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SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

YEAR ENDING 31st. DECEMBER 1947.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Sidmouth Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the Public Health of the Urban District for the year ending 31st. December 1947.

The report conforms as closely as possible with the requirements laid down in the Ministry of Health circular No. 170/47 dated 31st. December 1947.

SECTION A. Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area	11242 acres.
Number of inhabited houses.....	3088
Rateable Value	£100,678
Sum represented by penny rate....	£398.13.8.702
Population.....	9441

Vital Statistics.

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
Live Births (Legitimate)	140	76	64
" " (Illegitimate)	8	1	7
Birthrate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.	= 15.67		
Still Births. (Legitimate)	4	3	1
(Illegitimate)	-	-	-
Rate of still births per 1,000 total (live and still) births	= 26.315		
Deaths	171	78	93
Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.	= 18.11		
Deaths from puerperal causes	= 1		
Deaths of infants under 1 yr. of age (Legitimate)	1	1	-
(Illegitimate)	-	-	-
Death rate of all infants per 1,000 live births.	= 6.75		
Death rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 live births.	= 6.75		
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	26		
Deaths from Measles. " "	Nil		
Deaths from Whooping Cough. (all ages).....	Nil		
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)....	2		

SECTION B. General Provision of Health Services.

(a) Council Officials.

Health Department.

Medical Officer.
Sanitary Inspector.

E.L.Perry, D.S.O. D.P.H.
Stanley T.Chard, M.S.I.A.

Nursing Services.

Queen's Nurse.
District Nurses.

Miss E.Salaman, S.R.N.
Miss L.Pocock, S.R.N. S.C.N.
Miss N.D.Smith, C.M.B.

- (b) (i) Laboratory Facilities. These are provided by the Public Health Laboratory Service, Exeter.
- (ii) Ambulance Facilities. There is an excellent and adequate ambulance service provided by the Sidmouth Division of the St.John's Ambulance Brigade, which possesses a motor ambulance.
- (iii) Nursing in the Home, Clinic and Hospitals. The Queen's Nurse and District Nurses attend to cases requiring nursing in their own homes. These nurses also attend the Child Welfare Clinics and provide ante-natal services.

The up-to-date local hospital, the Victoria Cottage Hospital, provides facilities for every type of case requiring hospital treatment. It is affiliated to the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. Infectious cases are by arrangement with the City of Exeter admitted to the Whipton Isolation Hospital.

- (iv) Maternity. During recent years pressure on housing accommodation and social changes which are taking place make it increasingly difficult for maternity cases to be confined in their own homes. This applies to all classes of the residential and visiting population. It was of great advantage that during the year under report the Devon County Council maintained a temporary Maternity Home at The Grove. This temporary home functioned most efficiently.

The Victoria Cottage Hospital provides four maternity beds, but the presence of these in a cottage hospital which has a total of twenty-seven beds is open to question. From time to time there must be septic surgical cases in the general beds of the hospital.

A permanent Maternity Home in Sidmouth will meet a great local need when conditions allow of one being purchased or built. Sidmouth, both as a health resort and as a growing centre of population, has always attracted a high class of medical practitioner, and it would seem anomalous that where such medical skill is available maternity cases should be sent outside the town.

SECTION C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

1. WATER.

1. The water supply of the area has been satisfactory in both quantity and quality, excepting the supply of Salcombe Regis village for which an entirely new supply has been planned and awaits being put in hand.
11. Fifteen samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and one sample for chemical examination. All waters after chlorination were quite satisfactory.
111. The supply from all springs which yield plumbo solvent water is passed through beds of limestone chippings.

- (iv) The Salcombe Regis supply referred to in sub-paragraph (i) has, during the past few years, been under frequent examination for contamination, both bacteriologically and chemically and, although the chemical analysis is good, local contamination, as shown by the bacteriological reports together with an inadequate storage and distribution system, has led the Council to obtain the advice of a Consulting Engineer, who recommended that the present supply be discontinued and pumping arrangements be installed in order to obtain sufficient water from the public mains.
- (v) There are 3088 dwelling houses in the area of which 3064 are supplied direct from the mains. The remainder (24) are fed by standpipes and these are mainly in the Parish of Sidbury, which is a private supply maintained by the Sidbury Manor Estate.

2. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Over a considerable period it has been found that the storm water relief chamber in Fry's field is inadequate to deal with the stormwater at this outlet.

This stormwater outlet is situated just above the point where the Sid is joined by the Woolbrook stream. This stormwater outlet is from the 12 inch sewer coming down from Sidford. Below this outlet the 12 inch sewer passes on as a 9 inch sewer and crosses under the Sid.

A comprehensive survey of both sewers has been carried out and plans for a new twelve inch sewer to replace the nine inch sewer have been submitted to, and approved by, the Ministry.

Since the twelve inch Sidford sewer was constructed, large extensions of building have taken place in the area which it drains.

3. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Under this heading and the previous heading "Drainage and Sewerage", it is appropriate to report on a search for typhoid carriers.

Sporadically over a period of some ten years cases of typhoid and para-typhoid have been notified in this district or reported as possibly originating while on visits here. Bacteriological findings have suggested that these cases may be related.

The most searching enquiries amongst persons has never thrown any light on the matter. It was, therefore, decided to make a frontal attack on the problem by a systematic search of the sewers.

The Public Health Service Laboratory under Dr. Moore, who had recently successfully traced para-typhoid carriers at Woolacombe by this method, have given great assistance in this search.

The sewer tests were commenced in November 1946 and were carried on throughout 1947. The method adopted was to place a piece of surgical lint in the sewer so that sewage would flow over and through it, leave it for several days and then take it up and send it at once to the Laboratory.

To begin tests were made in the town at points near to the main outlet of the sewage system. Later on tests were made higher up the system and in the River Sid. The search was sustained and very arduous and called for great perseverance on the part of the staff in view of the fact that for nearly a whole year every single test was negative.

In October 1947, after the search had lasted eleven months and 145 consecutive tests had proved negative, the organism of para-typhoid was found in the River Sid near the overflow outlet in Fry's field. At the same time it was found low down in the sewage system near the main outfall. The Woolbrook stream was then tested and the Paratyphoid organism was found from its junction with the Sid up to a storm water outlet coming from a storm water relief chamber on the Alexandra Road sewer. A defect was found allowing of a tiny trickle from this chamber to the stream. When this was remedied the Woolbrook stream became free.

From both these stormwater relief chambers the infection was traced up the ramifications of the sewage system and ultimately in each case a house with a carrier was located. One of these houses was near the Sidmouth railway station; the other house was in Sidford village.

This search was undertaken primarily with a view to finding a typhoid carrier but, so far, the typhoid organism has not been recovered. The search continues.

4. (i) Closet Accommodation.

See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

(ii) Public Cleansing.

The refuse collection is under the control of the Surveyor and is satisfactory.

(iii) Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

See Sanitary Inspector's tabular statement.

(iv) Shops and Offices.

See Sanitary Inspector's tabular report.

(v) Camping Sites.

- (a) The number of sites used for camping purposes during 1947 was 1.
- (b) The number of licences in respect of camping sites issued by the Local Authority under Section 269 of the Public Health Act. 1936 was 1.
- (c) The maximum number of campers resident in the area in any week during 1947 was 48.

(vi) Smoke Abatement.

No occasion for action has arisen.

(vii) Swimming Baths and Pools.

There are no swimming baths or pools in the district.

(viii) Eradication of Bed Bugs.

No cases were dealt with during the year.

5. SCHOOLS.

No change to report.

SECTION D. Housing.

See Sanitary Inspector's report.

SECTION E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

See Sanitary Inspector's report.

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

Incidence of Notifiable Diseases during 1947(Excluding Tuberculosis).

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Scarlet Fever.	5	1	-
Diphtheria.	-	-	-
Measles.	2	-	-
Typhoid Fever.	-	-	-
Acute Pneumonia.	-	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia.	3	-	1
Whooping Cough.	9	-	-
Dysentery.	-	-	-
Chicken Pox.	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis.	2	2	-

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality 1947.

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	-	-
25	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
35	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
45	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
55	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	-
65 upwards	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Not known.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX 11

Statistics provided by the Registrar-General.

Total deaths in 1947 - 171

<u>Causes of death.</u>	M.	F.
13. Cancer of buccal cavity, oesophagus, uterus.	2	-
14. Cancer of stomach and duodenum.	2	2
15. Cancer of breast.	-	2
16. Cancer of all other sites.	5	13
17. Diabetes.	-	2
18. Intracranial vascular lesions.	11	17
19. Heart Diseases.	19	28
20. Other diseases of circulatory system.	7	9
21. Bronchitis.	2	1
22. Pneumonia.	-	1
23. Other respiratory diseases.	8	3
24. Ulcer of stomach & duodenum.	1	1
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years.	2	-
27. Other digestive diseases.	-	1
28. Nephritis.	1	1
29. Puor: & post-abortion: sepsis.	-	1
33. Suicide.	1	1
34. Road Traffic.	1	-
35. Other violent causes.	2	2
36. All other causes.	10	4
	<u>78</u>	<u>93</u>
	=====	=====

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient servant,
E.L.PERRY,

Medical Officer of Health.

- 2 -

REPTON H. HARRIS

- 2 -

REPTON H. HARRIS

VISITS. INTERVIEWS ETC.

..... 2

DISINFECTION.

Number of premises disinfected after I.D.....	5
" " " " " T.B.....	3
" " " " " other diseases.....	5
Bedding or clothing disinfected in steam disinfecter after I.D.	3
" " " " " " " " T.B.	3
" " " " " " " " "	
(other diseases.34	

UNSOUND FOOD.

The following amounts of unsound food were condemned and voluntarily surrendered for either destruction or salvage.

Meat and Meat Products.	102 tins.
	443 lbs. of Imported Meat.
	79½ " " Home Killed Meat.
Fruit & Vegetable Products.	547 tins.
	349 lbs.
Fish & Fish Products.	748 tins.
	153 stoncs.
Milk & Milk Products.	189 tins.
Miscellaneous.	3 lbs. Cheese. 5½ lbs. Butter.
	1 box. Pigeons.
	123 packets of Table Dessert Powder.
	8 lbs. of Sweets.
	8 lbs. of Sugar.
	2½ lbs. of Cake.

<u>MILK SAMPLES.</u>	<u>Passed.</u>	<u>Failed.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Samples taken for bacteriological test. (methylene blue).....	34	31	65
Heat treated samples.			
(phosphatase test.)..	8	Nil	8
Samples taken for T.B.....	8	Nil	8
Inconclusive	-	Nil	3
	<u>50</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>84</u>
	=====	=====	=====

HOUSING SUMMARY.

	<u>Demolished.</u>	<u>Closed.</u>	<u>Reconditioned.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Houses dealt with previous to this year.	62	10	61	133
Houses dealt with during 1947.				
Clearance Areas.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Individual houses.	1	Nil	Nil	1
Houses reconditioned.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total.	63	10	61	134

I am,

Your obedient servant,

STANLEY T. CHARD.

Sanitary Inspector.