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ROSS-CN-WYE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Interim

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

for the year

1942.

STAFF OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.



Medical Officer of Health.

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Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1942. The appearance of the report is somewhat late but has been due to pressure of work in the Department arising as a result of present day conditions. The Report is much abbreviated and is to be regarded as an Interim Report, in accordance with Circular 2773 of the Ministry of Health.

The outstanding feature of the year was the extraordinary low incidence of notifiable disease, and of that which did occur, nearly one half was due to measles. During the year however, a number of cases of catarrhal jaundice occurred over a period of several months.

I take this opportunity of placing on record my appreciation of the confidence and support which the Council has always given me in the discharge of my duties. This has enabled the difficulties encountered in the work of the Department to be rapidly and easily overcome and has made for efficiency.

Also I have to acknowledge much valuable assistance given me by the other officers of the Council not only in the preparation of this Report but throughout the year in connection with the work of the Department. In particular I have to thank Mr. E. Moses, Clerk to the Council for advice on financial matters, Mr. R. Shaw Batchford, Sanitary Inspector to the Council for his untiring efforts in connection with health education, and Mr. C. Caddick, Surveyor to the Council for his co-operation in matters relating to the undertakings of the Council under his control.

The publication of this Report gives me an opportunity of expressing my satisfaction of the cordial relationship which exists between the medical practitioners of the town and the Department.

2.

Without the co-operation of the practitioners the efforts of the Council to secure the greatest possible improvement in the health of the greatest number of inhabitants would be slow and unconvincing, and I am happy to assure the Council, that in spite of the somewhat disappointing response to the Diphtheria Immunisation effort the Department receives very considerable co-operation from the practitioners.

I remain, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health.

July 1943.

SECTION A. - STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA:

Area (in acres)	1,004
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1942)	1,340
Rateable Value	£31,651
Sum represented by a penny rate	£151.17.7

Extract from Vital Statistics of the Year:Live

Birth Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population ... 16.2

Stillbirths Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population (live & still) 65.9

Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population ... 14
(crude)

Deaths from Puerperal Causes:

		<u>Deaths.</u>	<u>Rate per 1,000 Total Births.</u>
Heading No.29 ...	Puerperal Sepsis	NIL.	NIL.
Heading No.30 ...	Other Puerperal Causes	NIL.	NIL.

Death Rate of Infants under One Year of Age:

All infants per 1,000 live Births	94.1
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	105.3
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	NIL

SECTION B. - GENERAL SUPERVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA:Laboratory Facilities:-

The number of specimens examined by the County and City Public Health Laboratory during the year were as follows:-

Swabs	30
Sputum	21
Blood	1
Milk	6
Water - Chemical Examination	1
Bacteriological "	15
	<u>74</u>

SECTION C. - SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA:Water:

During the year 13 samples of water were taken from the supply of the Ross Water Undertaking and examined at the County and City Laboratory, Hereford, and after bacteriological examination all samples were found to be satisfactory for potable purposes.

Drainage & Sewerage:

Seven new drains have been constructed these being new drains to existing premises. All drains were examined and tested by the Sanitary Inspector.

Rivers & Streams:

One animal carcase was removed from the river Wye and buried, on the instruction of the Council.

Offensive Accumulations Removed	...	...	...	...	...	5
Rats and Mice Infestations	...	...	...	...	...	9
Dirty Houses Cleaned	...	...	...	...	...	1

In spite of a considerable increase in his duties in connection with Civil Defence, Mr. R. Shaw Batchford has continued to exercise an efficient control of the sanitary circumstances of the area throughout the year.

Common Lodging Houses:

The number of these in the town remained at three and all premises were regularly inspected throughout the year.

Factories and Workshops:

The Register of Factories was revised from time to time.

Camping Sites:

Number of Camping Sites in the area used for Camping purposes during the year	...	...	...	...	...	2
Number of Camping Sites in respect of which Licences have been issued by the Local Authority under Section 269 of Public Health Act 1936	...	...	...	...	...	1
Estimated maximum campers resident in the area at one time during summer season 1942	...	...	...	...	...	20

Bed Bugs:

One house owned by the Council, and two others were found to be infested with bed bugs, and both were treated with Thermanol which appeared to give satisfactory results.

School Closures:

There were no school closures on account of health reasons throughout the year.

SECTION D. - HOUSING:

Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year:

1. (a) Total number of Dwellings inspected for housing defects under Public Health & Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	...	61
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	...	94
2. Number of Dwelling Houses found not to be, in all respects, reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	61

Action under Statutory Powers during the Year
Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	...	...	61
Number of Dwelling Houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:						
(a) By Owners	...	...	...	...	...	60
(b) By Local Authority in Default of Owners	...	...	...	...	...	NIL

Numbers 13 and 14 Alton Street:

These two houses had been the subject of Demolition Orders, but, owing to the outbreak of war demolition was not proceeded with. The Defence Regulations gave authority for this type of house to be re-occupied provided that necessary works were carried out. Licences to occupy were to be of six months validity and were to be renewed at the expiration every six months. During the year these two houses have been re-occupied on the fore-going terms, after certain minimum works had been carried out.

Van Dwellings:

The removal of one hutment and six caravans which migrated into the District during the year was secured as a result of informal action by the Department. Unless control is maintained with regard to these dwellings, small settlements would become established, accompanied no doubt, with the insanitary environment which appears to be inseparable from groups of these dwellings.

SECTION E. - INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD:Milk:

There were four wholesale purveyors and fifteen retail purveyors of milk registered with the Local Authority at the end of the year. Much attention was devoted by the Department to milk supplies. Dairies and cowsheds were regularly inspected. Six samples of milk were sent to the City and County Public Health Laboratory for examination, as a result of complaints of the rapid souring of milk. Appropriate action was taken in every instance.

Meat and Other Foods:

No slaughtering of meat for sale for human consumption has been carried out in the town during the year. Endeavour is made to inspect privately slaughtered pigs but owing to the incomplete information given this is frequently impossible.

The Sanitary Inspector endeavours to inspect as much of the meat exposed for sale as possible, but, the inspection of the whole presents too great a task as the Inspector is very fully occupied at the present time. He has from time to time undertaken periods of duty as meat inspector at the Hereford City Abattoir. The Inspector regularly attends markets etc.

Food found to be Unfit for Human Consumption:

Bacon	...	26½ lbs.
Fish	...	34 stones.
Tea	...	64 lbs.
Cheese	...	10 lbs.
Fish Cakes	...	9 dozen.
Eggs	...	266.
Rabbit	...	1 tinned.
Apples	...	1 - 10 lb. tin.
Plums	...	1 - 10 lb. tin.
Han	...	15½ lbs.
Sugar	...	28 lbs.
Cake	...	4 lbs.
Margarine	...	24 lbs.
Biscuits	...	3 lbs.
Livers - Poultry	...	2.
Beef - Pressed	...	48 lbs.

SECTION F. - PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE:

Throughout the year the incidence of notifiable disease in the District was remarkably low - only 37 notifications were received. I am satisfied that this figure represents an accurate estimation of the incidence of infection as it has always been the custom of the medical practitioners to notify promptly.

The detailed statement of the notifications is given in the table below. This shows that measles give rise to the greatest number of notifications, 16, but this represents a remarkably low incidence of the disease. Pneumonia gave rise to 12 notifications which is somewhat higher than the same figure for recent years. These two diseases together accounted for 75% of the number of notifications. No cases of diphtheria were notified during the year and there was only one case of scarlet fever.

Notifiable Disease during the Year 1942:-

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	1	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	2	-
Pneumonia	12	6	1
Whooping Cough	4	-	-
Measles	16	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	1	-

Analysis of Total Notified Cases according to Age:-

Disease.	Age Groups.											Totals.	
	Under 1	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+	10+	15+	20+	35+	45+		65 and over.
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Pneumonia	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	1	3	4	1	12
Whooping Cough	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Measles	-	-	1	-	1	3	8	3	-	-	-	-	16
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Totals	2	1	2	3	1	5	9	3	3	3	4	1	37

There were no admissions to the Stretton Sugwas Isolation Hospital and costs of hospital treatment were therefore small.

The Council considered the question of providing a steam disinfecter for use in the prevention of infectious disease and for dealing with verminous clothing and bedding. It was decided, that any form of disinfecter which could not hold a mattress was not fully adequate for the requirements of the District and as the necessary licence for the purchase of a steel steam disinfecter with self contained boiler could not be obtained, further progress could not be made.

Scabies:

The incidence of scabies appears to have been very low in the District before the outbreak of war. About one or two cases each year confined to one particular class the "Casuals" was the magnitude of the problem. With the outbreak of war, as a result of the migration of the population and overcrowding the incidence of the disease increased. In the year under review 15 cases of scabies came to the notice of the Department, but as this disease is not compulsorily notifiable I am of the opinion that this figure represents only part of the incidence.

The arrangements for the treatment of the disease should be cheap, efficient and capable of being applied without the necessity for admission of the patients to hospital. It seems that existing arrangements both for ascertainment and for treatment of scabies at present available in the District hardly conform to the above three principles.

Diphtheria Immunisation:-

Efforts to secure the immunisation against diphtheria of all children under the age of 16 years were continued during the year with only a moderate success.

Appreciating the necessity of securing the largest possible response by parents, the Council made arrangements with the Medical Practitioners whereby free immunisation was available from any doctor. In addition to these facilities, the Department provides free immunisation facilities as follows:-

Under 5 Years of Age:

At the Ross Infant Welfare Clinic held on alternate Thursday afternoons 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. at the Ross Congregational Church Room.

Under 16 Years of Age:

At 3, Alton Street, Saturday mornings 10 a.m. - 12 a.m.

Special clinics were also arranged by the Medical Officer of Health with the consent of the County Medical Officer at the Ross-on-Wye First Aid Post. Much valuable assistance was provided by the voluntary nursing staff of the Post under Mrs. Littlewood and these clinics were very successful although the numbers of children who attended were not entirely satisfactory.

The method of immunisation adopted by the Council is that A.P.T. (2 injections) should be used preferably for children under 8 years of age and T.A.F. (3 injections) for those over that age, but that choice should finally be determined by the doctor carrying out the immunisation. Free supplies of both these prophylactic agents are available to doctors for free immunisation. By this procedure the Council hopes that immunisation will be carried out with the minimum inconvenience to all children.

There are a number of private schools in the district which have their own school doctors. The children attending these schools do not appear to respond very well to appeals for immunisation, although the Council's scheme for free immunisation of children through their own doctor covers these children.

The Council attempted to stimulate further interest in Diphtheria Immunisation by means of posters, leaflets and newspaper advertisements almost continually throughout the year. This probably did much good although the results may not be immediately apparent, at the same counter propaganda appears to keep pace with the Council's efforts and there can be no doubt that it is the more effective in a number of instances.

The figures for Diphtheria Immunisation are given below:-

No. of Children who completed courses of Diphtheria Prophylactic during 1942.

Age Group	1 - 5	5 - 15	1 - 15
1st. Quarter	4	3	7
2nd. Quarter	3	5	8
3rd. Quarter	7	7	14
4th. Quarter	19	27	46
Whole Year	33	42	75

On the 31st. December, it was estimated that 23% of the children under five years of age resident in the district had received complete courses of diphtheria prophylactic and that 52% of those between five and fifteen years of age had been similarly treated.

Tuberculosis:

At the beginning of the year there were 20 cases of tuberculosis on the Register, 10 pulmonary cases and 10 non-pulmonary. During the year 16 cases were added to the Register 8 pulmonary and 8 non-pulmonary, and 4 cases were removed from the Register. At the end of the year 32 cases remained on the Register - 15 pulmonary and 17 non-pulmonary cases.

New Cases and Mortality during 1942:-

Age Periods.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5+	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
15+	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
25+	2	1	-	-	2	-	-	-
35+	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45+	2	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
55+	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
65 & Over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	7	1	3	5	2	1	-	-

Meteorological Report:-

I am indebted to Mr. F.J. Parons, Meteorologist-in-Charge, The Observatory, Ross-on-Wye, for the following report for the year 1942:-

SHADE TEMPERATURE (DEGREES FAHR).

Month.	Means.	Difference from Normal.	Extremes.	
			Maximum.	Minimum.
January	35.3	-4.1	51	19
February	33.7	-6.3	50	16
March	42.7	+0.1	61	25
April	49.5	+2.4	67	35
May	52.5	-0.8	72	32
June	58.7	+0.1	84	37
July	60.5	-1.4	78	42
August	61.5	+0.7	87	44
September	57.1	+0.5	73	33
October	51.9	+2.4	70	30
November	41.5	-2.1	54	23
December	45.9	+5.6	56	32
Year	49.2	-0.3	87 (Aug. 28.)	16 (Feb. 27.)

GROUND TEMPERATURE (DEGREES FAHR).

Month.	One foot depth.	Four feet depth.	On Surface, Lowest on Grass.	No. of Nights of Ground Frost.
	Mean.	Mean.		
January	37.2	42.7	12	17
February	35.8	40.1	9	24
March	41.3	41.2	20	13
April	48.3	46.4	24	6
May	53.1	50.3	20	5
June	60.6	55.5	30	1
July	62.4	58.8	35	0
August	62.5	59.5	37	0
September	59.5	59.2	27	1
October	53.5	55.4	27	4
November	44.3	49.1	18	17
December	45.3	47.3	27	7
Year	50.3	50.5	9 (Feb. 27.)	95

BRIGHT SUNSHINE (HOURS & TENTHS).

Month.	Duration.	Difference from Normal.	Highest Record in one day.	Number of Sunless Days.
	Total 1942			
January	51.4	- 2.5	6.6	13
February	52.7	-14.6	8.4	11
March	66.6	-47.4	10.3	10
April	196.9	+52.7	13.4	1
May	201.7	+17.0	13.5	3
June	236.6	+30.1	15.0	1
July	168.6	-13.2	12.3	2
August	129.6	-52.1	12.4	1
September	131.0	- 6.4	11.1	0
October	93.4	- 3.5	10.0	3
November	63.2	+ 1.6	7.0	12
December	35.9	-14.1	5.1	10
Year	1427.6	-52.4	15.0 (Jun. 7.)	67

RAINFALL (INCHES).

Month.	Total 1942.	Difference from Normal.	Greatest fall in one day.	No. of Rain Days. (.005 inch or more)
January	2.41	-0.13	.44	15
February	.45	-1.57	.20	7
March	2.54	+0.17	.54	13
April	1.68	-0.25	.53	9
May	3.63	+1.52	.63	14
June	.12	-1.80	.04	5
July	1.05	-1.22	.52	12
August	4.11	+1.59	2.00	17
September	1.37	-0.75	.51	15
October	1.52	-1.67	.43	13
November	1.03	-1.64	.43	9
December	4.03	+1.30	.81	19
Year	23.94	-4.45	2.00 (Aug. 29)	148

Faint, illegible table content, likely a continuation of the rainfall data or a related record.