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METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WOOLWICH



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# ANNUAL REPORT

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on the Health of the  
Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich  
for the Year 1950



BY

T. STANDRING, M.D., B.S., D.P.H., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Medical Officer of Health

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WOOLWICH



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Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich

for the Year 1950

J. STANDING M.D. & D.R. MED. SCI.

Medical Officer of Health

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## HEALTH COMMITTEE

At 31st December, 1950.

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR (Councillor Mrs. E. BROOKS, J.P.)

Alderman Mrs. J. R. WHITING (Chairman)

Councillor G. E. OFFORD (Vice-Chairman)

### Alderman—

L. A. HEATH

### Councillors—

T. G. BLANN

N. G. BURBRIDGE

G. S. DEAN

A. H. GILDER, M.B.E., J.P.

Mrs. A. E. MAXWELL

Mrs. E. R. M. MIDDLETON

D. J. O'BYRNE

Mrs. M. E. POLLEY

D. S. RAMSEY

Mrs. K. M. RANCE

D. S. RITCHIE

D. P. WALSH



## PREFACE

*To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the  
Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich.*

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit the Fiftieth Annual Report on the health of the Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich. The Report is prepared along the lines indicated by the Minister of Health. The general standard of the health of the Borough during the year may be regarded as satisfactory.

The Registrar-General's estimate of the population in mid-1950 was 149,000 (Home Population). This figure is the number of civilians resident in the Borough (144,000) plus members of the Armed Forces stationed in the Borough, estimated to be approximately 5,000.

The vital statistics for 1950 and for future years must be calculated on the Home Population, so that in the case of the birth and death rates it is not possible to present a just comparison with the rates for the last few years, which were calculated on the civilian population.

Compared with the previous year there was an increase of 96 in the total number of deaths, due mainly to an increase of 65 in the number of deaths from heart disease. There were 13 deaths from road accidents, against six in 1949.

Heart diseases account for nearly a quarter of the total deaths in the Borough, whilst one in every five deaths is attributable to cancer. Cancer is mainly a disease of the elderly and the general ageing of the population explains much of this increase. Again, improved medical diagnosis accounts for some increase. But this is not the whole story and it seems that there must be a genuine, if small, increased incidence of the disease. It is to be hoped that medical science will now soon find the solution to the cancer problem. In the meantime, diagnosis and treatment at the earliest possible moment is the main safeguard.

The infant death rate, *i.e.*, the number of deaths of children under one year for each 1,000 births, is now 24.4, which is easily the lowest on record in Woolwich. There were only 53 deaths of children under one year, being 18 fewer than the previous lowest total in 1942. A large proportion of these deaths occurred in children under one week. From the table in the body of the Report showing the chief vital statistics for the Borough since 1921, it will be seen that in that year there were 197 infant deaths. The number has steadily declined, but even twelve years ago there were 103 infant deaths. During the last fifty years, the Borough's infant death rate has been consistently below the rate for London and that for England and Wales.

With regard to infectious disease, due to a reduction in the number of measles' notifications in 1950, total notifications were 1,791, being 1,300 fewer than in 1949.

It is a pleasure to record that for the first time in the history of the Borough, there were no confirmed cases of diphtheria. When it is recalled that as recently as 1939 there were more than 500 confirmed cases in Woolwich alone in that year, those concerned with the diphtheria immunisation campaign may take just pride in this achievement. The Borough Council has long been active in campaigning for the immunisation of all young children, and there is no doubt that the work carried out in this field before and during the war years is reaping rich benefits.

An outbreak of poliomyelitis occurred during the summer and autumn of 1950 and there was a high incidence of cases in the Borough. There were 52 confirmed notifications, compared with 25 in 1949 and 23 in the 1947 outbreak. Fortunately, the proportion of fatal cases was again extremely low—only one death being due to poliomyelitis and one to polioencephalitis. In the great majority of the cases there was either little or no paralysis.



In the section of the Report dealing with tuberculosis, reference is made to the substantial drop in the number of deaths from this disease during the past few years. Since 1941, the Woolwich tuberculosis death rate has dropped from one death per thousand persons to .4 in 1950. This is indeed most encouraging. On the occasion of the recent visit to the Borough of the mass radiography unit some 16,000 persons were examined.

One of the Council's most important health activities is that of health education and during 1950 it was possible to increase further the Department's Health Education work. Following the purchase of a new film projector, a comprehensive winter programme of informal talks and film sessions on health and allied subjects was undertaken.

Much of this educational work deals with various aspects of hygiene and the observance of clean and hygienic practices in the preparation, handling and storage of food, and simple precautions to be observed in preventing spread of infection. The talks are designed to present their subject in an interesting and instructive manner. Towards the end of the year the Council decided to inaugurate a series of food hygiene lectures to food handlers working in the Borough. Arrangements were also in hand to give another series of lectures to the canteen staff at one of the large Woolwich factories and for a further series of lectures to food handlers in the Eltham district.

With the object of making the lives of old people more comfortable and less lonely, special attention is being directed by many to the welfare of the elderly.

It is, I believe, important that elderly people, whose numbers are increasing each year, should be encouraged to live normal independent lives for as long as possible in their own homes. More than 1,000 visits were paid during the year to the homes of elderly people in the Borough by the two women sanitary inspectors. In this way it is possible to help many of those old folk who are living without reasonable comfort or companionship. Some of these people rely on neighbours and friends to help them to do their shopping, cooking, write their letters and help them with other jobs about the house.

The Council has considered what further help it can give to the elderly, and has given financial assistance to organisations providing meals, and approved a contribution towards the cost involved in the home visitation of old people and for the services of a part-time organiser to supervise the regular visitation of the elderly.

A fine new home for the aged, provided by the London County Council in Plumstead Common Road, was nearing completion at the end of the year. It provides accommodation for 92 old persons.

During the year discussions have taken place on the resumption of slum clearance work in the Borough, and the London County Council has now agreed with the Borough Council's proposal that the clearance and redevelopment of the Lord Warwick Street Clearance Area (forming part of the larger area known as "the St. Mary's Redevelopment Area") should be carried out by the Borough Council. A detailed survey of this area is in hand. The Council has also considered a comprehensive schedule of further possible clearance areas in the Borough and is keen to begin slum clearance work again. I hope it will not now be long delayed.

Woolwich has a proud record in the provision of houses. A further 331 new houses were completed by the Council in 1950 and 127 by private enterprise. Yet hardly a day passes without one hearing or receiving a letter about some of the hundreds of families who are living with their in-laws or in one or two furnished rooms in which they are sharing the kitchen, and most probably the bathroom (if there is one in the house).

In their efforts to maintain the many older type houses in the Borough in a reasonable state of repair, the district sanitary inspectors have had a difficult task. It has become increasingly difficult to get owners to carry out essential repairs. At a time when the largest number of houses possible must be fit for occupation



the financial burden placed upon many owners, due to the cost of repairs exceeding the amount of rents derived from property, means that a proportion of houses which it is essential should be kept in good repair will the more rapidly deteriorate. This is indeed one of the most pressing problems of our time.

During a particularly busy year, some 40,000 inspections, including reinspections, were made by the sanitary inspectors. This is almost 9,000 more than in the previous year. A new scheme of clerical assistance to the sanitary inspectors was brought into operation at the beginning of the year, and, being relieved of much clerical work, the inspectors were able to spend the fullest amount of time on their technical duties.

During recent years, and particularly during 1950, there has been an increase in the number of complaints alleging foreign bodies in food. The complaints have related to : Glass splinters, dirt, a chestnut and a beetle in milk ; mites and cigarette ash in bread ; a nail in meat pie ; metal in a date slice ; glass and flour mites in bread ; a glass splinter in sausage ; and maggots in cake.

In several cases there was evidence of carelessness in preparation and in a number of cases legal proceedings were instituted.

Particular attention has again been paid to the supervision of food premises, including the cafes, restaurants and canteens, and frequent visits are paid to the Beresford Square stallholders.

During the year, in order to encourage personal hygiene, the Council decided to institute a free " wash-and-brush-up " service at the Beresford Square convenience. At the end of the year, after a six months' trial, the working of the service was reviewed, and it was found that increased use had been made of the washing facilities. I believe that the extension of these free facilities to five other major public conveniences in the Borough will more than justify the small additional expense in maintaining this service.

The number of animals arriving for slaughter at the one large abattoir in the Borough has increased by some 14,000 during the last two years. The total number of animals inspected by Meat Inspectors during the year was 49,945.

Far more time than is usually necessary has been devoted to atmospheric pollution. There have been numerous complaints of nuisances from smoke and dust from factory chimneys. Altogether, 450 observations were made during 1950. Consultations with the management in these cases usually has the effect of reducing the amount of smoke. However, in the case of three factories in particular, frequent visits were necessary before there was some improvement.

The Council has again been concerned in the matter of the offensive smells from the River Thames. This problem has, unfortunately, only a long-term solution. The first stage of capital works at the Outfalls is now in progress. Following representations by the Borough Council, the Minister of Health assured the Council that he will be ready to authorise a further large-scale scheme of improvement in the autumn of 1951, *i.e.*, before the present improvement work has been completed.

During 1950 there was further evidence of the value of the work being carried out by the Council with regard to rat destruction. This is clearly shown by the fact that, whilst 5,000 more inspections were carried out during 1950 than in the previous year, the number of infested premises found was approximately 500 less than those found in 1949.

Close co-operation has been maintained with the County Council and the local hospitals. I have continued to act for the Local Health Authority in the day-to-day administration of their personal health services.

I desire to thank members of the Council for their continued confidence and support and also members of the staff for valuable work during the year and for the help they have given me personally.

I am,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

T. STANDRING.

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF

### *Medical Officer of Health—*

T. STANDRING, M.D., B.S., D.P.H., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

### *Administrative and Clerical—*

Chief Administrative Assistant—T. H. PRESCOTT  
Senior Clerk and Committee Clerk—A. HEALEY.

### *Clerical Assistants—*

R. E. SWEETT  
R. H. THOMAS (appointed 16th January, 1950)  
Mrs. E. M. PAGE  
Miss E. C. NICOLSON  
Miss M. N. PRIGMORE  
Miss M. A. REAVIL  
H. R. HART (joined H.M. Forces, 12th May, 1950)  
L. W. JAGO (resigned 14th September, 1950)  
C. BURGESS  
G. RYAN  
J. KAY (appointed 6th November, 1950)  
K. DOUBLEDAY (temporary ; appointed 19th June, 1950).

### *Sanitary Inspectors—*

Chief Sanitary Inspector—C. J. COUCH.  
Sanitary Inspectors—H. W. PENDRILL  
F. A. ANDREW  
H. M. KERSEY  
F. J. HOINES  
W. F. WHEAL  
W. McLELLAND  
E. REES  
Miss M. F. THOMAS  
Miss B. HATFIELD  
R. A. LEACH  
W. F. TROUGHTON  
R. LINCOLN  
K. S. COOPER  
K. J. COPPIN  
J. A. ORRELL  
K. A. BENNETT  
J. B. O'CONNELL  
R. H. PASTERFIELD

### *Public Analyst (Part-time)—*

H. AMPHLETT WILLIAMS, Ph.D. (Lond.), A.C.G.F.C., F.R.I.C.



## GENERAL STATISTICS

Area of Borough	..	..	..	..	..	..	8,282 statute acres
Number of houses	..	..	..	..	..	..	38,424
Number of persons per acre	..	..	..	..	..	..	18.0
Rateable Value (March, 1950)	..	..	..	..	..	..	£1,202,783
Sum represented by a Penny Rate..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£4,850

## VITAL STATISTICS

Extracts from the vital statistics for the year are shown below :—

TABLE NO. 1.

Population (Home, <i>i.e.</i> , including members of H.M. Forces stationed in the district)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149,000
Live Births—Legitimate..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,073
Live Births—Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	99
Total Live Births	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,172
Birth Rate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14.57
Stillbirths	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	42
Stillbirths—Rate per 1,000 total births	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18.0
Deaths	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,668
Death Rate per 1,000 population	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11.2
Maternal Deaths	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Death Rate from Puerperal Causes per 1,000 total births	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.92
Deaths of Infants under one year	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	53
Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—									
(a) All Infants	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24.4
(b) Legitimate Infants	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23.0
(c) Illegitimate Infants	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	30.3
Deaths from Tuberculosis (all forms)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	58
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	330
Deaths from Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2

## BIRTHS.

The number of live births registered in Woolwich during 1950 was 1,911. After correction for inward and outward transfers, the net number of Woolwich live births was 2,172, being 332 less than in the previous year. Of the total births, 1,074 were boys and 1,098 girls. It is known that 2,018 births took place in public institutions in the Borough, of which 1,183 concerned Woolwich mothers. The birth rate was 14.5 which, when adjusted to allow for the differing age and sex distribution of the population in various parts of the country, gives a birth rate of 14.4, compared with the birth rate for England and Wales of 15.8 and for London of 17.8. There were 40 stillbirths during the year under review.

## NATURAL INCREASE IN POPULATION (*i.e.*, Excess of Births over Deaths).

In 1948 the natural increase in population was 954; in 1949, 932; and in 1950, 500.

## DEATHS.

The number of deaths registered in Woolwich was 1,311 and after correction for inward and outward transfers the net number was 1,668, giving a death rate of 11.2 for the Borough. This figure is slightly higher than for the previous year (10.9), but in comparing the two it must be borne in mind that the rate for 1950 is calculated on the home population, which includes members of the Armed Forces stationed in the area, whereas the rates for the last nine years have been calculated on the estimated civilian population.

The adjusted death rate for Woolwich was 10.7, compared with 11.8 for London and 11.6 for England and Wales.

Deaths of Woolwich residents in hospitals in the Borough totalled 333 (280 in 1949), whilst 312 died in other hospitals within the London area and 143 in hospitals outside the London area.

Of the total number of deaths, 330 were from Cancer, of which 175 occurred in men and 155 in women. There were two maternal deaths during the year, compared with one in the previous year.

## INQUESTS.

There were 50 inquests held on Woolwich residents during the year, and 301 post-mortems on Woolwich residents were carried out on behalf of the Coroner.

## INFANT MORTALITY.

The number of infant deaths has continued to fall, and during 1950 was the lowest on record, there being only 53 deaths of children under 1 year. The infant death rate was 24.4 per 1,000 live births, compared with 28.7 in 1949, and 27.0 in 1947, the previous lowest figure for the Borough. The Woolwich infant death rate compares very favourably with that for England and Wales for 1950 (29.8) and for London (26.3). The number of infant deaths is 18 fewer than occurred in 1942, the previous lowest figure for the Borough. The number of deaths occurring in the first week of life was 36.

## MARRIAGES.

There were 1,324 marriages in the Borough during 1950, of which 834 took place in churches. The remaining 490 took place at the Woolwich Register Office.



TABLE NO. 2. Nett Deaths during the Calendar Year 1950, but including Non-residents in Institutions in the Borough.

Causes of Death.	Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "residents" whether occurring within or without the district.													Deaths in Public Institutions.		
	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 2 years.	2 and under 5 years.	5 and under 15 years.	15 and under 25 years.	25 and under 35 years.	35 and under 45 years.	45 and under 55 years.	55 and under 65 years.	65 and under 75 years.	75 years and upwards.	In Borough		Out-lying In-stitutions.	
													Resid-ents.	Non-Rsdt.s.		
All Causes .. .. .	1668	53	5	8	6	9	33	53	134	249	475	644	333	156	455	
Tuberculosis, respiratory .. .. .	53	—	—	—	—	1	11	11	9	7	12	2	8	2	23	
Tuberculosis, other .. .. .	5	1	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	1	1	1	4	
Syphilitic disease .. .. .	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	3	—	—	5	
Diphtheria .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Whooping Cough .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Meningococcal infections .. .. .	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Acute poliomyelitis .. .. .	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Measles .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Other infective and parasitic diseases .. .. .	6	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	1	
Malignant neoplasm, stomach .. .. .	45	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	4	5	19	14	10	6	9	
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus .. .. .	71	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	12	22	24	10	18	4	26	
Malignant neoplasm, breast .. .. .	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4	5	6	8	3	1	3	
Malignant neoplasm, uterus .. .. .	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4	8	4	3	4	—	6	
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms .. .. .	170	1	1	1	—	—	2	6	23	37	51	48	40	16	54	
Leukaemia, aleukaemia .. .. .	8	—	—	1	—	1	1	—	—	5	—	—	3	1	4	
Diabetes .. .. .	15	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	2	4	7	2	—	7	
Vascular lesions of nervous system .. .. .	170	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	9	20	57	83	20	16	41	
Coronary disease angina .. .. .	222	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	15	52	74	77	41	18	30	
Hypertension with heart disease .. .. .	42	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	3	15	19	12	9	14	
Other heart disease .. .. .	287	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	11	17	64	188	25	5	69	
Other circulatory disease .. .. .	59	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	7	15	31	16	5	20	
Influenza .. .. .	6	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	3	—	—	1	
Pneumonia .. .. .	65	8	2	—	—	—	1	1	3	4	20	26	18	13	20	
Bronchitis .. .. .	80	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5	10	23	41	6	1	16	
Other diseases of respiratory system .. .. .	15	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	2	3	6	1	4	3	11	
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum .. .. .	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	8	11	8	15	4	6	
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea .. .. .	8	1	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	2	3	1	3	
Nephritis and Nephrosis .. .. .	18	—	—	1	—	1	1	3	—	3	8	1	6	2	7	
Hyperplasia of prostate .. .. .	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	7	13	10	2	8	
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion .. .. .	2	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Congenital malformations .. .. .	10	5	—	1	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	1	3	2	4	
Other defined and ill-defined diseases .. .. .	158	35	—	2	1	2	4	7	9	16	40	42	50	30	47	
Motor vehicle accidents .. .. .	13	—	—	1	2	—	2	1	1	1	1	4	5	4	5	
All other accidents .. .. .	20	—	1	1	1	—	—	2	1	3	5	6	6	10	6	
Suicide .. .. .	15	—	—	—	—	2	1	1	5	2	2	2	4	—	3	
Homicide and operations of war .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	



The birth and death rates locally and nationally are compared in the following table :—

TABLE NO. 3.

Birth Rates, Death Rates and Analysis of Mortality in the Year 1950.

	Rate per 1,000 Population.		Annual Death Rate per 1,000 Population.										Rate per 1,000 Live Births.	
	Live Births.	Still Births.	All Causes	Tuberculosis	Acute Poliomyelitis including Polio encephalitis	Smallpox	Whooping Cough	Diphtheria	Influenza	Pneumonia	Typhoid Paratyphoid Fevers.	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under 2 years)	Total Deaths under 1 year.	
England and Wales .. ..	15.8	0.37	11.6	0.36	0.02	—	0.01	0.00	0.10	0.46	0.00	1.9	29.8	
126 County Boroughs and Great Towns, including London ..	17.6	0.45	12.3	0.42	0.02	—	0.01	0.00	0.09	0.49	0.00	2.2	33.8	
148 Smaller Towns (Resident Populations, 25,000 to 50,000 at Census, 1931) .. ..	16.7	0.38	11.6	0.33	0.02	—	0.01	0.00	0.10	0.45	0.00	1.6	29.4	
London .. ..	17.8	0.36	11.8	0.39	0.01	—	0.01	0.00	0.07	0.48	0.00	1.0	26.3	
WOOLWICH.. ..	14.4	0.26	10.7	0.38	0.01	—	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.44	0.00	1.0	24.4	

The chief Vital Statistics since 1921 are given in the following Table :—

TABLE NO. 4.

YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	Births.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.			
		Nett.		Under 1 Year.		At all Ages.	
		Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 nett Births.	Number.	Rate.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1921 <i>a</i>	141,700	3,197	23·2	197	62	1,594	11·6
1921 <i>b</i>	137,604						
1922 <i>a</i>	142,350	2,941	21·3	184	63	1,603	11·6
1922 <i>b</i>	138,254						
1923 <i>a</i>	143,530	2,867	20·5	123	43	1,387	9·9
1923 <i>b</i>	140,000						
1924 <i>a</i>	144,400	2,590	18·5	168	65	1,543	11·0
1924 <i>b</i>	139,980						
1925 <i>a</i>	145,440	2,582	18·3	141	55	1,519	10·8
1925 <i>b</i>	140,740						
1926 <i>a</i>	146,200	2,463	17·4	107	43	1,450	10·2
1926 <i>b</i>	141,900						
1927 <i>a</i>	144,770	2,242	15·9	95	42	1,491	10·6
1927 <i>b</i>	140,770						
1928 <i>a</i>	146,600	2,269	16·1	114	50	1,554	11·0
1928 <i>b</i>	141,100						
1929 <i>a</i>	146,800	2,312	16·3	144	62	1,780	12·6
1929 <i>b</i>	141,600						
1930 <i>a</i>	146,800	2,188	15·5	91	42	1,547	10·9
1930 <i>b</i>	141,600						
1931 <i>a</i>	147,400	2,155	15·1	128	59	1,654	11·6
1931 <i>b</i>	142,600						
1932 <i>a</i>	146,400	2,054	14·0	123	60	1,635	11·1
1933 <i>a</i>	146,200	1,857	12·7	116	62	1,634	11·2
1934 <i>a</i>	145,520	2,000	13·7	127	63	1,650	11·3
1935 <i>a</i>	146,400	2,053	14·0	91	44	1,500	10·2
1936 <i>a</i>	146,500	2,017	13·8	121	59	1,649	11·2
1937 <i>a</i>	149,400	2,125	14·2	86	40	1,660	11·1
1938 <i>a</i>	150,900	2,057	13·6	102	50	1,576	10·4
1939 <i>a</i>	150,800	2,133	14·1	103	49	1,592	11·1
1940 <i>b</i>	124,340	1,846	14·8	66	36	1,854	14·9
1941 <i>b</i>	103,630	1,459	14·0	65	42	1,627	15·7
1942 <i>b</i>	110,140	2,036	18·5	71	34	1,410	12·8
1943 <i>b</i>	112,700	2,174	19·3	77	35	1,558	13·8
1944 <i>b</i>	110,970	2,037	18·3	83	40	1,611	14·5
1945 <i>b</i>	115,270	2,021	17·5	83	41	1,478	12·8
1946 <i>b</i>	134,420	2,903	21·6	91	31	1,531	11·4
1947 <i>b</i>	140,150	3,193	22·8	87	27·25	1,626	11·6
1948 <i>b</i>	142,800	2,527	17·7	74	29·28	1,573	11·0
1949 <i>b</i>	144,000	2,504	17·4	72	28·75	1,572	10·9
1950 <i>c</i>	149,000	2,172	14·6	53	24·40	1,668	11·2

*a*—Total population.

*b*—Civil population.

*c*—Home population.

Vital Statistics for 1950 for the Wards of the Borough :—

TABLE No. 5.

Wards.	BIRTHS.			DEATHS.	
	Legitimate.	Illegitimate	Still-births.	Under 1 year.	All Ages.
Dockyard .. .. .	56	5	—	3	74
St. Mary's .. .. .	67	4	—	1	44
River .. .. .	87	8	1	4	89
St. George's .. .. .	134	9	3	3	40
<b>WOOLWICH</b> .. .. .	<b>344</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>247</b>
Burrage .. .. .	82	7	2	1	85
Herbert .. .. .	132	3	3	2	104
Glyndon .. .. .	103	3	2	2	74
St. Margaret's .. .. .	201	12	5	9	174
Central .. .. .	104	8	1	2	109
St. Nicholas .. .. .	181	7	1	5	126
Abbey Wood .. .. .	155	7	6	—	154
<b>PLUMSTEAD</b> .. .. .	<b>958</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>826</b>
Well Hall .. .. .	122	6	2	2	123
Avery Hill .. .. .	327	7	5	7	207
Sherard .. .. .	322	13	9	12	265
<b>ELTHAM</b> .. .. .	<b>771</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>595</b>
<b>BOROUGH</b> .. .. .	<b>2,073</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>1,668</b>

## SANITARY ADMINISTRATION

### STAFF.

The staff of the Sanitary Section at the end of the year consisted of the Chief Inspector, sixteen men inspectors and two women inspectors.

Clerical Assistance for Sanitary Inspectors. A revised scheme of clerical assistance to the sanitary inspectors was brought into operation on the 1st January. The sanitary inspectors have been relieved of much clerical work arising from their duties, thus allowing them to spend the fullest amount of time on their technical duties. The benefit of this scheme was felt during the year.

### SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

During the year, 39,425 inspections, including re-inspections, were carried out by the sanitary inspectors, being almost 9,000 more than in the previous year. The nature of these inspections is shown in Table No. 6, and details of nuisances abated are given in Table No. 7. The number of intimation notices served as a result was 2,835, and the number of statutory notices 1,866.



TABLE NO. 6.—INSPECTIONS.

Complaints investigated ..	4,023	Tents and Vans .. ..	3
Complaints re-inspections ..	10,218	Factories .. ..	419
Outworkers' premises ..	139	Workplaces .. ..	18
Houses <i>re</i> Overcrowding ..	640	Shops Act .. ..	383
New houses <i>re</i> water supply	604	Food premises.. ..	3,218
Houses <i>re</i> infectious disease	460	Itinerant vendors .. ..	26
Houses <i>re</i> smallpox contacts	19	Complaints <i>re</i> Food .. ..	116
Houses <i>re</i> verminous cases	2,944	Pharmacy and Poisons .. ..	29
Houses <i>re</i> scabies cases ..	41	National Assistance Act .. ..	13
Houses <i>re</i> other diseases ..	63	Water sampling and testing ..	53
Houses <i>re</i> Housing Act ..	509	Rodent Control .. ..	3,308
House-to-house inspections..	85	Smoke observations .. ..	450
Rent Restrictions Act ..	14	Theatres and cinemas .. ..	13
Aged and infirm persons ..	1,162	Urinals accessible to the public	74
Common Lodging Houses ..	34	Women's Lavatories .. ..	105
Hostels .. ..	5	Miscellaneous .. ..	10,261

TABLE NO. 7.—NUISANCES ABATED.

Dirty conditions .. ..	1,275	Drainage defects .. ..	1,363
Damp conditions .. ..	4,948	Water closet defects .. ..	1,400
Dilapidations .. ..	6,205	Dustbins provided .. ..	486
Verminous rooms cleansed..	1,052	Water supply defects.. ..	214
Defective lighting .. ..	393	Foul accumulations removed	48
Defective ventilation .. ..	398	Overcrowding remedied .. ..	76
Defective paving .. ..	200	Miscellaneous .. ..	130

## COMPLAINTS.

— 4,023 complaints of nuisance (compared with 4,703 in 1949) were received and investigated. The necessary action was taken where defects or nuisances were discovered.

## WATER SUPPLY.

The Metropolitan Water Board is responsible for the water supply for all domestic purposes in the Borough, all dwelling-houses being supplied direct from the public water mains.

*Wells.* There are now only eight wells in use in the Borough, and these are used chiefly for trade and kindred purposes.

One private spring in the Woolwich Borough is at Conduit Meadows, Eltham. There are three private deep wells used for trade purposes and also deep wells at the Council's Woolwich and Plumstead Baths and at the refuse destructor plant at Plumstead. Another deep well, the supply from which is unfit for drinking, is situate in the Royal Dockyard. Other wells within the Borough have been sealed off and there is no access to them.

## DRAINAGE.

The inspection of new drains is carried out by the Borough Engineer, and reconstruction and repair of drainage work supervised by the Health Department.

## BUILDING LICENCES.

During the year, 1,983 applications for building licences were received by the Borough Engineer and licences were issued in respect of 1,246 of these applications.

## PHARMACY AND POISONS ACT, 1933.

This Act places upon Metropolitan Borough Councils the duty of enforcing the provisions of the Act relating to poisons in Part II of the Poisons List. At the end of the year the number of sellers of Part II Poisons (other than registered Pharmacists) on the list maintained by the Council was 145. This number includes 12 new registrations during the year.

# RENT AND MORTGAGE INTEREST (RESTRICTIONS) ACTS.

During 1950 the Health Committee authorised the issue of certificates in respect of seven dwelling houses, the premises in question not being in a reasonable state of repair.

The Committee also considered two applications for revocation of existing certificates of unfitness and authorised the issue of one such certificate on being satisfied that the necessary repairs to put the house in a reasonable state of fitness had been executed.

## FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

TABLE NO. 8.

Details of inspections carried out during 1950 :—

Premises.	No. on Register.	Number of		
		Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities .. .. .	46	87	5	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority .. .. .	337	332	24	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total .. .. .	383	419	29	—

Cases in which defects were found and remedied :—

Particulars.	Number of Cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of cleanliness ..	9	9	—	—	—
Overcrowding .. ..	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation ..	2	2	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors .. ..	5	5	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences :—					
(a) Insufficient ..	15	15	—	6	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	59	59	—	10	—
(c) Not separate for sexes .. ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outworkers) ..	—	—	11	—	—
Total .. ..	90	90	11	16	—



## OUTWORKERS.

Outworkers within the Borough are visited periodically by the sanitary inspectors.

The number of outworkers and the nature of the work carried on, in the list prepared in August, 1950, was as follows:—

Wearing apparel .. .. .	114
Household linen, etc. .. .. .	46
Lace and lace curtaining, etc. .. .. .	1
Curtains and furniture hangings, etc. .. .. .	1
Umbrellas, etc. .. .. .	1
Artificial Flowers .. .. .	4
Feather sorting .. .. .	2
Packing of buttons, etc. .. .. .	2
Making stuffed toys, etc. .. .. .	1
Cosaques, Christmas crackers and similar .. .. .	1
Lampshades .. .. .	9

## RODENT CONTROL.

The work of rat destruction was continued throughout the year. The staff engaged on this work consisted of two investigators and four operatives working under the supervision of a Sanitary Inspector who devoted the whole of his time to this service.

The treatment of private dwellings is generally free. This fact has made the public much more ready to report infestations. Before the scheme commenced, the average number of complaints received during a month was 40. This figure has now increased to approximately 110 per month.

All complaints are investigated and the area of infestation defined before treatment is commenced. In addition, a block control scheme is systematically worked throughout the Borough.

Where the infestation appears to originate from the drainage system the drains are tested and any defects remedied.

The sewers are treated twice a year in addition to an annual test bait, and the Council's refuse destructor tips are treated monthly.

At the maintenance treatment carried out in June, 696 manholes were treated and "takes" were recorded in 382 manholes or 55 per cent. of the number baited. A total of 697 manholes was treated at the December maintenance treatment, and "takes" were recorded in 426 manholes or 61 per cent. of the number treated.

The total number of premises surveyed during the year was 12,286 and the number of inspections amounted to 32,253. Effective preventive measures were taken in 1,702 instances.

Whilst over 5,000 more inspections were carried out during 1950 compared with 1949, the number of infested premises found was approximately 500 less than those found in 1949. This clearly shows the value of the work being carried out by the Council.

Guidance to local authorities on methods of treatment continues to be made available by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, which came into force on the 31st March, 1950, re-enacts, with modifications, the Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act which is repealed, and makes permanent provision for preventing loss of food by infestation. The Borough Council is an authority under the Act.

The new Act emphasises the primary obligation as being upon the local authority to ensure that so far as practicable, its area is kept free from rats and mice. Previously, the primary duty had been laid upon the individual occupier coupled with a right to the local authority to enforce the requirements upon him.



Occupiers of non-agricultural land, which includes buildings, are to give notice to the Local Authority of the presence of rats and mice in substantial numbers and penalties may be incurred for failure to give notice.

Local Authorities are empowered to serve notice on owners or occupiers of any land, requiring destruction of rats and mice and the notice may specify forms of treatment and any structural repairs or other works required to be effected. There is a right of appeal against the notice to a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Groups of premises may be given treatment as a unit, and the Local Authority may recover the cost from the several occupiers.

The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries is empowered to make regulations in connection with the threshing or dismantling of ricks to ensure the destruction of rats or mice escaping therefrom.

For the purpose of fulfilling their functions under Part I of the Act, the Local Authority is empowered to require information from the occupiers of any land as to interests in that land and failure to provide such information on request is subject to penalty.

Expenditure incurred by Local Authorities may be met by grants by the Minister with the consent of the Treasury up to one-half of such expenditure so far as not otherwise recovered under the Act.

Businesses dealing with food, including the manufacture, storage, transport or sale of food, must give notice to the Minister of any infestation that comes to their knowledge and the Minister may give directions for preventing or mitigating such infestation, including the carrying out of structural works or the application of any form of treatment deemed necessary by the Minister in the circumstances.

Regulations made under this Act relax or exclude, where expedient, the obligation under Section 13 of the 1949 Act of persons engaged in the manufacture, storage, transport or sale of food, *e.g.*, grain, fresh fruit, meat and fish, to give notice to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of any infestation of pests on premises, vehicles, food or other goods. As certain premises are permanently infested with insects and mites, constant notification would be impracticable.

The Regulations place restrictions on the delivery of infested food and other goods so as to enable infestation by pests to be controlled.

#### RAG AND BONE BYE-LAWS.

During 1950 the Council instituted proceedings against two men for an offence against the London County Council Bye-laws respecting the business of a rag and bone dealer. The men were seen by a police constable in a Woolwich street to hand balloons with plastic covers to eight small children in exchange for bundles of old rags. Fines totalling £4 with £2 costs were imposed.

#### RAG FLOCK.

The Public Analyst reported that the two samples submitted for analysis during 1950 conformed to the standard of cleanliness laid down in the Rag Flock Regulations, the number of parts of chlorine being 9.5 and 9.1 respectively.

#### OFFENSIVE TRADES.

During the year, the Council approved an application for the renewal of one tripe boiler licence.

There is one other offensive trade—that of slaughterer of poultry—carried on within the Borough, the Council having approved the re-establishment of this business.

#### LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

During 1950 it was necessary to institute legal proceedings in 97 cases in order to obtain compliance with notices served by the sanitary inspectors under the Public Health (London) Act, 1936. Of the total summonses, 45 were withdrawn,



the work being in hand at the time of the hearing, and a further 28 summonses were adjourned. Abatement Orders were made in 19 instances, and in the remaining cases fines totalling £15 with £12 14s. 6d. costs, were imposed.

#### WELFARE OF AGED AND INFIRM PERSONS.

The powers of the Borough Council to deal with the removal to suitable premises of aged persons in need of care and attention are now derived from Section 47 of the National Assistance Act, 1948. Where in the opinion of the Council removal is necessary in the interests of the persons concerned, or in the interest of the general public, the Council can apply to a Court for an Order requiring removal to suitable premises for a period, in the first instance, of not more than three months. However, action under this Section is limited to those persons who are suffering from a grave chronic disease, or, being aged, infirm or physically incapable, are living in insanitary conditions.

During the year it was found necessary to apply to the Court for a removal Order in respect of a woman aged 65 years, living in insanitary conditions and in need of care and attention.

A considerable amount of useful work has again been carried out by the Council in the care of old people. There are a great many elderly persons in the Borough who, whilst not sufficiently infirm to need institutional treatment, are living alone and with increasing age require constant observation.

The two women inspectors of the Department made 1,162 visits to the homes of old people during 1950. Valuable assistance was also given by the Home Nursing Service and the Home Helps, with whom there is complete liaison.

Work, on behalf of the London County Council, on the erection of a home in the Plumstead Common area to provide accommodation for elderly and infirm persons was nearing completion at the end of the year. The Home, which is the first of its kind to be specially designed and built by the London County Council as an old persons' home, will have 92 beds. Men and women are to be accommodated, but not persons needing special nursing care.

Metropolitan Borough Councils are responsible at the present time for the administration of the powers contained in Section 31 of the National Assistance Act, 1948, so far as they relate to the making of contributions to the funds of voluntary organisations who arrange for the provision of meals for old people in their own homes, or at old people's clubs. The Council is giving financial assistance to the Woolwich Council of Social Service who are operating an "Old People's Lunch Club" at the Central Hall, Plumstead High Street. The amount of the contribution made by the Council has been further increased this year. Approximately, 1,600 meals a month are served from the Club.

The Council has also considered and approved in principle the making of a contribution towards the cost of the service of a part-time organiser for the home visitation of old people.

#### MOSQUITO CONTROL.

Breeding grounds for mosquitos are provided by the marshland areas in the Borough. In Abbey Wood, the area nearest to the marshland, considerable annoyance has been caused in late years by this pest and extensive spraying operations have been carried out on stagnant ponds, marsh ditches and allotment holders' water butts, reducing this annoyance to a minimum.

During the year, fewer complaints were received and it is felt that the work of the department is meeting with considerable success. Routine spraying is carried out every year in the early summer, as a preventive measure.

#### COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

These are licensed annually by the Borough Council in accordance with the provisions of the Public Health (London) Act, 1936. There are now only two licensed



Common Lodging Houses in the Borough. The number of inspections made during the year was 34. Details of the accommodation available are as follows :—

Premises.	Accommodation (Men)
60, Beresford Street .. .. .	50
102, Woolwich High Street .. .. .	22

#### RIVER THAMES—OFFENSIVE SMELLS.

The offensive smells from the River Thames were again a source of complaint during the summer months of 1950. During the previous year the Council had made representations to the London County Council and the Port of London Authority on this matter and were informed that an improvement programme of capital works, at an estimated cost of £3,000,000 had been adopted by the County Council and was to be put in hand as soon as possible.

Work was commenced in September, 1950, on the erection of new primary sedimentation tanks at the Northern Outfall Works as part of this programme. However, in view of the seriousness of the condition of the river, the Borough Council sent representations to the London County Council that the closest attention be given to the problem, with a view to further instalments in the capital works programme being speedily put in hand. Representation was also made by the Council to the Minister of Health, pointing out that there was considerable concern locally about the condition of the River, and that it was considered essential that works to effect a substantial improvement should be commenced at an early date. The Minister replied that he would be ready to authorise a further large-scale scheme of improvement in the autumn of 1951, *i.e.*, before the present improvement work was completed, and he was considering proposals that further works should be undertaken at an early date to bring about a drastic improvement in the conditions obtaining off the Northern and Southern Outfall Works.

#### ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

There has been a considerable increase recently in the number of complaints of nuisance caused by the emission of smoke, etc. from factory chimneys in the Woolwich and Plumstead areas, and much attention has been given to this matter. During the year 450 observations were made of factory chimneys in the Borough and five notices were served requiring abatement of nuisances.

Investigations of a nuisance from fine dust emitted from a factory in the Plumstead area have been carried out. Numerous visits to the factory were made by officers of the Council and, following a particular observation, the owner was pressed to effect an immediate improvement. A notice was also served requiring the factory yard, which was congested and untidy and a source of nuisance, to be re-arranged and tidied and at least a part of the yard enclosed and covered to enable lorries to be loaded and unloaded under cover.

Complaints of excessive smoke from an Abbey Wood factory have been made from time to time by nearby residents, and the Council's Smoke Abatement Inspector has visited this factory on several occasions. Consultations with the management have resulted in slight improvement, but the nuisance from this factory was still a cause of complaint at the end of the year.

Several observations have been carried out on the chimneys of a large factory on the river front. The firm concerned stated that the primary cause of the excessive smoke was the quality of the coal being used, which was not all of one size and so made proper stoking very difficult. Recent observations on these chimneys, however, have shown some reduction in the amount of smoke being emitted.

At the Annual Conference of the National Smoke Abatement Society, a resolution was passed : " That this Conference learns with regret that in many instances bituminous coal is being burned in grates suitable for smokeless fuels in houses in local authority estates, which is in some cases exceptionally offensive from its being emitted at a low level from prefabricated bungalows, and asks all local authorities to encourage the use of smokeless fuels in these grates."



Enquiries locally showed that the majority of Council house tenants were using smokeless fuels where grates are designed for the purpose. Every effort is made by the Council to discourage the use of bituminous coal. Whilst in sympathy with the above resolution, the Council felt that, in view of the above position and owing to present difficulties generally, and especially the higher cost of smokeless fuels, no further action could be taken in the matter.

#### MORTUARY.

Public mortuary facilities are provided at the Council's premises at Sunbury Street. These facilities have been little used in recent years owing to the centralisation of Coroners' Courts in London.

#### EXHUMATIONS.

There was one exhumation carried out during the year, on the authority of an Exhumation Licence issued under the Burial Act, 1857. All the necessary precautions to safeguard the public health were observed.

#### BURIAL OR CREMATION OF THE DEAD.

Under Section 50 of the National Assistance Act, 1948, it is the duty of the Council as sanitary authority to arrange for the burial or cremation of any person who has died, or been found dead, in their area, where it appears to the Council that no other suitable arrangements have been or are being made. Expenses incurred in such burial may be recovered from the estate of the deceased person or from a "liable relative."

During the year 1950 the Council arranged for the burial of 10 persons, in each case there being no known relatives of the deceased or the relatives being unable to defray the private funeral costs. The total expenses in respect of the cases amounted to £72, of which £29 was recovered.

#### CEMETERIES.

Three cemeteries are owned by the Woolwich Borough Council and administered by the Town Clerk's Department. These are situate at Eltham and Plumstead, the two in Plumstead being known as Woolwich Cemetery and Plumstead Cemetery. Roughly, each cemetery serves the area after which it is named.

The following table gives details of interments during the last three years at these cemeteries :—

TABLE NO. 9.

Cemetery.	NUMBER OF INTERMENTS.		
	1948.	1949.	1950.
Woolwich .. .. .	474	416	416
Plumstead .. .. .	623	586	600
Eltham .. .. .	321	357	348

#### PROPOSED JOINT CREMATORIUM.

The Council in 1939 decided to establish a crematorium in Eltham Cemetery jointly with the Boroughs of Bexley and Erith and the Urban District Council of Chislehurst and Sidcup, but owing to the war the Council could not proceed.

The Crayford Urban District Council have since been included in the scheme.

The Borough Council has made several approaches to the Minister of Health for sanction to proceed with the scheme, but in view of the need for economy in capital expenditure such sanction has not been forthcoming.

## CHURCHYARDS.

The parish churches of Woolwich and Eltham, and the old parish church of Plumstead, each have an extensive churchyard, but burials are confined solely to Eltham, where only old vaults and graves are now opened.

## WASHING FACILITIES FOR THE PUBLIC.

In January, 1950, in order to encourage personal hygiene, the Health Committee considered a report on the public washing facilities in the Borough, and particularly facilities for the use of stall holders and other outside food handlers generally, and the extent to which use was being made of these washing facilities.

It was found that virtually no use was being made of the paid "wash-and-brush-up" service at the Beresford Square public convenience by the stall holders in the neighbouring market. The Committee felt that the time had come when every encouragement should be given, not only to food handlers but to citizens generally, to observe the washing of hands after use of the public convenience. The Works Committee gave sympathetic and favourable consideration to the initiation of a free "wash-and-brush-up" service at the Beresford Square convenience for a trial period of six months. This service commenced on the 1st May, the paid service continuing, and its working was reviewed at the end of the year. Of the total of 4,018 washes at this convenience during the period, 1,298 were in respect of the free wash. Whilst the free washing facilities had not been used as extensively as had been hoped, there had, nevertheless, been a considerable total increase in the use of washing facilities and women stall holders in particular had been ready to use the free facilities. The running cost of the service was found to be extremely low.

The extension of the free facilities to other public conveniences in the Borough was considered by the Council and I am now able to report that the Council has decided that free facilities also be provided at five other major public conveniences.

## PUBLIC BATHS AND WASH-HOUSES.

The Council has four bathing establishments in the Borough. A full description of this service, which includes swimming baths, slipper baths, Turkish baths and massage, wash-houses and the use of the premises for social and sporting activities during the winter months, was included in my Annual Report for 1949.

The Baths Superintendent has kindly supplied the following information on the number of bathers using the Baths Service in 1949-50 and 1950-51.

	1949-50.	1950-51.
Swimming .. .. .	411,642	335,004
Slipper Baths .. .. .	157,204	146,906
Turkish Baths and Massages .. .. .	20,246	17,762
Public Wash-house .. .. .	13,597	13,350
Free baths to Old Age Pensioners and Unemployed .. .. .	4,547	3,816
	<hr/> 607,236	<hr/> 516,838

The reduction in attendances for the year 1950-51 was in great measure due to the very unfavourable weather throughout the summer of that year. Samples of swimming bath water for bacteriological testing are taken monthly and more frequently if found necessary. One hundred such samples were submitted for bacteriological examination during 1950 and satisfactory reports were received on all the samples.

The Department carries out its own tests of free chlorine estimation and colorimetric test for the pH value.

## SWIMMING AND PADDLING POOLS.

The two open-air swimming pools in the Borough, in Eltham Park and in the Victoria Gardens, North Woolwich, are provided by the London County Council.



The Borough Council has paddling pools at the Middle Park Estate, in the Briset Road Recreation Ground and in Plumstead Gardens, and there is another paddling pool in Eaglesfield, Shooters Hill, belonging to the London County Council.

#### STREET CLEANSING AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.

This was fully described in my Annual Report for 1949. During 1950, 41,570 tons of house and trade refuse were collected and, with the trade refuse delivered by various tradesmen, brought the total to 48,586 tons dealt with at the destructor. The salvaged material, weighing 1,889 tons, yielded £6,546 when sold. The raw kitchen waste dealt with was 2,947 tons and realised £48,488. At the piggery, 269 pigs were maintained and the sale of pigs realised £5,428.

#### PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.

Fourteen conveniences for men and a similar number for women are maintained throughout the area, hours of opening and closing varying with local requirements. In the town centre, for example, the conveniences are open from 5.30 a.m. Normally, however, this service is available between the hours of 6.30 a.m. and 11 p.m. These conveniences were inspected regularly during the year.

The information regarding the street cleansing, refuse disposal and public conveniences, has been kindly supplied by the Borough Engineer.

### HOUSING

In December, 1950, there were 38,424 houses in the Borough. The number inspected for housing defects under the Public Health or Housing Acts was 14,849 compared with 6,242 in the previous year. The number found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for habitation was 2,835. Some 1,520 houses were rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the sanitary inspectors, including the service of Intimation Notices. Statutory Notices were served for the first time in respect of 1,315 houses.

The work necessitated by the large number of complaints of all descriptions received in 1950 continued to restrict the number of house-to-house inspections carried out under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations, 1925, 83 dwelling houses being inspected under these Regulations in 1950.

#### OVERCROWDING.

The Council is under obligation, upon application made by either landlord or occupier to give in writing the permitted number of persons in respect of any dwelling house, and measurements were taken of dwellings on 640 occasions, compared with 126 in 1949. In all, 198 families were found to be living in overcrowded conditions. Overcrowding reports were made to the London County Council on behalf of these persons and in 76 cases alternative accommodation was obtained.

#### DEMOLITION AND CLOSING ORDERS.

Demolition Orders were made by the Council under the provisions of Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, in respect of the following unfit houses : Nos. 91, 92 and 93, Woolwich High Street.

The Council accepted an undertaking from the owner of No. 6, Bowling Green Row, Woolwich, that the premises would not be used for human habitation.

During the year, Closing Orders were made in respect of the basement rooms at Nos. 81, Eltham Road, S.E. 9, 22, Heverham Road, S.E. 18 and 9, Passey Place, S.E. 9.

The Council authorised the service of a notice on the owner of No. 7, Heavitree Road, Plumstead, requested that works to render the house fit be executed as required by Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936.

At the end of the year action was pending regarding a further six houses.



## SLUM CLEARANCE.

In February, the Council forwarded to the London County Council, as Town Planning Authority, a list of areas which could be dealt with as slum clearance areas.

Early in the year discussions took place between representatives of the County Council and the Borough Council on the resumption of slum clearance work in the Borough, following which the Council made a formal approach to the County Council that the Lord Warwick Street Clearance Area should be transferred to the Council for representation and subsequent development. The County Council agreed with the proposal that the clearance and redevelopment of this area (which forms part of a considerably larger area now known as "the St. Mary's Redevelopment Area") should be carried out by the Borough Council. At the end of the year arrangements were being made with a view to the Council acquiring all available vacant sites within the redevelopment area in order to provide alternative accommodation for families who will be displaced.

The Health Committee of the Council also considered a comprehensive schedule of further possible clearance areas in the Borough, and authorised the carrying out of a detailed survey of another area suitable for slum clearance.

## NEW HOUSES.

The number of certificates issued in respect of new dwelling houses as having a proper and sufficient supply of water was 727, being 85 more than in the previous year.

I am indebted to the Director of Housing for the following information :—

The proud record of the Borough of Woolwich with regard to the provision of post-war houses was maintained during the year 1950. The number of new houses built in the Borough during 1950 are summarised as follows :—

By Woolwich Borough Council, 331 ; by private enterprise, 127.

In addition, 169 flats erected by the London County Council on the Barnfield Estate became available for letting during the year. Apart from the erection of flats by the London County Council there were a further 284 houses under construction in the Borough by the Borough Council and by private enterprise at the end of the year.

Number of applicants on Register at 1st January, 1950	..	6,300	
Number of applications received during year	..	1,368	
			7,668

Number of applicants rehoused during year :—

(1) By Borough Council	..	..	..	..	413	
(2) By nomination to L.C.C.	..	..	..	..	23	
(3) Direct by L.C.C.	..	..	..	..	197	
						633
						7,035

Number of applications cancelled or withdrawn (applicants moved, found own accommodation, etc.)..	..	..	515
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Number of applicants on "live" Register at 31st December, 1950	..	..	..	..	..	6,520
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Properties under Council's control :—

At 31st December, 1950, tenancies totalled :—

In pre-war houses	..	..	..	..	..	4,317
In rebuilt houses	..	..	..	..	..	146
In new post-war houses	..	..	..	..	..	1,321
In temporary dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	986
In S.D.A.A. Properties in Possession	..	..	..	..	..	35
In requisitioned properties..	..	..	..	..	..	1,080
In other properties	..	..	..	..	..	94
						7,979



The weekly rent roll at the end of 1950 was £8,024 11s. 11d., compared with £7,164 6s. 3d. at the end of 1949.

At the end of the year only two families (compared with 14 at the end of 1949) were still in occupation of huts on vacated Army sites which they had occupied as squatters. This accommodation is unsatisfactory in spite of works carried out. As each hut becomes empty it is rendered uninhabitable.

## HEALTH EDUCATION

### INFORMAL TALKS AND FILM SHOWS.

The Borough Council has for many years attached great importance to health education. Informal talks to audiences at their usual meeting places forms a prominent part of the programme.

During 1950 a new 16 mm. cinematograph projector was purchased by the Council, the existing projector, which had been in use since 1936 and which had given yeoman service in this work, being worn out and beyond economical repair. The new projector was purchased in time for a comprehensive winter programme to be undertaken, and this was begun on the 8th September. By the end of the year 27 film shows had been given on health subjects by the Health Department, with 17 talks by members of the staff on various health subjects. These talks are usually followed by discussions. This type of session at which talks are illustrated by appropriate films is distinctly popular with organisations throughout the Borough and, judging by the number of applications received for a visit from the unit, this winter session will break all previous records for attendance. Health propaganda films are now available in increasing numbers.

The talks are very useful in affording opportunities for making the health services well known and for spreading knowledge on subjects connected with health. It is a satisfying method of instruction. The audience, an organised body at its usual meeting place, is at home and is therefore inclined to ask more questions than at a public meeting, and as most of the talks are given by members of the staff there is a useful contact between the staff of the Department and the general public.

Film strips and slides are also being used in this work.

The following Informal Talks and film sessions were given to 31st December :—

### HEALTH EDUCATION SESSIONS.

Date.	Informal Talks.	Cine Films.
SEPTEMBER		
20	The Work of the Health Department..	Tuberculosis. Discovery of Sulphanilamide drugs. Health Cartoons.
25	—	Food, diet and cooking.
OCTOBER		
5	—	Food, diet and cooking.
10	Food Hygiene .. .. .	—
11	Pest Control .. .. .	Use of D.D.T.
17	Food Poisoning .. .. .	The work of a Medical Officer of Health.
18	do. .. .. .	Replanning of London. do., do.
19	Food Hygiene .. .. .	Food Poisoning
24	Work of the Health Department ..	Mass X-ray. Poliomyelitis.
26	Food Hygiene .. .. .	Food Poisoning. Children's Meals.

Date	Informal Talks.	Cine Films
NOVEMBER		
1	—	Makeup of Local Government, Rates. Health Services.
2	Food Poisoning .. .. .	Food Poisoning
6	—	Blood Transfusion. Mass X-ray. Story of Penicillin.
15	—	Mass X-ray. Pest Control.
16	—	do. do.
21	The work of the Health Department. Food Poisoning.	Polling. Mass X-ray. Health Cartoons.
21	Food Hygiene .. .. .	Food Poisoning. Mass X-ray.
27	—	The Housing Problem. Replanning London. Mass X-ray.
29	Food Hygiene .. .. .	The work of a Medical Officer of Health. Mass X-ray.
29	Food Hygiene .. .. .	Food Poisoning.
30	Health and Hygiene .. .. .	Children's Meals. Mass X-ray.
30	—	Road Safety. Athletics. Health Cartoons.
DECEMBER		
6	—	The Housing Problem. Replanning London.
9	—	The Common Cold. Health Cartoons.
12	—	Local Government Services.
14	—	Pest Control. Housing.
20	Work of the Health Department ..	The work of a Medical Officer of Health.

#### LECTURES TO FOOD HANDLERS.

Towards the end of the year the Health Committee decided that a series of lectures be arranged for professional food handlers, which would go rather more deeply into the subject of food hygiene than would normally be attempted with lay audiences. These arrangements were in hand at the end of the year. Further details are given elsewhere.

#### LEAFLETS AND POSTERS.

As in previous years, the Health Department circulated 500 copies per month of the booklet, *Better Health*.

The Council has two large poster sites in prominent positions in the Borough and these were used to display posters on measles, tuberculosis, clean food, flies, the washing of hands and diphtheria. Double-crown posters were also displayed in public offices during the year. Approximately 5,000 leaflets were distributed to the public during 1950. Leaflets issued by the Central Council for Health Education on measles and whooping cough, and by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents on safety in the home were most in demand.

## INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

#### PREMISES WHERE FOOD IS PREPARED OR OFFERED FOR SALE.

Amongst their other duties, five inspectors are specially concerned with this work and in the taking of samples under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938; the Defence (Sale of Food) Regulations; and the registration of all new premises under the Food and Drugs Act.

In addition, routine visits are paid by the district Sanitary Inspectors to all food premises in the Borough and immediate action is taken in regard to any insanitary condition found. Two women Inspectors devote a great deal of time to



the inspection of cafes, restaurants, canteens and eating houses. The total number of inspections of food premises during the year was 3,218. In addition to canteens there are some 540 restaurants and eating houses in the Borough.

In an endeavour to stimulate and encourage the food handler in his responsibilities and keep him up to date with modern ideas, the Council has authorised a series of lectures—"Hygiene for Food Handlers." Each series will comprise six lectures of one hour's duration.

These lectures have been specially designed for and are restricted to professional food handlers. They are free of charge, and have been arranged during business hours in the confident hope that managements will co-operate and so encourage members of their staff to further their knowledge and regard their attendance as a matter of duty. The syllabus consists of Food Borne Infections and Food Poisoning; Hygiene of Food Premises; Cleansing Detergents and Sterilants; Rodent and Insect Pest Control; The Law for Food Premises and Food Handlers.

A certificate of attendance will be awarded to candidates who complete the course.

*Food Bye-laws.* Model food bye-laws prepared by the Ministry of Food in conjunction with the Ministry of Health with the assistance of other Government Departments and associations representing Local Authorities and the food handling trades, were issued at the end of 1949.

The bye-laws aim at securing the observation of sanitary and cleanly conditions in premises in connection with the handling, wrapping and delivery of food for sale for human consumption and food exposed for sale in the open air. The model has been designed to apply generally to all branches of the food trade.

In London, the County Council is the authority responsible for the making of food bye-laws and Metropolitan Boroughs the authorities for enforcing them. Bye-laws made by the County Council in 1936 are in existence in London, but the new model bye-laws are more comprehensive. The County Council have approved draft bye-laws in the terms of the model, with the addition of three clauses specifically applicable to London. To date, the County Council's new food bye-laws have not come into operation.

The following is a summary of the registered food premises in the Borough at the end of 1950, together with the number of inspections carried out during the year :—

TABLE NO. 10.

Description.	Number in Borough on 31st December.	Number of Inspections.
Dairies .. .. .	5	34
Distributors of Milk .. .. .	103	320
Ice Cream Premises .. .. .	284	461
Premises where Food is prepared other than above	222	586
Restaurants and Eating Houses .. .. .	546	697
Shops and Markets .. .. .	—	1,077
Bakehouses .. .. .	29	43
Itinerant Vendors .. .. .	—	226

Constant attention is given to the inspection of stalls in the markets.

## MILK SUPPLY.

The number of registered distributors of milk in the Borough is 78, and there are 5 dairy premises. The Council has also approved the registration of a further 25 distributors of milk who are selling milk in the area from premises outside the Borough. Under the provisions of the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, 146 dealers' licences and 71 supplementary licences authorising the use of special designations have been issued.

The standard of the milk supply was found to be satisfactory; practically all the milk distributed in the Borough is heat treated, being supplied by a few large dairy companies.

All the 157 samples of milk submitted for chemical analysis contained 3 per cent. or more of fat. Actual figures were :—

	<i>Number of Samples.</i>
4·5 per cent. and over .. .. .	0
4 per cent. and under 4·5 per cent. .. .. .	6
3·5 per cent. and under 4 per cent. .. .. .	43
3 per cent. and under 3·5 per cent. .. .. .	108
Below 3 per cent. .. .. .	0

The Public Analyst observes that although no samples fell below 3 per cent. fat, the majority were again below 3·5 per cent. suggesting a persistent drift towards poorer milk.

During the year 261 samples of milk (all pasteurised) were submitted to the Methylene Blue test for the keeping quality of milk. Four samples failed to satisfy the test and in these cases repeat samples were immediately obtained and were reported as satisfactory.

Of the 281 samples of pasteurised milk submitted to the Phosphatase test for adequate heat treatment, the test was satisfied in respect of 274 samples. In the seven cases where an unsatisfactory report was received, further samples were immediately obtained and were reported as satisfactory.

Nine samples of sterilised milk were submitted for turbidity test in accordance with the Milk (Special Designations) (Pasteurised and Sterilised) Regulations, 1949, and satisfactory reports were received in each case.

A total of 141 samples of milk were obtained from milk roundsmen in the course of early morning deliveries to schools, hospitals and institutions in the Borough. Of these samples, 37 were submitted for chemical examination, 52 for the Phosphatase test and 52 for the Methylene Blue test.

**MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS)—SPECIFIED AREAS.** By the Food and Drugs (Milk, Dairies and Artificial Cream) Act, 1950, the Ministry of Food is empowered to make Orders specifying areas within which the use of special designations relating to milk sold by retail becomes obligatory. Up to the present time the use of special designations has been a voluntary act.

Following a survey for the Ministry of Food, the Minister has informed Local Authorities that he is satisfied that the consumer demand in the London and Portsmouth areas can be met by supplies of special designated milk. Subject to consultation with appropriate representative organisations, he intends to lay Orders before Parliament, the effect of which will be that from the 1st October, 1951, all milk sold by retail within these areas must be special designated milk, *i.e.*, sterilised, pasteurised, Tuberculin Tested or accredited milk from a single herd.

The Ministry of Food has stated that Local Authorities concerned with the execution and enforcement of Milk (Special Designations) Regulations in specified areas will have added responsibilities as the agents of the Central Government for carrying into effect the policy contained in recent legislation. The Minister believes that Authorities are alive to the importance of maintaining a high standard as regards the use of special designations, and that they will take all possible action to ensure the proper and efficient discharge of these duties.



For some considerable time now only special designated milk has been on sale in the Borough of Woolwich.

#### ICE CREAM.

Regular supervision of ice cream premises is carried out by the sanitary inspectors and advice given where necessary, particularly to manufacturers of ice cream.

A large number of new applications for registration of ice cream premises are being received. Inspections are carried out of all such premises and alterations and additions required where necessary before registration is approved. In several instances it has been found necessary to restrict the sale to that of pre-packed ice cream only.

The number of ice cream premises registered in the Borough at the end of the year was 219, of which 17 were for manufacture.

Sixty-two samples of ice cream were submitted for grading by the Methylene Blue reduction test. This test is a measure of the bacterial cleanliness of ice cream. The time taken at 37° C. for complete decolorisation to take place is ascertained. The samples were graded as follows :—

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Time taken to reduce Methylene Blue.</i>	<i>No. of Samples in grade.</i>
1 ..	4½ hours or more ..	32
2 ..	2½ to 4 hours ..	16
3 ..	½ to 2 hours ..	11
4 ..	Nil ..	3

Further investigation was carried out in the case of those samples in Grades 3 and 4. All the 12 samples submitted for grading in 1949 were graded in Grade 2, there has thus been a slight improvement in the bacterial standard of the ice cream.

Forty-nine samples were submitted for chemical analysis and the fat content of the samples was as follows :—

Over 20 per cent. fat .. .. .	4
15-20 per cent. .. .. .	0
10-15 per cent. .. .. .	17
5-10 per cent. .. .. .	23
2½-5 per cent. .. .. .	3
Under 2½ per cent. .. .. .	2

The average fat content of the samples examined was 9·1 per cent.

At the end of 1950 there was still no legal standard for ice cream. However, Local Authorities were informed by the Ministry of Food that a standard would come into operation on the 1st March, 1951, and that it was proposed to improve the standard progressively as supplies of ingredients became more plentiful.

The provisions of the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment, etc.) Regulations, 1947, made under the Food and Drugs Act, had not come into full force during 1950 owing to difficulties of the supply of certain essential recording instruments. However, from the 1st March, 1951, it is necessary in connection with the Regulations to use such indicating and recording thermometers as the local authority consider requisite for indicating and recording the temperatures to, or at which, the mixture is raised, kept or reduced. This interval has been provided in order to give time, where needed, to obtain special thermometers.

#### MEAT SUPPLY.

Slaughterhouses are subject to annual licensing and there are now only two licensed slaughterhouses in the Borough, one of which is not being used at the present time. The Council's food inspectors engaged on the inspection of meat supplies at the Plumstead Abattoir, again had a very busy year. Due to the con-

centration of slaughtering at these premises, the equivalent of the full-time services of more than three inspectors was required for the inspection of carcasses. Compared with the previous year, 3,962 more carcasses were inspected in 1950, and 14,130 more than in 1948. This was due to a large increase in the number of cattle, lambs and pigs being slaughtered. As the arrival of beasts for slaughter is irregular and as all carcasses must be inspected almost immediately after slaughter, the staff were frequently kept late on duty.

The following table gives details of the number of animals slaughtered during 1950 :—

TABLE NO. 11.  
CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED, 1950.

	Cattle, excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed .. .. .	12,638	4,453	3,103	27,359	2,392
Number Inspected .. .. .	12,638	4,453	3,103	27,359	2,392
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis :—</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned ..	6	4	1	13	7
Carcasses of which some part of organ was condemned ..	2,307	1,531	7	2,541	60
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis .. .. .	18·3	34·5	·2	9·3	2·8
<i>Tuberculosis only :—</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned ..	39	96	6	—	13
Carcasses of which some part of organ was condemned ..	1,462	1,542	1	—	101
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with Tub- erculosis .. .. .	11·8	36·7	·2	—	4·7

It will be seen from the above table that of the 12,638 cattle (excluding cows) inspected during the year, 11·8 per cent. (tuberculosis) and 18·3 per cent. (other diseases) were found to be diseased. However, only 45 whole carcasses or ·35 per cent. of the total number of cattle (other than cows) inspected had to be condemned.

The Minister of Food has asked local authorities to ensure that while the shortage of meat continues, no meat which is fit for human consumption should be unnecessarily condemned. This has been the practice in Woolwich. Liaison between the Council's inspectors and officers of the Ministry of Food works satisfactorily.

*Meat Manufacturing Premises.* A working party to review the present meat trade practice, legislation governing the meat manufacturing trades and control over the disposal of unfit meat, has been appointed by the Minister of Food. Ministry of Food inspectors co-operate with local authorities in any cases of suspected contraventions of the Food and Drugs Act.

**SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933.** Seven licences were granted to persons working in the Borough to act as slaughterers. In addition, 11 applications for renewal of existing slaughtermen's licences were approved.

**SHOPS ACT, 1950.**

The Council, in its capacity as sanitary authority, has duties under this Act of securing and maintaining sanitary and hygienic conditions in shops.



The number of inspections made during the year was 383 and 30 notices for offences under the Act were served.

#### BAKEHOUSES.

Inspections during 1950 numbered 43 and 5 notices were served. Conditions on the whole were satisfactory. On the occasion of the quinquennial review of basement bakehouses carried out in 1948, certificates of suitability were issued in respect of five basement bakehouses.

During the year, after due enquiry and notice to the owner, the certificate of suitability in force in respect of one of these bakehouses was withdrawn by the Council, the premises not having been used as a bakehouse within the last twelve months.

#### SOPHISTICATION OF FOOD.

During the year ended 31st December, 1950, 603 samples, including 421 informal and 182 formal samples, were submitted for analysis to the Public Analyst. Of these, 17 formal and 26 informal samples were reported to be adulterated, giving a percentage of 7.1 compared with 3.3 in 1948 and 4.06 in 1949. The foods examined were :—

Ale .. .. .	3	Lard .. .. .	1
Almonds .. .. .	1	Lemon Curd .. .. .	3
Aspirin Tablets .. .. .	2	Lemonade Crystals .. .. .	1
Bacon, canned .. .. .	1	Margarine .. .. .	3
Bread .. .. .	3	Marzipan .. .. .	1
Buns, Cakes and Pastries .. .. .	43	Meat—Raw .. .. .	1
Butter .. .. .	3	Meat Paste .. .. .	2
Calves' Feet Jelly .. .. .	1	Meat Pie .. .. .	1
Camphorated Oil .. .. .	1	Meat Products .. .. .	6
Castor Oil .. .. .	6	Meat Products (canned) .. .. .	6
Cheese .. .. .	13	Medicated Throat Pastilles .. .. .	5
Cherries, Glace .. .. .	1	Meringues .. .. .	13
Chocolate, Milk .. .. .	1	Milk .. .. .	157
Chocolate Spread .. .. .	1	Milk (condensed) .. .. .	16
Coconut, desiccated .. .. .	3	Mincemeat .. .. .	1
Coffee .. .. .	4	Molasses (canned) .. .. .	7
Coffee and Chicory Essence .. .. .	3	Olive Oil .. .. .	2
Confectionery, Sugar .. .. .	28	Nuts .. .. .	2
Cooking Fat .. .. .	2	Nutmegs, ground .. .. .	1
Cornflour .. .. .	4	Pastry, uncooked .. .. .	1
Cream, artificial .. .. .	1	Pastry Mix .. .. .	1
Crumpets .. .. .	1	Peanut Butter .. .. .	3
Curry Powder .. .. .	1	Pepper .. .. .	5
Custard Powder .. .. .	8	Pickles .. .. .	9
Dessert Powder .. .. .	3	Pimento .. .. .	1
Drinks, soft .. .. .	10	Potato Crisps .. .. .	1
Epsom Salts .. .. .	1	Puddings (Christmas) .. .. .	14
Fish Cakes .. .. .	6	Rice .. .. .	2
Fish (Canned) .. .. .	15	Rice Ground .. .. .	1
Fish (cockles) .. .. .	1	Rum .. .. .	1
Fish Paste .. .. .	5	Saccharin Tablets .. .. .	1

Flavouring Essences .. ..	5	Salad Cream .. ..	4
Flour (plain) .. ..	3	Sago .. ..	1
Flour (self-raising) .. ..	2	Sandwich Spread .. ..	1
Fruit (bottled) .. ..	1	Sauces .. ..	7
Fruit (canned) .. ..	2	Sausages .. ..	2
Fruit (dried) .. ..	4	Sausages (canned) .. ..	1
Fruit Curd .. ..	2	Soda, Bicarbonate of .. ..	1
Gelatine .. ..	1	Spices .. ..	2
Gin .. ..	1	Spinnach (Canned) .. ..	1
Glauber's Salt .. ..	1	Stuffing Mixture .. ..	2
Glycerine .. ..	2	Suet, Shredded .. ..	2
Gravy Preparations .. ..	3	Tapioca .. ..	3
Honey .. ..	7	Tea .. ..	4
Hydrogen Peroxide .. ..	1	Treacle .. ..	2
Ice Cream .. ..	49	Vegetables (canned) .. ..	6
Ice Lollipops .. ..	8	Vinegar (Malt) .. ..	3
Icing Compound .. ..	2	Wine (Alcoholic) .. ..	1
Icing Fondant.. ..	1	Whisky .. ..	1
Jams .. ..	4	Yoghourt .. ..	2
Jelly Tablets .. ..	10	Zinc and Castor Oil Ointment	1
Junket Preparations .. ..	2		

The following Table No. 12 gives details of adulterated samples :—

TABLE NO. 12. ADULTERATED SAMPLES.

Sample No.	Article.	Formal or Informal.	Result of Analysis.	Result of legal proceedings or other action.
781	"Choc-Nut Rock" ..	Informal	Unsound. The fat in the chocolate coating contained 12·6 per cent. free fatty acids.	Condemnation certificate issued in respect of the consignment.
715	"Africans" Herbal Medicated Tablets, Black.	Informal	Contained only 0·03 per cent. of menthol.	} Formal samples were taken.
716	"Africans" Herbal Medicated Tablets, White.	Informal	Contained only 0·04 per cent. of menthol.	
738	"Africans" Herbal Medicated Tablets, Black.	Formal	Contained only 0·08 per cent. of menthol.	} Letter sent to manufacturer with a view to alteration of label.
739	"Africans" Herbal Medicated Tablets, White.	Formal	Contained only 0·09 per cent. of menthol.	
787	Milk .. ..	Formal	Contained fat 3·39 per cent. milk solids other than milk-fat 8·40 per cent., corresponding to the presence of 1 per cent. added water.	Letter sent asking for explanation.
8	Bath Buns ..	Informal	Contained boric acid, 0·03 per cent.	Formal sample obtained



Sample No.	Article.	Formal or Informal.	Result of Analysis.	Result of legal proceedings or other action.
76	Glauber's Salt ..	Informal	Consisted of exsiccated sodium sulphate.	Stock exhausted. Sample was taken from shop window.
9	Pork Pie ..	Informal	Unsound. Contained a growth of fungus.	Stock exhausted.
19	Meat Paste .. ..	Informal	Contained sulphur dioxide, 190 parts per million.	Formal sample obtained
26	Meat Paste .. ..	Formal	Contained sulphur dioxide, 170 parts per million.	Warning letter sent to vendors.
27	Meringues ..	Informal	Consisted of imitation meringues made with synthetic gum (methyl cellulose) instead of white of egg or albumin	Details of samples without white of egg or albumin reported to Ministry of Food.
53	Meringues ..	Informal		
134	Meringues ..	Informal		
81	Meringues (cream filled).	Informal	Consisted of imitation cream - filled meringues, the "meringue" being made with synthetic gum (methyl cellulose) instead of white of egg or albumin.	
145	Meringues (cream filled)	Informal		
31	Milk ..	Formal	Contained fat, 3.22 per cent., solids - not - fat 8.25 per cent. ; corresponding to the presence of 2 per cent. of added water.	Warning letter sent to vendors.
116	Beef Sausages ..	Informal	Meat content, 39 per cent. Should contain not less than 50 per cent. of meat.	Referred to Ministry of Food.
174	Fruit Curd, Lemon Cheese.	Informal	Contained fat, 3.6 per cent. Should contain not less than 4 per cent. of fat.	Formal sample obtained
214	Fruit Curd, Lemon Cheese.	Formal	Contained fat, 3.6 per cent.	Communicated with manufacturers.
256	Ice Cream .. ..	Informal	Contained fat, 1.9 per cent.	Formal sample obtained
275	Ice Cream ..	Formal	Contained fat, 1.7 per cent.	Warning letter to manufacturer. Ministry of Food informed of fat content.
154	Condensed Machine-skimmed Milk, sweetened.	Informal	Composition satisfactory but label contravened Condensed Milk Regulations.	Formal sample obtained
209	Condensed Machine-skimmed Milk, sweetened.	Formal	do., do.	Attention of the Ministry of Food drawn to the label.
216	Horseradish Cream ..	Informal	Contained edible oil, 3 per cent. Should contain at least 6½ per cent. edible oil.	Formal sample obtained
233	Horseradish Cream ..	Formal	Contained edible oil, 3.3 per cent.	Communicated with Ministry of Food.
167	Flake Tapioca ..	Informal	Consisted of a Tapioca substitute made from potato starch.	Formal sample obtained
213	Flake Tapioca ..	Formal		Communicated with firm concerned.

Sample No.	Article.	Formal or Informal.	Result of Analysis.	Result of legal proceedings or other action.
316	Cream Cheese ..	Informal	A soft, processed cheese containing 46.1 per cent. fat calculated on the dry matter.	As there may be a tendency to regard processed cheese as cream cheese, to the prejudice of the vendor of genuine cream cheese, in order to ensure that shopkeepers are aware of this distinction, the Council instructed that traders in the Borough selling cheese be asked to see that processed cheese is not referred to as "Cream Cheese."
330	Cream Cheese ..	Formal	A soft, processed cheese containing 46.0 per cent. fat calculated on the dry matter.	
337	Cream Cheese ..	Formal	A soft, processed cheese, containing 46.2 per cent. fat, calculated on the dry matter.	
340	Cream Cheese ..	Formal	A soft, processed cheese, containing 42.3 per cent. fat, calculated on the dry matter.	
409	"Buta Krunch" Confectionery.	Informal	Consisted of sugar-coated puffed wheat. According to the label the product should have been made from maize.	Ministry of Food informed.
458	"Buta Krunch" Confectionery.	Formal		
448	Shrimps, Canned ..	Informal	Unsound. The can was "blown" and the contents decomposed, and unfit for human consumption.	Careful examination of remaining consignment showed no other 'blown' tins. Formal sample proved satisfactory.
502	Figs .. ..	Informal	Unsound .. ..	Careful examination of consignment showed no other unsound boxes.
346	Milk .. ..	Formal	Contained fat, 3.63 per cent. solids - not - fat, 8.43 per cent. corresponding to the presence of a small proportion of added water.	Attention of vendor drawn to result of analyses.
348	Milk .. ..	Formal	Contained fat 3.63 per cent. solids - not - fat, 8.43 per cent., corresponding to the presence of a small proportion of added water.	
463	Condensed machine skimmed milk, sweetened.	Informal	Unsound .. ..	Consignment returned to wholesalers.
494	Condensed machine skimmed milk, sweetened.	Informal	Composition satisfactory but label contravened the Condensed Milk Regulations.	Ministry of Food informed.
509	Condensed machine skimmed milk, sweetened.	Informal		

#### UN SOUND FOOD.

During 1950, 33,623 articles of food, weighing approximately 142 tons, were surrendered as unfit for human consumption. The majority of these articles were from the one large abattoir in the Borough.

Most of the food was utilised for animal feeding or for fertilisers.

#### SAUSAGE ROLLS.

Following a complaint from an Eltham resident that he purchased five sausage rolls which were unfit for human consumption, the consignment in question was seized and condemned.



#### GLASS IN MILK.

The Council instituted legal proceedings, as a result of a complaint by the Headmaster of a boys' school in the Borough of the presence of glass chippings in two one-third pint bottles of milk supplied by one of the large distributing firms in the Borough. The defendant firm was fined £5 and 2 guineas costs.

#### DIRT IN MILK.

In another case, the Council instituted proceedings against a dairy company for a contravention of the Milk and Dairies Regulations (dirt in a milk bottle). The summons was subsequently withdrawn for technical reasons.

#### METAL IN DATE SLICE.

Proceedings were also instituted against a firm of bakers for selling food intended for but unfit for human consumption. The complaint related to a piece of metal in a date-slice. In this case the firm obtained an absolute discharge, with payment of 5 guineas costs.

## PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The following diseases are notifiable in the Borough: Anthrax, Cholera, Continued Fever, Diphtheria, Dysentery, Encephalitis Lethargica, Erysipelas, Enteric Fever, Food Poisoning, Glanders, Hydrophobia, Malaria, Measles, Membranous Croup, Meningococcal Infection (C.S.M.), Ophthalmia Neonatorum, Pneumonia—Acute Primary, Pneumonia—Acute Influenzal, Poliomyelitis (Acute), Polio-encephalitis (Acute), Plague, Puerperal Pyrexia, Relapsing Fever, Scabies, Scarlet Fever (or Scarlatina), Smallpox, Tuberculosis (all forms), Typhoid Fever (including Paratyphoid), Typhus Fever, Whooping Cough, Zymotic Enteritis.

Although notification of an infectious disease in a house is incumbent not only upon the medical practitioner in attendance but also upon the head of the family or the nearest relative or person in charge of the patient; in fact, it is a rare thing for a "lay" notification to be received. If the patient is an inmate of a hospital, in most cases the certificate has to be sent to the Medical Officer of Health of the district in which the usual residence of the patient is situated, but cases of malaria, dysentery and the acute pneumonias, are always notifiable to the Medical Officer of Health of the district in which the patient is residing at the time he is notified.

#### DIPHTHERIA.

For the first time in the history of the Borough there were no known cases of diphtheria during the year. Medical practitioners notified 17 cases but all proved not to be diphtheria, tonsillitis or laryngitis commonly being the revised diagnoses.

#### WHOOPING COUGH AND MEASLES.

The number of notifications of measles (754) was almost half the previous year's total. There were no deaths from whooping cough or measles.

#### SCABIES.

The majority of the 34 cases notified were visited and treatment was given to the patients concerned.

#### SCARLET FEVER.

For the first time since 1941 the number of notifications of scarlet fever (185) was below the 200 mark. Of the total number of notified cases as many as 119 or 64 per cent. were isolated at home. A comparison of this percentage with the percentage for home isolation of this disease during the years between 1930 and 1938 shows that during those years never more than 7 per cent. of scarlet fever cases were isolated at home.

Frequent visits are made by the district sanitary inspectors to these cases in order to ensure that proper precautions are being taken.

TABLE NO. 13.  
Notification of Infectious Diseases (excluding Tuberculosis), 1950.

Diseases.	Number of Cases (after correction of diagnosis)												
	Age Groups.												
	Under 1 year.	1 and under 3 years.	3 and under 5 years.	5 and under 10 years.	10 and under 15 years.	15 and under 25 years.	25 and under 35 years.	35 and under 45 years.	45 and under 65 years.	65 and over.	Ages unknown	Total	Total No. admitted to Hosp.
Diphtheria .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever .. .. .	2	11	48	91	23	4	—	3	1	—	2	185	66
Paratyphoid Fever .. .. .	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Cerebro-spinal Fever .. .. .	3	—	—	2	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	9	9
Acute Poliomyelitis .. .. .	1	8	9	17	7	4	6	—	1	—	—	53	52
Acute Encephalitis .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Erysipelas .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	14	7	—	23	8
Dysentery .. .. .	4	1	2	4	2	4	—	—	—	1	1	19	9
Zymotic Enteritis .. .. .	26	12	3	1	—	1	1	1	1	2	—	48	44
Acute Pneumonia .. .. .	11	16	9	14	3	7	6	11	22	16	5	120	47
Food Poisoning .. .. .	2	3	—	1	1	2	3	1	3	2	—	18	5
Puerperal Pyrexia .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	7	4	1	1	—	2	15	8
Ophthalmia Neonatorum .. .. .	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	3
Whooping Cough .. .. .	28	111	171	185	2	1	1	—	—	—	3	502	69
Measles .. .. .	19	127	245	347	8	2	1	2	—	—	3	754	42
Scabies .. .. .	—	1	5	5	1	1	1	2	—	5	13	34	—
Typhoid Fever .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	1



#### SMALLPOX.

There were no cases notified during the year.

#### FOOD POISONING.

There were no serious outbreaks of food poisoning in the Borough during the year 1950. Notifications totalled 18 and no deaths were attributed to food poisoning. All the four outbreaks were of undiscovered cause. They involved a total of nine persons. There were nine single cases. Salmonella organisms were identified in four of these.

Investigations concerning one of the notified cases revealed that two members of a family were ill, tinned meat pudding being the food suspected. However, other members of the family had eaten the meat and were not ill. No specimens were available for examination.

Another case concerned a mother and two children who became ill when the family returned from holiday from a Kent coastal town. The food suspected in this case was artificial cream in buns which the family had eaten whilst on holiday.

A further case concerned a man whose grandchild had been ill with diarrhoea. As the patient's wife had been nursing the child it is possible she had transferred the infection to her husband.

Chicken dripping eaten by the patient was suspected in another case of food poisoning concerning a boy aged 12 years. Other members of the family had not eaten this food and were not ill.

In all the above cases the illness was of short duration with symptoms of diarrhoea, abdominal pains and vomiting.

#### POLIOMYELITIS.

There was again a high incidence of poliomyelitis during the summer months of 1950, 53 confirmed cases occurring in the Borough, compared with 25 during 1949 and 23 during the first serious epidemic in this country in 1947.

Of the confirmed cases, 38 were classified as paralytic and 15 as non-paralytic.

I am pleased to say, however, that 25 patients made a complete recovery. Eighteen patients have some degree of paralysis remaining and four are still in hospital. There was one death from poliomyelitis and one from polio-encephalitis. There is no information of the four other cases.

#### TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of primary notifications of tuberculosis was 205, a decrease of 51 on the previous year's total. Of the total number of notifications, 183 were in respect of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis. There were 58 deaths from this disease during the year, as against 59 in 1949 and 82 in 1948.

The following table shows the decline in deaths from tuberculosis during the last ten years, during which the number of deaths from this disease has been halved.

TABLE NO. 14.

Table of Notifications and Deaths compared with Population.

Year.	Civilian Population excluding Army.	Primary Notifications.	Deaths from Tuberculosis.	Deaths per 1,000 of population.	Total Deaths all causes.	Percentage of Tuberculosis Deaths against all Deaths.
1940	124,340	230	115	.92	1,854	6.2
1941	103,630	258	127	1.22	1,627	7.8
1942	110,140	249	102	.92	1,410	7.2
1943	112,700	292	102	.90	1,558	6.5
1944	110,970	248	100	.90	1,611	6.2
1945	115,270	260	90	.70	1,478	6.0
1946	134,420	247	83	.61	1,531	5.4
1947	140,150	297	101	.72	1,626	6.2
1948	142,800	230	82	.57	1,573	5.2
1949	144,000	256	59	.41	1,572	3.7
1950	144,000	205	58	.40	1,670	3.4

## MASS RADIOGRAPHY.

Arrangements were made for one of the Mass Radiography units of the Regional Hospital Board to operate in Woolwich during 1950. Following a visit to the Woolwich Arsenal from the 12th October to 6th November (for Arsenal personnel only), the apparatus was set up at the Old Town Hall and for seven weeks from the 21st November onwards a total of 9,787 persons was examined. Invitations to attend for X-ray had been extended to members of business houses in the Borough and also to the Council's staff.

The Health Department assisted by arranging a large number of bookings. The details of total examinations made are as follows :—

Centre.	Men.	Women.	Total.
Royal Arsenal .. ..	5,443	769	6,212
Old Town Hall .. ..	4,386	4,781	9,167
Woolwich Polytechnic .. ..	455	165	620
	<hr/> 10,284	<hr/> 5,715	<hr/> 15,999

Whilst the main object of this examination was, of course, the early detection of tuberculosis, certain other abnormalities may be detected.

A short film on the work of the X-ray unit was shown at 14 of the informal film programmes given by the Health Department just before and during the visit of the unit.

## PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS.

The Council has duties under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1930, concerned with measures for the prevention of tuberculosis, investigations of sources of infection, supervision of the environment of tuberculous persons, together with the keeping of the Notifications Register of all cases in the Borough. The administration of the dispensaries at Eltham and Woolwich is now carried out by the Regional Hospital Board.

## CARE COMMITTEE.

The voluntary Care Committee on which the Borough Council is represented continued to exercise its function of using the funds at its disposal for the purpose of providing assistance to patients and their relatives in emergencies not covered by other agencies.

## DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION.

The Council's Disinfecting Station is situated at White Hart Road, Plumstead, where there are installed two Washington-Lyon steam disinfectors, one steam washing machine and a room for disinfecting articles which cannot be subjected to heat. Infected articles of bedding, clothing, etc. and articles infested with bugs, are disinfected at the station, but personal clothing of persons treated at the two Cleansing Stations is disinfected at these two stations.

During 1950, the Department carried out disinfection of 474 rooms in 352 houses after cases of infectious disease, and of these, 115 premises had been occupied by tuberculous persons. Some 2,944 inspections regarding verminous conditions were made and 1,052 rooms were disinfested for vermin. Forty-nine vanloads of furniture were fumigated during the year.

The number of articles disinfected at the Disinfecting Station was 32,842, details of the type and number of articles disinfected there being as follows :—

Beds .. ..	214	Books .. ..	214
Palliassees .. ..	875	Bags .. ..	103
Pillows .. ..	1,632	Wearing Apparel ..	24,306
Bolsters .. ..	197	Boots .. ..	12
Quilts .. ..	515	Slippers .. ..	10
Sheets .. ..	637	Toys .. ..	114
Blankets .. ..	1,408	Cushions .. ..	165
Curtains .. ..	14	Sundries .. ..	2,407
Carpets .. ..	3		
Rugs .. ..	17		



Special disinfection is carried out upon request; a charge is made for such disinfection and during 1950 a large quantity of clothing was disinfected before export, on behalf of a local firm. Revenue during the year amounted to £142.

The following items were disinfected :—

Jackets .. .. .	9,980	Hats .. .. .	1,200
Battledress blouses ..	3,400	Khaki greatcoats ..	528
Ladies' coats .. ..	3,100	Overcoats .. .. .	400
Peaked caps .. .. .	2,340	Waistcoats .. .. .	400
Shirts .. .. .	2,000	Tunics .. .. .	200
Socks .. .. (pairs)	1,350	Suits .. .. .	50
Trousers .. .. .	1,300	Ground sheet capes (bundles)	50

#### PERSONAL CLEANSING.

The personal Cleansing Stations are situated adjacent to the Turkish Baths in Plumstead High Street, and at the Eltham Hill Health Centre, Sherard Road.

The number of persons cleansed was 1,472 (including contacts) and the number treated for scabies was 143. The total number of attendances was 1,671 being 458 less than during the previous year.

Details of the number of cases and attendances at the two Cleansing Stations are given below :—

#### TREATMENT OF VERMINOUS PERSONS.

	PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN.		SCHOOL CHILDREN.		ADULTS.		Totals.
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Men.	Women.	
Number of Cases .. ..	13	45	312	984	12	86	1,472
Number of Treatments ..	13	45	318	1,017	12	86	1,491

#### TREATMENT OF SCABIES.

	PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN.		SCHOOL CHILDREN.		ADULTS.		Totals.
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Men.	Women.	
Number of Cases .. ..	4	14	34	52	13	26	143
Number of Treatments ..	6	27	42	56	19	30	180

## LABORATORY FACILITIES

Certain pathological and allied work of the Council, *e.g.*, examinations of swimming bath water, samples of food in suspected food poisoning cases, specimens from the abattoir, and ice cream tests, are carried out by the Public Health Laboratory Service. Further details are given under the respective headings elsewhere in the report.

Examination of specimens of human origin (mainly swab examinations) for the general practitioners of the Borough is undertaken by the Woolwich Memorial Hospital. During the year 245 such examinations were carried out. Details are as follows :—

Sputum .. .. .	46
Nasal and throat swabs .. .. .	155
Faeces .. .. .	41
Stools .. .. .	3

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Woolwich—London's second largest Borough with an area of over 8,000 acres—is indeed fortunate to have so many parks and open spaces. There are no less than 923 acres of public open spaces within the Borough, or 6 acres of open space for each 1,000 of the population.

The Borough Council has been one of the foremost of Metropolitan Boroughs in securing public open space for the enjoyment of its residents. Sixteen open spaces of considerable size belonging to the Borough Council and the London County Council are maintained throughout the area. These include Plumstead and Eltham Commons, Avery Hill, Eltham Park, Bostall Heath and Bostall Woods; Castlewood, Jack Wood and Oxleas Wood at Shooters Hill, (a continuous expanse of woodland some 312 acres in extent), Well Hall Pleasaunce, Rockcliff Gardens, Sutcliffe Park, Eltham Green, The Tarn, Plumstead Gardens, and Queenscroft Recreation Ground.

There are 15 children's recreation grounds in the Woolwich area, a fact which must play a considerable part in giving healthy outdoor exercise and in keeping children off the busy roads.



# LABORATORY FACILITIES

The laboratory facilities are located in the basement of the building. The facilities include a large open space for general laboratory work, a smaller room for specialized work, and a room for the storage of equipment and materials. The facilities are well equipped and are suitable for a wide range of laboratory work.

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Room	Area (sq. ft.)	Equipment
General Laboratory	1,200	General laboratory equipment
Specialized Laboratory	400	Specialized laboratory equipment
Storage Room	200	Storage equipment

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The parks and open spaces are located in the vicinity of the building. The parks include a large open space for general recreation, a smaller park for specialized recreation, and a park for the storage of equipment and materials. The parks are well equipped and are suitable for a wide range of recreation work.

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