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BOROUGH



OF RYDE.

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FORTY-FIRST  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health


TO THE

TOWN COUNCIL,

ACTING AS THE

Sanitary Authority for the Borough of Ryde

For the Year 1920.



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SUDBURY, RYDE,  
*March, 1921.*

GENTLEMEN,

In presenting to you my annual report for the year 1920, I am again following the detailed instructions of the Ministry of Health as to the subjects to be mentioned and their order.

### **Natural and Social Conditions of the District.**

**Population.** Census 1911, 10,608. Estimated by Registrar General for 1920, 10,134.

**Physical Features and General Character of the District.** I beg to substitute the following for my last year's statement as to the geological formation which I am informed was incorrect. The geological formation are clays and marls of the Bembridge marls and the Osborne beds. The upper parts of the town stand on gravel beds which cover the higher parts of the hill.

**Social Conditions and Occupations.** The chief part which requires to be mentioned is the increase of unemployment, which is affecting this district in common with the whole country. One of those persons in the best position to judge tells me that there is now more unemployment in Ryde than for at least twenty years.

Wages have, of course, increased; but they are in many occupations still very low in relation to the value of money.

Number of persons in receipt of Poor Law Relief. In Workhouse 60, outside relief 124, total 184.

### **Sanitary Circumstances of the District.**

**Water.** There is a constant supply of good water, pumped from the chalk and upper greensand. Owing to the wet year there has been no shortage during the year, a result which has been contributed to by the discovery and stoppage of a serious source of waste at the Waterworks.



There has been no contamination of the water, the quality of which has been excellent. I append a recent Analyst's Report.

### **Report on Sample of Water received on June 16th from the Borough Engineer, Ryde, I.W.**

The sample was perfectly clear and free from odour and had the pale blue tint of organically pure water. Its composition in parts per 100,000 was as under :—

Chlorine	...	...	...	...	3'04
Sulphuric Acid ( $\text{SO}_3$ )	...	...	...	...	0'93
Nitric Acid ( $\text{N}_2 \text{O}_5$ )	...	...	...	...	1'23
Free Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0'0019
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0'0031
Oxygen absorbed from permanganate at					
80°F in 15 minutes	...	...	...	...	0'0122
Do. in 4 hours	...	...	...	...	0'0190
Total Solids dried at 212°F	...	...	...	...	28'60
Loss on Ignition	...	...	...	...	2'30
Appearance of solids on heating	...	...	...	...	Very slight browning
Hardness—Temporary	...	...	...	...	15'4
„ Permanent	...	...	...	...	6'6
„ Total	...	...	...	...	22'0

#### *Bacterioscopic Examination :—*

Total number of organisms per cubic	
centimetre	...
Growing at blood-heat in agar	...
B. Coli—not detectable in 36 cubic centimetres	...

The Water Supply is in excellent condition. It is of high organic purity and bacterially clean.

OTTO HEHNER.

**Rivers and Streams.** No complaints have been received as to the condition of the two streams which exist on the boundaries of the Borough.

**Drainage and Sewerage.** There is nothing to add to the remarks made on this subject last year.

**Closet Accommodation.** Every house in the Borough is provided with a water closet and flushing cistern. In a very few cases two houses use one water closet.

**Scavenging** is carried out by the Borough employes and the refuse tipped. The ground in use for this purpose last year no longer needing it, the refuse was tipped on some ground forming part of a brick field in Ashey Road. In consequence of complaints from the tenants of neighbouring houses I inspected the site and reported to the Town Clerk that in my opinion the refuse tip constituted a nuisance and should be abated forthwith. I was then asked to report on two proposed tips, and reported in favour of one in a field at the corner of Ashey Road and Smallbrook Lane. It was offered for the purpose for a year: but after a few months the owner no longer wanted the refuse. The objectionable site in Ashey Road was then used for a short time. Now, however, the refuse is being tipped on land off Rink Road and arrangements have been made for it to be tipped in the future on the low lying ground between Quarry Road and the railway line in order to raise its level.

These difficulties as to suitable tips, and the generally unsavoury, if not insanitary character of refuse tips make me once more urge the desirability of a refuse destructor.

The number of working-class houses provided with sanitary dustbins is still lamentably small: and I should like to see a by-law making such receptacles compulsory; seventeen sanitary dustbins have been provided during the year.

#### **Sanitary Inspection of District.**

Number of Nuisances reported during the year ...	167
Number of Notices served (formal) ... ..	25
Number of informal notices leading to abatement	142
Syphons or Drains choked ... ..	19
Yard Gullies choked ... ..	31
New Gullies provided ... ..	16



New W.C. Pans and traps ... ..	16
W.C. Cisterns provided ... ..	12
Inspecting Chambers provided ... ..	3
Ventilating Shafts raised ... ..	5
Defective Spouting and Stack Pipes ... ..	18

**Premises and Occupations which can be controlled by By-Laws, &c.** There are no common lodging-houses.

There is now only one Marine Store Dealer in the town whose premises unfortunately abut on the Municipal Infant School. His premises are much better kept than during the war and no complaint has arisen on this count during the year.

**Schools.** The sanitary condition of the schools and their water supply are satisfactory.

### Food.

**(a) Milk Supply.** The quality of the milk supplied is good. Most of the milk comes from farms outside, the cattle of which are not under the inspection of the Borough Veterinary Inspector. Those within the Borough are inspected quarterly by Mr. J. Vickers Blake, the Veterinary Inspector who reports as follows :—

“During the year I have inspected 669 head of cattle, viz :—

March	176
June	164
September	160
December	161

“In March three were turned out of the dairies for induration of udders : and in September one with mammitis. These were disposed of, all the rest were healthy. Cow stables, utensils, etc., are satisfactorily kept.”

Twenty samples of new milk were submitted for analysis all of which were satisfactory except in August when one sample was slightly deficient in fat and two in total solids in each case in a degree insufficient to warrant prosecution. In addition five

samples were examined for impurities, two of which were reported to be "reasonably clean" and one as "insufficiently strained." The rest were satisfactory.

**Milk (Mothers' and Children's) Order, 1918.** The Council has continued the grant of £7 10s. a month for milk for necessitous mothers and children. It is distributed by the Superintendent of the Ryde District Nursing Association under my supervision.

**(b) Meat.** The slaughter-houses are well kept and under regular inspection. There is no public abattoir in the district and the meat is not systematically inspected at the time of slaughter; no official of the corporation holds a certificate for meat inspection. One carcass of a cow was condemned during the year for tuberculosis.

### Slaughter-Houses.

	In 1914.	Jan., 1920.	Dec., 1920.
Registered	7	7	7
Licensed	1	1	1

**(c) Other Foods.** Various articles of food were inspected and found to be unfit for consumption and were destroyed, including 55lbs. beef, a carcass of a lamb, 72lbs. imported lamb, 23lbs. bacon and sausages, condensed milk, tinned foods of various kinds and cake powder.

No fault has been found with regard to premises used for preparation or storage of food.

The Bakehouses are regularly inspected, and except in a few cases where the need of limewash had to be called attention to, have been satisfactorily kept.

**(d) Sale of Food and Drugs Act.** In addition to the samples of milk mentioned above, two of butter, two of cream, two of sal volatile, three of camphorated oil, one of saccharine, one of plum jum and one of marmalade were subjected to analysis and all were found to be free from adulteration or impurity.



### **Prevalence and control over Infectious Diseases.**

There has been no serious epidemic during the year except a wide prevalence of whooping cough in the spring, which caused the death of three children.

There were three cases of diphtheria, one of which was imported. All were treated successfully at the Isolation Hospital.

Two cases of scarlatina. Both nursed at home without any spread of infection.

Seven cases of enteric fever. This is an unusually large number. Two occurred in one family in January, following a previous case in the same family at the end of 1919. The first case was not recognized until the second one occurred, and the family being one of very dirty habits, the infection occurred before it could be guarded against.

The third case was a nurse in the County Hospital, who contracted the disease from the above cases.

The fourth was a child who had admittedly eaten a few cockles two or three weeks before.

The fifth, a woman, occurring in May, lived two doors from the house from which the three cases in one family occurred. These houses are insanitary from lack of light and air, and the long interval between the cases seemed to preclude the idea of infection. I had the drains of all these houses and the adjoining court tested. The only defect found was a small leak in connection with a stack pipe in the last-named court. No source of infection could be discovered.

The sixth case, a boy aged five, at the end of November, was in premises the insanitary state of which has often been called attention to. The causes of complaint have been the keeping of animals in unsuitable places, the accumulation of manure, etc., conditions not of themselves sufficient to account for typhoid.

The last case, a very slight one, was notified from the County Hospital after recovery, and it was not possible after such a lapse of time to obtain full information about articles of diet which preceded the attack.

None of these last four cases appear to have any connecting link.

The remaining notifications were five of erysipelas, two of malaria (in returned soldiers), eight of pneumonia and one of puerperal fever. The last case was fatal. It was not attended by a midwife.

The Isolation Hospital was little used during the year, only three cases of diphtheria having been treated there.

Three children suffering from scabies and vermin, from a dirty overcrowded house, were admitted and treated at the instance of the Society for the Protection of Children, while the home was cleansed.

**Tuberculosis.** The notification of tuberculosis remains, I fear, more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Only seven cases were notified during the year.

While of nine deaths during the year from pulmonary tuberculosis, two had not been previously notified.

**Maternity and Child Welfare.** The Mothercraft centre—a voluntary one under the management of the District Nursing Association—continues to do good work.

The Children's Hostel for the Isle of Wight, to which I alluded in my last report, has not yet opened. Firstly, through difficulty in obtaining the suitable premises and secondly through difficulty in finding a suitable staff. These difficulties, at the time of writing, have, I believe, been overcome, and it will shortly be working.

It is intended to accommodate nearly forty children, preference being given firstly to the children of soldiers and sailors; and secondly to children who, while not actually ill, are ailing or not



making normal progress. It will probably also be able to take boarded-out children whose existing quarters are unsatisfactory. There will be a charge of so much per week and no child, except under special circumstances, will be retained for more than a year. It is hoped that the various Mothercraft centres of the Island will send children who need special care.

At the same time there will be two maternity wards, of three beds each, for the reception of women for their confinements or for diseases of pregnancy. These will be in charge of a special nurse.

The Council have recently increased the amount paid to the District Nurses for the Health Visitor from £40 to £80.

**Puerperal Fever.** One case has occurred this year and proved fatal. It was not attended by a midwife. There were also two fatal cases of puerperal edampsia.

**Ophthalmia Neonatorum.** No case has been notified.

**Mortality of Infectious Diseases among Children.** Three deaths occurred from whooping cough.

### **Sanitary Administration.**

1. **Staff.** Medical Officer of Health.  
One Sanitary Inspector.

2. **Infectious Disease Hospital.** Two wards accommodating twelve patients. One Nurse-Matron and one General Servant. The accommodation is usually sufficient ; but in case of more than two diseases needing to be accommodated at one time, or separate accommodation being required for the two sexes, the hospital would cease to be adequate to the need. Happily this has rarely occurred.

Small Pox accommodation is provided by the County Authority. The arrangements made on the last occasion to deal with an outbreak are strongly disapproved of by the Sanitary Authority of Ryde.

## General Adoptive Acts in Force.

### 3. Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

Sections 15 to 29, 32 and 33 of Part ii. Part iii. Sections 52 to 65 of Part iv, Part vi. Sections 81, 82, 83, 86 of Part vii. Sections 87 to 90 of Part viii. Sections 92 and 93 of Part x.

**Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.** Parts 2, 3 and 4.

**Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.**

**Private Streets Works Act, 1892.**

**Local Government Act, 1894.** Appointment of Overseers and Assistant Overseers. Certain powers of Parish Council under section 6 and sections 17, 18.

Powers of Vestry under sections 3 and 4 of **Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act, 1869.**

4. Bacteriological investigations in diphtheria, typhoid and tuberculosis, are made by arrangement with the Clinical Research Association. Diphtheria antitoxin is supplied free.

## Housing.

### 1. Number of Houses, 2,700.

Number of Working Class Houses, £12 and under, 1,075.

£12—20, 732.

Number of Working Class Houses erected during the year or in course of erection, 0.

### 2. Population estimated by Registrar General. 10,134.

3. **Extent of shortage or excess of Houses.** The better class of houses, of which a large number were empty two or three years ago, have filled up, and there are now very few empty houses of this class. Several are being, or have been, converted into flats, which are rapidly occupied. The working class houses unoccupied are very few. I have obtained a list of them, which shows eighteen empty houses ; but, of these, sixteen



are not fit for habitation, and the remaining two are being renovated and will, doubtless, shortly be occupied. A large number of those now inhabited are far below a decent standard, and in many cases the conditions do not permit of a decent standard being attained. I should be prepared to declare such houses to be unfit for habitation were there any accommodation elsewhere for the occupants. There is another factor in the shortage of houses, which is not inconsiderable, but which is very difficult to estimate. A good many young married couples have been unable to find houses and are living as lodgers, often in houses where there is not enough room for them. Again, a number of marriages are being put off because of the impossibility of finding house accommodation. In my opinion, therefore, there is a real shortage of working class houses, not less than sixty and perhaps eighty.

The building scheme which has been adopted only allows for thirty houses, which, in my opinion, is not adequate to the need.

**4. Overcrowding.** There is not much serious overcrowding. Action has only been taken in one case during the year, and in that case the mother has since been sent to prison for neglecting and ill-treating her children.

**5. Fitness of Houses.** The general standard of the district is fairly good. The chief defect, on the side of the owners, is the absence, in many instances, of an indoor water supply and sink, defective arrangements for the storage of food and absence of proper arrangements for the disposal of refuse.

The dirty habits of a good many of the tenants are responsible for a great part of the worst conditions found. In one case, that of Sun Place, the roadway, which has never been taken over by the authorities, and which is badly constructed, is in such a bad state that it is impossible to expect the inhabitants to keep their houses clean.



I am strongly of opinion that all the roadways of alleys and courts in the town should be taken over by the authorities and kept in a proper state of repair and cleanliness.

Where possible, too, the blind alley should be continued and made into a thoroughfare. These public improvements would, undoubtedly, form an incentive to the inhabitants to keep their houses decently. Whereas, when they live in a dirty blind alley, with a feeling that no one passes or sees the state of their homes, many lapse into a state of indifference and neglect.

In the case of Sun Place, a few years back all the houses were put into a proper state of repair and cleanliness under the Housing and Town Planning Act. Now five out of the eight are again dirty and dilapidated. I have not called on the owners to bear the expense of putting them again in order, as I consider it to be futile until the roadway is put into a state consistent with a decent house and a decent standard of living. The heavy expense of repairs at the present time makes it difficult to get the needed improvements carried out, and frequently the landlords beg to have the house declared unfit for habitation in order to get the tenants out.

The houses, Nos. 6—13 Buckingham Road, were found to be in a very bad condition. Two defective w.c.'s, insufficient water supply and refuse accommodation, defective roof, spouting, etc. After repeated notice, these houses have been put in a reasonable state of repair, but can never be made really fit. When equivalent accommodation can be found, they ought to be condemned.

Several houses in St. Mary's Passage are worthy of condemnation on account of insufficient light and air in the front rooms.

## **Appendices.**

### **Housing Conditions.**

Year ending 31st December, 1920.



## 1. General.

- (1) Estimated population, 10,134.
- (2) General death rate, 17·95.
- (3) Death rate from tuberculosis, 1·38.
- (4) Infantile mortality, 51·4.
- (5) Number of dwelling-houses of all classes, 2,700.
- (6) Number of working-class dwelling-houses, 1,807.
- (7) Number of new working-class houses erected, 0.

## 2. Unfit Dwelling-Houses.

### (I) Inspection.

- (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects, 76.
- (b) Number of dwelling-houses inspected and recorded under the Housing Regulations, 1910, 58.
- (c) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation, 0.
- (d) Number of dwelling-houses (excluding last heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation, 33.

### (II) Remedy of defects without service of formal notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority, 25.

### (III). Action under Statutory Powers.

- (a) Proceedings under section 28 Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919.

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs, 33.
  - (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit
    - (a) by owners, 50.
    - (b) by Local Authority in default of owners, 0.
  - (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which closing orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close, 0.
- (b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.
- (1) Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied, 0.
  - (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied.
    - (a) by owners, 25.
    - (b) by Local Authority in default of owners, 0.
- (c) Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, 0.
- (3) Unhealthy Areas, 0.
  - (4) Number of houses not complying with the building bye-laws erected with the consent of Local Authority under section 25 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919, 0.
  - (5) Staff engaged on housing work :
    - Sanitary Inspector.
    - Medical Officer of Health.

### Vital Statistics.

Population estimated by Registrar General, 10,134.  
 Total births, 214. Males, 102. Females, 112.  
 Birth rate, 21'11.



(Average of 148 smaller towns, 24.9).

Total deaths, 182. Males, 80. Females, 102.

Death rate, 17.95.

(Average of 148 smaller towns, 11.3)

### **Infant Mortality.**

Deaths under one year old, 11.

Death rate per 1 000 births registered, 51.4.

(Average of 148 smaller towns, 80).

### **Details of Infant Deaths.**

Premature births and congenital weakness, 6.

Pertussis, 2.

Pneumonia, 1.

Bronchitis, 1.

Drowning, 1.

Diarrhoea and enteritis (under 2), 0.

**Zymotic Deaths** (enteric, 1 Pertussis, 3. Erysipelas, 1), 5.

Zymotic death rate, .493.

**Tuberculosis Deaths** (all kinds), 14.

Death rate, 1.38.

**Cancer Deaths**, 16.

Death rate, 1.579.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

PHILIP D. TURNER.