[Report 1913] / Medical Officer of Health, Grantham R.D.C.

Contributors

Grantham (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1913

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GRANTHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1913.

CHARLES H. D. ROBBS, M.B.

Medical Officer of Health.

GRANTHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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Medical Officer of Health.

Gentlemen,

In accordance with instructions from the Local Government Board, I have the honour to submit my Seventh Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Condition of the Rural District, together with other information dealing with the administration of the various Acts for the maintenance of Public Health.

I submit a brief summary of the Vital Statistics before entering into details.

SUMMARY.

Area of Rural District	85,827 acres.
Rateable Value : Land -	£51,817.
Houses	£67,427.
Population - Census 1911	12,257.
" - Estimated 1913	12,200
Birth Rate per 1,000	20.2
Death Rate per 1,000	14.4
Death Rate of infants under One Year per 1,000	85.4
Number of Illegitimate Births	11 or 4.5 per cent.

The nature and social conditions of the district have been commented upon in former Annual Reports, and the chief occupation of the inhabitants, as formerly, is the pursuit of agriculture. Recent legislation has without doubt brought an improvement in the housing conditions in various parts of the district, and your Council will follow very closely any definite scheme which may be proposed for the improvement of the conditions under which the agricultural labourer lives and works. Your Medical Officer has often thought that it is most desirable that the rural worker should have more opportunities of escaping from his environment, and of taking an interest in affairs which do not affect his daily round of life. The country must be made more interesting, or it will not attract the intelligent class which is so desirable.

It is not without significance that the number of births during 1913, viz,-246, is decidedly lower than any previous record of the last seventeen years, and the mortality return for the year, whilst showing a satisfactory low figure, suggests that the district has an inordinately high number of persons at each extreme of life, and particularly of old people, whilst the vigorous adult is in the minority. If this is so, the problem of a yearly decreasing population becomes a very real one.

The Population, Census 1911, was 12,257. For the year 1913, the population is estimated to be 12,200.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER SUPPLY.

A large number of analyses of water was made by your Medical Officer during the year. An analysis was undertaken of all the wells in the village of Barrowby, and a report thereon was made to a Committee appointed by your Council and a copy of the same report was submitted to the Local Government Board's Secretary. The details of the report need not therefore now be given, but in view of the very great importance which he attaches to the results of this research, your Medical Officer here quotes the last paragraph in the report :

> "I must therefore place on permanent record my opinion that the present water supply of Barrowby is exceedingly bad, that it is a grave menace to the health of the village, and that a Scheme ought without delay to be adopted to supply the parish with wholesome drinking water."

The Committee of your Council gave this report very careful consideration, and discussed two schemes which were submitted to them for supplying the village with a wholesome water supply. The objection to each scheme was the expense, which was held to be prohibitive.

The outcome, therefore, of this report has been that the various owners of property in the parish have done what was possible to remedy any defects which were pointed out, and one well which supplied a considerable number of houses has been closed, and a supply from a pure source substituted. Your Medical Officer intends to make further examinations of wells in the village, and the sinking of an artesian well in the vicinity which is now being accomplished will be of interest to the residents of the parish.

Several examinations of water from wells in other parts of the district have been made, including the water supply of the various newly erected buildings, constructed during the year, and also the supply of houses where cases of infectious disease occurred.

These call for no particular comment.

One sample in the village of Humby was found to be unfit for consumption, but as the buildings in the vicinity could be supplied with a wholesome supply from a well within reasonable distance, no action was considered necessary.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

During the last seven years, action has been taken in several villages to prevent or minimise the pollution of streams. At the present time such pollution occurs principally in the villages of South Witham and Colsterworth, and in the former village particularly it is desirable that a definite drainage scheme should be laid down.

Work done in the year in connection with Drainage and Sewerage, conversion of Closets, and information as to Scavenging will be found in the Sanitary Inspector's report, which is appended at the end of this report, and which also contains a record of Sanitary Inspections made during the year.

SCHOOLS.

During the last few years the Schools in your district have come under the immediate supervision of the School Medical Officer, who is also the County Medical Officer of Health, and the subject of school closure is dealt with in his annual report. Your Medical Officer has had frequent consultations during the year with the County Medical Officer on various matters connected with Schools. The closure of schools during the year has been required in the villages of Welby and Barrowby owing to diphtheria, and in several cases measles, which has been very prevalent in the district, has caused the adoption of the same precaution.

FOOD SUPPLIES.

MILK.

The number of Cowkeepers on the register is the same as last year, viz,-48. Frequent Inspections have been made during the

year. In one case an order was served, and the nuisance complained of was rectified.

OTHER FOODS.

No action, beyond general inspection, has been taken during the year.

HOUSING.

The work done in connection with the Housing and Town Planning Act is always difficult, and the Committee appointed by the Council to receive the reports of the Inspector appointed under the Act have fully realised this. It would be easy in a large district such as the Grantham Rural District to make a list of several hundred cottages where repairs were desirable, and probably a similarly large number of cases of overcrowding. Overcrowding, indeed is inevitable in every cottage containing two bedrooms, where there are more than two adults and, at most, three children. The only possible remedy is to transfer such people to a more commodious dwelling house, and this course is at the present time impossible, since the larger houses either do not exist or are already occupied.

Your Council has taken the important step of erecting 4 cottages in the village of Carlton during the year. In this village there were several cases of overcrowding, and 4 of these families are now much more suitably housed in these new homes. The general plan in the erection of these cottages

has been to make one large sitting room, with a smaller kitchen and larder on the ground floor, and on the first floor are 3 bedrooms. The houses appear to be well built, and of pleasant appearance. One criticism may be made, viz., that the three bedrooms, and in particular the smallest of the three, are of insufficient size. There cannot be any doubt that the inhabitants are much more comfortably housed than formerly.

The financial side of this venture is not without interest, for it appears that the modest rent of 3/- per week asked for will not cover the various expenses in the erection and maintenance of the buildings, so that probably there will be a charge on the District until the time, 80 years hence, when the houses become the full property of the Council. There is therefore very little inducement for a public body and still less for individual enterprise to erect new houses in the district.

The Inspections carried out during the year are tabulated as follows:-

Numberof houses inspected during the year: About 200, of which 87 were reported on to the Committee;

Number found to be unfit for habitation : 12;

Number of representations made with a view to Closing Orders : 12;

Number of Closing Orders made : 0;

Number of houses in which defects were remedied without making Closing Orders : 87 (either remedied or in course of being remedied);

General character of defects found : Insufficient accomodation, particularly in bedrooms,
Leaky and defective roofs,
Insufficient size of windows,
General dilapidation.

During the twelve months, 12 new houses were erected in the district, and 5 additions made to existing houses.

The plans for the new buildings were passed by the Council after being found to conform to the Bye-Laws in each case, and supervision over the construction was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The Incidence of Infectious Disease during the year is shown in Table 2, at the end of the report.

During the year 68 notifications were received, including 17 cases of tuberculosis.

There were 24 cases of Diphtheria. Of these, eleven cases occurred during the second quarter of the year in the village of Barrowby, and constitute a small epidemic which, with the

exception of one fatal case, was characterized by excessive mildness of type. In several of these cases the diagnosis could only be made by bacteriological investigation, the actual appearance of the throats of the patients being by no means characteristic of the disease.

A second epidemic of six cases occurred at Welby in the latter part of the year. In this case the disease was of a more serious nature, and one case was fatal. In this outbreak it was found very difficult to properly isolate the patients, and as cases had also occurred at Ropsley and Sapperton, your Medical Officer advised that the Isolation Hospital should be opened. This was done and six cases were admitted, 4 from Welby and one each from Ropsley and Sapperton. The patients were kept in the hospital for three weeks.

The immediate effect of opening the hospital was satisfactory, inasmuch as no fresh cases were notified for six weeks after the date of opening it so far as Welby was concerned, and no fresh cases have since occurred at Ropsley or Sapperton.

There were four cases at Welby in January, 1914, but the village is at the present time (March, 1914) free from disease.

SCARLET FEVER.

This disease never occurred in epidemic form. There were 19 cases during the year, 5 of which were in one family at Stainby. In this case the services of a woman were supplied by the Authority, so that the ordinary house duties and nursing

could be carried out during the time whilst the housewife was suffering from this disease. The result was quite satisfactory, and the Authority was in this way, at small expense, able to supply the only alternative to the opening of the Isolation Hospital.

Your Medical Officer has advised the procedure of supplying a capable woman as nurse, in two cases with quite satisfactory results, and he considers that in certain cases, when there is no reasonable fear of a spread of infection to other houses, it is the best course to adopt.

Your Authority has now applied to adopt Paragraph 67 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, which, when adopted, will enable this course to be taken, without having to obtain the subsequent sanction of the Local Government Board for the necessary expenditure incurred.

There were no fatal cases of Scarlet Fever during the year. Your Medical Officer made some remarks in his report for 1910 on the mortality of this disease, which at that time was represented by two deaths in 132 cases which had been notified during the four years he had held office.

During the last 3 years, 53 further cases have been notified, without any fatal case, so that in 7 years 185 notifications of Scarlet Fever have been received, of which only two have proved fatal.

When it is borne in mind that all the cases have been nursed at their own homes, and in many cases under conditions the reverse of hygienic, it must be allowed that scarlet fever is not at the present time such a formidable disease as it was, say, forty years ago. It must not, however, be forgotten that dangerous sequelae may follow scarlet fever. Your Medical Officer has no means of ascertaining the extent of illness following scarlet fever in the district, but believes that it is quite small.

ENTERIC FEVER.

Three cases of Enteric or Typhoid fever occurred during the year in the parish of Heydour. Exhaustive examination failed to reveal the source of the disease. The cases were very severe, and two had a fatal termination, the third recovering after a long illness.

The methods adopted in the case of notifiable disease have been outlined in previous reports.

During the year there has been an increased tendency to utilise bacteriological aids to diagnosis, in the case of diphtheria. The use of antitoxin in this disease has been general, and the importance which medical practitioners attach to this treatment may be guaged by the fact that almost invariably, and often at considerable inconvenience, they will make a second journey on the same day on which they have diagnosed a case, for the purpose of injecting serum.

Arrangements for isolation and disinfection are unaltered. Your Medical Officer would like to have a steam disinfecting apparatus in use in the district, for he knows of no other methods by which perishable articles can be guaranteed to be free from infection.

Of non-notifiable infectious diseases, measles has been very prevalent in various parts of the district, and two deaths were attributed to it. There were also three deaths from whooping cough, whilst influenza was the cause of six deaths, all in elderly people.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Under the new Regulations of December, 1912, all forms of tuberculosis, i.e., not only "consumption" but cases of this disease occurring in other parts of the body besides the lungs, are now notifiable, and the number so notified is recorded in Table 2.

There were 12 cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, and five of other forms of the disease.

The treatment of Tuberculosis is being largely modified by the National Insurance Act, but so far as your district is concerned the full benefits promised by the Act are not yet fulfilled. A whole time Tuberculosis Officer has not at present been appointed, and there is no county Sanatorium or Dispensary. Insured persons suffering from this disease have, however, the

great advantage of a weekly grant in kind, by which suitable food is given to them.

Each of the cases notified, with one exception, has been visited, and printed advice given with regard to precautions which should be observed in the cases of pulmonary tuberculosis.

Subsequent visits have been paid on a few occasions. No general examination of other members of the household has been made. Your Medical Officer has considered that such a procedure would be in the province of the Tuberculosis Officer when appointed.

In a few cases the premises have been disinfected after the death of a person suffering from Tuberculosis.

The number of deaths from Tuberculosis during the year was 11, five being cases of phthisis, one of tuberculous meningitis, and five of other Tuberculous diseases.

INVESTIGATION OF OTHER DISEASES.

No unusual diseases, requiring especial investigation have occurred during the year. Your district has been again fortunate in having a low mortality of infants under the age of one year, and only one death was recorded from gastritis, infantile diarrhoea not having caused any deaths.

Definite evidence as to the extent of syphitis and gonorrhoea is not available, but from inquiries of practitioners in the district your Medical Officer is of opinion that neither disease is common. There are no local facilities for the modern diagnosis of the former of these diseases. Ophthalmia neonatorum having become a notifiable disease on April 1st., 1914, it is hoped that any cases which may occur will immediately come under treatment.

Your district did not adopt the Notification of Births Act, 1907, and since the infantile mortality during the last seven years has always been satisfactorily low, the Act is probably not required in the district. It may be mentioned that there are several excellent qualified nurses engaged in the district, who have doubtless a large share in maintaining infant mortality at a low figure.

VITAL STATISTICS.

These are shown on Table I. It has already been pointed out that the Birth Rate--20.2--is the lowest recorded for the 17 years of which your Medical Officer has the data.

The deaths have been considerably increased by 24 transferable deaths which have to be added, against 2 only which are deducted.

The inward transfers relate chiefly to people who have died in the Grantham Union Workhouse.

The actual causes of death are to be found in Tables 3 and 4.

It may be noticed that 86, or approximately half the deaths, occurred in people over the age of 65.

Cancer was the cause of 25 deaths, a larger number than usual. The deaths referable to infectious disease have been already alluded to, and the other causes of death call for no special comment.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT.

This is carried out by your Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector, each of whom, in conjunction and separately, have made several systematic examinations of the various parts of the district during the year.

The Hospital Accomodation for the District consists of one Isolation Hospital. This would hold sixteen patients suffering from one disease. It could not be used for nursing cases of more than one infectious disease simultaneously.

The Hospital was used on one occasion during the year as detailed under the heading of "Infectious Diseases."

No new local Acts were adopted during the year.

Chemical and bacteriological work, with the exception of the chemical analysis of drinking water, is not carried out by your Sanitary officers.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES H. D. ROBBS.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Gentlemen,

During the year 1913, I have made 250 visits to different parishes in your district.

NEW SEWERS have been laid in Middle Gonerby, Pickworth, Manthorpe, Woolsthorpe-by-Belvoir, South Witham and Barrowby, and Man-holes at Barrowby, Gonerby and Manthorpe.

CESS-POOLS have been emptied at Ropsley, Boothby, Denton, Manthorpe, Welby and Skillington.

OUTFALL DITCHES have received attention at Gonerby, Barrowby, Woolsthorpe, Ingoldsby, South Witham, Ropsley, Humby and Ancaster.

CLOSETS.-28 old Privy middens have been done away with at Barrowby, and replaced by 8 pan closets, 2 earth closets, and 18 hand flushed W. C's.

Others have been rectified at Colsterworth.

SCAVENGING.-None has up to the present been done by your Council. In a few instances it might be recommended, e.g., in Middle Gonerby and Barrowby, but on the whole, the area is too large for a general scheme of this kind.

Galvanized moveable ash-bins have been extensively used over the district during the last few years.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

Inspections were made of premises in 107 instances.

Defects or nuisances occurred in 40 cases, in all of which official notices were served, and in every case the nuisance complained of has been abated, or is now in hand.

The chief nuisances were faulty drains, or premises kept in such a state as to be injurious to health.

WORKSHOPS.-There are 78 workshops on the register, including bakehouses.

50 visits were made during the year.

Orders were served in the case of 3 bakehouses for cleaning and general repairs to be undertaken.

Yours faithfully,

H. C. RUDKIN.

TABLE 1.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1913 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Name of District :- GRANTHAM RURAL.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths registered in the - - District.		Transferable Deaths.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.			
								Under 1 year of age.		At all ages.	
		No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.	Non-Residents.	Residents.	No.	Rate per 1,000 net Births.	No.	Rate.
1908	12550	281	22.4	177	14.1			27	106		
1909	12575	292	23.22	167	13.6			32	109.8		
1910	12540	260	20.75	136	10.8			24	92.3		
1911	12257	274	22.35	148	12.07	2	13	25	91.2	159	12.7
1912	12250	277	22.6	140	11.4	3	14	26	93.8	151	12.3
1913	12200	246	20.2	154.	12.4	2	24	21	85.4	176	14.4

Area of District in acres, land and inland water) 85,827.

Total Population at all ages - 12,257.

Number of Inhabited Houses -

Average Number of Persons per house -

TABLE II.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING 1913.

Name of District:-GRANTHAM RURAL.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	At all ages.	NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED. 1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwds.	Total cases removed to Hospital.
Diphtheria	24	1	15	5	2	1	-	3
Erysipelas	5	-	-	-	2	3	-	-
Scarlet Fever	19	8	9	1	1	-	-	-
Enteric Fever	3	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	12	1	-	1	7	2	1	-
Other forms of Tuberculosis	5	-	2	2	1	-	-	-
TOTALS	68	10	26	12	13	6	1	3

Isolation Hospital:-

Whalebone Lane, Grantham.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1913.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the district.								
	All ages.	Under 1 year	1 to 2	2 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and up.
All Causes-Certified	176	21	5	3	8	5	14	34	86
Enteric Fever	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Measles	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Diphtheria and Croup	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Influenza	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	5	-	-	-	-	1	1	3	-
Tuberculous Meningitis	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other " Diseases	5	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	1
Cancer, malignant disease	25	-	-	-	-	-	3	8	14
Organic Heart Disease	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
Bronchitis	13	3	2	-	1	-	-	1	6
Pneumonia (all forms)	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Other diseases of respiratory organs	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Alcoholism	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and Parturition	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Congenital Debility and Malformation, including Premature Birth	7	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide	4	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	1
Suicide	3	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-
Other defined diseases	26	7	-	1	-	1	1	9	7
Diseases ill-defined or unknown	4	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	-
Old Age	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
Cerebral Haemorrage	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	10
Totals	176	21	5	3	8	5	14	34	86

Deaths in Institutions:-Nil.

T A B L E IV.

1913.-Nett Deaths from stated causes at various ages under One Year.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under one week	1 to 2 wks	2 to 3 wks	3 to 4 wks	Total under four weeks	1 to 3 ms	3 to 6 ms	6 to 9 ms	9 to 12 ms	Total deaths under 1 year.
All Causes:-										
Certified	5	4	1	1	11	2	2	2	4	21
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	1	1
Tuberculous Meningitis	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	1	1
Convulsions	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	3
Bronchitis	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	-	3
Pneumonia (all forms)	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	1	1
Diarrhoea	-	-	-	-	0	-	1	-	-	1
Gastritis	-	-	-	-	0	1	-	-	-	1
Injury at Birth	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Premature Birth	4	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	5
Atrophy, Debility & Marasmus	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Other Causes	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Totals	5	4	1	1	11	2	2	2	4	21

Nett Births in the Year :		Nett Deaths in the Year :	
Legitimate	235	Legitimate Infants	17
Illegitimate	11	Illegitimate Infants	4