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Contributors

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ISLE OF ELY COUNTY COUNCIL.

Survey Annual Report

of the

Public Health

of the

Administrative County of the

Isle of Ely,

For the Year 1925,

With Summary of Reports of District

Medical Officers of Health,

by

J. PIXTON WALKER, M.D., D.P.H.

LITTLEPORT, ISLE OF ELY:

WM. C. BARBER, PRINTER, VICTORIA STREET.

1926.



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Staff.

County Medical Officer of Health.

JAMES PIXTON WALKER, M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Assistant County Medical Officer of Health.

JOHN YOUNG, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

Health Visitors and School Nurses.

(a)—*Council Officials (whole-time).*

Miss M. S. CHISHOLM (to May 16th, 1925), March.

Miss M. E. CLIFFE (from March 23rd, 1925), Whittlesey.

Miss M. G. E. FYSON (from January 19th, 1925), Littleport.

Miss L. D. GOODWIN, Wisbech.

Miss G. HAWKINS (from June 1st, 1925), March.

Miss H. L. MORRIS, Ely.

Miss A. MORT, Chatteris.

Miss E. T. TAYLOR (to begin February 8th, 1926), Wisbech.

Miss M. WALES (to February 21st, 1925), Whittlesey.

Miss A. WARDLE (from January 26th, 1925), March.

(b)—*Employed by District Nursing Associations (part-time).*

The nurse or nurses at:—

Chatteris (<i>from Feb. 1st, 1925</i>)	March
Gorefield	Outwell
Haddenham	Sutton
Little Downham	Wisbech
Manea	

Home-Teacher and Visitor for the Blind.

J. H. MACKENZIE, M.A.

Clerical Staff.

H. A. HOUSE (Chief Clerk).

A. ANNESS.

LOCAL SANITARY AUTHORITIES.

Urban Districts and Boroughs.	Clerks.	District Medical Officers of Health.
1. Ely	A. K. Campbell, Esq.	.. F. H. M. A. Beckett, B.A., M.B., B.Ch.
2. Chatteris ..	W. F. Moore, Esq. ..	.. R. E. Nix, B.A., M.B., B.Ch.
3. March	C. Greenwood, Esq.	.. F. A. Evison, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
4. Whittlesey ..	F. W. English, Esq.	.. C. H. Harding, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
5. Wisbech ..	F. W. Coulam, Esq.	.. Harry Groom, B.A., M.D., M.R.C.S., L.S.A.
Rural Districts.	Clerks.	District Medical Officers of Health.
1. Ely	F. W. Green, Esq. ..	.. C. W. Howe, M.B., Ch.B., D.T.M., D.P.H.
2. North Witchford	H. P. Sharman, Esq.	.. Cecil E. Stephens, M.D.
3. Thorney	A. F. Whittome, Esq.	.. H. Clapham, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
4. Whittlesey ..	J. W. Bowker, Esq...	.. John J. Waddelow, F.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.S.A.
5. Wisbech ..	R. W. Fairecloth, Esq.	.. C. H. Gunson, M.B., Ch.B.
Port of Wisbech	F. W. Coulam, Esq.	.. G. F. Collins, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Isle of Ely County Council.*

GENTLEMEN,—

I have pleasure in presenting to you the County Health Report for 1925, this being my fourth as your County Medical Officer of Health, and the first of the detailed Survey Reports required at intervals of not more than five years.

When one looks back over old records of the Isle of Ely, one cannot fail to be struck by the remarkable progress made since then in matters of public health; deaths from Tuberculosis, and Zymotic Diseases generally, are only a third of what they were fifty years ago; almost the whole Isle has a pure and copious water supply now, whereas at that time the town of Wisbech was the only district so situated, and deaths from Diarrhœa are only a fifth of what they were. In addition, purer food supplies are now available, Blind and Mentally Defective persons are better cared for, children are better looked after both at the homes and in the Schools, their teeth and minor ailments and many of their Infectious Diseases are treated either gratuitously or at very little cost to themselves, facilities for recreation are greater than before, Old People are cared for by pensions, and Widows with families dependent on them are no longer to be forced to apply to the Guardians for relief; the cycle, the motor, the cinema, and "wireless" facilities have added greatly to the amenities of life in this district, as elsewhere, so that various factors have contributed much to the comfort, happiness, and well-being of its people.

For many of the advantages so enjoyed, the residents of the Isle are indebted to the direct care and forethought of the members of its County Council.

With pleasure do I record once more my appreciation of the great help I receive from the District Medical Officers of Health, from my Staff, and from the other Officials of your Council.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. P. WALKER.

August, 1926.

Administrative County of the Isle of Ely.

The Annual Reports for the year 1925, from the Medical Officers of Health for the Districts within the Administrative County, as submitted to the Isle of Ely County Council, in pursuance of Section 24, of the Local Government Act, 1888, were received as follows :—

	Area.	Medical Officer.	Date Received.	Style.
Urban Districts	Chatteris	Dr. Nix	July 24th, 1926	MS. prior to Printing
	Ely	Dr. Beckett	.. May 19th, 1926	Typewritten
	March	Dr. Evison	Aug. 12th, 1926	MS. prior to Printing
	Whittlesey	Dr. Harding	.. June 11th, 1926	.. Printed
	Wisbech	Dr. H. Groom	.. May 3rd, 1926	.. Printed
Rural Districts	Ely	Dr. Howe	.. May 10th, 1926	.. Printed
	North Witchford ..	Dr. Stephens	.. June 17th, 1926	.. Printed
	Thorney	Dr. Clapham	.. June 19th, 1926	.. Printed
	Whittlesey	Dr. Waddelow	.. May 27th, 1926	.. Printed
	Wisbech	Dr. Gunson	.. July 12th, 1926	Manuscript
	Wisbech Port San. Authority	Dr. Collins	.. July 6th, 1926	Manuscript

As previously pointed out by the Ministry, it is hoped that all reports may be received not later than the end of April. Although "survey reports," some of the reports are regrettably short, and make scanty or no reference to important sanitary matters concerning which ratepayers naturally look to a strong lead from their Medical Officer of Health.

It is well to repeat advice given in previous reports if the matters written about are not receiving due attention.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Below is a statement of the cost of the Isle of Ely County Council's Public Health Services for the year 1925—1926, apart from the cost of the School Medical Service.

	£	s.	d.
Salaries of Medical Officers and Health Visitors	2591	15	10
Tuberculosis (Clinics, Sanatoria)	4441	2	10
Maternity and Child Welfare	746	1	9
Venereal Disease	226	8	2
Mental Deficiency	668	2	3
Welfare of the Blind	201	4	8
Establishment Expenses	99	17	4½
	8974	12	10½
Less amount received from Education Committee for School Medical Service	495	5	4
Nett	£8479	7	6½

	£	s.	d.
Receipts from Grants, &c.—			
Tuberculosis	3146	17	5
Maternity & Child Welfare	636	13	2
Venereal Disease	344	0	0
Mental Deficiency	334	10	0
Welfare of the Blind	117	0	0
Miscellaneous	214	9	7
	£4793	10	2
Net Cost payable from County Funds ...	£3685	17	4½

STATISTICS, 1925.

Area of Administrative County (land & water)... acres	238,073
Rateable Value	£801,510
Reduced Assessable Value	£451,368
Product of a Penny Rate	£1,880 14s. 0d.

Rates in 1925:—General Purposes ... 2s. 10d.

Education 1s. 10½d.

Total 4s. 8½d.

Population (estim. to middle of year)	{ males 38,010 females 38,470 }	76,480
---------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------

No. of Births in the year	{ males 771 females 691 }	{ Legitimate 728 Illegitimate 43 }	{ Legitimate 654 Illegitimate 37 }	1462

Birth-rate per 1,000	19·11
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Total No. of Deaths in the year	...	{ males 529 females 448 }	...	977
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Death-rate per 1,000	12·77
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Number dying under 1 year old	...	{ males 60 females 36 }	...	96
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Infantile Mortality-rate (per 1,000 Births)	65·66
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In males ... 77·82	{ in legitimate males... 82·41 in illegitimate males 209·30 }
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In females... 52·09	{ in legitimate females 50·45 in illegitimate females 81·08 }
---------------------	--

England and Wales—

Birth-rate	...	...	...	...	18·3
Death-rate	...	...	...	...	12·2
Infantile Mortality-rate	...	...	...	...	75

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The Administrative County of the Isle of Ely is one of an irregularly rectangular shape, and is situated to the north of that of Cambridgeshire, its long axis extending from the north in a south-easterly direction for a distance of 27 miles, its greatest width being 17 miles; it covers an area of 238,073 acres, or nearly 372 square miles, rather more than a third of the Great Fenland of England.

Excluding water, its acreage is 236,961.

For the most part the County consists of rich fen land, drained by the Rivers Nene, Ouse, Lark, and Little Ouse, the river banks in many parts forming highways between towns and villages, thus forming the dual purposes of an embankment and a raised highway to maintain a means of communication in wet seasons.

Provision has been made for times of flood by two great washlands, the larger one extending from Earith on the border of Huntingdonshire to Denver Sluice in Norfolk, passing straight across the Isle of Ely for a distance of 13 miles, being nearly half a mile in width for a large part of its course; the smaller wash is situated to the north of Whittlesey, taking surplus water from the River Nene. From the time of the Roman occupation of this Country, if not before, big embankments were raised to keep out the sea, and since the reign of Elizabeth engineers have been at work from time to time making a number of artificial cuts, and raising the banks of the rivers, so that the fen-land which lies below the high-water sea level may not be drowned, water being pumped from the fen-land into the nearest big drain or river by a large number of pumps worked now by steam, but formerly by windmill, power.

Even now, in wet seasons, it is sometimes impossible to proceed from the North to the South of the County except by boat without going outside the County boundaries; similarly, at times one cannot walk from Whittlesey to Thorney except by going round by Peterborough. What was formerly called the Isle of Ely, as distinguished from the County of the Isle of Ely, is an elevated portion of land in the South about seven miles long and four miles broad; it includes not only Ely, but takes in also Chettisham, Haddenham, Little Downham, Mepal, Stretham, Sutton, Thetford, Wentworth, Wilburton, and Witcham, the highest portion of this Island being about 122 feet above Ordnance Datum.

Besides March and Chatteris, there are other slight land elevations, the terminations "ey," or "ea" (both pronounced alike locally), denoting the fact that they were Islands, *e.g.* Eastrea, Manea, Quaney, Stonea, Stuntney, Thorney, and Whittlesey. A bridge was opened during the year 1925 at Guyhirn, shortening the distance from March to Guyhirn by road from $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles to $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

GEOLOGICAL FORMATION.

These Islands, spoken of above, consisting sometimes of Chalky Boulder Clay, as at Ely, purple Boulder Clay, and of fossiliferous gravels, containing relics of the Palæolithic period, cap the Kimmeridge and Oxford Clays, out of which the basin of the Fens has been hollowed, this basin being a shallow bay of the sea coast.

Fen gravel, silt, and mud were then brought into this bay by the tides, the materials deposited being brought principally from the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire lands.

The Oxford Clay is seen at the surface at Whittlesey and Thorney, at the former of which places the clay is much used in brick-making.

The bulk of the great fen district is composed of beds of clay, peat and gravel, being in many places below the high-water level of ordinary tides, and only 5 to 20 feet above mean sea-level.

The lowest Fen Beds are gravels of marine origin.

Peat rests upon the gravel, and as we approach the sea we find interspersed beds of silt or warp, one kind of which has been called "buttery clay."

It is calculated that since the Roman Period in Britain this basin has extended seawards for a distance of 3 miles.

The peat is, perhaps, of an average thickness of six feet, and is said to contain near Ely at least five "buried forests," or horizons, on which stools and trunks of large trees are found. Land formed by the peat can readily be distinguished by its intense blackness, and its flat surface, and by its not containing any hedges or villages. In several places the depth of the peat has been as much as 18 feet.

The "Droves" are peculiar to the peat land. They are merely earth roads, being passable in summer, but in winter they form a spongy mass in which carts sink to their axles.

Sections of the land in different places (Skertchley).

1. At the 70th milestone, between Littleport and Ely.

				ft.	ins.
(a)	Peat	...	...	1	6
(b)	Sandy loam	...	...	0—1	6
(c)	Kimmeridge clay	...	...	16	0
(d)	"Stone floor" (Septaria bed)			1	3
				<hr/> 20	<hr/> 3

2. Brick Kilns, one mile West of Whittlesey.

				ft.	ins.
(a)	Gravel	...	...	10	0
(b)	Oxford clay, seen to	...	...	10	0
				20	0

3. New Brickyard, near Railway, Wisbech.

				ft.	ins.
(a)	Silt...	...	...	1	0
(b)	Clay	...	...	6	0
(c)	Peat	...	...	0	7
(d)	Blue clay	...	...	2	0
(e)	Silt, opened to	...	...	6	0
				15	7

4. White Lion Lane, March.

				ft.	ins.
(a)	Gravel	...	...	6	0
(b)	Clay	...	...	4—5	0
(c)	Kimmeridge clay	...	...	7	0
(d)	Layer of "Clunch Stones"				
	(Septaria)	...	...	0	6
(e)	Blue clay	...	...	14	0
				32	6

THE INHABITANTS OF THE ISLE OF ELY.

The population for the middle of the year 1925 is estimated by the Registrar-General as 76,480.

At the Census of 1921 it was 73,817, an increase of 4,065 over the figures at the 1911 Census, which, in turn, was an increase of 5,257 over the figures at the 1901 Census.

The births during the preceding ten years prior to 1921 had numbered 14,994, and the deaths 9,492, an increase of births over deaths of 5,502 persons, or an average gain of 550 persons per annum.

But the Census of 1921 showed the increase had averaged only 406 persons per annum, a difference of about 144 persons annually.

What had become of the 1,437 missing persons?

It is usual to account for the balance by ascribing the loss to emigration, but although this may in a measure account for some, I think the greater part must be set down to losses during the Great War, as the mortality figures given in Annual Reports applied to civilians only.

As was shown in my Report for 1923, the Census of 1921 revealed many interesting facts relating to the population of the Isle of Ely.

There were then 17,457 private families, the average per unit of population being 3.22.

The population of 73,817 showed 36,478 males to 37,339 females, and that agricultural workers numbered 481 per 1,000 males, the highest proportion of any County in England and Wales, whilst in the Rural Districts of the Isle, its rate was 661 per 1,000 males.

The people generally are said to speak better and purer English than anywhere else in the land, the cause of this being the existence in olden times hereabouts of many monastic institutions, whilst the absence of roads and the presence of floods prevented much intermingling with dwellers in other districts.

Ague and Rheumatism were in old days greatly prevalent, the ordinary type of the former complaint being quotidian. Charles Kingsley, in *Hereward the Wake*, says:—"The foul exhalations of Autumn called up fever and ague, crippling and enervating, and tempting, almost compelling, to that wild and desperate drinking which was the Scandinavian's special sin." And in his *Prose-Idylls—The Fens*, Kingsley remarks that after draining and cultivation of the Fens, "At least we shall have wheat and mutton instead, and no more typhus and ague; and, it is to be hoped, no more brandy drinking and opium eating; and children will live and not die."

The Authors of "*The Fenlands*," writing in 1877 state that "If desperate drinking was the special sin of our Scandinavian forefathers, opium-eating—the most insidious of habits—is the special vice of their descendants in the Fens." They feared too that "it was the labouring class who were most addicted to it."

Nowadays such a thing is unknown, and only 5 cases of malaria have been notified in the past four years, and no case of typhus fever whatever; moreover, of 9,298 deaths occurring in the ten years 1916—1925 inclusive only 25 persons have died from rheumatic fever in the Isle of Ely, so that though the Fen Districts are reputed to be very cold, the small rainfall enjoyed by them does possibly prevent this crippling disease from affecting seriously the health of its inhabitants. In the years 1918 and 1919, the only years for which I have full particulars, whilst 3,031 persons died in England and Wales from rheumatic fever, or a proportion of 2.715 per thousand of the deaths, there were only 2 deaths from it in the Isle of Ely, a proportion of only 1.009 per thousand.

OCCUPATION.

The number of agricultural regular workers employed on agricultural holdings above 1 acre in extent, as returned on June 4th, 1925, amounted to

6030 males 21 years, and over
1611 males under 21 years old
1053 women and girls
—
Total 8694 workers.
—

Casual workers similarly numbered
1426 males 21 years, and over
614 males under 21 years old
2480 women and girls
—
4520
—

Thus the total number of workers in 1925 employed in agriculture in the Isle of Ely amounted to 13,214.

At the 1921 Census there were shown to be 3,134 farmers, 710 farmers' sons, &c., 480 gardeners, 337 farm bailiffs, 8,960 agricultural labourers, 2045 domestic servants, 1156 railway workers, 113 clay, &c., pit workers, 361 makers of brick and pottery, 552 gardeners' labourers, 962 pea and fruit pickers, 130 printers, bookbinders, &c., and 115 agricultural machine drivers, &c., &c.

On the whole, there is not much poverty in the Isle, such as is so often seen elsewhere, and unemployment figures are not high.

Still, as the new Sugar Beet Factory at Ely discharged a large number of hands at one time, it is to be hoped that the new process of sugar manufacture may be successful, so that a whole year's employment may be found there for a small number of workers, rather than a few months' employment for a larger number of hands.

The following details show the disposition of the lands and the number of live stock in the County :—

In 1925 there were 208,632 acres under crops and grass (excluding rough grazings of 890 acres), divided thus :

	acres.
Arable land... ..	164,719
Permanent grass, for hay... ..	12,170
do. not for hay... ..	31,743

The acres were set out as follows:—

Wheat	...	...	...	...	...	46,886
Barley	...	...	...	...	...	18,192
Oats...	...	...	...	...	...	17,653
Mixed corn...	...	...	...	...	...	543
Rye ...	...	...	...	...	...	1,727
Beans	...	...	...	...	...	4,902
Peas	...	...	...	...	...	2,812
Potatoes	...	...	...	...	...	33,667
Turnips and Swedes	...	...	...	...	...	582
Mangolds	...	...	...	...	...	6,518
Cabbage for fodder, Kohl-rabi, and rape						430
Vetches or tares	...	...	...	...	...	603
Lucerne	...	...	...	...	...	302
Small fruit ...	...	...	...	...	...	6,493
Orchards	...	...	...	...	...	5,631
Clover and RTN. Grasses for hay					...	5,609
Clover and RTN. Grasses not for hay					...	917
Other crops	...	...	...	...	...	12,749
Bare fallow...	...	...	...	...	...	1,603

The Isle of Ely had nearly 5,800 acres under sugar beet, the great bulk being in the South, there being a Sugar Factory now at Ely. The better prices ruling for wheat doubtless led farmers to sow as much wheat as possible, 2,164 more acres being sown with wheat than in 1924, whilst 2,400 fewer acres were devoted to the cultivation of oats.

As regards potatoes, 5,026 more acres were planted in 1925 than in the previous year.

Of mustard for seed, there were 2,532 acres under cultivation; 1,991 acres of carrots, also, were grown here, so that mustard for seed in the Isle of Ely amounted to over 11 per cent. of the whole amount grown for England and Wales, whilst carrots amounted to over 24 per cent. The acreage under small fruit constituted 6,493 acres, or 9·4 per cent. of the total for England and Wales.

The Live Stock in the County in 1925 is enumerated in the following Table.

Horses—

For agriculture	...	...	...	11,162
Stallions	...	...	...	92
Others, 1 year and over	...	...	...	2,584
Under 1 year	...	...	...	943
Other horses	...	...	...	1,297
Total horses				<u>16,078</u>

Cattle—

Cows in milk	...	...	...	5,458
Cows in calf	...	...	...	889
Heifers in calf	...	...	...	1,418
Bulls	...	...	...	242
Others, 2 and over	...	...	...	5,881
1 and under 2	...	...	...	5,230
Under 1 year	...	...	...	5,450
Total cattle				<u>24,568</u>

Sheep—

Ewes	...	...	...	2,750
Rams and Ram Lambs	...	...	...	67
Others, 1 and over	...	...	...	3,314
Under 1 year	...	...	...	3,421
Total sheep				<u>9,552</u>

Pigs—

Sows	...	...	...	3,871
Boars	...	...	...	289
Other pigs	...	...	...	34,034
Total pigs				<u>38,194</u>

VITAL STATISTICS.

POPULATIONS.

The estimated populations of the County from 1921 onwards have been 73,642, 74,653, 75,250, 76,070, and 76,480.

BIRTH-RATE.

The numbers of births in the County similarly have been 1,621, 1,572, 1,510, 1,427, and 1,462, with corresponding rates per thousand of 22·01, 21·05, 20·06, 18·75, and 19·11 compared with rates for England and Wales of 22·4, 20·6, 19·7, 18·8, and 18·3.

These figures show a constantly decreasing rate for England and Wales, and also for the Isle of Ely, except in 1925, for the County.

There is no doubt but that contraceptive methods are the main cause of this diminution in the birth-rate. A Birth Control Clinic has been established at the Fitzroy Hall, Wellington Street, Cambridge, and some Isle of Ely residents have attended it.

DEATH-RATES.

The deaths have varied largely with the seasons, from 1921 onwards they numbered 894, 901, 924, 872, and 997 for the year 1925.

The death-rate per 1,000 of population were similarly 12·14, 12·06, 12·27, 11·46, and 12·77 for 1925, compared with the following figures for England and Wales, viz., 12·1, 12·9, 11·6, 12·2, and 12·2 respectively.

It must be remembered that the Isle of Ely figures are **uncorrected** figures, and that when standardised by the factor for correction, (a figure not yet received from the Registrar General, and arrived at after consideration of the figures ascertained at the 1921 Census of the Isle of Ely), these Isle rates would be much lower than those for England and Wales. We have, however, received these figures for several Isle Districts, and the results show that the corrected death-rate for Wisbech Borough is 11·72 (instead of 14·83), and for Ely Rural District 7·82 (instead of 10·58), and for the Wisbech Rural District the correction reduces the death-rate from 11·28 to 10·17 per thousand of population.

INFANTILE DEATH-RATES.

The infantile deaths, from 1921 onwards, have been 131, 95, 96, 84, and 96 respectively, and the rates 85·13, 60·4, 63·57, 58·86, and 65·66 compared with the following figures for England and Wales 83, 77, 69, 75, and 75. Whilst the improvement is great in the County, there is still room for further progress, and it behoves us to continue our efforts in Pre-natal and Maternity and Child Welfare Work to reduce these figures still further.

DEATH FROM ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

The deaths from Enteric Fever from 1921 onwards have been as follows 1, 1, 0, 0, and 1, total 3 in five years.

No deaths have occurred from Smallpox.

The deaths from Measles have been respectively 0, 5, 4, 6, and 1, or 16 in five years.

The deaths from Scarlet Fever have been 5, 1, 0, 1, and 2, or 9 in five years.

The deaths from Whooping Cough have numbered 2, 8, 7, 9, and 16, or 42 in five years.

The deaths from Diphtheria have amounted to 2, 1, 1, 7, and 11 respectively, or 22 in the five years.

The deaths from Influenza have been 17, 40, 22, 40, and 23, or 142 in the five years, or an average of 28·4 deaths per annum. This compares with a total of 329 deaths, in the preceding five-yearly period 1916—1920, or an average of 65·8 deaths per annum, that period including the record year of 1918 when 218 persons died in the Isle from Influenza.

The deaths from Encephalitis Lethargica have numbered 1, 0, 3, 0, and 3, or 7 in the five years.

Meningococcal Meningitis, or Cerebrospinal Meningitis, often called "Spotted Fever," was responsible for 2, 0, 0, 1, and 1 deaths, or a total of 4 in the five years.

DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS.

Deaths from Tuberculosis in 1925 numbered 61, 45 being from Pulmonary Phthisis, or Consumption as it is popularly termed, and 16 from other forms of Tuberculosis.

The deaths from Consumption were 9 more than in the preceding year, whilst the other tubercular deaths were the same in number.

Year	Deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Deaths from Other Forms of Tuberculosis	Total Deaths from Tuberculosis
1912.. ..	65	18	83
1913.. ..	55	16	71
1914.. ..	44	22	66
1915.. ..	52	12	64
1916.. ..	80	16	96
1917.. ..	73	20	93
1918.. ..	62	16	78
1919.. ..	60	14	74
1920.. ..	53	11	64
1921.. ..	59	19	78
1922.. ..	39	16	55
1923.. ..	41	17	58
1924.. ..	36	16	52
Average in pre- ceding 13 years	55	16	71
The year 1925	45	16	61

The number of deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis from 1921—1925 inclusive was 220, and from other forms of Tuberculosis, 84, or a total in the five years of 304, an average of over 60 per annum.

Compared with the preceding five-yearly period, where the numbers were 328 and 77 respectively, giving an average of 81 deaths per annum; this is an improvement of over 20 deaths per annum, almost entirely due, however, to the lessened deaths from Consumption.

DEATHS FROM CANCER.

The deaths from Cancer, or other malignant disease, numbered from 1921 onwards—103, 104, 136, 119 and **126** respectively, or an average of 117 deaths per annum.

Compared with the preceding five-yearly period, this is an increase of three per annum; it may be even be doubted if this can rightly be called an increase considering that the population is now considerably greater than during or just after the War period, for in 1914 the estimate for the population at the mid-year was 71,580, whereas in 1925 the estimated population was 76,480, an increase of 4,900 persons.

Of the total of 977 deaths from all causes, 291 persons were aged 75 years or more, or nearly 30 per cent. had reached that advanced age.

Causes of Death in Administrative Areas, 1925.

CAUSES OF DEATH	URBAN								RURAL								Total for Urban and Rural Districts.		GRAND TOTAL.				
	Chatteris.		Ely.		March.		Whittlesey.		Wisbech.		North.		Thorney.		Whittlesey.					Wisbech.			
	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	M.		F.			
ALL CAUSES	43	26	58	55	71	49	31	38	94	79	68	70	30	39	12	13	32	14	90	65	529	448	977
1. Enteric Fever .. ..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
2. Small Pox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0
3. Measles .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
4. Scarlet Fever .. ..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	1	7	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
5. Whooping Cough .. ..	..	..	1	1	..	..	1	2	1	1	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	16
6. Diphtheria	1	..	..	..	4	1	..	2	3	4	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	11	1	..	..	11
7. Influenza .. ..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3	1	11	12	23
8. Encephalitis Lethargica .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	3	..	3
9. Meningococcal Meningitis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
10. Tuberculosis of Resp'y System	3	..	2	6	1	2	1	3	3	3	3	2	1	4	1	..	1	2	5	2	21	24	45
11. Other Tuberculous Diseases .. ..	..	..	2	2	..	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	8	8	16
12. Cancer, malignant disease	9	2	7	9	5	5	4	6	14	8	12	7	1	7	..	..	3	..	15	12	70	56	126
13. Rheumatic Fever	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	1	2
14. Diabetes .. ..	..	..	..	2	1	1	..	1	..	..	1	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	..	7	6	13
15. Cerebral Haemorrhage, &c.	1	2	5	9	7	2	1	1	5	8	6	8	1	1	..	..	4	1	2	4	32	26	58
16. Heart Disease	3	2	5	..	5	8	4	3	9	9	13	5	..	7	1	4	6	2	10	12	56	61	117
17. Arterio-sclerosis	2	1	..	..	6	..	5	..	2	2	..	7	..	1	1	1	3	1	4	3	23	9	32
18. Bronchitis .. ..	..	3	1	4	4	2	2	1	3	4	5	7	1	2	1	3	5	1	3	4	25	31	56
19. Pneumonia (all forms) .. ..	..	2	1	2	2	3	1	3	4	3	1	3	3	1	3	1	..	..	5	6	22	24	46
20. Other Respiratory Diseases	1	..	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	..	..	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	9	1	9	7	16

[illegible]

Causes of Death at Different Periods of Life in the Administrative County of Isle of Ely in 1925.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Sex.	Aggregate of Urban Districts.									Aggregate of Rural Districts.									
		All Ages.									75 & upwards.									
		0—	1—	2—	5—	15—	25—	45—	65—	75 & upwards	0—	1—	2—	5—	15—	25—	45—	65—	75 & upwards	
ALL CAUSES ..	M.	297	34	6	5	10	18	69	67	82	232	26	3	2	10	6	20	46	54	65
	F.	247	15	5	4	8	32	40	57	76	201	21	2	2	6	2	20	34	46	68
1. Enteric Fever	M.	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2. Small Pox	M.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
3. Measles ..	M.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
	F.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
4. Scarlet Fever	M.	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
5. Whooping Cough	M.	9	6	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
	F.	3	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
6. Diphtheria..	M.	4	..	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
	F.	3	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	1	..	1	..	..	2	1	1
7. Influenza ..	M.	7	..	1	..	1	1	2	1	1	4	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2	1
	F.	8	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	6	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
8. Encephalitis Lethargica	M.	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
9. Meningococcal Meningitis	M.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F.	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	7	2	..	..
10. Tuberculosis of Resp'y System	M.	10	..	..	2	2	3	5	..	..	11	..	..	..	1	1	7	1	..	..
	F.	14	1	..	2	1	8	2	..	..	10	..	..	..	1	1	7	1	..	..
11. Other Tuberculous Diseases	M.	4	..	1	..	2	..	1	..	..	4	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	1	..
	F.	7	..	1	3	2	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
12. Cancer, malignant disease	M.	39	..	..	..	..	..	15	13	11	31	..	..	..	..	3	11	12	5	5
	F.	30	..	..	..	..	2	12	10	6	26	..	..	..	..	4	9	7	6	6

[illegible]

METEOROLOGY.

By the kindness of the Hon. Anna Jane Peckover, I am able to state from her records at Wisbech that the maximum shade temperature for the year 1925 was 91° F. on July 22nd, and the minimum shade temperature was 20° F. on December 5th and December 16th.

The lowest day temperature was 28° F. on December 4th, and the highest night temperature was 66° F. on July 23rd.

The rainfall was as follows:—

			Inches.
January	...	...	0·77
February	...	...	1·79
March...	...	...	1·11
April ...	...	...	1·49
May ...	...	...	2·46
June ...	...	...	0·25
July ...	...	...	2·32
August	...	...	2·56
September	...	...	2·35
October	...	...	2·38
November	...	...	1·66
December	...	...	1·95

Total rainfall during the year, 21·09 inches.

The heaviest fall was 1·09 inches on May 23rd, and there were 167 days on which ·01 inch (or more) of rain fell.

During the four years covered by the Annual Reports which I have issued, 1922—1925, there have been on an average 173 days each year on which ·01 inch (or more) of rain fell, the average rainfall being 24·15 inches, the greatest amount falling in one day being 1·67 inches on July 21st, 1923. The average fall agrees with similar observations made from 1861—1875, when the average fall was 24·23 inches.

The highest shade temperature recorded here in the four years 1921—1925 was 95° F. on July 12th, 1923, and the lowest 18° F. on February 6th, 1922.

250 years ago John Speed, in "The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain," wrote of the climate of Cambridgeshire: "This province is not large, nor for air greatly to be liked, having the Fens so spread upon her north that they infect the air far into the rest."

It is concluded from this and other writers that before the Fens were drained fogs were very prevalent, and it is said that 80 or 90 years ago the summer mornings were almost always foggy, whereas they are seldom so now, one great cause of the improvement being the improved drainage and cultivation of the land, and the consequent higher temperature of the soil through solar influence and the percolation of warm rain. The evaporation which produces coldness is, probably, less than formerly.

Miller and Skertchley, writing in 1878 of the climate of the Fenland, state :—" We believe that the inhabitants of the Fens—at the present day—enjoy as sunny skies, as beautiful star-lit nights, and as magnificent cloudscapes as any people in England."

It is generally considered elsewhere that the Fen district is very cold ; true, the district is little sheltered from winds wherever they come from, owing to the absence of trees, but comparative meteorology from past records shows that the monthly mean temperature of the air was 49.1° F. at Wisbech when it was only 50.2° F. at Osborne, whilst the lowest monthly mean was 37.9° F. in January at Wisbech, when it was 40.4° at Osborne in the Isle of Wight. Again, the monthly means of Daily Range of Temperature averaged 15.4° at Wisbech, compared with 15.3° at Osborne.

SAMPLES OF FOOD AND DRUGS TAKEN IN 1925.

The samples taken during the year numbered 177, of which 56 were taken formally, and 121 informally.

Out of 66 samples of milk (47 of which were taken formally), four proved to be below the normal standard.

In one case analysis showed 12 per cent. of added water, but as this was an informal sample no action could be taken. A subsequent sample, taken formally, was quite up to standard.

In another case, a sample proved to be deficient in milk fat to the extent of 11 per cent. The vendor was cautioned.

In a third case, a sample proved to be deficient in milk fat to the extent of 16 per cent. Legal proceedings were taken, and the case was dismissed.

In a fourth case, where analysis proved the presence of 13 per cent. of added water, the vendor was fined £2.

All the other samples taken for analysis proved to be genuine.

The samples analysed were as follows :—

Anchovy Paste (1), Baking Powder (7), Bread (9), Butter (16), Cakeoma (2), Castor Oil (1), Cheese (1), Cocoa (5), Coffee (1), Cornflour (3), Cream (4), Cream, Preserved (1), Cream of Tartar (2), Custard Powder (1), Flour (1), Flour, Self-raising (1), Glycerine (1), Ground Ginger (2), Jam (3), Lard (5), Margarine (6), Meat Paste (1), Milk (66), Milk, Condensed (2), Mustard (3), Oatmeal (1), Pea Flour (2), Pepper (2), Quinine (1), Rice (1), Rice, Ground (5), Salmon Paste (1), Sodium Bicarbonate (2), Sugar (5), Tapioca (3), Tartaric Acid (3), Tea (3), Treacle (1), Vinegar (2). Total, 177.

The following Table, for the details of which I am again indebted to Major Hartcup, C.B.E., Chief Constable, shows the respective Districts from which samples were taken.

Samples taken in 1925	Benwick	Chatteris	Coveney	Elm	Ely	Friday Bridge	Guyhirn	Little Downham	Littleport	Manea	March	Mepal	Parson Drove	Stretham
Anchovy Paste	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Baking Powder	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Bread	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
Butter	1	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
Cakeoma	1	..	..	..
Castor Oil
Cheese
Cocoa	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Coffee	1
Corn Flour	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Cream	2	..	..	..
Cream (preserved)	1	..	..	..
Cream of Tartar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Custard Powder	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Flour
Flour (Self-raising)	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ginger (ground)	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Glycerine	2	..	..	..
Jam	1	..	..	..
Lard	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Margarine	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Meat Paste	1	..	..	..
Milk ..	2	5	1	1	5	..	1	2	..	2	10	4	..	2
Milk (condensed)	1	..	..	1
Mustard	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Oatmeal	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Peaflour	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Pepper	1	..	..	..	..
Quinine
Rice
Rice (ground)	1	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..
Salmon Paste	1	..	..	..
Soda (Bicarbonate of)	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Sugar	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Tapioca	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Tartaric Acid	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tea	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Treacle
Vinegar	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals ..	2	16	1	2	18	1	1	7	1	5	30	4	4	6

Continued on following page.

Samples taken in 1925	Sutton	Thorney	Upwell	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Wisbech St. Mary	Witcham	Witchford						Total
Anchovy Paste	1
Baking Powder	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	7
Bread	1	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Butter ..	1	..	1	2	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
Cakeoma	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Castor Oil	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Cheese	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Cocoa ..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	5
Coffee	1
Corn Flour	3
Cream	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Cream (preserved)	1
Cream of Tartar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Custard Powder	1
Flour	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Flour (Self-raising)	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Ginger (ground) ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Glycerine	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Jam	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Lard	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Margarine	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Meat Paste	1
Milk ..	2	2	2	8	14	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	66
Milk (condensed)	2
Mustard	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Oatmeal	1
Peaflour ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Pepper ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Quinine	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Rice	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Rice (ground) ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Salmon Paste	1
Soda (Bicarbonate of)	2
Sugar	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Tapioca	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Tartaric Acid	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Tea	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
Treacle	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Vinegar	2
Totals ..	8	5	5	19	33	2	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	177

MILK AND CREAM REGULATIONS, 1912 AND 1917.

The following particulars refer to the administration of the Public Health (Milk and Cream) Regulations, 1912 and 1917, during the year 1925 :—

1. Milk and Cream not sold as preserved cream :—

		(a) Number of samples examined for the presence of preservatives.		(b) Number in which a preservative was reported to be present.	
Milk	...	66	...	...	0
Cream	...	4	...	...	0
		—			—
		70			0
		—			—

2. Cream sold as preserved cream :—

(a) Instances in which samples have been submitted for analysis to ascertain if the statements on the label as to preservatives were correct.

(i.)	Correct statements made	...	...	...	1
(ii.)	Incorrect statements	...	...	...	0
					—
					Total 1
					—

(b) Determinations made of milk-fat in Cream sold as preserved cream :—

(i.)	Above 35 per cent.	...	...	...	1
(ii.)	Below 35 per cent.	...	...	...	0
					—
					Total 1
					—

(c) Instances where (apart from analysis) the requirements as to labelling or declaration of preserved cream in Article V. (1) and the proviso in Article V. (2) of the regulations have not been observed.—None.

(d) Particulars of each case in which the Regulations have not been complied with, and action taken.—None.

3. Thickening substances. Any evidence of their addition to preserved cream.—None.

4. Other observations, if any.

The samples of cream not sold as preserved Cream contained 19·46, 24·8, 27·0, and 26·62 per cent. of milk-fat respectively.

The samples of milk taken during the year have again proved richer in cream than in the previous year, and even richer in the non-fatty solids than in 1923.

In some instances the milk sold has not always been clean, a visible deposit of dirt being noticed in the bottom of the container.

It is pleasing to note that "certified" milk is about to be produced in the March Division. It is sold likewise in the Ely Division.

The following Table shows the average composition of the milk sold in the whole County during the respective quarters of the year 1925 :—

Quarter ending	Average Total Solids.	Average Solids— Non-fat.	Average Fat.	Average Specific Gravity.	Number of Samples.
March	12·677	8·806	3·871	1031·57	14
June	12·353	8·829	3·523	1031·69	19
September ..	12·442	8·559	3·883	1030·74	15
December ..	12·933	8·919	4·063	1031·75	18
Averages for 1922..	12·329	8·745	3·583	1031·60	60
Averages for 1923..	12·384	8·725	3·655	1031·42	67
Averages for 1924..	12·343	8·563	3·779	1030·47	66
Averages for 1925..	12·600	8·78	3·82	1031·46	66

The following Table compares the averages of the composition of the milk in the respective Divisions of the County :—

Area	Average Total Solids	Average Solids Non-fat	Average Fat	Average Specific Gravity	No. of Samples
Ely	12·561	8·705	3·856	1030·35	16
March ..	12·437	8·815	3·650	1031·93	33
Wisbech ..	12·952	8·811	4·141	1031·35	17

The above Table shows the superiority of the milks at Wisbech as regards their solid constituents, especially the cream portion.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Fourteen Midwives notified their intention to practise in the County during the year 1925.

Ten notices were received from Midwives under the Regulations of the Central Midwives' Board, as having sent for medical help.

Milk to infants and nursing mothers was provided to the value of £130 11s. 2d.

Health Visitors paid 1,332 first visits, and 6,958 subsequent visits to children at their homes during the year.

The sum of £19 13s. was paid to practitioners summoned to the aid of midwives in necessitous cases, being one amount of £3 3s., seven amounts of £2s. 2s., one amount of £1 6s., and one 10s.

Six patients were treated at Addenbrooke's Hospital for a total period of 115 days at a cost to the County of £40 5s. Midwives are regularly visited, the books, appliances, and modes of practice being carefully examined.

In addition there was an Isle of Ely County Nursing Association, on which body the County Council had no official representative, nor was the Council a subscriber to its funds. Nurses belonging to the Nursing Associations affiliated with it were visited by a lady inspector emanating from the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for Nurses, and also by the Isle of Ely County Superintendent Nurse. The Isle of Ely County Nursing Association was disbanded for lack of interest and of funds during the year.

Infant Welfare Centres are held at Ely, Chatteris, Little Downham, Littleport, March, and Wisbech, and a new Centre is being started at Whittlesey, whilst one is projected at Thorney also.

THE MARCH NURSES' HOME.

During the year ending March 31st, 1926, eighteen patients were received into this Home.

In last year's Report it was pointed out this Home was conveniently placed so that, if desired, there would be no difficulty in adding on wards for urgent hospital cases, a long-felt want in the March area.

During the summer the local medical profession strongly urged that provision should be made for the treatment of urgent hospital cases at this Home, it being considered that there was greater need for such provision even than for maternity beds. So far, however, no attempt has been made to fulfil this want, and serious cases of injury still have to journey to Peterborough or Cambridge from March before receiving the treatment they need. In the meanwhile large amounts of money are being collected in the March district for the large Hospitals outside the County, some of which might beneficially be expended in March.

SUPERANNUATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

Reference was made in last year's Report to your Chairman's desire that the future of Nurses should be provided for by some system of superannuation or pension.

There were 3 resignations of whole-time Nurses during the year, and in each case the Nurse left us and proceeded to employment where the remuneration was higher than in this County, and where also the benefit of superannuation was obtainable.

Since the close of the year there have been two other resignations similarly, Nurses leaving in order to better their condition, and going to an Authority which has adopted the Local Government and other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, after a short preliminary experience of the work of Health Visiting in this County.

To meet the first difficulty your Council recently increased the salary of all its Health Visitors by £20 per annum, a wise and necessary move, but the second difficulty has not yet been met in this County.

As regards the question of superannuation of County Council officials, it may be noted that in March of this year, out of 586,376 public officers, there were only 22,500 Local Government officers who did not come under superannuation schemes, *i.e.*, rather less than 4 per cent.

The average total cost per £ of rates to the County Councils which have put the 1922 Act into operation (excluding amounts chargeable to trading undertakings) has been 0·475 of a penny.

From this amount of 0·475 of a penny rate there have, however, to be considered savings in other directions, such as the non-replacement of pensioned employees, the appointment of officers at lesser salaries to vacated posts, savings through obtaining exception from National Health Insurance and Unemployment Insurance contributions, and from savings on Income Tax, Commission on Loans, and Compassionate allowances.

The Departmental Committee, on the superannuation of persons employed by Local Authorities in England and Wales, reported in Section III. that "It is undoubtedly desirable that a scheme of superannuation should be introduced.

The advantages of superannuation are too well known and too widely recognised to require much argument. Not only Public Authorities, but also many Banks, Insurance Offices, and other private undertakings have put into force schemes of superannuation.

It would without doubt be of great advantage to the whole of the Staffs concerned, as **well as to the Authorities they serve**, that a system of superannuation should be introduced.

The Association of Municipal Corporations reported on 26th October, "A system for the superannuation of Local Government Officers is based upon real economy and is necessary, not only, nor

indeed primarily, for the benefit of the officers themselves, but in the interest of the Local Authorities and of the inhabitants whom they represent. The obligation placed on the community to assist in the provision of superannuation allowances is a trifling burden compared with the increased efficiency which the adoption of the Act will secure."

The Urban District Councils Association on June 29th, 1923, decided "to urge upon Urban District Councils the desirability of taking steps, either alone or in combination, towards the adoption of schemes under the Act."

Under Public Authorities we have at the present time officers working side by side, one with superannuation provisions, one without, and the passing of the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, by the transfer of officers with superannuation rights to these public Authorities will accentuate this anomaly. If and when the Poor Law Service is transferred to County Councils, the position regarding superannuation will be chaotic.

Section 14 of the Teachers (Superannuation) Act, 1925, made provision for administrative officers with teaching experience being brought within the scheme, so that many Directors of Education, secretaries, and organisers now wholly engaged in administrative work are entitled to superannuation, whilst the rest of the members of the department have no scheme at all.

Finally, real economy results from a superannuation fund; the longer it is delayed, the more expensive it becomes to the Local Authority, because the amount of any deficiency of a Superannuation Fund at the date of adoption of the Act falls entirely on a Council, and is discharged by an equal annual payment spread over 40 years; so that to the extent to which the deficiency is swollen by delay, so much the greater will be this annual payment, because the liability gets larger as every year of service passes.

The County Councils Association, at its meeting on January 27th, 1926, adopted a Report of a Sub-Committee to the effect that they adhered to their previous opinion that there should be a compulsory superannuation scheme for Local Government officers, as recommended by the Departmental Committee in 1919, and that **it was clear that the longer Superannuation Schemes are postponed the greater is likely to be the cost involved**, whilst the necessity for the universal establishment of schemes by Local Authorities was accentuated by the position that would arise with regard to transferred Poor Law Officers in consequence of the abolition of the existing Assessment Committees and the proposed abolition of Boards of Guardians.

If your Council were to adopt the Act, the Nurses engaged would remain longer in your service than they do now, knowing their old age would be provided for.

MENTAL DEFICIENCY.

During the year further efforts have been made to ascertain and to visit as far as possible all known cases of Mental Deficiency in the Isle of Ely, and the Register of Mental Defectives is gradually being improved.

There is a very great difficulty in finding institutions willing to take suitable cases from this area, there being very little vacant accommodation.

Perhaps, if and when the work now assigned to the Poor Law authorities is transferred to County Councils, some of the partially filled workhouses may be utilised as Homes for the Mentally Defective; possibly a combination of Councils may utilise a large institution for the purpose.

At the time of writing there are known to be connected with the County 59 feeble-minded persons, of whom 29 are males, and 30 females, and of these 5 males and 9 females are in residential institutions. There are 23 imbeciles, 16 males and 7 females, of whom 6 males and 1 female are in institutions.

Two male moral imbeciles are in institutions.

Of 18 idiots, 6 males and 12 females, 3 males and 5 females are in institutions.

The known Mental Defectives number 102, of whom 31 are detained in residential institutions.

A meeting at Wisbech in the early part of the year was addressed by the Lord Bishop of Ely and by your County Medical Officer on the subject of Mental Deficiency, and subsequently the Central Association for Mental Welfare sent down an agent, Mrs. Beach, to endeavour to form an Isle of Ely Voluntary Association for Mental Welfare for the furtherance of the care of the Mental Defectives. Later this was formed, with your Chairman as its first President.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

Cases of Venereal Disease resident in the Isle of Ely are treated free of cost to the patient and without letters of recommendation at Addenbrooke's Hospital Out-patient Department on Tuesday afternoons usually, women attending from 3—4 p.m., and men from 4—5 p.m.

A session for treatment is also held on Thursday evenings, but the train service is such that it is impossible for the majority of the Isle of Ely cases to attend its session for women at 7 p.m., or that for men at 8 p.m.

As compared with recent years, there has been in 1925 an increase in the number of cases of Venereal Disease arising in this area, as is seen from the following Table:—

Year	Total New Cases attending for Consultation	New cases of				Total Out-Patient Attendance	Total In-Patient Days	Doses of Arseno- Benzol Compounds given to	
		Syphilis	Soft Chancre	Gonorrhoea	Non-venereal Conditions			In-Patients	Out-Patients
1919	35	12	..	16	7	..	104	..	..
1920	48	26	..	16	6	416	197	26.5	
1921	41	17	..	23	1	341	155	19.5	
1922	26	7	..	10	9	265	145	3	151
1923	29	10	1	16	2	288	386	21	168
1924	19	9	..	7	3	280	260	15	189
1925	40	12	..	21	7	293	270	6	129

Those ceasing treatment before it was ascertained that their cure was completed numbered 36 per cent., a big increase on the previous year. This is especially noticeable in cases of Gonorrhoea in men; it has often been recommended that compulsory notification should be enforced with a view to securing compulsory treatment where cases cease to attend a Treatment Centre whilst still in an infectious condition, seeing that poverty is no bar to securing the treatment, for rail fares are given to all necessitous cases on application by letter to the County Medical Officer of Health at his office in March.

Laboratory facilities, too, are provided free of cost to all Isle of Ely medical practitioners for the diagnosis and treatment of cases of Venereal Disease at Addenbrooke's Hospital, where practitioners have the requisite skill and appliances for the intravenous injection of arseno-benzol compounds: these expensive drugs are also provided free of cost for any cases they choose to treat in their own surgeries.

It cannot, however, be too often repeated that these diseases ought not to exist, and that were strict continence maintained these contagious diseases which cause such intense misery, suffering, and ill-health would soon be things of the past. Human nature being liable to err, it should be better known that, where incontinence occurs, if immediate self-disinfection be adopted by the injection of a port-wine coloured solution of permanganate of potash, followed up by the application to the parts of a 30 per cent. calomel ointment, there is little likelihood of the individual becoming affected by disease of a contagious nature, assuming, of course, that the erring ones are not too much under the influence of drink to apply these measures in a reasonably efficient manner, as is so often the case.

It must not be forgotten that infected individuals can transmit these diseases by want of cleanliness, or by kissing, to innocent persons.

Six beds continue to be reserved for in-patient treatment of cases of Venereal Disease at Addenbrooke's Hospital.

WELFARE OF THE BLIND.

During the past year the Home Teacher and Visitor for the Blind (J. H. MacKenzie, M.A.), who holds the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, visited the blind and partially blind of the area, and gave instruction to suitable cases.

It was found that the total number of persons so afflicted in the area was 68. Of these 34 were males and 34 females, of ages varying as follows:—

MALES.

0-5	5-10	10-13	13-16	16-18	18-21	21-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70
..	1	..	4	1	2	..	2	3	5	5	11

FEMALES.

..	5	..	1	1	..	5	3	1	6	2	10
----	---	----	---	---	----	---	---	---	---	---	----

The total number of visits paid during the year was 486, and the total number of lessons given was 169, these being:—Braille 34, Moon 29, Basket Making 82, Chair Caning 10, Rush Seating 14.

There are at present three home workers under the Home Workers' scheme. One of these manufactures agricultural baskets, and, after

deducting cost of material, earns approximately 18s. to 19s. per week. One of the others is at present engaged in the rushing of chairs for Ely Cathedral and the manufacturing of cane baskets, his average earnings, after material has been paid for, approximately amount to 5s. or 6s. weekly, and the third is engaged in general basket making, and earns approximately 10s. to 12s. per week.

The Isle of Ely Blind Aid Society made the following grants to these home workers:—One received £16 to provide a good supply of willow, another was granted £5 for tools, the third, who had just lost his sight, was granted £5, and afterwards an allowance of 5s. per week. He has also received £3 in the form of material, making a total of £12.

The Home Teacher was also instructing in basket making a lad of 18 years and a man of 49 years in the hope that they might also become home workers. Unfortunately the lad, who was making fair progress, died suddenly. The man, though willing, did not make any progress, probably owing to his age, and it was found that to continue such instruction was useless. The Society is at present considering the case of a young woman of 22, who has just lost her sight. The Home Teacher is of opinion that she might well be taught chair caning. Owing to congested house conditions it is not possible for her to undertake the work in her own home.

There are at present five Braille readers, and one Moon reader, receiving books from the National Library for the Blind. The Society has made payments of 10s. per reader to the National Library, and the total so paid amounts to £3. The Home Teacher is still giving instruction to these readers, and helping them to understand the literature with which they are supplied.

There are 11 blind or partly blind children under 16 years of age. Of these 2 are attending a Council Elementary School in the district, 3 are mentally deficient, whilst 3 are undergoing ophthalmic treatment, and being instructed by the Home Teacher. One is not so far incapacitated as to prevent his working on the land, and has recently left the Elementary School, having reached the age of 14; and another, a new case, is in process of being dealt with.

Circular 681, issued by the Ministry of Health, defining blindness in relation to the welfare, training, and employment of the blind states that in the Regulations governing the Exchequer Grant in aid of services for the welfare of the blind, the definition of paragraph 10 "too blind to perform work for which eyesight is essential," is that contained in the report, dated July 21st, 1915, of the Ophthalmological Section of the Royal Society of Medicine.

Persons whose acuity of vision is below one-twentieth of the normal (3/60 Snellen) are usually unable to perform work requiring eyesight, while persons with vision better than one-tenth (6/60

Snellen) are usually able to perform such work. Other factors affect this broad distinction, but the Minister specially states that he regards it as essential that "only visual factors should be taken into account, and that other bodily or mental infirmities predisposing to incapacity should be disregarded."

This definition of blindness differs from that in the Education Act, 1921, which states that a blind child is one "too blind to be able to read the ordinary school books used by children," whereas such children may not subsequently be deemed to be blind for the purposes of the Blind Persons Act.

There is nothing to preclude the provision under the regulations of the Board of Education of facilities for the training of the partially blind, but it is pointed out that it is inadvisable to admit for training any persons who will subsequently prove ineligible for employment under the regulations.

To overcome this difficulty the Ministers of Health and Education have agreed that, except in special circumstances, no person should be admitted to a course of training unless he is, or is reasonably likely to be, blind within the meaning of the definition at the end of his training. In the case of exception, the Local Authority should satisfy itself that no totally blind person will be excluded from training by the admission of the special case, and that he will be able to earn his living afterwards without financial aid under approved schemes. The circular does not affect any cases under training in the Isle of Ely.

Details of the Notifications received during the year 1925 under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1912.

Pulmonary: Males in 1921	.
" " in 1922	.
" " in 1923	.
" " in 1924	.
" " in 1925	.
Females in 1921	.
" " in 1922	.
" " in 1923	.
" " in 1924	.
" " in 1925	.
Non-Pulmonary: Males in 1921	.
" " in 1922	.
" " in 1923	.
" " in 1924	.
" " in 1925	.
Females in 1921	.
" " in 1922	.
" " in 1923	.
" " in 1924	.
" " in 1925	.

TUBERCULOSIS.—CLINICS.

The Clinics at Ely, March, and Wisbech continue to do good work, and fill a much-felt want, there being no general or special Hospitals in the County, or even Dispensaries, for the treatment of Tuberculosis such as are to be found in most Administrative Counties, although a few cases are treated with that disease in the Wisbech Hospital, and at the Ely Dispensary.

At the Ely Tuberculosis Clinic there were 94 patients, the numbers attending in the respective quarters of the year being 86, 62, 54, and 45, and the attendances 321, 269, 222, and 202, or 1,014 attendances in all.

At March there were 119 patients, the numbers attending in the respective quarters of the year being 104, 65, 55, and 39, and the attendances 298, 255, 132, and 141, or 826 attendances in all.

At Wisbech there were 115 patients, the numbers attending in the respective quarters of the year being 102, 71, 55, and 59 and the attendances 449, 335, 208, and 235 respectively, or 1,227 attendances in all.

At the County Clinics, therefore, 328 patients attended as cases of Consumption, or with other forms of Tuberculosis, for consultation or treatment, or for purposes of diagnosis, making 3,067 attendances, an average weekly attendance of about 59 patients, or 10 less per week than last year.

HOME VISITING.

Patients are visited sometimes at their homes in consultation with their own private medical advisers, or at other times separately, by the Tuberculosis Officer, or by the Health Visitors, the latter of whom visited the homes on 1,495 occasions.

All the 35 shelters are in use, and prove of great value; every effort is made to keep them in good condition by appropriate repairs as required.

BEDS AT SANATORIA.

The Council reserves one female and four male beds at the Borough Sanatorium, Ipswich, and during the year 25 males and 18 females were treated there, totalling 3,829 in-patient days.

Beds are not reserved elsewhere, but cases have been sent to other Institutions as follows :—

- To Lord Mayor Treloar's Home at Alton, 3 male and 1 female surgical cases were sent, totalling 916 in-patient days.
- To the R.N. Sanatorium, Benenden, 1 female was sent, totalling 124 in-patient days.
- To Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, 11 male and 2 female surgical cases were sent, totalling 971 in-patient days.
- To Naylands Sanatorium, Colchester, 1 female was sent, totalling 153 in-patient days.
- To the Fairlight Sanatorium, Hastings, 3 males were sent, totalling 497 in-patient days.
- To the Children's Sanatorium, Holt, 2 males and 3 females were sent, totalling 810 in-patient days.
- To the Kelling Sanatorium, Holt, 2 males were sent, totalling 236 in-patient days.
- To the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital, Margate, 4 male and 2 female surgical cases were sent, totalling 1,112 in-patient days.
- To the Papworth Training Colony, 3 males were sent, totalling 549 in-patient days.
- To Wyton, 11 males and 9 females, all children, were sent, totalling 2,751 in-patient days.

Thus 101 patients, 64 males and 37 females, were sent to Hospitals or Sanatoria, totalling 11,941 in-patient days, an average stay of 118 days per patient, compared with 63 males and 33 females in 1924, with an average stay of 111 days in that year.

Extra nourishments in the form of milk and eggs were provided to Tuberculous persons to the value of £80 2s. 5d.

BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK.

62 specimens of Sputum were examined, 12 being found positive and 50 negative.

Infectious Diseases Notified in the Several Districts
for the Year ending 1925.

Disease	URBAN DISTRICTS.						RURAL DISTRICTS.						WISBECH PORT SANITARY DISTRICT.	Combined Total
	Ely	Chatteris	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Total Urban Districts	Ely	North Witchford	Thorney	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Total Rural Districts		
Small Pox ..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Scarlet Fever ..	13	9	12	..	14	48	50	4	..	..	20	74	..	122
Diphtheria ..	1	10	6	13	22	52	17	2	..	1	9	29	..	81
Enteric Fever ..	2	..	..	1	1	4	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	6
Puerperal Fever	1	..	1	..	2	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Typhus Fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plague ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Relapsing Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Continued Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cerebro Spinal Fever ..	..	..	2	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Acute Poliomyelitis ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas ..	1	1	..	1	4	7	9	1	..	2	7	19	..	26
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3	4	..	4
Tuberculosis														
(a) Pulmonary ..	8	..	16	4	9	37	5	3	2	4	11	25	..	62
(b) Other ..	5	1	4	4	8	22	9	3	1	1	5	19	..	41
(c) Total ..	13	1	20	8	17	59	14	6	3	5	16	44	..	103
Chicken Pox ..	60	..	..	..	37	97	8	5	..	1	16	30	..	127
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	3	3	..	7	..	..	..	7	..	10
Measles ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	3	..	3
Other Diseases														
(a) Pneumonia ..	8	5	..	5	13	31	4	2	..	2	7	15	..	46
(b) Dysentery ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(c) Malaria ..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
(d) Encephalitis Lethargica ..	..	..	..	1	1	2	..	..	1	..	2	3	..	5

HOUSING.

	Urban Districts					Rural Districts				
	Chatteris	Ely	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Ely	North Wicheford	Thorney	Whittlesey	Wisbech
Number of new houses erected during the year 1925 (a) Total	10	39	121	2	52	60	9	12	9	30
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts, 1919, or 1923—										
(1) By the Local Authority .. .. .	..	19	28	..	16	33	..	10	..	..
(2) By other bodies or persons	7	13	65	..	25	27	3	..	..	17
1. Unfit Dwelling-Houses.										
Inspection—										
(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	98	..	132	..	239	640	240	35	225	200
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910 .. .. .	..	..	..	..	209	633	5	..	..	50
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	43	..	..	..	5	30	1	..	..	..
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	16	..	8	..	244	32	20	..	..	20
2. Remedy of Defects without serving of formal Notices.										
Number of dwelling-Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	23	..	8	..	222	2	20	*	..	20

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

A. Proceedings under Sec. 28 of the Housing, Town-Planning, &c., Act, 1919

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	13	..	..	..	1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit— (a) by owners .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	1
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..
Proceedings under Public Health Acts										
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	9	14	..	..	1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied— (a) by owners .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	9	14	..	..	1
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Proceedings under Sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town-Planning, &c., Act, 1909.										
(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..

* No numbers mentioned in the Report.

NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT REPORTS.

I.—URBAN.

CHATTERIS URBAN DISTRICT.

Area, 13,719 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £24,562.

Population at Census 1911	...	...	5,259
„ „ 1921	...	...	5,084
„ Mid-year 1925	...	...	5,219 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 1,246, containing 1,261 families.

1925 Statistics :—Birth-rate, 18·20. Death-rate, 13·22. Infantile Mortality-rate, 50·50 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 31·57.

The town is situated on elevated ground about 30 feet above sea level ; this elevated portion consists of clay overlaid by loam of a few feet in thickness, interspersed with beds of gravel.

The ground water level is very constant, there being very free natural drainage to the surrounding fen area. The consequent general dryness of the surface soil is reflected in the comparatively small amount of bronchial and rheumatic affections met with in the district.

There is less need here of Poor Law Relief than in most agricultural districts.

A Smallpox Isolation Hospital, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of the town, has accommodation for 4 cases, but this accommodation can be readily increased, if necessary.

An Infant Welfare Clinic has been established by the County Council.

No certified midwife practises in the area.

The Water Supply from Marham is adequate and good, though at times its pressure is very low.

The Sewage System is gravitational, the effluent discharging eventually into the Forty Foot Drain. The sewers work efficiently, and are periodically flushed.

Eighty per cent. of the closet accommodation is on the water carriage system, and this system is steadily replacing the pail or privy methods.

The Council has an efficient Scavenging System.

Four licensed Slaughter-houses and four Common Lodging Houses are kept in accordance with the Bye-laws relating thereto.

Apart from excessively dusty streets, muddy in wet weather, and calling for the more frequent use of a mechanical brush, with the removal of the dust or mud, the sanitary condition of the town has been good.

There is still room for 60 or 70 more new houses. A building scheme for 38 houses has recently been adopted, under the Wheatley Act.

An Inspector of Meat has been appointed, but there was no need for formal action during the year.

None of the cases of Infectious Disease were removed to the Isolation Hospital.

Antitoxin is supplied by the Local Authority, and bacteriological examinations are carried out at the King Edward VII. Memorial Institute, Lewisham.

Where cases of Influenza have ended fatally, they have been in aged people, or additional to some pre-existing morbid condition.

ELY URBAN DISTRICT.

Area, 16,742 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £49,680.

Population at Census 1911	...	...	7,917
„ „ 1921	...	...	7,690
„ Mid-year 1925	...	...	7,621 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 1,848, containing 1,865 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 15·74. Death-rate, 14·82. Infantile Mortality-rate, 83·33 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 25.

The Urban area consists partly of high land and partly fen, and includes the villages of Stuntney, Adelaide, Prickwillow, and Chettisham, its highest point being 89 feet above sea level. The soil is partly drift and lower greensand, resting on Kimmeridge clay.

The bulk of the population is engaged in agriculture. There is a Beet Sugar Factory at Adelaide, completed this year, and also a brewing and a leather industry.

The Theological College and the Cathedral are items of great importance in the social circumstances of the district.

Since 1920 there have been a certain number of cases of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria.

	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Scarlet Fever ...	41	3	3	14	13
Diphtheria ...	3	0	4	18	1

Antitoxin is used in practically all cases of Diphtheria.

Two cases of Enteric Fever occurred, arising from the use of river water.

The Clinical Research Association examined 113 bacteriological specimens:—

For Tuberculosis ...	23 negative	...	4 positive
„ Diphtheria ...	58	„	17 „
„ Enteric Fever	5	„	6 „

No vaccinations were performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917, but, otherwise, there were 69 vaccinations, and 65 exemptions from vaccination.

Measles has been very prevalent, especially in the villages. There was an epidemic of influenza with gastro-intestinal symptoms, but no fatal cases occurred.

Disinfection of premises is regularly carried out in all cases of notifiable disease, clothing and bedding being removed to, and disinfected by steam at the Isolation Hospital.

There are two Maternity Wards at the Tower House (Poor Law) Infirmary.

There are no beds for cases of Smallpox.

For unmarried mothers there is provision at the Diocesan Refuge, The Haven, Ely, in connection with which there is a Maternity Home at Cambridge.

The Urban and Rural Joint Isolation Hospital have a motor ambulance for infectious cases, and for non-infectious cases the Cambridge Red Cross ambulance, and a private ambulance at a local garage are available.

For general nursing of the sick poor two trained nurses are employed by the Ely Nursing Association, one of them being also a certified midwife. In addition two other certified midwives maintain a Private Nursing Home in the City.

The Water Supply for the district is obtained from the chalk at Isleham, 12 miles away, the supply being constant and ample, from a well 90 feet in depth, though in Prickwillow, Adelaide, and Stuntney stand-pipes are provided in places. The Rivers Ouse and Lark are polluted by sewage and by the effluent from Beet Sugar Factories at Ely and Bury St. Edmunds. In the town the water carriage system of sewage disposal is general, whilst in the villages pail-closets and privies are in use. The town sewage is collected in a tank which is emptied twice a year, the overflow passing into the River Ouse.

Formal notice of a nuisance was given and action taken in one case only.

The ten Elementary Schools have been inspected, any minor defects being noted.

The chief item of interest during the year was the opening of the Beet Sugar Factory at Adelaide.

Work began there before the buildings were out of the Contractor's hands; hence there arose certain sanitary irregularities, since amended.

The treatment of the effluent from a sugar factory is a difficult problem, especially in Ely, where many people are dependent on the River Lark for their water supply, for the effluent contains suitable pabulum for bacterial action, from which gases arise that are fatal to fish.

It is suggested by Dr. Beckett that improvement might be effected by eliminating the filter-press cake, and treating the diffusion waters with milk of lime before entering the settling pond; he suggests further that the pond itself should be made more efficient by baffle plates to assist in the precipitation of the solid matter before it empties into the outfall.

The Medical Officer and Clerk have visited other sugar factories, investigating the effects of their working on fish life, and have taken many samples of water for analysis with the view of assisting the new industry.

One Licence has been granted for the sale of milk under special designation.

No action has been taken concerning tuberculous milk or cattle, nor has there been any refusal or revocation of licences to sell milk.

A part-time Meat Inspector under the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, has been appointed.

One carcase was found unfit for human food, and was destroyed.

There were 3 registered private Slaughter-houses and 2 licensed ones in 1925, as in the year 1920.

It is thought there is still a need for 40 or 50 new Parlour Houses, although 39 new houses were erected during the year; of these, 32 were with State assistance, 19 by the Local Authority, and 13 by other persons.

MARCH URBAN DISTRICT.

Area, 19,777 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £56,286.

Population at Census 1911	...	...	8,403
" " 1921	...	...	8,960
" Mid-year 1925	...	...	9,686 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 2,162, containing 2,208 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 22·81. Death-rate, 12·38. Infantile Mortality-rate, 49·77 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 58·82.

The March Urban District comprises an area about 8 miles by 5, the old River Nene dividing it into northern and southern portions, the town bridge being about 12 feet above the mean sea level.

After entering into details about the geological formation of the district, Dr. Evison comments on the advantages of the town as a place of residence, though strangers comment unfavourably on it for its bleakness in windy weather owing to the absence of any sheltering hills.

March is a great railway centre for the transshipment of goods, agriculture being, however, the main industry carried on there, the soil being highly productive.

Over one half of the deaths were in people over 65 years of age. Cancer in the first five years of the Survey period has caused in 1921 fourteen per cent. deaths, seventeen in 1922, eleven in 1923, fourteen in 1924, and eight per cent. in 1925.

Possibly Cerebro-spinal Fever is a more common cause of death than is generally known, owing to difficulties in its diagnosis.

A new site for a Cemetery has now been provided by the Urban District Council, and found suitable.

One case of Smallpox occurred in 1925, and a full report about it was issued at the time; it was surprising how indifferent were the people generally regarding it, only about 150 availing themselves of the free vaccination provided, although probably three-quarters of them are absolutely unprotected against the disease.

This case was the only one that occurred in the Isle of Ely in the five-yearly period under review.

Fortunately this case caused a welcome replacement of the old beds and bedding at the Isolation Hospital by newer and more suitable appliances.

Antitoxin for cases of Diphtheria is always kept at hand, and supplied gratuitously where necessary.

All deaths from Tuberculosis had been duly notified before death.

In cases of Tuberculosis residence for a time in a Sanatorium is an excellent thing, yet inmates of such institutions should bear in mind the fact that they are not either hotels or holiday resorts, but rather places of educational value where a sufferer from Tuberculosis can be taught to live his life to the best advantage to himself, and without his being a source of danger to his neighbours.

Attention is called to the desirability of having access to the help of a skilled radiologist in these cases; this, however, is readily available at Addenbrooke's Hospital, and at the Ipswich and other Sanatoria to which cases are sent at the expense of the County Council.

One case of Puerperal Fever occurred for which no reason could be assigned, there having been no manual interference.

Allusion is made in the Report to the petition sent in by about 150 people about the unpleasant smells from the river, and to the fact that at a special meeting of the Council, called to consider it, very few of the general public attended the same.

This is no new thing, however, for in eighteen years where millions of public moneys have been concerned, apart from newspaper reporters, the County Medical Officer has only seen two members of the general public in attendance. Very few of the public are aware that they are permitted to attend such meetings.

It must not be taken, therefore, from the fact of few outsiders attending a meeting that the general public are not interested therein, and although all who signed the petition were not direct ratepayers, everyone who signed the petition was interested in the matter, and suffered equally with the direct ratepayers who appended their signature to it.

The Report suggests that regard should be had to the fact that the considerable expenditure necessary to overcome the offensive state of the river would press hardly on impoverished ratepayers. That

may be so, but such increase of expenditure would have to be very considerable on a house rented at £10 per annum to cover the cost of even one unnecessary illness in a member of the household. Prevention is better than cure.

Dr. Evison thinks "much can and no doubt will be done" to improve matters without incurring enormous expenditure, and now that the Isle of Ely County Council has officially called the attention of the March Urban District Council to the matter, and is still taking observations on the condition of affairs relating to the pollution of the River Nene, it is to be hoped that Dr. Evison is a true prophet when he states that it "no doubt will be done," and that the "much" that can be done to improve the state of the river will be done quickly. "*Bis dat qui cito dat.*"

WHITTLESEY URBAN DISTRICT.

Area, 362 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £11,916.

Population at Census 1911	...	...	4,207
" " 1921	...	...	4,201
" Mid-year 1925	...	...	4,284 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 1,033, containing 1,044 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 21·94. Death-rate, 16·10. Infantile Mortality-rate, 53·19 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate, per 1,000 births, 74·46.

Two new houses were built during the year, three old houses also being replaced by new erections, whilst two railway carriages were reconstructed for people to live in.

There is a great shortage of houses, and much overcrowding.

There are no means of disinfecting bedding.

Three samples of water were sent for analysis, and found to be contaminated with sewage, and quite unfit for drinking purposes.

Two cases died of Influenza, two from Whooping Cough, and three from Diphtheria during the year.

A Public Inquiry was held on July 10th, 1925, at the Whittlesey Town Hall, before Alderman Sir W. H. Clarke, Chairman of the County Council, and Alderman L. H. Luddington, who were the Commissioners appointed by the Isle of Ely County Council to

conduct the Inquiry, relative to a proposal made by the Whittlesey Urban District Council to bringing the area of the Rural District Council under Urban authority, the Urban Council urging that under present conditions it was impossible for them to obtain an improved water supply, considered necessary by the Ministry of Health, or other improvements, needed in their district.

During the Inquiry it was shown that the Urban District had become very largely the "bedroom" of the Rural area, 1,204 workers (763 to brickwork, and 441 to agriculture) having gone out of the Urban District to their work on the morning of the Inquiry, and it was urged that the interests of the two areas had become so intermixed that the Urban Council felt there ought to be one Council representing the whole, making their burdens common ones distributable over the whole of the two Sanitary Districts. Subsequently the Isle of Ely County Council made an Order to that effect, a further Inquiry under the auspices of the Ministry of Health being held in the same building as before on April 7th, 1926.

The decision of the Ministry is awaited.

WISBECH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH.

Area, 6,477 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £66,607.

Population at Census 1911 ...	...	10,822
„ „ 1921 ...	...	11,321
„ Mid-year 1925 ...	...	11,660 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 2,748, containing 2,801 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 18·01. Death-rate, 14·83. Corrected Death-rate, 11·72. Infantile Mortality-rate, 85·71 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 71·42.

The standardizing factor for correction of the Death-rate is 0·790.

Diphtheria was prevalent, there being 22 cases with 2 deaths.

The Infant Welfare Centre continues to do good work, 110 mothers and 161 children, making 889 and 1,341 attendances respectively. Ambulance facilities are provided free of cost, and antitoxin is supplied in needy cases; also any necessary pathological and bacteriological examinations.

The Town is well kept clean, and the Public Buildings, Factories, Schools, Milk Shops, and Slaughter-houses are kept better than of

late, being under constant supervision. There are 19 factories and 67 workshops, the chief industries being the timber trade and fruit growing.

The plentiful supply of Marham water is constant, and is available to practically all the inhabitants.

There is in contemplation an extension of the Sewerage Scheme to the Harecroft Road and World's End districts shortly.

Dr. Groom views with considerable alarm the continued falling off in the practice of vaccination as a preventative of Smallpox, of which disease a scare arose, the case fortunately proving to be severe Chicken Pox in an adult.

52 new houses were erected during the year, 41 of these being with State assistance, 16 by the Local Authority, and 25 by other persons.

28 inspections were made of factories, and 97 of workshops, written notices being sent to 1 factory and 8 to workshops. All these defects were remedied without prosecution.

Legal proceedings were taken in a nuisance from defective drainage of a dwelling-house, an Order of Abatement with costs being obtained, which was subsequently complied with.

One case of Typhoid Fever arose from contaminated water, the storage tank receiving percolations from an adjoining privy and a piggery.

Nearly 3 tons of unsound food were condemned and destroyed, being voluntarily surrendered as unfit for human food; it comprised 3,154 lbs. of fresh meat, 144 tins of meat paste, and 142 tins of sardines, besides 85 tubs of strawberries.

Through the operation of the Meat Regulations, 1924, meat is not now hung outside shops exposed to the street dust, and the covering of meat in transport goes some way towards the provision of "clean meat."

The 13 Slaughter-houses have been kept satisfactorily, although structurally poor, and cramped.

There are 9 Milk Farms, with 13 Cowsheds and 4 Dairies in the Borough, and 20 registered Milk Shops, of which only four sell milk as a separate business.

Two infringements of the Shops Act where assistants were not receiving their weekly half holiday were remedied by informal action.

The 3 Common Lodging Houses accommodate 60 males only; on two occasions there has been found a want of cleanliness in them.

The unsatisfactory state of the Canal, the lack of adequate flushing facilities for water-closets, and a need for a proper provision of sanitary dustbins, are again matters of comment.

II.—RURAL.

ELY RURAL DISTRICT.

Area, 63,999 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £71,850.

Population at Census 1911 ...	...	12,916
„ „ 1921 ...	...	12,883
„ Mid-year 1925 ...	...	13,040 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census, 1921, 3,170, containing 3,191 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 16·48. Death-rate (uncorrected), 10·58. Death-rate (corrected for age and sex distribution), 7·82, the standardizing factor being 0·739. Infantile Mortality-rate, 42·85 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 23·8.

The Ely Rural District includes a number of low hills of Kimmeridge Clay, while Littleport is in the Silt-land area. There is an area of Boulder Clay and Gravel at Portley Hill (high ground to the south of Littleport); in Haddenham and Stretham there are outliers of greensand, also near Witchford. In other parts of the district there are shallow patches of drift gravel and sand.

The district forms a triangular area, bounded on the East by the Ouse, on the West by the New Bedford Level, and on the South by the Old West River.

The principal industry is agriculture, which, however, provides but a poor standard of living. There are two chaff factories, and a shirt factory, whilst the Ely Beet Sugar Factory outside the area provides occupation for many of the inhabitants of the Rural District.

Attention is drawn in the Report by Dr. Howe to the steadily diminishing Infantile Death-rate in the five years from 1921 to 1925, viz., 111·1, 76·04, 73·07, 69·10, and 42·85, and to the steadily falling Birth-rate during the same period, viz., 20·80, 20·09, 19·81, 18·89, and 16·48.

The Death-rates have varied somewhat, though 1925 is lower than any of the preceding years, and when corrected for age and sex distribution, comes as low as 7·82, a highly satisfactory figure.

A Tuberculous Clinic is conducted at Ely each Thursday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

An Infant Welfare Centre at Ely each Wednesday, 2.30—4.30 p.m.

do. at Littleport each Friday, 2.30—4 p.m.

do. at Little Downham, once a month.

School Clinic at Ely each Monday, 10. a.m.—noon.

There is a whole-time County Council Nurse resident in Littleport, whilst Haddenham, Little Downham, and Sutton have District Nursing Associations, whose Nurses are qualified midwives, and act as School Nurses and Health Visitors (part-time) for the County Council.

Dr. W. Henwood Harvey, of 6, Post Office Terrace, Cambridge, examines samples of sputum and diphtheria swabs free of charge to Practitioners, whilst antitoxin is issued gratis also.

There is now a piped Water Supply from a well sunk in the chalk at Mildenhall, a constant supply being connected to 1,107 dwelling-houses in Coveney, Downham, Littleport, Mepal, Sutton, Witcham, Witchford, and Wentworth, whilst others can cart water from hydrants.

Haddenham, Wilburton, Stretham, and Thetford are supplied from public wells, as yet.

The following Schools are supplied with rain-water:—Littleport, Dairy Houses, Westlands, Little Ouse, and Black Horse Drove, Witcham, and Mepal.

Water is obtained from a pump for the following Schools:—Haddenham Boys, Haddenham Girls and Infants, Wilburton, and Thetford.

A public pump supplies the following Schools:—Witchford, Stretham Mixed and Stretham Infants.

Pymoor School is supplied by filtered river water, whilst Haddenham Aldreth School is supplied by a public stand-pipe, all other public Elementary Schools being connected with the new mains from Mildenhall.

All the rivers in the area are polluted by drainage. Only the larger villages—Littleport, Haddenham, Stretham, and Downham—have sewerage systems. In some parishes catch-pits are provided at the ends of sewers, from which the effluent passes into the Fen ditches, which are cleaned out periodically.

In the several parishes the pail system of sewage disposal is most prevalent, being utilised to the extent of 44 per cent., whilst the privy pits amount to 29 per cent., water-closets 22 per cent., and about 3 per cent. are troughs, occupiers attending to the emptying of earth closets and cesspits as required.

The Wilburton and Haddenham (Boys') Schools alone have water-closets, others having the pail system.

Six statutory notices were served in connection with the sanitary inspection of the area.

The total number of houses at the end of the year was 2,659 working class houses and 666 others.

The new buildings erected during the five years have been 35 working class cottages, 165 Council cottages, and 41 other dwellings, making a total of 241 new dwellings during the Survey period.

There is still a shortage of houses, 206 being needed, though this figure includes the replacement of unfit premises; it is anticipated that when the Council's Housing Scheme is completed this shortage will disappear. Many of the cottages are low, badly lit, and ill ventilated, and let at very low rents, walls often being only a half-brick in thickness, floors and roofs often being decayed and beyond repair.

The Milk and Dairies Act, 1922, Registers contains the names of 65 wholesale producers of milk, and 26 retailers.

No action has been taken as to tuberculous milk or cattle.

Slaughter-houses are inspected monthly, but no diseased meat has been found. There are 23 registered slaughter-houses, and one licensed one.

The 23 Bakehouses have been periodically inspected, any defects being satisfactorily remedied.

Only in one instance could the epidemic of Scarlet Fever, which has prevailed from time to time during the last five years, be traced to its source, viz., Cambridge. Many cases do not come under medical care, and then spread the disease whilst still infectious.

Disinfection of the houses with formalin is carried out in all cases, blankets and bedding being steam sterilized at the Joint Isolation Hospital.

There were 55 Inspections of Workshops, uncleanness being found and subsequently remedied in 11 instances.

NORTH WITCHFORD RURAL DISTRICT.

Area, 26,088 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £115,738.

Population at Census 1911	...	...	5,215
" " 1921	...	...	5,059
" Mid-year 1925	...	...	5,195 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 1,190, containing 1,205 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 21·75. Death-rate, 13·28. Infantile Mortality-rate per 1,000 births, 53·09. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 53·09.

The District is flat with but slight elevations, on which the villages of Doddington, Wimblington, and Manea are built, Benwick and Welches Dam being on fen soil; artificially drained fen land constitutes the greater part of the district. The inhabitants are engaged in agriculture, and there is very little poverty.

The Birth-rate compares favourably with the four preceding years, and is higher than that for England and Wales.

The Death-rate is higher than for the preceding four years, although there appears to have been no special cause for sickness, nor any deleterious environmental conditions specially applicable during the year.

There is no provision for the isolation of any Infectious Diseases. One case of Diphtheria was sent to Cambridge, at the public expense.

For non-infectious cases the Ambulance at March is available. No Midwife practises as such in the District, but there is a Nurse resident at Manea.

The Water Supply is unaltered, Doddington, Wimblington, and Manea being served with a constant supply from the Marham Water Works, whilst Welches Dam relies on rain and river water.

Benwick relies on rain-water, and river water which has been pumped through a gravel bed; at times the river is low and putrid, the supply being intermittent. During times of drought water has had to be carted in the village, and this imperfect supply is considered detrimental to the health of the inhabitants.

It is suggested there may be water at Field's End, Doddington, and it may be advisable to bore there, a distance about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Benwick.

The Rivers or Drainage Water-courses are more or less polluted.

The larger and more thickly populated villages, Doddington, Wimblington, and Manea, are sewered, and in the former two the sewage passes through gravel beds, and later into open fen ditches which are cleaned out periodically by the Council. Benwick is partly sewered, Welches Dam not at all.

A scavenger empties 270 earth closets, and there are 100 water closets. There are a few cesspits, which the occupiers empty. The collection of house refuse is not undertaken.

The general housing conditions are fair, and the shortage is gradually lessening, whilst there is but little overcrowding. All defects in housing have been remedied without legal action being required.

Nine new houses were erected during the year, three of them by private persons with State assistance.

No action has been taken regarding tubercular milk or cattle. Any diseased meat is buried.

There are 7 "registered" Slaughter-houses, all in use; there are no "licensed" ones.

Since 1920 there has been an epidemic of Scarlet Fever in 1921, when there were 14 cases, and also one of Measles in 1924, when 174 cases were notified. In the five years there were 11 deaths from Influenza. One case of Encephalitis Lethargica occurred during the year. Diphtheria antitoxin and anti-tetanus serum are supplied by the Council, and arrangements have now been made for the examination of swabs and other pathological specimens. It is considered that a Veterinary Inspector should be appointed to examine cows for tuberculosis.

During the five years the inhabitants have made great advances in cleanliness, and have shown a desire for fresh air which was not so noticeable previously.

There were 30 Inspections of Workshops, no written notices being required.

THORNEY RURAL DISTRICT.

Area, 18,959 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £18,189.

Population at Census 1911	...	...	1,902
" " 1921	...	...	2,208
" Mid-year 1925	...	...	2,531 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 464, containing 470 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 22·12. Death-rate, 9·87. Infantile Mortality-rate, 89·28 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 53·57.

The District is low-lying and flat, the village of Thorney being on a small island about 150 acres in extent, with gravelly soil, the rest of the area being some 10 to 20 feet lower, the soil a black vegetable loam with a clay subsoil.

Water for the supply of the district is taken from the River Nene at the Dog-in-a-Doublet Sluice, whence it runs as a canal or river, the so-called Thorney River, to the village, small drains leading off at various points for the supply of farms.

Drains carry off all surplus water, and these drains ultimately empty into the River Nene below Wisbech.

The main industry is agriculture, corn and roots being the principal crops. Many acres formerly in grass have been ploughed during the last sixteen years. Sheep grazing has practically disappeared, and the number of shire horses bred has decreased considerably.

On an average 36 persons receive Poor Law relief, the cost thereof being £7 5s. 6d. weekly. There is but little unemployment, and, as housing is insufficient, gangs of men and women come into the district from time to time for such work as potato setting, lifting, and riddling, and for threshing, &c.

The Peterborough Infirmary and Dispensary is the General Hospital for the district; it contains 75 beds, and there were 852 in-patients, and 2,575 out-patients and casualty cases treated there during 1925, 640 being surgical cases, 530 major operations being performed, and 212 medical cases. A new hospital to accommodate 100 beds is in course of erection.

Some patients from this district attend the Wisbech Hospital. Arrangements exist with Peterborough for the admission into Hospital of cases of Smallpox, and other Infectious Diseases will also be admitted there providing they have enough accommodation. There are no ambulance facilities for either infectious or accident cases; nor are there any resident Nurses or Midwives.

Rain water, or dyke water, boiled and filtered, is used in houses outside the village. Past borings for water resulted only in finding brackish water, unfit for drinking.

Experiment has shown that the present village supply can be improved by increasing the area of the filter beds, and decreasing the rate of filtration, and Dr. Clapham thinks that the necessary alterations to improve the bulk of the supply should be taken in hand as soon as possible.

Some of the houses have water-closets connected with the sewers, their contents flowing to collecting tanks, whence they are pumped on a small sewage farm; others have earth closets, some of these being emptied by the Council, which also supplies a cart for scavenging in the village.

Where housing defects were found, they were remedied without formal notice.

A demolition order made two years ago for three cottages has remained inoperative, as they are in continuous occupation by a family against whom an ejectment order had been made in connection with another house. They are said, however, only to be housed there "temporarily."

The houses in the area are unusually good, the inhabitants being healthy, and free from Infectious Disease. There is no overcrowding.

WHITTLESEY RURAL DISTRICT.

Area, 25,837 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £44,932.

Population at Census 1911	...	...	3,380
" " 1921	...	...	3,422
" Mid-year 1925	...	...	3,514 (estimate).

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 775, containing 784 families.

1925 Statistics:—Birth-rate, 19·06. Death-rate, 13·09. Infantile Mortality-rate, 104·4 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 29·8.

The physical features comprise fen alluvial soil pierced through at certain points by gravel caps and the Oxford clay.

There are no hospitals or other forms of gratuitous medical relief, except the Poor Law, which is fairly well made use of, and a District Nurse, who is supported by voluntary contributions.

There is no provision for Infectious Diseases other than Small-pox; nor are there any arrangements for Laboratory work other than those provided by the County Council, and there are no Adoptive Acts or Bye-laws for sanitary administration.

Several new houses are in course of construction and of contemplation, viz., 6 at Eastrea, 14 at Pond's Bridge, and 30 elsewhere.

The Water Supply is from surface wells, rivers, and dykes, all more or less contaminated. New houses have the advantage of metal tanks and rain-water.

There is no Drainage or Sewerage in the district except a surface water drain at Coates. A few of the better houses have water-closets, but the majority have privy vaults. The new houses at King's Dyke have the pail system. There is no scavenging in the district.

There are 3 registered Slaughter-houses, and two notices were served for the remedy of defects.

Disinfection has been carried out in all cases where Infectious Disease has occurred. No notices were served concerning Cowsheds.

In conclusion, Dr. Waddelow states that there has been no progress made during the past five years in the improvement of the public health.

WISBECH RURAL DISTRICT.

Area, 46,113 acres. Reduced County assessable value, £72,456.

Population at Census 1911 ...	...	9,731
" " 1921 ...	...	12,989
" Mid-year 1925 ...	...	13,730 (estimate)

Inhabited houses at Census 1921, 2,602, containing 2,625 families.

1925 Statistics :—Birth-rate, 19.73. Death-rate, 11.28 (uncorrected). Corrected Death-rate, 10.17 (the factor for correction being 0.901). Infantile Mortality-rate, 73.80 per 1,000 births. Illegitimacy-rate per 1,000 births, 84.87.

The District consists of 8 parishes, lying north, west, and south of Wisbech, and is extremely flat, and essentially rural in character, the density of population being approximately one person to every five acres.

There is still a shortage of cottages throughout the district. There is no system of sewage disposal and no public scavenging.

The Water Supply for a large part of the district is excellent, being supplied by the Wisbech Waterworks Company. Others depend on rain-water stored in underground cisterns.

All Dairies, Cowsheds, Slaughter-houses, and Knackers'-yards have been inspected, and found clean and satisfactory.

The district has been comparatively free from Infectious Diseases.

During the year the area has been inspected by Dr. Gunson and the Sanitary Inspector, and any defects found have been remedied.

III.—PORT.

WISBECH PORT SANITARY AUTHORITY.

The health of the Port has been very good.

The Port Hospital has been inspected, being found always clean and ready for use, the Caretakers doing their work efficiently.

Pilots meet the ships in deep water, and await the Captain's report of freedom from sickness ere going aboard. Should sickness be present, the Port Medical Officer of Health visits the ship and inspects her before she goes in the river.

The Customs Officers board the ship on arrival, and hand out to the Captain information for the crew relating to the arrangement for the treatment of Venereal Disease. If berthed at Sutton Bridge the Medical Officer of Health inspects the ship, but if at Wisbech, the inspection is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector. All ships berthed at Sutton Bridge were found clean and free from rat infection.

Aliens do not land in this Port, so that the cleansing and disinfection of verminous persons is not performed.

There are no arrangements for the reception of wireless messages.

The tonnage entering the Port was—

Foreign	...	...	...	17,108 tons
Coastwise	...	...	...	8,412 „

The principal foreign imports are superphosphate and timber, whilst one cargo consisted of oats. The coastwise imports were potatoes, maize, oilcake, pulp, granite, and barley.

The cockle beds are in deep water, and free from infection.

No case of Infectious Disease occurred, nor was any uncleanness found in the 29 inspections made of foreign vessels, or the 46 inspections of coasters.

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*With the Compliments of the
County Medical Officer of Health
for the Isle of Ely.*

*Public Health Department,
County Hall,
March, Cambs.*

