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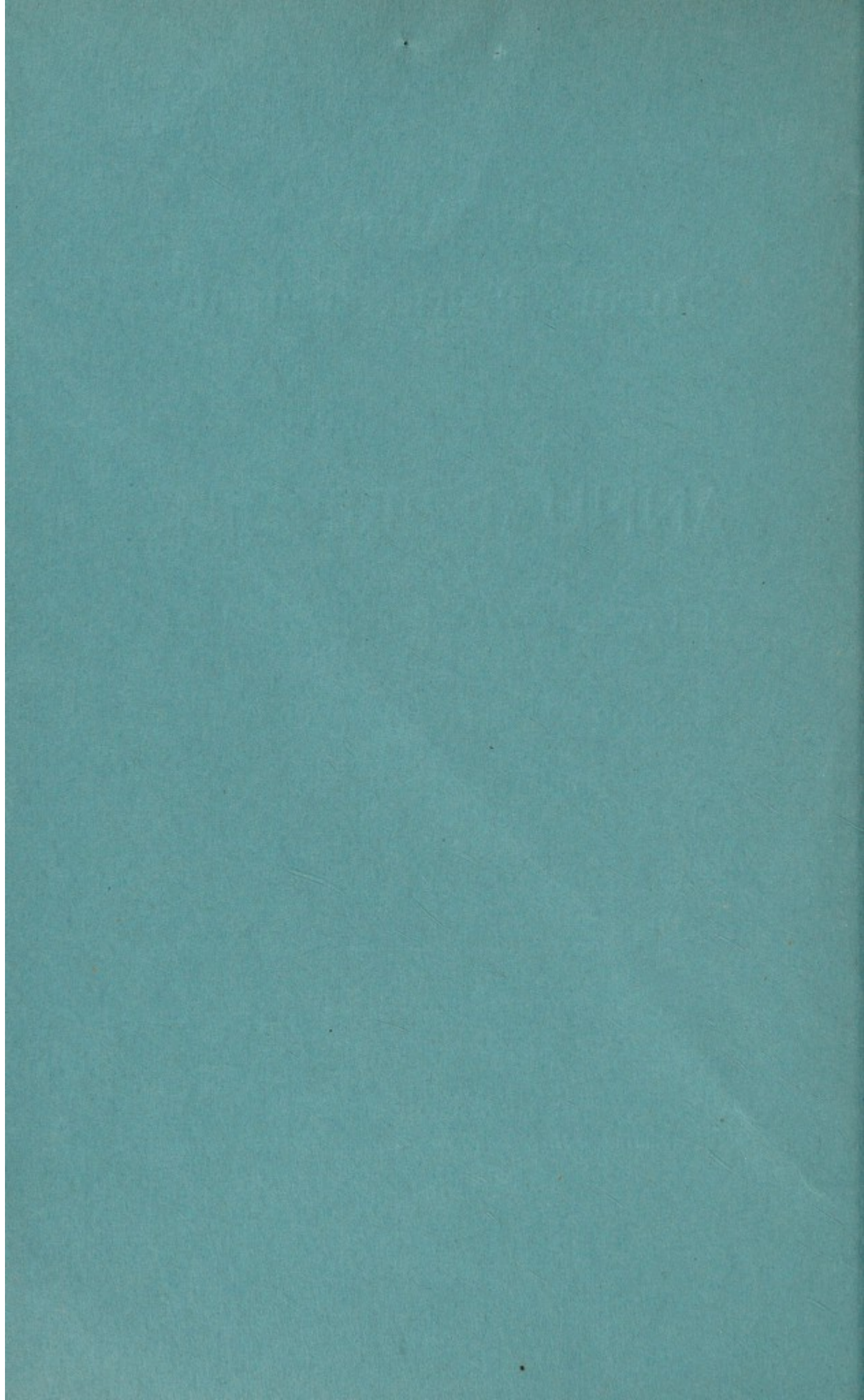


ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND
SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR 1946.

ST. ALBANS:
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To the Chairman and Members of the
St. Albans Rural District Council.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to present to you our Annual Report for the year 1946.

General Statistics.

Area (acres), 32,084.

Population (estimated), 24,260.

Rateable Value, £172,976.

Sum represented by penny Rate, £710.

Vital Statistics.

	Birth Rate per 1000 Population	Death Rate per 1000 Population	Deaths under 1 Year per 1000 Births
England and Wales	19·1	11·5	43
126 County Boroughs and Great Towns in- cluding London	22·2	12·7	46
148 Smaller Towns (1931 Census 25,000 to 50,000)	21·3	11·7	37
London	21·5	12·7	41
St. Albans Rural	19·5	6·6	29

Mortality Table.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever ...	...	...	...
Diphtheria ...	...	1	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	3	2	5
Other forms of Tuberculosis ..	...	2	2
Syphilitic Diseases ... ..	...	...	...
Influenza ... ..	...	1	1
Measles ... ..	...	...	...
Encephalitis lethargica ... ..	...	...	...
Cancer	12	10	22
Intracranial Vascular lesions ...	5	10	15
Heart Disease	24	21	45
Other Circulatory Diseases	4	1	5
Bronchitis	3	...	3
Pneumonia	6	4	10
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	...	1
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum ...	2	...	2
Diarrhoea, &c. (under 2 years) ...	2	...	2
Appendicitis ... ..	...	...	...
Other Digestive Diseases ... ..	...	2	2
Nephritis	3	1	4
Puerperal Sepsis, &c. ... ..	...	...	...
Premature Birth	3	...	3
Congenital Malformation	3	2	5
Suicide	1	1	2
Accidents	5	1	6
Other Violent Causes... ..	3	1	4
Cerebrospinal Fever ... ..	...	...	...
Whooping Cough ... ..	...	2	2
Scarlet Fever ... ..	...	...	...
Diabetes... ..	...	1	1
All other Causes	9	7	16
All Causes	89	70	159

Infant Mortality.

Of the 14 deaths of infants under one year 8 were due to Premature Birth and Congenital Defects.

Notification of Infectious Diseases during the Year.

DISEASES.	Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.
Diphtheria	8	7
Scarlet Fever	18	10
Pneumonia	10	...
Erysipelas	6	1
Hepatitis	5	..
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	...
Flexner Dysentery	1	...
Cerebro Spinal Fever	1	1
Whooping Cough	16	...
Measles	131	...
Poliomyelitis... ..	1	...
Pulmonary T.B.	36	...
Non-Pulmonary T.B.	6	...
Paratyphoid	1	1
Total	241	20

Tuberculosis.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	1	1	1	2	...	...	...	...
10	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
15	7	1	...	1	1	...	...	...
20	2	2	1	...	1	...	...	...
25	6	3	...	...	3	2	...	...
35	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
45	5	2	...	...	...	1	...	...
55	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
65	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ..	24	12	3	3	6	3	...	...

Diphtheria Immunisation.

During 1946, 735 children were immunised against Diphtheria. 468 of these children were between the ages of 5 and 15 years, and 267 under school age.

Sanitary Administration.

Disinfection and Disinfestation.

Thirty-three rooms were disinfected following cases of infectious diseases. Seven houses were treated for the eradication of vermin, by the application of D.D.T. preparations.

Work under the Public Health Act, 1936.

One hundred and eighty-three complaints of alleged nuisances were received and, of these, one hundred and forty-five were satisfactorily dealt with by informal action, leaving thirty-eight outstanding at the end of the year. In one case it was found necessary to serve an abatement notice.

As the result of informal action 13 pail closets were replaced by water closets. Statutory notices were served under Section 44 requiring the replacement of seven pail closets by water closets and, following upon the Council's decision to operate Section 47 of the Act, formal notices were served thereunder requiring the replacement of a further 14 pail closets by water closets.

Moveable Dwellings.

At the 31st December, 1946, twenty-six licences issued under the provisions of Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, were in operation. Because of the continued housing shortage the number of applications for licences tended to increase and, in order to meet the position, the Council had under consideration at the end of the year the question of renting or leasing a suitable piece of land to be used under their control as a site for moveable dwellings.

Housing.

The survey of housing conditions which was commenced on 3rd April, 1945, and to which reference was made in the last Annual Report, was pressed forward throughout 1946 and was virtually completed by the end of the year. It concerned all houses of £20 nett rateable value and under, and was carried through in the form suggested in the Report, commonly known as the Hobhouse Report, prepared by the Rural Housing Subcommittee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee which was published in 1943. It is the first time that such a survey has been attempted in rural areas, and of its importance and value there can I think be no doubt. It is an essential preliminary step in any planned programme such as that visualised in the Hobhouse Report to "bring rural housing conditions up to the highest possible level in a given period of years," but in view of the prevailing circumstances the question as to when such a programme should be launched is one which must be kept constantly under review. Detailed figures showing the result of the survey are given in Appendix A.

Water Supplies.

Eighty-five per cent. of the dwelling-houses in the area are supplied from waterworks. Of these 95.1% are supplied from the works directly to the houses and the remaining 4.9% by means of standpipes. With one exception, viz., that to the Aubreys Estate, Redbourn, the quality of the waters is satisfactory and the supplies are constant. There is no evidence of liability to plumbo-solvent action. The following table shows the number of houses in the district served by each undertaking which supplies therein :—

SUPPLIER	Number of Dwellings Supplied		Total
	DIRECT TO THE HOUSES	BY MEANS OF STAND-PIPES	
St. Albans Rural District Council ...	619	36	655
St. Albans Waterworks Company ...	2410	72	2482
The Barnet District Gas & Water Company ...	304	50	354
Harpenden Water Company ...	607	35	642
The Colne Valley Water Company ...	240	44	284
Borough of Hemel Hempstead ...	24	...	24
Napsbury Hospital Estate ...	51	...	51
Hill End Hospital Estate ...	111	10	121
Middlesex Colony Estate ...	62	...	62
Gorhambury Estate and adjacent Crown Property (Plant operated by Crown Commissioners) ... }	57	...	57
Miss Walker's Estate, Redbourn ...	100	...	100
Christmas Estate, Bricket Wood ...	111	...	111
Childwickbury Estate, St. Albans ...	59	...	59
Aubrey Estate, Redbourn ...	13	...	13
Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Company ...	25	...	25
	4793	247	5040

During the year negotiations proceeded regarding the proposed schemes of piped supplies for Tyttenhanger Green in the Parish of St. Peter's Rural, for Amwell, Nomansland and Bower Heath in the Parish of Wheathampstead, and for Old Bricket Wood in the Parish of St. Stephen's.

Sewerage.

No sewers are available in the following areas :—

- (a) the whole of the Parish of St. Stephen's Rural, except for a privately constructed sewer which serves the 111 houses forming the Christmas Estate.
- (b) certain developed localities within the Parish of Wheathampstead and particularly the Luton Road locality.
- (c) a considerable area within the Colney Heath Ward of St. Peter's Rural Parish, and particularly Colney Heath Lane, Hatfield Road, Tyttenhanger Green, and the Main Road, Tollgate Road, and Roestock Lane, Colney Heath.
- (d) that part of London Colney which lies south of the River Colne.
- (e) the whole of the Parish of St. Michael's Rural.
- (f) the whole of the Parish of Harpenden Rural.
- (g) a limited area at St. Albans Road, Sandridge.

During the year contracts were placed for carrying out the necessary sewer extensions to serve the outstanding properties at St. Albans Road, Sandridge, and also for the installation of a rider sewer along an accommodation road lying off Hempstead Road, Redbourn.

The question of the provision of main drainage within the Parish of St. Stephen's received close consideration by the Council and a firm of Consulting Engineers was instructed to prepare an outline scheme.

Factories' Act, 1937.

During the year an inspection was made of all factories and the Register was brought up to date. At the end of the year there were 66 factories in the District of which 48 were factories in which mechanical power is used.

Informal notices for minor infringements of the Act were served in three instances.

Milk.

The standard of milk production maintains a fairly satisfactory level.

There are 60 registered Cowsheds in the District located as follows :—

<i>Parish.</i>			
Harpenden Rural	...	...	4
Redbourn	...	...	13
St. Michael's Rural	...	...	6
St. Peter's Rural	...	...	6
St. Stephen's Rural	...	...	12
Sandridge	...	...	9
Wheathampstead	...	...	10
			—
	Total	...	60
			—

Throughout the year we assisted in the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme by taking samples from producer-retailers. In all 77 samples were submitted to the Laboratory at Winches Farm, Hatfield Road, St. Albans.

The following licences are in force under the Milk (Special Designations) Orders :—

<i>Designation.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Licensing Authority.</i>
Tuberculin Tested Milk ... (Production of)	17	County Council,
Accredited Milk ... (Production of)	12	County Council.
Supplementary Licences re- specting the sale of Tuberculin Tested Milk ...	5	Sanitary Authority.
Supplementary Licences re- specting the sale of Pas- teurised Milk ...	4	Sanitary Authority.
Supplementary Licences re- specting the sale of Accredited Milk ...	1	Sanitary Authority.

Meat Inspection.

During the year 10,649 animals were slaughtered by the Ministry of Food at the Government Slaughterhouse, Sandridge. Details are as follows :—

	Beasts.	Calves.	Sheep,	Pigs.
Carcases inspected ...	3,707	1,185	5,332	425

Condemnations.

	Carcases	Quarters of Beef	Heads	Livers	Lights	Plucks	Miscellaneous Pieces of Beef, Mutton and Pork.
Beasts ...	35	14	333	480	453	...	1740 lbs.
Calves...	1	...	1	...	...	2
Sheep ...	9	...	...	168	...	13
Pigs ...	1	...	13	1	...	1	

Public Cleansing.

Public cleansing is carried out by direct labour. The work involves refuse collection, nightsoil collection, and cesspool emptying, and came under the supervision of the Public Health Department on the 17th June, 1946.

Refuse Collection.

Three petrol-engined vehicles are engaged on refuse collection, and arrangements are being made to use a further vehicle on this work. Because of insufficient collectors through sickness or other causes, difficulty was experienced in maintaining a regular collection throughout the year, but the problem of securing sufficient and suitable labour for this type of work is one which is likely to persist for some time to come.

All refuse is dealt with by a modified system of controlled tipping. A further two disposal sites, viz., one at Nomansland Common within the Parish of Sandridge and one at Dunstable Road, Redbourn, were brought into use, making a total of three tips under the Council's control. The sending of refuse to the Black Bridge Tip, Wheathampstead, operated by Messrs. Inns & Co., was discontinued at the 30th November, 1946.

Nightsoil Collection.

A once-weekly collection is made wherever the service is required. One petrol-engined vehicle is engaged on this work, and the nightsoil is deposited on agricultural land. In all 736 pails are dealt with each week but every effort is being made to effect the replacement of a pail closet by a water closet at any occupied building which has a public sewer within 100 feet and has a piped water supply available.

Cesspool Emptying.

A fleet of four Dennis cesspool emptying vehicles is operated. All cesspools excepting those serving properties which are within 100 feet of a public sewer and which are at a level which makes it reasonably practicable to construct a drain to communicate with the public sewer are cleansed free of charge.

In the early part of the year the work was seriously handicapped because of the lack of suitable disposal sites in the Parish of St. Stephen's, but eventually Mr. Wadlow of Holt Farm, St. Stephen's, allowed the Council to use part of a field adjoining the St. Albans-Watford Road


which suited most admirably. Permission to use another site on lands near Potters Crouch was also granted by the Commissioners of Crown Lands.

Because of the high percentage of defective cesspools it is impossible to deal satisfactorily with the situation which invariably develops following heavy snowfalls or excessive rains, so the question of the extension of existing sewers and the provision of new sewerage schemes is one of great urgency.

In Appendix B to this Report, statistics are given with respect to cesspools which are cleansed by the Council.

We remain, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servants,

CHARLES, L. ELDER M.B., CH.B., D.P.H., 
Medical Officer of Health,

DAVID J. GRAHAM, M.R.SAN.I., M.S.I.A.,
Senior Sanitary Inspector.

Council Offices,
43 Upper Lattimore Road,
St. Albans, Herts.

3rd April, 1947.

Appendix A.

Figures showing the result of the Survey of Working-class Houses which was carried out in the form suggested in the Report prepared by the Rural Housing Sub-Committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee.

Parish	Number of Houses involved (i.e. all Houses of £20 nett R.V. or under)	Number of Houses Inspected	Categories				Number of Cases of Overcrowding noted	Number of Cases where sub-tenants or part occupiers require other accommodation
			1/2	3	5	4*		
Wheatthampstead ...	716	716	407	218	91	13	11	68
Saundridge ...	356	356	241	73	42	12	Nil	30
Colney Heath ...	638	638	442	123	73	6	6	80
London Colney ...	873	873	791	53	29	1	7	149
Redbourn ...	667	667	426	153	88	7	11	47
St. Michael's Rural	131	131	105	15	11	9	Nil	7
Harpenden Rural	59	59	31	21	7	9	2	5
St. Stephen's Rural	1118	1118	933	154	31	7	7 (see Report)	19 (see Report)
Totals ...	4558	4558	3376 =74.07%	810 =17.77%	372 =8.16%	64	44	405

NOTES. Category 1/2 houses are those fit for habitation in all respects or with minor defects only.

Category 3 houses are those requiring repair, structural alteration or improvement.

Category 5 houses are those requiring demolition and replacement.

* Category 4 In this Category I have included all those houses which, although already placed in either Category 3 or Category 5, are regarded as houses which would have been suitable for re-conditioning under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts. These Acts are not now in operation.

Appendix B.

STATISTICS RESPECTING CESSPOOLS IN THE DISTRICT WHICH ARE CLEANSED BY THE COUNCIL.

Parish	Number Emptied on request	Number Emptied at regular intervals	Totals	Cesspools in respect of which a charge is made for cleansing because they are within 100 feet of a Sewer or for other reasons	Cesspools, which although within 100 feet of a Sewer are, for various reasons, cleansed free of charge
St. Stephen's	588	8	596	Nil	Nil
Colney Heath	129	7	136	Nil	Nil
London Colney	18	5	23	3	Nil
Redbourn	49	Nil	48	10	14
Sandridge	22	Nil	22	1	Nil
Wheatthampstead	119	4	123	10	2
St. Michael's	47	Nil	47	Nil	Nil
Harpenden Rural	31	Nil	31	Nil	Nil
Grand Totals	1002	24	1026	24	16

