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Contributors

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Sanitary Condition

OF THE

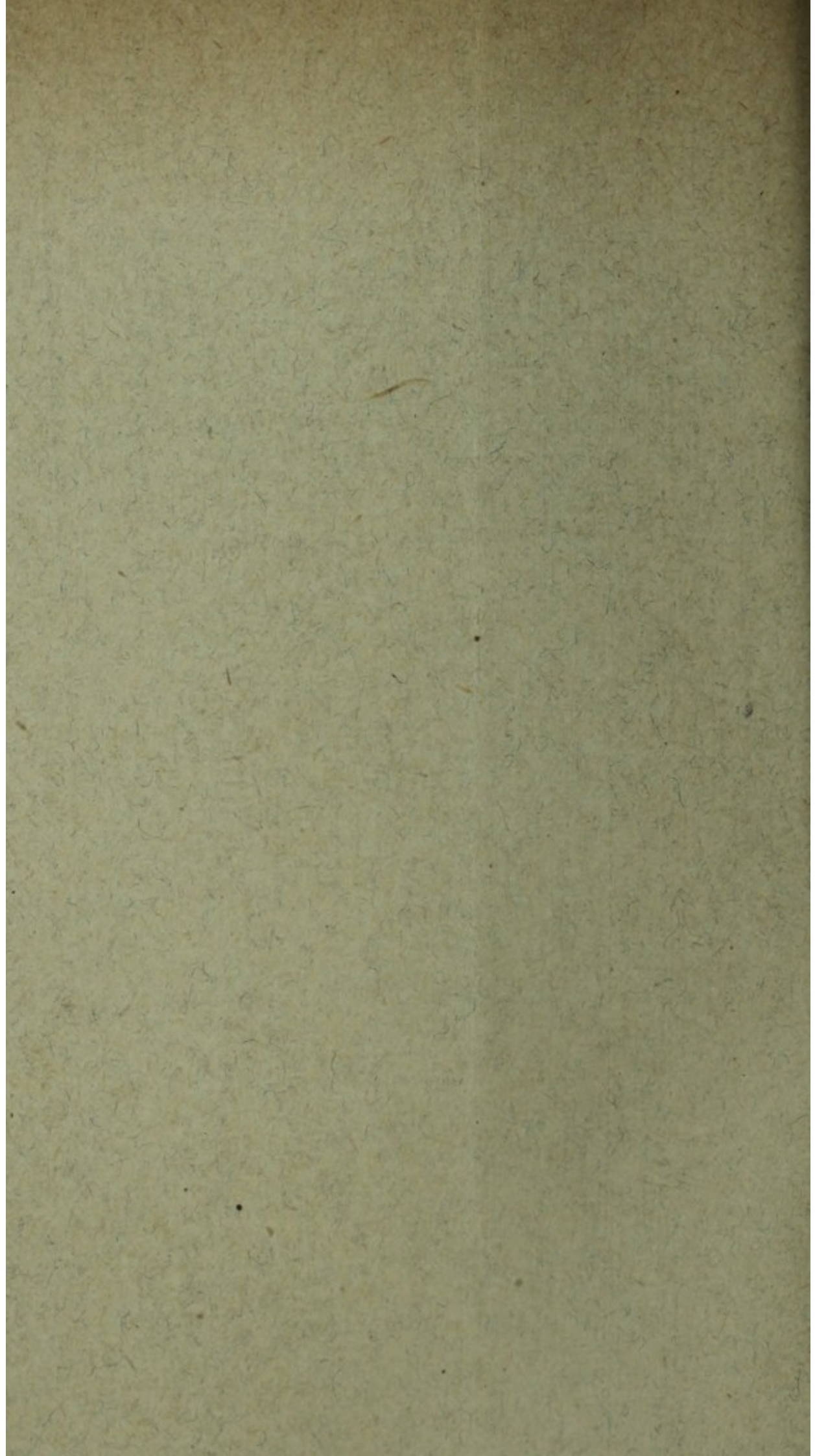
Hartismere Rural District

FOR THE

Year ending DECEMBER 31st, 1915.

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MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

To the Rural District Council of Hartismere.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to present my annual report of the sanitary state of your district for the year 1915, and in doing so, it is not my intention to report at any length on certain subjects which are fully dealt with in previous reports, the circumstances of which are unchanged, and concerning which no recommendations for immediate or future action are suggested.

The district comprises the following parishes:—

Aspall	Rickingham Superior
Bacton	Rishangles
Botesdale	Stoke Ash
Braiseworth	Stuston
Brome	Thorndon
Burgate	Thornham Magna
Cotton	Thornham Parva
Finningham	Thwaite
Gislingham	Thrandeston
Mellis	Westhorpe
Mendlesham.	Wetherinsett-cum-Brockford
Oakley	Wickham Skeith
Occold	Wortham
Palgrave	Wyverstone
Redgrave	Yaxley
Redlingfield	

containing in 1911 a population of 11,486; estimated for 1915 as 10,982.

Water Supply.—The water supply of the district is still in many instances not all that is desirable, but shows steady improvement. Care is taken in all new houses to obtain a wholesome and sufficient supply, but in the case of old houses practically no action can be taken, as in most cases it is impracticable to provide a supply within the cost prescribed by the Public Health (Water) Act, 1878.

During the year I made analyses of 7 specimens of drinking water, of which 5 are of satisfactory quality, 1 may be characterised as of

doubtful quality, while 1 was unfit for drinking and domestic uses. With regard to the latter the necessary steps have been taken to remedy the faults complained of.

The public supplies of water in the district have been kept under supervision; 29 wells and pumps have been cleansed or repaired during the year, and 4 ponds have been cleansed.

Nuisance Removal and Systematic Inspection.—Nuisances are dealt with by the constant and systematic inspection of the district by the Sanitary Inspector. Many are removed at his request, verbally; in others, after report to your Council, a formal notice is served, and this rarely fails to produce a remedy, and only in one or two cases each year are legal proceedings found to be necessary. In the more difficult cases in which the remedy is not obvious, or in which the owner or occupier disputes the necessity of complying with the Inspector's requirements, inspection is also made by the Medical Officer of Health, and in this way both officers keep themselves constantly informed of the sanitary state of the district. Many of the nuisances reported and remedied are found to recur; in fact, it appears that some occupiers never take any steps for the removal of refuse, or for the emptying of middens, or for unstopping blocked drains, until they are reminded of the omission by your Sanitary Officers. The extent and character of the work done during the year is thus summarised in the Sanitary Inspector's report:—

- 151 Statutory and
- 156 Verbal notices have been given for
sanitary improvements.
- 25 Privies repaired and cleansed.
- 4 Converted into pail closets.
- 1 New pail closet built.
- 1 New pail provided for old closet.
- 5 Houses provided with new drainage.
- 21 House drains repaired and trapped.
- 6 Gutters and cesspools filled up.
- 1 urinal provided.
- 1 urinal repaired.
- 8 Dead wells emptied and cleansed.
- 13 Foul ditches cleansed.
- 21 Accumulations of manure removed.
- 8 Dead wells cleansed.
- 3 Shelters repaired.
- 3 Premises cleansed.

- 10 Cases of overcrowding abated.
- 5 Cases of swine improperly kept removed.
- 33 Houses fumigated and cleansed after infectious diseases.
- 3 Dustbins cleansed.
- 20 Quarters of wheat condemned.
- 3 Gipsy vans removed (insufficient sanitary convenience).
- 5 Licences to sell petrol granted.
- 55 yards of 4in. socket pipe put down at Mellis.

The sewage tanks at Mendlesham and Palgrave have been cleansed periodically, and the ditches leading from them kept in order, and the sewage pump at Mendlesham has been repaired.

The sewage works in Palgrave, belonging to the Diss Urban Council, have been periodically inspected.

Milk Supply (Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk-shops Order, 1885).—The milk supply of the district is entirely in the hands of farmers, and no milk is imported; on the other hand, milk is sent away from the district to London and other towns. All such dairies, etc., which come under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk Shops Order, 1885, are registered. There are 8 premises thus registered at the present time, all of which have been regularly inspected and have been found to be fairly well kept. There are no by-laws in existence for the management of these registered premises, your Council being of opinion that such bye-laws are unnecessary in this district. In several instances sanitary improvements have been satisfactorily carried out.

In addition to these registered premises, milk is sold at many farmhouses to workmen on the farm and to near neighbours. Milk shops, apart from dairies, do not exist in the district, the milk being retailed directly by the farmer.

There is no special action taken to ascertain by inoculation or otherwise the existence or non-existence of tuberculosis in cattle.

Foods.—With regard to foods, there is no reason to believe that any foods of an unsound character are exposed for sale in the district, and the places in which foods are prepared, stored, or exposed for sale, are only subjected to the same systematic inspection as the other houses of the district, with the exception that

the bakehouses are specially inspected, and their periodical cleansing and limewashing secured. The supply of meat in the district is to a large extent from the adjacent towns, there being only three slaughter-houses for cattle in the district. These have been regularly inspected and are kept in a cleanly state. Samples of various foods, milk, etc., exposed for sale are from time to time taken by the police, by direction of the East Suffolk County Council, under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts.

Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909.—The Sanitary Inspector has, during the past year, inspected 541 dwellings under the above-named Act, in addition to visiting those previously reported. Of this number 76 were specially reported to your Council as in need of repair. Appended to this report is a table (Table VII.) showing for each parish the work done under this Act. The numbers for the entire district are:—

Houses inspected	541
Reported as defective	113
Repaired after report (this includes some reported in previous years)	76
Closing orders made	7
Repaired after previous closing order	1
Closed	4

It is impossible to carry out the Act in its entirety, and especially to enforce the Closure of Houses which are unfit for habitation, or to effectually deal with overcrowding. I am of opinion that the provision of cottages suitable for large families is an urgent necessity in the district.

In connection with this Act the Inspector has given (during the year 1915) 147 statutory and 33 verbal notices, with the result that:—

- 3 New privies have been built.
- 18 Repaired and cleansed.
- 3 Converted into pail closets.
- 3 New pail closets provided.
- 4 Houses provided with drainage to obviate dampness.
- 3 House drains repaired and trapped.
- 6 Cesspools or gutters filled up.
- 1 Well brickwork repaired and new frame provided.
- 1 Pail provided for old closet.

These figures relate only to the work done under the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, and are in addition to the figures given as the result of the ordinary systematic inspection of the district.

The stimulus which has been given to the repair and improvement of houses as a consequence of the house-to-house inspection carried out under the Housing and Town Planning Act cannot fail to be beneficial to the health of the district.

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901 (Table VI.).
—The Register of Factories and Workshops contains this year 125 entries, which may be classified as follows:—

Factories—20	{	Steam and windmills for grinding corn, etc....	19
		Sewage farm	1
Workshops—105	{	Smiths	29
		Carpenters	7
		Wheelwrights	6
		Wheelwrights and Carpenters	7
		Builders	9
		Builders and Wheelwrights	2
		Plumbers and Painters	3
		Coachbuilders	3
		Brickmaker	1
		Harness Makers	4
		Dressmakers	5
		Bootmakers	4
		Tailors	2
		Basket Makers	2
		Brushmaker	1
		Cycle Repairers	3
		Retail Bakehouses	17
			125

There is no underground bakehouse in the district, nor are there any places registered as workplaces.

These workshops have been regularly inspected, 310 visits having been made during 1915. They are satisfactorily kept, and all the bakehouses have been cleansed and limewashed.

Homework does not appear to exist in the district, hence there is no report to be made under this heading.

Section 22 of the Public Health Act (Amendment) Acts, 1890, is not in force in the district.

Almost all the workshops are small, and only employ two or three workers, and the sanitary arrangements required are left to the discretion of the sanitary officers all the circumstances of the case being taken into consideration. There are no workshops which employ workers of both sexes, except in some retail bakehouses where the wife or daughter of the proprietor superintends or assists in the making of bread.

Acute Infectious Diseases.—The number of cases notified under the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act, 1899 (Table II.), was 41, and included:—

28 Cases of Scarlet Fever.

2 Cases of Diphtheria.

10 Cases of Erysipelas.

1 Case of Cerebro-spinal Meningitis.

Scarlet Fever.—An outbreak of scarlet fever occurred at Wickham Skeith during the months of February and March. Seven cases were notified, and there were probably earlier un-notified cases attending school in an infectious state and so spreading the disease.

Cases also occurred at Bacton, Braiseworth, Finningham, Gislegham, Palgrave, Rickingham, and Westhorpe, and during the month of December a family of eight persons all had the disease at Wyverstone.

Cerebro-spinal Fever.—One case of this disease was reported from Occold, and although the bacteriological report was negative, the disease proved fatal.

Diphtheria.—One case was notified during the month of August at Rickingham and was associated with very unsatisfactory sanitary surroundings. A second case occurred at Thorndon during the month of December, and was probably contracted outside the district.

Of the other infectious diseases, influenza caused seven deaths. Whooping cough prevailed during February and March and December. Measles prevailed during the months of March, July, and August. There was also an outbreak in the parish of Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford about the end of December. Under the provision of the Measles and German Measles Regulations, 1915, this is now a notifiable disease.

Tuberculosis.—The number of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis notified during 1913 was 12, and of other forms of tuberculosis 2. On re-

ceipt of a notification, printed instructions are sent advising disinfection and destruction of sputa, etc., and in case of death or removal the house is fumigated with formaldehyde.

Two cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were treated at the Ipswich Sanatorium.

There were 11 deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis during 1915.

Births (Table I.).—The corrected number of births registered in your district during the year was 250, being at the rate of 22.7 per 1,000 of the population, the rate in former years being:—

1914	22.0
1913	22.3
1912	21.6
1911	21.4
Average of 5 years	22.0

The marked diminution in the birth-rate is partly due to the fact that so many of the younger adults leave the district in search of work, but is also partly due to causes affecting the whole community, as evidenced by the reports of the Registrar-General.

The Notification of Births (Extension) Act, 1915, came into force on the first day of September last, and provides that in the case of every child born within the district it is the duty of the father of the child, if he is actually residing in the house where the birth takes place at the time of its occurrence, and of any person in attendance upon the mother at the time of, or within six hours after the birth, to give notice in writing of the birth to the Medical Officer of Health of the district within 36 hours after the birth.

Fifty-four births were so notified before the end of the year.

Deaths (Table I.).—After correcting the registered number of deaths by the addition of the deaths of residents not registered in the district and the omission of the deaths of non-residents registered in the district, the number of deaths was 162, the death-rate being 14.7 per 1,000. The rates in former years were:—

1914	14.9
1913	12.9
1912	12.2
1911	13.7
Average of 5 years	13.7

Infantile Mortality (Tables I. and IV.).—The number of deaths under one year of age occurring in your district was 18, being at the rate of 72 per 1,000 births registered.

Closure of Public Elementary Schools.—The following schools have been closed on the recommendation of the School Medical Officer:—

Wickham Skeith	... March 1—15	... Influenza
Do.	... March 17—Easter Holidays	... Influenza
Thrandeston	... Feb. 16—Mar. 1	... Influenza Colds
Wyverstone	... Do.	... Do.
Brome and Oakley	... Do.	... Do.
Thornham	... Feb. 5—Mar. 1	... Whooping Cough
Braiseworth	... March 23—Easter Holidays	... Measles
Wortham and Long Green	... July 5—26	... Do.
Wortham and Long Green	... Aug. 3—Summer Holidays	... Do.
Thornham	... July 9—26	... Do.
Palgrave	... July 22—Summer Holidays	... Do.
Gislingham	... July 21—Summer Holidays	... Do.
Do.	... Nov. 24 Xmas Holidays	... Chicken Pox
Wyverstone	... Dec. 15—Xmas Holidays	... Whooping Cough

Legal Proceedings were taken in one case only.

I have to thank the Council and the Sanitary Inspector for the help they have given me during the past year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

HENRY E. BARNES, M.D., M.O.H.

Eye,

February, 1916.