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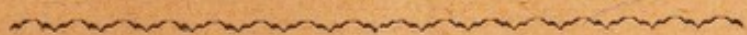
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TOTNES

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF

Mr. Henry Sandford Johnson,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

FOR THE YEAR 1903.



Printed at the "Times" and "Western Guardian" Offices, Totnes.



TO THE TOTNES Rural District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the year ending December 31st, 1903.

Gentlemen,

I have again the pleasure of laying my annual report before you, and in it you will find, as usual, a resume of the general health of the district, the number of births and deaths, the number of zymotic diseases, as well as the principal sanitary works carried out during the year 1903. The district is, as you are aware, divided into two sub-districts, for the purposes of sanitary work. No. 1 district, of which Mr. Tollit is the Inspector, comprises the parishes of Ashprington, Berry Pomeroy, Cornworthy, Churston Ferrers, Dittisham, Dartington, Halwell, Harberton, Morleigh, Marldon, Littlehempstone, Kingswear, and Stoke Gabriel, the population of the combined parishes, according to the census of 1901, being 6,721 and the acreage 32,231 acres. No. 2 district, of which Mr. Ellis is the Inspector, comprises the parishes of Buckfastleigh West, Dean Prior, Diptford, Holne, Rattery, North Huish, Staverton, South Brent and Ugborough. In the latter parish is situated the Plymouth Borough Asylum at Blackadon, and I take as a separate district. The population of the combined parishes is 5,127, and the acreage 44,750 acres; the combined population of the two districts is 11,848, and the combined acreage 76,961 acres. The population of the Plymouth Borough Asylum is 333. I would like to point out that No. 1 district is, as a rule, close to the sea, and that the No. 2 district is, as a rule, on the borders of

Dartmoor, so that the climatic conditions of the two districts is somewhat dissimilar. This is amply proved by the rainfall of the two districts.

In No. 1 district it is 51.37 inches, whilst in No 2 it is 75.84 inches, shewing that those parishes on the borders of the Forest of Dartmoor are by far the damper of the districts.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS.—During the year 1903 the births of 259 children were registered, 135 males and 124 females. These figures give a birth rate of 21.1 per 1,000. The birth rate for the Rural districts of England and Wales being 27.3, so that the birth rate is lower than that of the country generally. I append the number of births in each registration district :—

	Males.	Females.
Ugborough	32	27
Buckfastleigh	19	12
Totnes	17	18
Brixham	8	10
Paignton	12	17
Dartmouth	12	14
Harberton	34	27

The number of births registered during the year 1903 was 9 less than in the previous year.

DEATHS.—During the year 1903 there were registered 136 deaths, exclusive of Plymouth Borough Asylum, where 30 deaths occurred. This is nine less than in the previous year. These figures give a death rate of 11.4 per 1,000 of the population, which is the lowest yet recorded in the district. Of the 136 deaths, 69 were males and 67 females. Under the 1st year 20 deaths were registered, from the 1st to the 5th year 9, from the 5th to the 15th year 7, from the 15th to the 25th year 9, from the 25th to the 65th year 35, whilst above the 65th year 56 died, 23 of whom were between 80 and 90 years, and 4 over 90 years. The combined ages of those over 65 years equals 4,332 years, and gives an average of 77 years 4 months. Most deaths occurred in the months of January and March, when 18 in each month were registered. The smallest number occurred in August and October, when 5 and 6 respectively were registered. Comparing the births—259—with the deaths—136—gives a nat-

ural increase of 123 in the population. The deaths were classified as follows:—Enteric fever 1, epidemic influenza 2, enteritis 2, erysipelas 1, other septic diseases 1, phthisis pulmonalis 8, other tubercular diseases 2, cancer 6, bronchitis 12, pneumonia 13, other respiratory diseases 1, premature birth 4, diseases of parturition 1, heart disease 21, accidents 5, suicides 3, whilst from all other diseases 53, total 136. The 30 deaths in the Plymouth Borough Asylum were classified as follows:—Diarrhœa 1, phthisis 2, other tubercular diseases 2, cancer 1, pleurisy 1, other respiratory diseases 2, heart disease 1, and other diseases 20. These figures give a death rate of 90 per 1,000 of the population. I append the number of deaths in each registration district exclusive of the Plymouth Borough Asylum in the Ugborough district:—

	Males.	Females.
Harberton	11	16
Dartmouth	5	5
Paignton	13	4
Brixham	1	2
Totnes	7	11
Buckfastleigh	8	12
Ugborough	24	17

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

ACT.—Under the above Act 30 cases were notified during the year, which is 36 less than in the preceding year, when 66 cases were notified. The cases were classified as follows:—Scarlet fever 18, diphtheria 4, enteric fever 3, erysipelas 5. The eighteen cases of scarlet fever were scattered over the district, and were of a very mild type, and at no time assumed an epidemic form. The four cases of diphtheria were also of a mild type, two cases at North Huish being clearly imported from Bristol, one case at South Brent was also imported from Cornwall. The remaining case at Ugborough was very mild, and I was unable to account for it. The three cases of enteric fever all occurred at South Brent; one case at Brent Mill was an imported case, which I regret to say terminated fatally. The other case at Greenbank was caused by the effluvia from a dirty manure heap, and the other case, as far as I could ascer-

tain, was caused by the person eating shell-fish. The five cases of erysipelas, one of which terminated fatally, were of a sporadic character, and call for no special comment. It is satisfactory to note that only two deaths resulted from zymotic diseases during the year. Every case, on receipt of notification has been visited, and directions given as to necessary precautions to be taken. It was found necessary to close the Schools at South Brent and Rattery in consequence of epidemics of measles, and at Buckfastleigh West in consequence of chicken pox, also at Harbertonford in consequence of chicken pox. There was no outbreak of epidemic influenza as in previous years.

DAIRIES have been regularly inspected, and, as a rule, have been found clean and well ventilated. It was found necessary in one or two instances to withhold licenses to sell milk until certain sanitary arrangements were carried out, and I always insist that no meat or other perishable food is kept in the dairy.

COW HOUSES have been regularly visited, and have, with one or two exceptions, been found in a sanitary condition.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES have been kept under observation, and they were, as a rule, found in a sanitary condition. I always insist on their being whitewashed as often as I consider necessary, and the floors kept in a good state of repair.

WATER SUPPLY.—Owing to the extremely wet autumn there has been no very serious lack of water during the year. As I stated in my two last annual reports, the chief sufferers in this respect are the hamlet of Tuckenhay in Ashprington parish, and Scoriton in the parish of Buckfastleigh West, and the hamlets of both Forder and Cott Court in the parish of Dartington. As regards the Tuckenhay supply, advantageous terms have been offered by the owners, but so far nothing has been done. Two or three schemes have been suggested for the increase of the Scoriton supply, but so far no definite one has been adopted. As far as I am aware no attempt has been made to improve the supply to the hamlets in Dartington. Difficulties have unfortunately

arisen in obtaining an increased supply for South Brent, but the Council are using their best endeavours to obtain the much needed supply, which I trust will be obtained before long. Marlton is still short of an efficient water supply, but I hope when the Paignton water scheme is completed that a supply will be obtained from it as it passes through the parish.

The following improvements have been carried out :—

No. 1 DISTRICT.

DITTISHAM Water Supply extended, and a new 2in. main substituted for old one.

HARBERTON.—Drains extended to lower end of village.

No. 2 DISTRICT.

BUCKFASTLEIGH WEST.—Drains to several houses extended and improved.

RATTERY.—Drains at Millcross extended.

STAVERTON.—Drains in several parts of the parish improved, and now under consideration the improvement of the hamlet known as the Alms Houses.

SOUTH BRENT.—The condition of this town has considerably improved, as several of the insanitary courts and yards complained of in my last annual report have been put in a sanitary condition, but still much remains to be done.

UGBOROUGH.—New drains have been laid to several new houses at Bittaford Bridge, and tenders have been accepted for laying a new sewer in the hamlet. In Ugborough village the drains at the Ship Inn have been extended, and I would recommend that the drainage of the South East side of the village be improved, as at present it is in a very insanitary condition. The water supply has also been improved.

In addition to the above, minor improvements have been carried out, such as the erection of new closets, the abolition of insanitary ones, erection of ventilating shafts, relaying of defective drains and sewers, abolition of insanitary pigs' houses, manure pits., etc.

Several cases of overcrowding were reported, and abated on service of the usual notice. Several applications for the necessary certificate for the occupation of new houses were received, and it was only found necessary in three cases to refuse it as the premises were not considered to be in a sanitary condition, but on the defects being remedied they were granted. It was only found necessary in one case to resort to legal proceedings—the case of an insanitary drain at Marlton—which was successful.

I have tested many samples of water during the year, and only found two defective.

As usual disinfectants were distributed to each village, and I am pleased to find that they are freely used.

In company with the Sanitary Inspectors I have at frequent intervals visited every parish, and have reported to the Council any matter requiring their attention.

FACTORY and WORKSHOPS ACT.—Under the above Act several premises have been inspected, but they were all found in a clean and sanitary condition.

The Sanitary Inspectors, Messrs. Tollit and Ellis, have discharged their duties in a satisfactory manner.

I beg to thank the Council for the attention they give to all matters brought to their notice.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HENRY S. JOHNSON.

Totnes, February 22nd, 1904.