

Dr. Reynolds Says Health Gains Made On Many Fronts In N. Carolina During 1939

State's Vital Statistics Figures Indicate A Better Trend

DR. REYNOLDS SAYS

By CARL V. REYNOLDS, M. D. State Health Officer

Raleigh, Jan. 30.—Last year witnessed gains on several important fronts in the battle against disease in North Carolina.

Information that is both interesting and encouraging is found in the 1939 provisional report of the State Board of Health's Division of Vital Statistics, of which Dr. R. T. Stimpson is the Director. On the other hand, certain weaknesses also are revealed. Any report that simply gives figures, uninterpreted, carries little weight and is soon forgotten.

We must bear in mind that a year's compilation is merely factual; that it can, at best, reflect only a "trend," encouraging or discouraging as the case may be. To get the true picture, we must follow the "trend" through a series of years.

Vital statistics figure in North Carolina for last year, which have just been compiled, do, in some instances, reflect a very decided and encouraging "trend". The 80,421 births reported during the year outnumbered the 31,928 deaths that occurred during the same period by 48,493, and there were 1,636 fewer deaths than were reported the previous year, bringing the rate down from 9.5 to 9.0 from 1938 to 1939. If the 1938 rate had remained unchanged in 1939, the total number of deaths would have been 33,839, instead of 31,928, which means that, on this basis, the number of lives saved was, in reality, 1,911 instead of 1,636. Please bear in mind and recall in your future reading that an increase or reduction of one point represents the saving or loss of 3,000 lives within a year.

Pneumonia—Brighter Picture
Pneumonia has continued through the years to be one of the greatest scourges that has harassed humanity. Men and women, physicians and the laity, have bowed helplessly before its insidious law of death. But a new day appears to be at hand in the battle against this arch-enemy. While a single year's figures cannot be taken as final as they apply to pneumonia any more than in their application to any other disease, yet we have here a very striking example of encouraging "trend".

In North Carolina last year we saved the lives of 587 more pneumonia patients from untimely graves than we did the previous year the total number of deaths from this cause in 1939 having been 2,172 as compared with 2,760 in 1938, the rate dropping from 76.8 to 61.0.

To emphasize the downward "trend" in deaths from pneumonia in North Carolina, it is pointed out that there was also a decline from 1937 to 1938, when the number dropped from 2,915 to 2,709, and the rate from 84.3 to 76.8. In other words, the rate dropped 2.33 points in two years and the number of pneumonia deaths 773.

We feel that this saving of life has been due to two major causes: The early typing of the disease for the administration of pneumonia serum and sulfa-pyridine, which has shown results nothing short of marvelous.

Techniques for typing pneumonia may now be found at strategic points throughout the State, due to the courses in training which began at Duke University in January, 1938, through the cooperation of the Medical School of that institution and the North Carolina State Board of Health, stimulated by the active support of the North Carolina Commission on Pneumonia Control, of which Dr. Hubert B. Haywood, of Raleigh, also a member of the State Board of Health, is chairman. There were 67 technicians trained during the first course at Duke, in addition to those who had previously qualified and pioneered in this great work in our State.

I wish to emphasize here the value of Dr. Haywood's interest in this matter, as he devoted much time to laying the groundwork for what has proved to be such a successful undertaking.

While the use of sulfa-pyridine has wrought revolutionary changes in the pneumonia situation and has brought hope to the victims of a disease which, as late as 1937, took a toll of 110,000 lives in the United States, the importance of early diagnosis remains paramount. Neither serum nor sulfa-pyridine can be expected to overcome the serious handicap that delay brings. I cannot leave this subject without sounding a warning against neglecting what so many people

erroneously term the "common cold" or a "touch of flu". Every "common cold" or "touch of flu" should be treated until it proves itself otherwise, and we should constantly bear in mind that the "common cold" and "touch of flu" furnish a fertile field for the complication — pneumonia, which remains a serious menace to life and health.

Saving Babies, Mothers

One of the most gratifying features of the 1939 report lies in the fact that it reflects a "trend" which has now become very definite in North Carolina—a sharp reduction in both infant and maternal mortality.

Last year the lives of 757 babies under a year old were saved, the total number of deaths in this group having been 4,704, as compared with 5,461 in 1938. During a single year North Carolina's infant mortality rate dropped from 68.3 to 58.5 per 1,000 live births. The United States as a whole had an infant mortality rate of 54.4 in 1937, the last year for which figures are available, and it is interesting to note that the white infant death rate for the entire country that year was 50 and the Negro rate 82. The white rate for North Carolina was 56, the Negro rate 86 and the total rate 64.9. The average Negro population in the United States is ten per cent, as compared with 29 per cent in North Carolina. This gives added importance to our local figures.

Maternal deaths per 1,000 live births in North Carolina dropped from 450 in 1938 to 383 in 1939, bringing the rate down from 5.6 to 4.8 in a single year. In 1935 the maternal death rate in North Carolina was 7.0. So, there was a drop of 2.2 points in four years. The United States rate in 1937 was 1.9. This means we are making progress. Stated in simple terms, North Carolina last year saved 67 mothers and had 518 more live births than during the preceding year.

These figures are encouraging to public health workers because they show that beneficial results have accrued from the work that is being done in infant and maternal clinics and from the other efforts that are being exerted to save the State's mothers and babies.

Last year saw the saving of 357 lives of children under 2 years of age in North Carolina from diarrhea and enteritis, the rate falling from 21.2 to 18.0 between 1938 and 1939.

Preventable Diseases

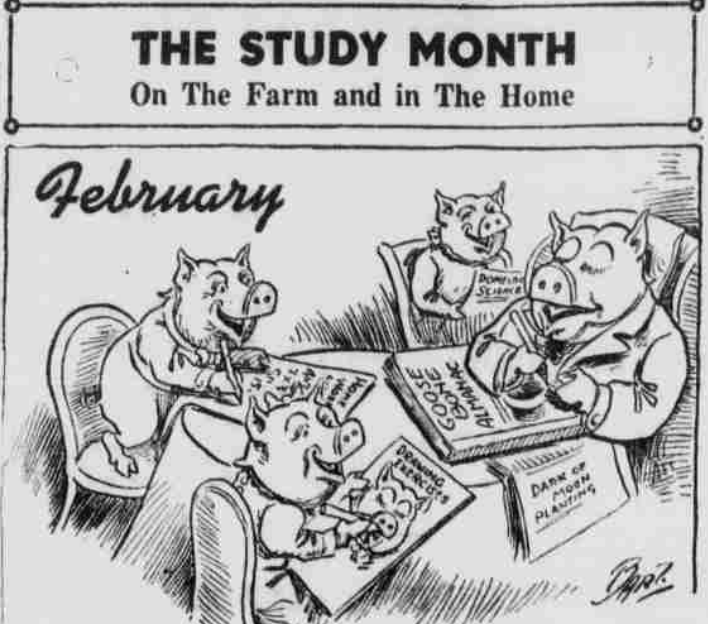
Now, let's take a look at another aspect of the vital statistics picture in North Carolina, as painted by figures for 1939. We will consider a few of the preventable diseases and see what we have done in this field. Typhoid deaths in 1938 numbered 72, or a rate of 2.0 as compared with 46 and a rate of 1.3 in 1939. This reflected an actual saving, not considering the increased population, of 26 lives. Typhoid is a preventable disease and we have gone a long way toward its elimination, but the means of combating it have only to be abated, even temporarily, for it to flare up and become the menace it formerly was.

I want to call particular attention to deaths from undulant fever. There were 6 last year, with a rate of 1.2 as compared with 2 in 1938, with a rate of 0.66. Only recently, I read with interest a newspaper article that had its origin with our State Department of Agriculture calling attention to the problem presented by Bang's disease—or infections abortion in cattle, which is a source of undulant fever, and discussing ways and means for its elimination. Here we have both an agricultural and health problem, and I am glad to note there is a serious effort being made to eradicate Bang's disease and, thereby, lessen the "trend" toward a greater incidence of undulant fever. In this connection I wish to call particular attention to hog and goat breeders to the importance of inoculating these animals against infections abortion as a further aid in the prevention of the spread of the undulant fever scourge.

There is at least one State in the Union where undulant fever is as great a hazard as typhoid.

The Diphtheria "Disgrace"

Diphtheria, in spite of the fact that it is unpreventable, continues to take its toll among our young. There were 173 deaths from this disease in 1939, with a rate of 4.9, as compared with 176 deaths and a rate of 5.0 in 1938, the decrease in both the number of cases and the rate having been negligible. It is nothing short of a disgrace that we should have so many deaths from this disease. Urgent appeals have gone forward for the enforcement of the law which provides that all babies shall be immunized against this disease between the ages of 6 months and 12 months and which



Each lengthy February night, Tolivar and his family gathered around the cheerful light. It just as busy as a bee, and in all practical respects, they sure improved their intellects.

Plan and Plant Wisely

Present conditions mark 1940 as a year of uncertainty for North Carolina farmers. Because of this situation, State College specialists are urging growers to plan and plant wisely.

During February, the Tar Heel crop grower will find it to his advantage to follow these eight rules as laid down by C. B. Williams, veteran State College agronomist:

- 1. Select those fields on the farm, insofar as possible, for the growth of major crops that have soils and natures best suited to the growth of each of the crops.
- 2. Decide upon the best quantities and analyses of fertilizers that should be used for each crop for the greatest per acre returns.
- 3. Do not use fertilizers which fail to meet the requirements for your crops grown on your particular soils.
- 4. Do not let someone talk you into using mixtures you are not sure will best meet your conditions and needs.
- 5. Use improved seed best suited to your locality and conditions.
- 6. Handle your land so that it will be a little more productive each succeeding year.
- 7. As far as possible, arrange your major crops in rotations, with at least one suitable legume in each rotation to be plowed under for soil-improving purposes.
- 8. Break your land early and plant promptly on a good mellow seed bed after the season opens. Delayed planting frequently leads to decreased yields.

Livestock

New, jumping from crops to livestock farming, here are a few suggestions from Dr. John E. Fos-

provides that no child shall be admitted to any public, private or parochial school who has not been immunized.

The results of this law should have been apparent before now, as it was ratified last March. While there may be no evidence of enforcement up to the present time, this law must be complied with.

We are proud of the continuous progress we have made in our war on tuberculosis in all forms. Last year there were in North Carolina 1,657 deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis, with a rate of 46.5, as compared with 1,968 deaths and a rate of 48.1 in 1938—a decrease of 41 deaths and 1.6 in the rate. Other forms of tuberculosis claimed 149 victims, as compared with 155 the previous year, a drop of 6, while the rate fell from 4.4 to 4.2.

When I sum up the gains that have been made in our fight against typhoid fever, infant and maternal mortality, pneumonia, tuberculosis and other diseases which we can either prevent or successfully treat and note the comparatively slow progress that has been made against diphtheria, a preventable disease beyond question, I feel like crying out: "Mothers, beware! For, perhaps, 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do in practicing such neglect!'"

A Challenge

The number of people who die violent deaths in North Carolina each year presents a distinct challenge. While many of these do not fall into the category of public health problems, strictly speaking, they have a very decided bearing on public safety. We hear a lot about "safety", but, alas, like the weather, there sometimes seems to be little we can do about it. In many cases, these violent deaths are preventable. Think it over.

Last year there were in North Carolina 1,494 deaths from what are styled "preventable accidents," as compared with 1,444 the preceding year, a gain of 50. These included: Automobile accidents, primary, as reported to the State Board of Health, 899; automobile and railroad collisions, 28; other railroad accidents, 93; air transportation accidents, 7; accidental drownings, 154; conflagration and accidental burns, 246; accidental traumatism by firearms, 67. There was a marked increase in drown-

RULES AND REGULATIONS PAUSED AT THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT, DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES AT RALEIGH, N. C.

January 16th, and 17th, 1940

- 9. (Amended) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to take, buy, sell, offer or sale, have in his of their possession, or unnecessarily destroy, anywhere in the State of North Carolina, any fish of less size than the length specified for the several kinds of fish or for any express company, railroad company or any common carrier to accept them for shipment.
- Sturgeon, Moose or pegging awl 5 feet.
- Rock Fish or striped bass 12 inches
- Mackerel 12 "
- Hickory Shad 12 "
- Grey Trout 9 "
- Speckled Trout 11 "
- Blue Fish 10 "
- Sheepshead 9 "
- Sea Mullet or king fish 10 "
- Red Drum 12 "
- Flounders 9 "
- Mullets 8 "
- Ring Perch 7 "
- Croakers 8 "
- Pompano 8 "
- Spots 7 "
- Hog Fish 8 "
- White Perch 7 "

Measurements are to be from the tip of the nose to the fork of the tail, except flounders and croakers which are measured from the tip of the nose to the inner edge of the tail; Provided, that this provision shall not be construed to prevent catches of smaller fish with hook and line for sport or personal use.

143. (Amended) It shall be unlawful to set pound nets outside of the following boundaries: Beginning at the southeast corner of what is known as the ten mile limit and running south half west to a point off Little Kinnakeet on the twelve foot curve nine and three-quarter miles from the beginning; thence southwest by south six and a half miles to a point on the twelve foot curve off north Point

Girl's Hi-Y.

The Beaufort girls Hi-Y club had its weekly meeting Monday night, seven o'clock at the home of Dorothy Eure.

The members and officers this year are Mary Johnson, president; Marie Davis, Secretary; Roberta Snow, treasurer; Sue Murray Thomas, vice president; Jess Pagels, program chairman; Verona Daniels reporter; Lillian Dudley, corresponding secretary; Rita Davis; Rita Davis, Marjorie Skinner, Dot Eure, Colleen Guthrie, and Florence Skarren. The Leader is Miss Eleanor Jones.

This is a Christian organization and its motto is "Clean speech, clean sports, clean scholarship and clean living."

Verona Daniels, Reporter.

Much needed moisture counteracted some of the damage to citrus fruit crops in the Rio Grande valley caused by recent freezing weather.

Take home FRUIT BOWL

MISS VAUGHAN'S COLUMN HOME ECONOMICS

The past week has been spent reviewing all material studied in Home Economics from September until January.

With this work completed the 8th grade girls have begun to study child care and development.

As one of the first topics they have chosen Child Behavior. Some of the girls have small brothers or sisters in the home whom they can observe in connection with Child Behavior. From this study the girls expect to find out how we can best discharge our responsibilities to small children. The time has passed when children "Jus Grow" as in Uncle Tom's Cabin. Every phase of their growth and development should be guided for those who have studied child care and training. Often boys and girls in the home as well as parents have a chance to help guide this development of the child. Therefore each person should know something of the child's reactions to certain situations and why they have such reactions.

There are many other phases to study as well as behavior. For example. Foods for all ages up to twelve years of age, the correct type of entertainment, clothing for the infant, small child and school child.

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Beacon; thence northwest by west two thousand yards; thence north-east by north six and a half miles to a point two thousand yards from the twelve foot curve; thence north half east nine and three-quarter miles to the southwest corner of what is known as the ten mile limit; thence east two thousand yards to the beginning.

152. Repealed.

157. It shall be unlawful for any person or persons, firm or corporation to take drum or channel bass with nets that weigh over twenty pounds in New Hanover County, or to take any drum or channel bass in any of the inlets in New Hanover County.

158. It shall be unlawful to fish for or take shad in the Cape Fear River between the Old Mossy Tree and Kings Bluff Locks.

SHELLFISH RULES

23. (Amended) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to take, catch, buy, sell, ship or have in his or their possession any soft shell crabs which measure less than three inches from tip to tip of spike, or to impound or shut up any hard crab of any kind in any of the waters of the State: Provided, that peelers may be floated in regular crab floats: Provided further, that crabbers shall be allowed one four by four float to each man for the purpose of floating fat crabs until

April 25th, and it shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to ship soft shell crabs from the first day of January to the first day of March following.

JOHN A. NELSON, Fisheries Commissioner. Feb. 1-8-15-22.

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