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Borough of Ludlow.



ANNUAL REPORT of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1944.

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BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1944.

LUDLOW.

1st July, 1945.

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the Health of the Borough for the year ending 31st December, 1944. It has been drawn up in accordance with the Ministry's Circular 49/45, dated 19th March, 1945.

STATISTICS.

These are, on the whole, satisfactory when compared with the figures for the whole country. The Birth-rate is high (19·3) and, although the crude Death-rate is higher than that for England and Wales (15·5) and 11·6 respectively), it is not possible to compare the rates at present owing to the fact that no "comparability factor" is available for the various towns and districts.

	Ludlow	Eng. & Wales
Birth-rate	19·3	17·6
Death-rate	15·5	11·6
Infantile Mortality Rate ...	60	46
Still-birth Rate	49	28
Maternal Death-rate ...	Nil	1·93
Tuberculosis Death-rate	0·499	0·667

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

No serious outbreak of Infectious Disease has taken place and no deaths took place from any such disease. The incidence rate of notifications was 3·49 per 1,000, as against 9·99 per 1,000 for the country as a whole. For the second year in succession no case of **Diphtheria** was notified and the protection of the children against this disease has been continued.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The register shows that there are forty-three notified cases in the town on December 31st, 1944.

Seven new cases were notified and 3 deaths were registered from this disease. One case received financial assistance under the scheme of allowances to patients and their families.

One way in which a Local Authority may help in the prevention of new cases is by giving preference as regards Council Houses to tubercular families who are living in overcrowded conditions.

HOUSING.

The Housing problem will require the Council's greatest attention in the next few years as the demand is certain to be greater than the supply.

A first essential would appear to be to ascertain the number of houses which will be required to replace those which will have to be demolished and the number required to re-house overcrowded families. In the section of the report dealing with Housing it is suggested that a survey of all houses—similar to that being carried out by the Rural District Councils throughout the country—should be commenced so that the extent of the problem can be ascertained as far as is possible.

WATER SUPPLY.

The Council have had under consideration the question of a more satisfactory Water Supply for the town. The present supply is apt to vary both as regards quality and quantity in different weather conditions and, with an increase in the amount of water used, the need for a new supply is becoming greater each year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES L. GREGORY,
Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH :

JAMES L. GREGORY, M.B., CH.B., F.R.F.P.S., D.P.H.,
D.T.M. AND HY.

SANITARY INSPECTOR :

WILLIAM GEORGE LANE, M.INST.M. AND CY.E.,
CERT. ROY. SAN. INST.

SECTION A

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	966
Registrar-General's estimate of the Population, mid-year, 1944	6,005
Number of Inhabited Houses according to the Rate Books	1,553
Rateable Value	£33,597
Sum represented by 1d. Rate	£136 18s. 11d.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.—The conditions are those of a Market Town in the centre of an Agricultural district. The town is a shopping centre for the surrounding country side and there are also markets.

Conditions as regards employment have been satisfactory as elsewhere in the country, *i.e.* there has been little unemployment.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS—

	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	106	55	51
Illegitimate	10	8	2
Totals	116	63	53

BIRTH-RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population = 19.3

	Total	M.	F.
STILL BIRTHS	6	4	2

STILL-BIRTH RATE per 1,000 total (live and still Births = 49.

	Total	M.	F.
DEATHS—	93	51	42

DEATH-RATE per 1,000 of the total estimated population = 15.5

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES—

	Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total Births
From Puerperal Sepsis	0	0
From other Puerperal causes	0	0
Totals	Nil	Nil

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR—

	Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 Live Births
(a) Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate births	4	37
(b) Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate births	3	300
(c) All Infants per 1,000 total births...	7	60
	—	—

DEATHS from—

Cancer (all ages) ... ..	...	14
Measles (all ages) ... ..	...	0
Whooping Cough (all ages) ... ..	...	0
Diarrhoea (under two years) ... ..	...	0

NOTES ON VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTH-RATE.—Births numbered 116 and this gives a rate of 19·3, compared with the country's rate of 17·6 per 1,000 of the population.

STILL - BIRTHS.—These numbered six compared with three in 1943. The rate was 49 per 1,000 total (live and still) births.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.—Seven Infants died under the age of one year. This gives an Infantile Mortality rate of 60 per 1,000 live births.

Three of these deaths were due to Broncho-Pneumonia and two to injury at birth.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.—No maternal death was recorded from any cause associated with child-birth.

DEATH-RATE.—Ninety-three deaths were registered and the death-rate was 15·5 per 1,000 of the population. At present no "factor of correction" for age and sex distribution is available so that it is not possible to compare this rate with that of other districts or of the country as a whole.

The chief causes of death were :- Heart Disease 37; Cancer 14; Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions 9. No death took place from any Infectious Disease during the year.

CANCER DEATH-RATE = 2,329 per million living.

TUBERCULOSIS „ = 499 „ „

There were three deaths from Tuberculosis, all from the Pulmonary type of the disease.

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

STAFF.—There have been no changes during the year.

LABORATORY FACILITIES. — The Donaldson-Hudson Laboratories, Shrewsbury, are available for routine bacteriological examinations. Routine examinations of the town's water supply have been carried out at the Laboratory, Assay Office, Goss Street, Chester.

NURSING SERVICES IN THE HOME.—This is carried out, as in former years, by the Nurses of the two Nursing Associations in Ludlow. Details of the work carried out will be found in the report of the Shropshire Nursing Federation, Shrewsbury, to which both of the Associations are affiliated.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.—The County Medical Officer states that as from the 1st April, 1945, the administrative centre for County Council Ambulances will be the County Council Hospital, Cross Houses, near Shrewsbury (Tel. No. Cross Houses 242).

In cases of Infectious Diseases requiring removal to the Isolation Hospital at Monkmoor, doctors are asked to get into touch with the Medical Officer of Health or the Sanitary Inspector, who will find out if a bed is available and arrange for an ambulance to be sent.

There is also an ambulance (St. John & B.R.C.S.) at Ludlow (Tel. No. Ludlow 184).

TREATMENT CENTRES and CLINICS.—These are under the control of the County Health Department, and include: School Clinic, Infant Welfare and Ante-natal Centres. The Tuberculosis Dispensary and Venereal Diseases Clinic are at Shrewsbury.

The following are particulars of the hours of the various Clinics, etc. :-

Clinic.	Place.	Days.	Hours.
School	Dinham	Daily	9—10 a.m.
Infant Welfare	do.	Mondays	10—12 a.m. & 2—4-30 p.m.
Ante-natal Centre	do.	do.	do.

Clinic.	Place.	Days.	Hours.
Venereal Diseases	1, Belmont, Shrewsbury	Tues. & Fri., (Men)	6—8 p.m.
		Mon. & Wed., (Women)	2—4 p.m.
Tuberculosis Dispensary	17, Belmont, Shrewsbury	Daily	By Appointment

The Tuberculosis Officer (Dr. A. C. Watkins) also visits the Clinic at Dinham once a month to see cases by appointment.

A Doctor attends at the School Clinic, etc., on alternate Mondays.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.—Details are given in my report for 1942 and there have been no changes. The representatives of the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust have not yet presented their report on the Hospital Services, and this is awaited.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

The matters to be dealt with in this section of the report include Water Supplies, Sewerage and Drainage, Refuse Disposal and other matters concerned with environmental hygiene.

WATER SUPPLY.—The sources of the town's supply have been described in the reports for 1942 and 1943. During the past year the Surveyor reports that the supply has been slightly below normal, but no shortage has been experienced and the quality has been satisfactory. Samples for bacteriological examination are taken both of the raw water before chlorination and of the treated water. A careful watch is kept on the reports as at times a larger dose of chlorine is required owing to an increase in the chlorine "demand" of the water.

The water has no plumbo-solvent action on pipes. Over 90% of the houses in the Borough are on the mains as only a few houses on the out-skirts have private supplies.

The quantity of water taken from the Birmingham Corporation's Aqueduct during the year was nearly 10 million gallons, the cost being £493.

A survey of all the water resources in the County is being undertaken by the County Council, who have appointed an

Engineer to report on the matter. In the future it is hoped that large schemes will be provided to cover the whole county, and the Minister of Health has now powers to arrange for the amalgamation of water undertakings where this is necessary.

Larger schemes would make supervision of gathering grounds and schemes of purification much easier and more thorough.

The Surveyor reports that scraping of sections of the mains was carried out with a resulting improvement of the pressure in the districts supplied. This work accounted for a large proportion of the excess water required from the Birmingham supply.

SEWERAGE and SEWAGE DISPOSAL.—No new sewers have been laid during the year. All the houses are connected to the sewers except a few on the outskirts of the Borough.

Extensions and renewals are required at the Disposal Works. This will have to receive the Council's attention in the post-war period. Meantime, the Surveyor reports that everything possible is done to prevent any nuisance arising.

An effort has been made during the year to rid the sewers of rats. The co-operation of the County Official has been sought and the results have been satisfactory.

No sample of sewage effluent has been taken, as far as I am aware, and it would be best to have this done at least once a year so that if any stream pollution takes place it can be ascertained and remedied before serious complaints arise.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.—House Refuse is collected weekly and is disposed of by "tipping" on a site at Fishmore. No nuisance has arisen during the year and rats have been dealt with.

MORTUARY.—Some improvements have been carried out at the Mortuary attached to the Public Assistance Institution and post-mortems are usually conducted there. Further suggestions were made as regards this Mortuary and the Public Assistance Committee of the County Council are having these carried out.

SECTION D

HOUSING.

There has been no building of new houses in the Borough during the year, nor has it been possible to have much work of repair carried out.

We have now had nearly six years complete stoppage of house building and, during that time, many of the existing houses have deteriorated and will require extensive repairs to make them fit again. It was pointed out in last year's report (p. 8) that it would be a good thing if a survey of all the houses in the Borough could be carried out so that the Council would be aware of what the problem to be dealt with really is.

In Rural Districts such a survey is being made and houses put into categories, as follows :-

- I. Houses fit or requiring only minor repairs;
- II. Houses requiring major repairs;
- III. Houses requiring re-construction;
- VI. Houses unfit and not capable of being rendered fit, and which should be demolished.

It would seem that some such survey is the only way to find out what the housing problem is—whether in an urban or rural area. The question of over-crowded families could be gone into at the same time. The Council could in this way ascertain how many houses would be needed to replace those totally unfit and also the number required to re-house over-crowded families.

In last year's report (p. 9) will be found the figures regarding outstanding demolition orders, etc.

The Council decided not to apply for any temporary houses under the Government scheme for these.

HOUSING INSPECTIONS.—The Inspector reports that sixty-four inspections were made under the Housing and Public Health Acts.

A total of twenty-two informal notices were served and, of these, twenty-one were complied with by the end of the year.

The following are some of the figures as regards the housing position in the town but, as already pointed out, a complete new survey is needed if we are to get a picture of the housing in the town as it is to-day :-

(a) Total number of Inhabited Houses	1,553
(b) Total number of Council Houses	175
(c) Proposed Post-war Building Programme (1st yr.)	70
(d) Outstanding Closing and Demolition Orders ...	12
(e) Estimated number of Over-crowded Houses ...	23
(f) Estimated number of Houses totally Unfit and for Demolition (in addition to the 12 in (d))	48

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MEAT INSPECTION.—There are no slaughter-houses being used in the Borough and therefore no meat inspection has taken place. Meat can be much more thoroughly supervised in large abattoirs as it is not possible for an Inspector to properly supervise a number of small places. The best method is for an Inspector to be present at all times when slaughtering is taking place, and this is of course only possible when he is devoting all or most of his time to this work. In the future it is to be hoped that large and properly equipped abattoirs will deal with all animals, and an Inspector be present to examine all the carcasses.

MILK.—

Milk Producers on register	...	...	12
Milk Shops	...	...	2
Sellers of T.T. Milk	...	...	1
Sellers of Accredited Milk	...	...	2
Inspection of Premises	...	...	32
Defects found	...	...	4
Defects remedied	...	...	4

Sampling of the Milk produced in the district has been carried out and advice given where necessary as to cleaner methods of production.

So far there is no heat treatment of milk or pasteurising in the district, but this will no doubt come in the near future as outlined in the report for 1943 (p. 10).

SECTION F

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following table gives the number of cases of the Infectious Diseases notified during the year ended 31st December, 1944, together with the numbers sent to Hospital, and the deaths :-

Disease.	Cases notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	7	2	0
Erysipelas	6	0	0
Measles	6	0	0
Whooping Cough	1	0	0
Dysentery	1	0	0
Totals	21	2	0

The above figures show that there was no serious epidemic of any Infectious Notifiable Disease.

For the second year in succession there has been no case of Diphtheria in the town. This is encouraging in view of the effort which has been made to get the children protected against this disease. The following table shows the number of children immunised during the year in the area, and the figures for the two previous years are also given :-

Year.	Number of Children Immunised.			Total.
	1—5 Years.	5—15 Years.		
1942	121	65		186
1943	69	47		116
1944	95	12		107

The percentage of children immunised in the 5—15 age group is approximately 90% and the important matter now is to get the younger children immunised as soon as they reach their first birthday. The parents of each child are notified by letter as soon as the first birthday is attained, and they are asked to have their child protected.

As there are about 100 births per annum in the Borough, our aim must be to get as large a percentage immunised each year as they reach their first birthday.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.—Cases of Infectious Disease are sent to Monkmoor Hospital, near Shrewsbury, when beds are available. The ambulance is sent from Monkmoor with a nurse in attendance.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following are the number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register as at 31st December, 1944 :-

MALES.		FEMALES.		Total.
Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	
13	9	15	6	43

NEW CASES.—Seven new cases were notified—Males 4 and Females 3. Four were of the Pulmonary type and three Non-pulmonary. (In 1943 the number of new cases was eight).

DEATHS.—Three deaths were registered as due to Tuberculosis—all from the Pulmonary type, and all males. The ages were 51, 37 and 34 years respectively.

DEATH-RATE per 1,000 of population—

	Ludlow	Eng. & Wales (1943)
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	0·499	0·557
Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	Nil	0·110
Total	0·499	0·667

Under the scheme for granting allowances to suitable cases who are undergoing treatment in a Sanatorium, the Tuberculosis Officer reports that during 1944 one case in Ludlow received allowances. This scheme is an emergency one brought in during the war years, but it is to be hoped that it will be continued after the war is over and extended so as to be granted to all Tubercular families who are in need of help owing to a wage-earner being incapacitated.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY, 1944.

(IN AGE GROUPS)

Age Period	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-5 yrs.								
5-15 „			1	1				
15-25 „								
25-35 „	2			1	1			
35-45 „	1				1			
45-55 „		1			1			
55-65 „								
Over 65 yrs.								
Totals	3	1	1	2	3	0	0	0





