STOCKTON-ON-TEES CORPORATION

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

TO THE

TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1939

J. A. A. DUNCAN,
L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health:
Medical Superintendent of Isolation Hospital:
School Medical Officer.

TO:- THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON-ON-TEES

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH TO THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1939

Mr. Mayor, Madam and Gentlemen,

On assuming office on 1st August, 1940, one of the first papers I found on my desk was a draft Report of the Health Department for the year 1939.

It is thus no product of my energies, and full recognition should be given to Mr. Kipling, who has drawn up this Report in conformity with the guiding principles laid down by the Ministry of Health, which has decided that for the duration of the war the usual form of Report should be held in abeyance, and that an abridged edition only containing essential and urgent matters should be issued. The Minister directs, however, that all records, including vital statistics should be carefully preserved so that in more leisured times to come a comprehensive and complete Report covering these years of emergency may be drawn up.

The present Report is, therefore, mainly tabular and comparative, and for the sake of economy in printing costs, recourse has been made to Roneo reduplication, and in view of the saving of at least £23. 15. 6., which was the cost of printing the 1938 Report, I feel sure that the Council will concur in this proposal.

Apart from these introductory remarks, the main body of the Report has been compiled by Mr. Kipling, and it demonstrates in a comparative manner that, on the whole, the state of the Public Health in Stockton has not markedly deteriorated during the period under review.

During the year, work in connection with the organisation of A.R.P. Casualty Services took up an increasing amount of time, and at one period practically the whole staff was engaged on this work. Eventually a separate Department was set up, and two members of the staff, a Sanitary Inspector and a Clerk have devoted their full time to the work. Difficulties in the work of the Department did not, however, make themselves felt until after the outbreak of war in September, and the work of the Department proceeded normally until that time.

Unfortunately, the health of the late Medical Officer, Dr. M'Gonigle, continued to give cause for anxiety, and early in the year he was given leave of absence to recuperate in the South. This, however, proved of no avail, and after an illness which had more or less incapacitated him for two years he died on 30th July, 1939. Dr. M'Gonigle had been your Medical Officer of Health for 15 years, and his death at the age of 51 was a great loss to Public Health in general and Stockton in particular.

During the interregnum between Dr. M'Gonigle's death and my assumption of office, Dr. E. H. T. Nash, formerly Medical Officer of Health of Heston and Isleworth, carried out the duties of Acting Medical Officer of Health.

I have the honour to remain,
Your obedient servant,

J. A. A. DUNCAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS

Accurate statistics are not available, as the figures for estimated population and the registered births and deaths have not yet been supplied by the Registrar General. The following figures are, however, sufficiently accurate to indicate the trend of the rates for the year.

The latest estimate of population received from the Registrar General is that for 1938, namely 67,280, and this figure has been used in the calculation of the birth and death rates.

Births			1939	1938
Males...	636			
Females.	605			
Total	1241	Rate...	18.44	19.65

Deaths				
Males...	479			
Females.	450			
Total..	929	Rate...	12.87	11.53

Infantile Mortality

No. of deaths under 1 year	83	Rate per 1000 total births	68	52

Deaths from Puerperal Causes

No. of deaths	4	Rate per 1000 total births	3.2	6.54

HEALTH SERVICES

There was no change of any importance in the Health Services of the Borough during the year. No scheme is yet in operation for the Dental treatment of expectant and nursing mothers and of pre-school children. No further progress has

been made with the scheme for the provision of an Orthopaedic Hospital of 100 beds for the County of Durham.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

The Borough water supply continues to be satisfactory. Twelve samples were taken during the year, and in only two cases B. Coli was found, the remaining samples showed that the water was of good quality.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION

All the houses in the town, with the exception of a few on the outskirts, are now on the water carriage system. Unfortunately, when the scheme of conversion was carried out, many houses were left with ashpits, and these have been of considerable inconvenience to the refuse collectors. During the past two or three years efforts have been made by this Department to have these ashpits converted into places for the accommodation of suitable galvanised iron ash pans. Considerable success has attended our efforts in this respect. During the past five years 1098 such conversions have been carried out.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

The outbreak of war in September 1939 necessitated the transfer of Mr. Varley, the Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector, from his routine duties to that of assisting in Regional Casualty Services of the Borough. Notwithstanding this reduction in strength and the increased time at present taken up by the supervision of the Central Slaughter Houses, the routine work of sanitary inspection has been carried out, and the following tables give substantially the amount of such work done.

Number and Nature of Inspections made by the Sanitary Inspectors during the year 1939.

Investigations made in respect of notifiable disease...	460
Premises disinfected re infectious disease.	409
" " " " vermin..	116
No. of re-visits where cases are isolated at home...	2
Inspections following complaints.	361
" under the Housing &c., Acts ...	366
" " " Public Health Acts...	292
" of Offensive Trades..	96
" " Factories with Mechanical Power ...	99
" " " without Mechanical Power ...	287
" " Bakehouses.	158
" " Cowsheds...	59
" " Dairies & Milkshops	49
" " Stables	13
" " Slaughter Houses..	2941

Inspections of Markets & Shops...	392
" " Common Lodging Houses.. ...	45
" " Ice Cream Shops...	37
" " Fried Fish Shops..	155
" " Hairdressers' Premises. ...	74
" in regard to outstanding Notices..	927
Miscellaneous Inspections...	272
Visits to Small-pox Contacts	-
Samples taken for Analysis..	44
" " " Bacteriological Examination...	56
Visits to Houses-Let-in-Lodgings.	36
" " Caravans	54

Notices.

	Housing			Public Health		
	Prel.	Stat.	Total.	Prel.	Stat.	Total
No. of Notices served during 1939.	40	189	229	319	41	360
No. of Notices complied with during 1939.	69	241	310	242	32	274

HOUSING

During the year 281 houses were inspected for housing defects, a considerable reduction on the number for the previous year when 520 houses were inspected. Of these, 42 houses were found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation. Under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1936 189 Notices were served, and 241 houses were rendered fit for human habitation. The latter figure includes notices which were served during the previous year. Three demolition orders were made during the year, and one house was demolished. Sixty houses were reconditioned under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, and five were vacated on undertakings given by the owners not to use for human habitation.

New houses erected during the year amounted to 227.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The number of notifications of infectious diseases received was 460, compared with 609 during the previous year.

	1939	1938
Scarlet Fever...	75	344
Diphtheria	129	122
Puerperal Pyrexia	16	20
Pneumonia..	162	70
Cerebro Spinal Fever. ...	1	3
Erysipelas.	50	42
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	9	7
Poliomyelitis...	2	1
Encephalitis Lethargica...	1	-
Whooping Cough..	11	-
Measles	4	-

Prosecutions.

Number of Notices served during 1939.	Number of Notices Not complied with.	Number of Prosecutions Instituted.	Total.	Proved.	Dismissed.	Withdrawn.	Pending.
No. of Notices.	40	109	229	216	41		240
Complied with.							
During 1939.	40	641	310	242	22		174

SCHOOLS

During the year 1939 houses were inspected for Rodents Defects, 6 prohibitory notices on the owner for the private year when 180 houses were inspected. Of these, 42 houses were found to be in a state so dangerous as injurious to health as to unfit for human habitation. Under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1936 109 notices were served, and 241 houses were rendered fit for human habitation. The 3 Year figure includes cases which were served during the previous year. Three demolition orders were made during the year, and two houses were demolished. Sixty houses were represented under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936, and five were vacated on undertakings given by the owners not to use for human habitation.

Six houses created during the year amounted to 4291.

INSECTICUS DISEASES.

The number of notifications of infectious diseases received was 4903, compared with 809 during the previous year.

	1939	1938
Scarlet fever...	78	464
Diphtheria...	1[illegible]	102
Puerperal Pyrexia	2[illegible]	27
Erysipelas...	4	20
Pneumonia...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tuberculosis...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pneumonia...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tuberculosis...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pneumonia...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tuberculosis...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pneumonia...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tuberculosis...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pneumonia...	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tuberculosis...	[illegible]	[illegible]

The number of cases of Scarlet Fever notified shows a considerable reduction on the number notified during the year 1938. No deaths were reported from Scarlet Fever during the year.

The number of notifications of Diphtheria was only slightly in excess of the number notified during the year 1938. There were four deaths from the disease compared with five for the previous year. No action was taken during the year to provide artificial immunisation against Diphtheria.

Measles and Whooping Cough became compulsorily notifiable in October 1939, but only eleven cases of Whooping Cough and four cases of Measles were notified to the end of the year.

Cases of Measles, Whooping Cough, Epidemic Diarrhoea, Ophthalmia Neonatorum, Puerperal Pyrexia, Pneumonia and Erysipelas, are visited by nurses from the District Nursing Association under agreement with the Corporation and, if necessary, nursing assistance is provided.

TUBERCULOSIS

During 1939 this Department received notifications of 113 new cases of Tuberculosis, of which 85 were Pulmonary and 28 Non-Pulmonary.

During this period there were 53 deaths, 45 Pulmonary and 8 Non-Pulmonary. The number of new cases is 15 in excess of the number notified during the previous year, while the number of deaths is two more than occurred during the year 1938.

MATERNITY & CHILD WELFARE

There has been no important change in the arrangements for Maternity & Child Welfare during the year.

The attendance at the Centres was affected somewhat by the outbreak of w ar, the total attendances at Child Welfare Centres being reduced from 27,559 in 1938 to 25,264.

The average attendances for each of the Child Welfare Centres, compared with the corresponding figures for 1938 are as follows:-

	1939	1938
No. 1...	74.1	82.0
" 2...	79.4	91.6
" 3...	75.6	97.3
" 4...	85.7	94.4
" 5...	68.2	78.3
" 6...	61.2	54.5
Average for all Centres	74.7	85.4

During the year 832 children under 1 year of age and 131 children between 1 - 5 attended at the centres for the first time. The primary attendances of Infants under 1 year of age who attended at the Centres represents 68% of the live births notified.

In the same period 361 expectant mothers made 1827 attendances at the ante-natal centres, a decrease of 107 and 616 respectively on the figures for 1938. The number of women attending the centres represents 28.1% of the total births notified during the year. These figures would, however, be practically doubled if the cases receiving ante-natal care at the Robson Maternity Home were included. The average attendances per session at the two ante-natal centres for the year were as follows:-

	1939	1938
No. 1...	28.1	38.6
" 2...	17.3	25.0
Average for the two Centres	24.4	33.9

The following defects were found at the ante-natal centres during the year:-

Anaemia...	122
Dental Sepsis..	71
Albuminuria	16
Varicose Veins.	41
Vomiting..	17

The number of home visits paid by Health Visitors was 14,161, being a reduction of 22 on the figure for 1938. These visits were made up as follows:-

To Infants under 1 year...	(First visits	1120
	(Total "	4513
To Children under 5 years.		9243
To Expectant Mothers	(First visits	169
	(Total "	405

A total of 13,494 lbs. of dried milk and 7,896 pints of fluid milk were distributed from the Centres during the year. In addition cod liver oil and other vitamin preparations were supplied either at cost price or free of charge.

SUPERVISION OF MIDWIVES

At the end of the year there were twenty midwives practising in the Borough. This figure is made up as follows:-

Municipal domiciliary midwives... ...	8
Domiciliary midwives in private practice	7
Midwives in Institutions:-	
Robson Maternity Home	4
Private Nursing Home	1

During the year 931 Domiciliary Cases were attended by these Midwives, 759 as Midwives and 172 as Maternity Nurses. The total number of cases attended in Institutions amounted to 368 - 261 as Midwives and 107 as Maternity Nurses. Medical aid in 411 cases was summoned by a midwife.

Municipal Midwives. Eight Midwives employed by the Corporation attended 660 confinements and 39 abortions during the year. Of the 660 confinements 530 were attended as Midwives and 130 as Maternity Nurses, 523 being normal deliveries and 137 instrumental.

Robson Maternity Home. Of the 306 cases admitted to the Robson Maternity Home there was one maternal death and 22 infant deaths (17 stillborn and 5 within 10 days of birth).

INFANTILE MORTALITY

During the year 83 deaths of infants under 1 year of age were registered, an increase of 14 on the figure for 1938. Of these deaths 30 occurred at ages under 1 week, 17 between 1 week and 1 month, and 36 between 1 month and 1 year.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

There were 4 maternal deaths during the year - 3 in Institutions and one at home. This is five less than the figure for the previous year. All the deaths were from puerperal sepsis.

	1939	1938
Maternal mortality rate per 1000 births	3.2	6.54

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS

Swine Movement Licences. The following licences were issued in connection with the movement of swine during the year 1939.

1575	licences	were	issued	for	17677	fat pigs
1152	"	"	"	"	7796	store pigs
2727					25473	pigs

Swine Fever. Fourteen cases of suspected swine fever were reported to the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries during the year. In two cases the disease was confirmed.

CATTLE MARKET

The following animals passed through the Cattle Market during 1939, compared with similar figures for 1938:-

	1939	1938
Fat Cattle...	9269	9240
Store Cattle.	394	649
Dairy Cattle.	598	684
Calves..	3330	2751
Sheep & Lambs	30730	33019
Fat Pigs	17677	27675
Store Pigs...	7796	9720
	69794	83738

Health Department,
STOCKTON-ON-TEES.
30th August, 1940.