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# Rural District of Meriden.

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## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT

FOR THE YEAR 1947,

BY

H. GIBBONS WARD, M.D., D.P.H.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

OF THE

Warwickshire Combined Districts.

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1, MILVERTON HILL,  
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July, 1948.

**To the Meriden Rural District Council.**

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my twenty-ninth Annual Report being that for the year 1947.

It is a source of regret to me that my long service with the Meriden Rural District Council should be coming to an end, but this is obviously inevitable, and I can only thank the members of the Council for their invariable kindness and courtesy to me.

To my fellow officers must be given the credit for much of the success which has resulted from our efforts, and I shall always look back with pleasure to having worked with them and their predecessors for so many years.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. GIBBONS WARD,  
*Medical Officer of Health.*



## *Meriden Rural District.*

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### A. EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

Population (estimated) Mid-year, 1947	...	...	34,800
Birth Rate	...	...	22.2
Still Births—Rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	19
Death Rate	...	...	10.0
Deaths from Diseases and Accidents of Pregnancy and Child-birth	{ From Sepsis ,, other causes	...	— 1
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age :—			
All Infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	39
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births			39
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	33
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	1
,, ,, Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	—
,, ,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	3

*Population.*—The estimated population, 34,800, is 1,030 greater than the estimate for 1946.

*Birth Rate.*—22.2 per 1,000 is higher than in 1946, and also higher than that for England and Wales.

*Death Rate.*—10.0 per 1,000, is much lower than that of England and Wales, viz., 12.0.

*Infantile Mortality.*—39 per 1,000 births is lower than that for 1946, and the figure for England and Wales in 1947, viz., 41. Conditions obtaining prior to birth would appear to be the greatest contribution to this figure.

Statistics for the past few years and also those for England and Wales in 1947 are given in Table II.



## B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT.

*Public Health Officers.*—Unchanged.

*Laboratory Facilities.*—Bacteriological examinations by Birmingham University :—

	Positive.	Negative.	Total.
Diphtheria ...	2	25	27
Enteric Fever —	—	—	—
Tuberculosis...	7	32	39
			66

## C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER (i) The supply has been generally satisfactory, except at Chadwick End (Balsall Parish), Corley Moor and Four Oaks (Berkswell and Meriden parishes), and in these three cases schemes for mains extensions have been approved.

26 samples of water were submitted for chemical analysis and 5 for bacteriological examination. Nine were of good quality, 11 unsatisfactory and 11 condemned.

(ii) No examinations of piped supplies were made.

(iii) Contamination of piped supplies was not experienced.

(iv) Wells were dealt with by cleansing and re-sampling and in 12 cases by connecting to mains.

(v) Particulars of piped supplies throughout the district are given in the Inspector's report herewith.

## D. HOUSING.

Progress in the provision of houses during the year was excellent. At the time of the special housing report (October, 1946) the Council had 366 houses, consisting of 276 existing in 1939, 10 agricultural cottages built 1944, and 80 temporary bungalows built since the war.

The five-year programme adopted after consideration of the 1946 housing report, was for 646 houses, and of these 153 had been completed by the end of the year under review, making a total of 519 houses.



The provision of council houses before the war was insufficient for the needs of the district, but the Council are now to be congratulated on an adequate post-war programme and on the energy with which the construction of houses has been pushed forward in face of innumerable difficulties.

### E. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Foodstuffs condemned were 2 cows, 2 pigs, 1 calf, 218 eggs, 413 meat pies, 210 lbs. beef, 23 lbs. bacon, 25 lbs. prunes and 119 tins of various foods.

Fresh registrations under section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, were for ice cream 6, fish and chips 1, and cooked meats 1.

### F. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

*Incidence of Commoner Infectious Diseases since 1939.*

		Smallpox.	Diphtheria.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Pneumonia.	Encephalitis Lethargica.	Puerperal Pyrexia.
1940	...	—	34	62	2	55	1	7
1941	...	—	60	47	4	73	—	2
1942	...	—	33	55	—	56	—	4
1943	...	—	18	122	2	91	1	3
1944	...	—	16	60	—	51	—	9
1945	...	—	15	35	—	51	—	13
1946	...	—	9	46	2	48	—	5
1947	...	—	10	48	—	58	1	5

*Scarlet Fever.*—48 cases were notified, rather below the average for the past eight years. Of these 12 were notified from Arley, 9 from Coleshill, 8 from Castle Bromwich and 5 from Marston Green.

*Diphtheria.*—Of the 10 cases, 5 were in adults. In 3 cases there was a history of immunisation. There were no deaths.

Reference to Table III. will give the age distribution of the cases notified during 1947.



*Diphtheria Immunisation.*—Immunisation has continued during the year, and in all at the end of 1947, 4,384 children had been treated in the schools and 2,807 either privately or at Infant Welfare Centres, giving a grand total up to December 31st, 1947, of 7,191.

*Acute Poliomyelitis.*—7 cases were notified, two adult males and 5 females, of whom one was an adult. It is interesting to note that one was the child of the adult female, and was taken ill some ten days before the mother.

*School Closures.*—Nil.

#### PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, TUBERCULOSIS.

AGE—PERIODS	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
			Non-				Non-	
	Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 ... ..	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—
1 ... ..	...	—	...	—	1	...	...	—
5 ... ..	...	2	...	3	4	...	...	—
15 ... ..	...	4	6	...	1	...	1	...
25 ... ..	...	5	3	...	...	1	3	...
35 ... ..	...	2	1	...	...	1	1	...
45 ... ..	...	4	—	...	...	1	1	...
55 ... ..	...	2	—	...	...	—	1	...
65 and upwards	...	2	1	...	...	1	—	...
TOTALS	...	19	13	...	3	7	...	4

*Treatment.*—9 cases were admitted to Sanatorium during the year, 8 were discharged.

The following table shows the incidence and deaths from Tuberculosis since 1928 (for 20 years) :—

#### *Tuberculosis.*

	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934
Cases ...	31	33	33	23	21	36	21
Deaths ...	12	23	16	9	5	18	12
	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Cases ...	35	27	26	19	54	35	40
Deaths ...	16	7	12	6	17	18	18
	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	
Cases ...	36	49	51	29	38	42	
Deaths	19	13	20	18	9	11	



## REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

*To the Chairman and Members of the  
Meriden Rural District Council.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my report for 1947.

### WATER ANALYSIS.

Samples were examined by the Analyst as follows:—

			<i>Passed.</i>	<i>Unsatis- factory.</i>	<i>Con- demned.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Old Wells	...	...	8	11	11	30
Spring	...	...	1	—	—	1

### FOOD INSPECTION.

134 Inspections were made and the following items condemned and surrendered for the reasons stated :

carcase and organs of cow,	generalised tuberculosis.
do.	gangrenous pneumonia.
do.	pig, generalised tuberculosis.
do.	calf, blackleg.
do.	pig, pneumonia.

218 eggs, decomposed.

413 meat pies, mouldy.

182 lbs. beef, decomposed.

28 lbs. beef, bone taint.

9½ lbs. bacon, fly blown.

14 lbs. bacon, decomposed.

25 lbs. prunes, mouldy.

119 tins, various foods, blown or damaged.

Eight new registrations were made of premises under section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Disinfections numbered 63. For scarlet fever 39, diphtheria 7, tuberculosis removals 6, deaths 5, meningitis 4, cancer deaths 2.

### FACTORIES.

The numbers on the registers are as follows:—

(1) Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the Factories Act are to be enforced by the Council, 5;

(2) Factories not included in (1) in which section 7 is enforced by the Council, 81.

Three cases of insufficient sanitary accommodation were dealt with.



## NUISANCES.

The following were dealt with:—

Animals so kept	...	...	...	...	1
Accumulations of refuse, etc.	...	...	...	...	9
Ashbins dilapidated	...	...	...	...	28
Cesspools defective	...	...	...	...	3
Cesspools overflowing	...	...	...	...	31
Choked and defective drains	...	...	...	...	130
Cellars flooded	...	...	...	...	11
Damp walls	...	...	...	...	29
Factory without closet accommodation	...	...	...	...	1
Factory insufficient	do.	...	...	...	2
Foul ditch	...	...	...	...	3
Fowls so kept	...	...	...	...	1
Housing defects	...	...	...	...	145
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	4
Polluted wells	...	...	...	...	5
Prevalence of rats	...	...	...	...	20
Privy middens insanitary	...	...	...	...	1
Rainwater conductors defective	...	...	...	...	15
Roofs defective	...	...	...	...	72
Smoke nuisance	...	...	...	...	3
Vermin-infested houses	...	...	...	...	6
Water Supply—Want of	...	...	...	...	6
Water Supply—Unsatisfactory	...	...	...	...	11
Waterclosets defective	...	...	...	...	35
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	3

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575

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Some of these figures (for example choked and defective drains ; roofs defective) are higher than previously, and I think occupiers are complaining more freely than they used to. This may be because we have now so many amongst us who have previously lived in towns and another reason is the desire to draw attention to unsatisfactory conditions, in connection with applications for council houses.

Proceedings were taken in one case of housing defects and defective drainage and the work was then done.

## RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION.

Routine samples were continued of effluents of small disposal works and a fair standard of maintenance secured.

In October the river Blythe received a toxic discharge (cyanide) for the second time and, later, a prosecution by the Solihull Council in respect of a trade effluent was successful.

## SQUATTERS.

Squatting increased during 1947 to the following:—

*On requisitioned property:*

Wood End Camp, Fillongley ;  
 Cedars, Castle Bromwich ;  
 Park Road, Coleshill ;  
 Hams Gardens, Lea Marston ;  
 Frogmore Wood, Fen End.



*On private property :*

Darlaston Hall, Meriden ;

Dare's site, Chester Road, Bacon's end (later vacated),

and the Council accepted responsibility for the first three (only) on this list.

### WATER SUPPLIES.

Small mains extensions were made at Fivefield Lane, Keresley, Hodgetts Lane, Berkswell, Corley Ash and Eastern Green, Allesley.

The situation throughout the district as to piped supplies is shown by the following table :—

<i>Parish.</i>	<i>Houses.</i>	<i>Piped Supplies.</i>		<i>Other.</i>
		<i>Birmingham.</i>	<i>Coventry.</i>	
Allesley ...	404	—	299	—
Arley ...	784	—	—	768
Astley ...	63	—	—	19
Balsall ...	626	—	220	—
Barston ...	130	—	87	—
Berkswell ...	559	—	257	—
Bickenhill ...	651	582	—	—
Castle Bromwich ...	1,221	1,019	—	—
Coleshill ...	1,202	1,010	—	—
Corley ...	205	—	86	—
Curdworth ...	122	72	—	—
Fillongley ...	397	151	—	—
Hampton ...	318	—	276	—
Keresley ...	624	—	565	—
Lea Marston ...	74	31	—	—
Maxstoke ...	70	—	9	—
Meriden ...	399	—	324	—
Packington ...	65	—	4	—
Shustoke ...	128	100	—	—
Water Orton ...	471	448	—	—
Whitacre, Nether ...	231	208	—	—
Whitacre, Over ...	105	61	—	—
Wishaw ...	49	—	—	—
	8,898	3,682	2,127	787
Total houses in district with piped supplies ...				6,596
Percentage ...				74

Practically all the supplies are direct to houses ; very few indeed are by stand pipes.

### SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Arising out of attendance by representatives at the Edinburgh conference the Council have decided to make use of 3 deposit gauges and 9 lead-peroxide gauges for measurement of atmospheric pollution in the district, with particular reference, of course, to the two large electric power stations at Hams Hall, Lea Marston.

## GENERAL.

These reports, for economy of printing and lack of time for much considered writing, are kept to the minimum statement of work done and events which have occurred, but I cannot close this last report to be issued in the name of Dr. Gibbons Ward without a few words.

It is 21 years since I came to Coleshill from town work in the routine of a big department, and I want to record my appreciation of the uniform kindness and consideration shown to me by Doctor Gibbons Ward throughout that long period, which has certainly contributed much to the pleasure one has had, over the years, in serving this Council and District.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

F. T. KENYON,  
Senior Sanitary Inspector.

Town Hall,  
Coleshill,  
Birmingham.

5th August, 1948.



TABLE I.

## MERIDEN RURAL DISTRICT.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY WORK DONE IN THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S  
DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR 1947.

				Inspections and Observations made.	Notices served.		Nuisances Abated after Notices.
					Statu- tory.	In- formal.	
Dwelling Houses and Schools	...	...	...	1441	4	141	145
Lodging Houses	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Dairies and Milkshops	...	...	...	22	—	—	—
Cowsheds	...	...	...	239	—	—	—
Bakehouses	...	...	...	12	—	—	—
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	140	—	—	—
Canal Boats	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Ashpits and Privies	...	...	...	29	—	29	29
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	...	...	...	—	—	9	9
Water Closets	...	...	...	35	—	35	35
House Drainage	...	...	...	164	19	145	164
Water Supply	...	...	...	214	—	27	27
Pigsties	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Animals improperly kept	...	...	...	2	—	2	2
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Smoke Nuisances	...	...	...	3	—	3	3
Other Nuisances	...	...	...	169	—	169	169
Various Inspections	...	...	...	1734	—	—	—
New Buildings	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	...	...	...	4204	23	560	583

						No.
Drain tests: Other than Water	...	...	...	...	...	—
Unwholesome Meat condemned...	...	...	...	...	...	1931lbs.
Samples of food taken for analysis (Milk)	...	...	...	...	...	—
Samples of Food adulterated	...	...	...	...	...	—
Samples of Water taken for analysis	...	...	...	...	...	31
Samples of Water condemned as unfit for use	...	...	...	...	...	11

## PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Lots of infected bedding, etc., disinfected or destroyed	...	1
Houses disinfected after cases of infectious diseases	...	63
Schools ditto ditto ditto	...	—

F. T. KENYON, Sanitary Inspector.



TABLE II.

## MERIDEN RURAL DISTRICT.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1947 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

YEAR.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Nett.		Under 1 Year of age.		At all Ages.	
		Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births.	Number.	Rate.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1941	34,210	564	16.5	35	59	377	10.6
1942	34,510	600	17.4	25	42	321	9.3
1943	34,310	667	19.4	30	45	321	9.4
1944	33,870	679	20.0	30	44	337	9.9
1945	33,110	649	19.5	30	46	309	9.3
1946	33,770	631	19.0	41	65	319	9.5
1947	34,800	773	22.2	30	39	348	10.0

## VITAL STATISTICS IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1947.

## ENGLAND AND WALES.

*Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Infantile Mortality during the Year 1947.  
(Provisional Figures).*

Annual Rate per 1,000 Population.

			Live Births	Still Births.	Deaths.	Deaths under one year to 1,000 Births.
England and Wales	...	...	20.5	0.50	12.0	41
126 Great Towns, including London			23.3	0.62	13.0	47
148 Smaller Towns	...	...	22.2	0.54	11.9	36
London	...	...	22.7	0.49	12.8	37



TABLE III.

## MERIDEN RURAL DISTRICT.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE  
YEAR 1947.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	Number of Cases notified.								Total cases removed to Hospital	Total Deaths.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.								
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 45.	45 to 65.	65 and upwards.		
Small-pox ... ..										
Plague ... ..										
Diphtheria (including Mem- branous Croup) ... ..	10	.....	1	4	2	3	.....	.....	9	.....
Erysipelas ... ..	9	.....				2	6	1		.....
Scarlet Fever ... ..	48	.....	13	26	5	4	.....	.....	30	.....
Typhus Fever ... ..										
Enteric Fever ... ..										
Pneumonia ... ..	58	10	6	3	5	9	19	6		18
Malaria ... ..										
Dysentery ... ..	2						2			
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	5				2	3				
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis ... ..	3		2	1						
Poliomyelitis ... ..	7	1	2	2	1	1				
Encephalitis Lethargica ... ..	1		1							
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ... ..										
Polio-Encephalitis ... ..	2					2				1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ... ..	32			2	10	11	6	3		11
Other forms of Tuberculosis ... ..	10		1	7	1			1		
Totals ... ..	187	11	26	45	26	35	33	11	39	30



TABLE IV.  
MERIDEN RURAL DISTRICT.

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1947.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	MALES.	FEMALES.
All Causes ... ..	189	159
1 Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ...	—	—
2 Cerebro Spinal Fever ... ..	1	—
3 Scarlet Fever ... ..	—	—
4 Whooping Cough ... ..	—	—
5 Diphtheria ... ..	—	—
6 Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ...	4	5
7 Other Forms of Tuberculosis ... ..	—	1
8 Syphilitic Diseases ... ..	1	1
9 Influenza ... ..	3	—
10 Measles ... ..	—	1
11 Ac. Polio-Myel and Polio-Enceph. ...	1	—
12 Ac. Infant Enceph. ... ..	2	—
13 Cancer of B. Cav. and Oesoph (M.) Uterus (F.) ... ..	4	1
14 Cancer of Stomach and Duod. ... ..	11	6
15 Cancer of Breast ... ..	—	9
16 Cancer, other Sites ... ..	21	10
17 Diabetes ... ..	1	2
18 Intra Cran. Vasc. Lesions... ..	19	10
19 Heart Disease ... ..	45	46
20 Other Dis. Circ. Sys. ... ..	4	10
21 Bronchitis ... ..	9	9
22 Pneumonia ... ..	11	7
23 Other Resp. Diseases ... ..	—	2
24 Ulcer of Stomach and Duod. ... ..	3	—
25 Diarrhoea (under 2 years)... ..	1	2
26 Appendicitis ... ..	—	1
27 Other Digestive Diseases ... ..	3	3
28 Nephritis ... ..	1	2
29 Puer. and Post Abort Sepsis ... ..	—	—
30 Other Maternal Causes ... ..	—	1
31 Premature Birth ... ..	4	4
32 Con. Mal., Birth Inj., etc.... ..	6	5
33 Suicide ... ..	2	1
34 Road Traffic Accidents ... ..	6	3
35 Other Violent Causes ... ..	5	1
36 All Other Causes ... ..	21	16











