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BOROUGH OF BUCKINGHAM.

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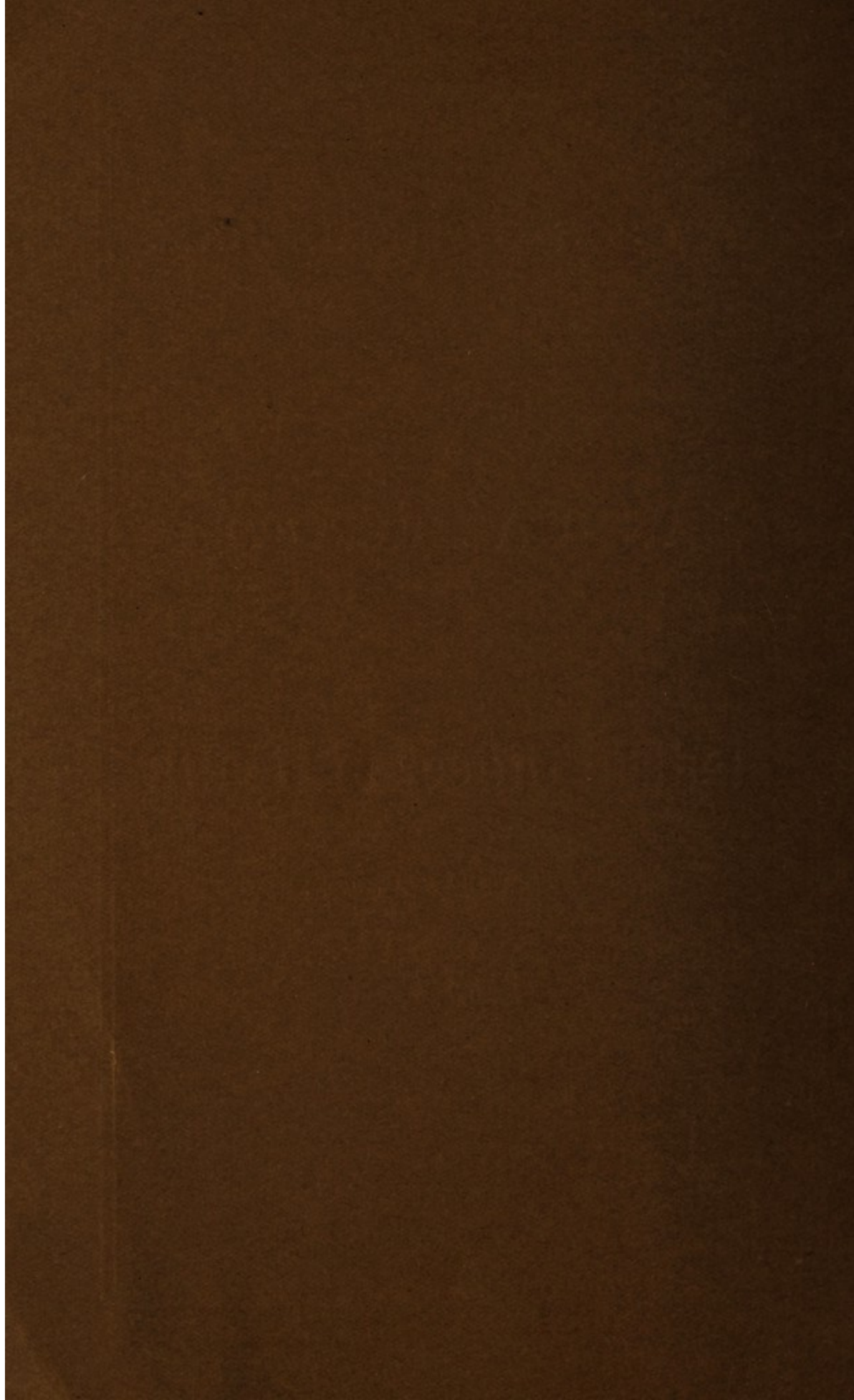
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**Medical Officer of Health**

FOR THE YEAR

1937.





*To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of Buckingham  
acting by the Town Council as the Urban District  
Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of producing the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1937. This Report is in accordance with Circular 1650 of the Minister of Health.

Public Health Legislation continues to progress and during the year several Acts have come into force including the Housing Act, 1936 consolidating the Housing Acts of 1925 and 1935, the Midwifery Act, 1936 and the Public Health Act, 1936 which amends and co-ordinates the numerous enactments from 1875 onwards. Amongst the measures which have gone through Parliament successfully in 1937 have been the Physical Training and Recreation Act, 1937, the Air Raids Precaution Act, 1937, the Public Health (Drainage of Trade Premises) Act, 1937 and the Hydrogen Cyanide (Fumigation) Act, 1937. In addition the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937 has been passed for the benefit of full time Local Government Officials.

The National Health Campaign was inaugurated this year and Buckingham played its part nobly in the effort to make everyone 'health conscious.' The Health Exhibition in November was the first in the County and was an outstanding success thanks to the able and willing assistance rendered by the many helpers and organisations and the whole-hearted support of the general public.

In Buckingham itself progress has been made, and perhaps the most important has been the preparation of the scheme to modernise the sewage disposal works. A certain amount of improvement has been made in regard to housing, but there is still need for firm action in the case of some properties, including some which I recommended for demolition within a few months of my appointment, nearly three years ago. Some of the condemned houses are in occupation and will have to remain so until there is somewhere to house the occupants.

Once more I should like to express my thanks to the members of the Council for their help and co-operation and to the Sanitary Inspector for his constant and ready assistance. The liaison with the County Medical Officer continues to be good and I am grateful to my medical colleagues in the Borough for their co-operation.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

A. MICHAEL CRITCHLEY.



BUCKINGHAM URBAN DISTRICT

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**Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health**  
**For the Year 1937.**

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*Mayor* :—COUNCILLOR T. H. SMITH.

*Public Health Committee :*

Chairman—Alderman A. E. Busby.

Aldermen B. L. Ackerman, F. Holton, A. J. Hounslow (deceased),  
E. H. Hudson.

Councillors A. E. Bryant, C. W. Cantell, E. T. Hawes, W. C.  
Garner (elected 1/11/37), Hon. F. S. Hubbard, W. O. Parker,  
W. S. Pringle, O. Rodwell, P. J. Small (elected 1/11/37),  
W. C. Spatchet (retired 31/10/37), T. Stacey (retired 31/10/37),  
W. H. Thomas (elected 1/11/37), J. M. Tilley.

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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS :

*Medical Officer of Health.*

A. Michael Critchley, M.D., CH.B., D.P.H.

The M.O.H. is also M.O.H. for Bletchley U.D.C. and  
Assistant County Medical Officer, Bucks.

*Sanitary Inspector.*

George Belson Chilvers, F.I.S.E., M. Inst. M. & Cty. Eng.,  
Crt. Royal Sanitary Institute.

**A. Vital Statistics.**

						1937.	1936.
Area ... ..						5123a.	5123a.
Registrar-General's estimate of Population...						3291	3266
Number of inhabited houses						1056	1056
Rateable value						£19709	£19782
Sum represented by a penny rate						£79	£77
Rates ... ..						12/9	11/8
Live Births	{	Legitimate	...	M.	F.	46	50
		Illegitimate	...	23	0	0	1
Birth-rate per 1,000 population						14	15.6
„ for Bucks						14.8	14.6
„ for England and Wales						14.9	14.8
Deaths per 1,000 of estimated population						10.9	14.6
Death-rate (corrected for sex and age)						8.5	11.4
„ Bucks						11.3	11.1
„ England and Wales						12.4	12.1
Deaths from Puerperal Causes						0	0
Maternal Mortality, England and Wales						3.1	3.8
<i>Death-rate of Infants under 1 year :</i>							
All Infants per 1,000 live births						0	59
Infantile Mortality, Bucks						40.4	44.9
„ „ England & Wales						58	59

DEATHS FROM :	1937.		1936.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
Measles				
Whooping Cough				
Influenza	2	2		
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)				
Respiratory Tuberculosis	1		3	
Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis				
Syphilis	1			
Cancer	2	3	3	4
Diabetes				1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	1	1	1	4
Heart Disease	5	2	4	5
Other Circulatory		1	2	1
Bronchitis		1	3	1
Pneumonia			1	2
Other Respiratory	1			
Peptic Ulcer				
Other Digestive	1	1	2	
Nephritis		1		1
Puerperal Causes				
Congenital Causes			3	
Senility	1	2		3
Suicide and other violence	2		2	
Other defined diseases	3	2	1	1
	20	16	25	23



## VITAL STATISTICS.

A study of the vital statistics reveals that the birth-rate for England and Wales has increased slightly, although in Buckingham itself there is a fall. In dealing with a place the size of this Borough one birth makes an appreciable difference in the rate so that this fall is of little significance. The infantile and maternal mortality rates for the country as a whole have become lowered, whilst in the Borough there have been no deaths of either infants or mothers. This is a wonderful improvement on 1936, when the infantile mortality for the district was 59.

## SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Buckingham is a typical country town in which most of the industries are associated with agriculture. The largest number of workers is employed in a milk factory.

### **B. General Provision of Health Services for the Area.**

1. PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS.—See Page 2 of Report.

2. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The Council has an arrangement with the Clinical Research Association and the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene to do its pathological investigations.

3. AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(a) *Infectious Cases* are transported by the motor ambulance of the North Bucks Joint Isolation Hospital Board.

(b) *Non-Infectious and Accident Cases* continue to be dealt with in a most satisfactory manner by the local St. John Ambulance Brigade.

4. NURSING IN THE HOME.

The Buckingham District Nursing Association continues to give valuable services in both sick nursing and maternity work.



## 5. CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

(a) *Maternity and Child Welfare Centre*.—A clinic is held monthly in the Oddfellows' Hall and is run by a committee of voluntary helpers. A grant is given by the County Council. The welfare centre is attended by one of the County Health visitors and the Medical Officer of Health, and arrangements have been made for the district nurses to be present whenever possible. There was a further increase in the numbers of mothers and babies attending the Welfare Centre. At this clinic mothers are given individual advice in addition to receiving short addresses on health topics. Necessitous cases receive free milk and dental treatment when required, the expenses being borne by the County Council. When further pregnancies are contra-indicated owing to reasons of health the mothers are referred to a Birth Control Clinic in Oxford, the cost of consultation and appliances being paid by the Bucks County Council.

There is no doubt that the decrease in infantile mortality throughout the kingdom is due in part to the work of the maternity and child welfare clinics. It is extremely satisfactory to note the fact that there were no maternal deaths nor deaths of children under the age of one year in the Borough.

(b) *Ophthalmic Clinic*.—School children requiring glasses or ophthalmic treatment are sent by the Bucks County Education Committee to special eye clinics at Bletchley or Aylesbury.

(c) *Tuberculosis Clinic*.—The Bucks County Tuberculosis Officer is in charge of an anti-tuberculosis dispensary held in Buckingham monthly.

(d) *Venereal Diseases Clinic*.—Cases requiring advice or treatment under this scheme can be seen gratuitously at the appropriate departments of the Northampton General Hospital, Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, or Royal Bucks Hospital, Aylesbury.

(e) *Minor Ailments Clinic*.—Held twice monthly by the County Health Visitor.

## 6. HOSPITALS.

*Infectious Diseases*.—Grove Hospital near Leighton Buzzard which belongs to the North Bucks Joint Isolation Hospital Board.

*Small-Pox*.—North Bucks Joint Small-Pox Hospital, Woughton, near Bletchley.

The following Voluntary Hospitals serve this area but are not subsidised by the Council:—Buckingham Hospital, Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, Northampton General Hospital, Royal Bucks Hospital, Aylesbury.



## C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

### 1. WATER.

The scheme for improving the town supply was completed during the early part of the year. The new 216,000 gallon reservoir has proved of real value. The water continues to be very satisfactory as the analysis appended shews:—

#### *Report from Bacteriological Laboratories :*

##### Samples of Water from Reservoir at Akeley.

##### QUANTATIVE ENUMERATION OF BACTERIA.

On Agar Plates, kept for two days at 37° C., 10 colonies per 1 c.c. developed.

On Agar Plates, kept for four days at 20°—22° C., 90 colonies per 1 c.c. developed.

##### EXAMINATION FOR SPECIAL BACTERIA.

Coliform bacilli	...	...	absent in 100 c.c.
Streptococci	...	...	absent in 100 c.c.
B. Enteritidis Sporogenes	...	...	absent in 100 c.c.

##### RESULT OF EXAMINATION.

From a consideration of the data, no exception can be taken to the use of this water for domestic purposes, upon bacteriological grounds.

#### *Certificate of Analysis of a Sample of Water :*

##### Sample of Water from Reservoir at Akeley.

##### PHYSICAL CHARACTERS.

Reaction	...	...	Alkaline.
Colour in 2 ft. stratum	...	...	Clear pale green.
Suspended matters	...	...	Nil.
Odour when warmed to 37° C.	...	...	Nil.

##### CHEMICAL CHARACTERS.

		Parts per 100,000	Grains per gallon.
Total solids dried at 100° C.	...	44.50	31.15
Loss on ignition (after re-carbonating)	...	9.0	6.3
Chlorine in Chlorides	...	1.70	1.19
" X 1.647 — Sodium Chloride	...	2.80	1.96
Nitrites	...	Nil	Nil
Nitrogen as Nitrates	...	0.10	0.07
Saline Ammonia	...	Nil	Nil
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	0.0038	0.0026
Oxygen absorbed in 3 hours at 37° C.	...	0.028	0.019
Hardness—Total	...	24.0	16.8
" Temporary	...	16.0	11.2
" Permanent	...	8.0	5.6
Poisonous Metals—Lead	...	Nil	
" " Copper	...	Nil	

##### REMARKS.

From a consideration of the above data, no exception can be taken to the use of this water for domestic purposes, upon Chemical grounds.

The No. 2 bore-hole which was thrown into disuse on the installation of the new electrical pumping plant was converted from a steam driven pump to oil engine drive; the head gear of the old pump was altered and crude oil engine installed. This pump will be of service as a standby in case of failure of electrical supply and also if there is a shortage of water in the new well.

## 2. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

No works of importance were carried out during the year. As stated in previous reports the present sewage works need modernising and accordingly Mr. J. S. Alford, M.I.C.E., was appointed to prepare a scheme to improve and enlarge the existing works, so as to be able, not only to deal with the present flow of sewage more adequately, but also to cope with extra sewage to equal an increase of over 1000 population. At the time of writing this scheme is being considered by the Ministry of Health, having been submitted by Mr. Alford to the Borough Council, which approved it.

## 3. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

No complaints were received during the year.

## 4. CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

A further 69 houses at Gawcott were converted from pail to water closets during the year.

Two conversions also took place at Buckingham.

## 5. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

No changes took place during the year.

## 6. PUBLIC MORTUARY.

The Public Mortuary has again been of service both to the Borough and Rural District.

## 7. SMOKE ABATEMENT.

No complaints or nuisance arose during the year.

## 8. SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

The bathing place in the river was again well patronised.



## 9. SCHOOLS.

There are three elementary and one secondary in the area. Water closets and wash basins have been installed in the Gawcott school during the year.

## 10. ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No complaints of verminous houses have been received, consequently no disinfection has been carried out.

## 11. SHOPS.

Inspection has been carried out under Shops Act, 1934.

### SUMMARY OF WORK BY SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1937.

#### General.

Inspections made ... ..	811
Stopped Drains ... ..	5
Animals kept as to be a nuisance ... ..	2
Defective Gutters ... ..	2
"    Grates ... ..	6
"    Paving ... ..	3
"    W.C.'s ... ..	8
"    Chimneys ... ..	3
"    Ceilings and Walls ... ..	6
"    Floors ... ..	9
"    Windows ... ..	10
"    Staircases ... ..	8
"    Coppers ... ..	1
"    and damp Walls ... ..	6
"    Roofs ... ..	9
Houses and Premises Disinfected ... ..	33
New Houses ... ..	2
Alterations and Additions ... ..	13
New Drainage ... ..	72

#### Slaughter Houses.

On Register ... ..	9
Inspections ... ..	156
Defects ... ..	Nil

#### Bakehouses.

On Register ... ..	5
Inspections ... ..	20
Defects ... ..	Nil

#### Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.

On Register ... ..	33
Inspections ... ..	66
Defects ... ..	6

## Registered Workshops.

Workshops on the Register (s. 131) at the end of the year 1937.

Boot and Shoe Repairers	...	...	6
Cabinet Makers	...	...	2
Saddlers	...	...	1
Millers	...	...	1
Milk Products Factories	...	...	2
Bakehouses	...	...	5
Printers	...	...	2
Builders	...	...	8
Engineering and Motor Cycle Works	...	...	9
Dressmaking, etc.	...	...	8
Coachbuilding	...	...	2
Tailoring	...	...	2
Gas Works	...	...	1
Electric Light Works	...	...	1
Plumbers, Painters and Tinsmiths	...	...	3
Laundries	...	...	1
Blacksmiths	...	...	2
			—
			56
			—

## D. Housing.

The following table shows the Housing Statistics for 1937 :—

<b>1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year :</b>			
(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	121
	(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	309
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	121
	(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	121
(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	10
(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	...	72
<b>2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notice :</b>			
	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers		59
<b>3.</b>	<b>Action under Statutory Powers during the Year</b>	...	23
<b>4. Housing Act, 1936—Part 4—Overcrowding.</b>			
(a) (1)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year		8
	(2) Number of families dwelling therein	...	8
	(3) Number of persons dwelling therein	...	44
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year		Nil
(c) (1)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year		Nil
	(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases	...	Nil
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	...	Nil
(e)	Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report	...	Nil



The housing question still causes much worry, but some progress has been made. Some properties have been reconditioned by means of assistance under the Rural Workers Housing Act. It would be of very great benefit to the district if more owners applied for a grant under this Act, as it is undoubtedly the best way of improving and preserving cottages which will let at a rent within the means of the agricultural labourer. In such an area as Buckingham this Act is perhaps the most useful of the various Housing Acts as it is the greatest help in getting houses at cheap rentals and by its clauses prevents exploitation by speculative owners.

Several houses have been dealt with under the Slum Clearance section of the Housing Act, 1936, but in some cases the very necessary repairs have been carried out in a half hearted and most unsatisfactory manner. If old houses are to be retained instead of being demolished they must be thoroughly re-conditioned, not just patched, otherwise they will be in an unfit condition again within a few months.

Two Clearance Areas were declared during the year and were duly confirmed by the Minister of Health.

In 1937 the Council acquired a site for the erection of 62 houses off the Tingewick Road. A scheme has been drawn up for this new housing estate and at the time of writing a tender for the erection of these houses has been accepted provisionally.

## **E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.**

### **(a) MILK SUPPLY.**

Registration procedure has been carried out in accordance with the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.

There were 33 Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops registered. No premises were licenced for the pasteurisation of milk.

### **(b) MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.**

Meat inspection was carried out, but owing to there being nine slaughter houses it was not possible to see all meat, so that only a small proportion of meat used in the Borough has been inspected.

There were five bakehouses registered. Inspection has revealed no gross defects.

### **(c) NUTRITION.**

At the Health Exhibition, emphasis was paid on nutritional problems including the value of safe milk, and several films, lectures and displays were given on these questions.



## F. Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

### 1. GENERAL.

This year there has been a less amount of illness, but the Scarlet Fever epidemic of 1936 carried on into 1937 causing a number of cases.

There were 32 notifications of Scarlet Fever. Most of these cases occurred in the first three months of the year. Then there was a period of comparative freedom for a couple of months but in June and July a fresh crop broke out. One of the patients lived in a dairy and it was feared that the milk might possibly become infected either by a carrier or an undetected case. The position was made clear to the dairyman and realizing the seriousness of the problem, not only to the people of the Borough but also to his own business, he made every effort to carry out the instructions and advice given him. The usual disinfection was carried out after removal of the patient to hospital. A pasteurisation plant was improvised and all the milk was treated by heat to kill any organisms present. All employees and contacts were examined and swabbed and as haemolytic streptococci were cultivated from nasal swabs of three, in spite of the fact that none of them had any symptoms of Scarlet Fever. As these three people were handling milk, they were excluded from work and treated until swabs taken from their noses and throats were negative, and then were allowed to return to work. These precautions were successful in preventing a milk borne outbreak of Scarlet Fever, for there was no evidence that any of the subsequent cases of Scarletina were produced by milk. Two cases that were discharged from hospital had to be returned there as they developed post Scarletinal Rheumatism on discharge.

TABLE SHEWING NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED AND  
NUMBER ADMITTED TO AN ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

DISEASE.	1937.		1936.	
	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.
Diphtheria ... ..	3	3	1	1
Scarlet Fever ... ..	32	30	40	38
Erysipelas ... ..	1	1	...	...
Puerperal Fever ... ..	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia ... ..	7	...	7	...



# CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE ACCORDING TO AGE AND SEX.

DISEASE.	Total all ages.	Under 1 year	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 upwards	Deaths
Scarlet Fever ... ..	M 16 F 16			2		4 1	11 3	6	2	1 1				
Diphtheria ... ..	M 1 F 2						1 1					1		
Pneumonia... ..	M 2 F 5				1	2		1				1	2	

## 2. CANCER.

There have been 5 deaths from Cancer during the year, a slight fall on the previous year.

Lectures have been given on Cancer under the auspices of the British Empire Cancer Campaign of which the M.O.H. is the local Secretary.

## 3. PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

No action has been taken under Section 66 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

## 4. TUBERCULOSIS.

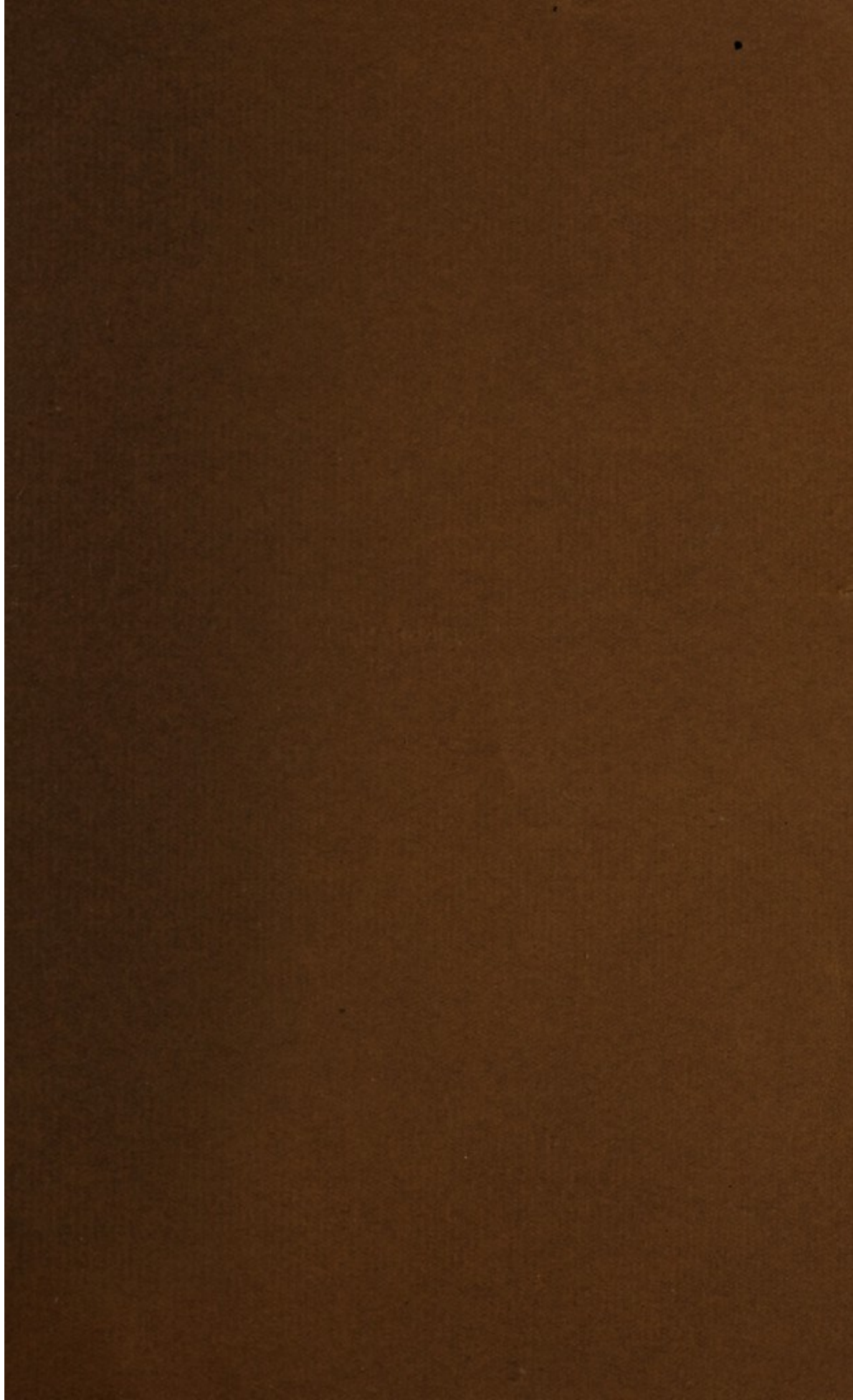
No action has been taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

## TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1937.

AGE PERIODS.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.	
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.			
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Years						
0—1						
1—5						
5—10						
10—25						
25—35					1	
35—45						
45—55				1		
55—65						
65 and upwards						
Totals ...				1	1	

A. MICHAEL CRITCHLEY,  
*Medical Officer of Health.*





BUCKINGHAM:

H. W. FREESTONE, 108, Market Square.