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BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

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ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE  
**Health of Bedford**  
FOR THE YEAR  
**1940.**

BY

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Together with the Report of  
F. C. HAYNES, Cert.San.I., M.S.I.A.,  
SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR.

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BOROUGH OF BEDFORD.

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**REPORT**  
OF THE  
**MEDICAL OFFICER OF**  
**HEALTH**

For the Year 1940.



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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,  
TOWN HALL,  
BEDFORD.

3rd May, 1944.

*To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Bedford.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report for the year 1940.

On account of what seemed more important work arising out of war conditions, the preparation of this report has been delayed till the date given at the head of this letter.

Probably the most important event of the year from the point of view of public health was the evacuation which took place on account of the bombing of London and the coastal areas, and which for a time replaced the preceding flow homewards of the original evacuees.

Notwithstanding all conditions which might have appeared adverse, the health of the town remained good.

All the staff worked well, and I should like to thank them as well as my colleagues in other departments for their valuable assistance.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

G. K. BOWES,  
*Medical Officer of Health.*



## BOROUGH OF BEDFORD.

# Annual Report

OF

## Medical Officer of Health

### For 1940.

#### I. General Statistics.

Area of Borough, 4,972 acres.

Population (estimated as resident by Registrar-General mid-1940) 53,190.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1940, according to Rate Books), 13,551.

Rateable value on December 31st, 1940 ... .. £388,026

Sum produced by Penny Rate (half year ending 30th September, 1940) £1,511

#### Extracts from Vital Statistics for the year 1940.

##### Live Births—

	Total	Males	Females	
Legitimate ...	664	347	317	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ... 13.2
Illegitimate ...	40	24	16	
Still Births ...	23	13	10	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births 30.6
Deaths ... ..	691	325	366	Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, crude 13.0
				After correction by com- parability factor, 0.95 12.4

##### Deaths from diseases and accidents of pregnancy and childbirth :—

From Sepsis ... ..	1
From other causes ... ..	1

##### Deaths of Infants under one year of age :—

Total ...	40	Rate per 1,000 live births ...	55
Legitimate	36	Rate per 1,000 legitimate live births	53
Illegitimate	4	Rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	98



Deaths from Cancer (all ages), 74.  
 Deaths from Measles (all ages), 2.  
 Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) 2.  
 Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age), 0.

On account of population movements it is necessary to use specially-prepared figures of births for calculation of infant mortality and maternal death rates. These are given below.

Births for calculation of Infant Mortality Rates and Maternal Death Rates :—

	Male	Female
Total ... ..	384	340
Legitimate ... ..	359	324
Illegitimate ... ..	25	16

### Causes of Death.

The following table shows causes of death as given in the Registrar-General's statistics.

<i>Causes of Death.</i>	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>
All Causes ... ..	325	366
1. Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ... ..	—	—
2. Cerebro-spinal Fever ... ..	3	2
3. Scarlet Fever ... ..	1	1
4. Whooping Cough ... ..	1	1
5. Diphtheria ... ..	1	—
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ... ..	8	17
7. Other Forms of Tuberculosis ... ..	6	2
8. Syphilitic Diseases ... ..	3	2
9. Influenza ... ..	9	11
10. Measles ... ..	—	2
11. Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis ... ..	—	—
12. Acute Infective Encephalitis ... ..	—	—
13. Cancer of Buccal Cavity and Oesophagus (M), Uterus (F) ... ..	4	8
14. Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum ... ..	8	5
15. Cancer of Breast ... ..	—	5
16. Cancer of All Other Sites ... ..	18	26
17. Diabetes ... ..	3	6
18. Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions ... ..	30	43
19. Heart Disease ... ..	69	76
20. Other Diseases of Circulatory System ... ..	26	26
21. Bronchitis ... ..	27	30
22. Pneumonia ... ..	14	13
23. Other Respiratory Diseases ... ..	5	4
24. Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum ... ..	9	1
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years ... ..	—	—
26. Appendicitis ... ..	2	4
27. Other Digestive Diseases ... ..	5	8
28. Nephritis ... ..	12	5
29. Puerperal and Post-abortion Sepsis ... ..	—	1
30. Other Maternal Causes ... ..	—	1
31. Premature Birth ... ..	9	9
32. Congenital malformation, Birth Injuries, In- fantile Diseases ... ..	4	1
33. Suicide ... ..	6	1
34. Road Traffic Accidents ... ..	6	1
35. Other Violent Causes ... ..	9	6
36. All Other Causes ... ..	27	48



The number of deaths occurring on account of certain special causes may be noted: cerebro-spinal fever, 5; scarlet fever, 2; whooping cough, 2; diphtheria, 1; tuberculosis, respiratory, 25; other forms, 8; influenza, 20 (in comparison with 6 in 1939); measles, 2; cancer, all forms, 74; maternal deaths, 2; suicide, 7; road traffic accidents, 7 (in comparison with 5 in 1939). The number of fatal road traffic accidents which occurred within the Borough boundary was 7, including 5 residents and 2 non-residents; thus two fatal accidents involving residents occurred outside the Borough boundary.

### Infant Mortality.

The following table shows infant mortality from individual causes, stated in accordance with age at death.

CAUSE.	WEEKS.				TOTAL UNDER ONE MONTH.	MONTHS.				TOTAL UNDER ONE YEAR.
	0—	1—	2—	3—		1—	3—	6—	9—	
Whooping Cough ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Erysipelas ...	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Non-pulmonary tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Congenital syphilis ...	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
Influenza ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	2
Myocarditis ...	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Pneumonia ...	—	—	1	1	2	—	2	1	1	6
Pulmonary oedema ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Volvulus of sigmoid colon	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Congenital malformation of heart ...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Congenital malformation ...	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	2
Premature birth ...	17	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	—	17
Atelectasis ...	1	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Accidental asphyxia ...	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	2
Totals ...	19	2	2	2	25	3	3	4	5	40

### Birth Rates, Death Rates, Deaths from certain causes, for Bedford and England and Wales compared.

The following table gives rates for births, deaths, certain causes of death, maternal and infant mortality for Bedford and England and Wales compared.

	Rates per 1000 Civilian Population.	
	Bedford.	England and Wales.
Live Births ...	13.2	14.6
Still Births ...	0.43	0.55

#### DEATHS :—

All causes, crude ...	13.0	14.3
After correction by comparability factor 0.95	12.4	
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ...	—	0.00
Scarlet Fever ...	0.04	0.00
Whooping Cough ...	0.04	0.02
Diphtheria ...	0.02	0.06
Influenza ...	0.38	0.32
Smallpox ...	—	—
Measles ...	0.04	0.02



						Rates per 1000 Live Births.	
						Bedford.	England and Wales.
Deaths under 1 year of age	...	...	...	...	...	55	55
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under							
2 years of age	...	...	...	...	...	—	4.6

						Rates per 1000 Total Births (live and still).	
						Bedford.	England and Wales.
MATERNAL MORTALITY (excluding abortion) :—							
Puerperal Infection	...	...	...	...	...	1.34	0.52
Others	...	...	...	...	...	1.34	1.64
Total	...	...	...	...	...	2.68	2.16

## II. Social Conditions

### EVACUATION.

The problems of evacuation still remained during the year. Although large numbers of the unaccompanied children, and most of the mothers and children who came with the original evacuation in September, 1939, returned home late in 1939 or early in 1940, yet the change in the character of the war and the beginning of bombing of this country caused a fresh influx from danger areas.

In the summer approximately 1,000 unaccompanied school children were received from certain coastal areas. These were generally of a much better type in cleanliness and other respects than the original evacuees of 1939. In order to prevent the billeting upon householders of children about whom there might be grounds for complaint, a temporary hostel was provided at the Howard Sunday School for children who were suffering from some degree of verminous infestation, or other conditions rendering immediate billeting undesirable. All children were medically examined before billeting. 44 children not immediately fit for billeting were temporarily accommodated in the Howard Sunday School, in addition to 26 who were accommodated at the Hostel for Difficult Children, 48, Cardington Road, and at a neighbouring house. Cleansing was accomplished generally after one or two days; the children were then billeted, and it was possible to close the hostel in ten days.

Later in the year other groups of mothers and children, of women, and of aged persons, were received in the town from other coastal areas, and from London. Arrangements were made for medical examination of all these persons before billeting. When cleansing was necessary this was carried out at the cleansing station. In a few cases of aged and infirm persons it was necessary to accommodate them in the Public Assistance Institution. For persons less aged and infirm but still not billetable in ordinary households, a hostel under the Evacuation Committee was opened for accommodation of 16 aged persons.

Similar arrangements for medical examination, cleansing, and temporary accommodation were in force for the less organised evacuation which took place in the autumn and winter. Evacuation generally was, of course, under the control of the Evacuation Committee and the Chief Billeting Officer, but the Public Health Department rendered help in such matters as medical examinations on arrival, cleansing, and remained responsible for the Hostel for Enuretics and Difficult Children at 48, Cardington Road. During the year the hostel just mentioned was enlarged by the incorporation of an additional house, No. 46, so that there was provision for over 40 children.



### III. General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

#### 1. Laboratory Facilities.

The following table shows the work carried out by the Municipal Laboratory during the year.

<i>Nature of Specimen.</i>	<i>Numbers.</i>
Diphtheria swabs from local practitioners, Isolation Hospital, Oakley, and Medical Officer of Health ... ..	266
Sputa for Tuberculosis ... ..	1
Ringworm ... ..	—
Gerber Tests of Milk ... ..	115
Bacteriological examination of water samples ... ..	202

#### 2. Midwifery and Maternity Services.

##### Midwives Service.

During the year 44 midwives notified their intention to practise, including some who undertook temporary duty only. The following table shows the work carried out by midwives practising in the Borough.

##### Midwives Cases attended.

	No.	As Midwife.	As Mat. Nurse.	Total.
Municipal Midwives ... ..	4	231	46	277
Midwives in private nursing homes	11	53	179	232
Midwives attached to the Bedford District Nursing Association ...	7	40	41	81
Midwives attached to the Public Assistance Institution ...	11	246	22	268
Midwives attached to the Bedford County Hospital ... ..	3	126	21	147
Midwives attached to the Bedford & County Girls' Home ...	3	18	6	24
	—	—	—	—
Total ... ..	39	714	315	1029
	—	—	—	—

##### Municipal Midwives.

There are 4 Municipal midwives in practice in the Borough, this number being supplemented by the engagement of a relief midwife at holiday times or times of special stress.

In addition to the confinements attended either as midwife or as maternity nurse, additional work is carried out by Municipal Midwives as follows: supervision of cases booked and supervised in the ante-natal period, but con-

fined in hospital; attendance at other cases before or after confinement only, and attendance at miscarriages.

Auxiliary Ante-Natal Clinics are held weekly at 3, Brereton Road, chiefly for mothers entering the Public Assistance Institution for confinement and attending the ordinary Ante-Natal Clinic for medical supervision.

### **Institution Accommodation for Maternity Cases.**

Fifty cases, for whom the Council accepted financial responsibility, were admitted to the Maternity Wards of the Bedford County Hospital. With few exceptions, admitted on the ground of unsuitable home conditions, these were admitted for obstetric reasons, namely complications of labour or of the ante-natal period.

### **Ante- and Post-Natal Supervision by Private Practitioners.**

The following table shows the work carried out under these headings by private practitioners.

No. of ante-natal examinations ... ..	94
No. of first examinations included in above ... ..	58
Insured patients ... ..	19
Uninsured patients ... ..	39
Total ... ..	58
No. of post-natal examinations ... ..	4

### **3. Maternity and Child Welfare Centres. Children.**

The following table shows the attendance of children at the Welfare Centres. The figures for the two Centres are combined.

	Children below 1 year.	Children aged 1-5	Total
First Attendances ... ..	535*	301	836
Total number of children attending ...	518†	938	1456

\* Children who were under 1 year at the date of their first attendance.

† Children who were under 1 year at the end of the year under review.

The total attendances were distributed as follows:—

	Bedford Residents.	Evacuees.
3, Brereton Road ... ..	5614	607
29, Barford Avenue ... ..	5744	453

### **Mothers.**

The following table shows the attendances at ante- and post-natal clinics.

	Ante-Natal Attendances (Total Attendances)		Post-Natal Attendances.	
	Bedford.	Evacuees.	Bedford.	Evacuees.
3, Brereton Road ... ..	664	101	34	1
29, Barford Avenue ... ..	604	57	22	—



#### 4. Health Visiting.

The following table shows the work carried out by the Health Visitors.

Total primary visits paid to infants ... ..	574
Total re-visits under 1 year ... ..	2508
Total re-visits 1-5 years ... ..	5708
Total number of ante-natal visits ... ..	196
Total number of special visits ... ..	94
Total number of useless visits, e.g. mother not at home ...	1759
Total number of post-natal visits ... ..	2

#### 5. Dental Treatment.

The following table shows the work carried out for expectant and nursing mothers and for pre-school children.

##### Nursing and Expectant Mothers.

	Bedford.	Evacuees.
Number of mothers attending (a) Expectant ...	133	11
(b) Nursing ...	43	—
Number of attendances ... ..	250	13
Number of extractions ... ..	251	31
Number of general anaesthetics ... ..	77	3
Number of fillings ... ..	5	2
Number of scalings ... ..	1	—
Other operations ... ..	66	—
Dentures supplied to—(a) Expectant mothers ...	17	—
(b) Nursing mothers ...	8	—

##### Pre-School Children.

	No. treated.	
	Bedford.	Evacuees.
Number of individual children attending ... ..	131	7
Number of attendances made by these children ...	140	7
Number of extractions ... ..	251	12
Number of fillings ... ..	3	—
Number of scalings ... ..	1	—
Number of general anaesthetics ... ..	87	6

#### 6. Public Health Act, 1936, Part VII.

##### Child Life Protection.

The number of persons who were receiving children for reward at the end of the year was 19, and the number of children so received 22.

Regular visits are paid to children and foster parents in accordance with the provisions of the Act.



## IV. Housing.

### 1. Statistics.

The following table gives statistics of housing work undertaken during the year. The table is given in the usual form with the exception that headings are omitted where the return is *nil*, or where, as in the case of overcrowding only, systematic records are not available.

1.	Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—	
(1)	(a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	532
	(b) Number of inspections, including reinspections, made for the purpose ...	2330
(2)	(a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ...	24
	(b) Number of inspections, including reinspections, made for the purpose ...	267
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...	317
2.	Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices.	
	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ...	317
4.	Housing Act, 1936—Part IV.—Overcrowding.	
	(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ...	30
	(c) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ...	11

### 2. Observations on Statistics.

The 532 houses inspected by the Sanitary Inspectors under the Housing Acts and Public Health Acts may be classified as follows :—

#### I.—Houses inspected under Housing Acts.

(i)	Reasonably capable of repair ...	24
(ii)	Not requiring repairs ...	—
(iii)	Totally unfit for human habitation ...	—
		24

#### II.—Houses inspected under Public Health Acts.

(i)	Minor defects ...	293
(ii)	Not requiring repairs ...	215

---

508

Grand total ... 532

Of the 24 houses included under I. (i) above, 2 were repaired before the end of the year under review, and in the case of the remaining 22 the necessary works were completed during the early part of the year 1941.



In the case of the 293 houses included in II. (i) above, all the notices were complied with at the end of the year under review.

Weather conditions and labour difficulties in many cases prevented compliance with notices before the end of the year.

Naturally all routine housing work has been suspended during the war, and work is carried out only for special and urgent reasons.

The figures given under overcrowding do not represent the true state of affairs in view of the large influx of population. There can be no doubt that overcrowding does exist in a large number of cases. Some cases do come to the notice of this department, but many do not. It is in most cases quite impossible to take action to abate overcrowding, so there is little use in attempting to remedy it. To speak generally, official billeting is not the cause of overcrowding, which is rather due to the fact that many householders are often quite willing to take into their houses by private arrangements war workers and families beyond the overcrowding limit.

Further details of work in connection with housing are given in the Sanitary Inspector's report.

## V. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

### 1. Milk.

#### (a) General.

The war-time difficulties of labour and transport have necessarily rendered the production of clean milk more difficult, and at the same time present-day methods of supply, involving purchase by retailers of accommodation milk, make it more difficult to trace the cause for failure of milk to comply with standards of cleanliness.

#### (b) Premises and Purveyors.

The following table shows the number of registered premises and purveyors at the end of the year.

Number of cowsheds on register ... ..	1
Number of dairymen with premises within the Borough ... ..	30
Number of County purveyors on register ... ..	28
	—
	59
	—

#### (c) Bacteriological Examination.

The following table shows the number of samples of milk taken for bacteriological and other special examination, and the results of such examinations. Examination was limited to specially designated milk.

Class of Milk.	Number of Samples.	Satisfactory.	Unsatisfactory.
Tuberculin tested ... ..	11	8	3
Accredited ... ..	12	2	10
Pasteurised (Bacterial Count) ... ..	57	55	2
Pasteurised (Phosphatase Test) ... ..	48*	39	6

\* Three sour on arrival. Ceased to despatch samples for Phosphatase Test, September, 1940—delay in transit causing samples to be too old for test on arrival.

Samples are classified as satisfactory when they are of designated milk if they reach the legal or agreed standard for such milk.



## 2. Meat.

The year under review was the first complete year of working of the Government scheme of slaughter applicable to Bedford. The figures show, as well as great increase in the volume of this work, great deterioration in the class of meat as compared with pre-war days. To give examples, the number of cattle (excluding cows) slaughtered was 3,663, as compared with 1,040 in 1938, the percentage affected with diseases other than tuberculosis 22.28, compared with 0.56 in 1938. Comparable increases are shown in the figures under other headings. The total number of pounds of home-killed meat condemned was 69,572½, compared with 5,403 in 1938.

The following table shows the number of carcasses inspected and condemned during the year.

**Carcasses Inspected and Condemned.**

	Cattle (excluding cows).	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Home-killed and inspected ...	3663	868	1134	19435	2376
Whole carcasses condemned ... <i>all diseases except tuberculosis.</i>	4	16	5	36	32
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	812	193	8	307	48
Percentage of number in- spected affected with disease other than tuberculosis ...	22.28 %	24.08 %	1.15 %	1.76 %	3.37 %
Whole carcasses condemned ... <i>tuberculosis only.</i>	12	29	—	—	12
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	215	141	—	—	31
Percentage of number in- spected affected with tuber- culosis ...	6.20 %	19.59 %	—	—	1.81 %

The following table shows the total weight of diseased and unsound home-killed meat condemned.

Class of Animal.	Tuberculosis.			Other Diseases.			Total lbs.
	Whole Carcase.	Part Carcase & Offals.	lbs.	Whole Part Carcase Carcase. & Offals.	lbs.	lbs.	
Oxen ...	12	215	13539½	4	812	10213¼	23752¾
Cows ...	29	141	22872	16	193	11613½	34485½
Calves ...	—	—	—	5	8	509½	509½
Sheep and Lambs ...	—	—	—	36	307	4066½	4066½
Pigs ...	12	31	2298	32	48	4640	6938
Totals ...	53	387	38709½	93	1368	31042¾	69752¼

In addition 273 lbs. of imported meat were condemned.



### 3. Other Foods.

The following table shows the amount of other food condemned.

Class of Food.	No. of lbs.
Tinned goods—various commodities (395 containers) ...	501½
Fish Cakes ...	30
Fish ...	1238
Meat Pies ...	36
Yeast ...	56
Cakes ...	130
Sausages ...	107
Fruit ...	252
Rabbits ...	440
Butter ...	98
Bacon ...	2842¼
Various Foodstuffs (damaged by enemy action) ...	395
<b>Total ...</b>	<b>6059¾</b>

Arrangements are in existence for the salvage for purposes other than human consumption of all foodstuffs condemned.

### 4. Adulteration of Foods.

79 samples of milk and 33 samples of other foods and drugs were submitted to the Public Analyst.

The following tabular statement shows the nature of samples found adulterated or deficient, and the action taken in these cases.

#### Action taken on Adulterated Samples.

Serial No. of Sample. Formal.	Sample. Informal.	Commodity.	Nature of Adulteration.	Remarks as to Action Taken.
A.977	—	Milk	6.6% abstracted fat.	Case investigated—satisfied no wilful adulteration.
A.933	—	Milk	3% added water.	Vendor cautioned.
B.3	—	Milk	3% abstracted fat.	Vendor cautioned.
B.14	—	Milk	28% abstracted fat.	Cases investigated—no apparent wilful adulteration. Referred to County Sanitary Office for further action.
B.17	—	Milk	13.3% abstracted fat.	
B.72	—	Milk	20% abstracted fat.	Sample was one of four taken from Producer on delivery to Retailer—remaining 3 samples genuine. Producer cautioned.

In addition 115 samples were tested in the laboratory by the Gerber Test. 92 were up to and 23 below the standard. Samples found deficient were made the basis for further action in determining causes of deficiency or in referring samples to the Public Analyst.

## VI. Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

### I. INFECTIOUS DISEASES, OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS.

#### (a) General Statistics.

The following table shows the number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with the number of cases admitted to hospital and the deaths from these diseases.

**Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) notified during the year 1940, in the 52 weeks ending 28th December, 1940.**

Disease.	Total cases notified.*	Cases admitted to Hospital.†	Total deaths registered.
Smallpox ... ..	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever ... ..	244	213	2
Diphtheria ... ..	8	8	1
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	2	2	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	9	—	1
Pneumonia ... ..	53	—	27
Cerebro-spinal Fever ... ..	19	16	5
Encephalitis Lethargica ... ..	1	—	—
Poliomyelitis ... ..	1	—	—
Polioencephalitis ... ..	—	—	—
Erysipelas ... ..	11	—	1
Dysentery ... ..	—	—	—
Malaria ... ..	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ... ..	1	—	—
Measles ... ..	1351	88	2
Whooping Cough ... ..	109	7	2

\* The figures given are the true figures after making allowance for revision of diagnosis.  
 † Reference is to Hospital of the Bedford Joint Hospital Board or other Isolation Hospitals.  
 Provisional diagnoses are included.



The following table gives an account of cases of infectious disease notified according to age.

Analysis of Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the 52-week period ending 28th December, 1940.

DISEASE	Under 1 year	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	16 to 20	20 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards	Total all ages
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	1	3	9	15	24	95	46	19	20	10	2	...	244
Diphtheria	...	...	1	...	...	2	3	...	1	...	1	...	8
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	6	2	...	...	9
Pneumonia	...	1	...	3	2	6	2	3	3	8	17	8	53
Encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Lethargica	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cerebro-spinal Fever	...	1	2	1	...	3	3	1	5	2	1	...	19
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dysentery	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	6	3	11
Malaria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	1	88	117	126	156	640	135	27	30	3	2	1	1351
Whooping Cough	26	8	11	12	15	49	4	2	1	...	...	...	109

**(b) Individual Diseases.**

The following remarks may be made under the heading of each disease.

**Scarlet Fever.** The prevalence was relatively high, with 244 cases and a rate per 1,000 of 4.59 compared with 1.63 for England and Wales. The type of case was generally mild. There were 2 deaths from scarlet fever.

**Diphtheria.** 8 cases only occurred, giving a rate of 0.15 compared with 1.16 for England and Wales. There was 1 death from diphtheria.

**Enteric Fevers.** 2 cases were notified, both of paratyphoid B. Both cases were notified from an institution in the town. They were not Bedford residents, and infection did not take place in Bedford.

**Measles** was prevalent during the latter part of the year. 1351 cases were notified, with 2 deaths.

**Whooping Cough.** 109 cases were notified with 2 deaths.

**Puerperal Pyrexia.** 9 cases were notified, a figure which as usual includes a proportion of non-residents confined in institutions in the town.

**Cerebro-spinal Fever.** 19 cases were notified, a rate of 0.36 per 1000 for Bedford compared with 0.32 for England and Wales. These figures indicate that the disease reached epidemic proportions during the year. There were 5 deaths.

**Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis.** One case was notified. There were no deaths.

**Influenza.** There were 20 deaths from influenza, a rate of 0.38 per 1000, which may be compared with the rate of 0.32 for England and Wales.

**(c) Artificial Immunisation against Diphtheria.**

During the year a circular letter was addressed to the parents of all children reaching the age of one year, of children entering the elementary schools at the usual age, as well as of older children who had not previously accepted immunisation. Immunisation was carried out where parents accepted treatment. The following figures show the numbers immunised.

					Treatment completed.
Children aged 1—5	...	...	...	...	125
Children aged 5—15	...	...	...	...	358

In addition treatment was begun in some cases but not completed on account of failure to keep appointments and other reasons.

**2. Tuberculosis.**

The following table shows the number of new cases, and the number of deaths, in their age groups.



## Age Distribution of Cases and Deaths.

Age Periods.				New Cases.				Deaths.			
				Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
				M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...	...	...	—	—	2	—	—	—	1	—
1	...	...	...	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	—
5	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	...	...	...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
15	...	...	...	2	4	—	—	—	4	—	1
20	...	...	...	3	4	—	—	—	2	1	—
25	...	...	...	7	2	1	—	4	3	—	—
35	...	...	...	5	3	2	—	—	2	1	—
45	...	...	...	—	1	1	—	1	3	1	1
55	...	...	...	4	—	—	1	3	3	—	—
65 and upwards	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals				21	14	8	1	8	17	6	2

Five deaths occurred in cases not previously notified. In all these cases communications are addressed to the doctor certifying death, or who is known to have been in previous attendance on the patient, asking him for any explanation of failure to notify.

The numbers of deaths correspond to a rate of 0.62 per 1000 for all forms of tuberculosis, 0.47 for respiratory cases, and 0.15 for non-respiratory.



BOROUGH OF BEDFORD.

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**REPORT**  
OF THE  
**SENIOR SANITARY**  
**INSPECTOR**

For the Year 1940.



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# Report of Senior Sanitary Inspector.

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

## I. Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

The following Report shows the general and detailed nature of the duties carried out by the Sanitary Inspectors of the Department during the year 1940.

This Report includes particulars with regard to Sanitary Inspections of the area; in conjunction with details with regard to matters referred to in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health relating to Housing (Section IV.), and Inspection and Supervision of Food (Section V.).

### 1. SUMMARY OF GENERAL INSPECTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES.

#### Housing.

No. of Houses inspected under the Housing Regulations	...	24
No. of Houses found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	24
No. of Houses found to be totally unfit for human habitation	—	
No. of Houses inspected under the Public Health Acts	...	813
No. of Houses where nuisances were discovered under Public Health Acts	...	293
No. of Re-visits to houses and premises under Housing and Public Health Acts	...	1798
*No. of Houses remedied under Housing Acts	...	107
No. of Houses where nuisances remedied under Public Health Acts	...	293
No. of Houses inspected under Housing Acts which were outstanding at end of 1940	...	22

\* This figure includes 67 houses inspected in 1939 and remedied in 1940 and 38 houses inspected in 1938 and remedied in 1940.

#### Overcrowding.

No. of Visits	...	78
No. of Houses found to be overcrowded	...	30
No. of Houses where overcrowding abated	...	11

#### Drainage.

No. of House drains tested on payment of fee	...	5
No. of House drains where defects found	...	4
No. of Nursing Home drains tested	...	3
No. of Nursing Home drains where defects found	...	2



No. of School and Boarding House drains tested	...	...	21
No. of School and Boarding House drains where defects found	...	...	1
No. of Drains tested on complaint, or inspected during alterations	...	...	148
No. of Drains where defects found	...	...	17
No. of Re-visits for inspection during repairs and reconstruction	...	...	581
No. of Re-tests made to drains	...	...	167

**Infectious Diseases.**

No. of Visits made	...	...	305
No. of Rooms disinfected	...	...	296
No. of articles of clothing, bedding, etc. disinfected	...	...	26569

**Cowsheds and Dairies.**

No. of Visits made to Cowsheds, Dairies and Milkshops	...	...	310
---	-----	-----	-----

**Slaughterhouses.**

No. of Visits made to Slaughterhouses	...	...	1748
---------------------------------------	-----	-----	------

**Other Food Premises.**

No. of Visits made to Meat Shops and all Food Premises, Stores and Vehicles	...	...	1733
No. of Visits to Bakehouses	...	...	59

**Factories.**

No. of Visits to Factories with mechanical power	...	...	92
No. of Visits to Factories without mechanical power	...	...	3
No. of Visits to Outworkers' Premises	...	...	15

**Shops Act.**

No. of Visits	...	...	125
---------------	-----	-----	-----

**Offices.**

No. of Visits	...	...	21
---------------	-----	-----	----

**Offensive Trades.**

No. of Inspections of Premises	...	...	37
--------------------------------	-----	-----	----

**Common Lodging Houses.**

No. of Visits made	...	...	18
--------------------	-----	-----	----

**Houses Let in Lodgings.**

No. of Visits made	...	...	23
--------------------	-----	-----	----

**Animals (Premises).**

No. of Visits made	...	...	2
--------------------	-----	-----	---

**Moveable Dwellings, Caravans, etc.**

No. of Visits made	...	...	41
--------------------	-----	-----	----

**Places of Entertainment.**

No. of Visits made	...	...	82
--------------------	-----	-----	----

**Public Houses and Hotels.**

No. of Visits made	...	...	107
--------------------	-----	-----	-----

**Merchandise Marks Act.**

No. of Visits made to Shops, Stalls, and Vehicles	...	...	435
---	-----	-----	-----

**Rats and Mice Destruction Acts.**

No. of Visits made to infested premises	...	...	47
---	-----	-----	----

**Rent Restriction Acts.**

No. of Visits in connection with extortionate rents	...	...	3
---	-----	-----	---

**Sundry Nuisances.**

No. of Visits made with reference to complaints or nuisances discovered	...	...	6
---	-----	-----	---

**Miscellaneous Visits.**

No. of Visits made (Unclassified)	...	...	306
No. of Visits made (Government Evacuation Scheme)	...	...	651

**Food and Drugs Sampling.**

No. of Samples submitted to the Public Analyst	...	...	112
No. of Informal samples procured and examined in the Laboratory of the Public Health Department	...	...	115
No. of Samples of Graded Milk submitted for examination	...	...	128

**General Administration.**

No. of Informal Notices served under Housing Act	...	...	24
No. of Informal Notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	300
No. of Informal Notices served under Shops Acts	...	...	9
No. of Informal Notices served under Rent Acts	...	...	3
No. of Informal Notices served under Factories Act	...	...	15
No. of Informal Notices served under Food and Drugs Act	...	...	2
No. of Informal Notices served under various Byelaws, Orders, and Regulations	...	...	5
Total No. of Informal Notices served	...	...	358

**Total No. Statutory Notices served.**

Housing Act	...	...	—
Public Health Acts	...	...	—

**Total No. Legal Proceedings taken under :—**

Public Health Acts	...	...	—
Housing Act	...	...	—
Food and Drugs Act	...	...	—
Rent Restriction Act	...	...	—
Other Statutes, Orders, or Regulations	...	...	—

## II. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

### 1. (a) Housing Act, 1936.

Owing to the war and shortage of skilled labour, together with general restrictions of supplies of materials, the routine inspection of houses under the provisions of the Housing Act 1936 was suspended, and only in serious cases was any action taken.

During the year 24 houses were inspected and action taken to have the same put in a reasonable state of repair.



**Houses demolished apart from Demolition Orders.**

Address.	No. of Houses.
1, 3 and 5, Thurlow Street ... ..	3
24, 26, 28 and 30, Church Square (Corporation Property) ...	4

1798 re-visits were made to houses during the year to supervise works of repair, etc., both under the Housing and Public Health Acts.

**(b) Public Health Act, 1936.**

During the year 813 houses were inspected under the provisions of the above Act, and at 293 minor defects or nuisances were found to exist, and these were abated as a result of informal action.

**(c) Various Acts, Byelaws, Orders and Regulations.**

The work of inspection of premises such as shops, factories, dairies, cowsheds, bakehouses, etc., was carried out in order to ensure that the same complied with the provisions relating to these classes of premises.

The following table gives a summary of the Notices served to secure compliance with the provisions of the various Statutes, Byelaws, Orders and Regulations.

Statute.	Notices Served.	
	Informal.	Statutory.
Housing Act ... ..	24	—
Public Health Act ... ..	300	—
Shops Act ... ..	9	—
Factories Act ... ..	15	—
Food and Drugs Act ... ..	2	—
Rent Act ... ..	3	—
Various Byelaws, Orders and Regulations ...	5	—
Totals ... ..	358	—

**2. Drainage.****Testing and Inspections.**

The following is a summary of the houses and other premises at which drains were tested or inspected and repair work carried out.

Type of Premises.	No. tested.	No. inspected.	No. where defects found	No. wholly relaid	No. repaired
(i) Private Houses					
(a) On payment of fee ... ..	5	—	4	2	2
(b) On complaint, etc. ... ..	6	135	10	6	4
(ii) Schools and Boarding Houses					
(a) Harpur Trust ...	20	—	—	—	—
(b) Private ...	1	—	1	—	1
(iii) Nursing Homes ...	3	—	2	1	1
(iv) Hospitals ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
(v) Other premises ...	—	7	7	1	6
Totals ... ..	35	142	24	10	14



At 1 house a cesspool was dispensed with, the drains relaid and connected to the public sewer; at 7 houses the drains to the W.C.s were reconstructed and new W.C.s provided.

581 visits were made for the purpose of supervising the reconstruction of drains, and 167 re-tests carried out.

### **3. Inspection of Office Premises.**

Inspections were made of 33 office premises during the year, and at two offices additional W.C.s, together with washing facilities, were installed owing to the employment of female staff.

### **4. Refuse Storage.**

It was found necessary in 31 instances to serve informal notices regarding the provision of new dustbins, and these were duly complied with.

Owing to the difficulties of obtaining the standard galvanised iron dustbins, the Authority have had to relax their regulation relating to the type of bin to be provided.

### **5. Hotels and Public Houses.**

80 visits have been made to these premises and at 3 public houses additional W.C. accommodation has been provided in order to give separate accommodation for the sexes and also for the tenants.

### **6. Refreshment Houses.**

27 visits of inspection have been made, and at 2 premises structural improvements were carried out to the kitchens as a result of informal action.

### **7. Places of Public Entertainment.**

82 visits were made to these premises and the sanitary accommodation found to be in a satisfactory condition.

### **8. Offensive Trades.**

There are no alterations in the number of premises at which these trades are carried on, but one premises was adapted for the trade of fish frying, and one was closed.

37 visits were made to these premises during the year and they were found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

### **9. Shops Act 1934—Section 10.**

#### **Health and Comfort of Shop Workers.**

125 visits of inspection of premises were made. At 6 shops heating was found to be unsatisfactory and suitable apparatus was installed. At 3 premises owing to the employment of both sexes it was found necessary to provide additional W.C. accommodation.

### **10. Rats and Mice Destruction Act, 1919.**

During the year 47 complaints were received concerning infestation of premises by rats, and these were at once investigated and action taken to



exterminate the rats by the use of poison baits, and in no instance was any serious infestation discovered. The important question of rodent control is one that receives constant attention, therefore we do not officially recognise "Rat Week." I am afraid that until more combined action is taken nationally the rat menace will continue to be with us. The extermination of rats in public sewers is one which is dealt with by the Borough Engineer and Surveyor.

### 11. Rent Restriction Acts, 1920-1939.

Under the provisions of the Act of 1939 the rents of all houses below a rateable value of £75 became controlled at the rent being paid on the 1st September, 1939, and provision was also made in the Act for dealing with extortionate rent charged for furnished accommodation. A Ministry of Health Circular No. 2164 urged all Authorities to exercise the powers conferred upon them by the Acts to prevent advantage being taken of the present exceptional demand for accommodation. The Authority authorised the Senior Sanitary Inspector to investigate and report upon all complaints alleging excessive rents.

Four complaints were received and investigated, and the following summary shows the result of investigations.

Type of Letting.	No. of complaints received.	Rent found excessive.	Rent found not excessive.	Rent reduced.
WHOLE HOUSE :				
(a) Furnished ...	1	—	1	—
(b) Unfurnished ...	1	1	—	1
FLAT OR ROOMS :				
(a) Furnished ...	—	—	—	—
(b) Unfurnished ...	2	2	—	2
Totals ...	4	3	1	3

It was not found necessary to institute any legal proceedings to secure the reductions, as in each case where excessive rent was found, reduction of the rent to a reasonable figure was secured by informal action.

## III. PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYELAWS AND REGULATIONS.

### 1. Houses Let in Lodgings.

There has been an increase in the number of houses let in lodgings since the last year owing to evacuees and to war workers and their families being transferred to the Borough.

23 visits of inspection have been made to these premises, and apart from some cases of overcrowding being discovered, the premises have been maintained in a satisfactory condition.

### 2. Common Lodging Houses.

There are 4 registered Common Lodging Houses in the Borough, and the following table shows the situation and accommodation available, with the number of lodgers admitted.



Situation.		No. of Rooms.	No. of Beds.	Lodgers Admitted	
				1939.	1940.
8a, Tavistock Place ...	...	6	40	9402	11086
4, All Hallow's Lane ...	...	4	19	3991	2871
22, All Hallow's Lane ...	...	5	28	5034	2897
104, Greyfriars Walk ...	...	5	14	3743	4231
		—	—	—	—
		20	101	22170	21085
		—	—	—	—

It will be seen that there is a slight decrease in the numbers of persons accommodated in the Lodging Houses in 1940. The casual wards at the Public Assistance Institution were closed from September, 1939, and by an arrangement with the Police casuals were admitted to the Lodging Houses. 18 visits of inspection were made to these premises, when it was found that the same were kept in a satisfactory condition, and the requirements of the byelaws duly observed.

### 3. Moveable Dwellings.

Inspections were made of the caravans stationed at the Fair Ground, and these were found to be in a satisfactory condition. Inspection was also made of the six caravans situated in the Clarence Yard, when they were found to be in a satisfactory condition. In all 41 visits of inspection were made for these purposes.

## IV. FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

### (a) Inspections.

The following table shows the number of inspections made and defects found and the result of action taken.

				Inspections.	Defects found.	Defects remedied.
Factories :						
(a) With mechanical power	...	...	...	92	10	10
(b) Without mechanical power	...	...	...	3	5	5
Other Premises	...	...	...	1	—	—
Out-workers	...	...	...	15	—	—
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	...	...	...	111	15	15

7 notifications were received from H.M. Inspector of Factories relating to contraventions as follows :

Want of Cleanliness ...	...	...	...	4
Thermometer not provided ...	...	...	...	2
Permitted number not exhibited ...	...	...	...	1

Inspections of these premises were made, and as a result of informal action the notices were complied with.



Four vacant premises were adapted and occupied as factories by firms who had suffered damage by enemy action in other districts., and at these premises W.C.s and washing facilities were provided. At one other factory, owing to the increase of staff, additional W.C. and washing facilities were provided.

### **(b) Home-work.**

During the year, as a result of lists that were received from employers recording the names and addresses of outworkers residing in the Borough, visits of inspection were made and the premises found to be in a satisfactory condition. No cases of infectious diseases occurred amongst the outworkers or their families.

### **(c) Bakehouses.**

59 visits were made, and at 2 premises defective floors were relaid with tiled surfaces. In general the premises were maintained in a satisfactory condition.

## **V. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION.**

### **1. Disinfection.**

305 visits were made with regard to investigation of infectious diseases. Disinfection of 296 rooms, and 26,569 articles of clothing, bedding, etc., after cases of infectious disease, tuberculosis and cancer was carried out.

### **2. Disinfestation.**

#### **(a) Eradication of Bed Bugs.**

The work of disinfestation of bug infested houses was carried out by this Department free of charge.

In all 36 houses comprising 99 rooms were given treatment by means of spraying with an insecticide and infested bedding was removed for steam disinfection. The majority of the houses were not seriously infested, but at 4 houses it was found necessary to destroy the bedding.

#### **(b) Other Vermin.**

3 houses infested with beetles, crickets and ants were discovered and the necessary treatment given.

#### **(c) Scabies.**

192 visits were made to cases of scabies which were reported or discovered during the year. All personal clothing and bedding was subject to steam disinfection.

## **VI. SCHEMES ARISING OUT OF PRESENT EMERGENCY.**

### **Duties carried out by the Public Health Department.**

#### **Reception of Evacuees.**

As further evacuation took place during the year arrangements were prepared by this Department to receive on six occasions evacuees from London, the East Coast, and South Coast. In all a total of 2,407 persons were received and ultimately billeted.

#### **Reception Hostels.**

By private arrangements with the trustees a Sunday School was utilised as a dormitory for persons living in London whereby, on payment of a charge,



sleeping accommodation was provided. The work of adapting the premises, including provision of washing facilities and additional W.C.s was carried out under supervision of this Department.

Three premises were requisitioned and put into a suitable state of repair under the supervision of this Department for the reception of the Highbury Training Home, a Jewish Nursery for babies.

### **Schools.**

Three premises were requisitioned for special schools evacuated from towns on the South Coast. The work of adaptation at these premises was carried out under the supervision of this Department. Another Sunday School was taken over for accommodating an evacuated school and the works of providing additional W.C.s and washing facilities were carried out under the supervision of this Department.

### **Social Centres.**

Six premises were taken over for the establishment of Social Centres for use by evacuees. The works of adaptation of these premises were carried out under the supervision of this Department.

### **Canteens.**

Owing to the large influx of people into the town, including war workers, 2 premises were taken over for the purpose of setting up British Restaurants. The works of adaptation of these premises were carried out under the supervision of this Department.

### **Housing.**

The 12 vacant and condemned houses at Goldington were, by instructions of the Ministry, licensed to be re-occupied by evacuee families. Certain repairs were carried out to the houses to make them satisfactory for this temporary purpose. Another house, previously used as a part of the Hostel for Difficult Children, was vacated and utilised for the purpose of housing several large families.

### **War Workers.**

The 38 houses on the Queen's Park Estate upon which building operations had been suspended, were by an arrangement with the contractors completed and handed over to the management of a transferred war factory under the Ministry of Aircraft Production and subsequently used for the housing of their transferred workers.

### **War-Time Day Nursery.**

Premises for this purpose were requisitioned and works of adaptation carried out under the supervision of this Department.

### **Claims for Compensation.**

55 claims for compensation for damage caused to bedding, etc., by evacuees were investigated and reported upon to the Ministry, and as a result awards were made in 44 instances.

### **Inspections of Billets and Hostels etc.**

651 visits were made during the year to billets and hostels, etc., for the general administration of the Government Evacuation Scheme.



1000