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RURAL DISTRICT OF EAST STOW. *East*

REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1900.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE EAST STOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

20TH FEBRUARY, 1901.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to you my Fourth Annual Report on the Health of the East Stow Rural District, for the year 1900.

VITAL STATISTICS.

I have estimated the population of the District to the middle of the year 1900 at 6100, and based the following statistics on that estimate.

Birth Rate. The number of Births registered was 139, which gives a Birth Rate of 22.5 per 1000. This is a considerable decrease, being 4.5 per 1000 below that of last year. The average for the previous four years was 28.3 per 1000. The Birth Rate for Stowmarket in 1900 was 21.9 per 1000 and for England and Wales 28.9 per 1000.

Death Rate. There were 89 Deaths registered during the year; 15 occurred in the Workhouse and of these 1 belonged to Stowmarket and 10 to the Thedwastre District, therefore the correct number of Deaths for the East Stow District was 78, giving a Death Rate of 12.7 per 1000; compared with 13.6 per 1000 last year. It is the lowest Death Rate for the last five years.

The average Death Rate for the previous four years was 15.2 per 1000.

The Death Rate for Stowmarket in 1900 was 15.0 per 1000 and the Death Rate of rural England and Wales in 1900 was 17.5 per 1000.

Infant Mortality. There were 12 Deaths of Infants under one year, giving an Infant Mortality of 86 per 1000 Births compared with 121 per 1000 last year.

The average Infant Mortality for the previous four years was 124 per 1000 Births. This Mortality for Stowmarket (1900) was 153 per 1000 and for rural England and Wales in 1900 was 138 per 1000 Births.

Zymotic Death Rate. There were 3 Deaths from the seven principal Zymotic Diseases, giving a Zymotic Death Rate of 0.4 per 1000. This Death Rate is the same as last year's.

For Stowmarket in 1900 it was 1.4 per 1000 and for rural England and Wales 1.5 per 1000.

Other Deaths. There were 21 Deaths from Phthisis compared with 12 last year.

There were 9 Deaths from Bronchial Complaints, 8 from Cancer and 5 from Heart Disease.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year 30 cases of Infectious Diseases were reported, compared with 49 last year and 40 the year before.

The question of the need of an Isolation Hospital for the District is still under discussion.

Scarlet Fever. There were 6 cases of Scarlet Fever reported compared with 13 last year and 22 the year before. These cases were probably in connection with the small outbreak in Stowmarket, as all the patients had been in direct or indirect communication with Scarlet Fever cases in this town. There were no deaths.

Diphtheria. There were 9 cases of Diphtheria reported, compared with 29 last year and 14 the year before. The steady increase of this complaint, noted in my last report as occurring since 1895, has now stopped.

Five of the 9 cases occurred in a cottage at Combs Ford and were associated with a polluted supply of drinking water. One of these cases ended fatally.

The remaining four cases were scattered over the District, and the disease did not spread.

Typhoid Fever. There were 6 cases of Typhoid Fever compared with 2 last year and 3 the year before. Two of the cases were imported, one from London which ended fatally, and one from Felixstowe.

The remaining 4 were Sporadic cases, and one case at least was associated with polluted drinking water.

There were 8 cases of Erysipelas compared with 5 last year and one the year before.

There was one case of Puerperal Fever reported, which ended fatally.



The following details have reference to the Villages in the District.

BUXHALL (Population 424).

There were 4 Deaths compared with 6 in 1899, 5 in 1898, and 2 in 1897.

Of the 4 Deaths one was of an infant under one year, and one was of a person over 65 years of age.

There was one case of Scarlet Fever reported.

The area of this Village is 2523 acres, the soil is mixed and the subsoil clay.

The water supply for domestic purposes is obtained partly from shallow wells and partly from ponds, which are obviously polluted.

COMBS (1183).

There were 17 Deaths compared with 21 in 1899, 15 in 1898 and 14 in 1897.

Of the 17 Deaths 3 were of infants under one year (compared with 8 last year and 3 the year before) and 4 were of persons over 65 years of age.

There were 34 Births compared with 38 in 1899, 44 in 1898 and 36 in 1897.

There were 11 cases of Infectious Disease reported, compared with 12 last year.

The 11 cases include one of Erysipelas, one of Typhoid Fever, 3 of Scarlet Fever and 6 of Diphtheria.

Five of the cases of Diphtheria occurred in one family at Combs Ford where the water used for domestic purposes was obtained from 2 shallow wells in boggy soil.

The water from these wells was analysed and condemned, being largely polluted with organic matter.

The area of this village is 2786 acres, the soil heavy clay, sub-soil clay. This village may be divided into 3 districts, viz :—The Ford, Upper Combs and Moat's Tye.

The Ford at present is supplied with drinking water from polluted shallow wells, and owing to its proximity to Stowmarket might conveniently draw its supply from the Stowmarket Waterworks.

Upper Combs obtains its water supply chiefly from shallow wells in the boulder clay, which are very liable to be polluted with manurial matter.

Moat's Tye gets its water supply chiefly from 2 ponds made by the Council. These ponds are dug in the clay and are supplied by Land drains 3 feet below the surface. One pond is near the "Gardener's Arms," and is capable of holding about 90,000 gallons. The second pond is at the other end of Moat's Tye near the cross roads and is capable of holding 150,000 gallons.

There is also another pond made by the Council near a group of Cottages on the Battisford Road. Scattered groups of Cottages belonging to this village use small ponds which are filled by the ditches and road washings.

CREETING (248).

There were 5 Deaths compared with one in 1899, 4 in 1898 and 5 in 1897.

Two of these Deaths were of persons over 65 years of age.

There were 4 Births compared with 4 last year and 6 the year before.

There were 2 cases of Infectious Disease reported, one of Scarlet Fever and one of Erysipelas.

The area of this village is 1313 acres, the sub-soil stiff clay.

The water was until recently obtained solely from polluted ditches. The Council has now sunk an artesian well into the chalk from which an absolutely pure supply of water is obtained. A wind mill and settling tanks will shortly be provided, settling tanks being necessary owing to the large quantity of iron the water contains.

FINBOROUGH MAGNA & PARVA (506).

There were 4 Deaths compared with 5 in 1899, 5 in 1898 and 8 in 1897.

Two of these Deaths were of persons over 65 years of age and 2 were of young people.

There were 6 Births compared with 2 last year and 6 the year before.

There was one case of Typhoid Fever reported.

The area of Great Finborough is 1641 acres. The soil is principally stiff clay, the sub-soil clay.

This village gets its drinking water almost solely from ponds which are largely polluted with organic matter.

The area of Little Finborough is 367 acres the soil very heavy, sub-soil clay.

The drinking water is obtained from polluted ponds and ditch water.

GIPPING (45).

There were no Deaths compared with 2 last year and none the year before.

There were 2 Births compared with 2 last year and one the year before.

There were no cases of Infectious Disease reported.

The area of this village is 1104 acres. The soil heavy, sub-soil clay.

The water for drinking purposes is chiefly obtained from polluted ponds. There are one or two shallow wells which are also polluted.

HARLESTON (78).

There was one Death (of a person over 65 years age) compared with 1 last year and 1 the year before.

There were 2 Births compared with none last year and 3 the year before.

There were no cases of Infectious Disease reported.

The area of this village is 615 acres, the soil loam, sub-soil clay.

The drinking water is chiefly taken from polluted ponds.

HAUGHLEY (859).

There were 19 Deaths compared with 13 in 1899, 12 in 1898 and 15 in 1897.

One of these Deaths was of an infant under one year and 8 were of persons over 65 years of age.

There were 17 Births compared with 20 in 1899, 29 in 1898 and 15 in 1897.

There were 3 cases of Infectious Disease, one of Erysipelas, one of Puerperal Fever and one of Diphtheria.

The area of this village is 2485 acres, the soil is mixed, the sub-soil clay and gravel.

The water supply is chiefly obtained from a public well in the main street which gives a fairly good water for a shallow well but is of course liable at any time to pollution.

There are several private shallow wells in the village and the scattered cottages obtain their supply from ponds and ditch water.

OLD NEWTON (672).

There were 5 Deaths compared with 9 last year, 16 in 1898, and 15 in 1897.

Four of these Deaths were of infants under one year and the fifth was of a person aged 32.

Last year and the year before this Village was 2nd on the list for Infant Mortality, this year it heads the list with one third of the total for the whole District.

There were 17 Births compared with 19 in 1899, 21 in 1898 and 16 in 1897.

There were 2 cases of Infectious Disease reported, one of Erysipelas and one of Diphtheria.

The area of this village is 2348 acres, the soil and sub-soil heavy clay.

This village is very scattered and straggling and the water supply is obtained from one artesian well and several ponds. The artesian well is situated near the "Shoulder of Mutton" Inn, and supplies one of the best waters in Suffolk, but is looked upon with grave suspicion by some of those who have been in the habit of using pond or ditch water all their lives.

There are also ponds made by the Council, one on Ward Green near a group of cottages and capable of holding about 45,000 gallons. There is another on the Newton Hall Road capable of holding about 33,000 gallons. Further on in Brown Street there is another capable of holding about 60,000 gallons, and a fourth on the road near the Chapel capable of holding about 30,000 gallons.

All these ponds made by the Council are properly protected from surface pollution and are supplied by sub-soil drainage as in those at Combs.

Beside these there are several private shallow wells, all liable to pollution.

ONEHOUSE (208).

There were 2 Deaths compared with 5 in 1899, none in 1898 and 2 in 1897.

One of these Deaths was of an infant under one year.

There were 3 cases of Infectious Diseases reported. Two of Erysipelas and one of Typhoid Fever.

The area of this village is 898 acres, the soil is of a mixed kind clay and loam, sub-soil heavy.

The water supply is obtained from shallow wells in the boulder clay.

SHELLAND (90).

There was one Death compared with none in 1899, one in 1898 and one in 1897.

This Death was of a person over 65 years of age.

There were no Cases of Infectious Disease reported.

The area of this village is 540 acres, the soil is mixed clay and sand.

The water supply is obtained chiefly from a brick well 25 ft. deep which is supplied by drainage from the green through pipes in the sub-soil.

WETHERDEN (452),

There were 6 Deaths compared with 6 in 1899, 14 in 1898, and 5 in 1897.

Only one Death was of a person over 65 years of age.

There was one case of Typhoid Fever reported. This case was imported from London and ended fatally.

The area of this village is 1830 acres, the soil mixed loam, sand and clay, the sub-soil gravel, sand and clay.

The water supply is obtained chiefly from shallow wells and ponds all of which are liable to pollution. The Council has made a pond on the road near Base Green capable of holding about 67,000 gallons.

STOWUPLAND (1250).

There were 10 Deaths compared with 11 in 1899, 20 in 1898, and 17 in 1897.

One of these was of an infant under one year, and 3 were of persons over 65 years of age.

There were 31 Births compared with 35 in 1899, 38 in 1898, and 49 in 1897.

There were 6 cases of Infectious Disease reported, one of Scarlet Fever, 2 of Erysipelas, one of Diphtheria, and 2 of Typhoid Fever (one of which was imported from Felixstowe).

The area of this village is 2840 acres, the soil is heavy, sub-soil clay.

The water supply is chiefly obtained from the Council's ponds, there being also some private shallow wells.

This village can be conveniently divided into two parts, viz:—the lower or urban part which is partly supplied with water from the Stowmarket Waterworks and partly by shallow and very polluted wells. The upper part, or village proper, is very scattered, the majority of the cottages are situated round the green which is very extensive. On this green are 3 ponds made by the Council with pumps in connection with them placed near groups of cottages.

One of these ponds is near Poole's farm with 2 pumps in connection with it, and capable of holding 273,000 gallons. The second is at the further end of the green on Back Road with one pump and capable of holding about 150,000 gallons. The third is near the Crown Farm on the Main Road with 2 pumps and capable of holding about 105,000 gallons.

Further along the Back Road and near a group of cottages is another of the Council's ponds, holding about 45,000 gallons.

Some distance along the Main Road is another pond capable of holding about 70,000 gallons connected with a pump to supply a group of cottages in Saxham Street.

In Mill Street there is another of these ponds close to a group of cottages capable of holding about 90,000 gallons.

UNION WORKHOUSE.

There were 15 Deaths compared with 19 in 1899, and 20 in 1898.

One of these belonged to Stowmarket, 10 to the Thedwastre District and 4 to the East Stow District.

Nine of these Deaths were of persons over 65 years of age and one was of an infant under one year.

GENERAL WATER SUPPLY.

With regard to the Water Supply of the District the deep wells at Old Newton and Creeping are the only absolutely safe public supplies. The Council's ponds are only a temporary expedient and it is not claimed that they give an absolutely safe supply but they yield an infinitely superior water to that obtained from the filthy ditches and unprotected ponds which they have replaced. But unfortunately in some parts of the District these polluted ditches and ponds are still used owing to the absence of any better supply.

In conclusion I have to acknowledge the willing help I have received from the Sanitary Inspector, and to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council for the considerate manner in which they have always received my suggestions.

I have the honour to remain, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

CHAS. W. LOW, M.B., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

