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B O R O U G H O F R Y E

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S

REPORT

for

1948

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REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

STATE

OF

HEALTH

BOROUGH OF RYE.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Rye.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present you with my second
and last Annual Report, which is for the year 1948.

The Report is abreviated in the same manner as
during the war years.

I most warmly thank you, Mr. Mayor, the Aldermen
and Councillors for your constant support and kindness to
me during the year, and I equally wish to record the great
help that I have received from your Town Clerk, your
Accountant Officer, your Surveyor and your other Officers.
We have worked in great harmony and with no little good
humour in these pleasant and historic surroundings.

I wish to report of the good work and faithful
performance of his duties of your Sanitary Inspector, Mr.
H.C.Gower, and further to acknowledge much help from your
Housing Officer, Mr. McCoy.

I am indeed sorry that my period as your Medical
Officer of Health has not lasted longer, in order that I
might see the further development of the Tilling Green
Estate, the continuance of our Housing Programme, the
furtherance of the sewerage plan and water supply proposal,
and the resumption of the representation of unfit houses
and the scheduling of clearance areas.

Finally, I should like to assure you, Mr. Mayor, Ladies
and Gentlemen, that my departure from East Sussex will in
no wise interfere with the affection with which I shall ever
hold this Ancient Town and the happiness which it has given
me to be its Officer and Servant. "If I forget thee, O
Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning".

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ERIC C. DOWNER.

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,
The Watch Oak,
Battle, Sussex.

31st December, 1948.

STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health	Eric C. Downer, M.A., D.P.H.
Sanitary Inspector and Meat Inspector.	H. C. Gower, A.R.San.I.
Surveyor, Town Planning Officer and Water Officer.	A.G.J.Cornner, O.B.E., M.Inst.M. & C.E., M.R.San.I.
Housing Officer.	F. W. McCoy.

Area...	1,021 acres.
Population by census, 1931...	3,947
Estimated population in 1948, Registrar General's figure...	Not yet received.
Number of inhabited houses ...	1,372
Number of Rateable premises, March 31st, 1948. ...	1,673
Rateable Value. ...	£41,606.
Sum represented by a penny rate for Financial year ending 31st March, 1948 (estimated) ...	£161. 12. Od.

CHIEF OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES.

Shopkeeping. Catering. Building.

General and Structural Engineering. Agriculture.

Fisheries. 170 vessels are registered at the Port of Rye, of which some 35 berth at Rye or Rye Harbour.

Fishing in Rye Bay has now dropped almost to its pre-war level.

Shipping. 5 Cargo boats delivered timber to Rye during the year, principally from the Netherlands.

Wooden Ship Building. At the Shipyard one Cabin Cruiser was completed, and the conversion of a large ex-naval vessel was completed during the year. General repair works were carried out.

BOROUGH OF RYE.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1948.

Registrar General's estimate of population for 1948..... 4390

Live Births.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	40	38	78
Illegitimate	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
	45	39	84

Stillbirths.

No stillbirths were registered in the Borough of Rye during 1948.

Live Birth-rate per 1,000 of Resident population..... 19.13

Live Birth-rate per 1,000 Civilian population
(England & Wales) 17.9

Still-Birth rate per 1,000 births (live and still)..... 0.00

Deaths.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	23	33	56
Death-rate per 1,000 population			12.75
Death-rate for England and Wales			10.8

Deaths under 1 year.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	1	1	2
Illegitimate	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	1	1	2
Infant death-rate per 1,000 live births			23.80
Infant death-rate per 1,000 live births (England and Wales)			34.00
Death-rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births			25.64
Death-rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births			00.00
Deaths under two years from diarrhoea			Nil
Death-rate from diarrhoea per 1,000 live births			00.00
Death-rate from diarrhoea (under two years) per 1,000 live births, England & Wales			3.3
Maternal Deaths			Nil
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births			00.00

Death-rates from certain specific causes.

	<u>England & Wales</u>	<u>Borough of Rye.</u>
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	0.00	0.00
Whooping Cough	0.02	0.00
Diphtheria	0.00	0.00
Tuberculosis	0.51	0.23
Smallpox	-	-
Influenza	0.03	0.23
Pneumonia	0.41	0.46
Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioccephalitis	0.01	0.00

Detailed Causes of Death.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	1	0	1
Influenza	0	1	1
Cancer (all sites)	3	11	14
Intercranial vascular lesions	5	3	8
Heart diseases	7	13	20
Other circulatory diseases	0	2	2
Bronchitis	0	1	1
Pneumonia	1	1	2
Digestive diseases other than appendicitis	0	1	1
Nephritis	1	0	1
Birth injury and weakness	1	0	1
All other causes	4	0	4
	<u>23</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>56</u>

N.B. This report is furnished in advance of the Registrar General's final statistics for the population of the Borough, births and deaths, and notifications of infectious disease.

These will be circulated later and this page is left so that they may be attached when received.

Disease	1933	1932	1931	1930
Scarlet fever	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0	0
Bacterial dysentery	0	0	0	0
Typhoid	0	0	0	0
Epidemic typhus	1	1	1	1
Lentils	52	70	5	5
Whooping cough	26	22	2	2

Deaths entered in Register for
1933

Number of cases notified as of
21st December, 1933

Disease	1933	1932	1931	1930
Typhoid	0	0	0	0
Epidemic typhus	1	1	1	1
Whooping cough	26	22	2	2

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Cases of Infectious Disease other than tuberculosis, notified during 1948, as compared with 1947.

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>1947</u>		<u>1948</u>	
	M	F	M	F
Scarlet fever	0	0	4	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0	0
Anterior poliomyelitis	1	0	0	0
Pneumonia	0	0	0	0
Erysipelas	1	1	0	1
Measles	4	5	70	62
Whooping cough	7	8	39	39

Tuberculosis.

Cases entered in Register for first time in 1948.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Pulmonary	4	5
Non-pulmonary	0	1

Number of cases on Register as at 31st December, 1948.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pulmonary	11	13	24
Non-pulmonary	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	15	17	32
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NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT.

Under the National Health Service Act the Rye and District Memorial Hospital has passed to the care of the South-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board and it, in common with the Hospitals of Hastings, Bexhill and the surrounding districts, is under the management of the Hastings Local Management Committee, whose Chairman is Mrs. A.W. Farnfield, J.P.

This great change has not to any extent altered where the average hospital case from Rye goes. Infectious cases still go to the Hastings Isolation Hospital, and general cases which are not accommodated locally to the East Sussex, the Buchanan or the St. Helen's Hospital (formerly the Municipal Hospital, Hastings). The provision for maternity is unaltered.

INSULIN.

The provision of Insulin for necessitous persons, formerly a function of the Borough Council, is now one of the duties of the Authorities administering the National Health Service Act.

LABORATORIES.

The Royal East Sussex Laboratory, with its parent Hospital, has passed to the Regional Hospital Board, but it continues to offer the same services in the District but they are of course now free. For analytical work, we have recourse to the County Analyst's Laboratory at Lewes, as of yore.

AMBULANCE SERVICES.

The Ambulance Service, which is manned and staffed as in last year's Report, is now working under the County Council's Scheme, they being the appropriate Authority under the National Health Service Act.

WATER SUPPLY.

Samples are taken for bacteriological examination about once a month, and for chemical examination about once a quarter. Other samples are taken when required.

During 1948, 40 bacteriological samples (25 pre-chlorination and 15 post-chlorination) and 10 chemical samples (4 pre-chlorination and 6 post-chlorination) were taken.

All water supplied to consumers was chlorinated and satisfactory.

The consumption of water during the year was as follows:-

Pumped from Cadborough Waterworks.	52,613,000 gallons.
" " Military Road "	<u>7,155,000</u> gallons.
Total	<u>59,768,000</u> gallons.

Water Supply continued.

This is approximately 14 millions gallons less than was pumped in the previous year.

The following table shows where the water was consumed:-

Borough of Rye	53,681,240 gallons.
Battle R.D.C. (bulk supply)	
(1947 - 4,633,000 gallons)	5,459,200 gallons.
Camber (delivered)	222,645 gallons.
Winchelsea Beach (delivered)	114,545 gallons.
East Guldeford, etc.	90,370 gallons.
	<u>59,768,000 gallons.</u>

Restricted Supply - Owing to shortage in supply as a result of recent dry years and increased demands it became necessary to introduce shutting down the mains nightly from the 30th July, 1948, onwards. This has effected a saving of some 14,000,000 gallons over the consumption for the previous year. Despite shortages, bulk supplies have been provided to Battle R.D., and also water from standpipe to areas of the Battle R.D. without piped supplies, although this has involved reduced supplies to the Borough consumers.

Additional Water Supply. The Council has now been informed by the Minister of Health that he is prepared to entertain an application for authority to construct waterworks to supplement the Council's supply by abstracting water from the River Rother, and this application will be submitted to the Minister early in 1949.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The automatic ejector stations during the year lifted the following amounts of sewage:-

Station A	610,920 gallons.
Station B	7,814,850 gallons.
Station C	1,381,150 gallons.
Station D	1,675,200 gallons.
Station E	5,138,910 gallons.
	<u>16,621,030 gallons.</u>

This is an increase over the previous year of 5,309,870 gallons or 31.9%.

This increase is mainly due to the connecting of the sewers in the Cadborough area, which previously discharged into the River Tillingham at Gibbets Marsh, via settlement tanks, to the new ejector station "E" which has been constructed to serve the Tilling Green Estate.

Schemes for further renewals of existing sewers will be prepared in 1949.

SCAVENGING.

3,123 cu.yds. of refuse were dealt with at the fully controlled tip in Cadborough Road.

Scavenging continued.

The collection and disposal of refuse is carried out by the Council. During the year the Council purchased a new S.D. Freighter with an all-metal tipping body for collection purposes. This vehicle replaced one which had been in continuous service for 16 years.

The work of refuse disposal is carried out according to the latest instructions of the Ministry of Health, and is entirely satisfactory and free from annoyance.

SALVAGE.

	<u>Collected.</u>				<u>Sums Received.</u>		
	T.	c.	q.	lbs.	£.	s.	d.
Paper.	7	16	2	20	33	11	4
Ferrous Metals.	2	16	3	14	6	2	5
Textiles (rags, etc.)		4	0	21	2	18	9
Bottles and Jars.	4	15	2	14	34	3	1
	15	13	1	13	£76	15	7

This is an increase of £17. 16. 1d. on the previous year.

CONTROL OF CIVIL BUILDING.

During the year 187 Licences amounting to £16,847 were issued by the Rye Building Control Committee and 51 Licences amounting to £27,269 were issued by the Ministry of Works.

This is a decrease on the previous year and is accounted for by the raising in July, 1948, of the value of work which could be carried out without a Licence.

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR REPORTS:-

44 Complaints of nuisances were investigated and remedied by service of informal notices.

Six Statutory Notices under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936, were issued in respect of defective houses; five were complied with and one is in abeyance.

Cowsheds and Dairies were periodically inspected.

No slaughter houses were in general use during the year. All home killed meat was delivered into Rye from Government Slaughter Houses outside the Borough. Seventeen pigs were slaughtered in a Rye Slaughter House under a Ministry of Food Licence.

Disinfection of Houses.

Eight houses were disinfected on account of infectious diseases.

Disinfestation of Vermin.

Complaints of vermin, mainly fleas and cockroaches, were successfully treated with D.D.T. spray and powder.

Factories.

There were fifty factories on the Register at the end of the year, thirty-one of which use mechanical power. Four complaints on insanitary conditions were received from H.M. Inspector of Factories.

Milk Licences.

The following Licences were granted:-

- Supplementary Dealer's Licence
for "Tuberculin Tested" milk... .. 1
- Supplementary Dealer's Licence
for "Accredited" milk 1

Food Inspection.

The following is a list of food condemned as unfit for human consumption, amounting approximately to 8,543 lbs. :-

Meat	52 tins
Milk	99 "
Soup	7 "
Fruit	70 "
Vegetables	50 "
Fish (tinned)	45 "
" dry	9 stone
" wet, at wharf	516 "
" wet, in shops	18 "
Liver	19 lbs.
Oranges	16 "
Whale meat sausages	25 "
Biscuits	60 "
Fish cakes	144
Cheese	47 small boxes
Bacon	56 lbs.
Sugar	12 "
Fats	2 "
Cereals	6 "
Sundries, jars, bottles, packets, etc.	56

87% of the above consisted of fish (mainly small plaice and dabs) brought into Rye from Rye Bay, for which there was no sale. The remainder, being various foods, amounted to 1,081 lbs.

Rodent Control.

One part-time operator is employed. The following infestations were treated:-

- Rats - 3 Major and 156 minor. Estimated kill 663.
- Mice - 17 Minor. Estimated kill 96.

Rodent Control continued.

The Council are operating the Ministry's Private Dwellings Scheme whereby all infestations of dwelling houses are treated free of charge to the occupants.

The sewers were treated twice during the year and the results indicated that a considerable number of rats were destroyed.

HOUSING.

The closest co-operation has existed between your Public Health Department, your Accountant Officer, and your Housing Officer. The Public Health Department has had full weight in the selection of tenants for houses, and the Committee has done all in its power to ensure that the houses should go to those who needed them most on the grounds of ill-health, insanitary conditions or overcrowding.

New Council Houses. Forty Council houses were completed during the year, thirty were in course of erection and approval received for a further thirty-two. These figures include twenty two-bedroomed flats.

Other new accommodation. The Council took over the Old Bonding Stores, Wish Ward, used during the war as a Civil Defence Depot, and converted the building into three flats.

Houses Controlled by the Council:-

Pre-war Council Houses	115
Post-war " "	46
Leasehold Houses (expired leases)	91
Requisitioned Houses and Flats	16
Bonding Store Flats	3
Temporary Houses (Bretton Road and N.F.S.Huts)	25
	<hr/>
	296
	<hr/>

This represents 21.6% of the inhabited houses in the Borough.

Maintenance work. Requisitioned properties were well maintained. Repairs and painting to other houses belonging to the Council were cut to such an extent that only urgent work was able to be carried out. This matter is serious and is receiving the very careful consideration of the Council.

Housing Shortage. The Housing Manager reports as follows:-

By the 31st December the list of applicants for Council houses reached 298. Whilst allowing for those applicants who no longer require accommodation but have not withdrawn their applications, it would appear that the speed of house building is barely keeping pace with the new applications. At the present rate of building it will take nearly five years to meet the needs of those already on the list even if no further applications were accepted.

It is interesting to note that analysis of the family structure of the Rye applicants shows a picture almost identical to the National analysis. The size of family is as follows:-

Housing Shortage continued.

37%	No children	18%	Two children
34%	One child	11%	Three or more children.

National surveys indicate a definite trend towards smaller families and statistics show that there is an increasing number of elderly couples and consequently an increasing demand for smaller accommodation. It may be that the situation could be more quickly relieved if, for the time being, the building of two-bedroomed houses and flats was concentrated upon, and the traditional three-bedroomed houses built as the need becomes apparent.

Another important factor is the amount of rent to be paid, and it is obvious that some of the tenants are finding considerable hardship in paying an inclusive rent of £1. 9. 1d. for a house containing one unwanted bedroom whilst the flats can be let at a figure more in keeping with their income, namely, 19s. 5d.

During the year fifty applicants have received special consideration on the grounds of ill-health. The more serious of these have been placed in suitable houses, or where that has not been possible, into temporary accommodation at least better than that previously occupied.

Tilling Green Estate. The site works, roads, sewers and services were completed to Part 1 early in the year. This provides for 102 houses and flats. The Council are considering the development of the land at the North of the site, originally set aside for allotments, which would provide for approximately a further eight houses and sixteen flats.

Housing Conditions Generally. A good standard of repair of cottage property privately owned has not been maintained, and the number of houses in such a condition as to be represented as unfit is increasing. As stated in last year's report, little can be done to remedy this while the housing shortage continues.

SCHOOLS.

Your Medical Officer of Health has held throughout the year the post of Assistant School Medical Officer inspecting the children at the three large schools in Rye, and conducting the monthly clinic.

The knowledge gathered by him and the contacts gained in this work have greatly helped him in his work as your Medical Officer of Health.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Children who received the two inoculations in 1948.

Under 5 years old... ..	61
Between 5 and 15 years.. . . .	6

Re-inforcing dose:-

14 children received the third dose.

Estimated total numbers of Rye children under 15 years immunised at December 31st, 1948:-

Under 5 years old... ..	203
5 - 14 years	424

CATERING SURVEY.

The epidemic of poliomyelitis in 1947 and the occurrence during the last few years of various outbreaks of Food poisoning coupled with the fact that catering for holiday makers and others is one of the most important industries in this part of Sussex, made it seem desirable that a survey of the Borough should be made with a view to ascertaining under what conditions food was prepared and handled and served to the public or to communities.

A Catering Survey was therefore initiated in October, 1948, and it is hoped to conclude it by 1st March, 1949, so that any action may have been taken before the commencement of the holiday season of the year.

I should like to report the very great co-operation and help that we have received from the Area Food Office at Battle, and its presiding Officer, Mr. J. F. Bryant.

The Catering Establishments were divided into the following categories:-

Residential Hotels and Catering Establishments.
Restaurants, Cafes, etc.
Public Houses. (if not in previous categories)
Industrial Canteens.
Hostels.
School Canteens.

It will be seen that the Borough includes a great many establishments of many varieties, serving widely different sections of the community.

A letter, several days in advance of the proposed visit, is sent to the proprietor of each establishment pointing out the purposes of the Survey and asking for his co-operation. The premises are then visited and short questionnaire completed with full details of the number of outside persons employed. An attempt is made to get some knowledge of the background and history of the persons handling the food, i.e., service overseas, previous bowel disease, etc. The premises, particularly the kitchens, washing-up places, and larders and store-rooms, are thoroughly inspected, as also the rooms in which the meals are served. Note is also taken of the cleanliness of overalls, aprons, tablecloths, cutlery, etc., and in Public Houses particular attention is paid to the state of the glasses. Lavatory and washing accommodation for the staff is carefully enquired into and seen, and its convenience to the place of work noted. The general sanitation and state of repair of the premises are not neglected.

When this information has been obtained informal letters are sent out suggesting any reasonable improvements and alterations, or confirming any discussion at the time of inspection. For definite sanitary or structural defects the powers of the Local Authority are in the background.

The whole spirit behind the Survey has been to carry it out with the co-operation and goodwill of the proprietors of the Catering Establishments. At the present moment, the 31st December, 1948, approximately half of the Survey has been completed, and in almost every case visits have been welcomed and information and permission to view freely given.

Catering Survey continued.

The vast majority of proprietors have felt that their interests and that of the trade were identical with that of the Local Authority:- to provide, and to give the Borough the reputation for providing a first class service of good, pure and wholesome food for those who come to re-create and rejuvenate themselves in this favoured area.

The Survey will be fully reported on in next year's Report.

BOUNDARY COMMISSION.

Rye was honoured by a further visit from the Assistant Commissioner of the Local Government Boundary Commission, but this time he was considering whether any re-arrangements were necessary in the Local Government Districts of East Sussex. The Rye Case was put before him together with the relevant statistics and maps, and the Council's Officers furnished the Assistant Commissioner with a good deal of ex tempore data.

My comments on Rye as a centre of a Health and Sanitary District are precisely the same as last year. I would further add that our work would have been easier if the claims of Hastings had first been disposed of.

From the point of view of Sanitary and Public Health Services alone Rye is an ideal centre, and in any scheme of delegation of the services under the National Health Service Act, to which the County Council may eventually come, the position of Rye would merit serious consideration.

A County District centred on Rye as proposed in the Rye Representation is quite big enough for the effective discharge and supervision of the sanitary duties of a County District Council. It is not, in my view, at present large enough to claim delegation of the County Health Services but with the development of Camber and the agricultural community proposed on the western side of Romney Marsh, it might reach a population of 20,000 and become suitable to receive delegation.

At the very end of the year the Minister of Health asked for further information on the Rye proposed Water Scheme to be submitted to him. Should the Scheme be approved, as it well might in the opening for development of Camber and Winchelsea Beach, the case for Rye to be a centre of District Government in sanitary matters would be greatly strengthened.
