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Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
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<https://wellcomecollection.org>

Murray

The Urban District Council of Caterham.

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**REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.**

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THE PRIORY,  
CATERHAM VALLEY,

February, 1915.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council  
of Caterham.*

GENTLEMEN,

As Medical Officer of Health I have the honour to present you with my Annual Report for the year 1914 for the District over which you preside:—

**Area, Statistics and Population.**

The area comprises 2,438 acres, with an estimated population of 11,246. This figure represents the anticipated increase based on the census returns. There has been of course a much larger population during a part of the year owing to the advent of a large number of recruits at the Guards' Depôt, this will be dealt with in a subsequent paragraph. The average number of inmates in the Metropolitan Asylum during the year were 2,012.

There have been 184 births and 88 deaths either in the District or assigned to the District during the year. This gives a birth rate of 19·8 per 1000 of the population and a death rate of 9·5.

In estimating these rates the inmates of the Asylum and the deaths therein have been excluded.

There have been 13 deaths of infants, i.e., children under one year of age, of these 7 were due to premature birth or congenital malformations, 1 to whooping cough, 2 to bronchitis, and 3 to pneumonia. Again the District is to be congratulated on the absence of infantile diarrhoea and this in spite of the hot and dry summer and autumn.



### **Infectious Diseases.**

There were 59 cases of infectious disease notified during the year, viz: 9 of Diphtheria, 5 of Erysipelas, 38 of Scarlet Fever, 1 of Ophthalmia Neonatorum, 5 of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and 1 of Surgical Tuberculosis.

Of the cases of Diphtheria 7 occurred in one house and the disease was of a particularly virulent type, 4 of the cases unfortunately proved fatal.

The cases of Scarlet Fever were all of a mild type and all terminated in recovery. Fourteen of the cases were notified from the Guards' Depôt. Ten cases of Scarlet Fever were removed to the Isolation Hospital.

Of the cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis 3 were removed to Sanitoria under the Insurance Act and one case reported from the Guards' Depôt was dealt with by the Military Authorities. No case of Enteric or Puerperal Fever was reported.

During the year arrangements have been made whereby Medical Practitioners in the District may under certain conditions have the Bacteriological Examination of throat swabs, blood, etc., carried out free of charge in case of suspected infectious disease.

Reverting to the number of recruits at the Guards' Depôt since the outbreak of the war these have varied between 5 and 7 thousand or more. Fortunately the health of the men has been on the whole remarkable: 16 cases only have been notifiable, viz. 14 of Scarlet Fever, 1 of Diphtheria, and 1 of Pulmonary Tuberculosis: much increase in the Sanitation of the District has been caused by the large number of troops stationed here.

The Council have rendered and are rendering considerable assistance to the Military Authorities in the disinfection of the huts and clothing of the troops, etc. Over 100 iron buildings have been erected by the War Office for the extra accommodation needed and the drainage from these buildings has been connected to the Council sewers. The intake at the Sewage Works has been twice the normal quantity since these connections have been made. The collection of house refuse from the Depot has necessitated daily attention and the increase in the quantity to be removed has been considerable.

Officers and men from other regiments have been stationed here and billeted in the District and supervision of the Sanitary requirements of this further Military



population has received close attention. Valuable co-operation and assistance have been rendered by the Military Medical Officers.

The Local Government Board Inspector in his recent visit stated that there were very few places in the country that had the conveniences and facilities in the matter of sanitation that Caterham had been able to offer for the large temporary population increase.

#### **Schools.**

Co-operation with the County Education Committee in the matter of sanitation of the schools has received careful attention. Some of the schools have been closed for varying periods during the year owing to the prevalence of measles and whooping cough; the infant departments were more particularly affected as the incidence of the above epidemics were worse during the inclement parts of the year, viz., the early part of the year and late autumn: good work is being done by the local after-care Committee especially in carrying out the recommendations of the School Medical Officers.

#### **General Hygienic Proceedings.**

The Sewage Works are in a very satisfactory condition. A pure effluent is obtained and the sewers, bacteria beds and works generally are in good order. The works have been inspected during the year by the Inspectors from the Local Government Board and War Office.

The number of cesspools emptied during the year, in the portion of the district not sewered, has been 875. The contents after being deoderised are removed to the Sewage Farm in covered vans. The consideration of the main drainage of the Valley has been postponed in consequence of the present financial situation and the increased cost of material.

#### **Housing of the Working Classes.**

The number of houses in the district under £16 rateable value is 958 and over £16 and under £26 is 269; as that there is an adequate supply of cottages for the working classes in the District.

Systematic inspection has been made of the cottages. Two cases of overcrowding were dealt with. Two cottages have been closed as unfit for habitation.

The following defects were remedied during the year :—

Drainage Defects and Stoppages ....	258
Defective Dust Bins ....	36
Animal, Manure and Offal Nuisances	9
Defective Walls and Roofs ....	15
Distempeting Rooms ....	13

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Total 331

### **House Refuse**

The Council have removed 3,385 loads of House Refuse during the year. This is either burnt by the Brickworks or on sites at a distance from inhabited houses.

### **New Buildings.**

Plans of 13 new houses or additions to existing houses have been passed by the Council.

### **Water Supply.**

Periodical Analyses were made by Dr. Rideal, F.I.C. on behalf of the Council of the water supplied from the mains of the East Surrey Water Co. Dr. Rideal reports that the water maintains its high standard of excellence and purity.

### **Slaughter Houses.**

Frequent inspection of the four slaughter houses in the district has been made but no case of tuberculosis meat has been detected. The slaughter houses are kept in a clean and satisfactory condition.

### **Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.**

There are 7 Cowkeepers and 12 Dairymen. The Dairies and Cowsheds have been repeatedly visited and found to be in order.

### **Sale of Foods and Drugs Act.**

The number of samples during the year has been 32. Four were found to be adulterated or to have deteriorated. There has been one prosecution and conviction

### **Factory and Workshops Act.**

There are 7 Bakehouses, 6 Laundries, and 25 workshops and workplaces in the district. These are in proper sanitary condition and well suited for their respective trades.

**S. DAVEY,**

*Medical Officer of Health for the Urban District of Caterham.*