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BRIDGWATER  
**Rural District Council.**

THE THIRTY-FIFTH  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

OF

**THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

**Wilberforce Thompson,**

AND

**THE INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES**

**Richard Popham.**

FOR THE YEAR 1907.

BRIDGWATER :

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**The Thirty-fifth Annual Report**  
OF THE  
**Bridgwater Rural District Council**

For the Year 1907.

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*To the*

*Chairman and Members of the Bridgwater Rural District Council.*

Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure of submitting to you my Report for the year 1907, and of laying before you the usual tables of vital statistics.

The District covers an area of 85,076 acres, with a population of 18,238, and is divided into a Western Division and an Eastern Division by the River Parrett. The Western Division slopes from the Quantock Hills to the Bristol Channel and the River Parrett, the character of the soil being red sandstone and clay marle. The Eastern Division is to a great extent level country, the character of the soil being clay land and marsh land, except the portion formed by the Polden Hills which is blue lias.

The occupation of the inhabitants is almost entirely agricultural. The house accommodation of the working classes is good and supervision is exercised over the building of new houses which are erected under the modern Bye-Laws of the L.G.B. as adopted by the Council.

Plans have been passed during the year for 21 New Buildings within the District.

Most of these buildings were of a good class residential character.

All of these have been erected in accordance with the Bye-Laws enforced within the District.

**Sewerage and Drainage**, is on the whole satisfactory. In the larger villages the sewage is received into settling-tanks which are emptied as occasion requires. In the Eastern Division the efficient drainage of some of the villages is a most difficult matter, though every endeavour has been made to carry this out satisfactorily.

A considerable amount of work has been done in improving the drainage of the different villages.

During the year (1907) a sewerage scheme for the drainage of the Parish of Wembdon has been put in hand and will be completed early in 1908.

The authorities for the past 30 years have had under consideration various schemes; at the present time the sewage is being dealt with in cesspools with overflows into streams, or, crude sewage is run into an open ditch by the side of the Public Highway.

The present scheme is being installed on the Ejector System, Shone's Patent Pneumatic Ejectors being used.

This has involved the laying of Stoneware Gravitating Sewers ranging from 6 in. to 12 in. diameter to the two Ejector Stations, and from thence 4 in. and 6 in. cast iron rising mains, to discharge directly into the River Parrett at Chilton Trinity.

Compressed Air for the working of the Ejectors will be generated by two gas engine air compressors fixed in an engine house, which has been erected near the Borough Boundary.

As this scheme will supply a much needed sanitary improvement, to the Parish, it is to be hoped that the owners and residents will have their premises connected up, at the earliest opportunity.

A new sewer 111 yards long with inspection chambers and two ventilating shafts, has been laid at Cannington. New sewers have also been laid at Ashcott, Chedzoy and Stowey, and an inspection Chamber has been built at Sydenham.

**Excrement disposal.** Where villages are sewered the excrement is disposed of by means of settling-tanks as above described. In other cases earth closets, cess-pits and privies are utilized. House refuse is disposed of by the occupier, no public scavenging being in vogue.

**Water Supply.** The Council's Water Supply is in a very satisfactory condition, the average daily amount used, about 45,000 gallons—the available supply varied considerably during the year, the lowest amount occurred during February, and was 90,000 gallons daily. The highest in December, 300,000 gallons daily.

This water takes its rise on the Quantock Hills from deep springs, and it is of excellent quality, and free from any risk of pollution being conveyed in pipes from its source. Extensions of the Council's mains have been made at Burrowbridge and Andersea, Districts which were previously almost entirely dependent on river water. Extensions have also been made to various outlying portions of other parishes.

A scheme is before the Local Government Board for supplying the parish of Cossington and part of Bawdrip, and also for West Newton, and other parts of the parish of North Petherton.

At Cannington the mains are already laid for supplying this village with water by the Bridgwater Corporation, this district being in the area which is covered by their water act.

The Water Supply of the other districts is from wells, the water from which is in some districts of rather inferior quality.

The Rainfall during the year was 29·61 inches.

Rainfall during each Month in inches.		Number of Days in which rain was measured.	
January	... 1·05	...	10
February	... 1·27	...	12
March	... ·81	...	10
April	... 4·37	...	19
May	... 2·56	...	20
June	... 2·23	...	22
July	... 2·18	...	14
August	... 2·47	...	19
September	... ·50	...	5
October	... 4·87	...	24
November	... 2·74	...	17
December	... 4·56	...	20
Total Rainfall <u>29·61</u>		Total wet days <u>192</u>	

The lowest temperature recorded was 12° on January 25th.

The highest 86° on July 20th.

**Slaughter-houses, Dairies, Cow-sheds and Milk-shops, Bake-houses, Factories, and Workshops,** have been inspected periodically, and any defects found, remedied. A systematic inspection has been made of the Dairies, Cow-sheds and Milk-shops, and a special report sent to the L.G.B. stating the sanitary condition, water supply, and the destination of the produce.

The Bye-Laws in force in the District are Cleansing of Footways and Removal of Refuse, Prevention of Nuisances, Common Lodging Houses, Houses let in Lodgings, New Streets and Buildings, Slaughter Houses, Cemeteries, and offensive Trades. They have been generally complied with.

**Nuisances.** Notices have been served throughout the District with reference to these, and have been complied with.

The Infectious Disease (notification) Act is in force, and cases reported are at once visited and steps taken to stop the spread of the disease. The disinfection of the premises is carried out by the Council's Officer.

**Factories and Workshops.** There are 80 Factories and ~~21~~ Workshops, viz :—21 Bake-houses and 59 general Workshops, a few minor defects were found and these were remedied by the owners. Very little home work is done, only 10 people being employed in this work, the houses in which they work were found in a satisfactory condition.

The general health of the district has been good. Only 46 cases of infectious disease having been reported, of these, 15 were diphtheria, 25 scarlet fever, and 6 erysipelas; of the above 2 cases of diphtheria were fatal.

From the seven chief Epidemic diseases 11 deaths were registered as against 9 in 1906, representing the extremely low zymotic death rate of .66 per 1000 of the population.

Regarding the vital statistics of the year, 248 deaths were registered, as against 253 in 1907, representing an Annual rate of mortality of 13.6 as against 13.8 in the year previous, of these 248 deaths, 117 occurred aged 65 and upwards, and 34 under 1 year of age.

In the Western Division of the District 125 deaths were registered, and in the Eastern Division 123.

Of the several causes of death, 14 resulted from Phthisis; 41 from Pneumonia, Bronchitis and Pleurisy; 13 from Heart Disease; 13 from Injuries and 1 from Suicide.

During the year the following Schools were closed in consequence of Epidemic Disease.

Bawdrip :—January 11th to February 11th, for Scarlet Fever

Goathurst :—February 20th to April 1st, Whooping Cough.

Shapwick :—July 4th to August 19th, Whooping Cough.

Fiddington.—December 5th to January 7th. Measles

# CANNINGTON DISTRICT.

Population, 1,738.

			1907.
Birth Rate	...	...	18·4.
Death Rate	...	...	12·0.

Including the Parishes of **Cannington**, **Fiddington**, **Stockland Bristol**, **Otterhampton**, and **Combwich**.

No diseases of a zymotic character have been notified to me in the Village of **Fiddington**.

**Stockland Bristol and Otterhampton.** The health of these two villages is fairly good. 2 cases reported to me of Scarlet Fever in the parish of Stockland Bristol.

**Combwich** has during the past year been free from zymotic disease.

**Cannington.** 1 Diphtheria case reported to me.

# PETHERTON DISTRICT.

Population, 6,425.

		1906.	1907.
Birth Rate	..	23·0	18·0
Death Rate	.	12·8	14·16

The villages of **Enmore**, **Goathurst**, **Broomfield** and **Thurloxtan**, comprise a portion of the Petherton district, possess good drainage and water supply, and the dwellings of the working classes are much improved.

**Goathurst.** No Infectious cases.

**North Petherton.** 1 case of Scarlatina and 3 of Erysipelas were notified to me

**Charlinch.** 2 cases of Scarlet Fever notified to me.

**Aisholt.** No infectious cases reported.

**Nether Stowey, Over Stowey and Spaxton.** No diseases of a zymotic character have been notified to me. Dwellings of the working classes improved,

# WEMBDON, CHILTON TRINITY, DURLEIGH, AND BRIDGWATER (WITHOUT).

Population 1,758.

		1906.	1907.
Birth Rate	..	23·9	24·4
Death Rate	..	8·0	9·1

Durleigh, Wembdon and Chilton Trinity. With reference to the drainage of Wembdon a further scheme is in contemplation which will almost immediately be carried out.

Wembdon. 2 cases of Diphtheria were notified to me.

Bridgwater (Without). 2 cases of Diphtheria reported to me.

## MIDDLEZOY DISTRICT.

Population 1,967.

		1906.	1907.
Birth Rate	...	18·3	24·4
Death Rate	...	12·7	17·3

Much has been done of late in the three villages, Othery, Middlezoy and Westonzoyland, comprising this district to improve the condition of the Drainage, and that with success. The water supply is fairly good, and the dwellings of the working classes are improved.

Westonzoyland. 2 cases of Erysipelas and 1 Diphtheria.

Othery. 1 case of Erysipelas reported to me.

Lyng. Dwellings of the working classes improved. No Infectious cases notified to me.

# HUNTSPILL DISTRICT.

Population 6,350.

		1906.	1907.
Birth Rate	...	23·6	23·0
Death Rate	...	13·5	13·5

7 cases of Scarlatina and and 7 Diphtheria, were notified to me from **Pawlett, Huntspill and Puriton.**

**Woolavington.** No Infectious cases reported to me.

**Cossington.** 2 Diphtheria cases notified to me.

**Chedzoy.** In a healthy condition, only 1 case of Scarlet Fever notified to me.

**Moorlinch.** No Infectious case been notified to me.

**Chilton Polden and Edington.** No Infectious cases reported to me.

**Sutton Mallett and Stawell.** In a healthy condition.

**Catcott.** No Infectious cases notified to me.

**Shapwick** No Infectious cases reported to me.

**Ashcott.** No cases reported.

**Greinton.** Healthy village, no case of Infectious nature

**Bawdrip.** 12 cases of Scarlet Fever notified to me.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WILBERFORCE THOMPSON.

# Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report

For the Year 1907.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Herewith I beg to hand you my Report of Administrative Work for the year ending December, 1907.

I have during the year 1907 made Inspections of the whole of the District from time to time, and have had brought to my notice 221 complaints, all of which have had attention and in cases where necessary Statutory Notices have been served by Council's directions, and the following nuisances have been abated :—

Council's drains broken in and choked and cleaned	...	37
Council's ditches thrown out and cleaned	... ..	9
Foul ditches thrown out and cleaned	... ..	4
Pigs kept improperly	... ..	5
Defective privies	... ..	7
Defective drains	... ..	14
Private cesspools cleaned out	... ..	4
Council's cesspools cleaned out	... ..	6
Dangerous buildings pulled down	... ..	7
New drains laid at private houses	... ..	21
Premises found to be in dirty state	... ..	6
Carcases ordered to be buried	... ..	3
Drains tested	... ..	27
Notices served to abate nuisances	... ..	35
Rooms disinfected after diphtheria and fever	... ..	44
Number of inspections made	... ..	426

Samples of water taken by Council's orders 44 all with the exception of 8 have been found to be unfit for dietetic use.

Over crowding cases	... ..	2
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One private sample has been taken and found to be unfit for dietetic use.

Dairies licensed	... ..	106
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The Council have laid under my supervision the following new Sewers, 40 yards of 18 inch stone ware pipes at Stowey Court.

New Sewer at Ashcott and a new 6 inch Sewer at Puriton.

New 6 inch Sewer 111 yards at Cannington with Inspection Chamber, and 2 Ventilation Shafts 26 feet high have been fixed to Main Sewer.

New 6 inch sewer has been laid at Chelzoy 17 yards.

New Inspection Chamber has been built at Sydenham Terrace, Bath Road.

Milk-shops and Dairies have been inspected from time to time and have been cleaned and whitened out where found to be in a dirty condition.

Bake-houses have been inspected and where found in a dirty state have been cleaned and whitened out.

Slaughter-houses have been inspected from time to time where found any defect owners have had necessary work done to abate nuisance.

Factorys and Workshops have been complied with.

R. POPHAM,

Inspector of Nuisances,

# Vital Statistics of the Whole District during 1907 and previous years.

## Name of District—Bridgwater Rural District.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each year.		BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.				Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.		Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
	2.	3.	Number.	Rate.*	Under one year		At all Ages.		9.	Number.	Rate.*	
					5.	6.	7.	8.				
1.					Rate per 1000 births registered.	Number.	Rate.*	Number.	Rate.*	10.	11.	
1897	19724	461	26.0	37	78.6	236	13.2	236	13.2	236	13.2	
1898	19928	432	24.4	42	90.3	247	14.0	247	14.0	247	14.0	
1899	20099	416	22.7	40	99.9	240	12.9	240	12.9	240	12.9	
1900	20326	372	20.5	39	107.4	228	12.7	228	12.7	228	12.7	
1901	16680	357	21.3	38	101.8	200	11.9	200	11.9	200	11.9	
1902	16680	379	22.7	26	68.6	228	13.6	228	13.6	228	13.6	
1903	16680	366	21.3	26	71.0	197	11.8	197	11.8	197	11.8	
1904	16680	364	21.2	37	101.6	224	13.4	224	13.4	224	13.4	
1905	16680	381	22.8	22	57.7	235	14.0	235	14.0	235	14.0	
1906	18238	395	21.6	29	73.4	224	12.2	29	13.8	253	13.8	
Average of Years 1897-1906.	18171	392	21.6	33	84.2	225	12.4	23	12.5	228	12.5	
1907	18238	384	21.0	29	75.5	225	12.3	23	13.6	248	13.6	

\*Rates in Columns 4, 8 and 11 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water). } 85,976

Total population at all ages 18,238  
Number of inhabited houses 4,260  
Average number of persons per house 4.28

} At Census of 1907.

TABLE II.

Vital Statistics of separate Localities in 1907 and previous years.  
Name of District—Bridgwater Rural District.

NAME OF LOCALITY.	PETHERTON.				MIDDLEZOY.				HUNTSPILL.				CANNINGTON DISTRICT.				DURLEIGH, WEMBODON, CHILTON TRINITY, AND BRIDGWATER (WITHOUT).			
	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.
1897	5128	127	64	10	2275	65	33	4	4483	109	47	11	1430	22	10	1	1430	22	10	1
1898	5170	118	67	14	2325	60	28	6	4519	83	66	11	1430	22	8		1430	22	8	
1899	5228	115	60	12	2344	49	27	6	4532	82	62	8	1430	16	6	3	1430	16	6	3
1900	4568	111	60	12	2366	45	28	2	4556	42	48	8	1430	19	15	4	1430	19	15	4
1901	4568	96	55	10	1967	44	25	4	6350	146	85	18	814	16	6		814	16	6	
1902	5344	99	52	9	1967	52	32	6	6350	142	87	5	814	11	9		814	11	9	
1903	4568	108	56	8	1967	31	23	5	6350	152	67	7	814	16	5	5	814	16	5	5
1904	4568	107	54	7	1967	46	30	5	6350	149	88	15	814	14	9	5	814	14	9	5
1905	4568	107	64	8	1967	46	31	2	6350	163	92	8	814	14	8	1	814	14	8	1
1906	4568	101	64	9	1967	36	32	4	6350	150	93	10	1758	42	16	4	1758	42	16	4
Averages of Years 1897 to 1906.	4827	108	59	9	2111	47	28	4	5619	121	73	10					1154	19	9	2
1907	6425	115	91	6	1967	48	34	5	6350	146	86	17	1738	32	21	5	1758	43	16	1

TABLE III.

**Cases of Infectious Disease during the Year 1907,  
In the Bridgwater Rural District.**

Notifiable Disease.	At all Ages.	Total cases notified in each Locality.					
		Petherton.	Middlezoy.	Huntspill.	Cannington District.	Wembdon.	Bridgwater (Without).
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) ...			1	9	1	2	2
Erysipelas ... ..		3	3				
Scarlet Fever ... ..		3		20	2		
<b>TOTALS</b> ...	46	6	4	29	3	2	2

Ages not supplied by Medical Men.

TABLE IV.

**Births in the Bridgwater Rural District during the  
Year 1907.**

	1st. Qr.	2nd. Qr.	3rd. Qr.	4th. Qr.	TOTAL.
North Petherton ... ..	32	26	39	18	115
Middlezoy ... ..	7	18	9	14	48
Huntspill ... ..	36	44	35	31	146
Durleigh ... ..	—	1	—	1	2
Wembdon ... ..	2	3	4	2	11
Chilton Trinity ... ..	1	—	1	2	4
Bridgwater (Without) ... ..	7	6	3	10	26
Cannington ... ..	5	3	7	5	20
Stockland Bristol ... ..	—	—	1	—	1
Otterhampton ... ..	4	1	2	3	10
Fiddington ... ..	—	—	1	—	1
Rate per 1000 1906—21·6					
ditto 1907—21·0					384

TABLE V.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during Year 1907.  
Name of District—Bridgwater Rural District.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths at the subjoined ages of Residents occurring in or beyond the District.							Deaths at all ages of Residents belonging to localities whether occurring in or beyond the District.							
	All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 2.	2 and under 3.	4 and under 5.	6 and under 10.	11 and under 15.	16 and under 25.	26 and under 65.	66 and upwards.	Petherton.	Middlezey.	Hantspill.	Cannington District.	Dartleigh, Wembdon, Chilton and Trinity and Bridgwater. (Without).
Measels ...	2	1	1							1				1	
Whooping-cough ...	3											3			
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	2	1	1									1		1	
Epidemic Influenza ...	4	2	1					1	3	1		3			
Diarrhoea ...	4	1	1						1	1		1			
Enteritis ...	2	1	1												
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	14			5				9		4	2	6	1	1	
Other tubercular diseases	3	1	1					9		1		2			
Cancer, malignant disease	18							9	9	10		2	1	3	
Bronchitis ...	23	5	2					3	13	8	3	9	2	1	
Pneumonia ...	18	3		1				8	5	3	7	7	1	1	
Premature Birth ...	4	4								1	1	1	1		
Heart Diseases ...	13	1	2	1				3	9	6	2	3	2		
Accidents ...	13	1						7	2	3	2	6	1	1	
Suicides ...	1							1		1					
All other Causes	124	14	3	2	1	29	75	51	13	40	21	86	16		
ALL CAUSES	248	34	12	6	9	117	91	34	86	21	16				



