections would doubtless not be wanting.

Convalescent Home for children between 3 and 5 years of age.  
 The Council's four beds at the Byfleet Home for toddlers  
 been kept full without any difficulty throughout the year.  
 and again the home has been in operation for infectious disease  
 which fortunately has never meant an empty bed. There is a  
 demand for an extension of the service to give mothers  
 convalescence with children but there is little chance of this  
 while the war continues.

War-time Nurseries.

<u>Date opened.</u>	<u>Accommodation.</u>	<u>Number 2 yrs. 3-5 yrs.</u>	
14.7.1941	40	20	Cowley
17.12.1941	40	30	Tulse Hill
1.2.1942	40	30	Black Prince
30.3.1942	40	-	Rider Road
5.8.1942	38	38	Annals McCall
24.9.1942	20	22	St. John's
12.7.1943	40	40	Goldharbour Lane
4.11.1943	22	20	Oval

Nursery places are always full and waiting lists are so long  
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 a nursery the child is exposed to infection from any entry to  
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 home at night and whose infections are there to be taken to the  
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 were made available for large numbers of mothers each to park  
 their young children any half day a week while they had  
 a time off. It is to be hoped that this kind of nursery will  
 never become popular as it may be a hot bed for infections  
 and particularly, although I am not a specialist, I am sure

All children are immunised against diphtheria and against whooping cough, and quarantine for all infectious disease has been cut out completely. Parents are informed when cases of whatever the infection may be have occurred and they are warned that they bring their children to the nursery at their own risk but that every care possible will be taken of their children if they are brought. The result has been that no nursery has been closed or had empty places for quarantine reasons, during the whole year and moreover there has been no observable excess of infectious illness of any kind as the result. Every child is isolated the moment there is any sign of illness while the mother is sent for to take him home, which has no doubt done something to limit the spread of infection, but experience seems to indicate that exclusion of contacts and other quarantine measures are not so important as they are ordinarily deemed to be.

#### Hostel for nursery probationers.

With the opening of nurseries came the attendant staff difficulties and among them the accommodation needed for the probationers in the hatted nurseries.

Fortunately the nurses home at the St. Thomas's Babies' Hostel was empty save for a welfare centre on the ground floor and, having 24 single bedrooms most of them with fitted washbasins and ample bathing arrangements as well that difficulty was easily overcome. The finding after a few false starts of a suitable housekeeper prepared to shoulder the responsibility of caring for a group of girls from sixteen to eighteen or nineteen years was a stroke of good fortune and the hostel is happily a success.

#### SUMMARY OF WORK DONE BY THE OFFICIAL HEALTH VISITORS.

Ante-natal visits	1,062
Ante-natal re-visits	155
Births 1st visits	1,395
Births revisits	185
Births stillborn	65
Ophthalmia 1st visits	48
Ophthalmia re-visits	33
Infantile deaths visits	23
Welfare Centres attendances	197
Diphtheria prevention clinic attendances	162
Post-natal visits	1,488
Visits to children 1-5 years	304
Puerperal Pyrexia visits	21
Puerperal Pyrexia re-visits	1
Special visits :- evacuation, scabies, etc.	1,387

One of the four official health visitors is still seconded for temporary duty in a reception area.

#### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

##### Sanitary Inspectors.

Total number of inspections (including war damage to property, etc.)	10,003
Total number of re-inspections	23,070
Total number of intimation notices served	2,611
Total number of nuisance notices served	335





## Women Sanitary Inspectors.

Total number of visits and inspections (factories, workplaces, infectious disease, etc.)	2,167
Total number of revisits	170
Total number of intimation notices served	66
Workshops in which defects were found	91

One male sanitary inspector is still on loan to the billeting officer and is engaged in repairs to requisitioned billets among his many other duties.

### Public Health (London) Act, 1936, Section 224.

One application was made for an order for the compulsory removal of an aged person to hospital under this section.

### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Unsound food. Approximately 31 tons of food was certified as unfit for human consumption. In accordance with the procedure now adopted very little of this amount was wasted, as much as possible being used for animal feeding.

Sampling of Food and Drugs. 1,587 samples (1559 informal and 28 formal) were submitted to the Public Analyst and 2 samples were examined bacteriologically in the Council's laboratory. In 1 case proceedings were instituted for contravention of the Food & Drugs Act, and a conviction was recorded.

The trend of legislation enacted since the advent of the Ministry of Food has been towards centralisation of control in that Ministry and away from the central authority of the Ministry of Health controlling the local administration of the Food & Drugs Authority. The Defence (Sale of Food) Regulations 1943 clearly illustrate this new direction. They bestow upon the Ministry of Food powers equal to those of the Ministry of Health (whose powers under an Act cannot be altered by a regulation) and the latter ceases to employ its powers in deference to the Ministry of Food. The latter Ministry by exercising its new powers is regulating the compositions of foods and is able to enforce them without necessarily making use of the Local Authority. The latter in fact may not without the prior consent of the Ministry of Food take legal proceedings in the case of any foods whose composition has so far been the subject of a regulation.

Decontamination of Food. Fortunately the need for the utilisation of this service has not yet arisen. The Food Treatment Centre at Kennington Oval is equipped and ready for action.

Slaughtering. 523 pigs (chiefly belonging to Pig Clubs) were inspected at the time of slaughter.

### SCABIES AND VERMINOUS PERSONS.

The incidence of scabies appeared to be on the increase from 1935 onwards so far as could be ascertained from information from the school medical services, and skin departments of hospitals and was not an evil directly attributable to war conditions although doubtless aggravated by them.

A total of 1,939 persons were treated at the cleansing station and given 4,121 baths compared with 1,467 persons treated in the previous year.



Scabies was made notifiable in 1943 in order that other members of a family might if infested be induced to undergo treatment at the same time and so prevent re-infestation of a school child for example by a younger or older member of the family in whom the infestation was not suspected or was unnoticed. The trend of notifications is definitely on the down-grade partly due to the efficacy of the more modern treatment and also to the fact that it does not seem necessary to upset the household by treating the bedding, which in the past has been one reason for hiding the malady. The County of London (Scabies) Regulations 1943, made scabies compulsorily notifiable from the 1st August and in the first four weeks 103 cases were so notified. In the following month 162 were notified then month by month 113, 133 and 113 in December.

The free issue of Lethane for head lice has been much less patronised and there seems little doubt that heads are much cleaner now than they were in 1942.

Infestation with body lice is comparatively rare nowadays and almost confined to the tramp class.

#### PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The measles epidemic which started in the autumn of 1942 carried over until the end of May 1943, most of the 1,533 cases being notified in the second half of 1942 and of the 1,288 in the first half of 1943. Whooping cough cases also tended to rise. Scarlet fever caused a definite epidemic with however but little morbidity and only one death among the 716 cases notified. Diphtheria gave rise to 103 notifications compared with an average figure of some 800 in pre-war years. No child who had completed the full immunisation course not less than 12 weeks contracted the disease but of the 103 others who had not been treated and who contracted the disease, five died.

#### Tuberculosis.

Notifications received during the year  
ended 31st December, 1943.

Pulmonary	319	(311)
Non-pulmonary	41	(26)

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Deaths certified                      191              (159)  
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Notifications received during the year  
ended 31st December, 1943.

Scarlet Fever	716	(307)
Diphtheria	103	(129)
Erysipelas	52	(39)
Puerperal Fever	14	(7)
Puerperal Pyrexia	25	(21)
Cerebro-spinal Fever	7	(22)
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	16	(15)
Measles	1,288	(1,533)
Whooping Cough	469	(333)
Primary Pneumonia	81	(109)
Influenzal Pneumonia	65	(33)
Malaria (Induced - 1)	2	(5)
Dysentery	62	(10)
Food Poisoning	8	(32)
Anthrax	1	(-)



## Diphtheria Prevention.

The following statistics relating to the campaign against diphtheria denote the meagre success which has attended the Council's efforts.

	Under 5 years.	5 yrs. and over but under 15 yrs.	Total.
Number of children who completed the full immunisation course between 1st January and 30th June, 1943.	801	807	1,608
Number of children who completed the full immunisation course between 1st July and 31st December, 1943.	782	643	1,425

Whereas the under-five population numbered 11,600 in the first half of the year, by new arrivals and returns from the provinces it had increased to 12,400 in the second six months while the over-fives increased similarly from 15,600 to 16,400.

The percentage of children in Lambeth who are now immune is estimated to be the following:-

	Under 5	Between 5 and 15 years.
Percentage age immunised by 30th June	23.66	55.73
Percentage age immunised by 31st December	24.12	49.63

What is happening is that although a few more children are immunised under the age of five than enter as the new born, more immunised children over five are reaching the age of 15 and so passing out of the picture than enter the age group 5-14 or have been immunised during the year.

### Vaccination.

The vaccination officer and his whole time assistant were fully occupied throughout the year as with the increased birthrate and the return to Lambeth of so many families the number of cases dealt with were more than double those of 1941. The births registered in the past three years number 1,354, 2,428 and 2,978 which with returning families meant 2,016, 3,541 and 4,390 cases to be followed. Dr. Rusby, public vaccinator for the Brixton division was injured by enemy action and his work was undertaken by Dr. Phillips, public vaccinator for Kennington, during his ten weeks absence. When the public vaccinator for the Norwood district was called up in the autumn the difficulty of finding a successor was so great that the work fell seriously into arrears. Eventually with the approval of the Ministry of Health, Dr. Bennett, assistant M.O.H., was appointed public vaccinator for the Norwood district and the arrears could then be tackled.

There were 1,475 successful primary vaccinations in infants and 39 in persons over the age of one year. Successful revaccinations numbered 27. The total number vaccinated was 1,541 compared with 1,390 in the previous year.



## Disinfecting Department.

3,981 rooms and 10,434 articles of bedding were disinfected during the year among them being the rooms and articles used by the 1,474 cases of various forms of infectious disease taken to hospital; 633 certificates of disinfection were issued, and 367 library books dealt with from the 11,609 premises visited during the year.

## Bacteriological Laboratory.

During the year 1943 the following 2,005 samples were examined bacteriologically in the Laboratory at Wanless Road.

<u>Specimen</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Total</u>
Swab for or suspected cases of Diphtheria	1,072	74	1,146
Sputum for suspected cases of Tuberculosis	624	84	708
Blood for suspected cases of Typhoid or Paratyphoid fever	28	1	29
Miscellaneous	93	29	122
	<hr/> 1,817	<hr/> 188	<hr/> 2,005

The miscellaneous specimens consisted of 40 urines, 23 swabs for Vincent's Angina, 40 swabs for haemolytic streptococci, 12 swabs or smears from eye or vagina for Gonorrhoea and 27 faeces.

## Rat Infestation.

In September, 1942 the Council decided to appoint a team to deal with the growing menace of rats which followed on the heels of damage to houses, drains and sewers. A large measure of success was attained although the restrictive effects of the Rats & Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919 limited the success and would have rendered much of the efforts abortive if no latitude had been permitted. The general policy was to ask occupiers by whose fault rats were present to find the cost of clearance and not to ask occupiers to pay where the fault clearly lay elsewhere. In this way by the end of May, 1943, 450 cases of rat infestation had been dealt with to the general satisfaction of all affected. During the year measures were taken against 546 cases of infestation of which 328 were private dwelling houses, 97 were premises where food is stored or prepared or sold and 121 were industrial premises other than food premises. Regular inspection are made of all war damaged derelict properties and cleared sites and where necessary baits are laid. The practice of seeing that disused drains are sealed has meant few infestations of these sites and properties.

The reservoir of rat infestations is the sewerage and drainage system and in 84 cases the source was definitely traced to defective or misused drains. In sixteen cases black rats were found and all but two of these were confined to an area near Westminster Bridge.

During December the baiting of the sewers was carried out by the Borough Engineer acting under the instructions of the Ministry of Food and according to the formula (1 ounce of poison bait taken is equivalent to 2½ dead rats) led to the destruction of 4,395 rats.





### Free Provision of Insulin.

On receiving Circular 2734 from the Ministry of Health, the Council decided to supply insulin free with the consent of the Minister under Section 227, Public Health (London) Act, 1936, to certain classes of persons who find that the increase which has occurred in the cost of insulin since the beginning of the war is a substantial burden, and for whom no public provision is made apart from poor relief e.g. the dependants of insured persons, widows and spinsters engaged in household duties and merchant seamen on foreign-going ships. The policy of the Council was welcomed widely and 30 persons now obtain a regular supply which has cost the Council during the year £94.3s.7½d.

One case of diabetes insipidus in a school child controlled by injections of pituitary extract did not fall within the ambit of the scheme and could not be allowed to do so without opening the door to a wide variety of cases. Definitely the Ministry of Health had no powers to grant the admission of this case to the scheme, but the County Council as Education and Social Welfare Authority were able to overcome the hardship laid upon the family. Had this case been treated with any variety of insulin, the free provision of the required material would of course have been available under the scheme, which is for the free provision of insulin and not for the free treatment of diabetes.

Free Provision of Insulin.

On receiving Circular 2754 from the Ministry of Health, the Council decided to supply insulin free with the consent of the Minister under Section 227, Public Health (London) Act, 1936, to certain classes of persons who find that the increase which has occurred in the cost of insulin since the beginning of the war is a substantial burden, and for whom no public provision is made apart from poor relief e.g. the dependants of insured persons, widows and spinners engaged in household duties and persons seamen on foreign-going ships. The policy of the Council was welcomed widely and 30 persons now obtain a regular supply which has cost the Council during the year 1944-5 £24,325.75d.

One case of diabetes insipidus in a school child controlled by injections of pituitary extract did not fall within the ambit of the scheme and could not be allowed to do so without opening the door to a wide variety of cases. Definitely the Ministry of Health had no powers to grant the admission of this case to the scheme, but the County Council as Education and Social Welfare Authority were able to overcome the hardship laid upon the family. Had this case been treated with any variety of insulin, the free provision of the required material would of course have been available under the scheme, which is for the free provision of insulin and not for the free treatment of diabetes.