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**Contributors**

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Council Offices,  
Beaconsfield.

July, 1939.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of submitting to you my Annual Reports for the years 1939 and 1940.

It is the Ministry of Health's request that these reports should be interim ones only, and confined to vital statistics and urgent matters affecting the public health, so, in the interests of national economy, I have not only limited their extent but included the two years in one report.

These years have been, as you are aware, a time of national emergency; this state, from the purview of the Local Government Official, ante-dating - by very many months - the outbreak of actual hostilities. The bulk of my work as your Medical Officer has therefore, during this period, been concerned with such matters as "A.R.P." and "Evacuation" - matters upon which I have not attempted to dwell in this report, but with which you are all familiar.

This report will be my last to you, for as most of you know, Dr. Evans of Southwark succeeds me in August, and so I should like to take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, of thanking you for all the kindly consideration and help that you have given me, and which has made my sojourn as your Medical Officer of Health a joy as well as a duty.

I also wish to tender my sincere gratitude to all the Council's Staff, whose willing co-operation has always been so readily offered, and which has afforded me so much help.

I wish the Council, the Staff and my successor a continuance of these conditions of amity.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT C. GUBBINS.

A.1. General Statistics.

Area (acres) of District	...	...	...	5,293
Population (Census of 1931)	...	...	...	4,843
Registrar-General's estimate (mid year)	5866 (1939)	:	7086 (1940)	
Rateable Value of Area	£78,343 (1939)	:	£78,428 (1940)	
Sum represented by ld. rate	£295 (1939)	:	£320 (1940)	
No. of Houses occupied, according to rate-books	1701 (1939)	:	1727 (1940)	

2. Vital Statistics.

	<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>
Birth Rate ...	14.2	8.75
Death Rate ...	9.9	7.76

Births.

(a) Live Births	<u>1939</u>			<u>1940</u>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	41	36	77	38	23	61
Illegitimate	3	0	3	1	0	1
Birth rate (per 1,000 resident population)	14.2			8.75		
England & Wales ...	15.6			15.15		
Total Urban (Bucks County)	16.1			not available		

(b) Still Births	<u>1939</u>			<u>1940</u>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	1	0	1	0	1	1
Illegitimate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rate per 1,000 total births	12.5			16.1		

Deaths.

	<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>
Total Deaths ...	58	55
Death rate (per 1,000 population)	9.9	7.76
England and Wales ...	12.1	14.3
Total Urban (Bucks County) ...	10.3	not available

(a) Deaths from Puerperal causes (i.e. No. of women in, or in consequence of, childbirth).

	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Rate per 1000 total births</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Rate per 1000 total births.</u>
	<u>1939</u>		<u>1940</u>	
Puerperal Sepsis ...	0	0	0	0
Other Puerperal causes	0	0	0	0

(b) Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age.

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	2	1	3	2	2	4
Illegitimate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births				<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>	
Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births				39	65.5	
				0	0	

Infantile Mortality.

	<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>
All Infants per 1,000 live births	37.5	64.5
England and Wales ...	50.0	55.0
Total Urban (Bucks County)	39.0	not available

	1939		1940.	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
(c) Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	5	6	2	7
"    "    Measles	0	0	0	0
"    "    Whooping Cough	0	0	0	0
"    "    Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	0	0	0	0
(d) <u>Causes of Death.</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ... ..	0	1	0	0
Other Tuberculosis ... ..	0	1	0	0
Cancer ... ..	5	6	2	7
Diabetes ... ..	0	1	0	1
Cerebral Haemorrhage ... ..	2	2	3	4
Heart Disease ... ..	9	8	6	5
Other circulatory diseases	0	2	0	1
Pneumonia ... ..	0	0	2	1
Bronchitis ... ..	0	0	1	2
Other respiratory diseases	0	0	1	0
Influenza ... ..	0	1	0	1
Diphtheria ... ..	0	0	0	1
Peptic Ulcer ... ..	0	1	2	0
Other digestive diseases ... ..	0	0	0	1
Acute and chronic Nephritis	0	3	1	1
Congenital Causes (Debility, Premature Birth etc) ... ..	1	1	2	1
Suicide ... ..	1	0	1	0
Road Traffic accidents and other violence ... ..	4	5	2	3
Other defined diseases ... ..	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	<u>24</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>30</u>
Grand Total	58		55	

B. General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

(a) Laboratory facilities.

Arrangements were made, during 1940, for the future examination of bacteriological specimens etc to be undertaken by the Emergency Laboratory Services, Oxford; the existing contract with the Chemical Research Association to lapse at the end of the period - March, 1941. The reason for the change being the facilities offered by the Emergency Laboratories.

(b) Ambulance facilities.

As hitherto, but now augmented by an American gift of an ambulance to the British Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance Corps.

(c) Nursing in the Home.

No change.

(d) Clinics and Treatment Centres.

No change.

(e) Hospitals.

The "general" hospital accommodation is as hitherto, plus increased facilities due to extensions of hospitals under

the Government Emergency Hospital Scheme - such as, for example, that at Amersham.

The "Isolation" accommodation has been increased by the opening of a block of 10 cubicles (1939) and by a hutment (1940) of 20 huts for diphtheria cases, at Booker Isolation Hospital.

C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

As in 1938 Report.

D. Housing.

As a consequence of evacuation (official and unofficial) the town is very much overcrowded. This is, of course, inevitable, and no statutory action has been taken, except in the case of the Sports Pavilion, Holtspur, where the presence of 27 women and children was considered dangerous overcrowding. Needless to relate, this was not a case of official billeting. Other bad, but less serious cases, have been dealt with unofficially, but no official action has been recommended as I can see no satisfactory solution of the problem.

E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Particulars as in 1938 Report (except for details re surrender of meat).

F. Prevalence of, and control over, Infectious Diseases.

1939.

Apart from an out-break of whooping-cough in November-December (21 cases) the year was singularly free from notifiable diseases - only 2 cases of Scarlet Fever and one case of Diphtheria being notified.

1940.

The year was marked by two outbreaks (one large and one small) of both Diphtheria and Measles.

Measles. The large outbreak (54 cases) occurred in June-July. It was spread indiscriminately over the town and was, of course, accentuated by the overcrowded state of the child population (due to evacuation). The small outbreak (6 cases) occurred in November and was confined to the inmates of the overcrowded Sports Pavilion at Holtspur (vide Section D).

Diphtheria. The larger of the diphtheria outbreaks occurred in August-September (13 cases) and was confined to the Children's Convalescent Home. This was eventually controlled by the administration of immunising material to all the children in the Home, the first dose being given with the prophylactic doses of anti-toxic sera.

Another small outbreak (8 cases) occurred in November in the Old Town; the only death occurring in this group.

Towards the end of the year the Council agreed to undertake a campaign for the immunising against diphtheria of all children in the town.

This campaign, undertaken early this year (1941), resulted in an eminently satisfactory response on the part of the population. To date (July, 1941) approximately 435 school children and 111 pre-school children have been immunised - the latter group by myself and the former by the Staff of the Emergency Laboratory Service, Oxford, to whom my grateful thanks are due.

I have good reason to think that only a very small proportion

of the child population of the town remains not immunised against diphtheria.

My successor will doubtless be giving more exact figures and comparisons to the Council and the Ministry of Health later in the year.

Notifiable Diseases.

	<u>Disease</u>	<u>Cases Notified</u>	<u>Cases admitted to hospital</u>	<u>Total Deaths</u>
1939	Scarlet Fever	2	2	0
	Erysipelas	1	1	0
	Whooping cough	21	1*	0

\* An "evacuee" child, removed owing to difficult billeting circumstances.

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Cases Notified</u>	<u>Cases admitted to hospital</u>	<u>Total Deaths</u>
Scarlet Fever	2	1	0
Whooping cough	1	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	1	0
Diphtheria	24	24	1
Measles	60	0	0

Tuberculosis.

1939.

Four new cases were notified during the year (only one pulmonary case) one of these cases was a transfer notification from another area. Two deaths have occurred (both females), one from pulmonary and one from non-pulmonary T.B.

1940.

Again, four new cases were notified during the year, one being a transfer notification from another area. No deaths occurred.

New Cases and Mortality.

1939.

Age Periods	New Cases		Non-Respiratory		Deaths			
	Respiratory		Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 year	...		...		...		...	
1 - 5 years	...		...		...		...	
5 - 15 "	...		...		...		...	
15 - 25 "	...		...		...		...	
25 - 35 "	...	1	1	1	...		...	
35 - 45 "	...		1		...		...	
45 - 55 "	...		...		1	...	...	
55 - 65 "	...		...		1	...	...	
Over 65 years	...		...		...		...	

New Cases and Mortality.  
1940.

Age Periods	New Cases		Non-Respiratory		Deaths		Non-Respiratory	
	Respiratory		Respiratory		Respiratory		Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1 - 5 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5 - 15 "	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15 - 25 "	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
25 - 35 "	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
35 - 45 "	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45 - 55 "	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
55 - 65 "	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 65 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

G. Cancer.

There were 11 deaths from Cancer in 1939 and 9 in 1940.

Age Group	1939				1940			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 - 45 years	...	...	...	1	0 - 45 years	...	1	...
45 - 55 "	...	...	...	1	45 - 55 "	...	...	1
55 - 65 "	...	...	...	1	55 - 65 "	...	...	2
65 - 75 "	...	...	3	2	65 - 75 "	...	1	4
75 - 85 "	...	...	2	1	75 - 85 "	...	1	...
Over 85 "	...	...	...	...	Over 85 "	...	...	...
			—	—			—	—
	Total	5	6		Total	3	7	