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Contributors

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INTERIM REPORT ON THE HEALTH AND SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE URBAN
DISTRICT OF MARKET DRAYTON FOR THE YEAR 1942.

Once again the Ministry of Health has required that the Report on the Health of the District shall be presented in an abbreviated interim form. This being so, exhaustive statistical figures have been avoided and such as are given have been confined to those of a domestic nature and of local interest.

Infectious Disease is dealt with in the relevant section of this Report but here it can be noted that an excellent record of freedom from zymotic disease was marred by the presence of an epidemic of diphtheria in the Autumn. Additionally noteworthy has been the complete absence of Scarlet Fever.

Over the country, generally, despite War conditions and the stringency of the times, acute infective diseases have shown little or no rise with the exception of Cerebro-Spinal-Fever - a disease from which this District escaped completely. It may be, however, that that condition associated with the maintainance of the good health of a country - cleanliness - has shewn some deterioration. The frequency of Scabies seems to denote a lack of this, and Scabies has been much in mind in the past twelve months. Turning to that more chronic infective condition Tuberculosis - over the country there has been a rise following a prewar decline which had been continued from the end of the First War. In some measure to meet this a system of Mass Radiography has been evolved. To expedite the examination of patients and at the same time to bring within the scope of preventive medicine a large section of adolescence and young adults (the 20-30 age group) a system of X ray photography has been invented which should be the means of bringing to light many unsuspected cases.

By this system of mass X ray examination the time should not be far distant when every adult will be subjected to this type of examination at the period of greatest susceptibility. The relationship of this disease to your District is dealt with at the end of the Report. To combat and further prevention the Ministry of Health has made arrangements to deal with the possible onset and spread of Typhus Fever - a disease from which this Country is now completely free. The danger of this gaining a foothold lies in the large proportion of our population at present abroad returning to this Country and coupled with this the rapid means for that return. The Continent has not enjoyed this freedom from Typhus and the danger is thereby emphasised. Venereal Disease has shown an unwelcomed increase in frequency and has been much discussed. To further prevention certain measures have been taken by Parliament to restrict, principally the infected female being the cause for further spread and it is now possible to deal with such causes compulsorily - on report. Much diversity of opinion exists as to the relative weight to be given to medical and moral teachings in attempting to secure eradication. Small-Pox, an infrequent and undesired visitor, has evidenced itself at periods in the Year. Scotland has been mainly affected and only rare cases have occurred on this side of the Border, and no epidemics have arisen.

A precautionary measure, new in so far as its general applicability to this Country has had to be taken in relationship to static water supplies. This one of the protective weapons used in defence of the Country is by reason of its nature a possible breeding ground for mosquitoes. The steps to prevent this has been the subject of a memorandum from the Ministry of Health. Preventive Medicine has become

a State Controlled Branch of Science and during the Year much conjecture and publicity has been given to the possibility of making Medicine generally under this same control, in a socialised form. The opening of Health Centres to deal with all diseases with attendant Doctors and Specialists as required is envisaged and while it would appear that some form of Service of this nature will result the shape and scope has still to be agreed and decided.

Complementary with the above the status of those Servants of Medicine, Nurses, has received much consideration and the resultant has been the stabilisation of their system of working and remuneration.

In the immediate neighbourhood particular attention has been directed to the need for a higher standard of Cleanliness in Milk. In this connection preliminary steps have been taken in association with the local Agricultural Collegiate formulate a scheme for local sampling. It is hoped that by this means it may be possible to eradicate that substratum of milk producers who are at present supplying a liquid of an inferior standard of cleanliness.

It is pleasing to note that as a resultant of the special care and supervision of the Diet of children there has been no adverse effects on the Health and Weight as a result of the War. Among the people generally better use is being made of the more ordinary foods in the home and it has been found possible to live satisfactorily on the restricted rations now in force. The lessening of Neurosis reported over the Country has been to persons being more occupied and busy and free from fear of unemployment.

POPULATION. No changes of domestic interest have been noted in the returns recently received from the Ministry.

Certain figures and Statistics supplied by the Ministry of Health:

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Live Births.....	49.	46.
Illegitimate Births	6.	6.
Still Births.....	-	1.
Deaths under 1 year of age	5.	
Deaths (generally).....	Males 29.	Females 33.

Some causes of death :-

Pulmonary Tuberculosis.....	1.
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis.....	1.
Cancer.....	11.
Cerebral Haemorrhage.....	6.
Heart Disease.....	18.
Pneumonia.....	5.

There were no deaths from acute infective (notifiable) disease.

BACTERIOLOGICAL SERVICE. This continues to be carried out by the County Bacteriologist, Dr. Rhodes, at the Royal Salop Infirmary at Shrewsbury. The centralisation in this Hospital is now complete and the whole works satisfactorily.

AMBULANCE. The rearrangement of the service for the removal of infectious cases has now had opportunity to regularise itself and there have been fewer complaints. Perhaps the greatest defect has been the time lag between the receiving of the notice of a case and its removal to hospital but this cannot easily be overcome where there is a part-time contract and the driver has other duties engaging his attention.

SWIMMING BATHS. The chlorination plant has now been installed and this centre continues to be one of the chief attractions for recreation in the town. Recently bacteriological reports of the water have not come to hand and this omission should be rectified. Such samples might be taken at intervals at the peak season of the Year.

WATER SUPPLY. No complaints have been received during the course of the period. Samples taken for analysis have generally been reported as being of Class 1 category although there was one exception.

SCAVENGING. This continues to be systematised on the basis of a weekly collection. A monthly report shows that, on an average, over one hundred loads have been removed to the Newtown Tip during the four week period - the major portion being conveyed by Council carts. In addition to refuse, salvage is also collected. From time to time, requests have been made to owners of houses to provide sanitary dustbins but it has not always been possible to comply with this demand on account of the scarcity of such receptacles.

SEWERAGE AND DISPOSAL. No outstanding incident in this service has been noted in the twelve months. No complaints have been received as to the method of disposal and any difficulty which has been experienced has been associated with the sewer collection. Judging from the Sanitary Inspector's Reports, chokages in drains have been unduely frequent, the most outstanding being the collapse of a culvert in Shropshire Street. This, ascribed to heavy traffic, was able to be repaired without any great inconvenience being caused. From time to time houses with faulty or no drainage have been inspected and where no sewer connection was available the best means of disposal of waste, slop water, and the removal and disposal of excrement from septic tanks, has been advised.

HOUSING. Regular reports have been submitted to the Council of homes inspected, defects found, repairs necessary and progress made. Such supervision, with the abatement of nuisances, limit the work of the Department on permanent dwellings. At times the presence of dwellers

in caravans within the Urban area have been brought to notice and such dwellings have been scrutinised, and from them a reasonable standard of hygiene demanded. In addition to the Sanitary Inspector, the Health Visitor has reported on houses in need of cleansing and such occupiers have been required to give this their attention.

The local lodging houses have been inspected and in one instance, repairs and redecorations have been required.

MEAT & FOODS. The Town continues to be served from the central abattoir at Whitchurch and on delivery any question as to the quality of the meat supplied is settled by the Sanitary Inspector. During this period the Whitchurch Authority felt that the burden imposed by this abattoir centralisation was too great to be borne solely by one Sanitary Department. To overcome this, invitations were extended to other authorities participating in this meat service to give assistance in the inspection of the carcasses. Market Drayton and Drayton were two of the Authorities concerned but Drayton, only, was able to respond and give assistance. Foods, other than meat, have been brought for inspection and advice asked as to quality and suitability for consumption. It has been found necessary to condemn and confiscate certain articles among which were such articles as tinned goods and a quantity of fish. There has been one instance of plans having been submitted for the proposed conversion of a building to be used as a bakehouse. It can here be emphasised again the need for the building of bakehouses to be systematised as far as possible on model plans.

SCHOOLS. Following on many complaints of the dangerous condition of the playgrounds of a local school, this was inspected. It was found

that the surrounds of the buildings had deteriorated, leaving a very uneven surface with a marked tendency to develop a dust nuisance in dry windy weather. The attention of the County Education Department was directed to this matter.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE. The number and variety of such disease notified in the Year has been very limited and, but for the presence of diphtheria in the Autumn, the District would have enjoyed as great a degree of freedom as must have been experienced for many years. Unfortunately, diphtheria occurred in epidemic form and gave rise to some sixteen cases. August and September were the months mainly concerned, the first two quarters having been completely free. Of the sixteen cases, 15 were treated in hospital, 8 were immunised, and none died. Generally over the North-Eastern Area of the County the benefits of the protection of children by means of immunisation has begun to be appreciated and while your town has experienced this setback at this early stage in the campaign, this retrograde departure should be considered as merely incidental and a final assessment should be postponed until this scheme has matured and a high percentage of protective treatments have been averaged over a number of years. In December, the number of children under 5 years treated by immunisation were 64% and over that age 87%. Up to the month of May, it had been the practice for the Local Authority to control all branches of immunisation administration, but in that month, the County Authority decided that by their taking over the clinical treatment a more intensive campaign could be conducted. From that time all active immunisation has been carried out by the County Doctors, the Local Authority however still continuing to complete the totals and render

statistical returns to the Ministry of Health biannually. Little need be said of the remainder of the diseases notified; there have been 4 cases of Pneumonia, 4 of Whooping Cough, 2 of Puerperal Pyrexia and 8 of Measles. There have been no cases of Scarlet Fever.

SCABIES. This disease had in the earlier years of the War manifested itself with some frequency and the present period crystallised its full potential. Many cases were brought to notice and while the majority were treated at the Local Health Centre it has been felt that there has been a considerable drag on the rapidity of cure obtainable. As no local inpatient centre has been available and the removal to the County Institution at Shawbury incurs absence from home with removal to some distance, practically no patients have been treated other than at home or at the Clinic. The facilities offered at Newport, where patients could be conveniently housed over the contagion period has been brought to notice but no case has presented itself at that Centre from your District. More recently there has been a considerable decline in incidence and it is to be hoped that this will be maintained.

TUBERCULOSIS. The numbers on the Register at the end of the year, were as follows :-

		<u>Males.</u>		<u>Females.</u>	
		<u>Pulmonary.</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary.</u>	<u>Pulmonary.</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary.</u>
1941...	10.	10.	5.	6.	
1942...	11.	12.	5.	7.	

W. A. M. STEWART.
Medical Officer of Health.

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