

## **[Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Poplar, Metropolitan Borough].**

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METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF POPLAR .  
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ABRIDGED    INTERIM    REPORT

on the

health of the Borough

during 1943

by

W. ALLAN YOUNG ,

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

Medical Officer of Health.  
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To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors  
of the Metropolitan Borough of Poplar.

Madam, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 10/44 (England) this Report for the year 1943 is, like those for the years 1939-42, an abridged Interim Report. Summaries of the principal vital and other statistics are included.

Population. The Registrar-General's estimate of the population is not to be published. Rates calculated on that population are not given either, but average rates for the preceding five years are given in parentheses, with comments as to the comparability of the appropriate rate for 1943.

Births. There was an increase in the number of live births, the birth rate being the highest since 1925.

Deaths. The number of deaths at all ages was higher than in 1942, the increase being due mainly to diseases of the circulatory system and cancer. On the other hand, there was a slight decrease in the death rate from Tuberculosis.

Maternal Deaths. These numbered three, two of them following abortions.

Infant Mortality. Respiratory diseases and premature birth were mainly responsible for the somewhat higher infant mortality, one-half of the total deaths under one year of age being assigned to these causes.

Infectious Disease. Scarlet fever was abnormally prevalent in 1943, but it is interesting to note that during the past five years there has not been one Poplar death attributed to this disease. The Measles epidemic referred to in my report for 1942 continued during the early months of 1943, but the number of deaths was relatively low.

Tuberculosis. There was a slight increase in the number of new cases notified but, as mentioned above, the death rate was lower than that of the previous year although above the average for five years.

Influenza. The Influenza epidemic which occurred in the latter part of the year did not call for any special action in this Borough.

Staff. Three members of the staff, Messrs. Barnett, Donovan and East, were called up for military service. The Council arranged that during the absence of Mr. Donovan the duties of Vaccination Officer should be carried out by Mr. May, one of the Sanitary Inspectors. The Ministry of Health raised no objection to this on the understanding that the sanitary inspection work was not prejudiced thereby.

Public Vaccinators. Dr. M. J. Burne was appointed Public Vaccinator for the southern portion of the Borough in place of the late Dr. Cotter. Dr. W. Feldman, the Medical Superintendent of Mile End Hospital, was appointed Public Vaccinator for St. Clement's Hospital, vice Dr. Pinney who had resigned.

General. Circulars on various matters were received from the Ministry of Health during the year and the necessary action has been taken thereon.

Once again I have to thank the members of the Council for their continued support during the year.

I am, Madam, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient Servant,

W. ALLAN YOUNG,

Medical Officer of Health.



STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

(The figures in parentheses are the averages for the 5 years 1938-42.)

AREA. 2,136 acres.

POPULATION. Census 1931 ... .. 155,089

The Registrar-General's estimate for 1943 is not to be published.

<u>LIVE BIRTHS.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	
Legitimate	1095	569	526	Birth rate above the average (16.6)
Illegitimate	67	34	33	
	<u>1162</u>	<u>603</u>	<u>559</u>	

<u>STILL BIRTHS.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	
	24	11	13	Rate per 1,000 total births 20.7 (25.7)

<u>DEATHS.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	
	922	546	376	Death rate above the average (15.2)

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES.

Puerperal sepsis ...	2	} Rate per 1,000 total births 2.53 (3.34)
Other maternal causes	1	

INFANT MORTALITY RATE.

All infants per 1,000 live births	...	47 (43)
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births		48 (42)
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births		30 (91)

CLASSIFICATION OF DEATHS AT ALL AGES.

The 922 deaths at all ages were classified by the Registrar-General as follows :-

Cerebrospinal fever 1; Whooping cough 1; Diphtheria 5; Tuberculosis of respiratory system 64; other forms of Tuberculosis 7; Syphilitic disease 14; Influenza 17; Measles 3; Cancer of: (a) buccal cavity and oesophagus 14; (b) uterus 6; (c) stomach and duodenum 19; (d) breast 7; (e) all other sites 106; Diabetes 6; Intracranial vascular lesions 51; Heart disease 256; other diseases of circulatory system 18; Bronchitis 79; Pneumonia 52; other respiratory diseases 7; Ulcer of stomach and duodenum 18; Diarrhoea (under 2 years) 4; Appendicitis 1; other digestive diseases 18; Nephritis 12; Puerperal and post-abortive sepsis 2; other maternal causes 1; Premature birth 12; Congenital malformations, etc. 14; Suicide 3; Road traffic accidents 5; other violent causes 42; all other causes 57.

INFANTILE DEATHS. There were 55 deaths of infants under one year of age, the causes of death being as follows :-

Whooping cough 1; Tuberculosis of respiratory system 2; other forms of Tuberculosis 1; Influenza 1; Measles 2; Bronchitis 5; Pneumonia 13; Diarrhoea 4; other digestive diseases 1; Premature birth 12; Congenital malformations, etc. 11; all other causes 2.



General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

NURSING IN THE HOME. The number of visits paid to cases by the nurses from nursing associations was 1541.

WELFARE CENTRES at 31st December 1943.

Clinics (Maternity and Child Welfare)

(a) Borough Council:

Ruston Street: .... Ante-natal: Tuesday mornings and alternate Monday mornings.  
 Infant Consultations: Thursday mornings and afternoons.  
 Dental: Wednesday mornings.  
 Sunlight: Monday afternoons; Friday mornings

Simpsons Road: ... Infant Consultations: Monday afternoons.  
 Sunlight: Monday mornings.

54 West Ferry Road: Infant Consultations: Wednesday afternoons.  
 Ante-natal: Friday afternoons.

(b) Royal College of St. Katharine:

1 Bazeley Street: Ante-natal: Thursday mornings.

Trinity Hall: ... Infant Consultations: Wednesday mornings.

All Hallows: ... Infant Consultations: Tuesday afternoons.

St. Michael's Hall: Infant Consultations: Monday afternoons.

The numbers of attendances at the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres were :-

<u>Borough Council.</u>	<u>Royal College of St. Katharine.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
15,654	6,714	22,368

VISITS PAID BY HEALTH VISITORS. The numbers of visits paid by the Health Visitors were :-

<u>Borough Council.</u>	<u>Royal College of St. Katharine.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
23,505	21,510	45,015

CHILD LIFE PROTECTION.

Visits to Foster Mothers and Children ... 15 (by H.V's.)  
 Foster Mothers under supervision during 1943 3  
 Foster Children " " " 4

STERILE MATERNITY OUTFITS. No outfits were issued during the year.

OBSTETRIC CONSULTANTS. It was not necessary to call in a Consultant during the year.

CONVALESCENT TREATMENT. 15 convalescent cases were sent away during the year through the agency of the Invalid Children's Aid Association.

CLOTHING COUPONS FOR EXPECTANT MOTHERS. The arrangements made in 1941 for the distribution of clothing vouchers for expectant mothers were continued until July when the issue of vouchers was transferred to the Local Food Offices. With the transfer of this service the Maternity and Child Welfare lost the great advantage it had in being able to make early and personal contact with the expectant mothers. This matter was



referred to the Metropolitan Boroughs' Standing Joint Committee who took up the question with the Ministry of Food and Board of Trade, and after considering replies to their representations thought that no useful purpose could be served by pursuing the matter further.

#### MILK SCHEME (Maternity and Child Welfare).

117 applications were received and granted. Orders for 726 pounds of dried milk were issued. In addition, 1,567 packets of dried milk were supplied at cost price.

NATIONAL MILK SCHEME. As from 7th February the National Milk and Vitamins Scheme was finally merged into the general work of the Food Office. The milk office at the Town Hall, therefore, became redundant and with the transfer of the scheme to the Local Food Office no officers of the Public Health Department have been involved in this work since 7th February, 1943.

DISTRIBUTION OF COD LIVER OIL AND FRUIT JUICES. The scheme of distribution arranged with the Local Deputy Food Officer in 1941 was continued.

WAR TIME DAY NURSERY: As the result of discussions with the Ministries of Health and Labour, the Borough Council took over the Queen Mary Day Nursery which had been used by the London County Council as a Day Nursery for children aged 2-5 years. After minor alterations to the building had been made to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Health the reception age was extended to one year and, in exceptional circumstances, to under one year. Responsibility for the premises was assumed by the Borough Council as from 13th September. There were some difficulties in connection with staff, and with the approval of the Council's Civil Defence Committee women personnel from one of the First Aid Posts now assist daily at the Day Nursery.

#### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

SANITARY INSPECTORS' WORK. With many of the staff assigned to other duties full routine work could not be maintained, but 26,032 inspections and reinspections were made by the District and Lady Sanitary Inspectors. Visits to air raid shelters numbered 5,455.

DISINFESTATION. Number of rooms disinfested 1,925; number of articles disinfested 6,278; total number of inspections and visits 1,932. Disinfestation by HCN was carried out in one case.

HOUSING. The Housing Inspectors, like the District Inspectors, were assigned to duties in connection with the Casualty Services. When not so engaged they assisted the District Inspectors. In November Mr. May took over the duties of Vaccination Officer in addition to his work as Sanitary Inspector.

RODENT CONTROL SCHEME. Following upon the issue by the Ministry of Food of "The Infestation Order, 1943", conferences were called by the Ministry and the intentions and proposals for carrying out the Order were explained. Later, the Ministry issued a Direction to the Borough Council to proceed with the initial survey and, after consideration of this Direction, certain suggestions concerning administration and procedure were adopted.

During July conversations took place with Dr. M. T. Morgan, Medical Officer of the Port of London, regarding a scheme of control in the dock area and the possibilities of a combined scheme between the Port of London Health Authority and the Poplar Borough Council for the Isle of Dogs. Dr. Morgan gave details of the Scheme of Rodent Control which had been in force in the Port during the last two years, which scheme was on a contributory basis. Dr. Morgan offered to assist in a scheme for fendering the foregoing part of the Borough free from rats and mice.



A special comprehensive report was submitted to the Finance and Emergency Administrative Committee in September and the Council adopted Resolutions authorising (1) the appointment of staff, (2) co-operation with the Port of London Health Authority and (3) the organization of a contributory scheme to operate in that part of the Borough south of East India Dock Road. (This last was extended to cover the whole of the Borough later when firms outside the original area asked to be included in the scheme.)

On receipt of Directions to proceed with all necessary action, the scheme was put into operation.

### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

The Meat and Food Inspectors made 3,626 inspections of premises where food is prepared, stored or sold.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ANALYSTS. The number of samples examined was 725, and the number found to be adulterated was 25, a percentage of 3.45. During the ten years 1934-43 the average number examined was 743 and the percentage adulterated was 3.9 .

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

Measles, Scarlet fever and Pneumonia were more prevalent than in 1942.

### NOTIFICATIONS (corrected for "altered diagnosis" cases).

	<u>Cases.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Scarlet fever ...	222	.
Diphtheria ...	47	5
Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	.	.
Erysipelas ...	25	.
Puerperal fever ...	6	2
Puerperal pyrexia ...	7	.
Cerebrospinal fever ...	5	1
Ophthalmia neonatorum ...	1	.
Measles ...	809	3
Whooping cough ...	184	1
Primary pneumonia ...	111	8
Influenzal pneumonia ...	18	2
Dysentery ...	20	.
Zymotic enteritis ...	8	4
Malaria ...	1 x	.
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	2	.
	<u>1466</u>	
Scabies (from 1st August 1943)	<u>472</u>	
	<u>1938</u>	

© notified cases only.

x induced for therapeutic purposes.

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA. As a result of Circular 2753 issued by the Ministry of Health on 6th January, 1943, medical practitioners were invited to co-operate in the immunisation of infants and young children, the prophylactic being supplied free of charge and a fee of 5/- being paid for each case immunised (two injections) on condition the practitioner completed an official card for each case which is seen when application is made for the prophylactic. 11 cases were immunised by practitioners during the year.

#### Summary of immunisations:-

(a) at Borough Council Clinic ...	499
(b) at L.C.C. Centres ...	1200
(c) by Private Practitioners ...	11
	<u>1710</u>



TUBERCULOSIS.

Dispensary Clinics.

From 1st Jan. to 31st Dec.	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2 p.m. Fridays, 10 a.m.
From 29th March to 27th Sept.	Mondays, 6-7 p.m. (additional)
From 1st Jan. to 6th March and 2nd Oct. to 31st Dec.	Saturdays, 2-4 p.m. (monthly) instead of Monday evenings.

Number of new cases and contacts examined	294
(Tuberculous 97; non-tuberculous 182; diagnosis incomplete 15)	
Number of attendances at the Dispensary	2561
Number of visits to homes by Health Visitors	6016
Number of sputum specimens examined	284
Number of X-ray examinations at St. Andrew's Hospital	394

Additional Statistics. In addition to the 6016 visits paid by the Health Visitors for Dispensary purposes, 183 non-Dispensary visits were paid under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1930.

Reports to Chairmen of Medical Boards	47
Patients sent away for institutional treatment	100
Patients in receipt of extra nourishment from Dispensary during the year	56
Patients in receipt of extra nourishment from Dispensary on 31st December	18
Reports on child contacts to Divisional School Medical Officer	35
Letters to General Practitioners concerning patients	334
Reports to General Practitioners on official forms	68
Progress Reports received from General Practitioners	2
Clinical Reports to London County Council	97
Reports to Ministry of Pensions ...	2
Shelters on loan during the year ...	0
Shelters on loan at 31st December ...	0
Beds and bedding on loan during the year	2
Beds and bedding on loan at 31st December	1

During the year 11 new cases and 24 old cases have attended Brompton, Colindale, London Chest and St. Andrew's Hospitals for 528 artificial pneumothorax refills.

During the year 4 children were boarded out under the London County Council Contact Scheme.

Dental Treatment (at St. Andrew's Hospital)

Number of patients referred	...	33
Number of attendances	...	383
Number of local anaesthetics	...	31
Number of general anaesthetics	...	31

Tuberculosis Allowances. The scheme for the provision of allowances for persons giving up work to undergo treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis came into operation on 30th June, 1943. Arrangements were made for the assessment of cases and payment of allowances at the Tuberculosis Dispensary. Miss U. Simeon, of the London County Council Welfare Department, was appointed Tuberculosis Adjudicating Officer and she holds a weekly session at the Dispensary. The cases are brought before the Adjudicating Officer by the Care Committee Secretary who has previously interviewed the patients and assisted them, when necessary, in filling up the appropriate application forms. An officer of the Finance Department attends the Dispensary each week to pay the allowances, the Care Committee Secretary being present when the payments are made.



During the six months period 30/6/43 - 31/12/43 applications were received from 93 patients. Of these, 84 were granted allowances. (The remaining 9 will probably qualify on discharge from sanatorium.) On 31/12/43 40 patients were actually in receipt of allowances. Cases are brought before the Adjudicating Officer for periodical review and when there is any change of circumstances. In addition to the new cases assessed, 225 reviews were carried out during the six months ended 31/12/43.

NUMBER OF NEW CASES AND DEATHS. The numbers of new cases reported and of deaths during the year were :-

	<u>New cases.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Pulmonary ...	163	64
Other forms ...	16	7
	<u>179</u>	<u>71</u>

The death rate was above the average for the five years 1938-42 :

Pulmonary (5 years average)	0.96
Other forms do.	0.09
	<u>1.05</u>

The percentage of non-notified cases to total deaths was 12.7 (12.7)

The number of cases of Tuberculosis on the Register at 31st Dec. 675  
 The number of cases on the Tuberculosis Dispensary Register :  
     Definitely Tuberculous 425 (T.B. plus 214)  
     Diagnosis not completed 28  
   453

SCABIES. The County of London (Scabies) Regulations, 1943, came into operation 1st August, 1943, and, subject to certain exceptions specified in the Regulations, require the notification of cases of Scabies by medical practitioners. Notice of the Regulations was given in the local press and a copy of the Regulations sent to each registered medical practitioner practising in the district. 472 cases were notified.

The number of treatments given at the Cleansing Station during the year was 5093 of which 145 were given at 51 evening sessions.

Adults: 1,253: males 505; females 748.  
 Children: 3,840: " 1771; " 2069.

244 premises and 27,896 articles were disinfected.

Total number of visits by Lady Sanitary Inspector and seconded Health Visitor 2,067.

INFESTATION BY HEAD LICE. A report on the Ministry of Health Circular 2831, dated 2nd July, 1943, was submitted to the Committee. Arrangements were made to give effect in general to the recommendations in the Circular.

INSULIN. The Ministry of Health issued Circular 2734 referring to the arrangements under which Insulin may be supplied either free of cost or at a reduced price to persons suffering from Diabetes. One application was dealt with during the year.

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN HEALTH. 203 lectures were given at 16 centres and the attendances totalled 11,286.