BOROUGH OF OSWESTRY

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

L. WILSON EVANS, M.C., M.B., D.P.H.

for the year

1941

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BOROUGH OF OSWESTRY.

Mayor: Councillor E.M.Hundley.

Chairman: Councillor T. Pitt.

The Health Committee consists of the whole Council.

Health Department,
6,Salop Road,
Oswestry.

July 1942.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Oswestry.

I have the honour to submit my fourteenth Annual Report.
The Minister of Health has directed that it should be in the form of an interim report and confined to essential and urgent matters which affect the public health. It is therefore considerably curtailed.
I am indebted to Mr. Isaac, Sanitary Inspector, for much of the material for the report.

Your obedient servant,

L. WILSON EVANS.

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Your obedient servant,

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PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

Name.	Qualifications.	Office Held.	Whole or Part time.
L. Wilson Evans	M.B., B.S., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health.	Part.
H.T. Isaac	M.S.I.A., C.M.I.	Sanitary Inspector.	Whole.
J.M. Roberts		Clerk.	Whole.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1941.

Birth Rate per 1,000 population	
Birth Rate Oswestry Rural District	16.4
England and Wales	15.3
	14.2
Still Births: M.5 F.3 Total 8	
Rate per 1,000 population	
Oswestry Rural District	.7
England and Wales	.027
	.51
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births	
Oswestry Rural District	35
England and Wales	46
	59
Death Rate	
Death Rate Oswestry Rural District	13.6
Death Rate England and Wales	12.1
	12.9
Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth	
From Sepsis	Nil
Other Causes	3
Oswestry Rural District	1
Maternal Mortality Rate for England and Wales per 1,000 live births.	2.23
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	1
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (over 2 years of age)	Nil

Chief Causes of Death.

	M.	F.
Heart Disease	20	28
Cancer	9	11
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	5	6
Nephritis	4	5
Other diseases of Circulatory System	5	3
Pneumonia	3	4
Violence	4	2

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Notification of Infectious Disease.

	Under 1 yr.	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	Over 65	Total.
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Scarlet Fever	-	-	1	3	2	7	6	2	1	-	-	-	22
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1	-	-	7
Pneumonia	2	9	1	2	-	3	2	3	2	9	9	1	43
Cerebrospinal Fever	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	1	7
Paratyphoid Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Dysentery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Measles	4	6	8	9	8	38	8	1	2	1	-	-	85
WHOOPING COUGH.	5	8	4	7	9	29	1	-	-	-	-	-	63

Infectious Disease was distributed throughout the year as follows.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apl.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total.
Diphtheria	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Scarlet Fever	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	6	2	4	5	22
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	2	-	1	-	7
Pneumonia	2	8	8	7	2	7	3	1	-	4	-	1	43
C.S.F.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Erysipelas	-	-	1	1	2	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	7
Paraphoid	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dysentery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Measles	24	2	19	21	10	4	4	1	-	-	-	-	85
Whooping Cough	6	17	20	4	5	3	5	3	-	-	-	-	63

	Cases admitted to hospital.	Deaths.	Case Rate per 1,000 Population.	Case Rate England & Wales.
Diphtheria	1	2	.08	1.25
Scarlet Fever	20	-	1.87	1.47
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	-	-	-
Pneumonia.	1	7	3.74	1.25
Cerebrospinal Fever	1	1	.08	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	1	-	.08	-
Erysipelas	1	-	.59	.30
Paratyphoid Fever	1	-	.08	.09
Dysentery	-	-	.08	-
Measles	-	1	7.22	10.33
Whooping Cough	-	-	5.32	4.39

At the same time as the case of Paratyphoid Fever occurred there were several cases in the Rural District. There was reason to suspect that the infection might have come from a bakehouse in the Town but examination of specimens from the workers on the premises failed to find any carrier among them but a driver of a van which served the Rural District was found to be infected.

TUBERCULOSIS 1941.

Number of cases notified.

	M.	F.	Totals.
Respiratory	12	3	15
Non-respiratory	2	2	4
	14	5	19

Deaths.	M.	F.	Totals.
Respiratory	3	2	5
Non-respiratory	-	-	-
	3	2	5

Of the 19 cases, 2 females were from other districts, these two were respiratory cases and were notified after moving into Oswestry. They afterwards returned home.

	Cases notified to hospital.	Deaths.	Case Rate per 1,000 population.	Cases Rate England & Wales.
Diphtheria	3	2	.08	1.25
Scarlet Fever	20	-	.57	1.47
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	-	.06	-
Pneumonia.	1	-	.03	1.25
Cerebrospinal Fever	2	-	.06	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	1	-	.03	-
Erysipelas	1	-	.03	-
Paratyphoid Fever	1	-	.03	.30
Dysentery	1	-	.03	.09
Measles	-	1	.03	10.33
Whooping Cough	-	-	.03	4.39

At the same time as the case of Paratyphoid Fever occurred there were several cases in the Rural District. There was reason to suppose that the infection might have come from a warehouse in the Town but examination of samples from the victims on the premises failed to find any evidence. Again but a driver of a van which served the Rural District was found to be infected.

TUBERCULOSIS 1941.

Number of cases notified.

	M.	F.	Total
Respiratory	12	3	15
Non-respiratory	2	2	4
	14	5	

Deaths.

	M.	F.	Total
Respiratory	3	2	5
Non-respiratory	-	-	-
	3	2	5

Of the 19 cases, 2 females were from other districts, these two were respiratory cases and were notified after moving into Dawsetts.

They afterwards returned home.

SCABIES.

Duringthe year 55 cases of scabies were investigated.

These occurred in 35 families.

They were distributed as follows:-

November.		December.	
No. of families.	Cases in each.	No. of families.	Cases in each.
9	1	16	1
1	2	4	2
		1	3
		3	4
		1	5
10	11	25	44

Cases of Scabies are chiefly discovered through the Education Authority. As soon as a case is reported the house is visited and a report made by the Sanitary Inspector, who ascertains that the case and any contacts are being treated. A leaflet is left with information as to the precautions necessary to prevent its spread. Treatment is provided for any case not being treated and for any contacts.

This disease is not confined to any particular section of the community.

ARTIFICIAL IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

The material used was Alum Precipitated Toxoid.

Two doses, one of .2cc and another of .5cc , were given at an interval of four weeks. The material was supplied free by the Ministry of Health.

The number of children who had complete treatment during the year was as follows:-

(a) Pre-school children..... 117

(b) School children..... 575

692

This shows a marked improvement on the previous year.

No case of Diphtheria occurred among children who had received immunising injections.

DIPHTHERIA ANTITOXIN ORDER.

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is available for cases residing in Oswestry in accordance with the provisions of the above Order. This is obtainable from the Health Offices, 6, Salop Road or after office hours from Mr. H. T. Isaac, Grenston, Croeswylan Lane. 8,000 units were used during the year.

VENEREAL DISEASE: FACILITIES FOR TREATMENT.

These have now become available at the Dispensary, Lower Brook Street and are administered by the Salop County Council. The Medical Officer attends on Thursdays, the hours being Men 1 p.m. to 2p.m. : Women 2p.m. to 3p.m.

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This shows a marked improvement on the previous year.

No cases of Diphtheria occurred among children who had received immunising injections.

DIPHTHERIA ANTITOXIN ORDER.

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is available for cases residing in Gawsworth in accordance with the provisions of the above Order. This is obtainable from the Health Offices, 6, Balop Road or after office hours from Mr. H. T. Isaac, Greenton, Crossways Lane. 8,000 units were used during the year.

VENEREAL DISEASES: FACILITIES FOR TREATMENT.

These have now become available at the Dispensary, Lower Brook Street and are administered by the Salop County Council. The Medical Officer attends on Thursdays, the hours being Men 1 p.m. to 2p.m. : Women 2p.m. to 3p.m.

HOUSING.

Apart from the Houses made available under the Ministry of Health Circulars 2156 and 1866 providing for those families rendered homeless by enemy action much good work has been accomplished by removating and converting first and second floors over shop premises into flats and also the conversion of the larger types of buildings available into self contained flats.

The formation of a Management Sub-committee has been a move in the right direction. Their duties will be to deal with all the management of the Council Estate including the letting of houses, the consideration of applications to be placed on the Housing List and to submit to the quarterly meeting of the Housing Committee a report of the Sub-committee's activities each quarter of the year. This will certainly bring the Council into closer grips with the personal side of the subject and should achieve quicker and more thorough results than hitherto.

OVERCROWDING.

During the last two years or so there has been a certain amount of overcrowding in the Town but owing to movement, e.g. workmen who previously were employed in the district moving on when their particular work was completed, the situation especially on the Council Estate has been considerably relieved. Individual cases have arisen and have been satisfactorily dealt with.

VERMINOUS HOUSES.

Infestation was reported in a few houses caused through Irish Labourers from a camp some distance from the Town being taken in as lodgers. The attention of the Camp Authorities was

drawn to the condition of the men and this combined with sending some of them to be cleansed appears to have had a satisfactory effect. It may be also mentioned that the cause of flea infestation in other instances was the excessive number of cats and dogs kept indoors. On patriotic grounds alone such pets should be kept down to a minimum. However at the moment there seems to be more dogs than ever in Oswestry. The infestation of houses by bugs has usually been found attributable to the purchase and storage of second hand bedding and furniture and lodgers of a certain type.

REPAIRS.

In spite of the restriction in material etc. little difficulty has been experienced on the whole in having essential and urgent repairs carried out to house property.

FOODS.

Under the present war time conditions food inspection in its multiple and varied branches has for obvious reasons been in greater demand than in peace time. Damage in transit and certain effects through storage have been the chief causes of complaint. It may be pointed out however that the outside appearance of tinned and other packed foods is not always a criterion as to its unfitness for food. In cases of doubt the Inspector should be consulted. Considering the changes in the control and distribution of foods during the last two years it is pleasing to note the very low percentage actually condemned on the whole. The question of salvage seldom arises owing to the quantities being small.

Centralised slaughtering and meat distribution continues on the same lines and the request of the Minister of Health for the co-operation of local authorities with the Ministry of Food in continuing the inspection at slaughterhouses and meat distributing depots works smoothly and there is every reason to believe efficiently.

MILK.

The milk supply is constantly receiving attention. Samples are examined at the Public Health Laboratory for cream content, cleanliness and apecific gravity or in other words the presence of added water. Samples for Biological examination are also taken as a matter of routine. All milk supplied to the schools under the County Council scheme also come within the scope of routine sampling. There has been no reason for taking any drastic action and no relaxation in the inspection of cowsheds and dairies.

The following are extracts from the report of the Veterinary Inspector Mr. Richard Hughes, F.R.C.V.S.

During the year 1450 cows were examined 174 in the Borough and 1276 outside and considering war time restrictions on feeding stuffs they were in good healthy and progressive condition. Milk samples were taken and microscopically examined from every suspected cow and all proved negative for Tubercle Bacilli. Every cow suffering from mastitis was isolated and the milk withheld from the bulk intended for sale. This being a breeding district and a good market for agricultural stock there are several flying herds in the list of dairies and

continues Mr. Hughes, I would again add the advisability of more frequent inspection to control cases of mastitis in fresh cows entering into the herds.

CINEMAS AND PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT.

Visits at frequent intervals during times of entertainment and otherwise showed that the conduct and provisions generally were satisfactory.

SHOPS.

There has been little complaint regarding infringements of the Shops Acts. The question of heating during the cold months in some instances called for reminders on the part of those responsible for the comfort of those employed. Plaques were distributed to all shops and food preparing places drawing attention to scrupulous cleanliness in the handling of foods. There were no cases of food poisoning during the year.

KEEPING OF PIGS AND POULTRY.

There has been a steady increase in the number of pig and poultry keepers in the Borough. The Salvage Committee of the Town Council has done yeoman service in furthering such schemes and the demand for swill at the moment is greater than the supply. Still greater efforts to salvage household waste will be a valuable contribution to the war effort.

Preliminary consultation with the Health Department as to site, construction of styes etc. has done much to obviate nuisances which would inevitably arise when pigs and poultry are kept under unsuitable conditions.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT.

The total destruction of rats instead of driving them away should be the aim of owners and occupiers of premises so infested. It has been clearly demonstrated that certain premises now closed for the preparation of food for human consumption are no longer troubled with rats. Complaints that have been dealt with are mainly from food stores or in premises in close proximity, piggeries and poultry runs.

There has not been serious infestation. The adequate protection of all foods including waste is of paramount importance in preventing rat infestation.