

[Report 1920] / Medical Officer of Health, Diss U.D.C.

Contributors

Diss (England). Urban District Council.

Publication/Creation

1920

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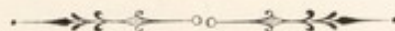


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ANNUAL REPORT
AS TO THE
SANITARY CONDITION
OF THE
URBAN DISTRICT OF DISS
for the Year 1920,

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 **SIXTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT** as your Medical Officer of Health.

1. Population.

1911—3769. Estimated 3739.

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 over-flow 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.

TABLE I.

YEAR.	POPULATION		BIRTHS.				DEATHS.				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
1920	3,739		35	49	84	22.4	26	25	51	13.6	2	8	91.6

4.—Infantile Mortality.

The rate is 91.6, that for England and Wales being 80.

5.—Births.

Total 84. Male 35, Female 49. Rate 22.4 per thousand, that for England and Wales being 25.4.

6.—Deaths.

Total 51. Male 26, Female 25. Rate 13.6 per thousand, that for England and Wales being 12.4.

NOTES ON THE ABOVE FIGURES.

Our birth rate is less than that of the whole country and our death rate is higher. This is not so satisfactory as last year.

Causes of Deaths at all Ages.

TABLE II.

CAUSES OF DEATH AT ALL AGES.	1920.	
	Males.	Females.
ALL CAUSES	26	25
Influenza	1	
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	2	
Other Tuberculosis Diseases...		1
Cancer, malignant disease ...	5	3
Organic Heart Disease ...		7
Bronchitis		4
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	1	
Other Respiratory Diseases...	1	
Nephritis & Bright's Disease		1
Congenital Debility, &c.	6	2
Violence, apart from suicide...	1	
Suicide		1
Other defined Diseases ...	9	6

7.—Rainfall.

Rainfall in 1920

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

Rain Gauge. { Diameter of Funnel 5in.
 { Height of { Above Ground 1ft. 8in.
 { Top { Above Sea Level 108ft.

Month.	Total Depth.	Greatest Fall in 24 hours.		Number of Days with .01 in. / .04 in. or more or more	
	Inches.	Inches.	Date.		
JANUARY ...	1.98	.40	28	2	11
FEBRUARY..	1.66	.25	20	3	4
MARCH	1.02	.73	9	1	9
APRIL.....	3.42	.49	17	3	22
MAY	1.72	.76	20	3	8
JUNE	2.66	.99	13	2	5
JULY	2.55	.30	6	2	13
AUGUST.....	1.53	.61	19	1	8
SEPTEMBER	1.55	.65	16	6	9
OCTOBER ...	.58	.47	1	1	2
NOVEMBER.	.56	.24	14	1	4
DECEMBER.	3.07	.40	11	2	18
TOTAL ...	22.30			27	119

8.—Sanitary Conditions of District.

WATER SUPPLY.

WATERWORKS.—MONTHLY PUMPING RECORDS, 1920.

Month.			Quantity of Water Pumped.	Average Daily Con- sumption.
			Gallons.	Gallons.
January...	...	...	1,055,500	34,048
February	...	...	1,028,000	35,448
March	...	...	1,154,000	37,225
April	...	...	1,095,000	36,500
May	...	...	1,219,000	39,322
June	...	...	1,239,000	41,300
July	...	...	1,181,000	38,096
August	...	...	1,032,500	33,306
September	...	...	1,080,000	36,000
October	...	...	1,316,000	42,451
November	...	...	1,360,000	45,333
December	...	...	1,150,000	37,129

9.—Infectious Diseases.

Again I am able to report almost a clean sheet in this department for 1920. In fact Diss was the only district in Norfolk with a blank return for the last quarter of the year.

There is also no doubt in my mind that this is due in the main to two factors !

1. The scavenging which is now being done so thoroughly and systematically.
2. The rapid reduction of old privy vaults by their conversion to water closets.

I would like to draw the attention of the "burdened ratepayer" to the above, for in my opinion it is a clear case of where they are getting their money's worth.

I append a list of the cases :—

Tuberculosis	.....	.....	.....	3
Scarlet Fever	.....	.....	.....	1
Chicken Pox	.....	.....	.....	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum			.....	1
Anthrax	.....	.....	.....	1

Disinfection has been carried out on two occasions of Infectious Disease. 32 persons have been supplied with disinfectant and instruction given as to its use. Fumigation of rooms has been done in three cases of prolonged illness before re-occupation.

One case of Anthrax occurred during the year. After exhaustive enquiry and investigation it was not possible to locate the occasion or source of contact, it being evidently a case where contact was effected other than in the district.

10.—Maternity and Child Welfare.

I have nothing to add to my remarks of last year. Nurse Campbell reports as follows :—

No. of House visits to Infants ...	.....	445
„ Infants attending Welfare Centre...		24
„ Visits made to Welfare Centre.....		79

11.—Drainage.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE.

There have been no extensions to the existing sewers during the year. Visits from time to time have been made to the Sewage Disposal Works, which at all times was found working satisfactorily. Three connections with new drainage have been made to the sewers during the year.

NEW DRAINAGE.

Four new drains have been constructed, with the necessary inspection chambers and proper provision of means for efficient ventilation. Sixteen old drains have been reconstructed and provided with shafts for proper ventilation. Three drains found to be constructed of unglazed pipes, without socket joints, have been abolished and replaced with new drains of modern materials. One drain has been reconstructed with extensions.

Summary :—

Connections to Sewers .....	.....	3
New Drains .....	.....	4
Old Drains condemned .....	.....	3
Reconstructed Drains .....	.....	16
Extended Drains .....	.....	1

32 New W.C.'s have been fixed on 26 Premises, serving 33 Houses and 3 business premises.

I herewith give Schedule of Accommodation :—

Conversion of Privies.		Year :	
		1919.	1920.
Privies :			
Fixed to Removable Receptacles	28	18	
„ With fixed Receptacles to fresh water W.C.'s	24	16	
„ With fixed Receptacles to waste water W.C.'s	2	16	
„ With movable Receptacles to fresh water W.C.'s ...	Nil.	Nil.	
„ With movable Receptacles to waste water W.C.'s...	Nil.	Nil.	
Statistics for the District. Closet Accommodation.			
No. of Privies : Fixed Receptacles	No. not known.		
„ „ Movable Receptacles.....	54	70	
No. of fresh water W.C.'s	194	210	
„ waste water W.C.'s	29	45	
Total No. of Water W.C.'s .....	...	255	
„ „ „ „ including Houses, Factories and Schools.....	...	285	

31 Privy-vault type Closets have been abolished during the year.

12.—Scavenging.

This work is done under contract. The Contract provides for the emptying, removal, and disposal of the contents of privy closets, privy pails, and dust bins (of the fixed and removable type), and refuse. The contract terminates 31st March, 1922, unless notice is given for earlier termination.

The routine of Scavenging the district by weekly emptying of Privy-Closet Pails is as follows :—

MONDAY.—Croft Lane, Denmark Street, Fair Green, Frenze Road, Heywood Road, Mount Street, Shelfanger Road, Stanley Road, Sunnyside, Walcot Road, St. Nicholas Street.

TUESDAY.—Chapel Street, Church Street, Victoria Road, Mission Road, Rose Lane, Tavern Lane, Vince's Lane, Gas-House Lane, Waveney Road, Mill Drive.

The routine of Scavenging the district by the weekly collection of House Refuse is as follows :—

MONDAY AND TUESDAY.—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.

WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY.—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.

Particulars of the work for the year are as follows :—

No. of Privy Pails emptied weekly	.....	70
„ Dust Bins „ „	.....	200
„ „ „ „ fixed type	.....	99
„ Loads of Dry Refuse removed	.....	159
„ Privy Vaults, fixed type, emptied.....	.....	140
„ Loads of Excreta removed ...	.....	170
„ Cesspools emptied ...	.....	2
„ Loads of Sewage removed ...	.....	4

INSPECTIONS.

During the year 1920 582 visits of Inspection have been made, viz. :—

Abatement of Nuisances...	.....	.....	59
New Drainage ...	.....	.....	173
Housing Inspections	.....	.....	102
Factory and Workshops ...	.....	.....	71
Dairies and Cowsheds	.....	.....	62
Slaughterhouses	.....	.....	51
Miscellaneous.....	.....	.....	64
Total			582

ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES.

Nuisances have been abated on 15 Premises, 5 Statutory Notices have been served, 3 have been complied with, and the work of reconstruction is now in hand for the abatement of the two outstanding.

Summary :—Unabated at 1st January, 1920	.....	1
Nuisances found on Inspection	.....	15
Total		16
Number abated ...	.....	14
„ unabated to 1st January, 1921	.....	2
Total		16

Eight formal Notices were served, the other Nuisances being abated upon request by letter. Two complaints of Nuisances were received and investigated during the year.

13.—Food.

MILK AND MILK SUPPLY.

The Milk supply of the district is adequate. The Council retain the powers late held by the Local Food Committee and conferred by the Local Authorities (Milk) Order, 1920, made by the Minister of Health, to maintain supplies and distribution should occasion arise. The quantity of milk distributed in the district weekly is approximately 650 gallons.

MEAT.

The shops of the Meat Purveyors are periodically visited and found kept in a very clean and wholesome condition, the Owners at all times being willing to do any work required to improve the premises. The greater consumption of Meat in the district is of Home-killed, and the standard of the district is generally good quality. During the year several Salesmen from outside the district have taken stalls in the weekly market for the sale of Imported Meat, these are frequently visited and inspected.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

Sixty-two visits of inspection have been made to these premises. The Dairies are kept clean and the premises in a satisfactory condition. There are eleven persons registered in the district as follows:—

Cowkeeper, Dairyman and Purveyor of Milk	4
Purveyor of Milk	7
	—
Total	11

Two persons have been registered as Dairy-men, Cowkeepers and Purveyors of Milk during the year, and one Registration as Cowkeeper, Dairyman and Purveyor of Milk has been cancelled upon the person discontinuing the business.

MILK (MOTHERS AND CHILDREN) ORDER, 1918.

Under the Order grants of one pint of Milk daily for a period of two months have been made in necessitous cases as follows :—

Nursing Mother	.....	.....	.....	1
Young Children	.....	.....	.....	3
				—
			Total	4

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

There are five Slaughterhouses in the district, four registered and one licensed ; one licensed Slaughterhouse having been discontinued for the purposes of the trade during the year. Three of the Slaughterhouses are in regular use and two only occasionally. 51 visits of inspection have been made to these premises, and all are kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

Structural renovation and improvements have been carried out during the year as follows :—

Cutting out and rebuilding defective outside walls ; repairs to defective roofs ; renewing of cement rendering on inside walls.

FISH AND CHIP-POTATO FRYING.

There are three premises where this business is carried on, and one Van Stall which visits various parts of the district each week. Visits are made to these premises from time to time, and they are found kept in a clean condition. During the year your Inspector advised one of the Owners on the fixing of a new boiler and frying apparatus, which since being fixed has worked satisfactorily. The four Fishmongers' premises are kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

BAKEHOUSES.

There are eight Bakehouses in the district including one underground Bakehouse, they are kept in a clean and satisfactory condition.

During the year the town water supply has been connected on to one Bakehouse, and various structural repairs have been carried out on the buildings.

14.—Housing Inspection.

102 Visits of Inspection and re-Inspection have been made during the year of Housing under the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, and the Public Health Act, 1875. The number of Houses inspected is as follows:—

Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909	.....	22
Public Health Act, 1875	.....	9
		—
Total		31

Two recommendations for closing orders have been made. In 28 cases the owners have carried out the requirements without the serving of Statutory Notices, there being only one instance where the work is yet to be done, the owner being willing to carry it out, but difficulty being experienced in obtaining the necessary material and skilled labour.

During the year Notices have been partially complied with in respect to 10 houses previously inspected. The work involved and carried out included—New drainage, abolishing Privy Closets and constructing W.C.'s, converting privy-closets of the fixed type to closets with removable receptacles, repair to roofs, and the provision of a proper wash-house.

Inspections :—Up to and including year 1919	.....	306
No. inspected year 1920 ...	.....	31
		—
Total		337

15.—Form 572.

1.—Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspector or Inspector of Nuisances.

Premises.	Number of Inspections.	Written Notices.
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries) ...	71	3
Total... ..	71	3

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

Particulars.	Number of Defects.	
	Found.	Remedied.
Nuisances under the Public Health Acts:—		
Want of Cleanliness... ..	3	3
Total	3	3

3.—Home Work.

Nature of Work.	Lists received from Employers.	
	Lists.	Contractors.
Wearing Apparel—Making, &c.	2	4
Yarn Winding	1	4
Total... ..	3	8

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.

71 Visits of Inspection have been made to Factories and Workshops. The number on the Register is 50, the same number as last year. Three letters were sent to Occupiers requesting lime-washing; in each case the request was complied with. The underground Bakehouse in the district is frequently visited, and kept in a sanitary condition. Three Lists of Out workers have been received, giving eight Contractors, i.e., four yarn-winding and four wearing apparel. The following sanitary improvements have been effected during the year, viz. :—One Factory the construction of a new W.C. with flushing cistern and connected with a new drain to the sewer; construction of new drainage; replacement of a defective stove with a more hygienic and effective means of heating.

One Workshop building considered dangerous has been demolished.

17.—Various.

Three animals improperly kept have been removed.

One insanitary stable has been condemned and demolished, and a new building constructed.

One insanitary storehouse has been demolished and re-constructed.

Fifteen inspections of Caravans have been made, each van was in a clean condition, and there was no case of illness found.

18.—Notes of the Year.

Three dangerous buildings have been demolished.

Three new wash-houses have been built.

Five houses had defective roofs repaired.

One house has been partially new roofed.

Five new glazed-wear sinks have been fixed.

Three new closets with removable receptacles have been built.

Six closets have been provided with new galvanized removable receptacles.

Two new baths have been fixed.

Two samples of water suspected of pollution were taken and submitted for analysis.

Two visits of inspection were made in company with the Members of the General Purposes Committee.

One new urinal has been constructed to licensed premises.

I beg to thank my Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Handel Jones, for his valuable and tactful help throughout the past year; Mr. Cooper for his summary of the water supply; Nurse Campbell for her work in connection with the Infant Welfare Centre, 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.