

# Vital Statistics

## Poliomyelitis

In the week ending March 31 notifications of poliomyelitis were as follows: paralytic, 19 (10); non-paralytic, 4 (3); total, 23 (13). The figures for the previous week are in parentheses.

Total uncorrected notifications for the first 13 weeks of the following years have been as follows: 1947, 125; 1948, 418; 1949, 248; 1950, 512; 1951, 337.

## Biostatistics in Lancashire

In his Annual Report for the year 1949, Dr. Alan S. Simpson, Divisional Medical Officer for Lancashire County Council, analyses some data on the birth and feeding of babies. He found that 1,215 baby boys had a mean weight of 7 lb. 6½ oz., while the mean weight of 1,124 baby girls was 7 lb. 4 oz. The difference is statistically significant. Variation in weight was slightly greater among male than female infants.

In 219 cases estimates of the expected date of delivery were checked against the actual date of delivery. In 7 cases (3%) the two dates coincided; in 44 cases (20%) delivery was one to seven days before the expected date; and in 50 cases (23%) it was one to seven days after the expected date. In other words, only about half the deliveries were within a fortnight of the expected date.

He carried out an inquiry among 876 children who had attained their first birthday to find out how long they had been breast-fed. His results are shown in the following Table:

	No.	%
Weaned between birth and 1 month ..	379	43
.. .. 1 month and 3 months	202	23
.. .. 3 months and 6 months	207	24
Not weaned before 6 months .. ..	88	10
Total .. .. .	876	100%

## Tuberculosis in Scotland

The following Table, taken from the Report of the Department of Health for Scotland for 1950, shows, for tuberculosis, the notifications, deaths, and death rates per 100,000 population.

Year	Respiratory			Non-respiratory		
	Notifi- cations	Deaths	Death Rate per 100,000 of Population	Notifi- cations	Deaths	Death Rate per 100,000 of Population
Average 1913-17	9,146	5,102	107	4,659*	2,661	56
.. 1918-22	7,870	4,347	90	4,351	1,977	41
.. 1923-7	6,771	3,693	76	4,900	1,619	33
.. 1928-32	5,831	3,125	64	4,205	1,258	26
.. 1933-7	4,950	2,816	57	3,025	901	18
1938 .. ..	4,793	2,581	52	2,772	851	17
1939 .. ..	4,657	2,717	54	2,440	809	16
1940 .. ..	5,212	3,018	62	2,510	961	19
1941 .. ..	5,739	3,117	63	2,555	1,058	21
1942 .. ..	6,224	3,043	62	2,824	955	20
1943 .. ..	7,215	2,976	62	2,873	983	21
1944 .. ..	7,282	2,978	62	2,651	958	20
1945 .. ..	7,316	2,932	60	2,342	871	18
1946 .. ..	7,627	3,231	64	2,086	753	15
1947 .. ..	7,984	3,390	66	2,133	705	14
1948 .. ..	8,204	3,415	66	1,842	486	9
1949 .. ..	8,653	3,084	60	1,647	400	8
1950 .. ..	8,138†	2,443	47	1,544†	336	6

\* Non-respiratory tuberculosis notifiable only from July 1, 1914.

† Provisional.

## Quarterly Report for Scotland

The birth rate during the fourth quarter of 1950 was 16.8 per 1,000 of the population and was 2.0 below the average of the five preceding December quarters; it was the lowest rate experienced in Scotland in any quarter since 1945. The infant mortality rate was 42 per 1,000 live births and was 2 below the rate for the fourth quarter of 1949. The death rate was 13.1 per 1,000 of the population and was 0.9 above the average of the five preceding December quarters.

The death rate from respiratory tuberculosis was 46 per 100,000, and 51 from all forms of tuberculosis. These rates

were 11 and 12 respectively below the rates for the corresponding quarter of 1949.

Deaths for the year 1950 attributed to the principal infectious diseases numbered 527, 45 fewer than in 1949. The deaths from infectious diseases included 386 from influenza, 61 from whooping-cough, 38 from measles, 35 from cerebrospinal fever. Only 3 deaths were due to diphtheria, and this was the lowest number ever registered in Scotland. Deaths from acute poliomyelitis and acute encephalitis numbered 63, an increase of 51 on the previous year, but in 1947 the number of deaths under this heading was 129. The number of deaths from heart disease was 20,300, and was the largest number ever recorded; these deaths formed 32% of all deaths. (Other Scottish statistics for 1950 were given in the *Journal* of April 7, p. 756.)

## Anthrax in Animals and Fowl Pest

In the period January 1 to March 15 of this year 135 cases of anthrax in animals were notified. The figures for the corresponding period in the previous years are as follows: 1950, 112; 1949, 34; 1948, 26.

In the same period there were 428 confirmed outbreaks of fowl pest. The figures for the corresponding period in the previous years were: 1950, 36; 1949, 101; 1948, 129.

## Smallpox and Typhus in Korea

Smallpox and typhus are prevalent in North Korea, according to a report received on March 17 by W.H.O. from Tokyo (W.H.O. *Weekly Epidemiological Record*, April 4). Sporadic cases of these diseases have also been reported from South Korea.

## Births, Marriages, and Deaths in 1950

In England and Wales in 1950, according to the Registrar-General's *Quarterly Return* for the quarter ending December 31, 1950, the provisional birth rate per 1,000 population was 15.8. This was 0.9 below that for 1949. The illegitimacy rate was 49 per 1,000 live births, which was 15 per 1,000 below the average for the preceding five years.

The provisional stillbirth rate was 22.6 per 1,000 total births—0.1 below the figure for 1949. The general death rate was 11.6 per 1,000—0.1 below that for 1949. The infant mortality rate was 29.8 per 1,000 related live births; it was the lowest ever recorded in this country and was 2.4 per 1,000 below the rate for 1949.

The births registered exceeded the deaths by 182,148; the corresponding increase for the preceding year was 210,479, and the average for 1944-8 was 290,783. Births in 1950 were 2% below the number required by a par replacement standard. The marriage rate of 16.3 was 0.8 below that of 1949.

The Registrar-General has also issued his *Estimates of the Population of England and Wales* as at June 30, 1950 (H.M.S.O., 6d.).

## Population in the U.S.A.

The population of the U.S.A. is 6½ times what it was a century ago, having increased from 23 million in 1850 to 151 million in 1950 (*Statistical Bulletin*, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, February, 1951). The rate of growth has been slowing down in recent years, though over the last 50 years the population has doubled. Rates of increase have varied markedly from one region of the country to another. The most rapid rate of growth has been in the west; it reflects the large-scale westward migration which began in the middle of the nineteenth century and is still continuing. Even in the decade between the two censuses of 1940 and 1950 the population increased 45% in Nevada, 50% in Arizona, and 53% in California.

## Week Ending March 31

The notifications of infectious diseases in England and Wales during the week included: scarlet fever 918, whooping-cough 4,098, diphtheria 46, measles 31,268, acute pneumonia 909, acute poliomyelitis 23, dysentery 999, paratyphoid fever 21, typhoid fever 7. Deaths from influenza in the great towns numbered 64.

**Infectious Diseases**

During the week ending March 24 large decreases were recorded in the incidence of infectious diseases in England and Wales. The largest falls in the number of notifications were measles 4,024, whooping-cough 1,437, dysentery 416, acute pneumonia 170, and scarlet fever 88.

The decline in the incidence of measles was greater in the southern section of the country than in the northern. The largest falls in the number of notifications were Southampton 661, London 618, Lancashire 440, Essex 297, Cheshire 278, Middlesex 271, Kent 228, Surrey 227, while the chief exceptions to a declining incidence were rises in Somerset 134 and Sussex 82.

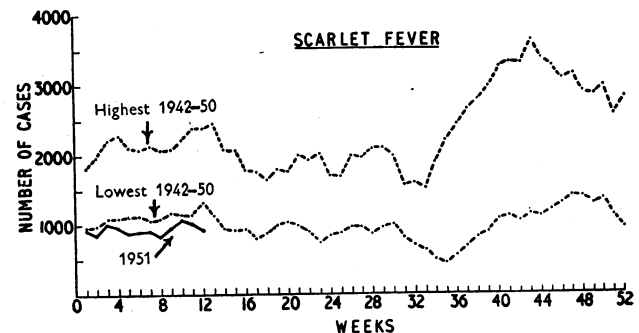
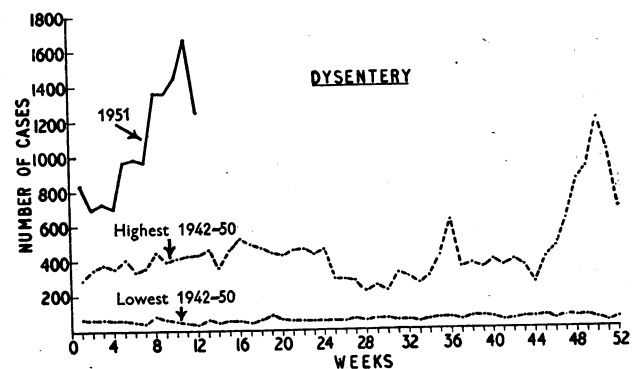
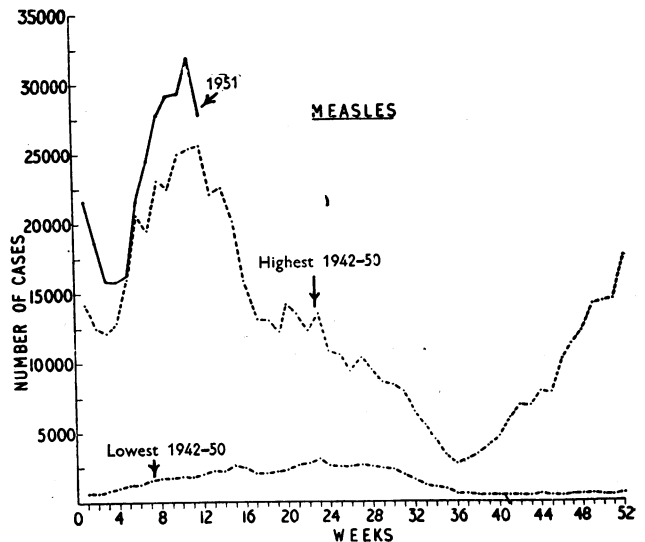
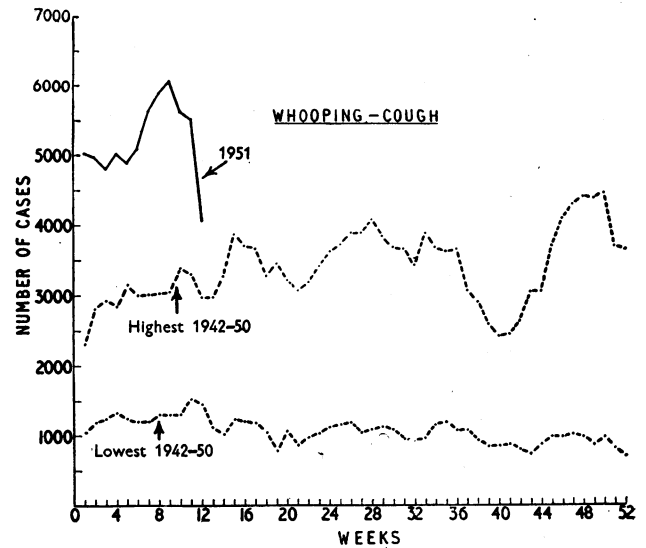
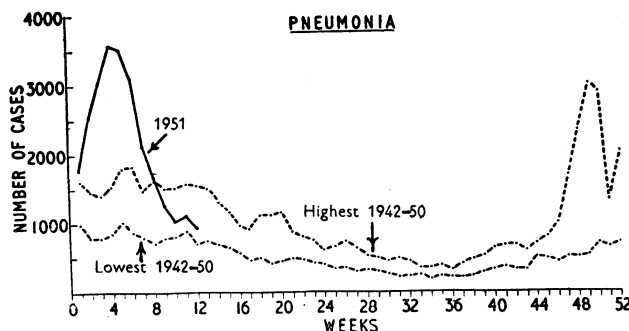
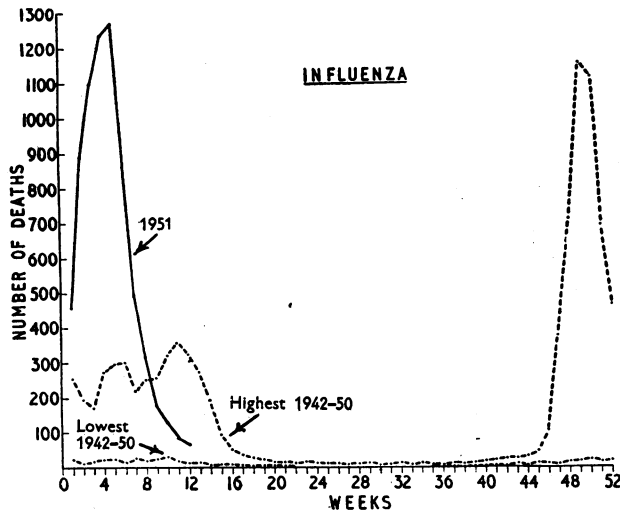
A decline in the incidence of whooping-cough was general throughout the country, although the largest fall was centred on London and the adjacent counties. The largest decreases were Kent 168, Lancashire 145, London 142, Essex 132, Surrey 102.

Only small variations occurred in the local trends of scarlet fever, with the exception of a fall of 30 in Lancashire. The number of notifications of diphtheria was the same as in the preceding week, and no variations of any size occurred in the incidence in any area. Of the 7 cases of typhoid fever 5 were notified in Sussex, Hailsham R.D. The only counties with more than one notification of acute poliomyelitis were Norfolk 3, Cheshire 2, London 2.

Despite the large fall in the number of notifications of dysentery the incidence remained very high, the largest centres of infection during the week being London 157, Lancashire 150, Middlesex 135, and Yorkshire West Riding 116.

**Graphs of Infectious Diseases**

The graphs below show the uncorrected numbers of cases (deaths from influenza) of certain diseases notified weekly in England and Wales. Highest and lowest figures reported during the nine years 1942-50 are shown thus - - - - -, the figures for 1951 thus ————. Except for the curves showing notifications in 1951, the graphs were prepared at the Department of Medical Statistics and Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.



## INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND VITAL STATISTICS

We print below a summary of Infectious Diseases and Vital Statistics in the British Isles for the week ending March 24 (No. 12).

Figures of notified cases are for: (a) England and Wales (London included). (b) London (administrative county). (c) Scotland. (d) Northern Ireland. (e) Eire. Figures of births and deaths and of deaths recorded under each disease are for: (a) The 126 great towns in England and Wales (London included). (b) London (administrative county). (c) The 16 principal towns in Scotland. (d) The 10 principal towns in Northern Ireland. (e) The 13 principal towns in Eire. A dash — denotes no cases; a blank space denotes disease not notifiable or no return available.

The table is based on information supplied by the Registrars-General of England and Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Eire, the Ministry of Health and Local Government of Northern Ireland, and the Department of Health of Eire.

Disease	1951 Week Ending March 24					1950 Corresponding Week					1942-50 England & Wales Corresponding Week		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	Highest	Median	Lowest
Diphtheria .. .. .	50	4	9	—	1	76	9	25	—	—	892	417	76
Deaths .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dysentery .. .. .	1,256	157	207	14	—	427	19	69	—	2	427	136	34
Deaths .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Encephalitis, acute .. .. .	7	2	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	1	6	1	—
Deaths .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas .. .. .	—	—	19	—	4	—	—	22	2	8	—	—	—
Food-poisoning .. .. .	45	2	—	—	—	65	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
Infective enteritis or diarrhoea under 2 years .. .. .	—	—	—	15	19	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—
Deaths .. .. .	14	—	1	1	2	16	—	3	—	2	—	—	—
Measles* .. .. .	27,813	2,518	428	114	85	5,716	98	329	404	95	25,507	9,308	1,875
Deaths .. .. .	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Meningococcal infection .. .. .	39	3	18	1	1	52	2	18	2	2	197	88	39
Deaths .. .. .	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia neonatorum .. .. .	34	—	8	—	—	37	5	12	—	1	105	67	37
Pneumonia, influenzal .. .. .	936	50	13	8	12	1,082	53	13	24	—	1,547	1,082	720
Deaths (from influenza)† .. .. .	67	6	3	—	5	135	15	4	6	9	—	—	—
Pneumonia, primary .. .. .	—	—	207	—	—	—	—	191	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths .. .. .	304	52	—	12	19	341	56	—	11	18	—	—	—
Poliomyelitis, acute:													
Paralytic .. .. .	10	2	—	—	—	29	3	—	—	1	29	9	4
Non-paralytic .. .. .	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths‡ .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal fever .. .. .	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal pyrexia   .. .. .	65	7	6	1	—	116	13	8	1	—	191	169	99
Scarlet fever .. .. .	919	66	124	41	70	1,805	112	222	115	64	2,389	1,522	1,311
Deaths .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Smallpox .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(1) Tuberculosis, respiratory .. .. .	—	—	149	26	—	—	—	178	44	—	—	—	—
(2) Tuberculosis, non-respiratory .. .. .	—	—	21	4	—	—	—	31	8	—	—	—	—
(1) Deaths .. .. .	—	—	30	6	16	188	33	29	6	11	—	—	—
(2) Deaths .. .. .	163	25	5	2	3	—	3	3	2	5	—	—	—
Typhoid fever .. .. .	7	—	1	—	2	4	1	1	—	1	—	—	—
Deaths¶ .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	10	5
Paratyphoid fever .. .. .	10	—	2 (B)	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping-cough .. .. .	4,079	260	641	21	48	2,362	93	398	51	71	2,978	2,244	1,453
Deaths .. .. .	5	1	3	—	—	8	—	—	1	2	—	—	—
Deaths (0-1 year) .. .. .	282	26	30	17	27	243	28	40	15	27	574	387	244
Deaths (excluding stillbirths) .. .. .	5,928	920	719	169	222	5,810	926	640	155	276	6,773	5,500	4,704
Annual death rate (per 1,000 persons living) .. .. .	—	—	14.5	—	—	—	—	12.9	—	—	—	—	—
Live births .. .. .	6,756	1,085	843	234	387	8,177	1,261	976	234	444	10,583	7,663	6,366
Annual rate per 1,000 persons living	—	—	17.0	—	—	—	—	19.6	—	—	—	—	—
Stillbirths .. .. .	207	35	27	—	—	183	30	29	—	—	272	245	183
Rate per 1,000 total births (includ- ing stillborn) .. .. .	—	—	31	—	—	—	—	29	—	—	—	—	—

\* Measles not notifiable in Scotland and returns are approximate. † Includes primary form for England and Wales, London, and N. Ireland. ‡ The number of deaths from poliomyelitis and polio-encephalitis for England and Wales, and London (administrative county), are combined. || Includes puerperal fever for England and Wales and for Eire. ¶ Deaths from paratyphoid fever are combined with those from typhoid fever.