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Will Combs

Andover
Rural District Council

Medical Officer's Report
1910.



April 22, 1910.

**To the Chairman and Members of the Andover Rural District
Council.**

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit to you my **ANNUAL REPORT** for the year 1909, copies of which have been forwarded in accordance with the Order, Act 16, Sec. 14, of March 23, 1891, to the Local Government Board and to the Hants County Council, also to the Secretary of the Home Office, as required by Sec. 152 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.

PHYSICAL FEATURES.—These vary considerably, being open downs in some places, hilly and woody in others, and sparsely populated in the uplands.

SOILS.—The subsoil is chalk throughout the district, with a stratum of gravel in some parts.

LEVELS.—These vary from 200ft. above sea level by the Test to 700ft. on the hills at Faccombe and Vernham.

OCCUPATIONS.—These are mainly agricultural. There is an Engineering Works employing a number of hands, and also a large Military Station at Tidworth.

AREA AND POPULATION.—The population at the last census was 9290. By adding the number of officers (94), N.C.O.'s and men (3336), women (292), and children (510), occupying the barracks at Tidworth, I estimate the population to be 13,522. The District covers an area of 65,558 acres.

BIRTHS AND BIRTH RATE.—There were 294 Births registered, being 7 more than last year, and giving a birth rate of 21·7 per 1000. Andover Rural—12 males, 5 females, total 17 ;

birth rate, 15·7. Amport—86 males, 83 females, total 169 ; birth rate, 24·2. Hurstbourne Tarrant—17 males, 13 females, total, 30 ; birth rate, 19·0. Longparish—39 males, 39 females, total, 78 ; birth rate, 19·7.

DEATHS AND DEATH RATE.—During the year 105 Deaths have been registered, whilst 11 have died in public institutions beyond the district. The nett deaths at all ages belonging to the district is therefore 116. This gives a death rate of 8·5 per 1000, a lower death rate than last year. 13 of the above deaths were of children under 1 year. The deaths in the several localities were as follows :—Andover Rural 12, rate 11·1, under 1 year 0. Amport 35, rate 5·0, under 1 year 6. Hurstbourne Tarrant 21, rate 13·4, under 1 year 3. Longparish 48, rate 12·4, under 1 year 4.

LONGEVITY.—Of the 116 deaths credited to the district no less than 44 were of persons of 70 years of age and upwards (the oldest being 90), and as there were 13 deaths of infants below 1 year of age, this leaves only 59 deaths between 1 year of age and 70, or between the very young and the very old. It is of interest to note that in Andover Rural District 12 deaths were registered ; of these 9 were over 74 years of age, and 2 died from accidental causes.

CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH.—Scarlet Fever 1, Diphtheria 1, Enteric 1, Epidemic Influenza 2, Enteritis 3, Gastritis 3, Phthisis 9, Heart Disease 15, other Tuberculosis Diseases 2, Cancer 5, Bronchitis 10, Pneumonia 4, other Respiratory Diseases 2, Premature Birth 3, Diseases of Parturition 1, Accidents 3, all other causes 48.

There were no uncertified deaths, and no means exist of obtaining the number of the still births.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.—Average last 10 years, 92·0 per 1000. During the year 13 infants under 1 year of age died, a very satisfactory decrease of 13 upon those of the previous year, 7 deaths occurring in the first four weeks of life. This gives an

infantile mortality of 44·0 per 1000 births registered. The causes of death amongst infants were as follows :—Premature birth 3, Convulsions 1, Pneumonia 1, Congenital Defects 1, Bronchitis 2, Enteritis 2, other causes 3.

NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS ACT.—This Act is not in force in the district. A letter was received from the County Medical Officer recommending the adoption of this Act. At a meeting I explained the objects of the Act and its advantages, and your Council resolved to apply to the Local Government Board for permission to adopt the Act, but this permission was withheld, no doubt from the difficulty and expense of working it.

ZYMOTIC DEATH RATE.—There were six deaths from zymotic diseases, giving a death rate of ·04 per 1000. One death was due to Scarlet Fever, four to Diphtheria, and one to Enteric Fever.

INFLUENZA DEATH RATE.—Two deaths occurred from this disease, giving a death rate of ·01 per 1000.

TUBERCULOSIS DEATH RATE.—Eleven deaths were registered as due to Tubercular Diseases, giving a Death rate of ·08 per 1000. Of these nine were due to the pulmonary organs being affected.

OTHER RESPIRATORY DISEASES.—Sixteen deaths were registered as due to disease of Respiratory Organs, giving a death rate of 1·1 per 1000.

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

DIPHTHERIA.—During the year this disease was prevalent amongst the children attending Longparish School, 31 cases in all being notified. On May 19 four cases were notified from Longparish. On visiting the elementary school it was found that out of 150 children attending 4 were absent with diphtheria, 1 was away with sore throat, which the mother said had looked white ; 31 children were present with enlarged glands of the neck ; 6 of the latter were members of two families, 10 were

members of five families, and 24 houses were affected. This condition of health showed that there had been an affection of the throat which had spread very rapidly. The cause of this rapid spread I found to be the dangerous practice of collecting the pencils and penholders after each lesson and placing them together in a box, in which they were kept until again distributed. A further outbreak occurred in this village in June, 11 more cases being notified. At first the epidemic was of a mild nature, but about the 21st of June it assumed a more virulent type. The actual cause of the outbreak could not be traced, but it must have been introduced into the school by a "carrier." Four cases proved fatal. Two cases contracted the disease from affected persons at their homes. One was discovered in a dying state when visiting his home to ascertain the cause of his absence from school. The child had been ill for some days with nasal diphtheria. This was thought to be an ordinary cold, consequently no medical man had been called in.

VERNHAM ROW.—A girl died from acute laryngitis ; she had been in service at Andover ; afterwards another child developed diphtheria. On enquiry being made at the house where the first case had been in service it was ascertained that several of the children had suffered from " sore throat."

PENTON MEWSEY.—Three cases were notified from this village, and removed to the Berthon tent. On visiting the schools several children were found with enlarged glands, and the same dangerous practice of collecting and re-distributing the pencils and penholders was in vogue.

UPPER CLATFORD.—Three cases notified.

WEYHILL.—Two cases were notified, one of which was removed to the Berthon tent.

THRUXTON, GRATELEY and SHODDESSEN.—One case each.

Total number of cases, 46. Deaths 4, death rate 8.6, removed to hospital 4.

SCARLET FEVER.—Number of cases notified, 28.

ABBOTTS ANN.—Eight cases were notified. On March 10 a child went from Abbots Ann to Southampton on a visit. On March 17 the child had a heavy cold, with a rash, which was thought to be “nettle-rash.” Two days later the child returned home, and attended the elementary school of the village. On April 3rd two cases occurred amongst the children attending the school. On investigating the cause the child who had suffered from “nettle-rash” was found to be “peeling,” and an aunt who lived in the village had a typical rash and sore throat, her medical attendant afterwards certifying her to be suffering from scarlet fever. The M.O.H. of Southampton was communicated with, who made enquiries at the house where the first child had visited, and found a child suffering from scarlet fever. No information could be obtained as to where the disease was contracted, but it is assumed that infection took place during the railway journey to Southampton. Two of the schoolmaster’s children caught the disease. Later a notice was sent by the School Medical Officer of a child with a suspicious desquamation of each hand. The child was kept under observation, but no further development took place.

LOWER CLATFORD.—The M.O.H. of Portsmouth reported the case of a girl suffering from scarlet fever who had been residing with her parents in this village. On visiting the cottage no case was discovered, nor could the cause be traced.

APPLESHAW.—Four cases notified. On investigation a lad was discovered with hands and feet peeling. He had been on a visit to Faccombe, and had undoubtedly contracted the disease there and conveyed it to the other affected persons.

TIDWORTH BARRACKS.—Five cases notified. PENTON MEWSEY and GRATELEY.—2. FACCOMBE.—3. LONGPARISH, SHIPTON, UPPER CLATFORD and WESTOVER.—1 each.

Number of cases, 28. Deaths 1, death rate 3.5, removed to hospital 3.

ENTERIC.—One death occurred from this disease at Shipton. The woman was employed at a laundry, where her duty

was to sort a large quantity of bed coverings, etc. There was no cause to be found at her home, except the water from the well was found on analysis contaminated with surface impurities. As this was the only case in a group of cottages, the inmates of which all used this water for drinking and domestic purposes, I do not consider the condition of the water as the cause. Every precaution was taken, the room and bedding being disinfected after the removal of the body. The War Office authorities excluded from Tidworth a tradesman who delivered bread to the Barracks, but he was allowed to return after a short time on undertaking to live away from the village until the danger of conveying infection ceased.

NON-NOTIFIABLE DISEASES MOST PREVALENT.—Measles, a few cases occurred in May. Whooping Cough in November. Chicken Pox in December.

ZYMOTIC DISEASE PREVENTION.

DIPHTHERIA.—(1) The whole of the scholars present at a school from which a case had been notified were inspected, the attendance register carefully gone through, and all absent children accounted for, and, if ill, visited. (2) The schoolmasters and mistresses were instructed to notify any child absent for more than 24 hours, if such absence is due to illness. (3) In the case of Longparish the schools were closed, and children attending Barton Stacey school from Bransbury, a village from which children attended Longparish, were excluded for some weeks. The Superintendents of all the Sunday Schools were written to asking them to keep their schools closed for the same period as the elementary schools. (4) The schoolrooms, books, and offices were all disinfected. (5) An urgent appeal was made to the Director of Education asking that means should at once be adopted to keep the pens and pencils for each child's separate use. Also the County Medical Officer was written to asking him to use his influence in the same direction, with the gratifying result that in every elementary school in my district a linen bag is supplied to each child in which to keep his or her books,

pencils, etc. (6) All the cases have been visited, and instructions given to those in charge by your Inspector and myself. (7) Frequent communication by letter and telephone has been held with the County Medical Officer, who also paid me a visit. (8) The medical men attending the cases have been conferred with. (9) Your Council placed a fully trained nurse in Longparish, whose duty it was to visit and assist in nursing the cases at their homes, instruct those in charge how to avoid contagion, to see that disinfectants were properly used, and to ensure that convalescents were kept out of the streets. This method was of the greatest assistance in arresting the spread of the disease, as parents whose children complained of illness at once asked her to visit them, and in this way mild cases were discovered and a medical man called in. (10) Disinfectants were supplied free to all. (11) By the generosity of Mr. H. K. Hodgson diphtheria anti-toxin was supplied free in every case. His kindness is deserving of your grateful thanks, and it must be a source of pleasure to him to know that its use was of the greatest benefit. (12) Mild and doubtful cases were submitted to bacteriological examination, and all cases were so examined before being declared free from infection. (13) The infected persons were separated as far as possible from the healthy. The rooms occupied and the clothes worn by the patients were carefully disinfected after convalescence. (14) The Berthon tent was erected in a field at Penton Mewsey kindly lent by Mr. Sutton, in which the cases from this village were isolated.

SCARLET FEVER.—All cases were visited and dealt with in a similar manner detailed in the previous paragraph.

ABBOTTS ANN.—Two of the schoolmaster's children contracted the disease, consequently it was necessary to exclude him and his wife from the school.

FACCOMBE.—Here by the kindness of Mr. E. Festus Kelly, who placed an empty cottage at your disposal, we were enabled to make a temporary hospital and isolate the cases.

SHIPTON BELLINGER.—A case in this village was discovered by the Military Authorities in the family of a soldier. They at

once removed the child to the isolation hospital at Bulford, your Authority contributing to its maintenance. The house was most thoroughly disinfected. The prompt action of the Military Authorities in all probability arrested an epidemic in this populous village.

LONGPARISH.—This case was strictly isolated at home, and after convalescence disinfection thoroughly carried out by Messrs. Lacey, of Fulham.

The other cases in the district were dealt with by separation as far as possible, and disinfection after recovery.

I wish to express my thanks to the medical men practising in your district for their prompt notification of all infectious diseases, and their ready assistance in dealing with them. It would have been impossible to record such satisfactory results without their very kind and generous help.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.—The same necessity exists of providing a permanent building to be used as an Isolation Hospital, as commented on in my last Annual Report. It would be quite fair to state that an Isolation Hospital would have proved invaluable this year. The presence of a large body of military persons of a susceptible age to all infectious diseases renders it necessary for the military authorities to enforce stringent measures amongst them, excluding all people living in an affected area from visiting the barracks at Tidworth, and forbidding any troops from going into an affected village, with the serious result of the loss of trade as well as great inconvenience to the inhabitants. The Berthon tent was used once this year. There were the usual unavoidable delays in getting it erected and ready to receive the patients, and then grave complaint was made by the medical man attending the cases of its unsuitability and its condition of repair and also the discomfort not only to the patient but those in charge. Though not quite agreeing with all the points raised as to its shortcomings, I am of opinion that the Berthon tent does not and cannot meet the requirements of your district as a hospital.

for infectious disease, and until your Council possess an Isolation Hospital which will be ready to receive patients at a moment's notice these complaints will arise, and are unavoidable.

DISINFECTION.—There is no special apparatus for this work. Rooms are disinfected with sulphur, formalin, etc., the bedding being exposed in the rooms during the process. The clothes, etc., are immersed in solution of carbolic before being washed.

BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK.—When necessary material for this purpose is sent away for examination to the Laboratories for Pathology and Public Health, London, and the result communicated in the first instance by telegram, and afterwards confirmed in a report.

TUBERCULOSIS.—Eleven deaths were registered as due to this disease, being a decrease of 7 on that of last year.

NOTIFICATION.—Eight cases were notified from the following villages ;—Linkenholt, Vernham, Longparish, Amport, Quarley, Penton Mewsey, and Hurstbourne Tarrant, and two by the Military Authorities at Tidworth. All the cases have been visited, and the patients cautioned as to the danger to others in not taking proper precautions in disinfecting and disposing of the expectoration, etc. Also the advantage of outdoor air, good food, rest, sleeping in a separate room, the avoidance of excesses and keeping the windows closed. Spitting flasks as well as disinfectants have been supplied. The rooms, etc., are disinfected after a fatal termination. There is no doubt that deficient window area—both as to windows and as regards opening—which limit the light and air in the rooms, play an important part in favouring the spread of tuberculous disease, as well as retarding the recovery of those affected. In connection with the subject of the prevention of consumption the County Medical Officer sent a rough sketch of a tablet warning the public against the danger of spitting, to your Council, recommending that these tablets should be placed in prominent

places such as publichouses, railway stations, etc., No steps were taken by your Council, and I consider that this matter should be referred to your Sanitary Committee for re-consideration.

SANATORIUM TREATMENT.—A Conference, at which a member of your council attended, was held at Winchester upon this subject, and after an important discussion a representative committee was formed to consider the best means of effecting this object.

SCHOOLS.—There are 21 elementary schools within your district, the sanitary condition and water supply of all being satisfactory.

ACTION TAKEN TO PREVENT SPREAD OF DISEASE.—Schools closed—Longparish, June 21 to the end of summer holidays. Shipton Bellinger, July 20 to July 30, for scarlet fever. Barton Stacey, the children attending from Bransbury from June 24 to July 8, for diphtheria. Members of any family where an infectious disease had occurred were excluded from school. The school masters and mistresses were asked to give particular attention to absence from illness, and to communicate at once with me. At Vernham the Managers closed the school for “influenza catarrh” without any reference in the matter either to the school medical officer or myself. The School Medical Officer wrote to them pointing out how irregular this step was. The Local Government Board have issued a memorandum upon the subject of closure of and exclusion from school, which deals very fully with this matter, and the recent changes made by Section 13 of the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, which have materially increased the possibilities of effective action against disease, possessed by your Council and Medical Officer. An important circular letter was sent by the County Medical Officer with regard to those children who, at the medical inspection, are found requiring medical or surgical treatment, and whose parents not being paupers are obviously unable to provide such treatment. The letter pointed out that

the Guardians possessed the power to deal effectively with these cases, and that the Local Government Board were prepared to sanction payment. This was considered by the Guardians, but no fees were fixed. It would have been better if some arrangement had been come to with the Medical Practitioners of the District.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.—This has seemed sufficient for the working population of this district. There has been an increased demand for good residential houses. In September I attended before a Select Committee of the House of Lords to give evidence with regard to movable dwellings, more especially as to van dwellings.

EXCREMENT AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.—(1) Disposal of house Refuse, Ashes, etc.—In the larger houses these are stored in properly constructed ash pits, etc., but in the cottages are first collected in small heaps on the gardens and then dug into the ground. (2) Scavenging.—In only one part of your District (Shipton) is this undertaken by your Council, and is working in a satisfactory manner. (3) Excrement Disposal.—This is by properly constructed cesspools, earth closets, and in Shipton by regular collection, all cesspools being emptied into a properly constructed soil cart and conveyed away for land treatment.

WATER SUPPLY.—This is almost entirely obtained from wells, both shallow and deep, and the water is generally of good quality, sufficient and pure. At Shipton water is laid on from the Cholderton Water Works, a tap being placed in the village for the free use of those desiring to take advantage of it. The water from a well at Shipton was submitted to the Public Analyst, and though found to be free from permanent pollution it was contaminated with dirty or dusty matter, so that it might become serious in its effects upon health. The cause was a dirty state of the well and a bad covering to it. This well was closed, and a supply laid on from the Cholderton Water Works.

MILK SUPPLY.—There are 22 persons registered as cow-keepers and dairymen, one more than last year. The type of premises and water supply remain the same as in my last report. Lighting, ventilation, and cleanliness has been satisfactory. Lime washing has been carried out in accordance with the regulations. The general sanitary conditions have improved, especially with regard to the cleansing of the walls of the cow-sheds, and the more frequent removal of the manure from the yards.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.—There are two in your District, and these are kept in clean condition.

BAKEHOUSES.—There are 25 in the district, all of which are properly constructed with regard to light, ventilation and drainage. They have all been lime-washed at the proper periods in accordance with the Act.

FACTORIES and WORKSHOPS have all suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences. The cleanliness, air space, and ventilation is satisfactory. All being on the ground floor there is ample provision for escape in case of fire.

VAN DWELLINGS.—At Shipton a field is let for this purpose, but being in a low-lying part of the village and subject to the influence of an abnormal rising of the springs, this field may at any time become unfit for occupation. Should this do so a notice will at once be served upon the owner to clear-out the vans, etc.

NUISANCES.—At Shipton a filtration gutter at the back and sides of a row of cottages was found not acting, and consequently not fulfilling its object of efficiently disposing of the slop water. The owner was written to and recommended to provide a properly constructed cesspool which could be emptied at regular intervals by your Authority. This suggestion has not been acted upon, but an extension of the gutter made, which has apparently remedied the trouble for the present, but it is only a

question of time, when the ground has become water-logged, for the nuisance to recur. Cases of throwing slop water upon the ground at the rear of cottages have been discovered and dealt with. A notice was received from the Medical Officer of Health for Bermondsey giving information of the removal of 50qrs. of damaged oats for home mixture. Enquiries were made, and it was found they were being used for that purpose.

MIDWIVES ACT.—The inspection of midwives in your district is carried out by the Hampshire Nursing Association. Visits of inspection have been paid by the Superintendent or her Assistants during the year. Nothing of an unsatisfactory character with regard to their practice has been communicated to you. Enquiries were made by the Local Government Board whether the practice of medicine and surgery by unqualified persons is assuming large proportions in the district, and the effects produced by such practice on the public health of the district. To both questions a negative answer was given.

I am attaching a Report from your Sanitary Inspector, from whom I have received most valuable assistance during the year.

I am, Gentleman,

Your obedient Servant,

ERNEST A. FARR.



ANDOVER, March, 1910.

**To the Members of the Andover Rural District
Council.**

GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to submit my Annual Report as Inspector of Nuisances for the year ending 31st December, 1909. During the year new drains have been tested in the following premises, and in each case have proved sound and watertight :—Shoddesden, Clanville, Little Shoddesden, Hurstbourne Tarrant (Knight), Kimpton Lodge, Longparish Church Hall, Abbotts Ann Manor, Lains Farm, Park House, Shipton (Capt. Byng), The Berthon tent was fixed by permission of Mr. Sutton for diphtheria patients at Penton on the 20th February and removed on the 1st April. The tent was then repaired and painted, and an arrangement made with Messrs. Beale to store this and the canvas tent and erect one or both when and where required.

A cottage at Faccombe lent by Mr. Kelly was furnished from the store in June, and used for the isolation of scarlet fever patients.

The scavenging of Shipton village was commenced with the new plant on the 20th February, and has resulted in a great improvement in the sanitary condition of the village.

Numerous complaints of overcrowded sleeping rooms at Bursledon Cottages, Shipton, have been received and in October I measured the rooms and gave notice of their cubic capacity to the occupier of each of the eight houses. Since then I have had no complaint.

A sample of water taken from a well at Shipton, the property of Mr. Hurford, was forwarded to the County Analyst in November, and on the report received the use for domestic purposes of water from this well was discontinued.

In December the drains at The Dene, Hurstbourne Tarrant, were tested, and found to be very defective, and a report with

recommendations was forwarded to the occupier. On my next inspection the house was unoccupied, so no further action has been taken. A large number of nuisances throughout the district caused by defective drains, foul pig styes, etc., etc., have been abated on my bringing them to the notice of the persons responsible.

All rooms occupied by infectious cases have been fumigated, and disinfectants have been freely supplied.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN WORMALD, A.R.San.I.



