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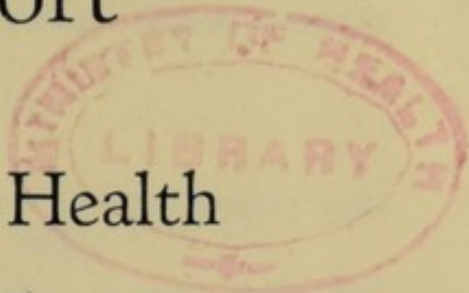


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# Cheltenham Rural District

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## Annual Report OF THE Medical Officer of Health For the Year 1945



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### STAFF

*Medical Officer of Health:*

STEPHEN KNIGHT,  
M.B., B.S.(Lond.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

*Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor:*

E. H. ROSSER, M.R.S.I.


*Additional Sanitary Inspectors:*

L. GROGAN,  
Certified Sanitary Inspector.  
Certified Inspector of Meats and Foods.

F. H. LEWIS,  
Certified Sanitary Inspector.

*Housing Inspector:*

A. F. YOUNG.



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# Cheltenham Rural District Council

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## ANNUAL REPORT 1945

*To the Chairman and Members of the Cheltenham Rural District Council.*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report on the health and sanitary circumstances of the District for 1945.

I resumed my duties in October after service with the R.A.M.C. since 1st September, 1939.

I found that preparations had been made in anticipation of the end of the war to improve conditions in the Rural District—plans to implement the Water Act of 1945, to bring “a tap in every home,” schemes for sewerage known to be very necessary in some parts of the district, but held up by the war, and—most important—every effort was being made to build houses to meet the acute shortage.

The population has increased from 15,150 in 1938 to 19,990 in the year under review. The birth rate, 17·1 for the district, shows a welcome upward trend, and compares favourably with the rate of 16·1 for the country as a whole. The death rate 11·4 is the same as that for England and Wales. Infantile deaths, children dying before they reach the age of one year, were at the rate of 32 per 1,000 live births, a low figure and better than the rate (46) for the country as a whole. If any one statistic is to be taken to assess the well-being of a community it should be this infantile-mortality figure.

Included in the Report are sections by Mr. Rosser, Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor, on water supply and sewerage, refuse and salvage collection, and sanitary inspection of the district.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

STEPHEN KNIGHT,  
*Medical Officer of Health.*

# Cheltenham Rural District Council

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Rural District of Cheltenham for the year 1945.

Area in Acres, 81,940.

Rateable value (1/4/45), £127,057.

Population (as estimated by the Registrar General), 19,990.

Yield of one penny rate, £522 1s. 9d.

Number of inhabited houses, 5,387.

## Vital Statistics

### BIRTHS

	LIVE BIRTHS.		Total.
	Males.	Females.	
Legitimate ..	152	144	296
Illegitimate ..	26	19	45
Total ..	178	163	341

Birth Rate per 1,000 of estimated population, 17.1.

	STILL BIRTHS.		Total.
	Males.	Females.	
Legitimate ..	4	2	6
Illegitimate ..	—	—	—
Total ..	4	2	6

Still Births per 1,000 estimated population, 0.3.

13 per cent. of total live births were illegitimate against 9.4 per cent the previous year.

### INFANTILE DEATH RATE.

	Males	Females.	Total.
Legitimate ..	5	5	10
Illegitimate ..	1	—	1
Total ..	6	5	11

Giving an Infantile Mortality Rate of 32 per 1,000 Live Births.

### DEATHS.

226 (102 Males, 124 Females) deaths of residents were registered during the year, giving a Death Rate of 11.4 per 1,000 population.

Deaths from Cancer, 1.2 per 1,000 population.

Deaths from Tuberculosis (all forms), 0.6 per 1,000 population.

The principal causes of death were:—

DISEASE.				Males.	Females
Typhoid and Para. Fevers	..	..	..	—	—
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	..	..	..	—	1
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	—	—
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	1	1
Diphtheria	..	..	..	—	—
Tuberculosis—Respiratory System	..	..	..	3	8
Other forms of Tuberculosis	..	..	..	1	—
Syphilis Diseases	..	..	..	—	—
Influenza	..	..	..	—	2
Measles	..	..	..	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	..	..	..	—	—
Polio-Encephalitis	..	..	..	—	—
Acute Infect. Encephalitis	..	..	..	—	—
Cancer	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Bucc. Cav.} \\ \text{Oesophagus (M)} \\ \text{Uterus (F)} \end{array} \right\}$		..	2	2
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	..	..	..	1	5
Cancer of Breast	..	..	..	—	3
Cancer of other Sites	..	..	..	4	7
Diabetes	..	..	..	—	2
Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions	..	..	..	13	21
Heart Disease	..	..	..	33	36
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	..	..	..	1	4
Bronchitis	..	..	..	2	4
Pneumonia	..	..	..	4	3
Other Respiratory Diseases	..	..	..	2	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	..	..	..	4	2
Diarrhoea under two years of age	..	..	..	1	1
Appendicitis	..	..	..	—	—
Other Digestive Diseases	..	..	..	4	3
Nephritis	..	..	..	2	1
Puerperal and Post-Abortion Sepsis	..	..	..	—	—
Other Maternal Causes	..	..	..	—	—

DISEASE.	Males.	Females
Premature Birth .. .. .	2	—
Congenital Malformation—Birth Injuries, Infantile Disease, etc. .. .. .	3	2
Suicide .. .. .	3	1
Road Traffic Acc. .. .. .	4	—
Other Violent Causes .. .. .	—	3
All other Causes .. .. .	12	11
<b>Total .. .. .</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Total, both Male and Female ..</b>	<b>226</b>	

## Infectious Diseases notified during 1945

(Excluding Tuberculosis).

DISEASES.	Under 1 year.		1 to 5		5 to 15		15 to 25		25 and upwards		Total.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
	Scarlet Fever .. .. .	—	—	3	4	7	5	—	1	1	
Diphtheria .. .. .	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	1	—	2	5
Whooping Cough .. .. .	3	2	21	17	3	12	—	2	2	—	62
Measles .. .. .	4	5	59	65	55	70	4	15	5	5	287
Pneumonia .. .. .	—	1	2	—	1	1	3	—	6	4	18
Erysipelas .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	5	7
Cerebro-Spinal Fever .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Dysentery .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Puerperal Pyrexia, .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2

There were extensive epidemics of measles and whooping cough in the early months of the year, whooping cough causing the death of two young infants.

### TUBERCULOSIS.

The following cases were notified during the year :

PULMONARY.			NON-PULMONARY.			All Forms
Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Total.
16	5	21	2	1	3	24

Seven of the notifications were in respect of Service Personnel discharged to their homes in this district.

The Age Group at notification :—

Under 1 year.		1 to 5		5 to 15		15 to 25		25 and upward	
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
—	—	—	1	—	—	6	3	12	2

The number of cases on the Register, 31st December, 1945, was as follows:—

PULMONARY.			NON-PULMONARY.			
Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	TOTAL.
55	33	88	21	13	34	122

**BIRTH, DEATH, AND INFANTILE MORTALITY RATES FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS.**

	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.
Birth Rate .. .. . (Per 1,000 population).	13.4	23.7	16.3	18.9	17.1
Death Rate .. .. . (Per 1,000 population).	11.8	11.8	11.9	10.3	11.4
Infantile Mortality Rate .. (Per 1,000 Live Births). (Deaths of infants under one year).	42.8	23.4	42.2	48.3	32

**FOR COMPARISON, THE BIRTH, DEATH AND INFANTILE MORTALITY RATES OF ENGLAND AND WALES, ETC., ARE GIVEN BELOW.**

	England and Wales.	126 C.B.'s and Great Towns.	148 Smaller Towns.	County of Gloucestershire.	Cheltenham R.D.C.
Live Births ..	16.1	19.1	19.2	18.4	17.1
Still Births, .. (Per 1,000 population).	0.46	0.58	0.53	—	0.3
Death Rate .. (Per 1,000 population).	11.4	13.5	12.3	12.6	11.4
Infantile Mortality Rate (Deaths of infants under 1 year.) (Per 1,000 Live Births).	46	54	43	38	32
Deaths under 2 years of age from Diarrhoea and Enteritis. . (Per 1,000 Live Births).	5.6	7.8	4.5	—	6.0

**IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.**

Our aim is to get 75 per cent. of the children below fifteen years of age immunised in order to wipe out diphtheria. At the present time 64 per cent. of the children in the country as a whole have been immunised, while in Cheltenham Rural District only 50 per cent. are known to have been treated in this way.



Diphtheria is most deadly when contracted by the young infant, therefore immunisation should have been completed before the child is one year old. The disease is most common at ages from four to six years. In order that the child may have the maximum protection during his early school life, it is necessary to give a single reinforcing dose when the child starts school.

Immunisation is carried out at each session of the Infant Welfare Centres, and at the schools throughout the district under the ægis of the County Council.

The District Council Scheme, which was in operation before the County Scheme, is useful in supplementing the latter, especially in the more remote parts of the district. If our records show that a child has reached the age of one year and has not been immunised, then a letter is sent to the parents offering to arrange for their family doctor to carry out the treatment. Only two cases of diphtheria occurred during the year in children under fifteen years of age; neither had been immunised.

It is extremely rare to find a parent who refuses the treatment, but many do not yet realise the importance of having it done early enough. Continued health education is necessary to make the position more secure and to bring a more enlightened outlook.

Number of children who had completed a full course of immunisation at any time up to 31st December, 1945 :—

Age at 31/12/45 <i>e.g.</i> born in year	Under	1	2	3	4	5 to 9	10 to 14	Total
	1 year 1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1936-40	1931-35	under 15
Number immunised	0	91	94	132	134	794	784	2,029
Estimated mid-year population 1945 ..		1,630				2,470		4,100

Diphtheria Notifications and Deaths in relation to immunisation :—

Age at date of notification	NOTIFICATIONS			Age at date of death	DEATHS	
	Number of cases notified	Number of cases included in preceding column in which the child had completed a full course of immunisation			Number of deaths	Number of cases included in preceding column in which the child had completed a full course of immunisation
4 to 5 ..	1	Nil				
10 to 14 ..	1	Nil				
Totals ..	2	Nil		Totals	Nil	Nil

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

## HOUSING.

Housing is the most urgent problem before the Council. To meet the acute shortage which had become worse each year of the war a three-year building programme was prepared. For the first post-war year 100 permanent houses were to be built, supplemented by 43 prefabs, and 16 Swedish timber houses. In spite of inevitable post-war difficulties, houses were in the course of erection at the end of the year at Winchcomb, Staverton and Apperley.

The next phase in housing must be an all-round improvement in living conditions, starting with the removal of those houses which are unfit for habitation.

Before the war the Council had dealt with a second series of 140 unfit houses. Each year a number of houses had to be brought forward for statutory action. No such action has been possible in the war years, thus there is an accumulation of these houses, and the number is further increased by the deterioration of houses where timely repairs could not be carried out.

Public concern over Rural Housing led to the appointment of the Hobhouse Committee and publication of their report in 1944, implemented by the issue of Ministry of Health Circular 64 on Rural Housing. Rural Authorities are required to undertake a survey of the fitness of houses in this district. A County Joint Committee for Rural Housing was formed in order to stimulate progress and ensure uniformity of standards.

The date for completion of the survey was April, 1947. A start was made in this district in September, an inspector being appointed for this purpose. At the time of writing, in order to hasten completion of the survey, two more inspectors have been engaged.

No. of houses to be inspected (under Rateable Value of £16 per ann.)	No. of houses inspected to 31st Dec., 1945	CLASSIFICATION CATEGORIES				
		1 Satisfactory in all respects	2 Minor defects	3 Requiring repair	4 Appropriate for reconditioning	5 Unfit for habitation
4,000	266	63	127	21	6	49

Using these figures to assess the housing position in the district, 25 per cent. are fit in all respects, 47 per cent. have minor defects, 10 per cent. require repair or reconditioning, and 18 per cent. are unfit for habitation.

The unfit houses lack essential amenities such as proper food stores, sinks, washing accommodation, and have inadequate cooking facilities. There is usually no piped water, and if present the housewife has to carry from a standpipe serving several houses.

Internally there is bad arrangement, and the bedrooms lack privacy. Staircases open to landing bedrooms, and one bedroom opens out of another. Some have no through ventilation, and the windows are too small for adequate light and ventilation.

Dampness is a common and serious feature. Many are in an advanced state of disrepair and dilapidation.

In the parishes adjoining the Severn houses are sited in positions where they are subject to flooding.

These unhealthy houses must be dealt with as soon as possible. Bad housing is an important factor in the incidence of disease, especially in the acute rheumatism of young people, and its aftermath of chronic heart disease.

There are special problems at Buckland, Stanton, Stanway and Snowhill. These villages do not possess enough houses, and whilst the Council are anxious to meet this need, they do not wish to spoil the Cotswold character of these villages by erection of houses which are not in keeping with the surroundings.

Reconditioning of houses under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts was of special value in this district in that the amenities could be brought up to modern standards without spoiling the external character of the house. These Acts are now in abeyance, but it is to be hoped that they will be brought into force again so that this means of improving housing conditions can be used to the full.

Under the supervision of the Council's staff repairs were carried out at thirty-eight requisitioned premises.

#### WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE

The number of troops in camps varied considerably during the year, but on the whole there was not any considerable reduction in the quantity of water used, and it was necessary to make use of the temporary overland main to Cleeve Hill reservoir.

Following upon the general report on water supplies and sewerage referred to in the Annual Report for 1944, a considerable amount of work has been done in the preparation of schemes which were shown to be so necessary in the district.

At a special meeting held in August the Council adopted a report approving in principle schemes of water supply and sewerage to all villages where such schemes are needed, the estimated cost of these works being £312,025 for sewerage and £68,825 for piped water supplies.

The officers of the Council were authorised to proceed with the preparation of the schemes for submission to the Ministry of Health.

In the early part of the year improvements to the Winchcombe Sewage Works were completed, viz., an additional settling tank, filter and humus tanks.

All the Council's water supplies are chlorinated. Nineteen samples were taken of public and private water supplies and submitted to the County Analyst. Reports on those of Council supplies were satisfactory. Twelve samples of effluents from sewage works were also submitted for analyses.

Particulars of the number of dwelling-houses and the number of the population supplied from public water mains:—

	Whole District	Supplies from public water mains	
		a. Direct to houses	b. By means of standpipes
Number of houses ..	5,387	3,646	79
Number of population	19,990	13,539	293

Particulars of the number of dwelling-houses and the number of the population supplied from private water mains:—

1. Satisfactory private supplies :

	a. Direct to houses	b. By means of standpipes
Number of houses .. ..	330	12
Number of population ..	1,125	44

2. Unsatisfactory private supplies :

	a. Direct to houses	b. By means of standpipes
Number of houses .. ..	350	20
Number of population ..	1,300	74

### POLLUTION OF STREAMS.

The pollution of the streams at Ashchurch and Toddington continues. There has been an improvement at Ashchurch due to the enlargement of the disposal works in the early part of the year and also to the reduction of personnel and the consequent reduction in the amount of sewage from the depot.

The serious nuisance at Toddington from the Canning Factory continues. The owners are conducting experiments with the wastes from various products with a view to the construction of a satisfactory disposal plant. In the meantime the stream continues to be a nuisance and is prejudicial to public health.

### I. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during 1945.

1 (a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) .. .. .	326
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	511
2 (a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head 1 above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 .. .. .	0
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	0
3.	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation .. .. .	49
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 .. .. .	214

### II. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices.

	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or their Officers .. .. .	40
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### III. Action under Statutory Powers during Year

A.	Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 .. .. .	1
(i)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ..	1
(ii)	Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	
(a)	By Owners .. .. .	1
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners ..	0

B.	Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—	
(i)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied .. .. .	0
(ii)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
(a)	By Owners .. .. .	0
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	0
C.	Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Acts, 1936 :— .. .. .	
(i)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made .. .. .	0
(ii)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. .. .	7
D.	Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—	
(i)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made .. .. .	0
(ii)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenements or rooms having been rendered fit .. .. .	0
IV.	<b>Housing Act, 1936. Part 4—Overcrowding.</b>	
(i)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year .. .. .	4
(ii)	Number of persons concerned in such cases	27

#### SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Nuisances discovered or reported .. .. .	75
Complaints not justified .. .. .	6
Number of Visits .. .. .	118
Informal notices sent .. .. .	40
Statutory notices sent .. .. .	2
Nuisances abated .. .. .	49
Summons issued .. .. .	0
Convictions obtained .. .. .	0
Premises disinfected .. .. .	36
Premises disinfested .. .. .	6
New drainage system .. .. .	33

## INSPECTION OF FOODS.

Owing to centralisation no regular slaughtering has been carried out in this area.

Fifty-one inspections were made in connection with food supplies, and the following quantities found to be unfit for human consumption :—

	Cwt.	qrs.	lb.
Tinned fruit and vegetables ..	—	2	11 $\frac{3}{4}$
Tinned meat .. .. .	—	3	19 $\frac{3}{4}$
Fresh meat .. .. .	—	3	4
Rice .. .. .	1	1	3
Barley .. .. .	1	0	8
Meat pies .. .. .	—	1	15
Bacon .. .. .	—	2	20
Jam .. .. .	—	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tinned milk .. .. .	—	—	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tinned fish .. .. .	2	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Butter .. .. .	—	—	22
Mustard .. .. .	—	1	17
Laytain powder .. .. .	—	—	18
Oatmeal .. .. .	—	—	15
Raisins .. .. .	—	1	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Semolina .. .. .	4	3	17
Dates .. .. .	1	0	0
Coffee .. .. .	—	1	7
Syrup former .. .. .	—	—	9
Eggs .. .. .	Number ; 117		

## MILK AND DAIRIES.

Two hundred and seven visits were paid to dairy premises in the district, the majority being at the time of milking ; twenty-three samples were taken.

In eleven cases improvements were made by structural alteration and in the provision of new cowsheds and dairies. One summons was served for contravention under the Milk and Dairies Order.

### BAKEHOUSES.

Four visits were paid to bakehouses, and conditions were satisfactory in all cases.

### FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Twenty-four visits were paid to factories and workshops in the district, and when necessary notices were served.

### REFUSE AND SALVAGE.

A house-to-house collection of house refuse is made throughout the district. In the parishes of Leckhampton, Prestbury and Winchcombe, a weekly collection is made. In other parts the collection is made once per month.

During the year the amount of salvage sold weighed 108·5 tons, the receipts for this being £573 9s. 7d. There has been a considerable drop in the amount of salvage collected ; this is due to the fact that materials formerly put out as salvage are now being mixed in with the house refuse.

The refuse is deposited on tips at Cleeve Hill, Winchcombe and Prestbury. Arrangements have been made with the County Council for regular treatment for the destruction of rats. Flies at the Prestbury tip have caused some concern, but treatment with insecticide had good results.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

RESEARCH REPORT  
NO. 100

BY  
J. H. GOLDSTEIN

AND  
M. L. HUGGINS

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS