

Contributors

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1895.



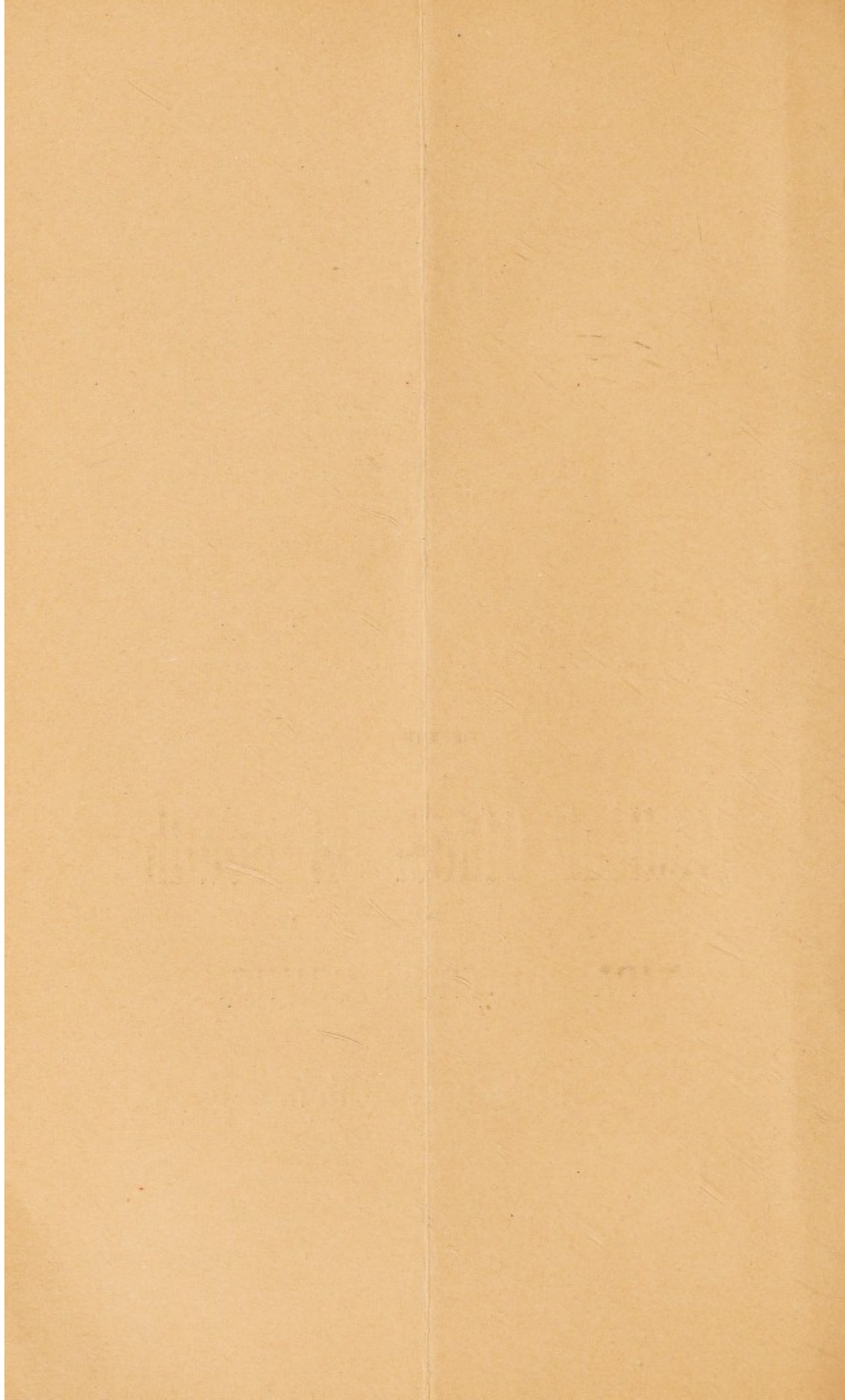
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

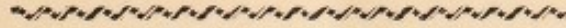
Medical Officer of Health

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL,

Cheltenham Union.



1895.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL,

CHELTENHAM UNION.



Population in 1891,	-	- 4,585
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Acreage, -	-	- 18,387
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TO THE

CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS

OF

THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN.

I am pleased to inform you that the Health of the District is good, although the Death Rate has increased somewhat from various causes. There has been no Epidemic of any particular Disease, and cases of Infectious Diseases under the "Notification of Diseases" Act have been reduced to a minimum.

REPORT.

Deaths. During the year 71 Deaths have been registered in the District as against 67 in the previous year. This is a slight increase, making the Death Rate 15.48 per 1000 of the population as against 14.39 in 1894.

Beside those dying in the District, there were 9 cases reported as dying in Public Institutions outside the District, viz. :—5 in the General Hospital, Cheltenham, and 4 in the Workhouse Infirmary, Cheltenham, these Deaths being added it would give a general Death Rate of 17.40 per 1000 of the population.

Causes of Deaths.

In the analysis of the causes of Deaths, as tabulated on the forms required for the Local Government Board, I find the greater number come under the head of "all other diseases," viz. :—36 Deaths out of the 80, or very nearly 50%.

I would suggest that some of the diseases here included be allotted separate headings for the purpose of statistics thus, some cerebral affections, tubercular diseases (other than phthisis), suicides, cerebral apoplexy, cancer, and influenza. The one blank column left us in the (A) form I have given to cancer, an increasing disease from an unknown cause or causes.

Zymotic Diseases. There have been 10 Deaths from the principal Zymotic diseases, all but one occurring in children. There have been 6 Deaths from Phthisis.

In the column headed, "Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy," 16 Deaths were registered.

The Infant Mortality calculated from the number of Births registered during the year gives a Death Rate under One Year of Age at 104 per 1000.

Mortality Table 1895.			
PER 1000 LIVING.			PER 1000 BIRTHS.
Principal Zymotic Diseases.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Infant Mortality.
2.18	1.30	3.48	104.34

27 Deaths occurred at 65 years of age and upwards, 9 of which were at 80 and over.

Births. During the year 115 Births have been registered viz. :—59 males and 56 females, of these 2 were illegitimate. This gives a Birth Rate of 25.08 per 1000 of the population which is much higher than that recorded for the past 3 years ; last year the Birth Rate was only 20.50 per 1000. This increased Birth Rate points to a more prosperous state of the Rural District.

Density of Area.

Since the Rural portion of Leckhampton has been added to the District, the density of area has slightly decreased, it is now at the rate of .249 persons to an acre or, without fractions, about 163 persons to a square mile; this District comprises 28 square miles and 467 acres. Density of population has not been found to increase the Death Rate until it becomes more than 400 persons to a square mile.

Infectious
Diseases.

There has been a marked freedom from infectious diseases under the Act, only 4 cases in all as against an average of 15 during the past 3 years. This immunity I attribute greatly to the strict carrying out of the "Notification of Diseases" Act, wisely adopted by this Council in 1890, which affords an opportunity of isolation and preventive measures being taken at the commencement of an attack.

Scarlet Fever.

Only 2 cases of Scarlet Fever have been notified to me during the year, these were children in the same house. Both cases were removed to the Delancey Fever Hospital. Disinfection of the premises was carried out so effectually that no other cases occurred, although there were 3 other children in the same house.

I may here mention, as anticipated in my former Reports, that the Fever Hospital has been enlarged to meet the requirements of the Town and District,

This Institution is well managed, and now has representatives of the Cheltenham Health Committee to assist in the direction of its affairs.

Puerperal Fever.

There was 1 case of Puerperal Fever notified to me during the year ; the case was primarily attended by a Midwife, but I think it was more a case of exhaustion, &c., occurring in a poor person where perhaps some of the lying-in arrangements were not too perfect. However, instructions were given to the Midwife as regards personal Disinfection, &c., and she was prevented from attending other cases for some time.

Typhoid Fever.

I find, by the Hospital Returns, there was 1 case of fatal Typhoid Fever from the District treated in the Hospital ; it was not notified to me, so am unable to trace the cause.

Prestbury.

Population 1430.
Acres 3054

The long vexed question of the Drainage of Prestbury having been concluded in 1894, the Sewage Works were preceded with, and during the year all the houses and cottages within the prescribed distance have been connected with the Sewer ; other houses have also been connected.

There is some little trouble at the outfall, chiefly owing to the nature of the soil, and some want of attention on the part of the tenant of the Sewage

Farm. This has been regularly inspected by the Inspector of Nuisances, and the tenant's attention called to the terms of his tenancy.

It may become necessary to adopt some form of purification by Chemical precipitation if the present settling and irrigation system be found inadequate.

The Sewers are regularly flushed under the direction of the Inspector, otherwise all Surface Water is kept from the Sewer.

Water. The Water from the Cheltenham Corporation Waterworks has been brought into the Village portion of the Parish, and I hope soon to see many of the houses supplied with water from the same source. Now that the Water Carriage system of Drainage has been introduced, it becomes more necessary than ever to have an ample supply of Water. This is not possible in many of the cottages, as they depend for their Water Supply on shallow wells, many of which become dry in the summer time.

At present most of the Water Supply is provided by shallow wells. Some cottages at Shaw Green (in the Village) are supplied by a Spring of Pure Water, provided at the expense of the Rural Sanitary Authority; most of the farm houses on the hill side are also provided with pure Spring Water, brought down in iron pipes, so that the cow sheds are well supplied.

Many of the cesspools have been cleaned out and filled up under the direction of the Inspector, and I hope he will soon be able to report that they have all been emptied and filled in.

Pig Keeping and
other Nuisances.

In this Parish there has been a continual nuisance caused by the keeping of a large number of pigs together by butchers and pig dealers; the unwholesome practice of feeding these animals on raw offal from the slaughter-houses has caused many complaints. The offal is taken through the streets in proper covered carts, but still they are offensive, and I would suggest that a Bye-law be passed, limiting the hours during which the offal should be taken through the streets.

One of the pig farms, which was 50 yards from the high road and dwelling houses, has been done away with, as I had to bring the matter very strongly before you. Another pig farm where the animals were fed in the same manner, has been reduced and the nuisance diminished.

I would suggest that these pig farms be kept at least 100 yards away from the high road, and the same distance from any dwelling.

Schools.

The Schools here have this year been connected with the new Drainage system, and the former privies done away with; these Schools are at the dead end

of a branch of the Main Sewer, and flushing has to be done by means of water brought to that part. At the other dead end or commencement of the Sewer, there is a running stream, which can be turned into a flushing chamber, and the Main Sewer easily and completely flushed.

Leckhampton.

Population 263.
Acres 1275.

The Rural portion of this Parish has now for the past two years been added to the Rural District Authority. It is mostly situated on rising ground.

Sewers. The lower portion adjoining Cheltenham is connected with that town's system of Drainage, there is only a slight fall in the sewer here so that for Sanitary purposes it is necessary at short intervals to flush the same by means of a water cart, this has been regularly attended to by the Inspector. Other parts are provided with cesspools.

Water. The Water Supply is by means of springs and shallow wells. There has been no case of Infectious Disease during the year. One house was thoroughly disinfected at the beginning of the year after a case of Scarlet Fever, with the result of preventing the spread of the disease.

Fever Hospital. I am pleased to be able to make this statement as the Fever Hospital is in the immediate neighbourhood of this Parish, so one might more likely expect

to hear of some cases; it shows the great care that is exercised at the Hospital to prevent any possible outside infection.

Up-Hatherley.

Population 99.
Acres 538.

The proposed extension of Sewers from Cheltenham mentioned in my last year's Report has been made. By this means one of the large houses has been properly drained, which before was not satisfactory.

Water.

The Corporation water was also brought two years ago into this Parish and several houses supplied.

Excrement.

The other houses and cottages depend on their shallow wells for their Water Supply, and the excrement is used on the land.

Badgeworth.

Population 1096.
Acres 3901.

Badgeworth is an adjoining Parish, part of which, known as the Reddings, is badly supplied with water from shallow wells, some of which are polluted from adjoining cesspools. There are some 30 houses and cottages near together that might, at a reasonable cost, be supplied with water from an extension of the mains: the subject will be gone into I believe during the present year.

Water.

This Parish has recently been altered in the direction of Shurdington, but I have not yet got the boundaries, acreage and population, so I have used the former figures for the purpose of this Report. I hope to get the correction this year.

Shurdington.

Population 193.
Acres 504.

This adjoining Parish has received much time and attention from the Council with regard to its drainage, which is in an unsatisfactory state. In 1894 two plans of improved drainage were submitted to the Council. The larger and more complete plan was approved of by the Council but objected to by several parishioners, and the Parish Council was then requested by you to form a scheme of drainage on a more economical plan. A Surveyor was employed and plans submitted to the District Council, but they were held not to be sufficiently comprehensive. Another plan was adopted by the Parish Council and again submitted to you. This in my opinion is satisfactory, and deals with the entire village. The plans have been submitted to the Local Government Board for their approval.

Typhoid Fever.

There has been one fatal case of Typhoid Fever during the year; the case was not notified to me, so I had no means of tracing its cause, but it points to the necessity of improved Drainage and Water Supply.

This latter is a difficult matter, as there are few good springs. With the present imperfect

Drainage the shallow wells become polluted. When the Drainage is completed, I hope to suggest a scheme by which a satisfactory Water Supply may be obtained.

Schools. The School Closets have been improved, and the rain-water Drainage from the buildings provided for.

Nuisances. Pollution of a brook from some cottages has been abated; the present primitive Sewer cleaned out and kept in fair working order, but nothing satisfactory can be done until some Sewage Scheme is adopted.

Staverton.

Population 374.
Acres 1022.

The Water Supply here is entirely from shallow wells, and of fairly good quality. Most of the Drainage is by cesspools, the overflow in some cases being carried away in ditches. There were 14 deaths. This is a high Death Rate for the year, being at the rate of 37.43 per 1000 of the population; nine of these deaths were in children under five years of age, the others were at ages over 65. The average Death Rate of Staverton for the past three years, was five. One death is certified as from measles, and four other Deaths in children from Bronchitis. Possibly these cases may also have been Measles, as there is always some bronchial irritation in Measles; if so, this would to some extent account for the excessive mortality, but I am obliged to make my returns according to

the Certificates of Death, and only one in the case of Staverton is returned as Measles. Two deaths in children severally, of 13 days and 30 days, are returned as from Debility; another at one month old, from Diarrhœa.

This accounts for eight out of the 14 deaths; the others are from various other causes.

Overcrowding. This is one of the ordinary causes of an increased Death Rate. Staverton is badly off for labourers' cottages, many of them are crowded, and in one case I had to take steps to compulsory abate the nuisance.

In two cottages cesspits were adjoining the living rooms and were flooded with rain water, these were done away with and accommodation provided down the gardens.

Several Cottages have been made more Sanitary by Drainage, Paving, and White-washing, &c.

Factory. The Gut Dressing Factory in this Parish has been regularly inspected. It is kept clean, and the men working there seem fairly healthy. The refuse had accumulated to a great extent, to which I had to call the owner's attention, and advised the more liberal use of deodorants. Greater care also in regard to washings getting into the brook.

Swindon.
Population 243.
Acres 279.

The water here is still chiefly derived from shallow wells, and in some cases is very impure, only being used for cleansing purposes. There is one spring near some cottages which gives a good supply of water.

It was in one of these cottages that two cases of Scarlet Fever occurred during the year.

The Road Authorities opened a drain or sewer from these cottages where it runs by the footpath, but on your representing to them that it was a sewer and that you would share the expenses with them in improving and making it good to take the surface water as well, they covered it in again and left it in the same state as before.

I have advised that a pipe drain be laid for these cottages at a small expense.

Excrement. Is disposed of on the land, the overflow from various cesspools passing away in ditches.

Overcrowding. A shed in this Parish was found to be used as a dwelling house, four adults sleeping in a room measuring 12 by 8 by 7 feet, or 672 cubic feet. This nuisance was abated and the shed is now closed.

Uckington.
Population 148.
Acres 883.

The adjoining Parish of Uckington is low lying and badly supplied with water, chiefly because of the shallowness of the wells, but the Cheltenham Corporation main supply from the river Severn now runs through this village, so that a good supply is at

their doors. The main has been tapped here to supply a private house at Hayden, over a mile away, but I have heard of no others making use of it.

The excrement is disposed of by means of privies and some ditches.

Two of these latter are nuisances in the hot, dry weather, but it is difficult, owing to the small fall, to get rid of it.

Some stagnant ponds here are also a nuisance, and I have advised them being cleaned out and filled in, but it is an expensive matter and tenants naturally object to such outlay.

The deaths here were two, both over 70 years of age

Cowley,
Cubberley, and
Gt. Witcombe.
Population 739.
Acres 6477.

These are quite Rural Parishes situated on the range of hills overlooking Cheltenham. They are well supplied with good spring water, and the Drainage is easy and sufficient.

There have only been six deaths, and chiefly among old persons.

The source of the Thames is in the Parish of Cubberley, and passes down through Cowley by Cockleford Mill.

The possible pollution of this stream was the subject of a circular from the Local Government Board, but I have not found any damage being done.

Some nuisances from Pig Styes have been abated.

There have been no cases of Infectious Diseases in these 6477 acres during the year.

Bakehouses. The Bakehouses have been inspected and kept in a Sanitary state.

Cowsheds and Dairies. Cowsheds and Dairies have been inspected.

There has been no case of Infectious Disease traced to any Dairy, and although some of the Cowsheds are difficult to keep as clean as I should wish, they are well ventilated, and the cows kept out more than is usual.

I have drawn special attention to the danger of using polluted water in washing the milk utensils, and the dairymen seem alive to the fact.

The Inspector reports 29 Milk Purveyors and Farmers, with a total Head of 329 Cows.

New Dwelling Houses. Plans of New Buildings are sometimes submitted to the Inspector and myself for approval, but occasionally this is neglected, and I recommend that some power be adopted to prevent the erection of insanitary houses.

There has been no prosecution under the Public Health Act. I find all are willing to comply with its provisions, persuasion being effective.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

RICHARD CRESSWELL,

M.O.H., D.P.H., &c.

