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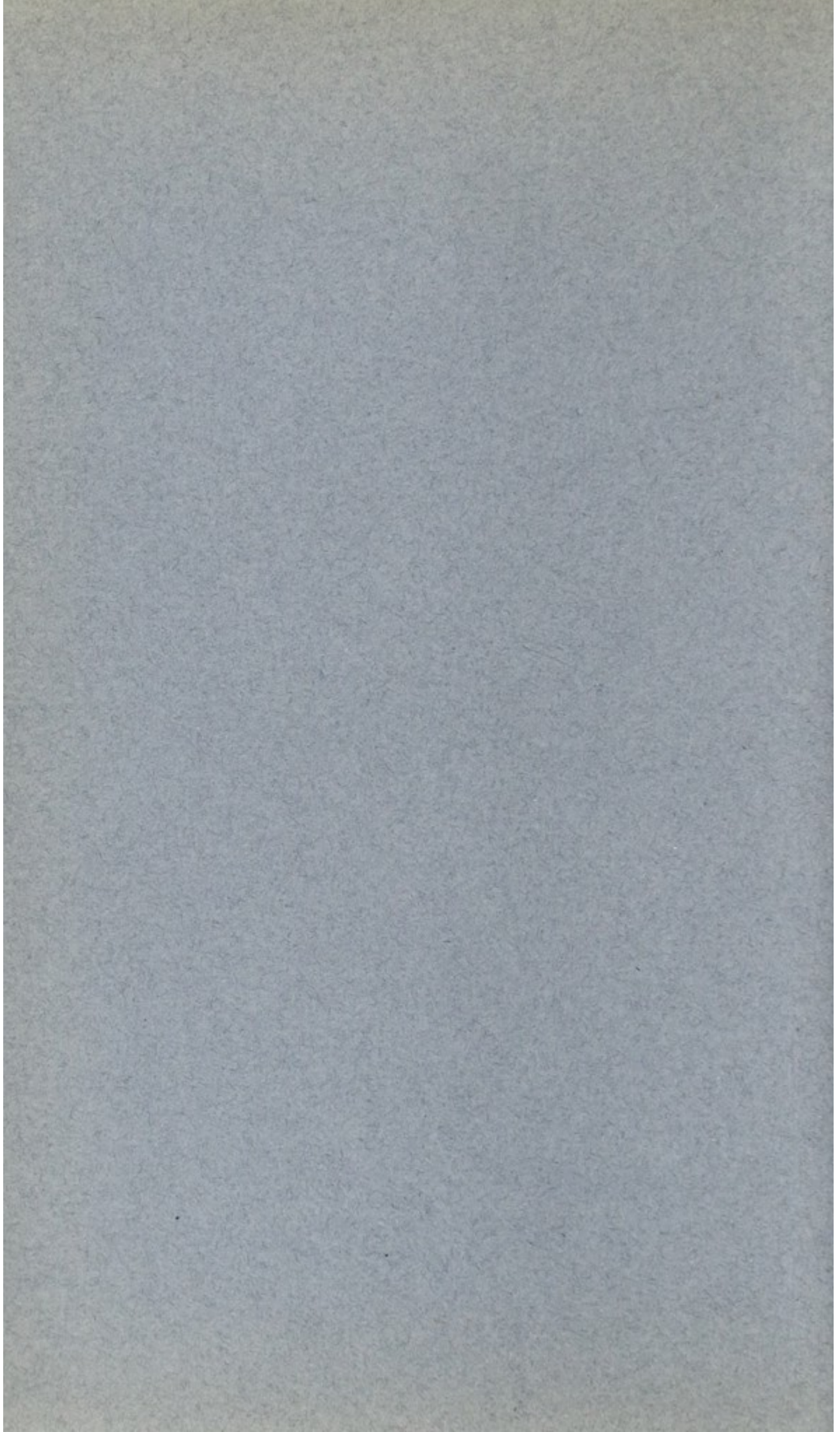


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Annual Report
on the
Health and
Sanitary Circumstances
of the
Town of Sherborne
For the Year 1920

by
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Medical Officer of Health.



URBAN DISTRICT OF SHERBORNE.

ANNUAL HEALTH REPORT

FOR 1920.

*To the CHAIRMAN, VICE-CHAIRMAN and MEMBERS
of the URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.*

Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

POPULATION (1911 census), 5954. Registrar General's estimate for 1920, 5649. As the census was taken during the school holidays, 950 is to be added to the estimate, giving 6599 as the correct figure.

Physical Features and General Characters of the District.

The town lies chiefly on the Northern side of the valley of the Yeo. The highest point is 321 feet and the lowest 169 feet above sea level. The sub-soil is inferior oolite.

RAINFALL, from figures kindly supplied by Mr. Turton was 32'50 inches on 211 days. The mean for the preceding five years is 36'53 on 202 days.

Social Conditions.

The chief occupations are agriculture, the manufacture of gloves, two large milk factories, one for silk-weaving, one for letter-press printing, and a steam laundry. Sherborne is widely known as an educational centre, being well provided with schools of every grade for both boys and girls.

Vital Statistics.

BIRTHS—Males 50. Females 53. Total 103.

Birth Rate per 1000 population, 15'73.

„ „ „ England and Wales, 25'4.

DEATHS—Males 30. Females 44. Total 74.

Allowance has been made for deaths occurring elsewhere which belong to this district, and for the deaths occurring in the district which belong elsewhere.

ACTUAL DEATH RATE—11'21 per 1000 population.

„ „ „ for England and Wales 12'4 per
1000 population.

In this District there were 30 deaths of 75 years of age and over.

INFANT MORTALITY.

Nett Deaths from stated causes at ages under 1 year, 3.

CAUSE OF DEATH,	Under 1 week.	Total under 1 month	1-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	Total under 1 year
All Causes	1	1		1	1		3
Accidental				1			1
Atrophy, Debility ...	1	1	1				2

Nett Births for the whole year : legitimate 102 ; illegitimate 1.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE—29·12 per 1000 births.

“ “ “ England and Wales, 80 per 1000 births.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1920.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	NETT DEATHS OF "RESIDENTS." WHETHER OCCURRING WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE DISTRICT.								
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 2 years	2 and under 5 years	5 and under 15 years	15 and under 25 years	25 and under 45 years	45 and under 65 years	65 and upwards
Influenza	5	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	3
Pulmonary Tuberculosis...	3	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...
Cancer, Malignant Disease	11	...	...	...	...	...	1	5	5
Organic Heart Disease ...	9	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	5
Bronchitis	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	5
Pneumonia, all forms ...	3	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...
Appendicitis	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Violence, excluding suicide	4	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	...
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Other Defined Diseases ...	29	3	...	...	2	...	...	4	20
Total	74	3	...	..	4	1	8	19	39

The amount of Poor Law Relief during 1920 was £1228 10s. 3d.

During 1920, 119 patients were admitted to The Yeatman Hospital from this District for in-patient treatment. The total number of days in Hospital was 3029. There were 155 out-patients with 500 attendances.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

WATER.—The chief source of supply is a well 250 feet in depth, the average yield per day being 240,000 gallons. The other source is a spring situated outside the district from which the water is conveyed in iron pipes; the yield from this source is 30 gallons per hour. The water is delivered to the district in a mixture of the two. It is a water of medium hardness and of great chemical and bacteriological purity. There is at times some discolouration due to oxides of iron.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.—The river Yeo receives the effluent from the sewage disposal works which are not yet completed.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.—The sewage works begun in 1913 and held up owing to the war have not yet been completed, but the work is progressing satisfactorily.

The whole of the district is well drained and the sewers are of adequate size.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.—There are about 1450 water closets in the district. There is a shortage in several of the courts off Newland and also at some of the cottages in Newland and Acreman Street.

SCAVENGING.—Refuse from houses, etc., is collected daily by the Council's workmen and carted to a field to the north of the town. Here it is set on fire and smoulders. A refuse destructor is necessary and occupiers ought to provide dust-bins with lids.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.—

Number of premises visited : 514.

Defects or nuisances discovered and action taken in regard to these : 34, all remedied.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S STATEMENT.—

a. Number of inspections made during the year : 856.

b. Number of notices served during the year : 10.

c. The result of the service of such notices : The nuisances were abated.

PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYE-LAWS AND REGULATIONS.—

Offensive trades: none.

Underground sleeping rooms: none.

SCHOOLS.—The sanitary conditions and water supply of schools, especially public elementary schools are all satisfactory.

Food.

(a) MILK SUPPLY. There are four milk shops in the town run in connection with four dairy farms situated in, or close to, the town.

The supply and the arrangements for distribution are adequate.

The standard of cleanliness varies in the different cases from a high to a moderate one.

On the whole the conditions may be considered satisfactory, up to the average, and as good as one can hope for in the present uneducated state of public opinion on this matter.

The desirability of milking with dry hands is not realised, and I am not convinced that the milkers' hands and the cows' udders are in all cases thoroughly washed.

There are two factories which collect a large quantity of milk daily from the surrounding country for the making of butter, cheese, dried milk, etc.

(b) MEAT. There are three private slaughter-houses in the district and every effort is made to ensure their cleanliness.

(c) OTHER FOODS. Inspections are carried out by the Sanitary Inspector and myself.

Administration of Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

Number of Samples taken :

Bread	...	...	1	Margarine	...	...	1
Curry Powder	...	...	2	Milk	...	...	1
Cheese	...	...	2	Oatmeal	...	...	2
Custard Powder	...	...	1	Olive Oil	...	...	2
Gregory's Powder	...	...	1	Self-Raising Flour	...	...	1
Jam	...	...	2	Tea	...	...	1

No sample was found to be adulterated.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious Diseases.

The notifications during the year were as follows:—

Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	2
Spinal Tuberculosis	...	...	1
Scarlet Fever	...	...	5
Puerperal septicaemia	...	...	1
Erysipelas	...	...	1
Encephalitis lethargica	...	...	2

There were deaths from: Influenza, 5; Pneumonia, 3.

Bacteriological investigations are carried out by the Lister Institute.

Disinfection of premises, etc., is undertaken by the Council's workmen under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector.

No case of infectious disease was removed from this district to the Isolation Hospital.

The five cases of Scarlet Fever were isolated in a private hospital.

Seventeen cases of infectious disease from the urban district were removed to the Isolation Hospital.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

During the year the centre was opened 49 times, the number of infants attending being 45, and attendances 244.

Housing.

I.—GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS IN THE DISTRICT.

(a) Extent of shortage or excess of houses:

In common with other towns there is a shortage of suitable houses for the working classes.

(b) Measures taken or contemplated to meet any shortage:

Thirty-six new houses are nearly completed, 28 being occupied, just fulfilling the local demand for such houses. The rental and rates of these amounts to 15s. 3d. a week, a sum far greater than the average working-man can afford.

Twelve to twenty non-parlour houses in addition to the proposed flats would meet the immediate crying demand. These are urgent and I press for their immediate construction.

The housing difficulty does not present any satisfactory solution under present conditions, for with the present cost of building the average working-man cannot afford even the uneconomic rent demanded, and in the future he will be just as little or less able, for wages are falling. It appears to me that houses built now, saddle the working-man with a very high rent during the life of the cottages.

II.—OVERCROWDING.

1. Extent and Causes :

There are a few cases of overcrowding chiefly due to the families having increased since the commencement of the tenancies, the shortage of suitable cottages and the inability of the tenants to pay higher rents.

The hopes expressed in last year's report that the proposed new houses would relieve the overcrowding have been falsified.

The worst cases of overcrowding occur in the most dilapidated houses, and the tenants are quite unwilling, if able, to pay the comparatively high rents of the new houses. They rarely pay any rent at present.

It seems well-nigh impossible to deal satisfactorily with the few bad cases of over-crowding.

III.—FITNESS OF HOUSES.

(a) General standard of housing in the district :

This is moderately good with some bad spots.

(b) General character of the defects found in unfit houses :

Low ceilings and lack of through ventilation.

A number of the cottages are in yards and closes. Shortage of closet accommodation.

(c) The defects are due to the age of the cottages and the ideas prevailing when they were built :

In some cases they are dilapidated, but as the tenants rarely pay rent the owner will not remedy the defects. These houses cannot very well be condemned as the families would have no house to live in and would quickly ruin a decent house, even if such existed and they would pay the rent of it, which is not at all likely.

When defects are found the owner is ordered to remedy them.

One of the pressing necessities for Sherborne is a comprehensive and well thought-out scheme for pulling down, and in part rebuilding a large number of cottages and building about 50 non-parlour cottages.

In carrying out this scheme care should be taken to preserve the open spaces which exist and if possible to create fresh ones.

The healthiest sites for building are on the outskirts of the town on the north side.

In my opinion all further building should, as far as possible, be on the outskirts of the town and not on the open spaces existing in the town.

This has not been kept sufficiently in mind, for officials from London who have come here to advise on the housing question and to press forward building have been much attracted by our open spaces as suitable sites for building cottages.

In conclusion I mention the most important needs of the town.

1. The initiation of a comprehensive housing scheme including the pulling down, altering and rebuilding of various unfit dwelling houses and the building of a number of new cottages.
2. The completion of the sewage works.
3. The provision of a refuse destructor.
4. The provision of a covered dust-bin by the occupier of every house.

I close by saying that on the whole, and judged by similar towns, the health of this town has been very satisfactory during the past year. ✓

The incidence of Tuberculosis and the other infectious diseases, the general death rate and the infant mortality rate compare very favourably with the rest of England and Wales, especially when it is remembered that thrice yearly we have an influx of school children from all parts of the country, with its attendant liability to the importation of infectious diseases.

APPENDICES.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.

STATISTICS.

Year ended 31st December 1920.

1.—GENERAL.

(1) Estimated population	...	...	...	6552
(2) General death-rate	...	..	11·21 per 1000 population.	
(3) Death-rate from tuberculosis	...	..	·45 per 1000 population.	
(4) Infantile mortality	...	...	29·12 per 1000 births.	
(5) Number of dwelling-houses of all classes	...	...
(6) Number of working-class dwelling-houses	...	...
(7) Number of new working-class houses erected	...	...		36

2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.

I.—INSPECTION.

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	514
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	...	304
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	2
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	6

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 or their officers	34
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III.—ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

A. *Proceeding under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919.*

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	18
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit—		
(a) by owners	...	34
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	...	None
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	...	—

B. *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied—		
(a) by owners	...	...
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	..	None

C. *Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909.*

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	...	1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	2
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	...	2
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	None
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	None