

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

**Contributors**

Southwark (London, England). Metropolitan Borough.  
Stott, William.

**Publication/Creation**

[1943]

**Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/r7tjqgdr>

**License and attribution**

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution, Non-commercial license.

Non-commercial use includes private study, academic research, teaching, and other activities that are not primarily intended for, or directed towards, commercial advantage or private monetary compensation. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

LIBRARY



METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK.

Interim Report.

of the

Medical Officer of Health.

Relative to the work of the  
Health Services Department during the year

1942

W. Stott. M.B., B.S., D.P.H.,  
Medical Officer of Health.

Health Services Department,  
Walworth Road, S.E.17.

117

Health Services Department,  
Walworth Road,  
S.E.17.

November, 1943.

To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting herewith my Report concerning the health of the Borough during the year 1942. In accordance with the request of the Ministry of Health that Annual Reports should be in an abridged form, this report includes only vital statistics and other items of interest affecting the Health Department, omitting detailed statistics for each particular subject.

The health of the population has been good and maintained at a satisfactory standard, there being no serious outbreak of infectious disease to which it is necessary to draw attention.

The introduction of the Scabies Order, 1941 has proved of considerable value and has been the means of effectually controlling the spread of the disease. Many contacts of patients suffering from scabies have been examined and where necessary treated or given preventive baths, which before the coming into operation of the Order, would not have been possible.

Owing to the ever increasing demand for nursery accommodation for the children of war workers, four war-time nurseries were opened in the Borough, and throughout the year there was a good attendance.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Department continued to provide a valuable service for mothers and children living in the area, and co-operation between the Ministry of Food's local office for the distribution of National Milk and Vitamins through the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres was arranged.

The Tuberculosis Dispensary was very active during the year, and although the number of cases referred by the Army Medical Boards, etc, decreased, the total amount of work was supplemented by new facilities for X-ray examinations of the chest. This scheme made for greater co-operation with the general practitioners in the Borough and gave most encouraging results in the diagnosis of early cases of tuberculosis.

I am,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

W. STOTT.

Medical Officer of Health.

VITAL STATISTICS 1942.

	<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate		622	563	1185
Illegitimate		53	39	92
		<u>675</u>	<u>602</u>	<u>1277</u>

Live Birth Rate:- 19.2 per thousand population.

Still Births.

Legitimate	17	21	38
Illegitimate	3	-	3
	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>41</u>

Still Birth Rate:- 31.1 per thousand total births.

<u>Deaths.</u>	773	485	1258
----------------	-----	-----	------

Death Rate:- 18.9 per thousand population.

<u>Maternal Deaths.</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Rate per thousand Live and still births.</u>
From Puorperal Sepsis	1	0.76
Other Puorperal Causes	2	1.52

<u>Infant Deaths (under one year)</u>	<u>Death Rate.</u>
All Infants - per thousand live births	61
Legitimate Infants - per thousand live legitimate births	60
Illegitimate Infants - per thousand live illegitimate births	76

Deaths from:	Measles (all ages)	1
	Cancer (all ages)	189
	Whooping Cough (all ages)	2
	Diarrhoea (under 2 yrs of age)	21

Classification of Deaths.

The causes of death (773 males and 485 females) were as follows:-

Whooping Cough	2
Diphtheria	2
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	77
Other Tuberculous diseases	4
Syphilitic diseases	23
Influenza	7
Measles	1
Acute Infective Encephalitis	1
Cancer	189
Diabetes	4
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	84
Heart Disease	341
Other Circulatory Diseases	38
Bronchitis	97
Pneumonia	67
Other respiratory diseases	14
Peptic Ulcer	13
Diarrhoea	21
Appendicitis	4
Other digestive diseases	32
Nephritis	32



Puerperal Sepsis	1
Other maternal causes	2
Premature births	23
Conjenital malformations and birth injuries	10
Suicide	7
Road Traffic Accidents	20
Other Violent causes	49
All other causes	93

Total deaths at all ages 1,258

#### AGE GROUPS

	<u>Under 1</u>	<u>1 to 4</u>	<u>5 to 14</u>	<u>15 to 44</u>	<u>45 to 64</u>	<u>65 and over</u>	<u>Total</u>
Males	53	12	10	70	245	383	773
Females	25	7	6	59	111	277	485
	78	19	16	129	356	660	1258

#### Infant Mortality.

The total number of deaths of infants under one year of age was seventy-eight, the causes of death being as follows:-

W hooping Cough	1
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	1
Bronchitis	7
Pneumonia	15
Diarrhoea	19
Premature births	23
Conjenital malformations and birth injuries	7
Other violent causes	1
All other causes	4
	78

#### Maternal Mortality.

One death was attributed to Puerperal Sepsis and two others to maternal causes.

Mortality Rate:- 2.28.

#### Maternity and Child Welfare.

Home Nursing. 860 visits to sick children and to cases of home confinement were made under arrangements with the local Nursing Associations.

Home Visiting. The Health Visitors made 28,847 visits to the homes of expectant mothers, infants and toddlers.

#### Welfare Centre Attendance.

Examinations of Expectant Mothers by Medical Officer	5,225
Examinations of Post Natal cases by Medical Officer	1,187
Attendances of Infants under one year	13,328
Attendances of Children one to five years	7,537

The Assistant Medical Officers examined 9,960 children during the year.

Continued.....

CHILD LIFE PROTECTION. At the end of the year there were three persons on the register who were receiving children for reward, and there were three foster children being cared for by foster mothers. The Child Life Protection Visitor made thirty-five visits to the homes of foster mothers. Four new foster mothers were registered during the year, two women who were not registered foster mothers were found to be taking children for reward and cautionary letters were sent in those instances. The names of five foster mothers were removed from the register, three at their own request, one by legal adoption of the foster child and another because of illness of the foster mother and subsequent death. In the latter case, the foster child was removed to a nursery temporarily and was later legally adopted. The names of four new foster children were added to the register and five were removed during the year. The health of the foster children in the district remained generally good and no child died.

HOME HELPS. Home Helps were provided in eighteen cases of home confinements.

WAR TIME NURSERIES. There were in the Borough, at the close of the year, four war time nurseries, three under the direct control of the Council on behalf of the Ministry of Health, and one under the control of the London County Council Rest Centre Service, the admissions to the four nurseries being supervised by the Council. The number of places provided were as follows:-

	<u>Under 2</u>	<u>Over 2.</u>
Crossways War Time Nursery, New Kent Road.	15	30
Bishop's House War Time Nursery, Kensington Park Place.	20	50
Evelina War Time Nursery, Southwark Bridge Road.	40	10
Clubland War Time Nursery, (L.C.C Rest Centre) Camberwell Road.	-	20
	<hr/> 75	<hr/> 110
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The health of the children in the nurseries was generally good and there was a satisfactory attendance of those whose names were on the register.

In addition to these nurseries, there were two residential war time nurseries in country areas which were maintained by the Surrey County Council, by arrangements with this Authority. These nurseries were situated at Whitnash, Shalford, Surrey and at Tilford Convalescent Home, Tilford, Surrey, each having accommodation for forty Southwark children.

Women's Country Holiday Fund. Sixteen women and fifteen children were sent for convalescence under this scheme.

Solarium - Health Services Department. 125 children under 5 years of age were treated in the Solarium at the request of the Council's Medical Officers, a total of 1,774 attendances being made.

Convalescent Treatment. 64 children were sent away by arrangement with the Invalid Children's Aid Association.

Extra Nourishment. 423 dinners were provided to children, necessitous expectant and nursing mothers.

Continued.....



Dental Clinic. There was a good attendance of patients who had been referred to the Clinic by Medical Officers of the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres. The number of new patients soon were:-

Expectant mothers	57
Nursing mothers	16
Children	70

The attendances at the Clinic were:-

Expectant mothers	278
Nursing mothers	140
Children	98

Fifty-two sessions were held during the year.

Vaccination. The total number of certificates and copies of certificates of successful primary vaccination received during the year 1942 was:-

Northern Division	268
Southern Division	466
	—
	734
	==

#### Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

The work of supervising the sanitary condition of the district, including the inspection of common lodging houses, factories and work-shops was carried out by the sanitary inspectors during the year. In addition there was periodic inspection of the air raid shelters in the Borough, particular attention being paid to the larger shelters where the nightly population exceeds 500 persons. Inspections were also made at frequent intervals of places used for the reception of shelterers' bedding, and the disinfection and disinfestation of these premises and the bedding stored, carried out in all cases where this was necessary.

#### Sanitary Work.

Number of Complaints	3,170
Inspections, house to house	123
Miscellaneous Visits	1,049
Inspections of shelters	2,927
Inspections of war damaged premises	1,509
Inspections of Factories	1,282
Inspections of Shops	29
Visits re: Billotting	229
Common Lodging House Visits	46
Smoke Observations	2
Inspection of Wardens' Posts	39
Inspection of Rest Centres	16
Inspection of Bombed Sites, etc.	49
Re-visits	12,062
Number of Intimation Notices Served	1,701
Number of Statutory Notices Served	446
Number of Defects found and remedied	4,720

Public Health (London) Act, 1936 - Section 224. One person was removed to an Institution upon an Order of the Court,

Continued.....



Common Lodging Houses. The inspection of these premises was carried out at frequent intervals, and nuisances were abated in several instances. In a few cases evidence of lice was found and notices under the Scabies Order, 1941 were served on the lodgers concerned who were subsequently treated at the Council's Treatment and Bathing Centre, and the bedding disinfested. One Common Lodging House for men was closed, the premises being insanitary and unfit for reconditioning.

Factories. The inspection of factories was regularly carried out and nuisances where found were abated. In a few instances additional W.C. accommodation had to be provided for increased staffs, whilst in one or two cases permission was granted for the use of temporary accommodation as an emergency measure.

Rats and Mice Destruction. During 1942, probably due to quieter conditions following air raidings, rats commenced to come back to their old haunts and more complaints were received than in 1941. A number of defects in drains and sewers as the result of war damage were the contributing factor to a number of infestations. Throughout the year, the systematic laying of poisoned baits in the Council's sewers was continued, but there was a little difficulty during the summer in obtaining supplies of red quill and barium, the chief source of supply of the former poison being from countries in enemy hands. Some difficulty was also experienced in obtaining waste fat for making up paste baits, but by the assistance of the Ministry of Food it was possible to overcome this problem. On the 30th April, the Ministry of Food took over the powers concerning rodent repressions from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. This transfer of powers resulted in a speeding up of activity for the destruction of rats and mice.

Summary of Inspections and Investigations made during the year:-

Complaints received	470
Premises cleared	145
Inspections by Rat Inspector	654
Re-inspections by Rat Inspector	2,851
Inspections by Rodent Officer (Food Premises)	314
Re-inspections of Food Premises	71
Smoke Tests	232
Defects found in drains or sewers	160
Baits laid in sewers	9,650
Other baits laid	21,388
Break-back traps set	1,770
Cage traps set	168

#### HOUSING.

During the year there was a very large increase in the number of applicants for housing accommodation due principally to applicant's accommodation becoming illegally overcrowded, caused by the return of relatives from evacuation areas or in a number of instances to the desire of people who had been evacuated to neutral areas, to again become residents of Southwark. Another type of applicant was the young married couple who upon marriage did not set up a home, but continued to live with parents, the husband having been called up for service in His Majesty's Forces. In some cases the husband had received his discharge from the Forces whilst in others children had been born of the marriage, thus causing immediate overcrowding in the parents' home.

Continued.....

Housing (Continued) Every endeavour was made to find suitable accommodation in the worst cases, but the problem is far from solved and the cessation of hostilities will undoubtedly result in large numbers of families clamouring for better accommodation. It will be necessary for the Government to review the present housing situation and to formulate the means for rapid construction of new dwellings at the earliest possible time and also to provide for the reconditioning of property damaged by enemy action. Whilst endeavouring to preserve the better type of property, in my view no large sums should be spent on houses which are of bad construction or would otherwise have come under clearance schemes. To do so would be to prejudice future development schemes.

Inspection and Supervision of Food. Careful attention has been given to all matters relating to the utilisation of damaged food and complete co-operation has been maintained with the Food Executive Officer for the District.

Large quantities of food, especially canned goods, that had been reported as unfit for human consumption, have on examination been found to be fit for human consumption, although it would not have been desirable for such food to have been sold in the shops. It was disposed of under proper safeguards to Institutions, Canteens and for manufacturing purposes. Food that was found to be unfit for human consumption was reported to the Local Food Committee, who disposed of same to the Ministry of Food's Salvage Section.

Close co-operation concerning all matters connected with food has existed throughout the year between the Ministry of Food and my Department.

The total quantity of food destroyed amounted to some 146 tons.

Public Health (Imported Food) Regulations, and  
Public Health (Preservatives in Food) Regulations. Duties under these Regulations, although somewhat limited were carried out as necessary, samples for examination being taken as required and submitted to the Public Analyst.

Mortuary and Coroner's Court.

Post-Mortems conducted - without inquest	314
Post-Mortems conducted - with Inquest	127
Inquests held, Post-Mortems conducted elsewhere	39
Bodies brought in for convenience	2
	<hr/>
	482
	<hr/>

Verminous Persons. During the year there was a total attendance of 14,932 persons for bathing and treatment. Of this number 6,782 were treatments given to children in accordance with the Council's Agreement with the London County Council.

8,150 treatments and baths were given to persons sent from various Common Lodging Houses, Hospitals and local practitioners.

Many additional treatments have been given during the year following upon enforcement of the Scabies Order, 1941.

The following figures indicate the great increase in the work undertaken in connection with Scabies treatment and prevention. For comparison the figures for 1941 are also given:-



SCABIES

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Woman</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Total</u>
First Quarter	599	985	1078	2662
" (1941)	(384)	(490)	(404)	(1278)
2nd Quarter	536	1160	1120	2816
" (1941)	(315)	(434)	(374)	(1123)
3rd Quarter	562	1495	1082	3139
" (1941)	(327)	(566)	(513)	(1406)
4th Quarter	531	1494	1484	3509
" (1941)	(445)	(768)	(779)	(1992)
Total	2228	5134	4764	12126
	(1471)	(2258)	(2070)	(5799)

VERMINOUS.

1st Quarter	195	46	458	699
2nd Quarter	161	69	482	712
3rd Quarter	115	74	553	742
4th Quarter	69	69	525	663
	540	258	2018	2816

Verminous Premises.

During the year 1,087 verminous rooms and their contents were treated by the disinfecting staff.

Council houses found infested	1
Council houses disinfested	1
Other premises found to be infested	557
Other premises disinfested	557

Verminous Bedding Disinfested.

	<u>Disinfested</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>
Beds	248	22
Palliasses	2206	33
Bolsters and Pillows	3401	41
Cushions	345	17
Blankets	8803	1
Shoots	1734	2
Quilts	1165	3
Articles of clothing, etc.	12,0508	296
Total	138,410	415

In addition one ton thirteen hundredweights of miscellaneous articles and household effects were destroyed.

Disinfection. The total number of disinfections of rooms during the year by the Council's Disinfecting staff was 421. Of this number 385 rooms were disinfested after the occurrence of the ordinary notifiable infectious diseases, and 36 after cases of pulmonary tuberculosis.

Continued.....



Disinfection - Infectious Disease.

	<u>Disinfected</u>	<u>Destroyed.</u>
Beds	200	1
Palliasses	164	3
Bolsters	142	2
Pillows	518	1
Cushions	72	
Blankets	612	
Shoots	352	
Quilts	333	
Articles of clothing, etc.	992	3
Books	175	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,560</b>	<b>10</b>

In addition 477 lbs of brisles were disinfected.

Food & Drugs Acts. The following samples of food and also drugs were taken by the Inspectors and their agents and submitted to the Public Analyst:-

No. of formal samples taken	1185
No. of formal samples adulterated	5
No. of informal samples taken	1178
No. of informal samples adulterated	29

Analysis of Samples.

	<u>No. of Samples Examined.</u>			<u>No. Adulterated.</u>		
	<u>Formal</u>	<u>Informal</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Formal</u>	<u>Informal</u>	<u>Total</u>
Milk and Milk Products	451	2	453	2		2
Oils, Fats, etc.	95	12	107			
Canned and Potted Foods	3	5	8			
Meat and Meat Products	104	242	346			
Fruits and Vegetables, canned, etc.	2	35	37			
Preserves, Jams, Jellies, etc.	37	10	47		1	1
Cereals & Cereals Preparations	103	95	198	2	7	9
Bread, Flour & Confectionery	73	236				
Wines, Spirits and Beverages	108	93	201	1	5	6
Condiments, Spices, Sauces, etc.	119	138	257		1	1
Drugs and Medical Preparations	14	133	147		11	11
Miscellaneous Samples	76	177	253		4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1185</b>	<b>1178</b>	<b>2363</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>

Percentage of adulterated samples 1.43

Continued.....

Legal Proceedings - Food and Drugs Act, etc.

<u>Defendant</u>	<u>Cause of Proceedings.</u>	<u>Result.</u>
Irono Moo "Duke of Clarence P.H. 132, London Road.	Selling whiskey 50.5° under proof.	Fined £10 and £10.10.0 costs
James Lewis, 7, Nicholson Street.	Selling milk containing 30% added water.	Fined £8 and £5.5.0 costs.
James Lewis, 7, Nicholson Street.	Selling milk containing 29% added water.	Fined £8. and £5.5.0 costs.

Legal Proceedings - Public Health Acts, etc.

John Edgington, 8, Ponton Place.	Foul condition of room and contents.	Abatement and Prohibition Orders.
-------------------------------------	---	---

Milksellers.

Retailers and Wholesalers in the Borough	227
Retailers and Wholesalers elsewhere	134

Milk (Special Designations) Order.

Principal Licenses	43
Supplementary Licenses	12

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The notifications of infectious diseases received during the year numbered 1,318 (excluding Tuberculosis) as follows:-  
Scarlet Fever 240, Diphtheria 80, Enteric Fever 5, Paratyphoid Fever 1, Puerperal Fever 1, Puerperal pyrexia 9, Cerebro-spinal Fever 4, Measles 621, Whooping Cough 208, Dysentery 7, Epidemic Diarrhoea 15, Pneumonia 77, Ophthalmia Neonatorum 3, Erysipelas 47.

27 deaths due to infectious diseases were recorded:-  
Whooping Cough 2, Diphtheria 2, Measles 1, Acute infective encephalitis 1, Diarrhoea 21.

Diphtheria Immunisation. Immunisation against diphtheria was carried out in the Council's Diphtheria Immunisation Clinics and by general practitioners in accordance with the Council's Scheme for Doctors. The total number of children given preventive injections during the year was 2,187 of whom 570 were under the age of 5 years.

Tuberculosis. 253 notifications of tuberculosis were received, of which 187 were in respect of pulmonary cases and 66 non-pulmonary. According to the return supplied by the Registrar General the number of deaths from tuberculosis was 81, 77 being pulmonary and 4 non-pulmonary.

Continued.....

TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS

DIAGNOSIS	PULMONARY				NON-PULMONARY				TOTAL				GRAND TOTAL	
	Adults		Children		Adults		Children		Adults		Children			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
A. New cases examined during the year (excluding contacts)														
(a) Definitely Tuberculous	50	41	4	4	8	3	2	9	58	44	6	13	121	
(b) Diagnosis not completed	39	26	3	2	1	-	1	-	40	26	4	2	72	
(c) Non-tuberculous	136	115	12	7	-	1	-	-	136	116	12	7	271	
B. Contacts examined during the year:-														
(a) Definitely Tuberculous	2	8	2	1	-	1	-	-	2	9	2	1	14	
(b) Diagnosis not completed	4	11	6	6	-	-	-	-	4	11	6	6	27	
(c) Non-tuberculous	25	56	22	24	-	-	1	-	25	56	23	24	128	
C. Cases written off the Dispensary Register as:-														
(a) Recovered	-	2	-	-	1	-	2	1	1	2	-	-	2	
(b) Non-tuberculous (including any such cases previously diagnosed and entered on the Dispensary Register as tuberculous)	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	
D. Number of cases on Dispensary Register on December 31st.														
(a) Definitely Tuberculous	431	294	51	53	24	29	4	5	455	323	55	58	891	
(b) Diagnosis not completed	43	37	9	8	1	-	1	-	44	37	10	8	99	



1.	Number of cases on Dispensary Register on 1st January	880
2.	Number of cases transferred from other areas and cases returned after discharge under head 3 in previous years	35
3.	Number of cases transferred to other areas, cases not desiring further assistance under the scheme, and cases 'lost sight of'	109
4.	Cases written off during the year as dead (all causes)	42
5.	Number of attendances at the Dispensary (including contacts)	4,391
6.	Number of insured persons under Domiciliary Treatment on December 31st	-
7.	Number of consultations with medical Practitioners:- (a) Personal (b) Others	410
8.	Number of visits by Tuberculosis Officers to homes (including personal consultations)	40
9.	Number of visits by nurses or Health Visitors to homes for Dispensary purposes	1,785
10.	Number of (a) specimens of Sputum etc. examined (b) X-ray examinations made in connection with Dispensary work	483
	(i) Screenings	614
	(ii) Films	916
	A.P. Re-fills	1,100
11.	Number of 'recovered' cases restored to Dispensary Register and included in (A) (a) and (A) (b) above	-
12.	Number of 'T.B Plus' cases on Dispensary Register on December 31st	362