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Contributors

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1947



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the

URBAN DISTRICT

(Municipal Borough)

OF ROMSEY



ANNUAL REPORT

for 1947

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

Urban District (Municipal Borough) of Romsey

To the Mayor and Corporation of the Borough of Romsey.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit the Annual Report for 1947.

SECTION A. Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	..	..	1212
Population (as estimated by the Registrar General)	..	..	..	..	..	6580
Rateable Value	..	..	..	..	..	£35,735
Sum represented by a 1d. rate	..	..	..	..	..	£140

A Brewery, a Horticultural Nursery, Paper Mills, Timber and Lumber mills and Jam Factory, give employment to a proportion of the population. The rest of the inhabitants are mostly engaged in retail trade or other occupations common to a market town.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	
Live Births				
Legitimate	50	57	107	Birth Rate per 1000
Illegitimate	—	2	2	estimated population 16.5.
Still Births	—	—	—	Rate (per 100 live and
				still births) — 0.
Deaths	36	41	77	Death rate per 1000
				estimated population
				11.7.
Number of women dying in or				From Sepsis 0.
in consequence of child birth.				From other causes .. 0.

INFANTILE MORTALITY. Death rate of infants under 1 year of age.

All infants per 1000 live births	..	..	..	..	45
Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate births	..	..	..	..	46
Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births	..	..	..	..	0
Deaths from Cancer all ages	..	..	..	..	10
Deaths from Measles all ages	..	..	..	..	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough all ages	..	..	..	..	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2	..	..	..	..	0

Of all causes of death, Heart Disease accounted for 21, Cerebral Haemorrhage 16, Cancer 10 and Tuberculosis 0. There is an increase in the number of deaths from cerebral haemorrhage but deaths from other diseases are about average.

Owing to the small population it is difficult to draw any definite conclusion from variations in the statistics from year to year. The school children are benefiting from the increased supply of milk, school meals and the improved housing conditions.

Children in the Romsey school appear to be in a better condition than children in some other areas possibly because their parents are on the spot when any extras are available in the Town and many have relations in the country near by. The children however still do not appear to have the energy of pre-war children.

The adults also seem to lack energy—this is apparent if one watches people walking across the town Square, especially women. An early increase in the fat and protein ration appears to be indicated.

SECTION B. General Provision of Health Services.

1. Public Health Officers of the Authority.
 - (a) The Medical Officer of Health is also Assistant Medical Officer County Council and Medical Officer of Health for the adjoining Rural District of Romsey and Stockbridge.
 - (b) The Sanitary Inspector is also Borough Engineer and Surveyor.
 - (c) Additional Sanitary Inspector.
 - (d) A veterinary Surgeon for the inspection of Dairies, meat and other foods.
2. Nursing in the Home.
 - (a) General, by Parish Nurses supported by voluntary contributions.
 - (b) In cases of ophthalmia and puerperal fever not requiring hospital treatment, nursing is provided where necessary by the County Council.
3. Laboratory Facilities.
 - (a) County Laboratory, The Castle, Winchester.
 - (b) Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Royal Hampshire County Hospital Winchester.

4. Hospitals.

General—The Romsey and District Hospital, the Southampton Hospitals and Broadlands Annexe are those principally used.

Infections—Where cases cannot be satisfactorily nursed at home they are admitted by arrangement to the Salisbury and District Isolation Hospital.

Small Pox—Provision is made by the County Authority.

5. Institution arrangements for un-married mothers.

Arrangements are made by the County Authority as regards Hostels and Maternity Homes.

6. Tuberculosis.

The County Council provides Hospitals and Dispensaries and arrangements are made as regards the treatment of bone and joint tuberculosis with the L.M.T. Hospital, Alton.

7. Welfare.

There is a welfare clinic and centre at Romsey.

8. Orthopaedic Clinics.

The County Council have arranged for children in the area to attend the clinics at Eastleigh and Totton. There is a Remedial exercises Clinic in Romsey.

SECTION C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Report of the Borough Surveyor, Engineer and Sanitary Inspector

1. Water.

The area is supplied with a piped supply by the Southampton Corporation from their Waterworks Pumping Station at Timsbury. The quality of the water is good and the supply "constant". A few houses in isolated areas still obtain their supply from shallow wells which are liable to contamination and inadequate and investigations are proceeding.

With few exceptions all houses are supplied direct from the mains, but instances remain of bib-taps being situated in common yards, and shared in common by more than one household.

2. Drainage and Sewerage.

The drains of all properties in the central area are connected with the sewerage system and it is only in outer areas that septic tanks and cess pits are used, that is, where the properties are not within reasonable distance of a sewer. The exceptional cases occur in the added area of the Borough in parts low lying but almost the whole of the available land within the boundaries of the old Borough is served by a sewer leading to a pumping station at Sadler's Mill, from which it is pumped to the Sewage Disposal Works.

During the year under review 101,175,000 gallons of sewage were pumped to the Sewage works at Greenhill to receive treatment. The increase over the average expected was due to the excessive rain fall and subsequent infiltration into the sewers. The quantity dealt with is equivalent to an average twenty-four hour flow of 281,042 gallons which is the discharge expected from a population of 14,052 persons at an allowance of 20 gallons per head per day. During the six winter months 52,485,250 gallons were pumped, equal to an average 24 hour flow of 287,590 gallons—a discharge expected from a population of 14,379 persons and during the six summer months 48,689,750 gallons were pumped equal to an average 24 hour flow of 266,784 gallons—the discharge expected from a population of 13,339 persons, allowing in both instances 20 gallons per head per day.

Due to lack of attention and proper maintenance during the war years and additional loading, the Disposal Works are now in need of a complete overhaul and partial extension.

The amount of rainfall during the year registered at the Disposal Works was 24.87 inches, 15.99 of which fell in the winter months and 8.88 in the summer months.

3. Rivers and Streams.

There is little pollution of the streams passing through the area. No flooding was experienced in the District during the year.

4. (i) Closet Accommodation.

The District except in a few isolated cases, is on water carriage system.

(ii) Public Cleansing.

The service is covered by Direct Labour over the whole of the District and Mechanical Transport is used. All premises are visited once per week, and in certain cases where the volume of the refuse is heavy the visits are more frequent. Generally the arrangements are satisfactory.

The return of refuse collected during the year is as follows :—

<i>Quarter.</i>	<i>No. of Loads Collected.</i>		<i>Total Weights.</i>	
			<i>Tons.</i>	<i>Cwts.</i>
31st March ..	..	252	570	0
30th June ..	..	266	602	0
30th September ..	..	282	631	0
31st December ..	..	254	571	0
Total for year ..	..	1054	2374	0
Total for previous year		1038	2335	0

The collection of waste and other materials was continued throughout the year and 27 tons for which £142 was received were returned to industry.

All the highways received weekly cleansing, the Main Roads being cleansed by arrangement with the County Council who contribute towards the cost. 104 loads of street sweepings with an estimated weight of 208 tons were collected during the year.

The refuse collected is taken to the Refuse Disposal Controlled Tip at Timsbury and after sorting is tipped into excavated ground pits.

(iii) **Sanitary Inspection in the Area.**

Inspection of the District has been carried out as often as possible, and individual complaints received immediate attention.

The total number of Sanitary Inspections amounted to 386 and 106 nuisances were discovered and subsequently abated.

During the year 9 fumigations were carried out after cases of infectious Disease.

(iv) **Shops.**

Informal action was taken in one case regarding sanitary accommodation under the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934, which was complied with.

(v) **Camping Sites.**

- (1) No sites were used for camping purposes during the year.
- (2) No licences under Section 269 of the Public Health Act 1936 were issued by the Local Authority during the year.
- (3) Estimated number of campers resident in the area at any one time—None.

(vi) **Smoke Abatement.**

No complaints were received during the year. The Borough has very few factories.

(vii) **Swimming Baths and Pools.**

Bathing for members of the male sex has, for a great number of years by use and custom taken place in a portion of the Fishlake Stream towards the upper reaches of the Town. The river is continually flowing—the source of supply being the River Test.

The Corporation also possess a modern open air swimming Pool equipped with water purification plant. The pool was very well patronised during the year ; samples of the pool water are taken at frequent intervals for bacteriological examination. The reports on the condition of the water were very satisfactory, and no adverse report has been received.

(viii) **Eradication of Bed Bugs.**

Number of Council Houses found to be infested	..	..	Nil.
Other Houses	do	..	.. Five.
Number of cyanide fumigations carried out during the year (on removal to Council Houses)	..	..	Five.

5. Schools.

Inspection was made from time to time on the sanitary circumstances and conditions in the schools within the Borough. The buildings for the most part are old, out-dated and overcrowded. The Sanitary Accommodation and drainage is connected with the Council Sewers and is on the water carriage system. The Sanitary circumstances of one school housed in buildings constructed of short lived materials (Romsey Senior Boys) leaves much to be desired by reason of the bad arrangement of the W.C's and Urinals, bad ventilation, and constant fouling from many years of use. Action has been taken

SECTION D. Housing.

New Buildings and Housing.

Forty building plans were submitted for approval during the year, six of which were for the erection of a total of eleven houses, two for adaption of existing houses into flats and four for improvements by additions of bathrooms to houses.

The Corporations housing schemes were commenced at Alma Road for the balance of sixty four traditional type houses. The scheme for temporary bungalows at Botley Road was completed in the early part of the year, the former comprising 45—3 bedroom types, 13—four bedroom types and six Aged Persons Bungalows. The latter scheme comprising 20 Arcon Mark V Temporary Bungalows.

The standard of fitness for more than 50% of the property, suitable for housing working classes in the Borough, is well below the Standard recommended by the Ministry of Health and more than 20% are in such a state of dilapidation as to be incapable of repair at reasonable expense. In addition more than 400 applications for Council Houses have been received from families living in overcrowded conditions and a continuous new housing programme is therefore amply justified.

Administration.

Administration of the Department is greatly hampered by lack of staff and facilities and need for economy in materials and resources imposed by constant demand on the rate. A difficulty is experienced in the delay and gap caused by members of the staff leaving and the consequent delay experienced waiting for Committee decisions on re-appointments which in the case of a typist/clerk might well be for a period of 5-6 months for all formalities to be settled.

Likewise the work imposed on the technical staff is such that a considerable amount of homework and overtime has to be undertaken to keep up-to-date, it being beyond the rate resources to permit the recruitment of additional staff, also the salaries now offered do not go far in encouraging the recruiting of able and ambitious personnel.

In the case of casual labour we have been more fortunate notwithstanding the scarcity of labour, in so far as the employment of labour is left to the Official concerned and in result many works of labour, maintenance and other services (including the erection of dwelling houses) have been undertaken by the Council's own Direct Labour organisation with promptness not normally experienced when waiting for the clearance of tender and contract formalities.

SECTION E. Inspection of Foods and Production.

The Veterinary Surgeon's Report, 1947.

ALMA HOUSE,
ROMSEY, HAMPSHIRE.

1. Milk Supply.

Inspection of Cowkeepers in the Borough with regard to drainage, lighting, ventilation and water supply, involving 14 cowsheds, maintaining about 170 cows, were examined during the year. In two cases the drainage and flooring were deficient and orders given for their improvement.

The dairies and bottling appliances were examined and found satisfactory.

2. Meat and other Food Stuffs.

No slaughtering of cattle or sheep now takes place in the Borough, but certain meat and Corned meat were examined in the shops and condemned where unfit for human consumption.

Pigs slaughtered in the Borough during the year numbered 48 and with the exception of one set of offal, all were passed as fit for human food.

All Shops, refrigerators, etc. were examined.

Certain fish, unfit for food was condemned and destroyed.

A consignment of Salad Cream was similarly dealt with.

E. H. DAYUS,
M.R.C.V.S.

SECTION F. Prevalence of, and Control over Infectious and other diseases.

Where cases cannot be satisfactorily nursed at home they are admitted to the Salisbury and District Isolation Hospital. 2 cases of measles, 2 of scarlet fever and 1 puerperal pyrexia received hospital treatment.

The incidence of infectious disease was very low. There were no cases of diphtheria and 4 cases of scarlet fever.

Diphtheria Immunisation. Children of school age are immunised at school. The under school age are partly done by local practitioners at their surgeries and at the Welfare Centre. Diphtheria Immunisation has been carried out since 1935 and a large proportion of the young population have been immunised.

At the end of 1947 the number of children between 1 and 15 who have been immunised at any time were as follows :—

Under 1 year 58. One year 73. Two years 78. Three years 87. Four years 64. 5—9 years 435. 10—14 years 405.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1947.

<i>Disease</i>	<i>Total number Notified</i>	<i>Cases admitted to Hospital</i>	<i>Total Deaths</i>
Scarlet Fever	4	2	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	1	0
Erysipelas	1	0	0
Measles	2	2	0

CANCER.

Deaths—Males 3. Females 7. This is slightly above the average.

TUBERCULOSIS

New cases notified. Males—3. Females—3.

Deaths—0.

Causes of Death in Romsey Urban District, 1947.

<i>Cause of Death.</i>	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>
ALL CAUSES	42	31
Tuberculosis	0	0
Cancer	3	7
Intra Cranial	6	10
Heart	15	6
Other Circulatory	1	2
Bronchitis	1	2
Pneumonia	1	1
Ulcer Stomach and Duodenum	1	0
Appendicitis	1	0
Nephritis	1	0
Premature Birth	1	1
Congenital	1	1
Suicide	1	0
All others	3	11

Yours faithfully,

G. TATE,

Medical Officer of Health.



