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Contributors

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Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1948

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Wisbech.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of submitting to you my report on the general health of the Borough for the past year, ending the 31st December, 1948.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area, 4666 Acres.

Estimated resident population mid-1948, 17,380.

Rateable value, £84,094.

Sum realised by a penny rate, £322 : 18 : 3.

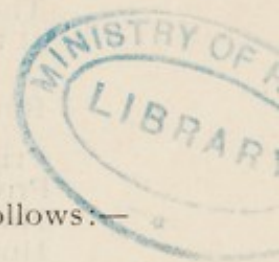
Number of inhabited houses about 4,721.

	Total	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate 294	165	129	Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population mid-1948, 18·8
	Illegitimate 33	14	19	
Stillbirths	Legitimate 3	1	2	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, 18·01
	Illegitimate 3	2	1	
Deaths	188	99	89	Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated average population 10·8

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births
Deaths from puerperal causes—		
Puerperal sepsis	0	0
Other puerperal causes	0	0
Death rate of Infants under 1 year of age—		
All infants per 1,000 live births		36·6
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births		30·6
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births		90·9
Deaths from cancer (all ages)		36
Deaths from measles (all ages)		0
Deaths from whooping cough (all ages)		2
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age)		0

The comparable figures for towns of approximately the same size are as follows:—

Birth rate per 1,000	19·2
Death rate per 1,000	10·7
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age	32



In the Borough there is one School Clinic, a Tubercular Clinic, a General Hospital, an Infectious Diseases Hospital and an Orthopaedic Clinic held bi-monthly at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital.

Excellent Motor Ambulance facilities are available, whilst Diphtheria Antitoxin and Pathological and Bacteriological examinations are provided when necessary.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

The duties connected with this are carried out by the M.O.H. who is a part time Officer, the Borough Surveyor, the Borough Senior and Additional Sanitary Inspectors, all full time Officers, together with those of the Council's employees who are specially needed for sanitary work.

INFANT AND CHILD WELFARE.

The Infant and Child Welfare Clinic is held weekly in Park Hall, Ruby Street, and is well attended.

Welfare attendances for 1948—

	Children	Attendances
No. of children attending for the 1st time and who at the end of the year were under 1 year	124	
Total number of attendances for same		1093
No. of children attending for the 1st time and who at the end of the year were between 1 and 5 years	50	
Total number of attendances for same		453
Total 1st attending	174	1546
No. of children attending who at the end of the year were between 1 and 5 years (other than 1st attendance)... ..	217	
Total number of attendances for same		2129
Total	391	3675

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Number of children under the age of five years who have completed a full course of immunisation against Diphtheria during the year, 208.

HOUSING.

FUTURE REQUIREMENTS.

The great need for further houses in the Borough is emphasised by the fact that at the end of the year 600 applicants remained on the waiting list.

BUILDING.

Private houses completed in 1948	11
Private houses under construction at the end of 1948	7
Houses completed by Council in 1948	62
Houses under construction by Council at the end of 1948	34
Number of applicants for Council houses on waiting list	600

WATER.

CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS.

Physical Characters Good
Reaction pH. 7.2

The Sample Contained—

	Parts per 100,000
Chlorine	2.8
Ammonia (Free and Saline)	absent
Ammonia (Albuminoid)	0.0004
Oxygen absorbed in 3 hours at 37°C	0.0349
Nitrates (expressed as Nitrogen)	0.70
Nitrates	absent
Poisonous metals	absent

Bacteriological Examination.

Coliform organisms absent in 100 mls.

Number of micro-organisms per ml developing on Agar at 37°C = nil

Number of micro-organisms per ml developing on Agar at 21°C = 1

Microscopical Examination of Deposit.

None.

Total Hardness 17.38 degrees (grains per gallon)

INFERENCE

The results obtained on the analysis of this sample do not show any evidence of pollution with harmful organic or inorganic matter, and this water is fit for drinking purposes.

Extensions.

New Mains	3" pipe ...	446 yds.
	4" pipe ...	210 yds.
	9" pipe ...	922 yds.

Services

112 new services have been connected to the mains.

WISBECH JOINT ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

A total of 126 cases were treated in the Wisbech and District Isolation Hospital—the main admissions being from the following areas:—

Diphtheria—

	Admissions.	Deaths.
Wisbech Borough	4 (suspected cases)	0
Marshland Rural District	2 " "	0
March Urban District	3 " "	0
Thorney Rural	1 " "	0

Scarlet Fever—

	Admissions.			Deaths.		
Wisbech Borough	...	...	26	...	...	0
Marshland Rural District	...	...	17	...	...	0
Wisbech Rural District	...	...	21	...	...	0
Whittlesey Rural District	...	...	1	...	...	0

Erysipelas—

Wisbech Borough	...	...	1	...	...	0
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Measles—

Wisbech Borough	...	...	18	...	...	0
Marshland Rural District	...	...	1	...	...	0
Wisbech Rural District	...	...	7	...	...	0

Notifiable Diseases during the year—

	Total cases notified.			Deaths.		
Small Pox	...	...	0	...	...	0
Scarlet Fever	...	...	26	...	...	0
Diphtheria	...	...	0	...	...	0
Pneumonia	...	...	10	...	...	7
Erysipelas	...	...	2	...	...	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	0	...	...	0
Enteric Fever	...	...	0	...	...	0
Measles	...	...	212	...	...	0
Cerebral Spinal Fever	...	...	0	...	...	0
Whooping Cough	...	...	68	...	...	2
Para Typhoid Fever	...	...	2	...	...	0
Anterior Polio Myelitis	...	...	1	...	...	0

NOTIFICATIONS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods.	New Cases.						Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.			
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
15	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
35	5	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
45	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
55	2	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
65 & over	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	8	6	0	1	7	3	0	1	0	1
	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=

I remain, Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

H. LESLIE GROOM, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Sanitary Inspector's Report for the Year 1948

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
ALBION PLACE,
NENE QUAY, WISBECH.

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

LADY AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year 1948, being my twenty-ninth Annual Report.

This report, as usual, is mainly in summary form and covers the work carried out by my department in the interests of the general health of the Borough.

NUISANCES.

General inspections for nuisances and matters coming within the Public Health Acts have increased to a total of 864. This increase is partly accounted for by the visits paid for the provision of proper dustbins. This is a matter which was long overdue and was impeded by the war and up to the end of the year difficulty was experienced owing to shortage of materials. However, during the year 218 notices were served for the provision of suitable bins and 190 of these notices were complied with. With regard to other nuisances investigated, all but three were dealt with by informal notice and abated, the three cases which had to be reported to the Council for statutory action were subsequently abated.

HOUSING.

Housing repairs at the present time is one of the matters calling for chief attention owing to existing houses, mainly by their age and unavoidable neglect when labour and materials were unobtainable, having deteriorated and fallen into bad repair. Whilst new houses are being built and until the supply nearer reaches the demand, these old houses will require patching and re-patching, so that they may not be allowed to outlive their usefulness. It would indeed be bad policy, if for every new house built two existing houses became uninhabitable for the want of this process of patching. Therefore, repairs must go on in order that as many families as possible can have a separate house to live in. In an endeavour to accomplish this work, repairs have been carried out under notice from my department, at 135 dwelling-houses during the year. 28 representations have been made for statutory action where informal notices were not complied with and where houses could be repaired at a reasonable expense and two representations were submitted for demolition orders in cases of houses beyond repair. One certificate was issued under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Restrictions (Amendment) Act, 1933 in a case of non repair. It would seem that for some time to come, clearance schemes will remain in abeyance.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of cases of Infectious Diseases notified has again been low as will be seen from the report of the Medical Officer of Health. These cases were all investigated as they occurred and disinfection was immediately carried out after removal to hospital or recovery of the patient.

RODENT CONTROL.

Rodent control is operated systematically in the Borough, and sewer treatments have been undertaken in order to qualify for grant. In addition to the sewer treatments the following work has been in hand at various properties:—

Pre-baits laid	...	...	...	...	2,048
Poison baits laid	...	...	...	...	567
Gassing Operations	...	...	...	...	59
Rodents recovered after above	...	...	...	...	267
Estimated kill	..	...	...	...	1,016

WATER.

In August, an Application for Grant with a Scheme under the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944, was submitted to the Ministry of Health for the extensions of Water Mains to the Rural areas of the Borough. This scheme is mainly concerned with those parts of the Borough situated on the North and South Brinks, and which are dependent on rainwater for their supplies. The scheme provides for the laying of 28,346 yards of mains at an estimated total cost of approximately £22,954. Details of the scheme were being supplied up to the end of the year.

A sample of drinking water from the Wisbech Waterworks Company's supply was submitted for Analysis by the Public Analyst in August 1948, the report of the Analyst being as follows:—"The results obtained on the Analysis of this sample do not show any evidences of pollution with harmful organic or inorganic matter. I am of opinion that this water is fit for drinking purposes."

CAMPS.

Fruit Pickers' Accommodation was given attention during the fruit season. One large canvas camp was erected in Weasenham Lane to accommodate approximately 300 workers. The ablution and drainage services at this camp were quite inadequate and several adjustments of a temporary nature were carried out. However, a more permanent type of camp with all necessary facilities for cooking and general sanitary arrangements was being planned towards the end of the year and arrangements were being made for the laying of a new water main so as to have a camp designed on modern lines by the 1949 season.

FOOD.

Food supplies have again been given regular attention. The Central Slaughterhouses have been given one or more visits daily and the premises have been found to be carried on in a satisfactory manner. The following particulars of condemnations are submitted:—

FOOD.

ARTICLES CONDEMNED.

FRESH MEAT.

Whole carcasses of Beef	...	...	...	22
Part	„	„	Beef	75
Whole	„	„	Pork	13

FRESH MEAT—continued

Part carcase of Pork	...	...	...	15
Whole „ „ Mutton	...	...	...	1
„ „ „ Veal	...	...	...	1
Ox Offals (Complete)	...	...	...	32
Ox Livers	...	...	...	248
Part „	...	...	...	239
Ox Lungs	...	...	...	106
Ox Heads and Tongues	...	...	...	72
Ox Spleens	...	...	...	31
Ox Hearts	...	...	...	18
Ox Tongues	...	...	...	1
Ox Tails	...	...	...	1
Pigs Plucks	...	...	...	30
Pigs Heads	...	...	...	5
Part Pigs Heads	...	...	...	2
Pigs Livers	...	...	...	13
Pigs Lungs	...	...	...	2
Pigs Hearts	...	...	...	2
Pigs Hocks	...	...	...	1
Sheeps Heads	...	...	...	1
Sheeps Plucks	...	...	...	4
Sheeps Livers	...	...	...	2

CAUSES FOR CONDEMNATION. lbs.

Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	16,941
Inflammation	...	...	...	...	807
Dropsy	...	...	...	...	908
Degeneration	...	...	...	...	310
Cirrhosis	...	...	...	...	2,996
Actinomycosis	...	...	...	...	723
Bruised	...	...	...	...	1,193
Pyæmia	...	...	...	...	787
C. Angioma	...	...	...	...	120
Congestion	...	...	...	...	1,436
Jaundice	...	...	...	...	110
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	623
Parasitic	...	...	...	...	85
Moribund	...	...	...	...	187
Septicæmia	...	...	...	...	684
Rash	...	...	...	...	24
Damaged	...	...	...	...	2
Hydræmia	...	...	...	...	197
Emaciation	...	...	...	...	377

CAUSES FOR CONDEMNATION—continued

T. Pericarditis	...	...	...	...	33
Fibrosis	...	...	...	...	17
					<u>28,560 lbs.</u>

Total Weight 12 tons 15 cwt. 0 qrs. 0 lbs.

ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED.

Cattle	...	...	...	...	1,649
Sheep	...	...	...	...	1,289
Pigs	...	...	...	...	582
Calves	...	...	...	...	88
					<u>3,608</u>

TINS.

Prepared Meat	...	...	...	...	55
Vegetables	...	...	...	...	160
Spaghetti	...	...	...	...	12
Corned Beef	...	...	...	...	191
Soups	...	...	...	...	13
Milk	...	...	...	...	504
Fruit	...	...	...	...	261
Fruit Juices	...	...	...	...	16
Marmalade	...	...	...	...	27
Jam	...	...	...	...	12
Fish	...	...	...	...	113
Fish Paste	...	...	...	...	63
Dried Milk	...	...	...	...	21
Various	...	...	...	...	9
					<u>1,457</u>

JARS.

Pickles	...	...	...	...	216
Jam	...	...	...	...	13
Marmalade	...	...	...	...	9
Fruit	...	...	...	...	3
Fish Paste	...	...	...	...	4
Honey	..	...	...	...	1
					<u>246 Jars</u>

PACKETS.

Cereals	309
Custard	12
Ryvita	20
Semolina	17
Cake Mixture	124
Flour	223
Pudding Mixture	50
Salt	16
	771 Packets

VARIOUS.

Fresh Fish	1,193 lbs.
Dried Fish	28 "
Bacon	37 "
Sausage Meat	62 "
Swedes	1½ tons
Vermicelli	28 lbs.
Macaroni	40 "
Flour	115 "
Cheese	140 "
Spaghetti	16 "
Sugar	99 "
Confectionery	258 "
Apples	26 "
Tea	5 "
Butter	22 "
Biscuits	6 "
Eggs	88 "

ICE CREAM.

Ice Cream is being manufactured at three registered premises in the Borough and at these premises the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment, etc.) Regulations 1947, are being carried out in a satisfactory manner. There are also 16 premises registered for sale and storage only of ice cream. Although these premises are kept under supervision and are satisfactory so far as the regulations are concerned, I am of the opinion that all foods should be wrapped before sale and in the case of ice cream this is especially desired.

LICENSES.

The following licenses have been issued during the year :—

Licenses to slaughter or stun animals	21
Knackers Licence	1
Dealers Licenses to sell T.T. Milk	4

LICENSES—continued.

Dealers Licence to sell Pasteurised Milk	...	1
Camping Licenses	...	3
Gangmasters Licenses	...	29

GENERAL.

From the foregoing and from the following summaries it will be observed that much has been done in an endeavour to maintain the general public health in the Borough. The Wisbech Canal is still one of the black spots in the town and until the new road schemes come into being it would seem that flushing and cleansing is all that can be done in the matter. On the whole the health of the Borough has been good and I would respectfully offer my thanks to the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee for their valued consideration of the various matters brought especially to their notice.

SUMMARIES.

INSPECTION OF PREMISES.

Inspections under Public Health Acts	...	864
Inspections under Housing Acts	...	316
Inspections after Infectious Diseases	...	33
Inspections of Factories	...	21
Inspections of Workshops and Bakehouses	...	22
Inspections of Shops and Food Stores	...	102
Inspections of Slaughterhouses	...	424
Inspections of Dairies and Cowsheds	...	41
Inspections of Common Lodging Houses	...	15
Inspections of Fruit Pickers Bunks	...	5
Inspections of Works in Progress	...	410
Re-inspections as to compliance with notices		274
Complaints investigated	...	408
Houses disinfected after Infectious Diseases	...	35
Houses treated for vermin	...	28
Smoke and water tests applied to drains	...	75

WORK CARRIED OUT IN COMPLIANCE WITH NOTICES AND UNDER SUPERVISION.

DRAINAGE.

New pipe drains provided	...	31
Drains repaired and cleansed	...	53
Waste pipes trapped	...	4
Inspection chambers built on drains	...	39
Cesspools emptied	...	24
New cesspools built	...	5
New ventilating pipes provided	...	2
Waste pipes disconnected from house drains	...	4

SANITARY CONVENIENCES.

New water-closets provided	...	...	...	15
Closets repaired	...	...	...	21
Flushing cisterns provided to W.C.'s	...	...	...	19
Privies converted into water-closets	...	...	...	3
W.C.'s abolished	..	...	...	2

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Factories provided with sufficient Sanitary Accommodation	...	...	...	...	5
Factories provided with improved Sanitary Accommodation	...	...	...	...	4
Factories provided with separate Sanitary Accommodation for sexes	...	...	...	...	2

DAIRIES.

Dairies provided with improved drainage	...	...	...	1
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MISCELLANEOUS.

Houses repaired	...	...	...	...	135
Houses demolished	...	...	...	...	3
Houses cleansed	...	...	...	...	3
Houses provided with new sinks	...	...	...	...	11
Yards paved	...	...	...	...	17
Accumulations of refuse removed	...	...	...	...	5
Cases of overcrowding abated	...	...	...	...	5

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

E. J. SUTCLIFFE, M.S.I.A.

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

