Contributors

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Annual Report

AS TO THE

SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE

for the Year 1919,

BY

H. M. SPEIRS, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE DISS URBAN COUNCIL.

I herewith have the honour to present my FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT as your Medical Officer of Health. I should first like to point out that it has not been printed during the war, and so one has taken this opportunity of including past work for comparisons sake, and secondly I quote from the Instructions of the Minister of Health to Medical Officers *re* the importance of their Annual Reports.

"It is further suggested that your Council should arrange for the Report to be distributed locally, as soon as it is available, as widely as possible, and should take steps through the local Press and otherwise to bring its contents effectively to the knowledge of the people. One of the main purposes of the compilation of the Report is that, by giving it the widest possible publicity, it shall engender a popular interest in the subject, and an enlightened public opinion which shall support the Local Authority in realising its high responsibilities for the health of its area, and in remedying, at the earliest opportunity, the various defects which the survey may bring to light, whether arising from war conditions, or from other causes. Such an increase of public knowledge and interest in these matters may also become an effective means of educating the citizens in the more important conditions of public health, of warning them against particular dangers, and of securing that highly important co-operation and confidence between them and the Health Authority and its staff, which is essential to successful health administration."

1. Population.

Census, 1911-3769. Estimated 3671. (See also Table 1).

2.—Physical Features and General Character of District. (a) Physical Features.

The parish of Diss is, roughly speaking, shaped like a pear, with its broadest part to the south, bounded by the River Waveney and Suffolk. On the west lie the parishes of Roydon, Shelfanger and Winfarthing; north, Tibenham; and on the east, Tivetshall, Gissing, Burston, Shimpling, Thelveton, Frenze and Scole. All of which are in the Depwade Sanitary Area.

These numerous boundaries form what I might call the stalk of the pear which runs north nearly five miles from the town proper, is a very narrow strip of land indeed. In size, it is 3,625 acres, of which about 10 are under water.

The town of Diss stands on ground sloping upwards from the river in the south to a ridge running due east and west about three-quarters of a mile from the river Waveney, the ground from this ridge sloping down again to the north. There are very few houses to the north of this ridge, nearly all standing to the south on the land sloping down to, and around the Mere.

This Mere forms the lowest part of the town (with the exception of the river) and is an important feature, both from a picturesque and a sanitary point of view; in as much as the sewerage of the town had for generations past been discharged there, in fact till the present system of sewerage was founded in 1878.

Further, in spite of careful supervision, there is more finds its way into it, than is proper, to this day.

The water which keeps the Mere at a constant level is supplied from five springs in the centre, and runs into the river by an overflow pipe at the south-east corner.

(b) GEOLOGICAL FEATURES.

The town virtually stands on two strata :--

(1) What is known as Boulder Clay, which is an impermeable mass of clay with stones and shells, etc., embedded in it.

(2) The Gravel and Sand beneath, but which comes to the surface round the Mere and in a broadening band running along the river to the eastern boundary.

Both these lie on the Chalk which has a thickness of not less than 400 feet, and from which our water supply is pumped.

3.-Social Conditions and Occupation.

One might say that there was no predominance to any particular form of trade, but that the people were occupied in such small business as is to be found in most small country towns.

There are three mat and brush factories which employ several hundred hands, both male and female (the one is situate just in the bounds of Roydon), also a stay factory which employs from thirty to one hundred girls according to the state of trade, an iron foundry for the manufacture and repairs of agricultural implements, and one or two large maltings.

VITAL STATISTICS.

YEAR.	Popui	ATION		BIRTHS. DEATHS.			5.	INFANTILE MORTALITY.					
	for Deaths.	for Births.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Rate per 1000.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Rate per 1000.	Illegitimate.	Total.	Rate per 1000 Births.
1916	3,467	3,772	37	34	71	18.1	28	23	51	14.7		4	56.3
1917	3,359	3,744	21	32	54	13.9	33	34	67	19.9		5	94.3
1918	3,417	3,829	29	34	63	16.0	30	25	55	16.	2	7	111.1
1919	3,596	3,746	36	29	65	17.3	21	23	44	12.2	1	5	76.9

4.—Infantile Mortality.

Meaning the deaths from all causes under 12 months.

This rate is 76.9 per thousand births, the rate for England and Wales being 89,

5.—Births.

Total 65. Males 36, Females 29, Illegitimate 11. Rate 17.3 per thousand, the rate for England and Wales being 18.5.

6.—Deaths.

Total 44. Males 21, Females 23. Rate 12.2 per thousand, the rate for England and Wales being 13.8.

NOTES ON THE ABOVE FIGURES.

You will see that our birth rate is less than that for the whole country, but so is our death rate, and the net result is a gain of births over deaths of 5.1.

This as the Malthusians have pointed out, is of much more importance than a very high birth rate with a corresponding high death rate.

	191	16.	191	7	191	0	101/	
	1				191	ō.	1919	9.
CAUSES OF DEATH.		Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
All causes	28	23	33	34	30	25	21	23
Enteric Fever								
Small-pox								
Measles	1							
Scarlet Fever								
Whooping Cough	1				2			
Diphtheria and Croup Influenza	2	ï	"i	1 6	1		1	
Erysipelas				1.1.2.2.2.1			-	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	2		2	3	2			ï
Tuberculous Meningitis					ĩ			
Other Tuberculosis Diseases	1		1	1				
Cancer, malignant disease	2	4	1	1	5	4	3	3
Rheumatic Fever								
Meningitis		;						
Organic Heart Disease	5	4	6	3	2	3	2	2
Bronchitis Pneumonia (all forms)	1	22	1	4	1	1	6	2 3 1
Other Respiratory Diseases	-	100	i		ï			2
Diarrhœa &c. (under 2 years)			1	•••	1	 1		-
Appendicitus & Typhlitis			î.	1		i		
Cirrhosis of Liver								
Alcoholism								
Nephritis & Bright's Disease	1		3					
Puerperal Fever			1					
Parturition, apart from puer-								
peral Fever	1						1	
Congenital Debility, &c	1				3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
Violence, apart from suicide Suicide					ï	100		-
Other defined Diseases	8		14	13	7	6	5	8
Causes ill-defined or unknown		i						

Causes of Deaths at all Ages. TABLE II.

7.—Rainfall.

Rainfall in 1919

at The Cedars, Diss, in the county of Norfolk.

Rain Gauge. { Diameter of Funnel 10in. Height of Above Ground 1ft. 8in. Top Above Sea Level 108ft.

Month.	Total Depth.	Greates in 24 h		Number of Days with .01 or more recorded.
	Inches.	Inches.	Date.	
JANUARY	2.62	.49	5	15
FEBRUARY	2.96	.82	17	11
MARCH	1.58	.29	7	13
APRIL	2.13	.48	15	17
May	.53	.19	25	4
JUNE	1.64	.59	20	11
JULY	3.41	.65	20	14
August	2.27	.81	28	9
September	.54	.25	22	4
OCTOBER	2.25	.67	28	12
NOVEMBER.	2.04	.42	17	13
DECEMBER.	3.59	.47	22	20
TOTAL	25.56			143

8.- Sanitary Circumstances of the District. WATER SUPPLY.

I am glad to be able to state that this continues to give every satisfaction. I have reprinted the figures from my report for 1913, which show at a glance that you are pumping and consuming more than double the quantity to-day than you were six years ago.

I might also note that it was owing to our excellent water supply that we were able to maintain at times during the war an addition of almost 50 per cent to our population of soldiers, and that without at any time any anxiety in the way of epidemics.

In fact, as I had charge of the health of the men through the whole of the last four years of war, I can say that the standard of health in the Camp and Billets was excellent.

I think it would be a good thing for the Waterworks Committee to have a Quantative Analysis of the water made at regular periods, even once a year, would be better than nothing.

For without this you cannot expect to trace changes in the water, and so keep an eye not only on its quality, but on its action on your machinery.

		the second s	19.		13.
Mont	th.	Quantity		Quantity	
	1000	the second se	Daily Con-		Daily Con-
		Pumped.	sumption.	Pumped.	sumption.
		Gallons.	Gallons.	Gallons.	Gallons.
January		 1,036,000	33,419	210,000	6,774
February		 1,019,750	36,419	219,000	7,821
March		 1,052,000	33,935	271,000	8,742
April		 977,500	32,583	365,000	12,166
May		 1,104,000	35,612	492,000	15,871
June		 1,130,500	37.683	502,000	16,733
July		 959,500	30,951	568,000	18,322
August		 844,000	27,225	544,000	17,548
September		 811,000	27,033	427,000	14,233
October		 910,000	29,354	501,000	16.161
November		 1,059,500	35,316	472,000	15,733
December		 1,013,500	32,693	453,000	14,613
Total		 11,917,259	392,223	5,024,000	164,717
Average per	Month	 993,104	32,685	418,666	13,726

WATERWORKS.—DISS URBAN COUNCIL. MONTHLY PUMPING RECORDS.

Premises	lains,	l	Not supplied.
Cottages	338		205
Private Houses			56
Business ditto	64		
Business Premises	27		38
Public Houses	12		IO
	573		325

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

I think I can honestly say that there is no real pollution of the River Waveney, and from analysis made in 1913 of the effluent from your sewerage farm, I consider this is doing its duty well.

DRAINAGE.

SEWERS AND SEWERAGE.

There have been no extensions to existing Sewers during the year. Periodical visits have been made to the Sewerage Disposal Works, which was on each occasion found working satisfactorily. Four connections have been made to Sewers connecting new drainage with W.C's.

NEW DRAINAGE.

Six new drains have been constructed, 4 new drains connected to sewers and 11 drains have been re-constructed with necessary extensions, 26 new W.C's. have been fixed on 22 Premises, serving 31 Houses. For the information of the Council I herewith give Schedules showing progress made during the War Period, i.e., 1914—1919. (a) New Drainage, (b) Conversion of Privies, and Statistics for the District.

New Drainage.	Year :							
0	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919		
Connections to Sewers	21	IO	5	- 7	5	4		
New Drains	24	IO	9	7	6	6		
Reconstructed Drains	5	8	5	15	5	II		

Conversion of Privies.	1914.	1915.	Yea 1916.		1918.	1919.
Privies :	1					1
Fixed to Removable Recep- tacles, With fixed Receptacles to	12	5	2	2	Nil.	28
fresh water W.C's. (with flushing cistern) ,, With fixed Receptacles to	28	26	23	21	10	24
Waste Water W.C's. (hand pail flushed) , With Movable Receptacles	15	4	Nil	Nil.	3	2
To Flush Water W.C's. To Waste Water W.C's.					I 	
Statistics for the District. Closet Accommodation. No. of Privies : Fixed Receptacles		No	o. not	know	'n.	
,, ,, Movable Receptacles No. of Fresh Water W.C.'s ,, Waste Water W.C.'s	17 90 20	22 116 24	24 139 24	26 160 24	26 170 27	54 194 29

Total No. of Water W.C.'s in the District ... 223.

I should like to point out to the Council that the request from the Owner of the Uplands to be connected to the Main Sewer should be met, and as the Council have to lay their Main Drain up Frenze Road to connect up their new housing scheme there, the request is a reasonable and proper one, and in my opinion should be complied with as soon as possible.

SCAVENGING.

The work was undertaken by S. C. Osborne under contract with the Council for a term of $2\frac{1}{2}$ years to date from the 1st October, 1919. It is not possible to give a full report as yet upon this work, being of so recent a date. The scheme was prepared by your Inspector in conjunction with the Medical Officer of Health, and up to the present time has worked smoothly and satisfactorily. I give particulars of the work done for the past three months, i.e., the period under review. No. of Privy Pails emptied702No. of Removable Sanitary Dust Bins emptied weekly123No. of Dust Bins Fixed Type emptied43No. of loads of dry refuse removed54No. of Privy Vaults Fixed Type emptied27No. of Loads of Excreta removed30

The routine of Scavenging the District by weekly collection of Refuse and Privy Pails is as follows :---

MONDAY.—Croft Lane, Denmark Street, Fair Green, Frenze Road, Heywood Road, Market Hill, Market Place, Mere Street, Mount Street, Park Road, Roydon Road, Shelfanger Road, Stanley Road, St. Nicholas Street, Sunnyside, Walcot Road. Removable Privy Receptacles and Removable Sanitary Dust Bins.

TUESDAY.—Chapel Street, Church Street, Victoria Road, Stuston Road, Mission Road, The Entry, Tavern Lane, Rose Lane, Gas-House Lane, Vince's Lane, Waveney Road, Mill Drive. Removable Privy Receptacles and Removable Sanitary Dust Bins.

Dust Bins and Privy Vaults of the fixed type are emptied upon *written notice* being given to the Sanitary Inspector by the Occupier of the Premises where the work is required to be done, and the work is attended to in the order received as soon as possible by the Scavenger from Official Lists passed on to him by the Inspector.

INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.

I beg to report that during the year 1919 542 visits of inspection have been made, viz. :--

Abatement of Nuisances	26
New Drainage	134
Infectious Diseases	
Factory and Workshops Act	65
Dairies and Cowsheds	46
Slaughterhouses	40
Miscellaneous	150

Total 542

ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES.

Nuisances have been abated on 20 Premises, 2 Statutory Notices have been served, and I has been complied with.

12 formal notices have been served, and 12 have been complied with.

SUMMARY.—Unabated at 1st January, 1919 I

Nuisances found on Inspection 14

Total 15

No. abated 14 Unabated to 1st January, 1920..... 1

Total 15

2 complaints of Nuisances were received and investigated during the year.

9,-Schools.

The following cases were reported to me from the Public Elementary Schools in the town, and having been inspected were reported on for further action :--

Measles	I
Chicken Pox	28
Whooping Cough	I

None of the Schools were closed at any period during the year 1919.

10.-Food.

MILK AND MILK SUPPLY.

The Milk Supply of the District is adequate, and there has been no need to put any priority scheme into operation. During the year 1917 there was threatened a diverting of part of the Milk Supply of the District. The Local Food Committee prevented this taking place by obtaining the sanction of the Food Controller for the powers under Clause 8 of the Milk Order 1917 being conferred upon them, and put into operation. This action saving as it did 112 gallons weekly for distribution in the District, prevented a Milk Famine, and a rationing of the Milk Supply. The total quantity of Milk sold by retail by the registered Milk Retailers in the District for the week ending 27th December, 1919, was 672 gallons 2 pints. The quantity of Milk that week distributed by the Food Committee under the powers before referred to amounted to 114 gallons.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

46 visits of Inspection have been made to these Premises. On each occasion the premises were found in a satisfactory condition. There are 10 persons registered in the District as follows :—

Cowkeeper, Dairyman, and Purveyor of Milk 3 Purveyor of Milk 7

Total 10

One person was registered as Purveyor of Milk during the year. The cows are habitually grazed throughout the year, and are kept in a very clean condition.

MILK (MOTHERS AND CHILDREN) ORDER, 1918.

No action has been taken by your Council under this Order it being considered by your M.O.H. that there was no difficulty on the part of Mothers, expectant or nursing, or of Children in the supply of Milk.

All Premises used in the distribution of Food are periodically visited, and in several instances suggestions given by your Inspector for the improved cleanliness of the Premises have been carried out. During the year 8 Boxes of Dates were surrendered to your Inspector and certified by the Medical Officer as unfit for food and destroyed; also one carcase of Lamb which was also destroyed being unfit for consumption as human food.

11.—Infectious Diseases.

I am glad to be able to report almost a clean sheet under this heading, in that we have not had any serious outbreak.

81 visits have been made in cases of Infectious Disease. Disinfection of Rooms, Clothing and Bedding has been done on 9 occasions. Disinfectant has been supplied to 39 persons during the year with instructions as to its use. The cases visited included Diptheria, Scarlet Fever, and Tuberculosis. A suspected case of Anthrax or Wool-niters' Disease was investigated during the year, and 3 samples of materials used by the suspected person were forwarded to the Ministry of Health for examination, which was subsequently reported as giving negative results. I give Schedule of Diseases with number of visits in each case :--

Disease.	No. of Notifications.	No. of Visits made.
Chicken Pox	4	6
Tuberculosis	1	4
Diphtheria	6	34
Malaria	4	8
Scarlet Fever	4	9
Opthalmia	2	2
Measles	10	18
Total	30	81

Two Small-Pox contacts from S.S. Katoomba were notified as having come into the town. On inquiry it was found that both men had been re-vaccinated in May, 1919, and so no further action was taken.

No action is taken by your Council with reference to Venereal Disease, all cases being sent to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital for treatment at the Public Dispensary there.

12.-Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Registered Midwives in the Town are under the inspection and care of the County Authorities, and of their action in the matter I have no knowledge, except as in so far I meet it in my private work, and I am pleased to be able to say that what I have seen is very satisfactory.

It will be in the memory of the Council that arrangements were made some time ago for our District Nurse to attend nursing and expectant Mothers, under the advice of your M.O.H.

This has been in operation for a complete year now, and Nurse reports as follows :---

" No.	of	House visits to Infants and Mothers	250
No.	of	Infants attending Weighing Centre	19
No.	of	visits made by the above	48
No.	of	cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum treated	2*

*These two cases were of specific origin, and both died of congenital syphilis.

The Home visits in most cases have been much appreciated by the Mothers, and the advice given carried out satisfactorily.

Many Mothers are keenly interested in the weighing of their Babies, which takes place at the Church Hall monthly." I should like to mention here that your Council is indebted to the Rector, the Rev. B. M. Downton, for the free use of the Church Hall for the above purpose, and in my opinion a recorded vote of thanks should be sent him.

13.—Housing.

Your Council is well forward with reference to the new Housing Scheme. Two plots of land have been bought, and the plans for houses to be built on them are at the present moment before the Minister of Health.

I can't help adding a note here as to these houses. First I think that other material than brick might have been chosen for their construction, as I feel sure that if we have to wait our turn for the necessary bricks we will not see our houses for some time to come.

And secondly I consider the plan of building houses with so many rooms adapted for coal fires is unnecessarily expensive as I am certain we shall never see coal used in the future as in the past, and therefore I think some plan of central heating or gas stoves should have been substituted. But this is, I admit, only my opinion.

I give the following report upon the housing within the District with particulars and summaries of inspections to date under the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909.

The total number of houses in Diss for the housing of the population is approximately 944, of which number 606 are houses of the cottage type, i.e., rateable value under $\pounds 8$ per annum.

Total number of houses inspected under the rateable value of $\pounds 8$ per annum, 306. This number is made up as follows, viz :--

No.	Houses	inspected	year	1911		100
		ditto	,,	1912		63
		ditto	,,	1913		104
		ditto	,,	1914	•••••	39

306

The various parts of the District covered by inspections include the following, viz. :--Shelfanger Road, Sunnyside, Harrison's Yard, Mission Road (6), St. Nicholas Street, Mount Street, Walcot Road and Walcot Green (part), Frenze Road, Church Street, Prime's Yard, Alger's Square, The Entry, Mere Street, Chapel Street, Beehive Yard, Denmark Street (part).

17 representations for closing have been made, concerning these. I give the following particulars, viz.:—5 have been closed and demolished, 3 have been closed and demolished and replaced by 2 newly built cottages, 2 have been closed, 7 still remain to be dealt with, total 17. Of the 7 remaining to be dealt with, the situation of same is as follows :—Chapel Street 2, Bryant's Yard 4, Walcot Green 1, total 7. Other houses in addition to the before mentioned which I report for the earliest consideration are situated as follows :—Harrison's Yard 3, Walcot Green 4, Chapel Street 6, Mission Road 4, total 17. I cottage has been voluntarily closed and demolished, and 1 cottage has been voluntarily closed during the year.

14.-Miscellaneous.

150 visits of inspection of a routine character have been made. Several instances of refuse accumulations and manurial deposits were found, verbal notice being given for the removal of same, this was in each case complied with.

Five new glazed lavatory sinks have been fixed on 3 premises, I new flushing tank has been fixed to a W.C., 20 caravans have been inspected during the year, I house has been thoroughly distempered and cleaned, 5 rooms have been cleansed following infectious disease, I new bath has been fixed, I closet with removable pail has been converted to a W.C. with flushing cistern, I furniture removal van has been disinfected, I new glazed wash-up sink has been fixed, 2 premises have been fitted with new eaves gutters, 50 premises have been provided with sanitary bins for the weekly removal of refuse, 39 persons have been provided with disinfectant and instructions given as to its use, 8 boxes of dates were surrendered to your Inspector and condemned as unfit for human consumption and destroyed, I carcase of a Lamb was surrendered and condemned as unfit for human food and destroyed,

15.—Form 572.

1.-Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

Premises.	Number of Inspections.	Written Notices.
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	65	5
Total	65	5

2.-Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Particulars.	Number of Defects.	
	Found.	Remedied.
Nuisances under the Public Health Acts :		
Want of Cleanliness	5	5
Total	5	5

3.-Home Work.

Nature of Work.	Lists received from Employers.	
Mature of WOIK.	Lists.	Contractors.
Wearing Apparel-Making, &c	2	2
Brush Making	8	8
Yarn Winding	6	6
Total	16	16

4 -Registered Workshops.

Workshops on the Register (3131) at the end of the year.	Number.
	50
Total number of Workshops on Register	50

16.—Factory and Workshops Act.

One workshop has been struck off the register the business having been closed, 5 others have been added to the register on the notification of H.M. Inspector of Factories, viz. :--Costume work 1, Dressmaking 1, Motor work 2, Stone mason 1. The total number of workshops registered are 50. One complaint was received from H.M. Inspector of Factories and this has been attended to. 4 notices were given to remedy defects from want of cleanliness, in each case the work was carried out. 65 inspections have been made, one preliminary notice was served on an occupier to cleanse the workshop. The underground bakehouse in the district is frequently visited, and kept in a satisfactory condition. Lists received of outworkers give the following particulars, viz. :--Brush Drawing 8, Yarn Winding 6, Tailors 2, total 16.

17. - Slaughterhouses.

There are 6 Slaughterhouses in the District, 4 registered and 2 licensed. During the War period and while the slaughter of livestock is under control the 2 licensed slaughterhouses are temporarily closed, slaughtering has been more centralised to facilitate the distribution of meat to the trade. 40 visits of inspection have been made to these premises, and the 4 in occupation are kept in a clean and satisfactory condition.

I beg to thank my Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Handel Jones, for his valuable and tactful help throughout the past five years, and for his figures and facts which are embodied in this report.

Also Mr. Cooper for his summary of the water supply.

Also Nurse Campbell and the Diss Nursing Association for their ready help in the care of Infants, etc., and you, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, for your unvarying courtesy and help to me in my work.

I am,

Your obedient Servant, H. M. SPEIRS.



