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Contributors

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BOROUGH OF CHARD.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

For the Year ending December 31st, 1915.

*To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the
Borough of Chard.*

GENTLEMEN,

As Deputy Medical Officer of Health for Chard Borough, I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report for the year 1915.

As I only took up the duties of the office in December, 1915, this report is largely a compilation and analysis of the reports of our Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector (Mr. E. W. Hearn) and the Borough Registrar of Births and Deaths and Vaccination Officer (Mr. E. Hawker), to each of whom I would express my indebtedness for their great help in those matters.

The population of the Borough is estimated at 4,114 as against 4,620 in 1914. The decrease is no doubt mainly due to the young men who have joined the Army, picked lives whose absence makes our vital statistics all more adverse than usual. We still have some 29 Belgians in the town, but from a health point of view they do not differ from ordinary residents. We also have had wounded or otherwise sick soldiers at Monmouth House, our local V.A.D. Hospital, all of whom have speedily improved in their general health in response to our invigorating climate and the generous feeding and healthful life catered for there. No troops or prisoners of war have been quartered in or about the town.

Death Rate.

There were 81 deaths registered during the year, 17 more than in 1914; 14 of these were of non-residents who died in the district, and 4 of our residents died away from the town, leaving the nett number of 71, giving the rate of 17.2 per 1000 of the population, the highest for some years past, although not much higher than 1914.

The births for the year were 75, but 2 were transferable to other districts, leaving us a nett birth rate of 17.7 per 1000, the lowest for some years. When to this we couple the fact that 11 children under 1 year of age died during the same period, one can realise the desirability of making every endeavour to preserve the lives of infants and children. The Notification of Births Act, with the looking up from time to time of the mothers by a Health Visitor, imparting useful knowledge verbally and by leaflet, will, I hope, help to improve matters. The efforts of the "Committee of Matrons" appointed by the Council to secure a trained nurse-midwife for prematernity, maternity and infant welfare, have not so far been successful. Neither has any children's clinic been started here. I am afraid that instead of being pioneers in such matters we are only laggards.

Water Supply.

Full details of the water supply were furnished in the Annual Report for 1914.

A thorough inspection of the springs and supply mains was made during the year and certain improvements effected.

No further progress has been made with the proposed new supply from Combe St. Nicholas.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The sewers continue in good condition, and, where necessary, are frequently flushed.

The sewage is treated at disposal works situated about half a mile from the town. A very good effluent is produced.

Public Scavenging.

House refuse is collected twice a week and disposed of on tips situated outside the Borough.

A large number of galvanised sanitary dustbins were provided by owners of property, and more would certainly have been done in this direction had not the price of the dustbins reached an almost prohibitive figure.

During the summer months all house refuse receptacles and the collecting vans are sprayed with petroleum as a preventive measure against the fly pest.

The main streets of the Borough are scavenged daily; the others as required,

Schools.

Both Elementary Schools were inspected. The sanitary conveniences were not in good condition, and the attention of the School Managers was called to this.

Infectious Disease.

One case of scarlet fever and 4 of erysipelas reported.

Tuberculosis.

Ten fresh cases of tuberculosis were notified during the year, 7 of which were pulmonary. Six deaths from this affection were registered.

Milk Supply.

There are 20 milk sellers, and 12 cowkeepers on the register.

Owing to the scarcity of labour, the cow-yards were not kept quite so well as in former years, but where complaint had to be made the occupiers made every effort to comply with the requirements.

Bakehouses.

There are 8 bakehouses which continue to be well kept

Slaughterhouses.

There are 6 slaughterhouses, 5 licensed and 1 registered. A distinct improvement in their condition was observed.

Factories and Workshops.

There are 47 workshops on the register, viz.:—Carpenters and wheelwrights, 6; tailors, dressmakers and milliners, 10; smiths, plumbers and painters, 6; saddlers, 2; bootmakers, 2; monumental mason, 1; tallow chandler, 1; cabinet maker, 1; wool sorter, 1; watchmaker, 1; gas fitter, 1; bakers, 8; lace mending, 2; printing works, 2; carriage and motor works, 3.

Seven inspections were made.

Account of Work performed by Sanitary Inspector during 1915.

INSPECTIONS :—

General	17
Housing Act	10
Do. (Re-inspection)	12
Slaughterhouses	7
Cowsheds and Dairies	13
Factories and Workshops	7
Bakehouses.. .. .	5
Infectious Disease (including disinfecting)	45
Drainage (including testing)	131
Collections of Manure, Animals, etc.	16
Elementary Schools	2
Provision of Dustbins	1062
Total	1327

INFORMAL NOTICES :—

To re-construct defective drainage	13
To remove collection of refuse	2
To limewash, etc., after infectious disease	1
To limewash cowshed	2
To limewash school conveniences	1
To remedy defective water-closets	2
To abate nuisance from keeping of fowl	2
To limewash factory conveniences	2
To provide sanitary dustbins	188
Total	213

Housing.

There have been 8 houses erected during the year. Ten inspections were made and defects found in 2 of them.

The 12 houses in Old Town reported unfit in 1912 still remain to be dealt with. Three of them are in a ruinous condition, and notice has now (March, 1916) been served on the owner to demolish.

Two houses are being rebuilt at the present time but there seems no probability of further building. Indeed, the scarcity of labour makes any extensive sanitary improvements an impossibility.

Drainage and Closet Accommodation.

Six tests were made of old house drains, 9 new or additional drainage systems provided, 12 insanitary D traps abolished, and one privy converted into a water closet.

House Refuse.

An effort was made to get the remaining houses in the Borough provided with sanitary dustbins, and some progress was made in the early part of the year. Over 1000 visits to premises were made, 188 notices served, and about 170 dustbins provided. It then became almost an impossibility to obtain dustbins, except at a prohibitive figure, and work in this direction was abandoned.

The Fly Pest.

Active steps were taken to combat this peril. All receptacles used for house refuse and the house refuse collecting van were sprayed with paraffin; the former twice a week and the latter once. A circular letter was also addressed to every householder within the Borough calling attention to the danger, and giving advice as to the best measures to adopt.

Infectious Disease.

As the cases were notified every possible precaution was immediately taken to prevent the spread of infection. To promote greater efficiency in this direction, a steam disinfecter is required, but the present time is not opportune for expenditure not absolutely essential.

Housing.

No progress has been made with the proposed Housing Scheme. Tenders were advertised for, but only one was received. This price proved absolutely prohibitive.

Vaccination Statistics for Year 1915.

Number of Children born in the Borough during the Year	75
Successfully vaccinated	40
Died unvaccinated	8
Conscientious objectors	21
Removed to other Districts	2
Postponed (illness)	4
	—
	75

I am, Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

ROBERT SUTHERLAND,
M.B., Ch.B.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1915 & previous Years.
Name of District, CHARD BOROUGH.

YEAR	Popu- lation estima- ted to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.			TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.		TRANSFER- ABLE DEATHS		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Uncor- rected N'mbr.	Nett.		N'mbr.	Rate.	of Non- resi- dents regis- tered in the Dis- trict.	of Resi- dents not reg- istered in the Dis- trict.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.	
			N'mbr.	Rate.					N'mbr	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births.	No.	Rate.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1910	4650	—	111	23.8	58	12.4	9	—	13	117.1	49	10.5
1911	4568	108	108	23.6	72	15.7	11	2	13	120.3	63	13.7
1912	4580	93	93	20.3	56	12.2	11	1	7	75.2	46	10.4
1913	4609	100	100	21.6	71	15.7	20	1	7	98.5	52	11.0
1914	4620	96	96	20.7	64	11.2	1	12	9	93.7	76	15.5
1915	4114	75	73	17.7	81	19.6	14	4	11	150.6	71	17.2

TABLE II.
CHARD URBAN DISTRICT.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1915

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE	Number of Cases Notified.							
	At all Ages.	At Ages---Years.						
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards
Small-pox ...								
Cholera ...								
Diphtheria (in- cluding Mem- br'n's croup) ...								
Erysipelas ...	4		1		2	1		
Scarlet fever ...	1		1					
Typhus fever ...								
Enteric fever ...								
Relapsing fever								
Continued fever								
Puerperal fever...								
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis ..								
Poliomyelitis ..								
Ophthalmia Neonatorum...			1	1				
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ..	7			3	2	1	1	
Other forms of Tuberculosis ..	3			1	1	1		
Totals ...	15	0	0	2	4	5	3	1

Isolation Hospital or Hospitals, Sanitoria, &c.—Joint with R.D.,
Clayhanger Common.

TABLE III.

Chard Borough.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the Year 1915.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	NETT DEATHS AT THE SUBJOINED AGES OF RESIDENTS" WHETHER OCCURRING WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE DISTRICT.									TOTAL DEATHS whether of "Residents" or "Non-Residents" in Institutions in the District.
	All ages	Under 1	1 and 2 under	2 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 45	45 and under 65	65 and upwards.	
All causes { Certified ...	71	11	5	—	2	3	5	17	28	15
Uncertified										
Enteric Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Small-pox ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping-cough ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diphtheria and Croup ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Influenza ...	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas ...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Phthisis, (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ...	5	—	—	—	—	2	1	1	1	—
Tuberculous Meningitis ...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Other tuberculous diseases	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cancer, malignant disease ...	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	1	1
Rheumatic Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Meningitis ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Organic Heart Disease ...	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	8	2
Bronchitis ...	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	1
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	5	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other diseases of Respiratory organs ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diarrhoea and Enteritis ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cirrhosis of liver ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alcoholism ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nephritis and Bright's Disease ...	2	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other accidents and Diseases of Pregnancy and Parturition ...	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Congenital Debility and Malformation, including Premature Birth ...	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide ...	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Suicide ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Other defined Diseases ...	25	3	—	—	—	1	3	5	13	9
Diseases ill-defined or unknown ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	71	11	5	—	2	3	5	17	28	15

TABLE IV. CHARD URBAN DISTRICT. Infant Mortality during the Year 1915. Nett Deaths from stated Causes at Various Ages under One Year of age.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Nett Deaths in the Year										Total Deaths under One Year.
	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 4 Weeks.	4 Weeks and under 3 Months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months.		
All Causes.	3	1	1	1	5	2	3	1	1	11	
Common Infectious Diseases.											
{ Small-pox ...											
{ Chicken-pox ...											
{ Measles ...											
{ Scarlet Fever ...											
{ Whooping Cough ...											
{ Diphtheria and Croup ...											
{ Erysipelas ...											
Tuberculous Diseases.											
{ Tuberculous Meningitis ...											
{ Abdominal Tuberculosis ...											
{ Other Tuberculous Diseases ...											
{ Meningitis (<i>not Tuberculous</i>) ...											
{ Convulsions ...										2	
{ Laryngitis ...											
{ Bronchitis ...											
{ Pneumonia (all forms)...									1	3	
Diarrhoeal Diseases.											
{ Diarrhoea, ...										3	
{ Enteritis ...											
{ Gastritis ...											
{ Syphilis ...											
{ Rickets ...											
{ Suffocation, overlying ...											
{ Injury at Birth ...										1	
{ Atelectasis ...										1	
Wasting Diseases.											
{ Congenital Malformations ...											
{ Premature Birth ...										1	
{ Atrophy, Debility, and Marasmus ...										1	
{ Other Causes ...										3	
	3	1	1	1	5	4	1	1	1	11	
Nett Births in the Year											
{ Legitimate ..										71.	
{ Illegitimate ..										2.	
Nett Deaths in the Year											
{ Legitimate Infants ..										10.	
{ Illegitimate Infants ..										1.	

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACT.

		Chard Borough.	
1.	Sanitary District		8
2.	New houses erected during 1915		10
3.	Number of houses inspected during 1915 under the Housing Act, 1909. (This must <i>not</i> include re-inspection of houses inspected in previous years.)		0
4.	Results of inspections of the fresh houses inspected during 1915, classified as follows :—		2
	(a) Number reported as unfit for human habitation		8
	(b) Number defective, but with defects not sufficient to report as unfit for habitation		
	(c) Number without recorded sanitary defects		
5.	Action taken and results in regard to houses reported as unfit during 1914 and 1915, as follows :—		
	Number so reported		
	Closing Order made		
	Made fit without a Closing Order		
	Still unfit, but no Closing Order made		
	Demolished		
	Put in repair after Closing Order made		
	Still closed at end of year		
	Action taken and results in regard to houses reported as unfit during 1913 and 1914 as follows :—		
	Number so examined		
	Number with defects remedied by the end of 1915		
	Number still defective at end of 1915		
	Number not yet visited to ascertain if defects are remedied		
7.	Cases of overcrowding dealt with during the year		
8.	Parishes in which there is evidence of shortage of houses, and steps taken to remedy		
		For houses reported during 1914.	For houses reported during 1915.
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
There still remain 12 houses reported unfit in 1912. Closing orders issued but no further action taken. Three of these now derelict. Owner served with notice to demolish.			
		For houses first examined during 1914.	For houses first examined during 1915.
		2	2
		1	0
1 But this house is now derelict and am considering issue of demolition order.		0	2
		0	
There appears to be no shortage of houses at present.			

Factories, Workshops, and Workplaces.

1.—INSPECTION of FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, and WORKPLACES (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances)

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Prosecutions.
FACTORIES (Including Factory Laundries)	4	2	none
WORKSHOPS (Including Workshop Laundries)	3	none	none
WORKPLACES (Other than Outworkers' premises included in Part 2 of this Report)	none	none	none
TOTAL	7	2	none

2.—DEFECTS FOUND in FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, and WORKPLACES.

Sanitary Accomodation unsuitable or defective: Found, 2; Remedied, 2.

3.—HOME WORK.

LACE, LACE CURTAINS, and NETS.—Lists, 3; Workmen, 248.

4.—REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.

Workshops on the Register at the end of the year.	Number.
Carpenters and Wheelwrights	6
Tailors, Dresmakers, and Milliners	10
Smiths, Plumbers and Painters	6
Saddlers	2
Bootmakers	2
Monumental Mason	1
Tallow Chandler	1
Cabinet Maker	1
Wool Sorter	1
Watchmaker	1
Gas Fitter	1
Bakers	8
Lace Mending	2
Carriage and Motor Works	3
Total number of Workshops on Register	45

