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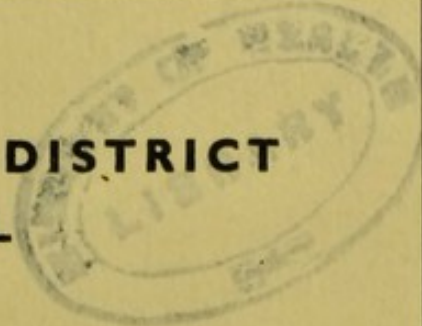
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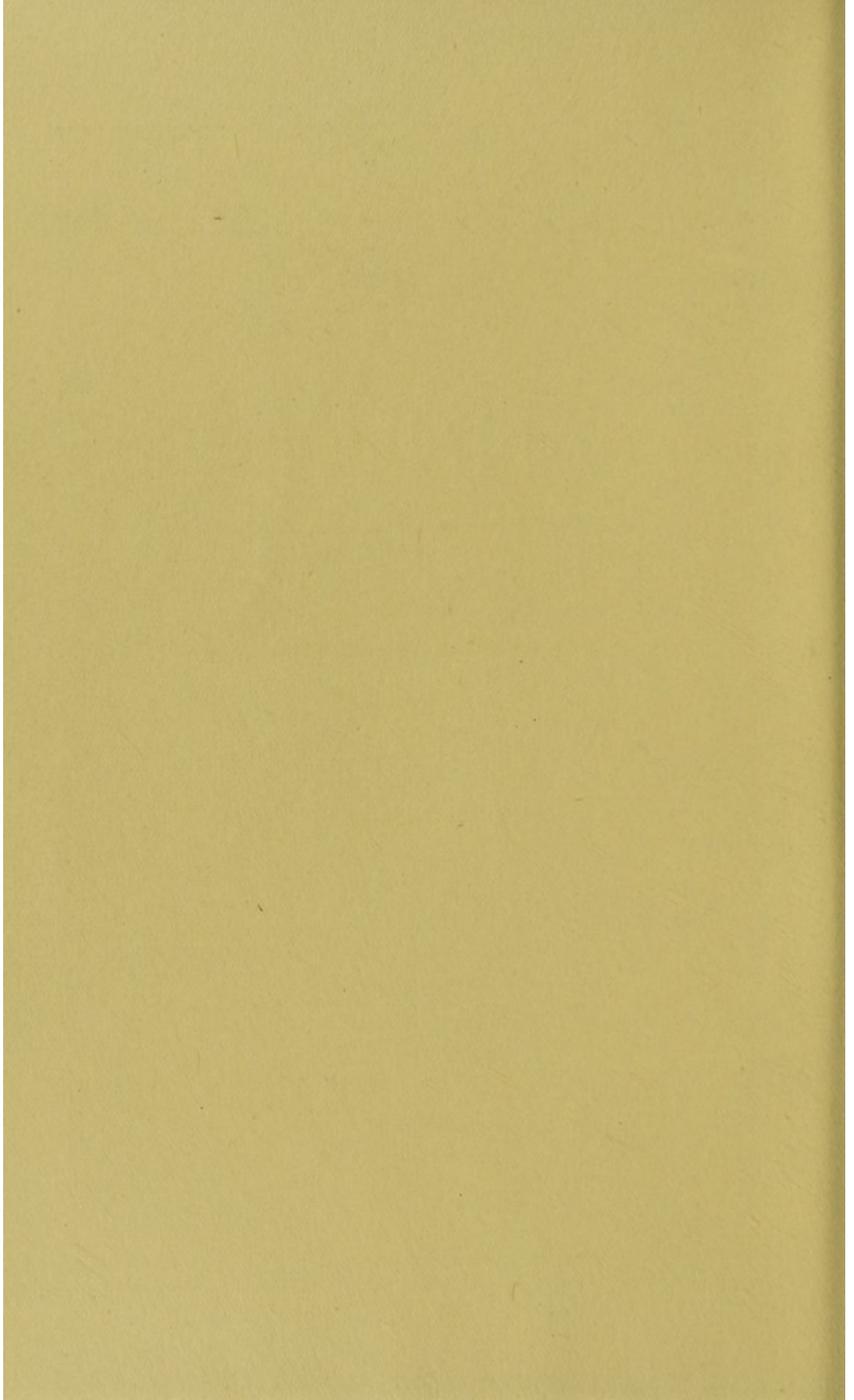
# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer  
of Health  
FOR 1947

G. H. H. WAYLEN, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab.  
Medical Officer of Health for the Devizes Rural District

DEVIZES  
Woodward, Printer  
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1948





# DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1947

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit herewith my Annual Report on the Public Health and Sanitary Administration of your District for the year 1947.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

G. H. H. WAYLEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

Browfort, Devizes.

### GENERAL STATISTICS

Area in Acres—63,515.

Population as estimated by the Registrar-General—12,080.

Number of inhabited houses—3,456.

Rateable Value—£66,516.

Product of a penny rate—£285 (estimated).

### VITAL STATISTICS

	M.	F.	TOTAL
Live Births ... ..	149	102	251
Legitimate ... ..	140	98	238
Illegitimate ... ..	9	4	13
Stillbirths ... ..	1	5	6
Legitimate ... ..	1	3	4
Illegitimate ... ..	—	2	2
Live Birth Rate ... ..			20.78
Live Birth Rate for England and Wales			20.5
Number of Deaths from all causes ...			157
Crude Death Rate ... ..			12.9
Crude Death Rate for England and Wales			12.0
Death of Infants under one year :—			
Total ... ..	5	5	10
Legitimate ... ..	4	3	7
Illegitimate ... ..	1	2	3
Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 live births			11.95
Infantile Death Rate for England and Wales			41.0

**CAUSES OF DEATH**  
**AS RETURNED BY REGISTRAR-GENERAL**

	M.	F.	Total.
1 Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ...	—	—	—
2 Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	—	—	—
3 Scarlet Fever ...	—	—	—
4 Whooping Cough ...	—	—	—
5 Diphtheria ...	—	—	—
6 Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ...	1	3	4
7 Other Forms of Tuberculosis ...	—	—	—
8 Syphilitic Diseases ...	—	—	—
9 Influenza ...	1	1	2
10 Measles ...	—	—	—
11 Acute Poliomyelitis and Polio Encephalitis	—	1	1
12 Acute Infectious Encephalitis ...	—	—	—
13 Cancer of Buccal Cavity and Oesophagus (M) and Uterus (F) ...	—	—	—
14 Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	2	3	5
15 Cancer of Breast ...	—	1	1
16 Cancer of all other sites ...	15	4	19
17 Diabetes ...	—	—	—
18 Intracranial Vascular Lesions ...	8	10	18
19 Heart Diseases ...	19	25	44
20 Other Diseases of Circulatory System ...	4	2	6
21 Bronchitis ...	3	5	8
22 Pneumonia ...	10	3	13
23 Other Respiratory Diseases ...	2	—	2
24 Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum ...	1	—	1
25 Diarrhoea—under 2 years ...	—	—	—
26 Appendicitis ...	—	—	—
27 Other Digestive Diseases ...	—	2	2
28 Nephritis ...	3	2	5
29 Puerperal and Post Abortional Sepsis ...	—	—	—
30 Other Maternal Causes ...	—	—	—
31 Premature Births ...	2	1	3
32 Congenital Malformations, Birth Injuries and Infantile Diseases ...	1	1	2
33 Suicide ...	1	—	1
34 Road Traffic Accidents ...	3	—	3
35 Other Violent causes ...	2	1	3
36 All Other Causes ...	4	10	14
All Cases ...	82	75	157



Satisfactory features are :

- (1) Absence of death from Notifiable Infections with single exception of a death from Poliomyelitis contracted in Ireland.
- (2) Absence of Maternal Deaths.
- (3) Absence of deaths in infants under one year, therefore Maternal and Infantile Death rates Nil.

43% of deaths attributed to diseases of the Heart and Blood Vessels and 16% to Cancer, i.e. nearly 60% from two outstanding Causes of death in an aging population. 14.0% died from Respiratory Disease and there were four deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

### **GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA**

Medical Officer of Health:—G. H. H. Waylen, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab.

Chief Sanitary Inspector (also Surveyor and Water Engineer)—G. E. Williams M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector:—G. J. Watts, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., M.R.I.P.H.H.

Housing Inspector:—M. I. C. Spencer.

Ambulance Service provided by a Joint Ambulance Committee from the Borough and Rural District Councils of Devizes.

Nursing in the Home:—Nurses supported by District Nursing Associations available over most of area. The Maternity duties of District Nurses forbid or curtail their attendance on some sufferers despite their need.

Laboratory Facilities:—The Greville Laboratory at Salisbury Infirmary utilised for all purposes.

Clinics and Treatment Centres:—All under the auspices of the Wilts County Health Department, as follows:—

- (i) Orthopædic at Scout Hall and District Hospital.
- (ii) Tuberculosis at District Hospital.
- (iii) Venereal Diseases (female) at District Hospital.
- (iv) Ophthalmic Clinic elsewhere in Devizes.
- (v) Infant Welfare Clinic elsewhere in Devizes.

### **DEVIZES AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL**

The total available beds remain at 58 ; average number occupied during the year 44.6.

Inpatient admissions totalled close on 1,000 (980). Of these your District contributed 429 (42.8%).

Outpatient attendances increased to over 18,000.

Provision of a new Outpatient Department with ample space is the Hospital's most urgent requirement, which will become more needful still when the new Health Service Act comes into being.



**RATE AIDED HOSPITAL**  
**DEVIZES AND PEWSEY JOINT ISOLATION HOSPITAL**

Difficulties in obtaining and retaining both Nursing and Domestic staff did not lessen. In consequence the Hospital could not have worked to capacity. Fortunately there was no need to do so in a remarkably healthy year. Of the 44 admissions, your district supplied 9; 14 from the Nursery at St. Jame's Home, Devizes, were taken in on account of measles, that Institution providing Nursing assistance as well. Of the remainder 10 were Military Cases admitted for Rubella. The Hospital closed on December 2nd when the Matron was without any nurses at all and Miss Sutton herself left on 31st December to take up another post.

Cases admitted to Devizes and Pewsey Joint Isolation Hospital in 1947:—

Diseases	Borough	Devizes R.D.	Pewsey R.D.	Elsewhere	Military	Total
Scarlet Fever...	3	5	2	1	—	11
Diphtheria ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles ...	12	1	—	—	—	13
Rubella ..	1	1	—	—	9	11
Whooping Cough ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia ...	—	1	—	—	—	1
Tuberculosis ...	1	—	—	—	—	1
Poliomyelitis ...	—	1	2	—	—	3
Observation ...	3	—	—	—	1	4
Totals ...	20	9	4	1	10	44

**NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

Scarlet Fever ...	...	...	10
Measles...	...	...	86
Whooping Cough ...	...	...	21
Acute Primary Pneumonia	...	...	4
Dysentery ...	...	...	8
Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	2
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	2

Again no case of diphtheria notified.



### IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA—1947

Number of children who had completed a full course of Immunisation at any time up to 31st December, 1946.

Age at 31: 12: 47 i.e. Born in Year.	Under 1. 1947.	1 1946.	2 1945.	3 1944.	4 1943.	5 to 9 1938-42.	10 to 14 1933-37.	Total under 15.
Number Immunised.	—	45	99	130	119	678	789	1860
Estimated mid-year child population 1947.	Children under five 971.					Children 5—14 1605.		2576

### NOTIFICATION OF TUBERCULOSIS 1947

		Pulmonary.		Total.	Non-Pulmonary.		Total.
		M.	F.		M.	F.	
Notifications	...	5	2	7	2	—	2
Deaths	...	—	4	4	—	—	—

### MATERNITY SERVICES 1947

Your District is fully served by Certified Midwives mainly employed by Voluntary Nursing Associations with assistance of Grants from the Wilts County Council. Where such organisations are absent the Wilts County Council make direct provision. Close on half the Mothers domiciled in your District, 121 out of 251, were so provided for. Of the remainder, a considerable number were confined at Ivy House, Devizes. This Private Nursing Home is worked to capacity and over. It served 165 Births during the year and has frequently to turn away applicants for admission who thus have to seek accommodation further afield. I can only again emphasise my comments made in last year's Annual Report (1946) as to the need for more Maternity beds in the Devizes Area.

### HOUSING 1947

Progress still very slow.

Sites have been acquired at Rowde and two other smaller villages. Negotiations are proceeding over several others.

Six new Council Houses have been commenced during the year: and sixteen by Private Enterprise. The thirty-eight Local Authority houses sanctioned to date have been completed, and thirteen others privately built; a total of fifty-one for the year.

Delay is due in the main to the reluctance of owners to part with land. This sometimes results in tentative sites being scrapped and replaced by others; re-inspection following inspection; quite apart from time taken up by owners in obtaining legal and other professional advice.



The Housing Survey has been completed. It is a careful and detailed report giving a comprehensive picture of housing conditions in your district. Out of rather over 2,500 houses, 10% fall into Category 5, as incapable of being rendered fit for habitation at reasonable expense, and so calling for demolition. Another 34.0% (860) need re-conditioning at varying degrees of expense. How many owners of this latter class will be willing to put such property in good order at current prices and labour costs is problematical. Quite a number of dwellings will inevitably fall into Category 5 and have to be replaced. I estimate that 500 new houses will be thus needed. Can this be carried out over any short term period under present economic conditions? I doubt it. Provision of fresh accommodation for new families with no homes at all is urgent, quite apart from that needed to remedy overcrowding and slum conditions. The enactment of a new Measure by Parliament on the lines of the Housing of Rural Workers Act appears one obvious remedy for present ills, and to be urgently called for.

### **WATER SUPPLIES**

The new Council Houses at Bromham have been supplied from Devizes Borough Water Works by an extension of the mains to their site. Apart from this no augmentation of supply in your District has been made.

The exploitation of new sources and further linkage with the Borough supply were still under consideration throughout the year.

I can only stress again the remarks made in my Annual Report for 1945 as to the urgent need for increased supply.

### **SEWERAGE**

Small plants installed for completed groups of Council Houses, otherwise no fresh developments.

## **Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report 1947**

*To the Chairman and Members of the Devizes Rural District Council.*  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report in conjunction with your Medical Officer of Health. The Report includes particulars which relate more especially to my duties as Waterworks Engineer and Building Surveyor which I have included as the work has a direct, or indirect bearing on public health matters.

### **Housing**

#### **(a) RURAL HOUSING SURVEY.**

The Survey of the houses in the District suitable for occupation by members of the working classes was completed during the year, and the following is a summary of the results.



1. A large number of houses would probably qualify for grants if a measure similar to the Housing (Rural Workers) Act, was re-enacted.

2. The level of rent is low. The tenants of 39.8% of the total number of rented houses inspected only pay up to 3/- per week rent. This complicates the question of repair under Housing Acts procedure.

3. The number of owner-occupiers is low, namely 14.1% of the total inspected.

4. Provision of electricity is widespread and good. This service covers 90% of the District.

5. Piped water supply is only available over about 50% of the District.

6. A proper system of sewers is non-existent, and those that exist are very unsatisfactory.

7. The provision of closet accommodation throughout the District is atrocious. A large number are tumble-down, derelict and badly sited buildings. Only 191 houses out of 2,538 possess the elementary convenience of a water closet.

8. 36% of the total number of houses have no suitable food store, an important thing in rural areas.

9. The general standard of structure and repair is poor. 60% of the total number of houses need a great deal of repair.

10. 72 houses, or 2.8% are shared by two families.

11. 58 houses, or 2.3% are overcrowded.

12. 187 2, 3, or 4-bedroomed houses are occupied by only one person.

13. The number of houses in the Demolition Category is 263.

14. The number of houses required, due to deterioration of properties, which are at present habitable but likely to become uninhabitable within the next ten years is 129.

The Table on page 8 shows the Categorisation in accordance with Ministry of Health directions.

#### (b) *REPAIRS*

Despite the difficulties of materials and labour, fairly extensive repairs and improvements were carried out to over 20 properties and minor essential repairs to keep the houses weatherproof and preserve the fabric on many others. (See also "Building Licensing Regulations").

#### (c) *NEW HOUSES*

During the year the Council completed 38 new houses and 13 were erected by private enterprise.

#### **Water Supply**

Of the 24 Parishes in the District, eight only are totally served by the Council's Mains, and four partially served.

Parts of two other Parishes are served from the Devizes Borough Supply, and parts of three others by private mains supply.



### TABLE OF CATEGORISATION OF PROPERTIES

This Table shows the categorisation of the houses having regard to the state of repair, general standard of accommodation and amenities.  
 Category 1.—Satisfactory in all respects.

Category 2.—Minor repairs required.

Category 3.—Repairs, structural alterations or improvements required.

Category 4.—Re-conditioning required.

Category 5.—Unfit for human habitation, and beyond repair at reasonable expense.

Parish	Categories					Total	Per cent. in comparison with 100% fitness
	1	2	3	4	5		
Marston ...	—	—	2	11	5	18	37 Per cent.
Erlstoke ...	—	—	7	26	3	36	42 "
Little Cheverell ...	—	4	8	18	4	34	46 "
Urchfont ...	—	19	36	86	18	159	47 "
Poulshot ...	—	8	15	34	5	62	48 "
Seend ...	2	14	69	58	27	170	49 "
Stert ...	—	3	10	13	2	28	50 "
West Lavington ...	—	30	72	55	35	192	50 "
Great Cheverell ...	2	11	19	24	10	66	51 "
Etchilhampton ...	—	4	16	14	4	38	51 "
Beechingsstoke ...	—	10	11	12	6	39	53 "
Marden ...	—	1	17	11	—	29	53 "
Rowde ...	—	44	34	72	17	167	53 "
Potterne ...	2	51	94	48	40	235	54 "
Easterton ...	1	19	36	22	10	88	55 "
Bromham ...	14	67	88	152	19	340	55 "
Chirton ...	—	16	20	23	4	63	55 "
All Cannings ...	—	14	64	30	6	114	55 "
Roundway ...	1	12	40	13	5	71	57 "
Stanton St. Bernard ...	2	9	20	19	1	51	57 "
Bishops Cannings ...	2	53	44	62	10	171	57 "
Worton ...	—	13	28	12	3	56	58 "
Market Lavington ...	29	98	88	42	29	286	64 "
Patney ...	—	18	4	3	—	25	72 "
TOTALS ...	55	518	842	860	263	2538	

The Parishes have been arranged according to the standard of the housing, viz: Marston is the worst and Patney the best Parish.



The rest of the District depends on wells, many of which are shallow and the water is of doubtful quality and quantity.

The quality of the water supplied by the Council was satisfactory. The improvised chlorinator at Great Cheverell was replaced with a new automatic Hypochlorinator which injects sodium hypochlorite, ("Chloros") into the rising main. The excessive hardness of the water caused precipitation of lime salts on the apparatus which gave trouble and entailed dismantling every other day, but this has been overcome by the use of an inhibitor in the hypochlorite and mixing it with rain water.

The results of the samples taken are as follows:—

<b>Raw Water</b>		<b>Treated Water</b>	
<i>Date Taken</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Date Taken</i>	<i>Result</i>
26. 3.47	Satisfactory	4. 6.47	Satisfactory
23.10.47	Satisfactory	30. 7.47	Satisfactory
		23.10.47	Satisfactory

The amount of water pumped from the Cheverell Boreholes was 28,804,600 gallons.

The amount of water supplied to the Council's Mains by the Devizes Borough was 15,820,000 gallons.

The quantity of water available from the Borehole and the existing augmenting link with the Devizes Borough supply is insufficient, and until further augmentation with the Borough is effected, or further supplies are available it will continue to be necessary to refuse connections on that part of the Main which is wholly supplied from Cheverell. A scheme to provide a further link with the Devizes Borough supply has been prepared and the decision of the Ministry awaited. If approval is forthcoming, the amount of water available will then be sufficient to fully serve all consumers in the Parishes now served by the Mains.

In connection with the proposed post war Schemes, further samples have been taken from the Warren. These show:—

<i>Bacteriological Exam.</i>		<i>Chemical Analysis</i>
13. 5.47	Polluted	Satisfactory
28. 7.47	Polluted	Satisfactory
23.10.47	Polluted	Satisfactory

Samples have also been taken from the old W.D. supply at Erlestoke, with a view to taking over the supply and plant. The results were:—

2. 4. 47	Satisfactory
22. 9 47	Satisfactory
23.10.47	Polluted



The results of samples taken from private wells are —

Date	Site	Result
28.2.47	Monument Hill	Fair
4.6.47	Russell Mill	Fair
4.6.47	Oak Lane, Easterton	Unsatisfactory
2.7.47	Worton	Unsatisfactory
15.7.47	The Stocks, Seend	Unsatisfactory
28.7.47	Patney	Unsatisfactory
16.7.47	White Street, Easterton	Satisfactory

The extension of the Council's Mains to the Bromham Housing Site, (1,300 yards) was carried out.

Parts of the Council's Mains are laid in the Kimmeridge Clay, and in these parts numerous bursts have occurred due to the action of sulphates and sulphate reducing bacteria converting the iron to graphite. The matter has been taken up with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the Council have decided to relay parts of these mains.

The following Table shows the position in regard to availability of piped water supplies.

Parish	No. of Houses Supplied		Population Supplied	
	Direct	Standpipe	Direct	Standpipe
<i>From R.D. Supply</i>				
Bromham ...	55	—	192	—
Easterton ...	10	Installed Dec. 1947	35	—
Great Cheverell ...	79	—	276	—
Little Cheverell ...	17	—	60	—
Market Lavington ...	242	—	847	—
Marston ...	31	—	109	—
Potterne ...	194	11	679	40
Poulshot ...	46	—	161	—
Rowde ...	122	5	397	20
Seend ...	190	22	665	78
West Lavington ...	16	—	56	—
Worton ...	77	—	269	—
Totals ...	1,079	38	3,746	138
<i>From other Sources</i>				
Roundway (*) ...	40	—	1,600	—
West Lavington ...	80	—	280	—
Bishops Cannings ...	70	8	225	30
Erlestoke ...	35	—	123	—
Easterton ...	6	—	25	—
Totals ...	231	8	2,253	30
Grand Totals ...	1,310	46	5,999	168

(\*) This includes Wilts County Mental Hospital



### Drainage and Sewerage

The Council have, over the course of years, assumed responsibility for 80 sewer ditches which deal with sullage, overflows from cesspools and surface water. There are no sewage works, and the sewers discharge into watercourses or streams. These sewers are cleaned so far as the limited labour resources permit. Many are long and have little fall, and consequently difficult to keep free of nuisance. A further 90 yards, at Littleton Panell has been piped during the year, but generally speaking they are unsatisfactory and will remain so until modern sewerage and sewage disposal works are constructed.

On the 29th July, a Public Enquiry was held into the proposed sewerage scheme at Potterne. The Ministry of Health did not agree to the proposed site of the works which was considered too remote from the village, and so entailed a long length of sewer at high cost, and which served no useful purpose. Apart from this qualification the Scheme has been generally approved. Potterne will be the first village to have a proper sewerage scheme, and the big advantages which it brings will no doubt, be much appreciated by the parishioners.

An increasing number of people are installing their own private disposal works in the form of Sceptic Tanks. Plans for 45 of these (including new houses) were submitted during the year, and 25 were actually installed.

### Food Inspection

Particulars of the food condemned as unfit for human consumption is as follows :—

<i>Food</i>	<i>Cause</i>
65 lbs. Beef	Decomposition
26 lbs. Bacon	Decomposition
28 lbs. Cheese	Contaminated by Rats
2½ lbs. Tea	Contaminated by Disinfectant
504 lbs. Margarine	Rancidity
168 lbs. Suet Substitute	Rancidity
5½ lbs. Boiled Sweets	Contaminated with broken glass
15 tins Milk	} Decomposition or Physical damage
9 tins Beans	
5 tins Peas	
3 tins Meat	
2 tins Beetroot	
1 tin Macaroni	
1 tin Pudding	
1 tin Stew	
1 tin Jam	
1 tin Sausage	



### **Cowsheds and Dairies**

The number of registered milk producers in the District is 328. The number of "Designated" licenses is still small but slowly increasing. At the end of the year there were 40 T.T. licence holders and 34 accredited.

Two new sheds were erected during the year and extensive improvements made to seven others.

### **Rodent Control**

The Council had no Rat Catcher for part of the year, but agreed to share the services of one with the Devizes Borough Council. He devotes the whole of his time to this work and commenced duties with the Council on the 20th October.

A Survey is in operation parish by parish, house by house, and infestations are dealt with as they are met. The Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act 1919 places the obligation to rid premises of rats and mice on the occupier. The rat however, is no respecter of property limits, and infestations are sometimes spread over several properties, including stream banks, etc. Thus, if action is to be effective, in these cases it must be concerted. The only way to secure effective agreement is for the Council to hire their Rat Catcher to the respective occupiers and apportion the cost according to the degree of infestation.

This is what happens, and in the event of failure to recover the cost, it is borne partly by the Ministry of Food and partly by the Council.

The estimated kill for the three weeks during which the Rat Catcher was employed for this year is 200 rats. It is too early as yet to judge the extent of infestation generally in the District.

The County Agricultural Executive Committee are responsible for dealing with infestations on farms, and the Council for other properties. This division of function between two Authorities operating in the same area is a bad administrative arrangement.

### **Refuse Collection**

The system of collecting refuse by direct labour started by the Council in 1946 continues to work satisfactorily, and fortnightly collections are made of all Parishes. The increased frequency of collection and the taking of all forms of household refuse has resulted in elimination of insanitary refuse accumulations near houses.

The drawback to the scheme has been the absence of good tipping sites in the Southern part of the District, but the Council have now acquired a site near Frieth Farm, and when this site is used, it will considerably facilitate collection, as at present all refuse has to be taken to the Seend Tip.

### **Building Licensing Regulations**

During the year 340 licenses were issued for housing work involving a total of £31,530, and 116 for non-housing work, involving £5,520.

**Summary of Inspections**

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I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

G. E. WILLIAMS,

*Senior Sanitary Inspector.*



Summary of Inspections

75	Housing Act (General)
123	Local Housing Survey
81	Public Health Act (General)
118	Building Inspections
91	Drainage (Tests)
114	Sanitary Appliances
176	Water Supplies
23	Water Samples
80	Milk and Public Order
7	Food Inspections
68	Kitchen Appliances
28	Refrigerators
44	Council House Sites
117	Building Licensing Regulations
9	Buildings
2	Mobile Buildings
1	Petroleum Acts
9	Factories and Workshops
80	Mechanics

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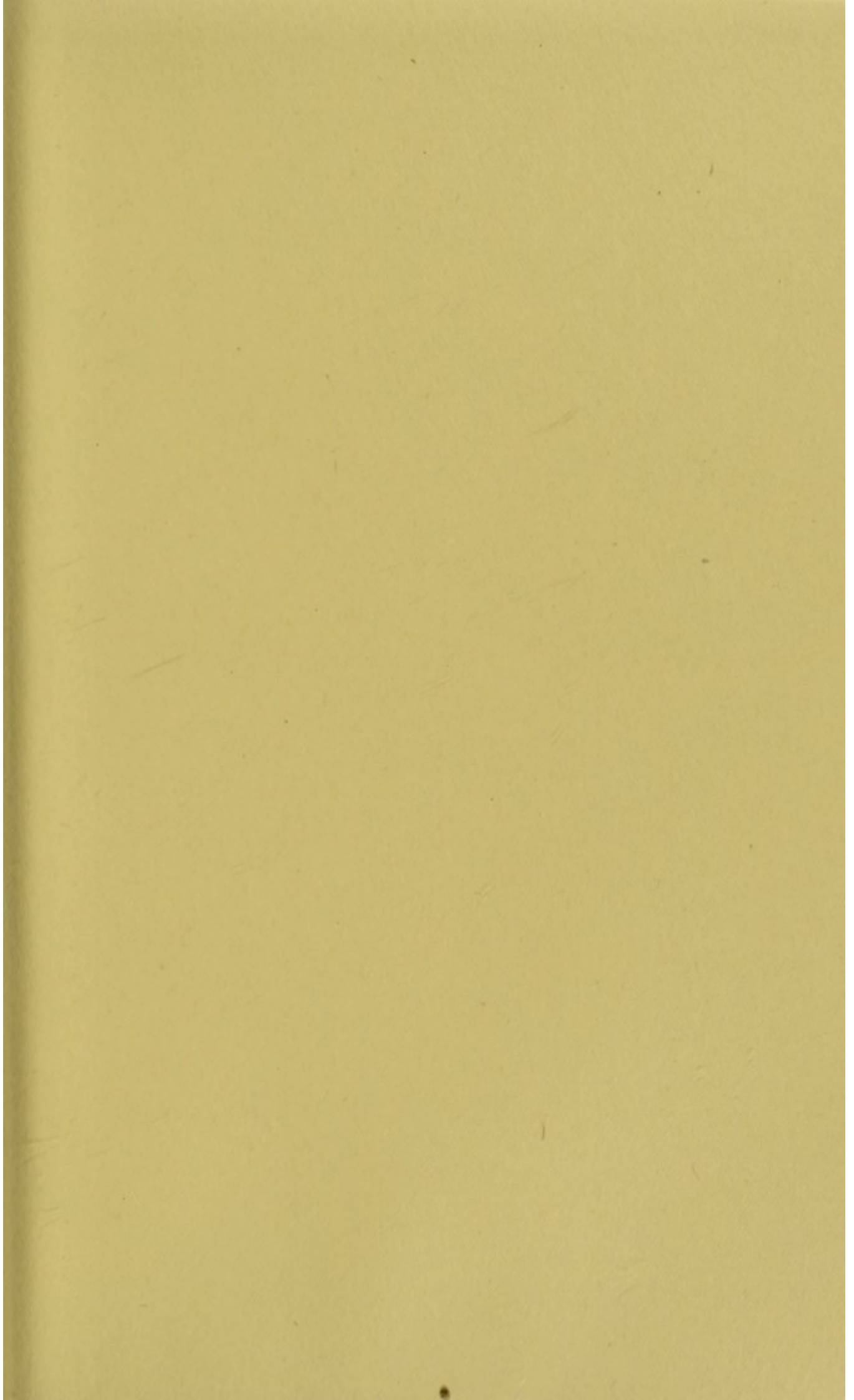
Yours faithfully,  
G. E. WILLIAMS

General Manager, ...

The ...

The ...

...





1854