

[Report 1925] / Medical Officer of Health, Brixham U.D.C.

Contributors

Brixham (England). Urban District Council.

Publication/Creation

1925

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ANNUAL
HEALTH REPORT

ON THE
Brixham Urban District.

1925.

BRIXHAM ·

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REPORT

ON THE

Brixham Urban District

For 1925.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you the report on the health of the Urban District of Brixham for the year ending December 31st, 1925.

This report, by the instructions of the Ministry of Health, unlike those of the last few years, is a survey one, embracing features not usually referred to in the ordinary short report, but as some of these have been dealt with from time to time during the past few years it may not have to be so extensive as would otherwise have been the case. It may be permitted briefly to touch on the natural features of Brixham as bearing on its public health problems. At one time almost purely a Fishing Village, the inhabitants of which were justly reckoned to be amongst the finest sailors in the Empire, with an agricultural district scattered round, it has grown by the blending of Higher and Lower Brixham, comprising the landward and seaward portions, a not inconsiderable township, with good shops, streets as good as the natural limitations of the district will permit, and within recent years by the accession of many retired families, some of them native, many from outside its character, as a purely fishing town has been changed by the residential element.

Originally a sea valley, the town itself maintains those characteristics, and it remains a place of valley and lofty cliff. Taking the line of least resistance the main streets, Fore Street, Bolton Street, and New Road, follow the tract of the valley with secondary roads in places almost precipitous, leading to the subsidiary parts which have been built on the cliff, and it is worth noting that in Fore Street there are shops and houses built over the site which was once the Harbour. The town is scattered, the distance from Berry Head, its limit on the east, to the furthest houses in Higher Brixham, being not far short of three miles, and while all this makes for picturesqueness, obviously it makes for added difficulties in administration. It means the upkeep of roads many of them so steep as to make the work of a steam roller dangerous. No one who has watched the skilful way in which the engines pulling the component parts of the fair up Furzeham Hill during Brixham's Annual Festival, the Regatta, can fail to appreciate those difficulties or to admire the patience and ability of their drivers, and it adds considerably to the ever present sewer question, the fall in places being almost nil while in others it is quite extraordinarily steep, but when all this has been written, Brixham remains almost unique even amongst the glories of South Devon.

A Bay, rivalling in its blue the Mediterranean, great cliffs rising sheer to 500 feet, tree-crowned uplands to west and south almost shutting the village in. No one, who from the top of King Street, has on a September evening seen the sun set behind Churston Woods with the houses in the higher parts and above all Lower Brixham Church upstanding and clean cut in the clear evening light, can wonder that such a scene inspired Lyte's undying hymn.

Allowing for the difficulties already referred to, Public Health Service in the area, if one excepts the difficulties of housing ever abounding in old fishing towns, is quite respectably good. The sewage system is being gradually improved, the roads as in the case of so many districts of its kind are bad and are steadily getting worse. This is in no way the fault of the local Surveyor or of the Council, but is due to the present

chaotic regulations of the Ministry of Transport, who apparently fail to realize that there is a limit to the bearing capacity even of roads. For small local authorities the question is likely to become more grave and expensive and until some limit is set to the weight of vehicles and some attention paid to the fitting of pneumatic tyres to all types of motor vehicles, the state of things will become progressively and very rapidly worse.

There is an efficient Cottage Hospital with ample bed accommodation, infectious cases other than smallpox, cholera, and plague, are treated at Paignton Sanatorium on a paying basis, and arrangements have been come to for the treatment of smallpox cases.

Scavenging and food inspection are carefully carried out, and there is a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre meeting weekly. In addition to the Hospital, there is a Maternity Nurse and also a District Nurse, both of whose services are in increasing demand, notification of infectious disease is good and suitable tuberculosis cases receive sanatorium treatment. Bacteriological service is undertaken and paid for by the County, is of great benefit and is freely taken advantage of.

As to housing I can only repeat what has been said year after year, while it is true that there are few houses in Brixham so situated as not to receive an abundant supply of fresh air and sunlight, many of the houses are deplorable, and in spite of new housing at Garlic Rea and Higher Brixham, sufficient houses are not being built to justify extensive demolition. It is perfectly true that much private building is being done by local Contractors, but with rare exceptions those houses are being built to the order of private individuals, or for immediate sale. No houses suitable for working classes are being erected for letting purposes, at this one can hardly wonder when one takes into account weight of taxation and cost of repairs, nevertheless it reacts most unfavourably on family life, a strong feature in Brixham, and the difficulty of finding a house is an added barrier to the matrimonial intentions of Brixham's young men and maidens who otherwise show little hesitation in plunging into that dread vortex.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b))	26
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :	
(i) By the Local Authority	—
(ii) By other bodies or persons	26

1. *Unfit dwelling-houses.*

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... 86

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 4

(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 45

2. *Remedy of defects without Service of formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 84

3. *Action under Statutory Powers.*

A.—Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs 1

- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices
 - (a) By owners
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close 4

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... none
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices
 - (a) By owners 48
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners

C.—Proceedings under sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925

- (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders 4
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made 4
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 2
- (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 3

POPULATION.

The population as estimated by the 'General Register House and adjusted by the customary statistics from the return of 1921 is given as 8,092, an increase of 34 from last year. This if only approximate is probably not far out, as many of the houses are overcrowded and in families of every class it is a common occurrence for married sons and daughters to continue to live with their parents owing to the impossibility of acquiring houses of their own. What the indefinable attraction and personality of Brixham really are is hard to express on paper, undeniably it possesses not merely for its old families but for the more casual visitors a curious atmosphere that draws one to the place and this is still shown in the fact to which attention has been drawn before, that many of its workers who earn their daily bread frequently in districts far beyond Brixham retain their homes and households here, and also in the fact that many who come temporarily, remain and build themselves a lodge which is certainly not a lodge in the wilderness.

BIRTHS.

During 1925, 152 were registered, giving a rate of 18.7 per 1,000, this shows an increase of 21 on the previous year. Of these births 81 were male and 71 female. There were 5 illegitimate children born, 3 male and 2 female.

DEATHS.

In 1925, 135 deaths were recorded giving a rate of 16.8 per 1,000. This shows a regrettable increase over last year's figures—107. Under one year the rate rose from 5 in last report to 12 in 1925, of these 12, two were due to whooping cough, 4 to pneumonia, 1 to congenital syphilis and 1 to poliomyelitis. It may be to the credit of the Midwife and of the work done at the Maternity Centre that the deaths due to congenital debility and premature birth were again but 3 in number. From pneumonia numbers rose from 7 to 17, these occurring largely during the three early and most miserably wet months of 1925, but an uncomfortable feature was that the cancer numbers rose from 11 to 22, the rates from other diseases

showing little change. Once again I have to call attention to the extraordinarily few deaths between the ages of 1 and 45, 24 out of a total of 135, under the age of 1 year there were 12, from 45 to 65, 30, and over 65 the really amazing number of 69, these last figures speak for themselves and may to some extent account for the unwillingness of Brixhamites to separate themselves from the town of their birth, probably they feel that a permanent abode in Brixham makes for their prospects of long life, a safer investment than any life Insurance Firm can offer.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

I regret very much that in spite of the fact there was only one case of Typhoid during the year, the number of cases of infectious disease notified during 1925 has risen to 127, an increase of 20 over the previous year. This is almost entirely accounted for by an epidemic of diphtheria in the last three months of the year, a very disappointing fact when one considers the steady decrease in the number of cases recorded during the two previous years. It is difficult to account for this recurrence, for while many of the cases certainly occurred in the Furzeham district, adults as well as children were attacked and cases were notified from other parts of Brixham. Two deaths occurred, but in spite of this fact the type of disease was very mild, and in the case both children who succumbed no Doctor was called in until the child was practically dying, so that anti-toxin had not the slightest chance of proving how almost miraculously it can act when exhibited at an early stage of this disease. One school-girl on whom suspicion of being a carrier fell, was treated by the enucleation of tonsils with a result entirely satisfactory.

PNEUMONIA.

There was the unusually large number of 46 notifications, with a death rate of 17, seven of these deaths occurring under the age of 2, and 8 over the age of 65. The majority of these cases occurred in the unusually trying months of January, February, and March. The Phthisis notifications numbered 28, with 9 deaths, 3 of these tragically enough in one family.

For the first time in many years a case of Puerperal Septicæmia falls to be recorded, and at a time when so much is being written about the high mortality in childbearing, it says something for the cleanliness of Brixham homes, and not a little for the efficiency of maternity nursing that this should have been the first case occurring during the last 6 years. It was unusually interesting as illustrating the present theory that puerperal fever is more often due to some cause in the general maternal health than to potency of infection. In this case there was no laceration and no retention, it took the form of a blood infection with signs of septic emboli in one lung, resulting in a pulmonary abscess, from which eventually a complete recovery was made. I should add that the case was a perfectly normal one, with no interference of any kind. While on this subject, it is worth mentioning that out of a total of 152 births almost 100 received attention from Nurse Fry, an excellent nurse. There were 4 cases of Encephalitis Lethargica, with one death, all of them being rather atypical. The one straight case of last year's report ultimately made a good recovery after an illness of six months, though the Parkinsonian signs persisted for many following months. Of non-notifiable diseases measles was practically non-existent, but there was a considerable amount of both whooping cough and mumps. There were only 6 cases of scarlet fever.

MATERNITY CENTRE.

Owing to the fact that Miss Acton, who for four years had done good work as School Nurse, received another appointment at the end of the year, being replaced by Miss Rickman who has always been very popular with everyone connected with the centre, it is impossible on this occasion to give more than approximate figures of attendances, a further loss is that of Mrs. Brown, who had been Chairman for some years, in consequence of this much extra work has devolved on Mrs. Carlile, her understudy, Mrs. Widdicombe, and the other ladies of the Committee who give such willing service. The work is progressing steadily, the Maternity Nurse being the means of bringing many of the younger mothers to the Centre, and they are showing a keenness and interest in the welfare of

their babies which is the most pleasing form of appreciation for those responsible for the conduct of the Centre. The Centre was opened 46 times in 1925.

	Mothers	E	Under 1 Year	1 to 5 Years
Total Numbers	765	30	416	570

HOSPITAL.

For the Hospital 1925 was probably one of the most prosperous years falling to be recorded. In the early part of the year its financial position was, as frequently before, somewhat critical; but at this anxious time the handsome donation from Mr. Charles Hellyer, backed by most generous help from Lady Laidlaw and Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Stevens, as well as by many equally welcome smaller donations, put a very different colour on the funds of the Hospital, and in spite of the fact that no biennial fete was held, the year was ended clear of debt. Apart from money matters the year's work was at as high a level as ever, over 100 operations were done, many of them major operations, the beds were almost continuously well filled and the out-patient department showed a large increase in work. At one time a not too popular Institution, I think I am absolutely justified in saying that this has been lived down and that the Hospital now is a landmark in Brixham, thoroughly appreciated by the inhabitants. It is supported by all the Medical men in the town, who are deeply in the debt of the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee for the extraordinary amount of interest they show in the working of the Hospital, and the time they spend in arrangements for its well-being, and if one singles out the name of Mr. W. L. Parsons it is because as Chairman for many years much of the responsibility falls on his shoulders, and because in the occasional troubles which arise, one knows him to be a very present help. In spite of a long and serious illness in the early part of the year, Miss Amery remains as efficient as ever, her devotion to the Hospital being very real. The loss of Nurse Sloman, the Staff Nurse, was regretted by everyone.

After three villainous seasons the weather in the middle part of the year made a solid effort to re-establish its rather draggled reputation. The first months of 1925 were wet and

cold, and it was not until the beginning of June that real warmth came along, but June, July, and August and to a lesser extent September did somehow remind us that even in England summer does occasionally happen, and holiday makers during those months were able to bask in the sun and realize what a really glorious county Devon is when the sun shines, as it can do, and the rain does not pour.

The rainfall for the year was 45.43 inches, for this figure, as well as for the detailed report, I am once again under an obligation to Harold Clayton, Esq., Combe Bank.

In the early part of the year the office of Surveyor, formerly so ably filled by Mr. John Silley, was taken over by Mr. J. W. Smith, the successor appointed by the Council. If in no other department than in that of the roads Mr. Smith will find abundant opportunity to prove his mettle, but already he has shown himself to be a capable man and a pleasant colleague, who knows his work and does it thoroughly.

Before closing this report I wish to express my indebtedness to Mr. Sanders Lear and his clerical staff, not merely for their assistance in its preparation, but for the courtesy, help, and consideration invariably shown to me at all times. To Mr. Jefford, Brixham's Sanitary Inspector, I owe much. He is a pleasant and most patient colleague, tactful and thorough in the performance of duties which at times call for the full exercise of these qualities, and this report has been considerably shortened by his embodying in his resumé many of the statistics asked for on this occasion by the Ministry of Health.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES F. FALCONER,
Medical Officer of Health,

NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

				1925	1924	1923
Pneumonia	...	...	...	46	38	26
Erysipelas	...	...	...	9	5	8
Diphtheria	...	...	...	24	5	12
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	6	4	1
Eucephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	4	2	0
Typhoid Fever	...	...	...	1	14	6
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	1	0	0
Puerperal Septicæmia	...	...	...	1	0	0
Tubercle—Respiratory	...	...	...	28	30	57
Tubercle—other forms	...	...	...	7	6	8
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	0	3	2
Totals				<u>127</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>120</u>

	Tuberculosis Notifications				Tuberculosis Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0								
1								
5								
10			1					
15		1	2		1			
20	2	3	2	1	1			
25	2	1	1		1			
35	5	7			2	2		
45	1	2			1			
55	2	2			1			
65								
	<u>12</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>		

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the Year 1925.

Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the District.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the District.								
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 & under 2	2 & under 5	5 & under 15	15 & under 25	25 & under 45	45 & under 65	65 & upwards
Enteric Fever									
Small Pox									
Measles									
Scarlet Fever									
Whooping Cough	2	2							
Diphtheria and Croup	2				2				
Influenza	2								2
Erysipelas									
Phthisis	9					3	4	2	
Tuberculous Meningitis									
Other Tuberculous Diseases									
Cancer	22					1	2	7	12
Rheumatic Fever	1								1
Meningitis									
Organic Heart	18						1	6	11
Bronchitis	6							3	3
Pneumonia	17	4	3		1			1	8
Other Respiratory Diseases	1							1	
Diarrhœa and Enteritis	3						1	1	1
Appendicitis									
Cirrhosis of Liver and Gall Stone	2						1	1	
Alcoholism									
Nephritis	7				1		1	3	2
Puerperal Fever and other Diseases of Pregnancy									
Congenital Debility and Premature Birth	3	3							
Violet Deaths	1	1							
Suicides	1						1		
Diseases ill-defined	8								8
Other Defined Diseases	3			1		1			1
Gangrene of Leg									
Diabetes	3								3
Disseminated Sclerosis	1							1	
Cerebral Hemorrhage	8							2	6
Congenital Syphilis	1	1							
Hernia	1								1
Septicœmia									
Cystitis	1								1
Poliomyelitis	1	1							
Bulbar Paralysis	1								1
Arterio Sclerosis	8								8
Hodgkins Disease	1							1	
Encephalitis Lethargica	1							1	
Total All Causes	135	12	3	1	4	5	11	30	69

RAINFALL, 1925.

January	...	6.96
February	...	5.49
March	...	.30
April	...	2.80
May	...	4.40
June	...	.01
July	...	3.15
August	...	3.97
September	...	4.35
October	...	4.45
November	...	3.80
December	...	6.75
		<hr/>
Total		45.43
		<hr/>

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
SANITARY INSPECTOR,

Urban District Council,

Brixham, Devon.

TOWN HALL,

BRIXHAM.

28th March, 1926.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my "Fourth Annual Report," and I have endeavoured to conform as far as possible with Circular 648 from the Ministry of Health, who require this year a Survey Report of the District, and with this object in view, I have tabulated the various items, most of which are in the interest of the Public Health of your town and District. Owing to the construction of dwelling houses, etc., on the slopes of the valley, it is very difficult to deal with the back-to-back houses that are prevalent, there being no Bye-Laws on Existing Buildings, and I would venture to suggest that a "Town Planning Scheme" be inaugurated whenever the Town is in a financial position to carry out such a scheme, this eliminating the unhealthy area.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres) ...	...	...	...	5626
Population (census 1921)	...	...	...	7782
" (estimated 1925)	...	...	...	8500

Physical features and general character of the area :—
Subsoil : good. Strata : Limestone and Sandstone.

The main part of the town is built on the slopes of a valley, thus accounting for many back-to-back houses that are occupied by the working class. The sewer outfall enters the sea in the harbour, the natural gradient of the area allow the sewers to have a good fall.

Number of inhabited houses (1921)	...	2031
Number of families, or separate occupiers (1921)	...	75
Rateable Value	... ..	£48,908
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	£129

Social conditions :

Chief occupation of inhabitants: Fishing, Shipping, Farming, Paintworks.

Influence of any particular occupation on the Public Health : None.

HOUSING.

(I) *General Condition* :—

Extent of Shortage	...	...	...	200
New houses erected	...	...	...	26
Number of houses renovated	...	...	...	45
Number of plans approved	...	...	...	64
Cases reported ...	...	...	...	84

(II) *Overcrowding* :—

1. Extent 3
2. Causes : Insufficient houses of the working class.
3. Measures taken : Notices have been served which in time have had the desired effect.
4. Principle cases : Mr. Connell, "Laburnum Cottage," Drew Street.

Mrs. Jackman, 36, Middle Street.

Action taken : (a) Mrs. Connell has been sent to a Sanitorium (b) one of the families have now got accommodation.

(III) *Fitness of Houses* :

(a) General Standard :—Residential : Good. Working Class : bad.

(b) General Character of defects found to exist:—
Defective roofs, damp walls and D traps.

(c) How far are defects due to owner, or neglect of Tenant? Owner of little means allow the property to fall into delapidation.

Tenants are frequently in the habit of using the floors for chopping wood, etc.

General action taken under (a) Public Health Acts, (b) Housing Acts:—Preliminary and Statutory Notices served on the owner.

(IV) *Unhealthy Areas:*

Unhealthy areas are still in existence and until sufficient houses of the working classes are built at an economical rent (say 5/- to 6/- per week) very little will be done to relieve the congestion in the unhealthy areas. (See my report on housing).

(V) *Bye-Laws relating to houses, etc.*

(1) Working of existing Bye-Laws:—The new Building Bye-Laws, which came under revision in 1924, is working up to the present satisfactory.

(2) New Bye-Laws are needed for the following:—
(a) Existing buildings. (b) Deposit of House Refuse in proper metal covered receptacles. (See my report on Scavenging).

(VI) *General:*—

The Council have and are acquiring old and delapidated property, with a view to opening up unhealthy areas, and Street improvements. The Council tip where all House Refuse is deposited and burnt is due to be handed over to the owner in 1928, they are therefore contemplating the erection of a Refuse Destructor. The great majority of work done in connection with unfit houses is carried out more by personal explanation to the owner, than by formal or other notices. My advice usually has the desired effect.

HOUSING, AND INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.

The housing of the working classes is still a wanted factor in Brixham, and I venture to report that until sufficient houses of a type suitable for the working class can be built at an economical rent (say 5/- to 6/- per week) very little will be done to relieve the congestion in the unhealthy areas.

The "Subsidy Houses" that have been built during the year are built to be sold, and not "To Let," therefore the working class has little or no relief in this direction.

The Council Houses have relieved to some extent the housing shortage of the town, but owing to the excessive rent, most of the poorer class are unable to take advantage of them whenever they become vacant, thus the unhealthy area still exists where the rent is at an average of 4/- per week.

Whenever I inspect these premises in the District, and send out Formal Notices, it is invariably a case of the tenant being given notice to quit, especially where the tenant has complained to me about the condition of the premises. On my representation that the work has not been done, and a Statutory Notice is required, the Council should, if the owner is still in default, exercise their powers under the Housing Acts (*i.e.*, do the work and charge the owner with the cost thereof, etc.) I very reluctantly have to state that my Committee has not in one single instance recommended to the Council to exercise these powers when recommended by me. These powers are intended to relieve the condition of tenants occupying houses of the working class, where the owners fail to make their premises reasonably fit for human habitation, after reasonable notice of not less than twenty-one days.

SUBSIDY HOUSES.

It is generally understood that the object of the subsidy (among other things) is to assist the working man to acquire his own house in a given number of years. Perhaps the public of Brixham do not know that if a person has 10% of the estimated purchase cost of a Subsidy House, the Council can provide the other 90% under similar conditions as Building Societies are doing.

INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.

The Inspection of the District is carried out whenever circumstances permit. At present I am engaged in the inspection of the houses in the vicinity of the Laywell Water Supply. A few houses have been discovered with their W.C. with a flushing box, and these have been dealt with, together with premises who have insufficient Sanitary Convenience.

SCAVENGING, AND UNCOVERED HOUSE REFUSE RECEPTACLES.

This unhealthy practice of placing uncovered house refuse receptacles in the street is a menace to public health. It is bad enough to have a refuse cart passing through the street uncovered, but when one sees old pails, baskets, etc., with the bottoms nearly out, and sometimes the empty receptacles are left there all day, and I venture to say that until the Urban District Council of Brixham introduce Bye-Laws, and enforce them, together with the mutual co-operation of the Public, very little or nothing can be done in this very unhealthy practice of your historical old town.

Uncovered receptacles are an attraction for cats and dogs in search of a dainty morsel, who very often scatter the contents of the "ash pail" over the foot paths and roads to be carried eventually into the inhabitants' homes on the soles of their boots.

I am invariably calling attention to Dairymen about the dust in their milk cans. This is due chiefly to the high wind blowing the filth and dust from the uncovered receptacles, and carts during the process of tipping.

FARM HOUSES, COW-SHEDS, AND DAIRIES.

During the year I have inspected the Farms, Cow-sheds, and Dairies in the District, of which there are thirty-eight. The majority of the Dairies are in good condition, but I find in some cases the Dairies are used as a larder. This I point out to the persons in charge, is not conducive to clean milk. The same thing applies to milk carts, who, in the majority of cases

carry vegetables, rabbits, etc., on the same cart. The best method of distributing milk in the town is from Chiseldon Dairy Farm, who have the sealed bottle system (the only one in the town). I here venture to say that if all the purveyors of milk were to introduce this system, the contamination of the milk during the course of distribution would be reduced to a minimum. On the whole the local Retail Milk Purveyors are very clean.

The Cow-sheds, etc., could be kept cleaner if the lime could be obtained in the District. The farmer would then make more frequent use of this commodity to sweeten their cow-sheds, especially in the summer months.

There are very few cow-houses in the District that can be called modern and up-to-date.

This state of affairs is chiefly due to the farmer being a tenant farmer, where the owner will not keep the buildings in a good state of repair. The channelling in the cow-sheds are constructed in such a manner that the cow invariably lies down in its own manure, so that when the cow is milked, unless the animal is groomed and the udders washed (as recommended by the County Medical Officer of Health, of which each farmer had a copy), there is a certain amount of the manure bound to find its way into the milk, no matter what precautions may be taken in straining the milk.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

There are six Slaughter Houses in the District, three licensed, and three registered. They are kept in a cleanly state as far as possible, and in every case are washed down immediately after slaughtering has concluded for the day. I have had to complain about one particular Slaughter House allowing their blood pit and manure pit to accumulate until it becomes a nuisance, and an official notice under Sec. 41 and 91 of the Public Health Acts, 1875, had to be served on the proprietors, also intimating that if an occurrence of this nuisance comes under my notice again, I shall have to report the circumstances to the Council with a view to withhold license.

	1920.	Jan. 1925.	Dec. 1925.
Registered Slaughter Houses	3	3	3
Licensed Slaughter Houses	2	2	3*
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	5	5	6

*One licensed in 1925 for Pigs only.

Carcases examined:—

1,002 carcases have been examined, and the following have been condemned, and destroyed in my presence after being sprinkled with a strong disinfectant. All condemned carcases, etc., have been voluntarily surrendered.

6 carcases : 3 sheep, 3 pigs, Tuberculosis and Dropsy
 11 ox and pig's livers, Fluke Cirrhosis
 4 pig's heads and offal, Tuberculosis
 4 sheep's heads, Tuberculosis
 5 ox viscera, Tuberculosis
 216 lbs imported (decomposed)

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION.

Meat Inspection has been carried out as far as possible consistent with my other important duties, and a great deal of extra time has been taken up in connection with the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, which came into force in this District in May, 1925. The visit to farms on notification of an emergency slaughter also takes up some considerable time, as these farms are on the average about three or four miles from the town.

The fact of having six Slaughter Houses in the District makes it impossible for me to examine every carcass, but on the whole the traders have adopted the principle of buying young animals, which, in my opinion is the best, to insure a good sound meat supply to the public of Brixham, and I would like to emphasize the fact that the traders give me all the assistance and help in carrying out these Regulations, no marking of meat has been adopted in this District, and all traders except one have taking the precaution to protect their

meat from contamination by having fixed glass windows to their shops, the one outstanding stating to me that he is contemplating following the example of the other traders.

OTHER FOODS.

The Bakehouses are kept in a cleanly state as far as possible, but there is one out of the nine which I consider should be closed, and I have intimated to the occupier and owner that when the present tenant vacates the premises, it must no longer be used as a Bakehouse, owing chiefly to its construction. There are three Fried Fish Shops, and these are kept in a cleanly state, especially at the back of the one in Fore Street and Bolton Street. Grocers and General Dealers shops are kept clean, and the food is protected from contamination by flies, etc., as far as possible, by glass windows, and covering the food with a suitable fabric.

WATER SUPPLY.

This most important item has engaged the serious attention of the Council during the year 1925, with a view to obtaining an adequate supply all the year round, and negotiations are still in progress between Brixham and Paignton Council. At present the supply is:—constant, direct from the water main pipes. Source:—Local and Moorland. Plumbo Solvent Action:—Nil. Inspection:—By County Analyst.

PREVENTION OF THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Number of bedding, etc.—131 articles have been sent to the Steam Disinfector at Paignton Isolation Hospital. There was also twelve lots of bedding burnt at the Refuse Tip after being saturated with Paraffin, and burnt under my direction and supervision. Thirty-nine houses and three schools have been fumigated and disinfected during the year.

SCHOOLS.

There are four Elementary Schools and three Private Schools in the District, all these have been visited by me periodically during the year. There has been a complaint

during the year made by a parent of a child that contracted Diphtheria about the Furzeham Elementary (County Council) School, in connection with the Sanitary condition of the W.C. The Medical Officer of Health, and myself, visited the School in question, a report of which I made to the Local Authority, and a copy of which was forwarded both to the Ministry of Health and the County Medical Officer of Health. The School Authority has agreed to carry out my suggestion quoted in the Report, and the County Council Architect has been given instructions to go into the matter of ventilation, etc. There evidently was no foundation for the complaint, and I am of an opinion that it was a case of prejudice on account of the child contracting Diphtheria. The drains of all the Schools have been tested, and where defective have been repaired or made good under my supervision.

The Private Schools are also visited during the year, and are found to be in a very clean condition. The water supply of all Schools is from the local supply, constant and direct from the mains.

The prevention of the spreading of Infectious Diseases in the Schools are, that all patients after being declared clear of infection by the Medical Attendant, the premises fumigated, and articles disinfected, are *not* allowed to return to School until after fourteen days has elapsed, contacts are kept from School during the period of infection. No School has been closed during the year owing to Infectious Diseases. In cases of Diphtheria a negative swab has to be obtained before any child, contact, or patient is allowed to return to School, by adopting this system the cases of this infectious disease are more or less curtailed from spreading among the scholars in the School. I have also suggested to the Education Authority that a reasonable amount of diluted disinfectant should be sprinkled over the floors of the class-rooms before sweeping operations take place, with a view to minimising any infection being contracted by the Caretaker.

My report on the Furzeham School, and the flooding of Station Hill premises and the "Goat House," are as follows :

re FURZEHAM HILL (COUNCIL) SANITARY CONVENIENCES.

I have the honour to submit a report on the condition of the above School Lavatories, etc. The School was visited by the Medical Officer of Health and myself on the 21st instant, and we found the Lavatories, etc., in a very clean condition.

Type of Water Closets. These Water Closets are not modern, but of the "trough" type, each seat being separated by a partition. At the higher end of the trough is a 60 gallon (reduced to 30 gallons) Field Automatic Flushing Tank, which actuates about every three hours (or three times a day during school hours), and at the other end of the trough is a weir, over which the water flows into a trap when the water closets are flushed, water being retained in the trough at all times. I recommend that the water closets be flushed at least six times during school hours.

Condition of Water Closets. The Water Closets are kept in a clean state, and I have never had to complain or report on their uncleanness during the many times I have inspected these Schools, which invariably took place during school hours.

Urinals. The channelling in the Urinals could be made 2 inches deeper, and the grid of the Gullies movable, to enable the Caretaker to cleanse them frequently.

Drains. The Water Closets are drained through a 6-inch pipe into a manhole, having a 6-inch half-channel and interceptor outside the boundary of the school walls, and are ventilated by a 3-inch iron pipe with a fresh-air inlet.

Lavatory Wash Basins. The Wash Basins require cleansing in both the Boys' and Girls' Schools. The "D" trap in the Boys' Cloakroom should be removed and the waste water to run over an half-channel (outside) to an open gulley. At present it is allowed to remain in the "D" trap inside and flows into a catchpit before entering the gulley.

Disinfectant. The Caretaker should have a liberal supply of a liquid disinfectant for the purpose of sprinkling the floors before sweeping them out. I propose fumigating these Schools next week.

The County Council's Architect and two Councillors visited these Schools about three or four weeks ago, and I understand that some work is being carried out to alter the system of ventilation and the wash basin waste water system.

re STATION HILL AND "GOAT HOUSE."

I have to report the result of an Inquiry and consultation I, in company with the Surveyor, had with Mr. O. F. Stanford, a Ministry of Health Inspector, *re* Station Hill Sewer and "Goat House" Drainage.

STATION HILL SEWER.

At the Inquiry held at the Town Hall on the 29th January, 1926, the question of evidence from the Sanitary Inspector was not raised by Mr. Gray, therefore I had nothing to say, but subsequently I explained to the Inspector that I was the Acting Surveyor at the time of the first flooding of Mr. Gray's premises, and that the sewer was opened and the clearing rods were used, but nothing of an obstructive nature was discovered or indicated by the rods. The Surveyor will probably report on the Inspector's suggestions.

"GOAT HOUSE."

1. The work now being carried out by the Council, as recommended by the Surveyor and myself, is approved by Mr. Stanford, except that the bath and waste must go into the sewer, and for that purpose a raised gulley may be used.

2. The Owner to be requested to build a dam in the garden to prevent flooding from the leat in that direction.

3. The culvert to be widened at the outfall and a man-hole constructed over the culvert for examination and clearing purposes.

4. The sewer to be relieved as much as possible of surface and storm water.

5. Six times the dry weather flow, as regards sewage entering a stream or water course, etc., does not, in the Inspector's opinion, apply to the leat at Horsepool, where it passes through your town, he upholds my objection to the sewage entering the leat in any shape or form from the main sewer.

REMARKS.

The final remarks of Mr. Stanford were that any alteration to the sewers and drainage of the Goat House must not in any way prejudice what work may have to be done in future to the sewers, and that the Council must always have in their minds that sooner or later the sewer from St. Kilda (Drew Street) to Horsepool Street will have to be replaced by a 12-in. sewer, especially if the work now being carried out proves unsatisfactory.

Mr. Stanford does not wish to involve the Council into any unnecessary expenditure, and with that object in view wishes his name to be kept out of the suggested alterations to the sewers, etc., so that the Council may send direct what they propose to do to the Ministry of Health.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. JEFFORD, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,
Sanitary Inspector.

REPORT OF THE BRIXHAM PORT SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Gentlemen,

On the 20th February, 1925, the S.S. "Gransha" (crew fifteen, tonnage 487, cargo coal), was visited by the Medical Officer of Health (Dr. J. F. Falconer) and myself, the crew being medically examined, the said ship having been at an infected Port (St. Malo, France). From information received from the Port Medical Officer at Hull, who stated that the crew had been vaccinated, but on examination it was found that seven out of the fifteen of the crew the vaccination had not taken, otherwise they had a clear Bill of Health. A wire was sent to the Port Sanitary Medical Officer at Cardiff for any action he might consider necessary on the arrival of the ship at Berry Road, a letter followed confirming the wire, sanitary conditions were good.

On the 6th April, 1925, the S.S. "Clonlee" (crew thirteen, tonnage 396, cargo coal), was also visited by the Medical Officer of Health and myself, the same procedure was carried out as in the case of the S.S. "Gransha." The Port Medical Officer of Cardiff being informed. On the crew being examined all of them were found well.

INSPECTION OF SHIPS AND HARBOUR.

Ships, both Foreign and Coastwise, have been visited by me, as the Port Sanitary Official, whenever an opportunity occurs consistant with my many other duties.

The Fish Market is kept in a cleanly state, being washed down every day after the day's sale of the Fish landed, but spitting on the floor of the Market must be stopped. The trawlers are kept clean, both in the holds and cabins. During the year I have fumigated one Steam Trawler that was over-run with rats and was in a verminous condition.

The state of the Inner Harbour is not quite as good as we might expect, the silting is accumulating, and may, if left too long, be an heavy expense. This matter has been brought before the Council by the Harbour Committee and the questions raised, but owing to the financial position of the Harbour Estate it has been put off to a later date.

Amount of Shipping entering the Port Sanitary District of Brixham during the year ending December, 1925.

	Number	Tonnage	Numbers Inspected		Numbers reported to be defective	Number of Orders issued
			By M.O.H.	By S.I.		
Foreign	Steamers	246	331369		23	
	Motor ...					
	Sailing ...	2	92		2	
	Fishing	5	1605		2	
Total Foreign ...	253	333066		27		
Coastwise	Steamers	161	42790	2	16	
	Motor ...	7	158		1	
	Sailing ...	2	44			
	Fishing	47	1208		20	
Total Coastwise ...	217	44200	2	37		
Total Foreign and Coastwise ...	470	377266	2	64		

Rats destroyed during 1925.

On the 27th June, 1925, the S. Drifter "Rose of Sharon" was fumigated, and poison laid to exterminate Rats and Vermin, the holds were battened down for two days, the Crew being quartered ashore.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. JEFFORD, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,
Port Sanitary Inspector.

