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Contributors

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DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL

ANNUAL
REPORT

OF

Medical Officer
of Health
FOR 1945

G. H. H. WAYLEN, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab.
Medical Officer of Health for the Devizes Rural District

DEVIZES
Woodward, Printer
1948



DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1945

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit herewith my Annual Report on the Public Health and Sanitary Administration of your District for the year 1945.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

G. H. H. WAYLEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

Browfort, Devizes.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area in Acres—63,515

Population as estimated by Registrar-General—12,580

Number of inhabited houses—3,402

Rateable Value—£65,452

Product of a penny rate—£278 18s. 6d.

VITAL STATISTICS

| | M. | F. | TOTAL |
|--|-----|-----|-------|
| Live Births | 117 | 115 | 232 |
| Legitimate | 101 | 96 | |
| Illegitimate | 16 | 19 | |
| Stillbirths | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Legitimate | 1 | | |
| Illegitimate | | 1 | |
| Live Birth Rate | | | 18·44 |
| Live Birth Rate for England and Wales | | | 16·1 |
| Number of Deaths from all causes ... | 74 | 75 | 149 |
| Crude Death Rate | | | 11·8 |
| Crude Death Rate for England and Wales | | | 11·4 |
| Death of Infants under one year :— | | | |
| Total | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| Legitimate | 3 | 3 | |
| Illegitimate | 1 | 1 | |
| Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 live births | | | 34·5 |
| Infantile Death Rate for England and Wales | | | 46·0 |

CAUSES OF DEATH

AS RETURNED BY REGISTRAR-GENERAL

| | M. | F. | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Typhoid | — | — | — |
| Cerebro Spinal Fever | — | 1 | 1 |
| Scarlet Fever | — | — | — |
| Whooping Cough | — | — | — |
| Diphtheria | — | — | — |
| Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ... | 2 | — | 2 |
| Tuberculosis—other forms | — | — | — |
| Syphilitic Diseases | 1 | — | 1 |
| Influenza | — | 1 | 1 |
| Measles | — | — | — |
| Acute Poliomyelitis and Polio Encephalitis ... | — | — | — |
| Acute Infective Encephalitis | — | — | — |
| Cancer of Buccal Cavity, Oesophagus and Uterus | — | 1 | 1 |
| Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum ... | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Cancer of Breast | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Cancer of all other sites | 9 | 7 | 16 |
| Diabetes | — | 1 | 1 |
| Intracranial Vascular Lesions | 11 | 13 | 24 |
| Heart Disease | 21 | 21 | 42 |
| Other Diseases of Circulatory System ... | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| Bronchitis | — | 1 | 1 |
| Pneumonia | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| Other Respiratory Diseases | 1 | — | 1 |
| Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum | — | — | — |
| Diarrhoea—under two years | — | — | — |
| Appendicitis | — | 2 | 2 |
| Other Digestive Diseases | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| Nephritis | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Puerperal and Post Abortional Sepsis ... | — | — | — |
| Other Maternal Causes | — | — | — |
| Premature Birth | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Congenital Malformations, Birth Injuries and Infantile Diseases | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Suicide | — | — | — |
| Road Traffic Accidents | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Other Violent Causes | 3 | — | 3 |
| All other causes | 11 | 7 | 18 |
| All Causes | 74 | 75 | 149 |

Satisfactory features are :—

- (i) No deaths of Infants under two years of age from Enteritis and Diarrhoea.
- (ii) Single deaths only from Cerebro Spinal Fever and Influenza among Infectious Diseases, and two from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

The main causes of deaths were from Cardio Vascular Diseases, 31%; and Cancer nearly 14%. Both forms indicating an aging population.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Medical Officer of Health :—G. H. H. Waylen, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab.

Sanitary Inspector (also Surveyor and Water Engineer) —G. E. Williams, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Housing Inspector :—M. I. C. Spencer (from 1st July, 1945).

Ambulance Service provided by a Joint Ambulance Committee from the Borough and Rural District Councils of Devizes.

Nursing in the Home :—Nurses supported by District Nursing Associations available over most of area. The Maternity duties of District Nurses forbid or curtail their attendance on some sufferers despite their need.

Laboratory Facilities :—The Greville Laboratory at Salisbury Infirmary utilised for all purposes.

Clinics and Treatment Centres :—All under the auspices of the Wilts County Health Department, as follows :—

- (i) Orthopædic at Scout Hall and District Hospital.
- (ii) Tuberculosis at District Hospital.
- (iii) Venereal Diseases (female) at District Hospital.
- (iv) Ophthalmic Clinic elsewhere in Devizes.
- (v) Infant Welfare Clinic elsewhere in Devizes.

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL

This Hospital serves your Area. The number of beds was reduced to 88 owing to lessened intake of military cases. Of 1,200 admissions nearly 70% were civilians, and of these over 400, or 33%, came from the country parishes.

RATE AIDED HOSPITAL

DEVIZES AND PEWSEY JOINT ISOLATION HOSPITAL

Admissions to the above Hospital from your District were 26 out of a total of 130. See Table below.

Cases admitted to Devizes and Pewsey Joint Isolation Hospital in 1945:—

| Diseases | Bor-rough | Devizes R.D. | Pewsey R.D. | Other Dist-riacts | Mili-tary | Total |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| Scarlet Fever... | 28 | 14 | 7 | — | 2 | 51 |
| Diphtheria ... | — | — | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Cerebro Spinal Fever ... | 1 | — | — | — | — | 1 |
| Measles ... | 12 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 24 |
| Whooping Cough ... | 3 | — | — | — | — | 3 |
| Rubella ... | — | — | — | — | 3 | 3 |
| Vincent's Angina ... | — | — | — | — | 2 | 2 |
| Erysipelas ... | — | 2 | 1 | — | 1 | 4 |
| Dysentery ... | 2 | — | — | — | 3 | 5 |
| Mumps ... | 2 | — | — | — | 4 | 6 |
| Anterior Poliomyelitis ... | — | 1 | — | — | — | 1 |
| Pneumonia ... | — | — | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Tonsillitis ... | 3 | 1 | 3 | — | 6 | 13 |
| Observation ... | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 9 |
| Chicken Pox ... | — | — | — | — | 2 | 2 |
| Pemphigus ... | 3 | — | — | — | — | 3 |
| Puerperal Pyrexia ... | — | 1 | — | — | — | 1 |
| Totals ... | 56 | 26 | 17 | 2 | 29 | 130 |

The above Table shows the wide variety of cases, unsuitable for admission to the Wards of a General Hospital, for which accommodation was provided in the Cubicle Block despite shortages of Nursing and Domestic Staff. In addition 28 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were housed in the big block during the first nine months of the year.

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 1945

| Disease | Civilian | Military | Total |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|-------|
| Scarlet Fever ... | 19 | 2 | 21 |
| Measles ... | 268 | 2 | 270 |
| Whooping Cough ... | 19 | — | 19 |
| Dysentery ... | 25 | 7 | 32 |
| Acute Primary Pneumonia ... | 5 | 13 | 18 |
| Diphtheria ... | — | 2 | 2 |
| Erysipelas ... | 3 | — | 3 |
| Cerebro Spinal Fever ... | 2 | — | 2 |
| Anterior Poliomyelitis ... | 1 | — | — |

Chief points of interest were the occurrence of a sharp outburst of measles spread over the first nine months, and the absence of any diphtheria cases among the civilian population.

T.B. NOTIFICATIONS

| AGE GROUP | NEW CASES | | | | T. B. DEATHS | | | |
|------------|-----------|----|---------------|----|--------------|----|---------------|----|
| | Pulmonary | | Non-Pulmonary | | Pulmonary | | Non-Pulmonary | |
| | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. |
| 0-10 ... | — | — | 1 | — | — | — | — | — |
| 10-15 ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 15-25 ... | 3 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 25-35 ... | 1 | 2 | — | — | 1 | — | — | — |
| 35-45 ... | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | 1 | — |
| 45-65 ... | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Over 65 .. | *1 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — |
| TOTALS ... | 7 | 2 | 1 | — | 2 | — | 1 | — |

*Notified as Pulmonary and Non-Pulmonary

MATERNITY SERVICES

The services of Certified Midwives are available over your area under the County Council Maternity Scheme. Just over half of the births from your District were so attended, the remainder being dealt with Institutionally.

No rate aided Maternity Hospital is available in the Devizes Area; Ivy House, a Private Maternity Home in Devizes, cannot nearly meet the demands made on it. Provision of further maternity beds in and for this area is an urgent need.

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA

| IMMUNISATION IN RELATION TO CHILD POPULATION | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Number of Children who had completed a full course of immunisation at any time up to 31st December, 1945. | | | | | | | | |
| Age at 31/12/45, i.e. born in year | Under 1, 1945 | 1 1944 | 2 1943 | 3 1942 | 4 1941 | 5 to 9 1936/40 | 10 to 14 1931/35 | Total under 15 |
| Number immunised | — | 65 | 104 | 111 | 122 | 747 | 778 | 1926 |
| Estimated mid-year population 1945 | 922 | | | | | 1830 | | 2822 |

The absence of Diphtheria notifications during the year following the lessened occurrence of such in recent years suggests that the above campaign has now become effective.

HOUSING

A complete housing survey of your District was commenced by the Housing Inspector. Only most urgent repair work was pressed for owing to nation wide shortage of building labour and materials.

For details see Sanitary Inspector's Report.

WATER SUPPLY

Major A. H. S. Waters, Consulting Engineer, presented the report on his Survey of your District, in May, 1945.

Various additional sources of supply were suggested with possibilities of ultimate linkage between them. The only one in being is that at Bourton opened up by the Devizes Borough Council which is easily capable of supplying the villages to the North East of your District.

The existing supply at Great Cheverell cannot from time to time meet the demands now made on it. Until, therefore, additional sources of supply are made available neither the provision of modern sanitary conveniences to future housing, nor that needed for up-to-date dairying can be provided over large portions of your District.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report 1945

To the Chairman and Members of the Devizes Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my first annual Report in conjunction with your Medical Officer of Health. Included in the Report are a few particulars which relate more especially to my duties as Waterworks Engineer, and Building Surveyor, which I have ventured to include as the work is closely inter-related to public health matters.

1. Housing.

As a result of the Hobhouse Report, Rural District Councils were asked by the Ministry of Health in May, 1944, to survey and classify all houses suitable for occupation by members of the working classes.

The survey must be based on a uniform standard and the results classified in a uniform manner. When completed, the survey will provide the Council with a picture of the housing conditions in their area based on carefully ascertained facts measured against an agreed standard. It will be a valuable guide for the long term planning of the Council's building programme; it will furnish an accurate appraisal of the extent of the repair, reconditioning and overcrowding problem, and provide some of the requisite data for the Public Inquiries which will no doubt be held before the Post-War Water Supply and Sewerage Schemes can be finally approved by the Ministry of Health. The results of the survey will also be invaluable for the day to day administration of the department, and useful for rating and valuation purposes.

It forms the first complete systematic record which the department possesses.

Work on the Survey was commenced on the 1st July, 1945, and the following table shows the results in the eight parishes surveyed up to 31st December, 1945.

TABLE OF CLASSIFICATION.

HOUSES INSPECTED TO 31st DECEMBER, 1945

| PARISH | Cat. 1 | Cat. 2 | Cat. 3 | Cat. 4 | Cat. 5 | Total |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Little Cheverell ... | — | — | 6 | 20 | 4 | 30 |
| Great Cheverell ... | — | 1 | 19 | 24 | 10 | 54 |
| Erlestoke ... | — | — | 7 | 26 | 3 | 36 |
| Marston ... | — | — | 2 | 11 | 5 | 18 |
| Poulshot ... | — | — | 15 | 34 | 5 | 54 |
| Rowde ... | — | 13 | 31 | 73 | 15 | 132 |
| Bromham ... | — | 15 | 88 | 152 | 19 | 274 |
| Urchfont ... | — | 3 | 7 | 28 | 12 | 50 |
| TOTALS ... | — | 32 | 175 | 368 | 73 | 648 |

What the Categories mean :

- Category 1. Satisfactory in all respects.
- „ 2. Minor repairs required.
- „ 3. Repairs, structural alterations or improvement required.
- „ 4. Re-conditioning required.
- „ 5. Unfit for habitation, and beyond repair at reasonable expense.

Up to date the survey reveals that housing conditions are in a very unsatisfactory state. It will be seen that over 11% of the dwellings inspected are quite unfit for human habitation, and not one complies in all respects with the Standard of Fitness. No doubt a considerable number of Category 4 houses will pass into Category 5 before the problem of reconditioning them can be tackled.

Years of intensive housing work will be necessary to break the back of this problem.

Informal action was taken in several cases (see Summary of Inspections), for the repair of leaky roofs, etc., to afford some amelioration of the worst conditions.

Water Supply.

During the early part of the year it was found impossible to maintain a continuous supply throughout the district, and at one period the high points were without water for several days. The Council had found it necessary to refuse any additional consumers on to the water system in 1944, and this rule continued until April, 1945. The reasons for this state of affairs were as follows:—

1. Decreased yield from the Great Cheverell Boreholes.
2. Increasing consumption.
3. Reduction in the number of pumping hours from November to February, due to the electricity peak-load restriction.

To meet this position, the Council decided to purchase a bulk supply from Devizes Borough, and withdraw the borehole linings and overhaul the plant at Great Cheverell. Accordingly, a five years Agreement was made with the Borough for the purchase of water up to a maximum of 150,000 gallons per day at 10½d. per thousand gallons. The link-up was made by laying 820 yards of three-inch main from the bottom of Dunkirk Hill, Devizes, to Rowde.

After certain exploratory work, it was discovered that the decreased yield at Great Cheverell was due to the gradual progressive sealing up by a yellowish oxide, of the perforations in the bottom lining of the boreholes. Consequently, these linings were withdrawn in the large borehole, and one of the smaller bores, and slotted to seven times their former sectional area. The result was an increased yield of approximately 50% from the small borehole. Only a slight increase, however, resulted from slotting the large borehole, and this clearly confirms the theory (advanced at an early stage in the progress of the work), that it is not possible to extract more than 5,000 gallons per hour from a ten-inch borehole which taps the strata between 230 and 190 O.D. in this particular location.

A very considerable saving in electricity has resulted through the increased efficiency factor at which the pumps now operate, and over a period of years, this might well pay for the cost of the exploratory work and overhaul.

An ample supply of water is now available on the whole of the Council's system.

The total number of consumers on the Great Cheverell System at 31st December, 1945, was 922, of which 45 were connected during the year.

The following figures show the position in regard to the availability of piped water supplies:—

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Total population | ... | 12,981 |
| Population supplied into houses | ... | 4,999* |
| Population supplied by standpipe | ... | 737 |
| Total population directly supplied | ... | 5,736* |
| Population without piped supplies | ... | 7,245 |

* These figures include the Mental Hospital (population 1,680), Erlestoke, West Lavington and Bishops Cannings supplies.

It will be seen that the majority of households have to depend on wells and springs for their water.

Sewerage.

The Council have, over a course of many years, assumed responsibility for 80 sewers or sewer ditches, which deal with sullage, overflows from cesspools and surface water. There are no sewage works, and the sewers discharge into watercourses or streams. These sewers are cleansed so far as the limited labour resources permit. Many are long and low lying, and difficult to keep free of nuisance. For the most part, they are unsatisfactory and will remain so until modern sewerage and sewage disposal works are constructed.

Cowsheds and Dairies,

There are 326 registered milk producers in the District which includes 49 Producer Retailers and 7 Retailers.

A comparatively small number of dairy farms produce designated milk, viz.: 25 Tuberculin Tested herds and 39 Accredited, although these are mainly large herds.

Only 6 additional T.T. Licences were granted by the County Council during the year, and 3 Accredited Licences were cancelled.

It is obvious that many farms in the area are unsatisfactory in the matter of buildings, equipment and method, and there is much spade work to be done in this phase of the Council's activities.

Little was done in 1945 owing to insufficient staff.

Rodent Control.

Most of this work is done by the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee, who employ squads of full time trained rodent operators to deal with rats (and other pests) on farms.

The Council are required by the Ministry of Food to make arrangements for dealing with infestations on request from occupiers of premises, other than farms, provided they agree to pay the cost. Indeed, the Ministry consider it desirable that periodic surveys be undertaken to search out and destroy rats and mice.

The Council employ a part-time Rodent Operator to deal with reported infestations as there is insufficient work to justify the employment of a full-time man.

This division of function between two authorities is not a sound administrative arrangement in an area of this description, and it would appear desirable for either the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee to transfer their duties to the Council, or *vice versa*.

The number of infestations dealt with during the year was six.

Refuse Collection.

Tins and glass ware are collected once per month by a Contractor. Disposal is by crude tipping at Seend.

Within its limitations the system operates satisfactorily, but if measured by modern standards for a refuse collecting service it leaves much to be desired.

Food Inspection.

Particulars of the food condemned as unfit for human consumption is as follows :—

680 2lb. loaves contaminated with rodent faeces.

131 lbs. Beef—Hind-quarter decomposition.

In addition, a quantity of food was inspected for the Devizes Borough Council in the absence of their Sanitary Inspector.

Summary of Inspections.

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|
| Rural Housing Survey | ... | ... | 648 |
| Housing Acts. Generally | ... | ... | 77 |
| Public Health Act | ... | ... | 63 |
| Food and Drugs Act | ... | ... | 7 |
| Factories Act | ... | ... | 3 |
| Milk and Dairies Order | ... | ... | 23 |
| Shops Act | ... | ... | Nil |
| Petroleum Regulations | ... | ... | 8 |
| Sewers and Sewer Ditches | ... | ... | 45 |
| Drains | ... | ... | 42 |
| Water Supplies | ... | ... | 228 |
| Building | ... | ... | 73 |
| Refuse Collection | ... | ... | 23 |
| Rodent Control | ... | ... | 10 |
| Water Samples | ... | ... | 9 |
| Inspection of Requisitioned Properties | ... | ... | 3 |
| Rights of Way—Obstruction | ... | ... | 4 |
| Disinfestations | ... | ... | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | ... | ... | 6 |

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

G. E. WILLIAMS.



