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Contributors

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**URBAN SANITARY
DISTRICT OF ILFRACOMBE**

1909.



**Medical Officer's
Report**

For the Year ending 31st December, 1909.

ILFRACOMBE :
JOHN HENRY MOORE, "Chronicle" Printing Works,
Northfield Road.

SUMMARY, 1909.

ILFRACOMBE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Area of District in Statute Acres, 5,836.

Estimated Population to middle of 1909, 9,160.

Census 1901.

Males, 3,420

Females, 5,130

Total, 8,550

Excess of Females over Males 1,710.

Birth rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	16·4
Gross Death rate	...	...	...	15·0
Nett Death rate (excluding visitors)	...	...	...	12·7
Average Nett Death rate for 8 years	...	...	...	12·0
Death rate from 7 chief Epidemic Diseases	...	...	...	0·5
Infant Mortality per 1,000 births	...	...	...	92·7

Number of Inhabited Houses in District, 1,819.

Average number of persons per house, 4·7.

PAROCHIAL PAUPERISM per 1,000 population:—

Ilfracombe, 19; Morte Hoe, 10; Berrynarbor, 17;

Combe Martin, 52; Barnstaple, 44; Braunton, 43.

For the purpose of comparison the subjoined statistics are of interest. They relate to England and Wales for 1909:—

	Annual rates per 1,000 living.			Infant Mortality.
	Birth rate.	Death rate.	Death rate from 7 chief Epidemic Diseases.	Annual Death rate of Infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 births.
England and Wales	25·6	14·5	1·12	109

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICE,
3 MARKET SQUARE,
ILFRACOMBE.

January, 1910.

*To the Chairman and Councillors of the Urban District
of Ilfracombe.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit to your consideration the report on the Public Health of Ilfracombe during the year ending 31st December, 1909. It is constructed on the lines of the Memorandum of the L.G.B. which prescribes the forms of the tables and of the other particulars, which must now be contained in the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

The **value of Vital Statistics** depends as your Council well understands, **not** on the figures of a **single year**, but on the **average results of continued observations**. Judged by this test, your Council will recognize with satisfaction that as a result of your liberal sanitary administration Ilfracombe again maintains its **position in the forefront of British Health Resorts**.

In this connection Ilfracombe may be considered from a **two-fold** aspect. On the one hand, its varied and romantic scenery—both by land and by sea, unique in character; its pure air, its sunshine, its situation as the **tourists' centre** of North Devon; its facilities for excursions and for amusements, and its salubrity; render it an ideal resort for the Summer Holidays. While on the other hand, Nature has provided a mild and equable climate, a light dry soil and an undulating surface, which secure natural drainage, freedom from land fogs, and which facilitate out of doors exercise and amusements. Here, too, we find **free** and **easy** access to picturesque pleasure grounds and to the upland walks which dominate our grand coast-line. Perfection in the matters of roadways, of water supply, of sewerage. A low death-rate and all but freedom from epidemic disease. Considerations essential to the well-being of children and of invalids.

To these advantages are conjoined musical society, social and sporting clubs, good shops, good markets, an abundant supply

of pure milk, of provisions of all kinds, and last, but not least, a choice of houses so moderately rented and rated that it is well within the power of families of even limited means to inhabit well built houses equipped with garden ground and with spacious bed chambers. In **all these particulars the claim** of Ilfracombe **to rank not only as a delightful Health Resort, but as, perhaps, the most convenient Residential District in the South-West of England is fully justified.**

To Mr. Oswald Prouse, Surveyor I.U.D.C., I am much indebted for the detailed information relating to structural work which is embodied in this Report.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

EDWYN J. SLADE-KING,

M.D., D. Public Health,

Fellow of the S.M.O. Health, C.C.



PHYSICAL FEATURES AND CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

The southern limit of the Urban Sanitary District of Ilfracombe is a range of high ground (600—800 feet) forming the water parting. It runs east and west, and conforms in its direction to the Bristol Channel, which constitutes the northern boundary. The east and west sides of the district are not defined by any well marked natural limits.

The marine slope terminates abruptly in a line of weather-worn cliffs. Its surface has been rendered rugged and picturesque by continued denudations, and is cut up by three valleys trending north and south. As the mouths of these valleys open out to the sea they afford level space sufficient for the town proper and its several hamlets.

The soil is mostly thin and light.

The rocks are shales over sandstone and grit. There are a few pockets of mountain limestone and some small deposits of a poor clay.

CLIMATOLOGY.

Sheltered under the steep hills which form the western buttress of Exmoor, in a break of the lofty cliffs, and in the three valleys which run back from Wildersmouth, Ilfracombe town is thoroughly protected from the Atlantic gales which blow from W. and S.W., and parts are also secure from the N.W. winds. E. and S.E. gales it also escapes, but the older streets lie open to the N. and N.E. New houses, however, are creeping up the sheltered valleys, and thus gain a warm southern exposure. Yet even with this partial northern aspect, thanks to the Gulf Stream, Ilfracombe is by no means cold in winter, and with its dry soil, moderate rainfall, remarkable equability (a good second in England only to Falmouth) and delightful surroundings, it has exceptional claims to be considered as a place of all-round-the-year residence. The average summer temperature is 57 degs., the average winter temperature 44.9 degs. The mean daily range during the group of years 1881—1890, is noteworthy, being only 8.4 degs.

Two points in the Vital Statistics are of especial medical interest, viz., the remarkable frequency of old age, and the low death-rate from Tubercular Diseases.

As regards tuberculosis, the death-rate from phthisis is on the average so low as 0.6 per 1,000, and it is estimated that more than one-fourth was due to the advent of strangers or to the descendants of people who have been sent to the south-west as "tubercular."

OCCUPATIONS.

Agriculture, Fishing, Lodging-house and Hotel keeping, general retail Shop-keeping. Large number of Private Residents, mostly consisting of persons retired from professions and businesses.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

Except in the height of the season there is very little overcrowding. No case of overcrowding has this year come to the knowledge of the Sanitary Officials.

At present there is no demand for additional houses nor for cottages. Several have been improved. Any deficiency of houses is at once responded to by the Building Trade.

The house property in general is in good condition. The bed chambers of all the newer houses are sufficient in size and well ventilated. House drainage good. Roofs and walls dry.

There is a sufficiency of open space around all houses built since 1875, and the areas surrounding them are clean.

The number of plans received for new buildings during the year was 30.

The number of new buildings erected during 1909 was 14.

All plans for new houses are submitted to the Council after having been certified by the Surveyor as being in accordance with the bye-laws which regulate new buildings, etc.

HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES ACT.

Under the Housing of Working Classes Act and Public Health Acts the Sanitary Officials have inspected during the year **614 houses**, mostly inhabited by the wage-earning classes.

64 Defects have been reported on. The necessary steps for the abatement of these defects have in every case been effectually taken.

One house was reported as unfit for human habitation. A closing order was obtained at the Petty Sessions, which took effect in January.

Owing to the exceptional heavy rainfall at the end of September and the beginning of October, flooding occurred in the low-lying parts of the town, causing considerable dampness to the foundations of the houses. This was fully reported on by the M.O.H. and the Council have now under consideration a small scheme to provide a storm overflow to relieve the sewers when under abnormal pressure.

The rainfall from September 29th to October 19th, 21 days inclusive, measured 9·83 inches. From October 1st to October 22nd it measured 8·14 inches. The average Ilfracombe rainfall is 32 inches, therefore rather under one-third of an average year's rainfall took place in 21 days.

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & SUNSHINE.

Total Rainfall, 34 inches.

Number of days on which rain fell, 199.

Greatest fall, 2·14 inches on September 28th.

TEMPERATURE.

Maximum 81·6, Aug. 15th. Minimum 27·8, Jan. 27th.

SUNSHINE.

The number of hours of bright sunshine recorded in Ilfracombe for 1909 was **1,937·25**.

This is an average of **37·2 hours per week**, or nearly **5½ hours per day for the whole year**.

WATER—PUBLIC SUPPLY.

The Public Water Supply is of the highest purity and practically unlimited in quantity.

It is received by eight intakes, which are fed from a watershed of upwards of 3,000 acres of open moor, forming part of the forest of Exmoor.

It is conveyed by means of an aqueduct and pipe-line for a distance of 14 miles to the Ilfracombe Filter Beds and Distribution Tanks.

The subjoined is an analysis of the water, as furnished by the Clinical Research Association:—

	GRAINS—PER GALLON.
Total Solid Residue (dried at 102 C.)	3·50
Combined Chlorine	0·8
Expressed as Common Salt	1·3
Nitrogen as Nitrates	trace only
Nitrates	Nil.
Saline Ammonia	0·0004
Albuminoid Ammonia	0·003
Oxygen required to oxidize the organic matter ..	0·037
Hardness in Degrees	1·9 deg.
Lead or Copper	Nil.

OBSERVATIONS.—This is a water of great purity and from a chemical point of view admirably suitable for drinking purposes

Writing on this subject, Dr. W. COLLINGRIDGE, M.O.H. for City of London, says:—

“ to its excellent position and health giving climate Ilfracombe has now added the valuable asset of a pure and abundant water supply, and secured its position as an unsurpassed Health Resort.”

This water is liable to have a lead solvent action at certain periods of the year, but the use of lead pipes is absolutely forbidden in distributing water for domestic use.

Twenty-five samples have been taken from the mains at the following places during the year, for analysis, viz.:—Montpelier Road, High Street, Springfield Terrace, Langleigh Lane, St. James' Place, Arcade Road, Highfield Road, Horne Road, St. Brannock's Park, Wilder Road, Hillsborough Terrace, Quay, Larkstone Road, Capstone Road, Oxford Grove, Fore Street, Granville Road, Church Street, Crofts Lea Park, Portland Street, Oxford Park, Market Street, Torrs Park, and Ropers Road.

The supply has been constant and the pressure good.

No complaints have been received.

ILFRACOMBE RURAL WATER SUPPLY.

Public Health (Water) Act, 1878.

The Public Rural Water Supplies at Hele and at Lincombe have been sufficient and of good quality.

The Private Rural Water Supplies are 57 in number.

The only complaints received as regards shortage of water came from Higher Slade. The Council determined, in consequence, to extend the water main to this hamlet, and this work is now completed.

All the houses at Hele, with the exception of the mill, are now supplied with water from the Council's mains.

Six samples have been received from the Sanitary Inspector and analysed by the Medical Officer of Health, four proving satisfactory. The two other samples related to the same well, and were found to be unfit for domestic use. A proper water supply has now been provided.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS ORDERS 1885 and 1889.

All **British Milk** used in the town is produced within the district and the immediate surrounding area.

The only imported milk is "**condensed**" and, as far as is known there have been neither defects nor unsoundness.

The sale of **Machine Skimmed Milk** (a most unsatisfactory food for children) is estimated by the Sanitary Inspector, to average not more than 18 tins per week in this town.

This milk is all duly labelled "Not suitable food for Infants or Invalids."

The condition of the Dairies, &c., is most satisfactory.

The cleanliness of the Linhays is fairly satisfactory, but the buildings are mostly old and are much behind the standard which the regulations suggest, but in a district where the cattle lie out the greatest part of the year it is unnecessary to incur the expense which re-building and reconstruction would involve.

The cows themselves are very healthy and remarkably free from Tubercular Diseases, but if the following suggestions were more carefully observed, they would obviate all cause for complaints which are occasionally made of the presence of a sediment, in the milk, as delivered at the houses of private purchasers.

- (1) The milker should be responsible for seeing that the can which he uses is thoroughly clean.
- (2) The cows' flanks and udders should be sponged over and rubbed dry with a rough cloth before milking.
- (3) The milker should wear a clean overall when milking.
- (4) Care should be taken that all milk sent for a distance should be contained in cans provided with dust-proof covers.

Number of Registered Dairies	...	58
„ struck off Register	... ..	3
„ put on Register	... ..	4

They are constantly visited. Eight defects have been reported, five as regards limewashing, one as regards storage of milk, one as regards a broken floor, and one as regards closet accommodation. The defects have all been remedied, and at one farm an improved water supply has been provided.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

There have been **152 inspections** of fruit shops, some small seizures were made of food unfit for consumption, but as a rule the stock was found to be in excellent condition.

One sample of milk was taken by the Sanitary Inspector on receiving a complaint. On analysis it was found to be genuine.

REGULATION OF THE MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF ICE CREAM.

By Section 81 of the Ilfracombe Harbour Act, 1905, any person being a manufacturer, or vendor, or dealer in ice cream, who causes or permits ice cream, or other similar commodity, to be manufactured under conditions which are injurious to health, or who omits to take proper precaution for due protection of such commodity from infection or contamination, is liable on summary conviction, to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings. He must have his name and address legibly painted or inscribed on his cart or barrow.

Two persons selling ice cream from barrows not bearing their name and address were cautioned. In each case the above section was forthwith complied with.

Thirty-four inspections of ice cream factories have been made.

Five ice cream barrows have been inspected.

Two cases of defective storage was observed and remedied on verbal notice.

SEWERAGE.

The sewers are new, satisfactory, and well equipped with ventilating shafts, manholes, and automatic flushing tanks.

There is a separate system for Hele.

The outfalls discharge into the tide-way of the Bristol Channel at points considerably below low water mark.

The Sewerage system and Outfalls at Cheyne and Hele are proving most satisfactory.

The drains of nine additional houses have been connected with the Public Sewer.

Six additional ventilating shafts have been erected in the Wilder Road, and one in Torrs Park.

The automatic flushing chambers are working in a satisfactory manner.

EXCREMENT DISPOSAL.

Within the town area by water carriage through pipe drains to the sewers. In the quasi rural district earth closets are in use, and the soil goes direct to the land.

REMOVAL & DISPOSAL OF HOUSE REFUSE.

Certain fields at Cheglinch Down and Keypitt have been determined upon as depôts for the town refuse, and are now being so used with satisfactory results. (See Sanitary Inspector's Report).

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.—None in district.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Additional School Accommodation to the extent of 180 seats has been provided by the erection of County Council Schools at Shepherds Park.

These modern buildings, well equipped in every respect, have effectually reduced any overcrowding which occasionally existed in the Public Elementary Schools of the town from insufficient floor space. The children attending the Public Elementary Schools have been medically examined by the Educational Department. The bodily development of the children is very highly commended by the examiners. The value of athletic games, swimming and drill, is well represented by the good physique of the children, and reflects infinite credit on their Instructors. The number of children attending the Public Elementary Schools throughout the District is 1283. Structural improvements have been carried out at the St. Philip and St. James' Schools, at the Holy Trinity Schools, and at the County Council (Infants) Schools.

All these Buildings have been inspected, their structural condition is good, ventilation satisfactory, they are well cleaned, play-grounds and offices in good order.

The Water Supply for domestic purposes ample.

On the occurrence of any epidemic of Infectious Disease, a circular is addressed to the Head Masters and Mistresses of the Public Elementary Schools asking their co-operation in limiting its spread among the children.

NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The number of Notifications received during the year 1909 was 17, which is equivalent to a notification rate of 1·8 per 1,000 population.

The average notification rate for the period of years 1905—1909 was 4.

Table "B" furnishes details as to the yearly incidence of scheduled infectious disease.

Weekly notification returns are received from and sent to the L.G.B. and Devon C.C.

Intimation of all contacts landed at certain ports en route to this district are given by the disembarkation staff. These contracts are kept under observation for a limited period.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS.

The General Isolation Hospital was open for the reception of Scarlet Fever Patients for **306 days**. The average number of days for the past **five years was 1,134.4**.

There were **no deaths** from infectious disease, but one death from Meningitis. **No return cases.**

The average detention of scarlet fever patients in Hospital was **38.2** days.

Each block of Hospitals has been regularly cleansed and disinfected. Fire insurance is kept up. The whole of the buildings, furniture, and fittings, are maintained in good condition.

The Small Pox Hospital at Mullacott has not been in use during the year.

The Hospital Committee consists of Councillors E. Auckland, J. G. Dadds, G. C. Jones, W. H. Lewis, W. J. Pile, G. Southcombe (Chairman, Councillor F. H. Thomas).

Miss Chadwick, Matron, has discharged her duties in a very skilful and satisfactory manner.

The Caretakers, Thomas William Allen and Priscilla Allen have also discharged their duties well.

All domestic and other washing is now carried out within the grounds of the Hospital.

The system of nursing which was introduced during the chairmanship of the late Mr. Richard Lake, has both reduced the expenditure which was formerly involved by the hire and travelling expenses of trained nurses from other hospitals outside the town, and has increased the efficiency of the work.

METHOD OF CONTROL OF TUBERCULOSIS.

The system of **voluntary notification** suggested by this Authority, has not been a success, and the attempt to enlist the support of householders by the reception, where necessary, of the subjoined "**list of precautions**" has proved fruitless. Two cases have been notified, one under the L.G.B. Order of Dec. 1908, and one voluntary.

The death rate from Phthisis for **1909 was 0.6**, which is **0.2 below** the average death rate for the group of years 1904-1908, which was **0.8**. This low death rate from Phthisis has been maintained for the **past nine years**.

It is estimated that **one fourth** of the deaths attributed to Phthisis **occur amongst strangers or among the decendants of people who have been sent to reside in North Devon when actually suffering from Tubercular Disease**

The Sanitary Inspector reports that he has carried out disinfection in 12 houses in which Tuberculosis has been present.

“PRECAUTIONS AGAINST THE SPREAD OF CONSUMPTION.”

The Urban District Council of Ilfracombe earnestly requests you to read over and observe the following instructions. They are adapted, by permission, from a form issued by the Manchester Health Department, and are the outcome of a long continued study of Tuberculosis.

1. Consumption is an infectious disease, liable to be communicated more particularly in damp, badly ventilated, and badly lighted houses and workshops.
2. It is usually communicated by the matters coughed up by consumptive people, which get dried and dispersed as dust, thus reaching the lungs of those susceptible to the disease.
3. Such matters should, therefore, never be allowed to get dry. For that reason they should not be spat on the floors of a house, but either into pieces of rag or paper, which should be at once burned, or into a hand-vessel containing water. This vessel should be emptied into the drains outside the house once a day, and then scalded and re-charged with water.
4. Everyone affected with a chronic cough should take the same precautions as a consumptive person.
5. The same precautions should be observed in a workshop as at home.
6. Consumptive people should not spit into a pocket-handkerchief, as both the handkerchief and their clothes are thus made infectious.
7. No one should spit on the ground inside any building or in a public conveyance.
8. The bowel discharges of consumptive people should be disinfected by being passed into a 15 per cent. solution of carbolic acid, or simply into water, and the vessel, when emptied, should be at once scalded. Soiled clothing should be at once removed, disinfected, and afterwards boiled.
9. When it is settled that anyone is consumptive the house should be thoroughly disinfected, and the patient should be thenceforward confined to certain parts of the house. On a request made in writing to the Health Office disinfection will be carried out by the Department free of charge.
10. The rooms occupied by a consumptive person should be kept **well ventilated, and well lighted**. This will aid greatly in destroying the infection.
11. **No one is more liable to inhale the dust from matters coughed up than the consumptive himself. The removal of infectious matter is, therefore, calculated to promote his recovery.** Moreover, if these precautions are strictly carried out he need not be a source of danger to anyone.
12. It is the duty of the attendant to see that the above precautions in regard to the phlegm and discharges are observed, and also to see that every obstacle to sufficient lighting and

ventilation is removed.

13. In case of death the house will be disinfected by the Sanitary Authority, if this is desired. A new tenant should not enter a house previously occupied by a consumptive person until such house has been thoroughly disinfected.

14. Amongst the agencies which act powerfully in causing Consumption are damp dwellings and workshops, overcrowding, defective ventilation, occupations which involve the inhaling of irritating dust, and alcoholic excess. These should be avoided.

15. The milk from consumptive cows is very dangerous, especially to children. All milk should be boiled before use. As many animals suffer from Consumption, all meat should be thoroughly cooked.

VITAL STATISTICS & PREVALENCE OF SICKNESS.

BIRTHS.—The births registered within the 12 months ending December 31st, 1909, were, **Males 70, Females 81, Total 151.** This is equivalent to a birth rate of 16·4 per 1,000 population, a betterment of 1·9 over the year 1908.

The average number of children born in the group of years 1901-1908, was **153·6**, so that notwithstanding an increase of population the total births for the year 1909 have fallen 2·6 below the average. Eight years ago with a smaller population 183 children were born in Ilfracombe, and the birth rate stood at 21·4 per 1,000. In the present year the births number 151, and the birth rate is 16·4 per 1,000. The natural increase of population, *i.e.* the excess of births over deaths is only **13**. For comparison the National birth rate for England and Wales is 25·6.

The constant tendency towards National extinction is acutely felt in Ilfracombe.

DEATHS.—During the year ending December 31st, 1909, the total number of deaths registered as having actually occurred within the district is **138**. This is an increase of 22·5 on the average number of deaths which have been registered during the eight preceding years, which was **115·5**. The gross death rate is **15**, which is 2 higher than the eight years average, which is **13**.

The National death rate for 1909 is 14·5.

In making up the official tables the gross death rate is set out in accordance with the instructions issued by the Local Government Board, and **includes the deaths of strangers as well as of residents.** But in a popular health resort which in the summer months is crowded with visitors, as many as 6,000 sleeping here on one night in August, and many of whom are invalids, the nett deaths alone furnish a fair basis for calculation. Thus the deaths of **11 strangers** were registered within the district during the year 1909. If these 11 deaths are deducted from the gross total of deaths it is apparent that among the 9,160 persons who form the resident population of Ilfracombe, 127 died, which is equal to a true death rate of **12·7 per 1,000 population.** The average

nett death rate for the group of years 1901-1908 is the excellent one of **11.9**. **Six deaths** were registered as occurring in the Tyrrell Cottage Hospital.

AGES AT DEATH.

REMARKABLE FREQUENCY OF OLD AGE IN NORTH DEVON.

The percentages of all deaths which were registered in the ten years 1881—1890 as occurring at 75 and upwards were for England and Wales, 10.5.

In the five North Devon districts of Crediton, Torrington, Barnstaple, South Molton and Bideford, the respective percentages were 23, 22, 21, 23, and 22.

The percentages of survival to the age of 75 and upwards, calculated from the Register Generals Report for 1891—1900 (*British Medical Journal, 1909*) were :—

Manchester ..	2.2	Bradford ..	6.4
London	4.6	Swansea ..	6.5

The most healthy districts in England and Wales show the percentage of survival to be :—

Leyburn	29.4	Aberayron ..	28.5
Hartesmere ..	29.2	Lutterworth	27.7

and closely following come the **North Devon** districts of

South Molton ..	27.5	Okehampton	25.6
Torrington ..	25.8	Crediton ..	25.4

From these more general percentages it is natural to inquire how **Ilfracombe** compares not only with Urban but with Rural Districts.

For the year **1909** the deaths registered at and over **75 were 43**, which shows the very remarkable percentages of ages at 75 and upwards to be **31.1**.

The number of deaths registered at **75 and over** for the group of years 1905—1909 have been **165** or an average of **29 per cent.** of the gross deaths.

The following table shows the number of deaths at **70 years of age and over** for the past five years. The number of deaths registered at **70 and over** for the group of years 1905—1909 have been **221**, or an average of **37 per cent. of the total deaths.**

AGE.

Year.	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	94	96	97	99	Total.
1905	4	1	2	1	2	5	4		1	2	5	3	1	1	1	1	2		1	1				1				38
1906	3	4	3	1	2	3	2	2	6	2	2			1	2	1	1			1	2		1		1			40
1907	2	1	5	2	4	4		2		2		1	5	3	2		1	2	1			1			1	1		39
1908	1	1	2			2	2	1	6	2	2	1	5		2	4	2	6	2			1		1				43
1909	2	3	5	4	3	1	4	4		8	6	2	3	3	1	2	1	2	1	2		1	1				1	60
Totals	12	10	16	8	11	15	12	9	13	16	15	7	14	8	8	8	7	10	5	4	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	221

CAUSES OF SICKNESS AND DEATHS AT ALL AGES.

The attacks of Infectious Diseases were :—

Erysipelas	5
Scarlet Fever	11
Enteric Fever	1—17..Total

Five deaths were registered as due to the **seven chief Zymotic Diseases** which is equal to a Zymotic death rate of **0·5 per 1,000 population.**

The National rate is 1·12 per 1,000 living.

Epidemic Influenza.—There were 13 deaths registered, 10 of which were over 65 years of age.

The deaths registered as due to Influenza during the past eight years have been 44, an average of 5·5 per annum.

Cancer.—Registered 10 deaths, The average for the past five years being 11.

Phthisis.—(Pulmonary Tuberculosis).—Six deaths registered at ages between 15 and 65 were attributed to this disease.

In 1906 the deaths registered were 12, when a maximum was reached. There are three deaths registered from other Tubercular Diseases, so that during the past 12 months the death rate in Ilfracombe attributed to all Tubercular Diseases in all forms is only 0·9 per 1,000 population.

Erysipelas.—There have been five attacks. Three deaths.

Alcoholism and Cirrhosis of Liver.—NO DEATHS.

The average number of deaths attributed to Alcoholic Poisoning for five years is two.

Suicide.—**There has been no deaths.** In seven years there have been but **three cases** of self-inflicted deaths registered.

The vital statistics for the year 1909 offer some points of interest.

The decline of the birth rate, which stood at 21·4 per 1,000 in the year 1901, to 16·4 in the present year is lamentable. There is fault somewhere.

The present rate is 1·0 below even the unsatisfactory average of the past eight years which is 17·4.

INFANT MORTALITY.

The deaths of 14 children under 12 months of age are equal to a **death rate of 92·7 per 1,000** children born. The average Infant death-rate for the past eight years was at the rate of 109·9.

For the ten years previous to 1900 the average Infant Mortality showed a rate of 105·6 per 1,000 births. A reference to the Local Government Board table 5 shows that the causes of Infant Mortality under one year of age were :—

Zymotic Diseases (Measles)	1
" (Whooping Cough)	2
Premature Birth	4
Congenital Defects	2
Atrophy	1
Peritonitis	1
All other causes	3—14..Total.

There has been only one death from Diarrhœa in a period of six years; this reflects infinite credit on the nursing mothers of Ilfracombe.

The National Infant Death-rate is 109.

Local Conditions which have probably conduced to the Reduction of the Infant Mortality during the year 1909:—

- (1) Low Temperature.
- (2) Improvement in Food Stores.
- (3) The active and methodical manner in which all surface nuisances are removed by the painstaking administration of the Sanitary Inspector.
- (4) The greater care exercised over the artificial feeding of infants, particularly as regards the cleanliness of feeding bottles which are in use.
- (5) The increased number of mothers who suckle their children.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.

The Medical Officer of Health is now required to report on a special form issued by the Home Office, direct to the Chief Inspector of factories.

A circular directing the M.O.H. to report on the administration of these sections which relate to home work, was issued on June 25th, 1906.

The Bakehouses are 13 in number. They are kept in conformity with the special regulations of the Act. Limewashing is required every six months, and duly carried out. There are no underground bakehouses.

Sanitary Conditions of Workshops and Workplaces.—

Clean, and in accordance with the regulations; no overcrowding, ventilation good, floors in good order, and well drained.

Factories (Inspections)	16
Bakehouses and Workshops (Inspections) ..	156
Workplaces (Inspections)	27
	— 199..Total.
Number of Defects found	9
Number of Defects remedied	9
Number of Outworkers lists received during the year	6
Number of Outworkers.. .. .	4

Reports forwarded to the Home Office, L.G.B., and Devon C.C., January 13th, 1910.

GAS SUPPLY.

The gas supplied by the Ilfracombe Gas Company is tested by the M.O.H. every month, and has, on examination, proved to be in accordance with the requirements of the Local Act.

The average illuminating power for the year 1909 has been equal to 15.3 candles; the standard illuminating power being 15 candles as required by Act of Parliament.

The average illuminating power for the group of years 1903—1909 was 15·5.

The pressure has been maintained at the limits required by the Gas Works' Act, and the prescribed tests have been so used as to be conclusive of the absence of dangerous impurity.

The Gas Company's Works at Hele are carried on without causing any nuisance to the neighbourhood.

NEW BUILDINGS.

The number of houses and buildings for which plans were submitted for the approval of the Council during the year ending the 31st day of December, 1909, was **30**. There were also **30 plans** deposited showing alterations and additions to existing buildings. Among the plans deposited, one was for a proposed New Arcade between High Street and Avenue Road.

LEE.

The Sanitary condition of this hamlet continues to be satisfactory. In the month of June the Local Government Board directed the Medical Officer of Health to furnish them with a report with reference to the risk of pollution of a dripping well in Tuggs Park, Lee, from a cesspool near the source of supply. Some alterations with regard to the distribution of the effluent sewage from Briarwood Cottage were recommended and have been carried out, up to the present, with satisfactory results, and so far as is known the incident is closed.

FORESHORES.

Notice Boards prohibiting the deposit of offensive waste matters on the Foreshores at Lee and Hele have been fixed by the order of the Council.

A Circular Letter, bearing date October 29th, 1909, has been received from the Local Government Board, directing the Medical Officer of Health to report on certain specific matters, viz:—

MEAT INSPECTION.

NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS ACT, 1907.

MEASURES TAKEN TO REDUCE INFANT MORTALITY.

PART III. P.H. ACT, 1907, SECTIONS 39-42.

EXAMINATION OF DAIRY COWS.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFICATION ACT, 1899.

His report is as follows:—

Medical Officer's Report on Circular Letter of Local Government Board, dated Oct. 29th, 1909.

(A) **Meat Inspection.**—There is one Public Slaughterhouse and seven Private Slaughterhouses in use in the district. These have all been regularly reported on for the past 13 years. The Sanitary Inspector visits them when possible at times of slaughtering, but in consequence of the killing taking place on the same day, and often at the same hour, his supervision is limited. The Inspector does not at present hold a Meat Inspector's Certificate, but he is an Associate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, and is now qualifying for the special certificate in Meat Inspection. No carcasses have been found to be tubercular.

(B) **Notification of Births Act.**—The Medical Officer of Health reports that the Notification of Births Act, 1907, has not been adopted in this district.

MEASURES TAKEN TO REDUCE INFANT MORTALITY.

(c) The steps taken have been reported on annually. Special attention is given to the storage of food in domestic larders, supervision of the milk supply, the cleansing of surfaces in streets, courts, and around houses, the rapid removal of stable manure, and the great attention now given to the condition of house drains.

In the Annual Report for 1903, the following strong appeal was made :—

“There can be little doubt that epidemic Diarrhœa among children is largely due to food contamination. In cottages, both town and country, food is constantly stored in chests of drawers, in cupboards which are themselves dirty, and which become a dumping ground for foul clothing and household refuse of all kinds, or is left sitting on open shelves in wash-houses and sculleries in vessels devoid of covers.

“To milk, fresh or condensed, to sugar used for sweetening the child's food, dust, abounding with poison bacilli, finds ready access; while the common house fly, which is a most ready carrier of infection, is feeding one hour on dung heaps and stinking garbage of all kinds, and the next is revelling in milk jugs and sugar basins.

“The total disuse of long feeding tubes, the provision of proper food stores, and a little simple teaching to the girls in our Public Schools as to cleanly methods of storing and handling children's food, would do much to diminish the prevalence of a disease which can be controlled, and which is one of the chief causes of the waste of infant life in all towns.”

(D) **Part 3 P.H. (A) Act, 1907 (secs. 39-42).**—Part 3 of this Act has not been adopted.

Secs. 73, 74, and 75 of the Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Act, 1905, covers the same ground, and action has been taken under these sections.

The number of Privies converted to the water carriage system being 38.

Earth closets in use within the District number 44.

Privy accommodation is practically extinct.

All houses within the Sewer Area are provided with water closet accommodation.

All new erections are carried out in accordance with the bye-laws controlling new buildings.

(E) **Examination of Dairy Cows.**—These have not been examined by a Veterinary Surgeon since 1899, when there was an examination of all the cows in the Sanitary Area by a qualified person. In Devon the cows lay out for about 8 months in the year, and consequently are particularly free from Tubercle. The condition of the dairies is closely looked after as to their cleanliness, light, ventilation, water supply, and drainage.

(F) **Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889.**—Glanders, Anthrax, and Hydrophobia in man are very rare diseases, and there is no reason why they should be made notifiable.

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

The report of Mr. H. J. Karslake, Sanitary Inspector, is appended. This official is vigilant and is well acquainted with the duties of his office, which he carries out with remarkably good results. The complaints with regard to the surface cleansing of the thoroughfares, which were tolerably frequent in former years, have now been reduced to a minimum under his administration.



Annual Report of Sanitary Inspector.

(SUMMARY).

BAKEHOUSES.—13. Visits—25.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILKSHOPS.—58. Visited quarterly.

DRAINS.—37 found defective, 43 inspection chambers built, 13 new interceptors fixed, 15 iron "Lip traps" replaced by glazed stoneware, 13 galvanized iron ventilating shafts provided, one lead ventilating shaft provided.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS.—152 inspections of fruit shops, etc.; small quantity of fruit, vegetables, and fish found unsound and destroyed by owners, viz.:—4 doz. banannas, 2 bags potatoes, 6lbs. strawberries, 28lbs. shrimps; samples taken—one (milk); notices served—one, under section 9 of the 1899 Act.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—Rooms disinfected, 21; articles disinfected, 208; notices served, 9. **TUBERCULOSIS.**—Rooms disinfected, 82; articles disinfected, 398; articles destroyed, 211. Disinfectants are supplied free.

NUISANCES.—Complaints received (written) 86, (verbal) 223. Notices served.—By order of Council, 47; for removal of accumulations, 10. Informal notices served, and letters written with respect to the abatement of nuisances, 79. Verbal notices were found to have the desired effect in many cases. Nuisance byelaws.—Swine removed, 12.

INSPECTION OF SANITARY CONVENIENCES AT RAILWAY STATIONS.—Number, 18.

HOUSE AND TRADE REFUSE.—Quantity removed, 3,215 tons; street refuse, 1,000 tons.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—Private, 7; public, 1; notices served to limewash, 2. No seizures of unsound meat.

PETROLEUM STORES.—On register, 3; visits, 6.

DWELLING HOUSES.—All systematic inspections carried out in company with the Medical Officer of Health.

HERBERT J. KARSLAKE,

Associate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

TABLE 1.

Vital Statistics of whole District during 1909 and previous years.

NAME OF DISTRICT—ILFRACOMBE.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths regist'rd in District.				Nett Deaths at all ages belonging to the District.	
		No.	Rate.	Under 1 yr of age		At all ages.		No.	Rate.
				No.	Rate p'r 1000 births reg.	No.	Rate.		
Averages for years 1899-1908	8800	153·6	17·4	16·8	109·9	115·9	13	103·3	11·9
1909	9160	151	16·4	14	92·7	138	15	127	12·7

TABLE 3.

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year 1909, in the Urban District of Ilfracombe.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.						
	At all ages.	At Ages—Years.					
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 and upwards.
Erysipelas	5					3	2
Scarlet Fever	11		1	4	5	1	
Enteric Fever	1				1		
Total	17		1	4	6	4	2

ISOLATION HOSPITALS—Bickleighscombe and Mullacott.

TABLE 4.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1909, in the
Urban District of Ilfracombe.

Causes of Death.	Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the District.						
	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
Small-pox							
Measles	2	1	1				
Scarlet fever							
Whooping-cough ..	3	2	1				
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) ..							
Croup							
Fever—Typhus ..							
Enteric							
Other continued							
Epidemic influenza ..	13	1			1	1	10
Cholera							
Plague							
Diarrhoea							
Enteritis							
Gastritis							
Puerperal Fever ..							
Erysipelas	3		1			1	1
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ..	6				1	5	
Other tuberculous diseases ..	3	1		1		1	
Cancer, malignant disease ..	10					3	7
Bronchitis	4					2	2
Pneumonia	4					3	1
Pleurisy	1			1			
Other diseases of Respiratory organs ..							
Alcoholism							
Cirrhosis of liver ..							
Venereal diseases ..							
Premature birth ..	4	4					
Diseases and accidents of parturition ..	1					1	
Heart diseases	21					7	14
Accidents	3					1	2
Suicides							
All other causes ..	60	5	2	2		17	34
All causes	138	14	5	4	2	42	71

TABLE 5.

Infantile Mortality during the year 1909, in the Urban District of Ilfracombe.
Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-2 Months.	2-3 Months.	3-4 Months.	4-5 Months.	5-6 Months.	6-7 Months.	7-8 Months.	8-9 Months.	9-10 Months.	10-11 Months.	11-12 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 Year.
	All Causes. Certified—All ..	7	1	1		9	1						1		2	1		14
Common Infectious Diseases—																	
Small-pox																	
Chicken-pox																	
Measles														1			1
Scarlet Fever																	
Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup																	
Whooping Cough												1		1			2
Diarrhœal Diseases—																	
Diarrhœa, all forms																	
Enteritis, Muco-enteritis, Gastro-enteritis																	
Gastritis, Gastro-intestinal Catarrh																	
Wasting Diseases—																	
Premature Birth	4				4												4
Congenital Defects	1	1			2												2
Injury at Birth																	
Want of Breast-milk Starvation																	
Atrophy, Debility, Merasmus	1				1												1
Tuberculous Diseases—																	
Tuberculous Meningitis																	
Tuberculous Peritonitis: Tabes Mesenterica														1			1
Other Tuberculous Diseases																	
Other Causes—																	
Erysipelas																	
Syphilis																	
Rickets																	
Meningitis (not Tuberculous)																	
Convulsions																	
Bronchitis																	
Laryngitis																	
Pneumonia																	
Suffocation, overlying																	
Other causes	1	1			2	1											3

Births in the Year 151.

Deaths in the Year 14.

Deaths from all Causes at all Ages, 138.

TABLE B.

Showing Notifications received during the years 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, and 1909, within the Urban Sanitary District of Ilfracombe.

	Small Pox.	Cholera.	Plague.	Diphtheria.	Mem. Croup.	Enteric Fever.	Scarlet Fever.	Typhus Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	Total for five years.
1905				1		1	64		1	4	71
1906				2			17			5	24
1907					1	1	43			1	46
1908				4			21		1	2	28
1909						1	11			5	17
Total for 5 years.				7	1	3	156		2	17	186