

Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health for Calstock Rural District Council 1907.

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Bowhay, Albert.
Great Britain. General Board of Health.

Publication/Creation

1908.

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CALSTOCK RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1907.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to present my thirteenth annual report dealing with the vital statistics and sanitary condition of your district for the past year. The statistics, as in the previous six years, are calculated on the last census population of 5,874.

VITAL STATISTICS.—The births registered were 150—85 male and 65 female—five of which were illegitimate. The birth-rate is 25·53 per 1,000, an increase of 18 in number and 2·89 in rate on the previous year. With the exception of 1905, this is the highest birth-rate since the last census.

Deaths numbered 80—45 male and 35 female—the death-rate being 13·61 per 1,000, a decrease of 1 in number and 0·17 in rate from the previous year. The natural increase is 70, compared with 71 in 1906. Five deaths of residents of this district occurred in the Tavistock Union Workhouse, and four in the Tavistock Cottage Hospital; of these, seven were male and two female. The corrected death-rate is therefore 15·15 per 1,000, compared with 15·30 in the previous year.

Thirteen of the deaths were those of infants, 7 of persons between 1 and 5 years of age, 3 between 5 and 15, 2 between 15 and 25, 33 between 25 and 65, and 31 aged 65 and upwards.

The infantile death-rate is 86·66 per 1,000 births, a decrease of 19·40 from the previous year. None of the deaths were those of illegitimate infants. Two deaths have occurred from zymotic diseases, viz., one from measles and one from whooping cough. The zymotic death-rate is 0·340, compared with 1·021 in the previous year. Twenty-four deaths were from diseases of the respiratory organs, giving a rate of 4·08, compared with 26 and a rate of 4·43 in the previous year. Eight of these were from phthisis, 6 from bronchitis, 7 from pneumonia, and one each from whooping croup, croup, and asthma. Of the other classified causes of death, 6 occurred from tubercular diseases other than phthisis, 4 cancer, 1 venereal, 2 premature birth, 14 heart diseases, and 3 accidents.

A comparison of the vital statistics of this district with that of the county is as follows:—

	Birth Rate.	Natural Increase.	Zymotic Death Rate.	Zymotic Disease Rate.	General Death Rate.
Calstock	25·53	11·91	0·340	7·83	13·61 per 1,000
Cornwall	21·15	6·45	0·672	4·12	15·13 „ „
	+4·38	+5·46	-0·332	+3·71	-1·52

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—Forty-six cases of infectious disease have been notified at a cost in fees of £5 12s. 6d. Five of the cases were erysipelas, 40 scarlet fever, and one puerperal fever. The infectious disease rate was 7·83 compared with 3·57 in the previous year.

SCARLET FEVER.—An outbreak of scarlet fever commenced in April, when two cases were notified at Harrowbarrow. In May six more cases were notified, the district affected including St. Ann's Chapel and Albaston, as well as Harrowbarrow. In June five cases were notified, three of which were at Coxpark. In July there were 2 cases, August 7, September 10, October 4, November 3, and December 2 cases; all occurring in the districts already mentioned.

The outbreak was noticeable for the lengthened period—nine months—over which it extended without developing into an epidemic. Application was twice made by the managers of one of the Council schools, in the centre of the outbreak, that the school should be closed, but it was found

that although all the affected families were excluded from school, the number so excluded was never sufficiently large to seriously affect the attendance. The outbreak was also so scattered and so slow in its spread as to warrant the opinion that the school was not the cause of infection. The Council therefore declined to close the school, and events justified this course, as the disease practically subsided in the school district immediately afterwards.

MUMPS.—An outbreak of this disease occurred at Gunnislake in September, and extended so rapidly among the children attending the Council schools, that they were closed for a period of 14 days. In December a similar outbreak occurred among children attending the Delaware school, and it was closed for a like period until the Christmas holidays.

WATER SUPPLY.—In my last annual report I stated that it had not been possible to proceed with the scheme for supplying St. Ann's Chapel with water in consequence of the Council's right to take water from the Drakewalls leats being disputed. The matter having since been settled satisfactorily, the Council has contracted for the carrying out of the work, and the laying of the pipe line has been commenced. When completed, the scheme will not only give the much needed supply to St. Ann's Chapel, but will also supply Cross, and increase that of Gunnislake.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—During the year a systematic inspection of the whole district has been made, with the result that a considerable improvement in the general sanitary condition of the district has been found to have taken place since the last systematic inspection. The number of dwelling-houses in the district is 1,417. The closets number 1,236, of which 748 are pail, 262 w.c.'s, 212 cess-pits, and 14 have other methods.

Ten houses were measured for suspected overcrowding, and five cases of overcrowding were discovered and abated.

NEW BUILDINGS.—Certificates of water supply have been granted for 21 new dwelling-houses, and the number of new dwellings in process of construction shows no diminution. The Council has insisted on a strict adherence to the bye-laws when plans for new buildings have been submitted, especially with regard to the sufficiency of air space about the buildings.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT.—Eleven bake-houses, one of which is classed as a factory, have been inspected. In four cases lime-washing was required, and was done after inspection. No case of overcrowding was discovered, and the sanitary condition of the workshops was satisfactory.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILKSHOPS.—A register of these has been kept during the year, and a record of the Inspector's visits entered. All the dairies have been inspected twice, and their condition was satisfactory. There are now fifteen dairies on the register.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY WORK performed during the year by the Council, or by owners of property after notice from the Council:—Sewers repaired—40 feet; new drains constructed—60 feet; drains cleared and repaired—6; new closets—10; closets converted to pail—2; closets repaired—1; cess-pits filled in—6; nuisances abated—67; notices issued—14; houses measured for overcrowding—10; houses inspected—1417; certificates of water supply—21; bakehouses inspected—11; bakehouses limewashed after notice—4; slaughter-houses inspected—10; slaughter-houses lime-washed after notice—5; dairies, cowsheds, &c., inspected—15.

I have again to acknowledge the valuable assistance I have received from Inspector Bennett.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

ALBERT BOWHAY, M.D., D.P.H.

Gunnislake, Tavistock, February 4th, 1908.

