

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT

(11 & 12 Vict. Cap. 63.)

R E P O R T

TO THE

GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH

ON A

PRELIMINARY INQUIRY

**INTO THE SEWERAGE, DRAINAGE, SUPPLY OF
WATER, AND THE SANITARY CONDITION
OF THE INHABITANTS**

OF THE TOWNSHIP OF

S K I P T O N ,

IN THE WEST RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF YORK,

By WILLIAM RANGER, Esq., C.E.,

SUPERINTENDING INSPECTOR.



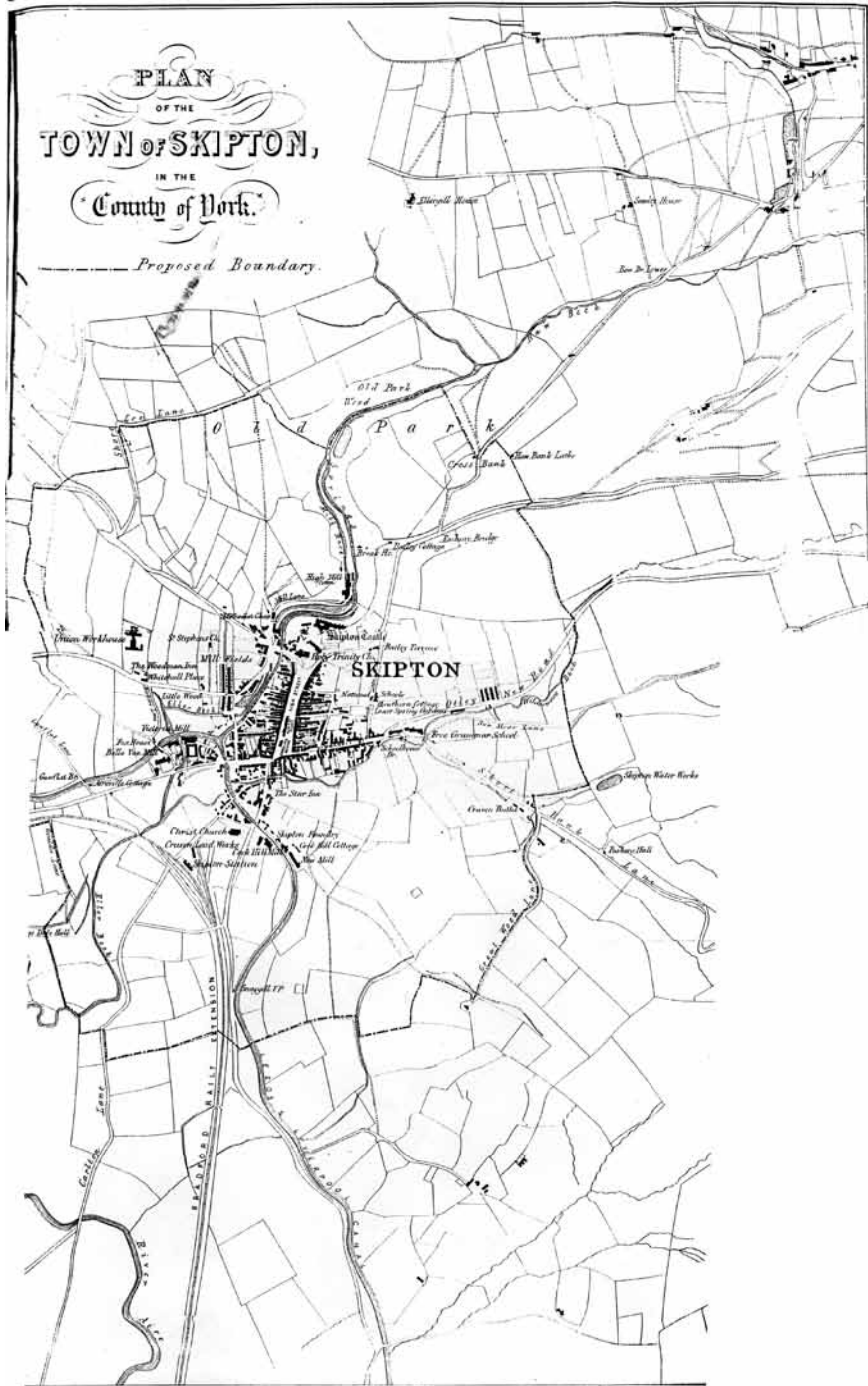
LONDON:

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1857.

PLAN
OF THE
TOWN OF SKIPTON,
IN THE
County of York.

Proposed Boundary.



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PUBLIC HEALTH ACT (11 & 12 Vict. c. 63.)

Report to the Right Hon. W. MONSELL, M.P., President of the General Board of Health, on a Preliminary Inquiry into the Sewerage, Drainage, Supply of Water, and Sanitary Condition of the Inhabitants of the Township of SKIPTON, in the West Riding of the County of YORK. By WILLIAM RANGER, Esq., C.E., Superintending Inspector.

SIR,

Whitehall, March 26, 1857.

IN accordance with your instructions, and after SKIPTON. notice duly given, I went to Skipton on the 17th instant, and there on the 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 24th, held sittings at the Town Hall. I employed parts of four days in the inspection of the town.

The inquiry was instituted on a petition signed by 129 persons, of whom 120 are rated to the poor. The total number so rated in the township is 1,189.

NOTICES.

The notices required by the Act appeared in the *Leeds Mercury* of the 26th February, the *Leeds Times* and *Leeds Intelligencer* of the 28th. Copies of the notices were also fixed to the parish and new churches; the Roman Catholic church, Wesleyan Methodist, Primitive Methodist, Baptist, and Independent chapels, also Friends meeting house, and Town Hall.

My acknowledgments are due to the Water and Gas Companies for the readiness with which information was afforded. They are also due to Mr. Alcock and the Town Committee, as well as to Mr. Bell, medical officer, Mr. Beanland, inspector of police, and the inhabitants generally, for assistance and information during the inquiry.

DESCRIPTION AND BOUNDARY.

Skipton is in the east division of the wapentake of Staincliffe and Ewecross, West Riding of Yorkshire, 42 miles W. of York, and 211 N.N.W. of London. For registration

SKIPTON. purposes it is a sub-district No. 5. of district No. 489. It is bounded on the southern by Kildwick and Silsden, on the east by Draughton and Atton-last, on the north by Embsay, and on the west by Stirton with Thorlby and Low-Waltondale.

The town stands in a fertile valley, near the river Aire, at an altitude of 350 to 400 feet above the approximate mean water level at Liverpool. It consists of two spacious streets running nearly at right angles and several minor ones.

The Leeds and Liverpool Canal, with a branch called the "Springs Canal," skirts and intersects the town. It is bounded on the S.W. side by the Leeds and Bradford Extension Railway; hence there is every facility for conveyance, &c.

GEOLOGY.

The stratum on which the town is seated is chiefly alluvial, varying in thickness; its contour is undulating.

AREA.

The area of the township is 3,826 acres.

LOCAL ACTS.

There is one dated 1823, obtained by a private company for supplying the inhabitants with water; R. Calvert is clerk, and the office is in New Market Street.

The Gas Company are incorporated under a deed of co-partnership; the office is in Bank Yard; Mr. Scowby is the clerk.

RATEABLE VALUE.

The rateable value of the township is 11,738*l.* including 7,588*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.*, *i.e.* for—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------------|-------|----|----|
| Land - - - - | 4,488 | 12 | 1 |
| Mills - - - - | 1,477 | 4 | 0 |
| Railways - - - - | 670 | 0 | 0 |
| Quarries - - - - | 479 | 0 | 0 |
| Warehouses - - - - | 166 | 1 | 7 |
| Workhouse - - - - | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Canal - - - - | 71 | 19 | 2 |
| Brewery - - - - | 65 | 0 | 0 |
| Waterworks - - - - | 29 | 15 | 8 |
| Gasworks - - - - | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Tithes - - - - | 28 | 18 | 0 |

HOUSES, &c.

SKIPTON

In 1841 there were 973 houses; of these 911 were inhabited, and 62 uninhabited.

In 1851 the total number was 1,021, *i.e.*, 993 inhabited, 28 uninhabited.

At the present time there are 1,103 houses entered upon the rate books at the following amounts:—

| No. | £ | £ |
|-----|-------------------|----|
| 835 | under 5 | |
| 141 | at 5 and under 10 | |
| 41 | " 10 " | 15 |
| 33 | " 15 " | 20 |
| 22 | " 20 " | 25 |
| 7 | " 25 " | 30 |
| 2 | " 35 " | 40 |
| 2 | " 40 " | 45 |
| 2 | " 50 " | 55 |

RATES.

The rates levied for the relief of the poor during the last 5 years varied from 10*d.* to 15*d.* in the pound. It is now 12*d.*

The amount of the rating and sums collected have been as follows:—

| | Amount of Rating. | | | Amount Collected. | | |
|--------|-------------------|----|----|-------------------|----|-----|
| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| 1852 - | 985 | 9 | 3 | 965 | 9 | 3½ |
| 1853 - | 999 | 13 | 10 | 970 | 2 | 5½ |
| 1854 - | 1,192 | 14 | 6 | 1,167 | 3 | 8 |
| 1855 - | 1,381 | 11 | 8 | 1,339 | 16 | 10½ |
| 1856 - | 1,401 | 12 | 8 | 1,380 | 14 | 2 |

HOTELS AND BEER HOUSES.

There are 29 licensed victuallers, and 6 beer retailers.

POPULATION.

In 1801, there were 2,305 inhabitants, from that time to 1851 the number gradually increased to 5,044; of these 2,501 were males, and 2,543 females.

The inmates in the union house amounted to 76 in 1841, but in 1851 these were reduced to 67; they are included in the above aggregate.

SKIPTON.

MORTALITY.

The number of deaths (from information furnished from the office of the Registrar-General) in the township of Skipton in the last seven years, 1850-56, was 827:—

DEATHS.

| | 1850. | 1851. | 1852. | 1853. | 1854. | 1855. | 1856. | Total in 7 years. |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------|
| Township - | 107 | 138 | 87 | 121 | 120 | 118 | 136 | 827 |

Population in 1851 - - - - 5,044

„ 1841 - - - - 4,842

Average annual mortality to 1,000 persons living 23.2.*

Mr. *Carr*, Deputy Superintending Registrar of the district, stated—

“That during the last four years 437 persons died; of these 137 did not survive their fifth year, whilst only 141 reached the age of 60.”

The average age of all who died in the six years ending March 1856 was 34.66 years.

Zymotic diseases proved fatal in 47 cases, 10 per cent. on the whole.

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Of Diarrhoea | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 20 |
| Phthisis | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 |
| Typhus | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 |
| Erysipelas | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Dysentery | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Hooping cough | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Rheumatic fever | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Cholera | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| English cholera | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Cholera infantum | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Moratumus | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Measles | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Syphilis | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |

* The workhouse of the Skipton Union is situate in Skipton township, a circumstance which tends to increase the rate of mortality.

I could not procure reliable evidence to enable me to set SKIPTON out the death rate in every street and place.

The births registered in six years from 1851 to 1856 were:—

| | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|-----|
| In 1851 | - | - | - | 143 |
| „ 1852 | - | - | - | 145 |
| „ 1853 | - | - | - | 174 |
| „ 1854 | - | - | - | 157 |
| „ 1855 | - | - | - | 197 |
| „ 1856 | - | - | - | 101 |

Of these it seems only 1 in 7 survived their fifth year.

Mr. *Bell*, M.R.C.S., stated—

“He is medical officer for the union, and has been in practice here for the last 23 years. The epidemic diseases most prevalent are, scarlet fever and measles. Dysentery and diarrhoea generally prevail in Waller Hill, Union Square, Swadforth, Clubhouses, Newmarket Streets, and Spring Gardens. There has also been a few cases in Mill Fields. He has been surprised, seeing the state of the different yards, courts, &c., to find so little typhus. The prevalent diseases during the past winter were rheumatic fever and bronchitis. He has only had one case small-pox, and that was a tramp.”

WATERWORKS.

In 1823 an Act of incorporation was obtained for supplying the town with water, upon the constant system, from several springs rising in Rombald's Moor. The works now consist of two open reservoirs at different altitudes, but their united capacity is not known.

The sides of the lower reservoir are constructed of dry rubble work; those of the other are formed with slopes, but not covered with stone, except the face of the dam. The water is conducted into each reservoir along an ordinary open watercourse; this receives drainage water from land under cultivation. There is no provision for filtration, or other means of insuring a supply at all times free from earthy matter and impurities. In a few instances the water is conveyed into the houses, and these belong to the higher class, where private filters are used. The largest portion of the inhabitants have no such means of obtaining clear water at all times, as they are only supplied by means of standpipes.

The street mains vary in size from two inches to eight inches.

SKIPTON. Fireplugs have been placed in High Street, New Market Street, the Square, and Swadforth Street.

In the upper part of Mill Fields the inhabitants were loud in their complaint of not being able to obtain a supply at all times of the day. There is, it seems, a want of sufficient pressure for this district when they are *drawing* in the lower parts of the town.

The Company are prohibited supplying water for engine power or machinery; but it is compulsory on them to supply any inhabitant requiring it.

The maximum rates fixed by the Act are,—

| | |
|--|---------------|
| For houses not exceeding 5 <i>l.</i> in annual value | 20 <i>s.</i> |
| „ houses above 5 <i>l.</i> - - - - - | 60 <i>s.</i> |
| „ inns, breweries, and large consumers any sum not exceeding - - - - - | 160 <i>s.</i> |

may be charged subject to agreement.

The Company have never yet charged their maximum rate.

The annual charges for water to 736 houses, at present supplied are,—

| No. | | £ | s. | d. |
|-----|---------------|---|----|-------------|
| 1 | house charged | - | - | 4 10 0 |
| 1 | ditto | - | - | 3 3 0 |
| 3 | ditto | - | - | 3 0 0 each. |
| 2 | ditto | - | - | 2 12 0 „ |
| 8 | ditto | - | - | 2 10 0 „ |
| 8 | ditto | - | - | 2 0 0 „ |
| 1 | ditto | - | - | 1 18 0 „ |
| 3 | ditto | - | - | 1 16 0 „ |
| 2 | ditto | - | - | 1 14 0 „ |
| 1 | ditto | - | - | 1 12 0 „ |
| 12 | ditto | - | - | 1 10 0 „ |
| 2 | ditto | - | - | 1 8 0 „ |
| 1 | ditto | - | - | 1 6 0 „ |
| 2 | ditto | - | - | 1 5 0 „ |
| 14 | ditto | - | - | 1 4 0 „ |
| 1 | ditto | - | - | 1 2 0 „ |
| 1 | ditto | - | - | 1 1 0 „ |
| 51 | ditto | - | - | 1 10 0 „ |
| 75 | ditto | - | - | 0 5 0 „ |
| 530 | ditto | - | - | 0 4 0 „ |

The latter 530 are supplied by means of standpipes in the yards.

Sixteen houses only are compounded for, at a rent of 25*s.* per annum.

Complaint—Mr. Bell stated—

SKIPTON.

“He had seen several poisonous shrubs growing on the edges of the reservoirs.”

It is due to the Company to state, that they instantly ordered the removal of the plants mentioned in this complaint.

The water is at times turbid.

R. Calvert, manager of the works, said—

“He sludges the street mains once a fortnight in winter, and once in three weeks in summer ; that on those occasions the water is very dirty from the pipes for an hour or more.”

Mr. Alcock stated—

“The Company would not object to do whatever may be found necessary to render the water fit and proper for use.”

SEWERAGE, &c.

The town is unsewered.

Mr. Alcock stated—

“That in his opinion, the sewers necessary may be executed and paid for by voluntary subscription.”

This arrangement has not, however, been acquiesced in by others.

Even supposing the voluntary system should realize sufficient funds to carry out the works, it is certain that it cannot secure to the parties the right to enter upon private lands to do the works, and hold them when done.

Mr. Bell said—

“There is great need for a system of sewerage works. At present the liquid refuse from the gasworks is discharged into the beck, and is very offensive ; whilst several houses are drained into the canal and beck.”

DRAINAGE.

The superstratum for the most part is a strong clay of a considerable thickness ; hence the great necessity for drainage—a work that has already been commenced in the township.

Mr. Nicolson, agent for Sir R. Tufton, Bart., stated—

“He has recently executed works of land drainage, to the value of 10,000*l.*, at depths varying from four to five feet.”

SKIPTON.

Mr. *Alcock* stated—

“A project for straightening the river, so as to accelerate the discharge of the water, was under consideration in 1841, yet nothing has been done in the matter.”

ROAD DRAINS.

Mr. *Bradley*, Acting Surveyor of Highways, furnished a return, showing a length of 1,845 lineal yards of square permeable drains for carrying off the surface waters from the roads.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|------------|---|
| From water trough in “Bailey” | } | 479 yards. | |
| to Waller Hill Beck | | | |
| Swadforth Street | - - - | 100 | ” |
| Coach Street | - - - | 72 | ” |
| Mill Fields | - - - | 73 | ” |
| Water Street | - - - | 138 | ” |
| Mill Bridge | - - - | 80 | ” |
| Keighley Road | - - - | 107 | ” |
| Currer Street | - - - | 440 | ” |
| New Market Street | - - - | 356 | ” |

The depths vary from 2 to 10 feet, and the sizes from 9 to 24 inches square. The sewers have dry rubble walls, covered with flags.

Mr. *J. Carr* stated—

“The surveyors have permitted persons to connect their water-closets with these drains.”

This is at variance with the provisions of the Highway Act.

Mr. *Bradley* said—

“That he has always allowed persons to connect with the drains as stated by Mr. Carr.”

INSPECTION OF THE TOWN.

In the discharge of this part of my duty I was accompanied during part of the time by Mr. *Alcock*, Mr. *Sidgwick*, and other members of the Town Committee; Mr. *Bell*, medical officer of the union, Mr. *A. Beanland*, superintendent of police; and *Whittingham*, the inspector of nuisances.

The inspection extended to 69 separate places, courts, and yards, each containing from 2 to 22 dwellings.

The houses are for the most part substantially built with stone, covered with slabs or slates, in height two and three stories.

Those I inspected were with few exceptions, clean and neat. ΣΚΙΤΡΟΝ. I have for the purpose of this report classed the places, &c. inspected under the following heads.

1. Houses built back to back or without outlets on more than one side.
2. Cellar dwellings.
3. Yards paved with flags, used in common by occupiers of more than one house.
4. Yards pitched with parpoints or pebbles.
5. Yards partly paved and partly pitched.
6. Yards only partly paved and pitched.
7. Unpaved yards.

HOUSES BACK TO BACK.

1. There are 245 houses built back to back or without outlets on more than one side situated in 29 different places known as Robinson's Yard, Crossley's, Union Square, Mill Fields, Commercial Street, Mill Bridge, Mount Pleasant, Tindal's Yard, Watson's Buildings, Victoria Street, Albert Street, Cook's Yard, Middle Row, Devonshire Place, Birt-whistle's Yard, Queen's Court, Quaker's Place, Club-houses, Cottages near Grammar School, Low Spring Gardens, King Street, Carr's Yard, Sun Lane, Wheatsheaf Yard, Tipping's Yard, Hole-in-the-Wall Yard, Bank Yard, and Chancery Lane.

CELLAR DWELLINGS.

There are 66 of these situated in the Mill Fields, Middle Row, and High Street, west side.

FLAGGED YARDS.

The surface of 10 yards, courts, &c., containing from 3 to 9 houses each (in the aggregate 73, of which 34 have no outlets on more than one side), *i. e.* Brown's, Tipping's, Robinson's, Hardcastle's, Tindal's, Cook's, and Rogers' Yards, Victoria Street, and Albert Street, of these, Brown's and Tipping's were remarkably clean; the lower part of Albert Street in a bad state. The air of Rogers' Yard was foul; being enclosed on all four sides, it is never swept by the wind.

The lower end of Cook's Yard is only about 3 feet in width.

PAVED YARDS.

In 12 yards, containing from 3 to 22 houses each (in all 102, of which 45 have no outlets on more than one side), the surface is paved with sets or pitched with pebbles.

SKIPTON. These are Birtwistle's Yard, Green Side, Wheatsheaf, Waller Hill, Grassington Road, Mount Pleasant, Bayhorse Yard, Wilkinson's, Sweep's Yard, Craven Terrace, the Square and part of Victoria Street; the surface of Birtwistle's Yard, Green Side, and Wheatsheaf were very clean. The condition of the Square, Waller Hill, and Mount Pleasant was bad. Most of the yards in Mill Fields, which are mere sunk *areas*, are damp and dirty.

YARDS PARTLY FLAGGED AND PARTLY PAVED.

Of these there are 15, containing from 6 to 20 houses each; in the aggregate, 162. Of these 95 have outlets only on one side. The names of these courts are,—Queen's Court, Quaker's Court, Quaker's Place, Clubhouses, Hole-in-the-Wall, Bank Yard, Wilkinson's Yard, Chancery Lane, Burton's, Robinson's, Jolly's, Cock and Bottle, Watson's, 2 yards, and Mount Pleasant. Of these Queen's Court, Quaker's Court (upper part), Hole-in-the-Wall, and Bank Yards, were very clean; the latter was rather damp. In Burton's Yard offal is kept; Clubhouses Yard unclean; in Jolly's Yard the air was bad. The Cock and Bottle Yard is surrounded by buildings. In several places the flagging is out of repair and foul, and water stands in the holes.

YARDS FLAGGED OR PITCHED IN PART.

In 7 yards the surface is only partially covered to prevent foul water from soaking into the ground.

These places contain from 2 to 10 houses each (in the aggregate 42), of these 9 have outlets only on one side. The names are, Burton's, Crossley's, and Sun Yard, Beck Side, Brown's Yard, Collins', and Hardcastle's. The latter contains a slaughter-house, the refuse is thrown into an open pit (by the side of the canal). Its state was very offensive, and much complained of by the people of the district. The condition of the other yards is unsatisfactory.

UNPAVED YARDS.

There is no pavement of any kind in Devonshire Place, Whitehorse Yard, entrance road to Union Square, and Thanet's Place. Out of 18 houses here, 11 have but one outlet each. At Robinson's Place there is not space left by the side of the road even for a flagged footway.

YARDS DEVOTED TO TRADE.

There are several yards, each of a considerable area, by the side of the canal, at the back of High Street, and in other

parts of the town, used as the receptacles for manure and filth. These deposits, contributed by the Acting Surveyor of Highways, are too near the houses, and some of them are of a most offensive and injurious character. None of them appear to have attracted the notice of the Inspector of Nuisances. In a yard leading out of New Market Street the soil occupied a space of about 40 square yards (360 feet) by a height of 7 feet in some parts. SKIPTON.

STEPS TAKEN UNDER THE NUISANCES ACT.

The Act of 18 & 19 Vict. c. 121. was put in force in November 1856, when W. Whittingham was appointed inspector at a salary of 5*l.* per annum. The number of nuisances reported up to this date (a period of about six months) is 37, *i.e.*,—

No.

15 ash-pits and privies.

3 cesspools and drains.

4 accumulations of manure.

1 foul drain.

3 foul channels and cesspools.

3 drains and cesspools in a foul state.

4 ash and dung heaps on side of road or in channels.

1 pigsty and privy in a foul state.

1 privy and passage in a foul state.

1 privy unclean state.

It does not appear from the books whether the inhabitants have ever complained of the nuisances in various parts of the town. Be this as it may, they did so to me in the course of my inspection.

In Sweep's Yard, or Canal Street, the tenants complained of the effluvia arising from open soil pits belonging to the houses in Craven Terrace (a range of 11 new houses). This yard (about 9 feet wide) contains 9 dwellings, with no outlets at the back.

Besides the annoyance to the tenants of Mr. Stockdale, arising from the open privy pits, the sink and slop water is discharged through the wall, thence upon the surface directly in front of the houses and within a few feet of the doors. These cases call for immediate attention. Complaints were also made of the flooding of some cellars with foul water, and of the water from open spaces flowing into the yards and courts. The cases I observed were not numerous, but exceedingly bad of their kind.

In all the places visited by me, with nine exceptions, I found nuisances. Their recurrence, in many instances, can

SKIPTON. only be prevented by alterations in character and position of the receptacles for refuse, and of the privy arrangements.

THE CANAL AND BECK.

The branch (Springs Canal) is the receptacle for filth, &c., from houses and yards, and is thus rendered little better than an open sewer.

The beck is the receptacle for foul water and liquid refuse from the gas works.

ROOFAGE WATER.

In 96 cases the means for keeping the walls &c., dry by collecting the rain water at the eaves of the houses are insufficient, whilst in many instances the down pipes terminate at a short distance above the level of the public footpaths.

PRIVY ACCOMMODATION.

In 12 cases there are no privies of any kind. The tenants of 8 separate houses in High Street and Middle Row, most of whom are shopkeepers, go to privies in various yards on the opposite side of the street; the others go where they can. Mrs. — said we used to go into the churchyard, and were most thankful for the opportunity thus afforded; but the gate is now locked.

In one instance the privy and open soil pit for the use of a large number of persons is under a dwelling room. The person residing here complained of the smell, particularly in the summer.

In numerous cases the privies and soil pits are too near the houses.

In Robinson's Yard, and Devonshire Place there are 2 houses to 1 privy.

In Quaker's Place, Back Lane, and Brown's Court, the proportion is 3 to 1.

At Tindal's Yard, Victoria Street, Clubhouses, and Tip-ping's Yard it is 4 to 1.

At Waller Hill, 5 to 1.

In Crossley's Yard and Cock and Bottle Yard, 6 to 1.

At Grassington Road, Clubhouses, and Bunker's Hill 7 to 1.

Jolly's Buildings, 9 to 1.

Victoria Street, 8 to 1.

Brown's Yard, 10 to 1.

In Wilkinson's Yard, Carr's Yard, and Hardacre's, it is 6 to 2.

- Hole-in-the-Wall Yard 7 to 2.
 - At Cook's Yard, Collins' Yard, and Green side, and
Hardcastle's Yard, 8 to 2.
 - Rogers' Yard, 10 to 2.
 - Ditto. 12 to 2.
 - Mount Pleasant, 13 to 2.
 - Robinson's Yard, 20 to 2.
 - Wilkinson's Yard, 4 to 3.
 - Sun Lane, 5 to 3.
 - Mount Pleasant, 6 to 3.
 - Low Spring Gardens, 12 to 3.
 - Chancery Lane, 18 to 3.
 - Queen's Court, 8 to 4.
 - Sweeps Yard or Canal Street, 9 to 4.
 - Bank Yard, 14 to 4.
 - Union Square, 22 to 4.
 - Birtwistle's Yard, 15 to 7.
 - Quakers' Place, 28 to 5.
- The area of the open soil pits varies from 9 to 98 feet each.

Mr. *Bell* stated—

“The privy accommodation is very deficient. Generally the privies are much too near the houses, particularly at Mill Fields, where the excrement oozes through the walls, and runs down upon the roads.”

WATERCLOSETS.

Mr. *Bradley*, Surveyor of Highways stated—

“There are 22 waterclosets in different parts of the town, these are connected by means of drains with the *permeable* drains of the highways—an arrangement utterly at variance with the statute.”

Mr. *Marsden*, Surgeon under the Factory Act, said—

“In the old mills the usual privy accommodation is common to both sexes, and consists of a drop from the highest to the lowest room, and thence into a covered tank (except in one instance, where it is open); the soil is from time to time carted away and used for manure. In the newly constructed mills there are waterclosets. The refuse is discharged into the beck.”

VENTILATION.

Mr. *Bell* stated—

“In the dwellings of the poor it is bad; the windows are not made to open. At Bramley's Buildings, Bunker's Hill, Mount Pleasant, courts on the west side of High Street, and Quaker's Place, they have no means at present of getting fresh air into the sleeping rooms.”

SKIPTON.

Mrs. ———, a clean-looking person, with a melancholy earnestness that evinced a suffering from the cause of complaint, stated—

“We have no means of letting air into our bedrooms in the summer, and we suffer very much in consequence.”

With the exception of the better class of houses and the common lodging houses registered under the Act, the only opening for admitting air into the bedrooms consists of a square of glass about 5 by 7 inches in each window, which is utterly insufficient.

OVERCROWDING.

My attention was called to this subject in two cases particularly; first, that of a family of 9, consisting of a man, his wife, and 7 children, *i.e.* two sons, 18 and 15 years of age, two girls, 9 and 7, and the youngest 12 months, sleeping in one room, affording a space of only 86 cubic feet to each person. The air in this room I found very bad, in fact, unfit for human beings to remain in.

In the second case, a family of 10 persons as sleeping in one room, affording a space of about 180 cubic feet to each. The family consists of a man, wife, and 8 children, the eldest a son 21 years of age, two daughters 19 and 17, two boys 15 and 13, and three girls of the age of 10, 7, and 5 years respectively.

SURFACE CHANNELS.

The channels or gutters for carrying off the rain water from the surface of the roads, courts, &c. are generally defective throughout the town. Foul water lies in several of these channels. There is evidence of a want of proper attention to this matter on the part of the surveyors of the roads.

HIGHWAYS, &c.

There are 7 miles 7 furlongs 11½ yards of highways, and about 10 miles of turnpike roads under 8 different trusts in the township.

The return made by W. Bradley, Acting Surveyor, shows that the causeways are 3,811 yards in length, varying in width from 3 to 8 feet, of which 3,525 yards are flagged and 286 macadamized. This is exclusive of 3,264 yards of paved surface in the High Street and market place.

The rate for repair of the highways for the last 3 years has been sixpence in the pound. This rate produces 290*l.*

Mr. Bradely makes and collects the rates ; he also pays the ^{SKIPTON.} accounts and afterwards submits them to the surveyors appointed by the vestry. The money is not paid into a bank. At the end of one year the surplus in hand was 77*l.* He is the only paid officer ; his salary is 35*l.* per annum, with the privilege of undertaking any other business he can get to do.

The expenditure for the repair of roads for 1856 was 261*l.* 18*s.* 7½*d.* including salary. The amount collected 361*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.* There is considerable room for improvement in the form of the roads.

SCAVENGING.

There is nothing like an efficient system of scavenging carried on in the town, although Mr. Bradley stated, he cleanses 63 gully holes and sweeps the following streets generally once a week, High Street, Swadford, Coach Street, Mill Fields, Water Street, Mill Bridge, Currer Street, New Market Street, and Keighley Road, making an area of 16,058 square yards at a cost of 33*l.* 3*s.* 0*d.* per annum ; no income is derived from the sale of the refuse. He deposits it at the nearest place, sometimes in the Red Lion Yard, at others he takes it to the Mill Bridge, but does not carry it out of the town.

The cost for watering the streets 31 days amounted to 6*l.* 7*s.* 9*d.*

LODGING HOUSES.

The Act for regulating common lodging houses is in force.

Mr. *Beanland*, Inspector of Police, stated—

“ There are 23 of these houses in the township. The chief evil the owners have to contend with arises from the bad condition of the channels and the want of proper means for removing foul stagnant water from the courts, and of a better arrangement of the privies. The state of the latter is now very bad.”

PREVENTION OF SMOKE.

Mr. *Carr* said—

“ Nothing has yet been done here to prevent the evil arising from the large volumes of smoke daily issuing from the various factory chimnies. The colour of the sheep (which is nearly black) in the surrounding fields he considers strong evidence of the want of something being done by way of prevention.”

Mr. *Heelis* stated—

“ He is greatly inconvenienced by smoke from a bakery chimney.”

The position of the town gives to its markets and fairs considerable importance.

Mr. *J. Carr* stated—

“A market is held in the High Street every Saturday for the sale of vegetables, meat, grain, and other wares and merchandise. The stallage rents, amounting to 2*d.* per stall and 1*d.* per cart for the day, belong for the most part to Sir. R. Tufton, Bart., Lord of the Manor, occupiers of houses in the street having a right of standage co-extensive with their frontage by a limited width.”

There is also a fortnightly cattle fair held in the High Street for the sale of live stock. This fair is no longer confined to the space occupied for the Saturday markets, but it extends during part of each year into Swadford Street, Mill Bridge, Water Street, and the Bailey. This fair frequently lasts the whole day, to the great inconvenience of the inhabitants, particularly in the summer months. Footways and carriageways are occupied by cattle to the exclusion of passengers, the windows of shops being protected either by a rail or shutters. The present encroachment on the footways might be easily and cheaply prevented by posts with a moveable chain placed on the verge of the footways.

LIGHTING.

In January 1836, the inhabitants adopted the Act of 3 & 4 Will. 4. cap. 90, and entered into an agreement with the Gas Company for lighting the district.

On the 30th of December 1856, in consequence of a complaint from the inhabitants, the inspectors by letter to the company stated, that the lights were deficient in quantity and the gas bad in quality, and called upon the Company to furnish the town with purer gas, and to supply larger burners. Complaint was also made of the price charged to the shopkeepers and private houses. To this remonstrance the Company replied they were taking steps to ensure for the future gas of good quality and sufficient in quantity; that it is their intention to reduce the price after the present quarter.

The charge for public lights since 1850 has been reduced from 2*l.* 1*s.* 0*d.* to 2*l.* 4*s.* 0*d.* per light. To private consumers it has been lowered from 6*s.* 8*d.* to 5*s.* 10*d.* per

1,000 cubic feet, subject to discount on an annual consumption of—

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 20l. and under 30l. | of 15 per cent. |
| 30l. " 40l. | " 20 " |
| 40l. " 50l. | " 25 " |
| 50l. and upwards | " 30 " |

The Company do not charge for the use of meters.

The dividend paid has never exceeded 6 per cent. The average for 20 years ending 1856 was 4l. 3s. 7d.

In addition to the payment of the dividend a sum of about 500l. was expended out of income on the erection of 5 cottages in 1854-5.

The quantity of gas registered by the station meter for the year ending 11th January 1857 was four millions of cubic feet.

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| The consumption by | } 2,982,900 cubic feet. |
| mills and shops - | |
| Castle lamp - | 9,550 " |
| 80 street lamps, estimated - | } 764,000 " |
| - | |
| | <u>3,756,400 "</u> |

There has recently been an extension of the mains to meet the wants of private consumers.

INSPECTORS OF LIGHTING.

Nine inspectors are appointed in vestry annually from the body of ratepayers. Mr. Heelis, clerk to the inspectors at a salary of 5l. per annum, stated, that none of the present inspectors of lighting are holders of shares in the works; that on receiving complaints from the inhabitants an inspection is always made, and if necessary, representation made to the Company.

The position of the lamps is regulated by inspectors, who have no fixed rule for their guidance; from a remark made at the inquiry, this it would seem is a matter that requires a little more consideration at their hands.

SUMMARY.

1. The average annual mortality in the last 7 years ending 1856 was 23.2 to 1,000 persons living; deaths in the workhouse are included.

2. Zymotic diseases were fatal in 47 cases during the last 4 years, or about one-tenth of all who died.

SKIPTON. 3. The average age of all who died during the 4 years ending 1856, was 35·75 years, but of those who died during that time 137 did not survive their fifth year.

4. There is an utter want of adequate means for changing the air in the bed rooms generally throughout the town; a few of the windows only are made to open from top.

About one-fifth of the entire number of the houses are built back to back, or without outlets on more than one side.

The town is unsewered, and the drainage of yards for the most part defective.

The inhabitants have been supplied with water upon the constant system since 1823. The chairman, Mr. Alcock, expressed the readiness of the Company to do everything necessary to insure supply at all times free from impurities and fit for drinking and domestic purposes in future. The rents hitherto charged for supply to the smaller class houses are less than the maximum rate fixed by the Public Health Act, as well as by the Companies Act.

The town has had the benefit of public lights since 1836, at rates gradually reduced from 2*l.* 14*s.* to 2*l.* 4*s.* per light; and by meter from 6*s.* 8*d.* to 5*s.* 10*d.* per thousand cubic feet, subject to discount.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

I recommend that the Public Health Act, 1848, be applied to the town and district indicated on the plan prefixed to this report and described in the Appendix; for this a second inquiry will be necessary.

That the Local Board of Health shall consist of nine members; that the property qualification of the members shall be the possession of real or personal estate, or both to the amount of not less than 1,000*l.*, or being rated to the relief of the poor of the said district of not less than 25*l.*

I have the honour to remain, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
W. RANGER,

Superintending Inspector.

To the Right Hon. W. Monsell, M.P.,
&c. &c. &c.
President, General Board of Health.

APPENDIX.

SKIPTON.

THE boundary of the district recommended shall be a line commencing at a small hull or building situate at or near Cross Bank, on the Skipton and Embsay Road, and running thence in a northerly direction along the fence on the west side of a certain field belonging to Sir Richard Tufton called the Storams, and in the occupation of John Kendall, to the brook called Eller Beck, and running thence along the course of the said brook to the point where a certain rivulet from the north-west runs into the said brook, near the reservoir or round dam of the Skipton High Mill, and thence following the course of such rivulet to the point where it crosses the Short Lee Lane; thence along the said lane to the north point of the east fence of a close called Sodhill, in the occupation of John Moorhouse, and belonging to the township of Skipton; thence following the fence of the said close called Sodhill along the east and south sides thereof until it reaches the old Skipton and Gargrave Road; thence across the said road, along a certain occupation lane, to the north-west corner of a certain close belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton, called Bull Ing, late in occupation of Robert Twisleton and now in the occupation of William Scaife; thence along the line of fence on the west side of the said last-mentioned close and the line of fence on the west side of the Bull Ing plantation, also belonging to Sir Richard Tufton, and the line of fence on the west side of a close of meadow land abutting on the new Skipton and Gargran turnpike road; thence westerly along the said road to a point where it will be in a straight line with the sunk fence on the west side of a certain close called Harwoods belonging to Henry Alcock, and thence across the shrubbery belonging to the said Henry Alcock, and along the said sunk fence on the west side of the said close called Harwoods to the Gowfat Lane; thence along the said lane leading towards the canal to a point where the fence on the west side of a close called Lambert Hills belonging to Sir Richard Tufton, and in the occupation of William Stockdale, abuts on the said lane; thence along the said fence on the west side of the said last-mentioned close and a small garden upon the south of the said close to and across the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in a direct line to and across the Leeds and Bradford Railway Extension, and thence in an easterly direction along the occupation road on the south of the said railway, until the point where it reaches the lane called Golden Lane, and thence along the said last-mentioned lane to the north-west point of a close called Low Crake Moor, in the occupation of John Howson; thence along the fences on the west sides of the said close and the adjoining close, also called Low Crake Moor, and also in the occupation of the said John Howson, to the southern extremity of such fence, and thence along the brook called Eller Beck, in an easterly direction, until it passes into a certain close called Buck Dimples, also belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton and in the occupation of John Metcalf, and thence southerly along the western fence of the said close called Buck Dimples to the Waltonwrays occupation

SKIPTON. lane, leading into the Skipton and Carlton Road, and thence along the said occupation lane in an easterly direction into the said Skipton and Carlton Road, and thence in a southerly direction along the said last-mentioned road to the south corner of a certain close or inclosure, also belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton, called Cross Close, and now in the occupation of Henry Hird, and thence in an easterly direction along the south fence of the said last-mentioned close, and along the south fences of the two closes lying between the said close called Cross Close and the said railway, and across the said railway to the Skipton and Keighly Road, and thence in a south-easterly direction along the said road to the south-west corner of a triangular close called the Paddock, also belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton, and lying between the said road and the Leeds and Liverpool Canal; thence along the south fence of the said triangular close to and across the Leeds and Liverpool Canal to the south-west corner of a certain field edging on the said canal, also belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton, called the Far Lower Firth, in the occupation of John Howson, and thence along the south fences of the last-mentioned close and the three adjoining closes called the Firth or Firth and Cornfield, in the occupation of the said John Howson, and Far Wood Bottom, in the occupation of Sarah Whitham; thence along the easterly fence of the last-mentioned close until such fence runs into the south fence of a certain other close adjoining thereon, called the Great Wood Pasture, in the occupation of John Wignall; thence along the south and east fences of the said last-mentioned close into a certain occupation lane, called the Great Wood Lane; thence along the said lane until it reaches the Old Rumblesmoor Road, and thence along the said last-mentioned road in a direction towards the town of Skipton to the south-west corner of a field or garden adjoining upon the Bath House; thence along the south fence of the said last-mentioned field or garden to the south fences of two other closes called Gill Pasture and Gill Meadow, also belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton, now in the occupation of John Whittingham; thence in a northerly direction along the east fence of the said close called Gill Meadow; thence along the east fence of the two closes, also belonging to the said Richard Tufton, called Sun Moor Meadow and Sun Moor, late in the occupation of Storey Watkinson, but now of to the point where the brook called Skibedon Beck runs into the said close called Sun Moor Pasture; thence in a northerly direction along the said brook to the point where it passes under the Skipton and Otley Road; thence in a direct line to the south-west corner of a certain field called Far East Field, also belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton, in the occupation of Robert Birtwhistle; thence along the western fence of the said last-mentioned close to the Skipton and Knaresbro' Road; thence along the said road in an easterly direction to a point opposite to the west fence of a close called Haw Bank or Rock Field, also belonging to the said Sir Richard Tufton, late in the occupation of Jeremiah Phillip, but now of his daughter Ann Wilkinson; thence along the west fences of the said last-mentioned close and the

adjoining close called Cross Bank Meadow, also belonging to the ^{SKIPTON.} said Sir Richard Tufton, and late in the occupation of the said Jeremiah Phillip, but now of his said daughter, to the Skipton and Embsay Road, and thence along the said road in a direction towards the town of Skipton to the said small hull or building first described at the commencement of the said boundary line.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT

(11 & 12 Vict. Cap. 63.)

REPORT

TO THE

GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH

ON A

FURTHER INQUIRY

HELD AT

S K I P T O N ,

IN THE WEST RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF YORK,

TO DETERMINE THE BOUNDARY OF THE DISTRICT FOR
THE PURPOSES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.

By WILLIAM RANGER, Esq., C.E.,

SUPERINTENDING INSPECTOR.



LONDON :

PRINTED BY GEORGE E. EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1857.

NOTIFICATION.

THE General Board of Health hereby give notice, in terms of section 9 of the Public Health Act, that on or before the 31st day of October next, being a period of not less than one month from the date of the publication and deposit hereof, written statements may be forwarded to the Board with respect to any matter contained in or omitted from the accompanying Report on a Further Inquiry held at SKIPTON, in the West Riding of the County of York, to determine the Boundary of the District for the Purposes of the Public Health Act ; or with respect to any amendment to be proposed therein.

By order of the Board,
T. TAYLOR, *Secretary.*

Whitehall, 26th September 1857.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT (11 & 12 Vict. 63.)

Report to the Right Honourable W. COWPER, M.P., SKIPTON.
*President of the General Board of Health, on a further
Inquiry held at SKIPTON, in the West Riding of the
County of York, to determine the Boundary of the Dis-
trict for the Purposes of the Public Health Act. By
WILLIAM RANGER, Esq., Superintending Inspector.*

SIR,

Whitehall, September 1, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that on the 17th of March last I went to Skipton, and held a public meeting there on the 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 24th, in the Town Hall. The Report on that inquiry was made and presented to the late president of this Board on the 26th of the same month. Amongst the recommendations therein contained, was one made with the concurrence of the meeting, "That the boundary of the district should for the purposes of the Public Health Act be altered," as indicated on the plan prefixed to the Report, and fully described in the Appendix thereto.

In accordance with the instructions of the late president, I proceeded to Skipton again on the 18th of August last, and held another meeting there on the following day at the Town Hall.

Notice of this meeting was published in the *Leeds Mercury*, also in the *Leeds Intelligencer*, and the *Leeds Times* of the 1st of August. Copies of the notices were also fixed to the parish and new churches, the Roman Catholic church, Wesleyan Methodist, Primitive Methodist, Baptist, and Independent chapels, also Friends' meeting-house, and Town Hall.

The meeting was attended by a majority of those gentlemen who were present at and assisted me on the first inquiry.

At the meeting on the 19th of August, the boundary recommended in my report of the 26th March was, after a short discussion, unanimously approved. (See Appendix, page 23, first Report.)

SKIPTON. In respect of the qualification of the members recommended in the Report, *i. e.* "1,000*l.* personal property, or a rating to the relief of the poor in the district of not less than 25*l.*," Mr. *Paget* and others stated it as their opinion,—

"That the amounts named would bar many persons otherwise eligible from being candidates for the office."

Mr. *Wilson*, who had previously suggested a reduction in the rating qualification from 25*l.* to 15*l.*, supported the proposition for lowering the amount.

Mr. *C. Thornton*, in a letter upon the subject, states,—

"If the qualification is not altered there will not be sufficient persons to enable the ratepayers to make changes in the members. That he has no doubt a Local Board, if properly managed, will be of great benefit to the town."

The meeting finally agreed to a reduction of the rateable value qualification from 25*l.* to 20*l.* The property qualification to remain at 1,000*l.*

Mr. *Carr* directed my attention to an error at page 19 of the Report, line 10, the word "collected" should be "levied;" and in line 11, "361*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.*" should be "316*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.*;" it is but fair to the surveyor, I should state that this error was not of his making.

With respect to the charges for gas, Mr. *R. H. Sidgwick*, by letter, stated—

"That the charge for gas in 1836 was 3*l.* 15*s.* 0*d.* per lamp, and 11*s.* per 1,000 cubic feet, and not 2*l.* 14*s.* 0*d.* per lamp. The reduction to the lesser sums has been made since 1850."

Mr. *J. Carr*, by letter, states,—

"That the statement on page 16, under the heading "Privy Accommodation," appears to cast an imputation on the churchwardens and inhabitants of the town which they do not deserve; it only wants explanation. Behind the parish church, on the north side, there once existed a school and adjoining to it a privy. The school house has been removed, but the privy remains. Here was the accommodation afforded to Mrs. ———, and not as might be inferred from the text, that these performances were 'sub die.'"

This evidence was read at the meeting in March. Mr. *Carr* was present, but the explanation now given was not then furnished.

With regard to the constitution of the Local Board, it was proposed by Mr. Alcock, Mr. Robinson, and others, and finally agreed to by the meeting, SKIPTON.

- 1st. That the Board should consist of nine persons, *two-thirds* of whom shall be resident in the proposed district, the remaining *third* to be elected from persons resident in the township, and being rated for property in the aforesaid district.
- 2nd. That the property qualification of the members shall be the possession of real or personal estate, or both, to the amount of not less than 1,000*l.*, or being rated to the relief of the poor of the district of not less than 20*l.*
- 3rd. That the Public Health Act be applied to the district indicated on the plan prefixed to the Report dated 26th March 1857, and described in the Appendix thereto at page 23.

I have the honour to remain,

Your obedient and humble servant,

W. RANGER,

Superintending Inspector.

To the Right Hon. W. Cowper, M.P.,
President of the General Board of Health.
