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**Contributors**

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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

(INTERIM)

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

(W.F. Young, M.B., D.P.H.)

FOR THE YEAR 1939



PRELIMINARY NOTE

The Ministry of Health's Circular 1961 of 16th February, 1940 (dealing with the contents and arrangement of annual reports of Medical Officers of Health for 1939) stressed the importance of curtailment of reports during the period of the war, and suggested that they should be limited to a record of important alterations, improvements or developments which had taken place during the year.

Circular 2067 of 19th July, 1940, stated that in view of the increasing pressure of work in public health departments and the need for strict economy in the use of paper the Minister considered that interim reports only should be made for the year 1939. The Circular added that reports should be confined to essential and urgent matters which had affected the public health during the year; especially any matters arising from or connected with the war and outbreaks of infectious disease.

It was further suggested that statistics and other records should be preserved in order that after the termination of the war a report could be made dealing more fully with the period from the beginning of 1939 to the end of the last complete year, giving separate statistics for each year in order that the annual records might, as far as practicable, be continuous and complete. It had been found possible earlier in 1940 to proceed with the compilation of the report for this district



very much on the usual lines, and with the exception of data awaited from the Registrar-General a draft was practically complete. The recommendations in Circular 2067 have nevertheless been complied with in the restricted form of report which I now have the honour to present to the Council.

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#### SECTION A.

##### Statistics and Social Conditions in the Area.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident

population, mid-1939:- 16,140

Number of inhabited houses according to

the Rate Books:- 4,543

Rateable Value:- £56,241

Sum represented by a penny rate:- £218

	England and Wales	Newcastle- u-Lyme R.D.
Birth Rate .. .. .	15.0	12.3
Death Rate .. .. .	12.1	11.0
Infantile Mortality Rate ..	50	65

#### SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Local Managers of Employment Exchanges reported that during the year, particularly since war had been declared, there had been considerable improvement in the employment position in Audley Parish, and that in other parishes there was, as previously, very little unemployment.

#### Evacuation.

On the declaration of war the district was made a reception area, and during the first week of September 1150 children of school age, and 650 mothers with children of less than school age (inclusive) were received from Manchester. The numbers remaining on January 1st, 1940, were 650 children of school age, and 60 mothers with children of less than school age, (inclusive).

It became obvious that in a large number of cases evacuation had meant a marked improvement in the housing conditions of the population transferred, and this change, together with the beneficial effects of country air, a food supply adequate as to quality and quantity, regular hours, and in some cases better home discipline, resulted in a very marked improvement in the physical and mental condition of a considerable number of children. Among the children transferred a number of cases of impetigo and uncleanness of the scalp came to notice, but as the result of intensive work on the part of foster-parents, health visitors, and district nurses, improvement was rapidly effected. About half a dozen cases of scabies were discovered, and three children were removed to an institution for treatment.

Up to the end of the year there was no evidence that the transfer of children from another district had had any influence on the incidence of infectious disease.

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#### SECTION B.

##### General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

##### Public Health Officers of the Authority.

During the year there was no change in personnel.

On account of the considerable increase in the time required in connection with Air Raid Precautions casualty services I have been able to give less attention to several special aspects of Public Health work, but my general routine work, with the exception of housing, has been carried out practically as usual.

Additional duties in connection with salvage, fuel control, etc., fell to the lot of the Sanitary Inspector's Department. The Assistant Inspector filled the office of Quartermaster for Air Raid Precautions stores and also undertook other duties connected with Air Raid Precautions.

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SECTION C.  
Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.

Supplies generally were of adequate quantity and satisfactory quality. Analyses of public main supplies showed very high standards of purity.

Extensions of mains were carried out at Manor Road, Madeley, and at Bowsey Wood, Betley.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Plans for the completion of the Audley Parish scheme were resubmitted to the Ministry of Health in April, but further consideration was abandoned on the outbreak of war.

Improvement of unsatisfactory conditions at Baldwin's Gate and in other parts of the District, and the question of the reconstruction of the disposal works at Madeley had similarly to be deferred.

Sanitary Inspection.

As a result of war conditions a considerable amount of non-sanitary work was imposed on the Sanitary Inspector's Department. Routine sanitary inspection had in consequence to be much curtailed during the last quarter of the year.

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SECTION D.

Housing.

During the year Orders had been made in respect of thirteen Clearance Areas. (Nos. 13-32)., and a Ministry of Health Inquiry was to have been held during the week in which war was declared. This was cancelled and the Orders are therefore still awaiting confirmation. Fortunately it was found possible to rehouse some of the inhabitants of the houses concerned.

There was no evidence that housing conditions generally were adversely affected by the reception into the area of evacuees. This was due in great part to the care exercised in the choice of billets by the officers concerned.

It was not found possible to continue routine housing inspection during the last quarter of the year.

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SECTION F.  
Infectious Disease.

The number of cases of scarlet fever notified rose from 24 in 1938 to 33 in 1939. The type of disease continued to be mild and there were no deaths. No increase was observed in the incidence after the reception of evacuees into the district during the last quarter of the year.

Diphtheria cases fell from 17 in 1938 to one (fatal) in 1939, and pneumonia cases from nine to seven.

No cases of enteric fever or cerebro-spinal meningitis were notified.

Measles and whoopingcough became notifiable in October, 1939, and by the end of the year two cases of measles and one of whoopingcough only had been notified.

Notification of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis fell from 15 in 1938 to nine in 1939, and of non-pulmonary from seven to three. Deaths from pulmonary cases fell from eight to seven.

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The number of cases of heart failure reported from 1950 to 1955. The type of disease contracted by the patients was not stated. No deaths were reported. In the incidence after the hospitalization of patients with heart failure, the number of deaths was 10.

Incidence of cases of heart failure in 1950 to 1955. In 1950, and the rate of cases was 10 per 100,000. The number of cases of heart failure of coronary origin was 10. The number of cases of heart failure of non-coronary origin was 10. The number of cases of heart failure of unknown origin was 10. The number of cases of heart failure of other origin was 10.

Incidence of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis from 1950 to 1955. The number of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis was 10. The number of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis of primary origin was 10. The number of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis of secondary origin was 10. The number of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis of unknown origin was 10.

Incidence of cases of heart failure in 1950 to 1955. The number of cases of heart failure was 10. The number of cases of heart failure of coronary origin was 10. The number of cases of heart failure of non-coronary origin was 10. The number of cases of heart failure of unknown origin was 10. The number of cases of heart failure of other origin was 10.