

[Report 1944] / Medical Officer of Health, Blandford R.D.C.

Contributors

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Medical Officer's Annual Report for the year 1944.

The Minister of Health has directed that the report for 1944 shall again be abbreviated and confined to essential matters and exceptional measures. He desires it to include information on the steps taken to combat infestation and on the state of water supplies. Statistics are to be preserved but not included in this interim report.

The health of the population remained good. The only disease which was notified in exceptional number was dysentery of the Sonne type, mostly of a very mild character. It is doubtful whether this disease actually increased in prevalence or whether the greater number of notifications was due to improved methods of diagnosis.

Immunisation against diphtheria proceeds satisfactorily. On Dec 31, 1944 it was estimated that 80% of the child population aged 5 to 15 were immunised and 55.3% of those aged under 5. The former figure is lower than previous estimates and the latter higher. No case of diphtheria was notified during the year.

Infestation Of the verminous conditions scabies was still unduly prevalent. Pediculosis capitis was not a serious problem though frequent. This Council has been fortunate in having its old Isolation Hospital to act as a cleansing station, in addition to the Minor Ailment Clinic established at the First Aid Post in Blandford. Both the hospital and the First Aid Post will be closed down soon after the end of 1944. Arrangements have been made by the County Council to carry on the Clinic in another form for the time but the hospital will be a serious loss. Neighbouring Districts have been worse off in this respect than Blandford and in my opinion a central cleansing station, with some inpatient accommodation, is urgently required to serve the group of Districts at this end of the County which at present have no proper means of applying the power given them by those sections of the Public Health Act 1936 which deal with verminous conditions, and by the Scabies Order 1941.

Water Supplies The greater part of the District is dependent on wells. Being in the chalk formation these give a reasonably pure and usually sufficient supply. In dry seasons however the shallower wells fail. There was a serious shortage of water in some villages during part of 1944.

13 Parishes are provided, most of them only partly, with piped supplies. 18 Parishes are not so provided.

There are 6 piped supplies in the District, owned and managed with one exception by private estates or companies. 4 of the waterworks are small and not very efficient. Standpipes are the usual provision and only a minority of the working class houses have water laid on inside the house.

21 samples were taken for bacteriological examination from the various supplies. 9 of these were of the raw water, 3 being reported as suspicious and the rest highly satisfactory. 12 samples were taken of water going into supply after chlorination. All gave highly satisfactory results.

4 samples were chemically analysed and gave satisfactory results.

The Council is planning an extensive public water supply for the whole district but at present has no water undertaking of its own

(Signed) L. B. SCOTT. M.D. D.P.H.

Medical Officer's Report for the year 1941

The Medical Officer of Health has directed that the report for 1941 shall again be abbreviated and confined to essential matters and exceptional measures. He desires to be informed in relation to the steps taken to control infection and on the state of water supply. Statistics are to be preserved but not included in this interim report.

The health of the population remained good. The only disease which was notified in exceptional number was diphtheria. Some cases, mostly of a very mild character. It is doubtful whether this disease actually increased in prevalence or whether the number of notifications was due to improved methods of diagnosis.

Investigation against diphtheria provided satisfactorily. On Dec 21, 1941 it was estimated that 75% of the child population aged 5 to 14 were immunised and 25% of those aged under 5. The figures are lower than previous estimates and the latter higher. No cases of diphtheria were notified during the year.

Infestation Of the verminous conditions section was with mainly prevalent. Tuberculosis capitis was not a serious problem during the year. This Council has been fortunate in having the old Infestation Hospital to act as a permanent unit. In addition to the Infestation Hospital situated at the West Hill Road in Hantsford, Northampton. The Hospital and the West Hill Road will be closed down soon after the end of 1941. Arrangements have been made by the County Council to carry on the Clinic in another form for the time but the Hospital will be a serious loss. Referring to the Infestation Hospital have been worse off in this respect than Hantsford and in a certain number of cases of infestation with some patients associated. It is necessary to refer to some of the group of districts at this end of the County which at present have no proper means of reporting the power given them by those sections of the Public Health Act 1936 which deal with verminous conditions, and by the Council Order 1941.

Water Supplying The greater part of the District is dependent on wells. Being in the chalk formation there give a reasonably pure and usually sufficient supply. In dry seasons however the shallow wells fail. There was a serious shortage of water in some villages during part of 1941.

Is facilities are provided, most of them only partial, with piped supplies. Is facilities are not so provided.

There are 6 piped supplies in the District, owned and managed with one exception by private enterprise or companies. 5 of the waterworks are small and not very efficient. 8 companies have the water provision and only a minority of the working-class houses have water laid on inside the house.

21 samples were taken for bacteriological examination from the various supplies. 2 of these were of the raw water, 2 being reported as satisfactory and the rest highly satisfactory. 13 samples were taken of water going into supply after chlorination. All gave highly satisfactory results.

4 samples were chemically analysed and gave satisfactory results.

The Council is planning an extensive public water supply for the whole District but at present has no water works of its own.