

HEALTH OFFICER SAYS

Need for Vaccinations Could Last a Lifetime

By K. H. SUTHERLAND, M. D.
County Health Officer

One of the major tasks of public health officials in the United States is to get vaccine against certain diseases into those persons who need it. Though the emphasis is understandably on childhood immunization, it is evident from disease-reports that adults do not always realize that some of the common communicable diseases, including tetanus, polio, diphtheria and smallpox may

occur at any age. Never in the history of human progress, it was recently said of vaccination, has a better or cheaper method of preventing illness been developed. Yet, by and large, people do not take advantage of this protection.

The danger of the spread of communicable disease always exists. During 1962, for example, an outbreak of smallpox occurred in an English town which resulted in 6 deaths and shocked residents

and health officials into an immediate and intensive smallpox vaccination program. True, the infection was imported, but such an incident could also happen here. The fact that no confirmed case of smallpox has been reported in this country since 1949 is no guarantee that it will not occur again, despite Public Health Service immunization rules and disease precautions that apply to all persons entering the United States.

THE NEED for protection against certain communicable diseases does not stop, as some individuals seem to assume, with the school-age child. About the only exception is whooping cough. This disease, so dangerous in the infant and young child, becomes milder in nature as the child gets older. For this reason, physicians generally agree that immunization against whooping cough is unnecessary beyond 6 to 8 years of age.

The artificial immunity acquired against certain diseases in early childhood is usually neither as strong nor as lasting as that which follows an attack of the disease. Unless booster doses of vaccine are received when the child enters school for the first time, he is particularly vulnerable, since exposure to communicable disease becomes greater just as immunity is weakening.

When recommended booster shots are not obtained, and they are generally due every 4 to 5 years, by the time many individuals reach adolescence or adulthood, susceptibility to diseases such as tetanus, diphtheria, and poliomyelitis is greatly increased. Moreover, in some instances these infections tend to be more severe in older children and adults than in the very young.

WHEN recommended boost-

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Assignment TV

By TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY

STRATFORD — Any schoolboy can know William Shakespeare merely by reading his plays, but to know Will Shakespeare, the man, and to fully savor his gifts, one must leave London and travel out into the green, rolling land of Warwickshire to the little town of Stratford on the Avon where he was born in 1564 and where he died 52 years later.

My guide and friends is Dr. Frank Baxter, one of television's only literate symbols, and a man who had introduced Shakespeare to a whole generation of viewers.

Most references to the playwright during his lengthy stay in London called him "the gentle Shakespeare," an adjective which appears over and over. But apparently there was a lively side to him when he was here in Stratford. At the age of 18 he married a landed lady of 26 and their first child arrived so hastily that local gossips could count only six fingers since the license was issued.

Baxter claims they had what was a perfectly acceptable Elizabethan agreement called a "pre-marriage contract" after which the pair felt free to behave as man and wife. Whether or no, they DID behave as man and wife and Mrs. Shakespeare proved it beyond doubt by having a daughter Susanna.

THE TOWN OF Stratford looks as if it might have been built on the back lot of M-G-M. It is "quaint," but it is also lived-in. There are many half-timbered buildings left and every facade has been painted and polished in preparation for The Big Day Thursday when the great bell in the Guild Chapel will toll to start the Quatercentennial just as it

did when Shakespeare was buried in the parish church at the end of the street in 1616.

In the town of Stratford there is no end to the commercial use of his memory. We are staying in the Shakespeare Hotel, an ancient building where the rooms are named after his plays, characters and locales.

Dr. Baxter is in "The Merchant of Venice"—a play he loathes. I am in "Elsinore" at the end of the longest hall in all Warwickshire. The walls are whitewashed and the leaded glass windows overlook Shakespeare's garden as well as the Shakespeare Garage.

The single bed in "Elsinore" is so narrow I almost tumbled out on my "Coriolanus" in the middle of the night. To get to "Elsinore" I must pass by "Romeo and Juliet" and I have developed an overwhelming curiosity to learn if it too has a single bed. I wonder if the management rearranged the accommodations in "As You Like It" to suit the guest? And what of "Love's Labour's Lost"? Next door is "Two Gentlemen of Verona" and I don't even want to THINK about that!

A MONTH before Shakespeare died, a lesser talent, Francis Beaumont, had been buried in Westminster Abbey next to Chaucer and Spenser. Why wasn't Shakespeare, Britain's most honored citizen and export, given a similar honor?

To answer my question Baxter took me to Stratford's small Church of the Holy Trinity, which dates back to the Thirteenth Century. The grave-stones in the churchyard are covered with moss and the morning sun that came through the trees bathed everything in an apple green light.

Because he was a lay rector—and not because he was a successful actor-playwright—Shakespeare was buried inside the chancel rail of the parish church under a stone that is unmarked except for a four-line verse to guard against the removal of his bones in future years.

"You see, it seems right that he's buried here because when you read his plays you find countless references to this lovely countryside where he grew to manhood," said Baxter. "His works are full of lines about the dawn. That's the mark of a country boy. It's right that he's here by himself. As William Basse said, 'Sleep, rare tragedian, sleep alone.'"

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