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Public Health Officers

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REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH 1959

LUDLOW,
OCTOBER, 1960

To: The Mayor, Alderman and Councillors of Ludlow Corporation.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the health of the Borough and the work of the Public Health Department during 1959.

On the whole this has been a year of satisfactory progress.

A study of the Vital Statistics shows that the Birth Rate has a rising tendency, the general Death Rate is low and the Infant Mortality Rate is very low indeed.

In contrast to these satisfactory figures are those for illegitimacy and perinatal mortality. Both of these rates are sufficiently high to demand serious consideration and thought.

I should like to emphasise that accidents in the home caused more deaths than accidents on the road, and this is true throughout the whole country. In spite of this, house accidents receive little publicity. I should like to see a Home Safety Committee formed here, either as a branch of the very successful Road Safety Committee, or as an independent Committee.

It is pleasing to report that it has been possible to start our Slum Clearance Programme, although admittedly on a small scale. Of the 11 houses represented as "Unfit" only 6 had been closed by the end of the year. Rehousing some of the occupants is proving exceedingly difficult for various reasons.

It is very satisfactory to note the number of new houses built, or under construction at the end of the year, both by the local authority and by private enterprise, and also that more requests for Improvement Grants have been received. I hope that much more use will be made of the Improvement Grant Scheme and many more old houses will be brought up to a reasonable standard. It is time that stand - pipe water supplies and chemical and pail closets were things of the past.

This housing programme makes increasing demands on our Water supply and Sewage Disposal system. Good progress has been made to improve the water supply but practically none has been made so far with the improvements to the Sewage Disposal System which are long overdue. We cannot continue to overload our present inadequate sewers and sewage works, and this is now a matter of vital importance and urgency.

I am pleased to report again 100% meat inspection, the meat being of very good quality.

Very few cases of Infectious Diseases were notified - only tuberculosis showed little reduction in incidence. The figures for vaccination and immunisation are improving but we still have not reached the level where we can consider our children far from the risks of epidemics.

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1959.

<u>Live Births.</u>	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	53	49	102
Illegitimate.....	2	3	5
	55	52	107
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population			16.19
Illegitimate Live Births per cent of total live births.....			4.68
<u>Still Births.</u>	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate.....	1	5	6
Illegitimate.....	-	-	-
	1	5	6
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total live and still births			53.1
<u>Total Live and Still Births.</u>	Male	Female	Total
	56	57	113
<u>Infant Deaths (deaths under one year)</u>			
Legitimate.....	1	-	1
Illegitimate.....	-	-	-
	1	-	1
<u>Infant Mortality Rates.</u>			
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births.....			9.35
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births.....			9.8
Illegitimate deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births.....			0.0
<u>Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks)</u>			
Total neo-natal deaths per 1,000 total live births.....			9.35
<u>Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under one week)</u>			
Total early neo-natal deaths per 1,000 total live births.....			9.35
<u>Perinatal Mortality Rate (still births and death under 1 week)</u>			
Combined deaths per 1,000 total live and still births			51.28
<u>Maternal Mortality (including abortion)</u>			
Number of deaths.....			0
Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 total live and still births.....			0.0

<u>Death From All Causes.</u>	Male	Female	Total
	45	64	109
Death rate per 1,000 population.....			16.49
Standardised death rate.....			10.39

The following were the Rates for England and Wales.

Birth Rate.....	16.5
Death Rate.....	11.6
Still Birth Rate.....	20.7
Infant Mortality Rate.....	22.0

SECTION A.General Statistics and Notes on Vital Statistics.

Area (in acres)	1,068
Registrar Generals estimate of the population as at mid 1959,	6,610
Number of inhabited houses	2,153
Rateable value of the Borough	£ 68,785
Estimated product of Id. rate	£ 254

The population of the Borough continues to increase each year: as in 1958, it rose by 20 this year and this means that there has been an increase of 120 in the population of the Borough in the last three years.

Births.

There were 107 live births and of these 5 were illegitimate, thus the percentage of illegitimate births is just over double the figures for 1957 and 1958.

The birth rate this year, both crude and standardised was 16.19 which is a slight increase in the rate for 1958 (15.8).

Still Births.

There were 6 Still-Births during the year, none of which was illegitimate, and thus gives a Still Birth Rate of 53.1. This figure is practically double that for 1958 and for 1957, and well over the figure for 1956 (32.3).

Each case was fully investigated by the County Health Department: this is always done when a Still Birth is notified in an endeavour to find further information about the causes of this very distressing and wasteful loss of human life.

Infant Mortality.

Only one child died under the age of one year, the death actually occurring early in the first week of life and being due to prematurity and congenital malformations. The Infant Mortality Rate was 9.35 and this compares very favourably with the Rate for England and Wales.

Deaths.

There were 109 deaths during this year (45 male and 64 female). The crude death rate was 16.49 and the Standardised Death Rate was 10.39. These figures are a little lower than last year, the rates then being 19.3 and 13.9.

Cause of Death	Number of Deaths.		
	Male	Female	Total
Diseases of heart and circulation.....	11	23	34
Vascular lesions of central nervous system.....	6	14	20
Influenza.....	3	3	6
Pneumonia.....	8	4	12
Bronchitis.....	3	2	5
Other Respiratory Diseases.....	1	1	2
Malignant disease.....	6	5	11
Malignant disease of lung.....	0	0	0
Leukaemia.....	1	0	1
Diabetes.....	0	1	1
Gastro enteritis and diarrhoea.....	0	1	1
Nephritis and nephrosis.....	0	1	1
Other diseases.....	3	6	9
Motor vehicle accidents.....	1	1	2
All other accidents.....	2	2	4
Suicide.....	0	0	0
	45	64	109

This year, disease of the heart and circulation accounted for 49% of the deaths and this proportion has varied little in recent years: malignant disease accounted for 8.3% compared with 15.7% last year: disease of the respiratory system accounted for 23% of the deaths, whereas last year the figure was only 7.8%. This may seem rather surprising when the good weather of 1959 is recalled but the rise in deaths from respiratory diseases was found throughout Shropshire.

This year five of the deaths occurred in persons of 90 years of age or more, 31 in the 65 - 74 year age group, 41 in the 75 - 84 year age group and 12 in the 85 - 89 year age group.

There were two deaths as a result of road accidents and four deaths from other accidents, three of which occurred in the home, and were the results of gas poisoning, fractured femur caused by a fall and burns from an electric fire. The fourth death was caused by drowning.

General Provisions of Health Services.Staff.

There have been no changes of Public Health Officers, the names of whom are given at the beginning of the Report. Both the Medical Officer of Health and the Public Health Inspector only devote part of their time to the Ludlow Borough Health Department, but whereas the Public Health Inspector is always readily available if necessary when carrying out his other duties as Borough Surveyor, the Medical Officer of Health is often further afield in the South West of the County. Thus she has arranged to be available every Monday morning either at the Borough Municipal Offices or in the nearby Child Welfare Centre until about 11.0 a.m.

Laboratory Services.

These are unchanged, and again we wish to record our thanks to Dr. Jones and his staff for their help during the year.

Ambulance Services.

There are five ambulances stationed at Ludlow under the direct control of the Central Ambulance Depot, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. Ambulances are only available if for any reason public transport cannot be used, and are normally obtained by the Family Doctor.

In case of accidents however an ambulance can be called either by telephoning the Central Ambulance Depot, Shrewsbury 6631, or making an Emergency 999 call.

Home Nursing.

There are still 2 District Nurse-Midwives and one full time Home Nurse.

Home Help Service.

The demand for this service is so great at times that it is difficult to meet it. There were 10 Home Helps working in Ludlow throughout the year, their services being needed chiefly by the elderly and for home confinements.

Meals on Wheels Service.

It is pleasing to report that the Womens Voluntary Services have continued to organise this and many elderly people in the town must be very grateful to them for their friendship and help. In spite of all the Statutory help available to the aged and handicapped more Voluntary help is needed. This is given through the Womens Voluntary Services, Old Peoples Welfare Committees, and similar organisations, but much more could be done if more people would give a little of their time and this includes the younger people, many of whom appear to have ample leisure.

Infant Welfare Centre (Cliftonville, Dinham)

The Centre is open on Mondays from 1-30 p.m. to 4-30 p.m., the morning session having been closed. In its place a new centre was started at East Hamlet Hall, New Street, every Thursday afternoon from 1-30 p.m. to 4-30 p.m. A Doctor is in attendance on the 2nd. and 4th. Thursday in the month.

The Family Planning Clinic has had to be closed because of the very poor attendance. The nearest Clinics now are at Hereford and Kidderminster. There is also a clinic at Shrewsbury but it is restricted to cases referred by a doctor until it is re-organised in 1960. Further information about these clinics can be obtained at the Infant Welfare Centres and from the General Practitioners in the town.

Venereal Diseases Clinic.

Belmont - Shrewsbury.

Males - Tuesday and Fridays

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Females - Mondays

3.30p.m. - 5.30 p.m.

Thursdays

5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Hospital Accommodation.

There has been an extension of the local facilities.

National Blood Transfusion Service.

This unit visits Ludlow at intervals and more and more volunteers are needed to meet the demand which is ever increasing, for blood transfusions.

SECTION CSanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supplies. The natural supplies were generally adequate except for seasonal shortages particularly during the period of drought in the summer months. Bulk purchases from the Birmingham Corporation amounted to 26½ million gallons. 200 yards of new 2" main was laid at Linney replacing an existing defective and corroded 1" pipe.

In June, the construction of a Reinforced Concrete Water Tower, cap. 182,000 gallons, together with the necessary 6" supply mains was commenced. This project, which, was mentioned in the 1956 Annual Report, had become an urgent necessity due to the considerable post-war housing development in the upper parts of the Borough. Good progress on the work was maintained and about 50% of the construction had been completed by the end of the year.

All water is chlorinated, and of 29 samples submitted, 25 were found to be satisfactory. Repeat samples of the other four were later found to be satisfactory also. Samples of the natural water from the two sources of supply were found to be:-

Fountain Spring (2 samples)	-	Satisfactory.
Burway (2 samples)	-	Some coliform organisms present.

Chemical analyses of each supply were made as follows:-

CERTIFICATES OF ANALYSIS

Date: 30th. September, 1959.

	In parts per million of water.	
	<u>Fountain.</u>	<u>Burway.</u>
Total solid matter in solution	260.0	320.0
Nitrogen in nitrates	1.0	5.0
Chlorine in Chlorides.	14.0	22.0
Oxygen absorbed from permanganate in 4 hours of 80°F	0.24	0.20
Free and saline ammonia	NIL	NIL
Albuminoid ammonia	0.17	0.14
Lead, copper, zinc	NIL	NIL
Microscopical examination of sediment	Nil	Slight trace
Temporary hardness	145.0	190.0
Permanent hardness	13.0	50.0
pH value	7.6	7.2
Colour	NIL	NIL
Odour	NIL	NIL
Iron in Solution	NIL	NIL
Classification	Mod.Hard.	Hard.

(Signed) Harold Lowe, M.Sc. F.R.I.C.
Public Analyst.

Only one of the 2153 houses has a private supply, with 168 houses being served only by stand-pipes.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL. Of the 2153 houses in the Borough 2095 have main drainage, 35 have private disposal plant and the remaining 23 have chemical or pail closets with satisfactory means of disposal.

No new sewers were laid during the year. The preparation of plans etc. for the new Sewage Works etc. has been continued by the Council's Consultants and an Official Enquiry into the Scheme by an Engineering Inspector of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is to be held in February 1960.

The housing development taking place in the Borough has further increased the overloading at the pumping station. The sewage works is maintained at its maximum capacity and a sample of effluent taken in September, gave results only slightly below the Royal Commission recommended standards.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL Weekly collections continue to be made from all domestic premises and more frequently from hotels, cafes, snack-bars etc., in the holiday season, as required.

Although efforts were made to obtain sufficient covering material at the Refuse tip, conditions there have been far from satisfactory. Although periodically treated for rat destruction and fly disinfestation fires broke out on several occasions causing a great nuisance to near-by residents culminating in a petition to the Minister in November. As a result and after receipt of the Department's suggested tipping precautions, the question of introducing a proper system of controlled tipping was under consideration at the end of the year.

72½ tons of salvaged waste paper was sold during the year.

RODENT CONTROL. Periodical surveys were carried out of all the main sewers, refuse tip and Council properties and the necessary treatment carried out.

The houses and business premises visited and the number of visits made are as follows:-

Private Dwellings	38	72 visits.
Business Premises	6	15 "

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACTS 1937 and 1948.

There are 83 factories in the Borough, 71 with mechanical power and 12 without.
Lists have been checked with H.M. Inspector of Factories.

Inspection by the Public Health Inspector were as follows:-

	No. on Register	Inspection	Written notices
(1) Factories in which Sections 1.2.3. 4. & 6. are to be enforced by the Local Authority.	12	30	1
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is not enforced by the Local Authority.	71	96	5
Total	83	126	6

Cases in which defects were found.	Found.	Remedied.
Want of cleanliness	2	2
Inadequate ventilation	4	4
Sanitary Conveniences		
(a) Insufficient	2	2
(b) Unsuitable or defective	4	4

SECTION D.Housing.

Number of inhabited houses.	2153
Number of houses owned by Council	493
Number of housing units controlled by Council	Nil.

Houses completed in 1959.

(a) Council Houses	40
(b) Private Houses	28

Houses under construction as at 31/12/59

(a) Council	10
(b) Private	18

X Improvement Grants applied for	16
Number of applicants for Council Houses	424
Number of Houses closed as unfit	6

X of the 16 applications, 15 were made under the Housing Act 1949 and 1 under Sec. 4 House Purchase and Housing Act 1959, and affected 20 units of accommodation.

New Houses. At the end of the year, of the 50 houses comprising Stage I, of the Sheet Road Housing Scheme, 40 had been completed and occupied and the remaining 10 were in an advanced state of construction. Site works in connection with Stage II were also commenced during the year.

Housing Applications. The 424 applications can be classified as follows:-

No homes of their own	92
Occupying houses in the Borough but desiring a change	98
Occupying sub-standard houses in the Borough	102
Living outside the Borough	132

Caravan Site. Frequent visits have been made to the licensed caravan site and conditions were found to be generally satisfactory and in accordance with the licence.

SECTION E

Meat. At the commencement of the year, there were four licensed slaughterhouses of which two were in regular use. The licenses of the two not in use lapsed as no applications for renewal were made by the owners.

The two premises in use were maintained in a satisfactory manner, one being brought up to the requirements of the new construction regulations.

Adequate arrangements continue for the removal of the hides, waste matters etc. Unfit meat is disposed of as set out in previous reports.

Particulars of the meat inspections are as follows:-

CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR PART.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	152	-	-	938	289
Number Inspected	152	-	-	938	289
All diseases except tuberculosis and cysticerci. Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some parts or organs were condemned.	26	-	-	32	18
Percentage of the number inspected with diseases other than T.B. or cysticerci	17.1%	-	-	3.4%	6.24%
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some parts or organs were condemned.	-	-	-	-	3
Percentage of number inspected affected with T.B.	-	-	-	-	1%
Cysticercosis:					
Number of carcasses infected and condemned.	-	-	-	-	-

SECTION E

MILK. There is one milk producer in the Borough who pasteurises all the milk produced. Particulars of the milk retailers are as follows:-

Sterilized. 1. T.T. Pasteurized 3. T.T. 2.

The Pasteurization Plant was visited on 8 occasions and the two dairies received 12 visits. Satisfactory conditions were found to exist on all occasions.

ICE-CREAM. There are 40 retailers of ice-cream, all of proprietary brands and all but three only sell pre-wrapped ice-cream.

Five samples were taken and found to be Grade I.

FOOD PREMISES. The numbers and types of food premises in the Borough are as follows:-

Butchers' Shops.....	11	Fried Fish Shops.....	2
Bakehouses.....	11	Restaurants, Cafes and	
Food Shops.....	52	Snackbars.....	17

Premises registered under Sec. 14 Food and Drugs.

Act 1938 and included in the above figures are..... 21.

All Cafes, Snack-bars, restaurants and shops where food is sold were visited periodically to ensure that the Food Hygiene regulations were being complied with.

UN SOUND FOOD.

The following foodstuffs were condemned :-

Cheese	29 lbs.	Soup.	4 Tins
Fruit	109 tins.	Fish.	16 "
Vegetables	1 tin	Tinned Milk	11 pints
Jam.	8 lbs.	Kippers	42 lbs.
Sausages	49 lbs	Margarine.	1 lb.
Butter	2½ lbs	Cooked Ham	6 lbs.
Tinned Meat	46½ lbs.	Tomatoes	78 tins.
Pilchards.	9 tins.		

SECTION F.Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases.

The following cases of Infectious Diseases were notified in 1959 and figures for 1957 and 1958 are given also.

	<u>1957.</u>	<u>1958.</u>	<u>1959.</u>
Scarlet Fever	0	1	1
Whooping Cough	64	36	2
Measles	117	96	27
Pneumonia	4	3	2
Acute Poliomyelitis	6	0	0
Tuberculosis			
Respiratory	3	4	3
Meninges	6	0	0
Other	1	3	1
Erysipelas	1	1	0
Food Poisoning	0	17	1
Dysentery	0	0	1

There were no deaths from Infectious Diseases.

There was a very small outbreak of Measles in the second and third quarters of the year but otherwise there were very few cases of Infectious Diseases notified. The avenue of infection of the isolated case of dysentery was not traced, and the food poisoning, which was also an isolated case was caused by the ingestion of unsound food. The shopkeeper withdrew the rest from sale and disposed of it himself instead of following the correct practice of calling in the Public Health Inspector, so examination of the food was not possible.

It is very disappointing that there is little change in the number of notification of tuberculosis. Three new cases of pulmonary diseases were notified this year, all of them being adults - two in the 25 - 44 year age group and one in the 45 - 64 year age group. One of these cases was found by the Miniature Mass Radiography Unit; the disease was quite unsuspected but was shown to be present by the X-ray examination.

In the fourth case of tuberculosis, the disease was in the glands of the neck. This infection is nearly always milk-borne and we may confidently expect it to disappear completely in the fairly near future when tuberculosis in cattle has been eradicated.

Shropshire became an Attested Area on 1st October 1959, but before that "Specified Areas" were designated, and in fact included most of the north of the County - in these areas only Pasteurised Sterilised or Tuberculin Tested milk can be sold. The remaining districts of the County, including Ludlow will probably become "Specified Areas" in 1960.

Vaccination and Immunisation.

The following tables show how many children received protection against smallpox, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis and tuberculosis.

	<u>Under 1.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>5-14</u>	<u>over 14 years.</u>
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Smallpox Vaccination.

Primary	49	8	1	4	5
re-vaccination	1	-	1	-	4

<u>Under 1.</u>	<u>1 - 4</u>	<u>5 - 14 years.</u>
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Diphtheria Immunisations.

primary	47	29	4
booster			40

Whooping Cough

primary	51	9	2
booster	-	-	-

Tetanus.

primary	3	3	2
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Poliomyelitis Vaccination.

Primary Vaccination (i.e. 1st and 2nd injections)

	Children born 1959-1943	Young Persons born 1942-1933	Other Adults	Expectant Mothers	Ambulance Staff X	Hosp. Staff X
By County Council Medical Officers	187	256	77	33	-	2
By General Practitioners	26	57	4	-	-	-
Totals.	213	313	81	33	-	2

X Including members of their households.

SECTION F.

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Third or Booster Injection.

	Children born 1959-1943	Young Persons born 1942-1933	Other Adults	Expectant Mothers	Ambulance Staff X	Hospital Staff X
By County Council Medical Officers	1037	276	9	14	2	-
By General Practitioners	61	7	4	-	-	-
Totals:	1098	283	13	14	2	-

* Including members of their households.

Tuberculosis-B.C.G. Vaccination.

The following are particulars of Mantoux Tests and B.C.G. vaccination given at schools in Ludlow during 1959 :-

No. of children accepting B.C.G. vaccination	-	298
No. of children refusing B.C.G. vaccination	-	14
No. skin tested	-	276
No. found to be positive	-	42
No. found to be negative	-	220
No. given B.C.G. Vaccination	-	220
No. still found negative after vaccination	-	2

The figures for smallpox, diphtheria and whooping cough show a definite improvement but the number of children who have been protected is still not large enough to be a safeguard against an epidemic should infection be brought here.

Now that the formidable task of mass poliomyelitis vaccination is nearing its completion we must endeavour to make greater efforts to reach the figure of 75% of all children protected against these other diseases.

Number of cases in Tuberculosis Register, December, 1959.

Pulmonary	57
None Pulmonary	10

Two were removed from the register as they were cured, two left the area and four were transferred in,

