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*With the compliments of D. G. H. 1911*

Downham Rural District Council.

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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,  
FOR THE  
Year ending 31st December, 1910.

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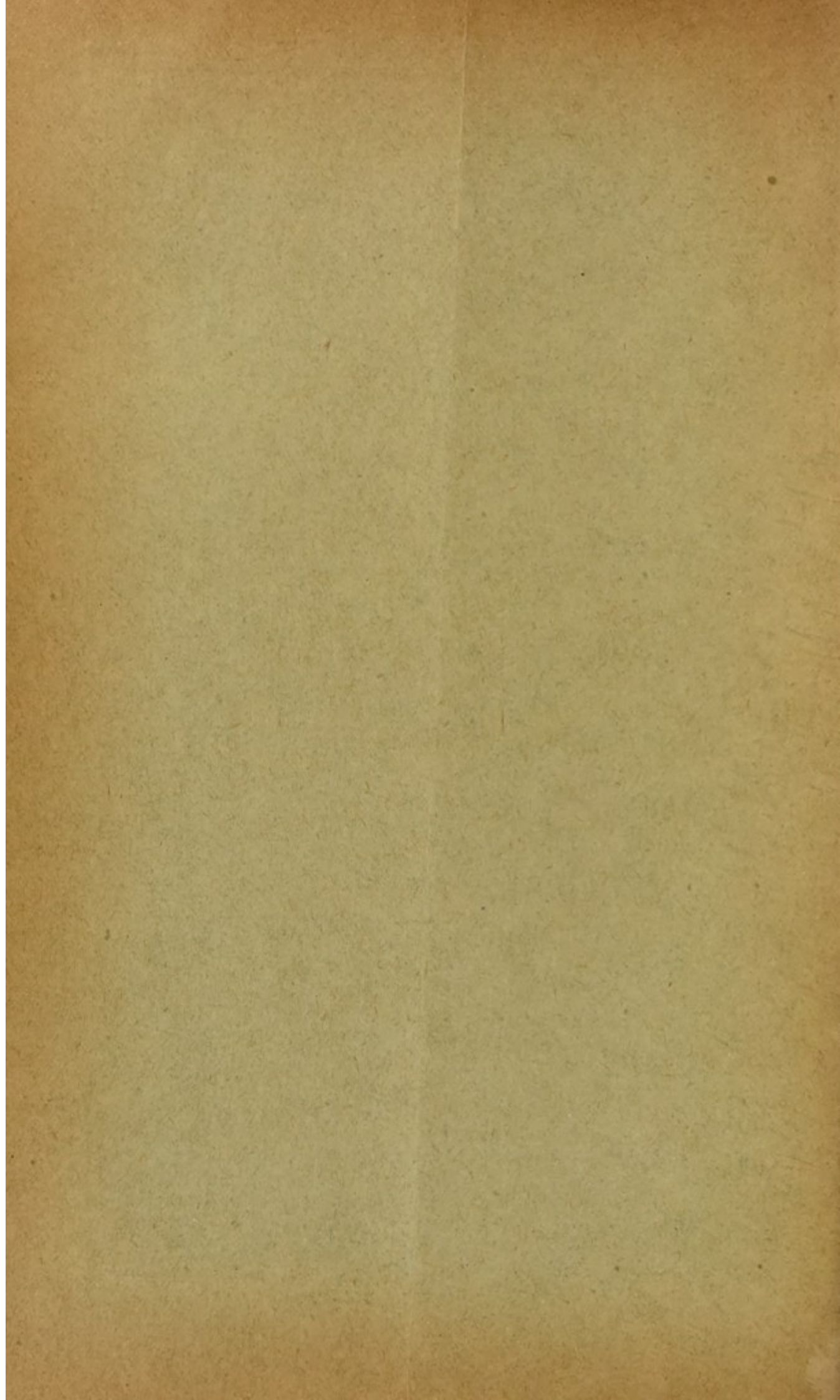
GEO. FREDK. CROSS, M.B., B.S.

*Fellow Royal Institute Public Health.*

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DOWNHAM MARKET,  
Printed by R. WATSON, Bridge Street.







DOWNHAM MARKET,

*March 10th, 1911.*

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS  
OF THE DOWNHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have much pleasure in presenting my Fifteenth Annual Report of the Sanitary Condition and of the work done in the District during the past year.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Dealing as it does with matters well within your own knowledge much of this report will appear superfluous. The instructions of the Local Government Board outline a general scheme as to the manner in which these reports should be drawn up and I have endeavoured as far as possible to conform to this.

As will be seen from the following report a good deal of work has been accomplished, more probably than is generally realized. I am glad to say that there has been no necessity for taking any legal steps. Many of the improvements that have been effected, whether in house property or in dealing with nuisances have been arranged with the interested parties. Such methods of procedure may be slow, but in the end are much more satisfactory.

As in proceeding years the work of the Inspector of Nuisances has been embodied in this report, and some of his reports have been added verbatim.

The health of the district taking it upon the whole has been very good. In spite of the wet weather during the middle of the year there were no epidemics of any serious nature.

The number of notifications of Infectious Disease was particularly low. This is no doubt partly due to the prompt measures taken upon the notification of a disease. Every case has been visited by your Inspector, and where necessary by myself, and a complete record of the sanitary conditions of the house is filed for future reference. A stamped and addressed post card is left to be signed by the practitioner attending when the danger of infection is over and the premises are ready for disinfection.

During the coming year your attention should be directed to the problem of the provision of better houses for the working classes. Also to the report of your Inspector on the village of Hilgay in relation to the overcrowding there and to the water supply.



## PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The Downham Rural District Council comprises an area of 82,834 acres and is the third largest district in the County. It comprises 34 parishes and these are divided into three sub-districts viz., Downham, Wiggenhall, and Fincham. The district might perhaps be better divided into two portions which have marked characteristics differing as regards natural and physical features, occupation of inhabitants, structure of houses and water supply. The river Ouse divides the district into two parts. On the East there is a gentle rising slope with a subsoil of gravel and chalk; this part may be called the upland and is well wooded and the soil is in most parts fairly productive. Some 24 villages, 10 of which have a population of over 600 and 3 over a 1000 are included in this part, and the ordinary agricultural work forms the chief employment of its inhabitants.

To the west is the edge of the great Fen district with a subsoil of dark blue stiff clay and called the lowland portion. The land is well drained and very productive and there are a number of Small Holdings. Market gardening and potato growing give employment to many.

## POPULATION.

The population of the district according to the Census of 1901 was 14,837. The increase of births over deaths since then is 1446. For the past few years I have taken 15,000 as the approximate estimate. This year taking into consideration the rather abnormally small number of deaths and the slightly lower number of births I have estimated the population as 14,500. How far this is correct will be shown at the forthcoming census. My statistics will be calculated from this estimated population and I shall be able to correct them when the Census returns are available.

## HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

It is a point which need not be disputed that the future of the race depends on the removal of all possible hindrances to the development of the young into strong and healthy citizens. The provision of adequate home surroundings is therefore a matter of national concern.

I cannot refrain from quoting an extract from a letter written some 20 years ago by the late Cardinal Manning "He (i.e. Lord R. Churchill) has given great attention to the subject which is one of the most vital to the welfare of the people. The Drink Trade and Bad Housing have destroyed their domestic life and when this is gone neither Criminal Law nor Education can save us for the domestic life of the people is the foundation of the Commonwealth."

Everybody recognises the importance of this nowadays and none more so than your Council, but progress in remedying over-



crowding and its attendant evils is slow. We are all waiting for someone else to begin.

A stimulus and the necessary powers have now been placed in your hands by the

## HOUSING & TOWN PLANNING ETC., ACT 1909.

Mr. John Burns says, "The object of this Bill is to provide a domestic condition for the people in which their physical health, their morals, their character and their whole social condition can be improved."

The provisions of this Act relating to Rural Districts came into force last September and *inter alia* it is directed that

(1.) "The local authority shall as early as practicable take into consideration the provisions of subsection (1) of section 17 of the Act, of 1909, *i.e.* ascertain whether any dwelling house is in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation."

(2.) "The local authority shall make provisions for a thorough inspection of the dwelling houses in the district."

(3.) "The local authority shall cause to be prepared from time to time by the Medical Officer of Health a list of dwelling houses the early inspection of which is desirable."

This inspection to be made in relation to the following matters :—

(1.) "Arrangements for preventing the contamination of water supply."

(2.) "Closet accommodation."

(3.) "Drainage."

(4.) "Condition of house in regard to light, free circulation of air, dampness and cleanliness."

(5.) "Paving, drainage and sanitary condition of the yard and outhouses."

(6.) "Arrangements for deposit of refuse."

(7.) "The existence of any room that may be considered dangerous or unfit."

(8.) "Any defects in other matters which may tend to render the dwelling house dangerous or injurious to the health of an inhabitant."

Anticipating this Order your Inspector and I have devoted as much time as possible to this work during the past year. We decided first of all to take one village, Hilgay, and go through it systematically and in addition inspect and record as many houses elsewhere as called for immediate attention.

This year we have commenced with Southery.



The work of inspection must of necessity be very gradual as far as I am concerned unless provision is made to enable me to devote more time to the work.

According to the Rate Books there are 3,851 inhabited houses in the district. Of this number only 436 have been visited so that some considerable time must elapse before a complete inspection of the district can be made.

In my previous Annual Reports I have repeatedly referred to the general conditions of the houses of the working class in this district and in consequence many improvements have been effected. It has been possible to remedy structural defects, but the greatest difficulty has been to provide for large families, and many cases of overcrowding have had to be left undealt with. I am perfectly certain that in many of the villages, more especially in the lowland portion of the district, there are householders who would be only too glad to avail themselves of better cottages, and are not only willing, but able, to pay a higher rental. The income of many families in the Fen District amounts to over 30/- per week.

There are houses in the lowland portion of the district with an acre of land at a rental of £8. These are never empty and there is no difficulty about the rent, and yet these are far from satisfactory. The rooms are cramped and low, the floors damp and uneven, the walls have to be papered every year, no proper out-buildings, except such temporary ones as the tenants have themselves put up, no drains, and no ashpits.

Provided there is a little land to each cottage the agricultural labourer, certainly in the Fen, can pay from £7 to £8 per year rent. This point should be useful in considering the question of the cost of erecting new cottages.

It cannot be denied that although the cottages on the larger Estates are in fair condition, those in the villages, generally belonging to very small owners, are frequently in a lamentable state. And it must be added that the inclination to rebuild, or repair is decreasing rather than not; and besides there is not the money in an Agricultural District to build or repair.

Too frequently cottages are purchased solely for speculative purposes without a thought for the tenants beyond their rent-paying capacity; the purchaser never intends to spend a farthing on them (possibly he has not much to spend) knowing that the dearth of houses guarantees him a safe and quick return for his money.

The result of the house to house inspection will reveal the need for well built three roomed cottages, with concrete or damp-proof floors, with at least an acre of ground and it will be the duty of your Council to see that steps are taken to ensure this being gradually carried out. How and in what manner it will be best to proceed of course is entirely in your hands.



Having given this question considerable attention I should like to add a few further remarks.

First of all I think it is necessary that there should be some Building Bye-Laws in force in the district. There is a diversity of opinion as to whether or not Bye-Laws retard progress, but in view of the fact that only 11 new cottages were built in 1909, and 17 in 1910, in a district of 34 parishes, it cannot be considered to be so, and one of the advantages of Bye-Laws would be to ensure that the lower floors were built at least 6 inches above ground level. Out of the 436 houses inspected last year 247 were below ground level, and this of course tends to make houses damp. I would therefore suggest that the question of the adoption of Bye-Laws be considered during the coming year. Some years ago a draft of Model Bye-Laws was prepared, but this was not sanctioned by the Local Government Board. I think it would be possible to draft a new set of Bye-Laws suitable to this District which would be sanctioned by the Local Government Board.

The Housing and Town Planning Act. makes it possible to buy land and build cottages.

This could be done by the Parish Councils, the Rural District Council, or the County Council, but I understand that it means taking the money from the ratepayer and building cottages which will be the property of the State.

The legal expenses of purchasing even a quarter acre of land is appreciable, the cost of local inquiry, compulsory powers, the cost of constant supervision by Public Authority and frequent repairs will all add to expense.

Would it not be a more simple matter if a bounty were given on every new cottage fulfilling certain requirements? (In certain Rural Districts I believe a grant is made towards the erection of a certain style of sanitary conveniences).

I have been given to understand that the Land Tax bleeds the poorer Agricultural Counties in an inverse ratio to their wealth. For instance Norfolk sends out of the County 9d. in the pound, and Suffolk 10d., whilst the richer Counties such as Lancashire only sends out .27 of a penny and Durham .68 of a penny (including redemptions). If 5% of this Tax could be allotted to each County in giving premia for new cottages the poorer Counties would receive back a rebate in just proportion to its needs.

There certainly seems to be some need to encourage private enterprise rather than resort to State built and State controlled houses.

From conversations that I have had with some of the Small Holders who a few years ago were penniless and who now possess small banking accounts, I feel sure they would welcome the opportunity of becoming owners of their own homes if they could be assisted in building new cottages, or if these could be built for them



so that by paying a higher rental they would ultimately become the owners.

The County Council have already built 3 new cottages in your District.

In connection with these there has been some difficulty with respect to the provision of drains. Your Council was informed that there was no intention to provide such, and some considerable correspondence ensued.

I think your Council was quite right to insist that drains should be laid. I am at a loss to know how a public body could entertain the idea of doing without them. Slops and other household refuse cannot with impunity be emptied outside the back door, and experience shows that this would be done.

The St. Germans Parish Council three years ago purchased some 13 acres of land for allotments. In December last a letter was addressed to your Council with reference to the erection of dwellings on this land. The proposal is to erect 3 pairs of semi detached dwellings each with 1rd. to 1 acre of land. The Marham Water is available. In the village there are 135 inhabited houses, 6 of which are temporarily empty. The need for new houses is due to there being a scarcity of houses with more than 2 bedrooms. For instance one of the applicants is a groom whose family is obliged to reside outside the district, and another applicant lives in the village in a house too small for the needs of his family.

The matter is still before your council.

You have this year received the following petition from Southery. "We the undersigned, four of the inhabitants and householders in the parish of Southery, note the scarcity of labourers cottages which has for a long while been seriously felt in this parish, and now that the demolition of several cottages in the parish have been recently ordered by the Council, the situation is made worse. We therefore respectfully request that your Authority will exercise the power under part 2 of the Housing Act of 1890 which would remedy the grievance."

It should be stated here that the tenants of the houses (3 in number) referred to as being about to be demolished found other houses in the village, and further that the landlord (I am given to understand) is prepared to rebuild the cottages. If such is the case your Council will be only too glad to rescind the Demolition Order. The Closing order was not asked for until it was ascertained that the tenants could obtain fresh cottages.

The inspector reports as follows :—

In dealing with house property each case must be considered on its merits. The rents of the cottages vary from £2 10s. to £7 per year. £5 being the usual rent for a cottage with a strip of garden attached. Out of this rent the owner has to meet all



charges except the water rate where the Marham water is laid on, which is usually added to the rent.

As to the appearance of a house much depends upon the tenant, although structural defects often render it impossible to keep the house in good order. The difference between a pair of cottages, structural conditions being equal, may be very striking; in one everything presents a clean and tidy appearance whilst next door disorder prevails. 294 informal notices have been issued and 12 statutory notices. It has not been necessary to take legal proceedings, although in three cases the offenders came just within the pale of the law and then carried out the necessary work.

Houses visited for special purposes	...	201
" " " house to house inspection		235
" and premises revisited	...	495
Structural improvements to dwelling houses		21
Dwelling houses cleaned and limewashed		4
" " spouted	...	8
" " overcrowding abated	...	7
" " connected to water main		
(including Barroway Drove)	...	169
Dwelling houses provided with new cisterns		5
" tank " " " underground		
" tank	...	1

Under Article 5 of the Housing and Town Planning Act (1909) the following Table gives the required information according to Section 17 of the Act.

**TABLE A.**

Number of dwelling houses inspected	436
Number of dwelling houses which on inspection were considered to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	12
Number of representations to Local Authority with a view to making a closing order	8
Number of closing orders made	3
Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied without making the closing orders	3
Number of dwelling houses put into a fit state for human habitation after making closing orders	Nil
General character of defects found.—Walls dilapidated, roof unsafe, no spouting, floors uneven, and below ground level, houses damp, badly lighted.	



TABLE B.—NEW HOUSES.

PARISH	DESCRIPTION	BUILT FOR	No. of Rooms.		WATER SUPPLY.
Boughton ... ..	Pair of cottages ...	R. Harwin, Esq ...	3 living	3 sleeping	Rain water, cemented under ground tanks 700 gs. pump
Denver ... ..	Two detached cottages	Norfolk C. C. ...	3 "	3 "	Rain water, galvanized iron cisterns 200 gallons
Hilgay ... ..	Cottage ... ..	M. Stocks, Esq ...	3 "	3 "	Ditto ditto
" Ten mile bank	Pair of cottages ...	C. Wright, Esq ...	3 "	3 "	Ditto ditto
Runcton South ...	Bungalow ... ..	W. Warren, Esq ...	2 "	2 "	Well and rain water cisterns 150 gallons
Southery ... ..	House ... ..	G. H. Attlesey, Esq	3 "	3 "	Rain water galvanized iron cisterns 350 gallons
" ... ..	" ... ..	J. W. Porter, Esq	3 "	4 "	Ditto " 400 gallons
" Farther Fen	Pair of cottages ...	Col. Taylor ... ..	2 "	3 "	Ditto 200 gallons
Stow Bardolph ...	House ... ..	R. Lewis, Esq ...	3 "	3 "	Marham water & rain water cisterns 350 gallons
Watlington ... ..	" ... ..	A. Turner, Esq. ...	4 "	4 "	Marham water
Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen	" ... ..	W. Ground, Esq ...	3 "	3 "	Marham water
Wiggenhall St. Peter	" ... ..	Norfolk C. C. ...	2 "	3 "	Rain water galvanized iron cisterns 350 gallons
Welney ... ..	" ... ..	J. Smart, Esq. ...	3 "	3 "	Ditto 200 gallons



## TOTAL 17 HOUSES

*Denver*—House converted into a pair of cottages, each with 3 living and 3 bedrooms.

*Shouldham Thorpe*—Cottage rebuilt.

*Magdalen*—House converted into a pair of cottages each with 3 living and 3 bedrooms.

*Magdalen*—Barn converted into a dwelling house, with 2 living and 3 bedrooms.

## OVERCROWDING.

Out of 436 houses inspected defects were found in 284 for which notices have been issued.

As in most Rural Districts there is a scarcity of houses with 3 or more bedrooms, and overcrowding is frequently met with. During the year 12 cases have been dealt with and 7 have been abated.

TABLE C.

No. of Case	Bed-rooms.	Total Cubical contents	In-mates.	Airspace per head	How Abated.
1	1	750	5	150	Removed to larger house
2	2	1485	9	165	„ „
3	2	980	7	140	4 adults & 2 children left; 1 adult and 2 children returned
4	2	1989	10	195	Another bedroom added, giving an extra 1248 cubic feet
5	2	1478	7	211	Two adults left
6	1	702	7	100	Family removed out of district
7	2	1417	11	128	Family removed into house formed with railway coaches

In cases of overcrowding where there is no separation of sexes and where upgrown children sleep in the same room as the parents, overcrowding is then in its worst form. Regarding case 7, which was one of the worst cases, 8 of the children slept together in a back bedroom, which was devoid of furniture, there being not even a bedstead, a heap of rags on the floor did service as bedclothes.

As there was not a larger house to be obtained in the village the man's employer, not wishing to lose a good workman, purchased three disused railway coaches and has converted them into a dwelling. He has also provided them with furniture and a complete set of new bedclothes.



The present conditions are a decided improvement upon the former conditions, but there is not the minimum air space per head (i.e. 300 cubic feet). There is however, separation of sexes, good ventilation and good bedding. The Council have, therefore, deferred the order for an indefinite period.

#### HILGAY.

*December 16th, 1910.*

The parish covers 7,860 acres, 6,000 of which are Fen. This report deals with the village portion. Hilgay is situate  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Downham Market, on the main road, which almost equally bisects the village.

The river Wissey, a tributary of the Ouse, forms the north boundary.

The soil consists of rich clay and gravel.

#### HOUSING.

There are 174 houses, a total population of 653 (504 adults and 149 children) children over 10 are counted as adults for sanitary purposes.

Average inmates per house 3.75 approximately there are five cases of overcrowding, these are difficult to deal with, owing to the scarcity of houses, the overcrowding occurs in houses containing only 2 bedrooms,

9 houses contain	1 living and	1 sleeping room
2 " "	2 " "	1 " "
2 " "	1 " "	2 " "
108 " "	2 " "	2 " "
5 " "	2 " "	3 " "
7 " "	3 " "	2 " "
11 " "	3 " "	3 " "
1 house contains	2 " "	4 " "
7 houses contain	3 " "	4 " "
1 house contains	4 " "	3 " "
9 houses contain	4 " "	4 " "
7 " "	4 " "	5 " "
2 " "	4 " "	6 " "
3 " "	5 " "	8 " "

Out of the 174 houses 160 are built of brick, 14 are built of carr stone and brick. In 142 instances the roofs are tiled, 27 slated, 6 slated and tiled, and 1 thatched. The floors of 156 houses are bricked, or tiled, in 94 the floors are below ground level, in 62 above ground level. 146 are through houses, 134 having doors back and front, and 12 with doors front and side. 22 houses each have but one door. 6 houses are back to back, 2 of these each have 2 doors front and side. 15 houses are not spouted.

#### FOOD STORAGE.

52 houses are provided with pantries, in 48 houses the food is kept in a cupboard under the stairs, and in 74 cases the food cupboard is in the living room, generally next the fireplace. It is only in the pantries where any means of ventilation is provided.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

There are 30 wells each fitted with a pump.—One serves 16 houses; 2 each serve 7 houses; 1 serves 6 houses; 3 each serves 3 houses; 6 each serve 2 houses; 16 each serve 1 house. Total number of houses obtaining drinking water from wells with pumps 73.



There are 12 wells, each fitted with a windlass.—1 serves 15 houses ; 1 serves 10 houses : 1 serves 7 houses ; 2 each serve 4 houses ; 4 each serve 2 houses ; 3 each serve 1 house. Total number of houses obtaining drinking water from wells 51. The wells vary in depth from 6 to 20 feet. The water in 6 wells (pump) and 5 wells (windlass) is unfit for drinking purposes. The occupants of 15 houses, obtain their drinking water on suffrage. In 35 cases the drinking water is obtained from the river. 23 at point A (near to the bridge) 12 at point B (approximately 120 yards below the bridge).

#### DRAINAGE,

80 houses are drained. 25 are connected with the sewers. 11 drains discharge into dykes. 7 drains are connected with cesspools. 2 houses are fitted with baths. 23 houses are fitted with sinks. There are 35 trapped (earthenware) gullies and 21 open gullies. 94 houses are without drains.

Paving at rear of houses. In 22 cases the yards are paved. In 58 cases the approach to the door is paved. In 28 cases the pathway is paved. In 66 cases there is no paving.

#### SEWERAGE.

There are 5 lengths of sewers. 2 consisting of 9-in. glazed pipes (chiefly). 2 consisting of 6-in. glazed pipes (chiefly). 1 consisting of Brick on edge (one brick wide. 2 sewers discharge into the river direct, 3 discharge into dykes, and ~~alternately~~ into the river. One enters the river above point A\*, 2 above point B\*, and 2 below point B\*. The sewerage enters the river untreated.

\* see water supply.

#### PRIVY ACCOMMODATION.

150 houses each have separate accommodation. 24 houses are without separate accommodation. There are 125 pail closets, 27 privies (vaults), 3 water closets (not connected to sewers).

There is a system of scavenging, the Parish Council possess a soil cart, and the R.D.C., contract for a weekly removal of the contents of pail closets.

#### HOUSE REFUSE, STORAGE & REMOVAL.

There are 7 bricked ash pits and in 12 cases bins or tubs are provided, in 160 cases the refuse is placed in a heap and removed periodically, with a few exceptions where a gozzle hole is made in the garden.

During the past year the following improvements have been carried out at Hilgay. 9 trapped gullies and 74 yards of 4-in. glazed socket piped drains laid. 12 new closets erected, 10 privies converted to pail closets, 21 privies repaired, 6 houses spouted and 2 structural improvements to houses. Estimated cost of such work £64 16s. 6d. The above work is included in the foregoing report.

Yours obediently,

S. C. RIGG.

This report of your inspector was accompanied by a map of the village showing the Drainage. Water Supply, Wells, &c., and was only presented at the close of the year and will doubtless receive your consideration during the forthcoming year. As I have embodied this in my Annual Report I did not think it necessary to forward a special copy to the Local Government Board and the County Council.



## WATER SUPPLY.

The total rainfall for the year in Downham Market, which is about the centre of the district was 26·43. Last year in comparing the rainfall of West Norfolk with East Norfolk the latter was lower, but during the past year it has been higher, the records from Smallburgh being 30·53, Little Dunham 31·99 and Diss 28·53. The lowest rainfall was in March '68 and the highest in December 4·02, May 3·58 and July 3·34.

In the upland portion of the district there are two chief sources of water supply. The first is by wells, which are often very shallow and liable to surface pollution. The second is by obtaining a supply from the Wisbech Water Works Company, and is referred to in this report as the Marham Water. This water is collected from springs in the chalk at Marham and is carried through the district to Wisbech. There appears to be an unlimited supply which is of excellent quality.

In the lowland portion of the district there are no wells and the inhabitants, where there is no possibility of obtaining the Marham Water, rely upon rain water collected in cisterns or tanks. When this supply fails they have recourse to river or ditch water. Many of the houses have tiled roofs which at times render the water in the tanks very unfit. The County Medical Officer of Health recommends that a Roberts Separator would be useful in purifying the water collected from the roofs.

None of the water in the district is plumbo solvent.

With the exception of the Fen portion of the district there has been no shortage of water during the past year.

In my last Annual Report I drew your attention to the necessity of reopening negotiations with the Wisbech Water Works Company to extend their main from Magdalen to Nordelph. I was very anxious that this should be carried out and on making a house to house visitation I found that nearly all the inhabitants were anxious to have the Marham Water. I attended a meeting of the Parish Council which was largely attended, over seventy of the principal householders being present. A unanimous vote was passed asking your Council to give the guarantee required. It was thought that a special rate could be levied on that portion of the Parish interested, and your Council was prepared to carry this out subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board. The negotiations with the Wisbech Water Works Company were satisfactorily concluded and preparations for the commencement of pipes were made when we received the following reply from the Local Government Board.

“ Sir.

I am directed by the Local Government Board to advert to your letters of the 4th ultimo and 19th instant with reference to the proposal of the Rural District Council of Downham that a portion of the Parish of Stow Bardolph should be constituted a special drainage district for the purpose of charging



thereon exclusively any sums which the Council may be called upon to pay to the Wisbech Water Works Company in respect of a supply of water to the area in question.

I am to point out in reply that the Public Health Act, 1875, contemplates that in all ordinary cases the civil parish shall in Rural Districts, be the area upon which special expenses incurred in respect of it shall be charged, and that when an area is formed into a special Drainage District it becomes a separate contributory place for all the purposes of the Public Health Acts.

It is contrary to the general practice of the Board to entertain applications for their approval of the constitution of Special Drainage Districts where the sole object to be achieved is to limit the area proposed to be charged with the cost of providing a supply of water, and in the present case it has not been shown that there are any such exceptional circumstances as would justify the Board in departing from their practice.

The Board do not gather from the information furnished, how the rest of the Parish of Stow Bardolph is at present supplied with water or whether that supply is sufficient and satisfactory.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. S. DAVY,

Assistant Secretary."

This reply placed the Council in a very difficult position and it was necessary that some immediate steps should be taken otherwise the whole question would have been dropped and it is doubtful whether the Wisbech Water Works Company would have entertained the idea again. Together with your Clerk I called a meeting of a few of the principal ratepayers in the Parish and thanks to their generosity the £200 required was privately guaranteed.

The work of laying the pipes was immediately commenced and in six weeks was finished. I understand there are 140 houses out of 160 now supplied with the water.

Thanks are due to Messrs. J. W. Ambrose, C. Beart, W. Hutson, G. Johnson, J. Morton, Senr., J. Morton, Junr., E. P. Rowell, and A. Thorpe, Junr., in assisting this work by carting the pipes free of charge, which considerably reduced the cost of the work.

At the early part of the year a complaint was received with reference to a watercourse at Saddlebow. Together with your Inspector I met the Medical Officer of Health and the Borough Surveyor of Lynn, whose district joins at this point. The watercourse in question is vested under the Court of Sewers. There is no doubt that the stream is liable to a certain amount of pollution. Some of the inhabitants are in the habit of using this water, which should not be used for drinking purposes. A meeting of the interested owners which I attended, was called with a view to obtaining a better supply. It was decided to approach the Wisbech Water Works Company with a view to obtaining a supply of Marham Water by extending the main from St. Germans, a distance



of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Failing this it was suggested to provide a Public Pump from an existing well. However I took samples of water from this well and found it to be unsatisfactory. This was a very hard water, containing a large proportion of saline constituents. The figures for nitrates, albumenoid ammonia and oxygen were all high, pointing to the presence of oxidised and unoxidised organic matter. The question of getting a supply from the river Nar was also considered. I analysed samples of this and although I found it satisfactory I could not recommend it as a public supply in its present state owing to the uncertainty of the state of the river at various seasons of the year due to natural causes. The cost of the Marham Water was ascertained to involve a yearly guarantee of £25. This although being less than the probable cost of the other two schemes was considered excessive at a General Meeting (which I attended) and the matter was allowed to drop. The Marham Scheme is still, however, possible and failing this the defaulting owners will be called upon to provide suitable tanks.

In the village of Hilgay the Water Supply is unsatisfactory as is reported elsewhere. There are 30 wells mostly shallow and liable to contamination. I have analysed the water in several and found them all to be more or less polluted. A new well was sunk last year on one property and the water was far from good. At the lower part of the village the inhabitants drink the water from the river Wissey. The water in this river which is a running stream is fairly good above the point where the Hilgay sewer discharges into the river. It is however polluted by the sewer at Stoke Ferry some 6 or 7 miles higher up. The question of providing a better supply of water for this village must be considered during the coming year. The only satisfactory solution, in my opinion will be to obtain a supply of Marham Water by extending the main from Downham through Denver (where it would also be appreciated) to Hilgay a distance of about 3 miles.

I have analysed 23 samples of water. One sample was sent to London for verification of my analysis.

Number of wells cleaned out	...	...	16
„ „ new wells sunk (in 2 the water was found unfit for drinking)	...	...	4
Number of 200 gall. galvanised iron cisterns provided.	...	...	5
Pump fixed	...	...	2
Water certificates granted to new houses	...	...	17
„ „ deferred	...	...	2
Houses connected with water main including Barroway Drove, etc.	...	...	169



## POLLUTION OF RIVERS.

In my last Annual Report I referred to the pollution of the river Ouse, more especially at the Ten Mile Bank Pumping Engine. I pointed out that the Ely Rural District Council denied that the sewage from Littleport could have access to the river at this point. In a report by one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board on the Sanitary Administration of that District it is shown that such pollution is possible, and it further states that the Ouse "receives the drainage from a considerable population elsewhere."

Owing to the drain which leads to the Pumping Station having been cleaned out there have not been any complaints during the past year, but unless the discharge of sewage is stopped there will always remain a strong menace to the public health at the Ten Mile Bank. One case of Enteric Fever occurred on the Bank and the river water had been used for drinking.

The river Wissey is polluted by the Sewers at Stoke Ferry and Hilgay. This is referred to elsewhere. The St. Johns Eau is polluted by the Downham Sewage, but since most of the houses in Downham West are supplied with Marham Water there is not so much cause for anxiety as formerly.

## SEWAGE AND DRAINAGE.

FINCHAM.—In February a portion of the sewer in the main road was relaid. 52 yards of 6 inch glazed pipe, a trapped gulley and 2 inspection chambers were put in at a cost of £8 half of which was paid by the County Council, as the sewer takes the surface water from the main road. In June 2 new lengths of sewer were laid down on the Stoke Ferry Road, 178 yards of 6 inch glazed pipe and 5 inspection chambers were put in at a cost of £25 10s. In each case the work was let by tender and was carried out by local contractor.

SHOULDHAM.—One portion of the sewer in Westgate Street has been repaired at a cost of £1 9s. 10d.

The sewers at Hilgay, Stoke Ferry, St. German's, and Magdalen have been regularly flushed.

### Other Work—

- 9 dykes have been cleaned out, after informal notice
- 182 drains have been examined
- 89 drains found defective
- 194 yards of 6-in. glazed socket pipes have been laid
- 512 „ 4-in. „ „ „ „
- 66 trapped earthenware gullies fixed
- 11 sink wastes disconnected
- 5 new sinks provided
- 10 cesspools constructed



House scavenging is in vogue at Fincham, Hilgay and Downham West. A report upon the sanitary condition of Downham West was printed in last year's Annual Report. The work has been carried out as recommended. The Inspector at your meeting recommended that a scavenger's cart be purchased for use at Downham West and submitted a design for the cart to be made locally and this was accepted by the Council and tenders invited. An order was placed with a local firm to provide a cart as per specification for the sum of £9 15s.

### MILK SUPPLY.

Regulations with respect to Dairies, Cowshed with Milk Shops have been in force in this district since 1905.

There are 13 dairies and cowsheds registered in the district, 2 having been registered since 1910. From 3 of these the milk is not purveyed but used in stock rearing, small quantities only being sold.

There are 116 cows on registered premises. One case of serious overcrowding was met with, but this has been remedied, the roof of the cowshed having been raised 5 feet, giving an additional air space of 2700 cubic feet.

32 cowsheds have been inspected. Verbal notice was given, as to cleansing and whitewashing, in 8 cases and all were complied with. From 18 of the premises inspected the milk is not purveyed, but is chiefly made into butter, or is used in stock rearing, only a small quantity being sold to neighbours.

It is often a difficult matter for the cottagers to obtain new milk, they mostly have to be satisfied with skim milk and even this is sometimes difficult to obtain.

From 3 registered dairies milk is sent to London. The condition of two of these is fairly satisfactory but in the third the cowsheds do not meet with the requirements of your Bye Laws, in so far as no provision is made for drainage, the limewashing is not regularly carried out and the manure is allowed to accumulate in the cowsheds and in the yards.

### PRIVY ACCOMMODATION.

Approximately the numbers of each type of closets are :—

Water closets	...	...	140
Privy vaults	...	...	1600
Earth closets	...	...	1500

In a Rural District it is difficult to decide which is the best type of privy, each case must be taken individually. The water closet is undoubtedly the best form, but unfortunately cannot often be resorted to owing to the absence of a sewage scheme: Where the drinking supply is obtained from shallow wells earth closets are by far the best means of dealing with human excreta, but



these are very often improperly used. To make them a success two things are necessary, one is plenty of earth and the other is the (at least) weekly removal of the contents. The great difficulty is to get the users to conform to this. Where a pail closet is not satisfactory it is generally due to improper construction, neglect, or carelessness. The chief disadvantage is that such a system requires more attention than the vault type of privy.

Where there is no well to pollute and the privy is a good distance from the house, the privy system with properly constructed vaults and of such a size as to render the emptying necessary 3 or 4 times a year, is quite satisfactory. During the year cases of abuse have been met with. One in which the vault (a double one to serve two privies) had not been emptied for more than 10 years. Another, for which it was necessary to serve a Statutory Notice, had not been emptied for more than 20 years and the contents of the vaults were overflowing on to a neighbour's garden. In another case the occupier boastfully asserted that the vault had never been emptied since it was constructed, which must have been many years ago as the privy was in a most dilapidated condition.

New Privies (vaults) erected	...	8
„ Closets (pail)	...	34
Privies converted into pail closets...		36
„ repaired	...	45
Vaults emptied (after notice)	...	28
New ash pits constructed	...	5
Sanitary dust bins provided	...	2

#### SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

It has not been necessary to take any action under this Act.  
Slaughter Houses—

Number on register	...	25
„ of visits	...	44
Defects found	...	4
„ remedied	...	4
Carcasses examined	...	50

Three unsound carcasses were surrendered and destroyed. In one slaughter house a proper tank on wheels is in use for the removal of refuse.

#### FACTORIES & WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.

Special attention has been given during the past year to the Bakehouses and Workshops in the district with a result that there are now 152 on the register compared with 63 last year.

A copy of the returns sent to the Home Office is attached to this report.

Factories—

Brewery	...	1
Wheelwright and Wood Sawyer	...	1
Flour and Corn Millers	...	12



## Workshops—

Bakers ... ..	32
Blacksmiths ... ..	23
Carpenters and Builders ... ..	26
Cycle repairers... ..	5
Dressmakers and Milliners ... ..	3
Plumbers ... ..	6
Saddlers ... ..	7
Shoemakers ... ..	24
Tailors ... ..	4
Wheelwrights ... ..	13
Miscellaneous ... ..	9

Total ... .. 152

## No. of Inspections—

Bakehouses ... ..	54
Workshops ... ..	98
Number of defects found ... ..	6
„ „ remedied ... ..	5
Notices for Limewashing ... ..	6
„ carried out ... ..	6
Notices of occupation received from H.M. Inspector of Factories ... ..	8

There was but one serious defect, a workshop in a dangerous condition, and, after service of notice, this was rebuilt.

## OTHER NOTICES.

Informal letter and preliminary notices issued ... ..	294
Statutory notices issued ... ..	12
Outstanding December 31st, 1909 ... ..	40
Notices complied with ... ..	246
Outstanding December 31st, 1910 ... ..	88

## CANAL BOATS ACT.

Boats inspected ... ..	12
Cabins requiring painting ... ..	1
Masters would not produce certificates	2
Boat unregistered ... ..	1
Boat with no provision for drinking water ... ..	1
Certificate did not identify owner ... ..	1
Boats not properly marked ... ..	2

## PETROLEUM ACTS.

Visits to examine stores ... ..	12
Licenses renewed ... ..	6
New licenses granted ... ..	2



## SCHOOLS.

There are 26 schools in the District. The total number of children on the Register is 2914.

The average number of weeks the schools were open during the year was 45. The highest percentage of attendance for the whole District for any one week was 93.82 (week ending April 15th), the Average for the whole County during that week was 74.29. The highest number of children absent for the whole week in any one week was 240 (week ending December 16th).

In view of the fact that a large proportion of the children, more especially in the Fen, have a considerable distance to walk to school the attendance has been remarkable good.

The Medical inspection of school children has been carried out by the Staff of the County Medical Officer of Health who is also the School Medical Officer,

The following is an extract from Memorandum on the Medical Inspection of Children, 1907.

"It is unnecessary to emphasise the objection to a dual jurisdiction in such matters as the sanitary control of school premises and the notification and prevention of the spread of infectious diseases in which the duties of the Medical Officer of Health and the school Medical Officer necessarily and obviously overlap. If they are to be effectively carried out the interests and activities of the School Medical Officer must extend over the whole environment of the child. School hygiene cannot be divorced from home hygiene and this in turn is intimately bound up with the hygienic conditions of the community. Efficiency and economy require, therefore, an organic relationship between the daily work of the school authority and of the authority responsible for the administration of the wider branches of public health, etc."

In accordance with these views, I have endeavoured to work in conjunction with the School Medical Officer. This has entailed a considerable amount of extra work. The Head Teachers in sending their lists of absentees to the School Medical Officer forward a duplicate to me and whenever it has been possible I have visited the school and, more often than not, have had to visit the homes of the absentees. During the year under this head alone I have received 76 lists and have made 27 special visits. These visits were not made in connection with notifiable infectious diseases, but for such complaints as headache, sickness, sore throat, verminous heads, scabies or spots, and children being badly clothed or dirty. A great deal of this extra work in connection with the Schools cannot reasonably be expected of your Medical Officer of Health, although I believe it can best and most economically be done by him. I think it would only be fair if the Norfolk Education Committee recognised this and would arrange with your Council that some remuneration should be made for any such work as they may require.

Dr. Nash in his Annual Report as School Medical Officer speaks at some length upon the cleanliness of children especially as regards vermin of the head and body. In order to obtain some degree of amelioration the schools should be visited at least once a month.



I found in the course of my inspections many children suffering from verminous heads. Great difficulty has been experienced in dealing with these since many parents will not or cannot take the trouble necessary to destroy the vermin. It is very hard on those parents whose homes are clean, and whose children come to school clean and healthy to have them infected with this loathsome complaint. The School Medical Officer whom I have consulted on several occasions has issued printed cards of instructions for dealing with verminous heads. Some of the parents on receiving these have promptly thrown them in the fire.

At one school I found some children whose clothing and general condition were in a deplorable condition. On visiting the home I found this to be extremely filthy. After a good deal of trouble the house has now been considerably improved both inside and outside and the children on my last visit were much better clothed and cleaner.

The health of the children has upon the whole been very good. The schools at Stoke, Wretton and Wormagay were closed by the School Medical Officer for Measles.

At Marham the school has been reconstructed and amongst the improvements a small dining room has been provided. Some 20 children stay to dinner but they had nothing except water to drink. A kettle and some cups have been provided and at my request Messrs. Cadbury & Bros. kindly sent some Cocoa, sufficient to last two months, whilst the Rector promised to provide the milk and sugar. During the winter months such provision will be greatly appreciated. I have further suggested that the children themselves pay a small weekly sum towards a fund for providing Cocoa and I am sure no parent would grudge a small contribution.

The Head Teacher writes—

Feb. 10th, 1911

“The Cocoa scheme is working well and is much appreciated. There is no difficulty in defraying the expense.”

During my visits to the Schools I have counted the number of handkerchiefs amongst the children, I found that not more than 60% brought these with them, some of the handkerchiefs were very dirty, more like pieces of dirty rag. This is a more important point than it might appear. Children without handkerchiefs are much more liable to spread disease. A child with a cold or with a sore throat borrows, or lends, a handkerchief and in this way spreads the complaint.

Many of the Schools are now provided with earth closets. In none of these is there any provision for putting earth in the pails. This I consider highly necessary. If children are taught at School how to properly use pails when they get home they would see the advantage of carrying out the same process. The cost of providing a small wooden box together with a shovel would be very small. The condition of some of the pails, both at the Schools and elsewhere, is often most revolting.



BARROWAY DROVE—Good School. Big class room rather crowded, 60 children present, built for 50. Infants class room lighting not good. Playground wants gravelling. Cloak room accommodation insufficient. Type of Privy—Vaults, not ventilated, covers defective. Marham Water has been laid on. New lavatory required to replace small sinks.

BARTON—Good School. Lighting might be improved by replacing sash windows with modern windows. Drainage not satisfactory. Present gully should be replaced by trapped gullies. Type of Privy—Vaults.

BOUGHTON—Excellent School. Type of Privy—Vaults.

CRIMPLESHAM—Good School. Ventilation not good. No water supply.

DENVER—Good School and everything satisfactory. No water supply.

FINCHAM—School satisfactory. Defective Urinal has been repaired. There is still no water supply or lavatory accommodation seeing that the water main runs past the school gate it should not be very expensive to lay the Marham Water on and construct a lavatory.

FORDHAM—Satisfactory.

HILGAY—Modern School. Ventilation—no extraction for foul air. Water supply not satisfactory. Urinal should be flushed more frequently. Type of Privy—Pail, these should be emptied at least twice a week.

HOLME—Ventilation in large class room is still unsatisfactory. The only ventilation in the roof is one small trap door 16 inches by 8 inches, and this is seldom opened. One small circular window can be opened at the north gable. The other ventilation is by windows and this is not effectual. There is a fair inlet for fresh air, but the outlet for foul air is very deficient. These remarks apply to all three rooms. Sanitary conveniences satisfactory, earth closets, nothing is used to put in the pails. Greater attention should be paid to the cleanliness of the girls closets. The pump in the girls lavatory has been repaired but it is now out of repair again. The lavatory basins are iron and are not satisfactory. Playground requires regravelling.

MARHAM—School has been rebuilt during the year. A small room for meals has been provided. Marham water laid on. New sanitary conveniences have been constructed. One provided for girls has pail closets, these pails are emptied into a covered shed at the back of the building and mixed with soil. A complaint having been made as to this excreta not being properly deodorised, I made



an inspection. This system of dealing with the excreta is a good one, but in this particular case sufficient space has not been allowed and the soil used was not sufficiently dry. I advised the Managers to have this cleaned out periodically. I also asked the Managers to place a small box of dry earth in each closet. Playground has been regravelled.

MAGDALEN—Ventilation not good. Sanitary conveniences were very offensive, at time of visit, structurally they are not good and should be converted into pail or water closets. Marham water should be laid on.

SALTER'S LODGE—New porcelain basins in lavatory. Marham Water laid on. Boys vaults improved. Roof light fixed in each privy. Drains overhauled.

SHOULDHAM—Ventilation not good. In infants class room galleries have been removed and a window enlarged. Cloak room accommodation unsatisfactory. No water supply. This is the only school in the district heated by hot water pipes.

SOUTHERY—Large School, very satisfactory and in good condition throughout.

STOW BRIDGE—School satisfactory. Marham water has been laid on. School House unsatisfactory,

STOKE FERRY—School satisfactory. Drainage has been reconstructed.

St. GERMAN'S—General condition of School very satisfactory. Considerable improvements have been effected. Ventilation good, Boyle's ventilators, Hopper Windows. Glass screens separating big class room. Heating excellent. Rooms bright and cheereful. Floor in large class room rather worn and will required relaying shortly. Many of the desks are new (with back rests) only a few old desks. Lavatories supplied with Marham water. Boys lavatory not properly trapped (at date of visit) orders have been given for this to be done, Sanitary conveniences well constructed but privy vaults smelt and should be emptied more often. It should be possible, and certainly would be beneficial, if those were converted into water closets. Childrens boots and clothes when wet are sometimes dried in the Head Teachers house.

TEN MILE BANK—Walls have been cleaned and painted. Wash basins unsatisfactory.

WATLINGTON—Good School. Satisfactory.

WELNEY (WEST)—Lighting bad as reported last year.



WELNEY (100-FT. BANK)—Doorway has been blocked up and new firegrate inserted. Cast iron stove abolished and replaced by modern firegrate. School buildings still unsatisfactory.

WIMBOTSHAM—Unsatisfactory. In large school room wood-work of windows is rotten, roof defective and rain comes through. Floor in bad condition. No satisfactory arrangements for washing. The Marham water has been laid on. Type of Privies—Vaults. This is a case where they could be readily converted into water closets.

WEREHAM—Two new large windows have been put in each end of room and a Boyle's ventilator fixed in roof of main room. Cloak room accommodation insufficient. Infants room draughty. Privies in good condition but no provision made for earth to be put into pails. No provision for washing. Playground divided.

WEST DEREHAM—School has been thoroughly painted and distempered during the year. Boys playground has been tarred. All school buildings satisfactory. Lavatory conveniences satisfactory.

WORMEGAY—Good School. Lavatory accommodation not good.

WRETTON—School satisfactory. Urinal has been improved. Type of Privies—Vaults. Vaults were emptied after Notice had been served.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The total number of Infectious Diseases notified during the year was 39, and represent 32 infected premises. This number does not include the cases of Consumption notified under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations Act, 1908, which will be found elsewhere. This number again compares most favourably with the past 15 years. There is no isolation hospital in the district. A small isolation tent with 4 beds is kept in reserve for a possible outbreak of Small Pox.

In my report of 1908 I suggested two alternatives for the better isolation of patients. One I am afraid at present is out of the question, i.e., of utilising a block of the present Workhouse for the joint use of the Rural and Urban District Councils, and the other was the acquisition of a cottage to a group of villages.

During the past two years the number of notifications of infectious cases has been very small and there has really been no need for hospital isolation or even to secure a cottage. It has



been possible (probably more by good luck than anything else) to check any spread of Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria. But, although so far we have been fortunate it is necessary to look ahead. The County Medical Officer of Health in his last Annual Report has suggested two or three Fever Hospitals for the County. This I consider by far the most feasible proposition. There would be very little difficulty in moving a case from any part of this district to somewhere between Swaffham and Dereham, providing the Hospital sent a motor ambulance.

Cases reported and inquired into ...	...	39
Rooms disinfected ...	...	40

The following table shows the distribution throughout the district :—

**TABLE D.**

DISTRICT.	Scarlet Fever.	Diph- theria.	Enteric.	Erysi- pelas.	Total.
<b>DOWNHAM DISTRICT—</b>					
Hilgay ...	3	...	...	5	8
Southery ...	1	...	...	1	2
Ten Mile Bank...	...	...	1	...	1
Welney, 100 feet bank	6	...	...	1	7
Denver ...	...	...	...	1	1
Downham West	...	...	...	1	1
<b>WIGGENHALL DISTRICT—</b>					
Stow Bridge ...	5	...	...	1	6
Stow, Nordelph	3	...	...	...	3
St. Germans ...	...	...	1	...	1
Magdalen ...	...	1	1	...	2
Holme ...	...	...	1	1	2
Wormegay ...	1	...	...	...	1
Runcton ...	1	...	...	...	1
<b>FINCHAM DISTRICT—</b>					
Marham ...	...	1	...	...	1
Wretton ...	...	...	...	1	1
Wereham ...	...	...	1	...	1
<b>TOTALS</b> ...	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>39</b>



The following table shows the prevalence of these diseases throughout the various months of the year :—

**TABLE E.**

MONTH.	Scarlet Fever	Diph- theria	Enteric.	Erysi- pelas.	Total.
January ... ..	1	1	1	1	4
February ... ..	6	...	1	1	8
March ... ..	2	...	...	3	5
April ... ..	4	...	1	2	7
May ... ..	1	...	...	1	2
June ... ..	...	...	...	...	...
July ... ..	1	1	1	...	3
August ... ..	...	...	...	...	...
September... ..	...	...	...	...	...
October ... ..	...	...	1	1	2
November... ..	1	...	...	...	1
December ... ..	4	...	...	3	7
	20	2	5	12	39

The following table compares the number of principal notifiable diseases during the past 15 years :—

**TABLE F.**

YEAR	Scarlet Fever	Enteric Fever.	Diph- theria.	Erysi- pelas.	Puer- peral.	Total
1896	49	7	28	13	1	98
1897	97	11	16	15	1	140
1898	9	4	34	10	1	58
1899	17	3	6	9	...	35
1900	19	11	1	6	...	37
1901	49	9	10	7	...	75
1902	75	7	36	4	...	122
1903	26	23	3	7	1	60
1904	45	2	1	7	...	55
1905	43	29	2	14	...	88
1906	129	14	8	9	1	161
1907	67	3	...	7	...	77
1908	87	3	3	3	1	97
1909	28	1	12	8	...	49
1910	20	5	2	12	...	39



## SCARLET FEVER.

There were 20 cases of Scarlet Fever. The majority of these were of a very mild type. It will be seen from Table D that there were only two groups of cases that could have any connection with each other. At Welney there were six cases; of the first four cases three occurred in one family; six months later another child living near contracted the disease, this child attended a different school.

At Stow Bridge 5 cases were notified. The first in April. In the same yard 3 others were notified later on in the month. At the end of July the fifth case was notified. This child had been staying away for some time and a few days after her return to school fell with the disease.

The other cases call for little comment. Seven cases were certainly of a doubtful nature. The rash though not typical of Scarlet Fever was not typical of any other disease, the throats were more or less affected and there was little or no desquamation. It is, however, much safer to notify such cases and take the necessary precautions.

## DIPHTHERIA.

Only 2 notifications of Diphtheria were received during the past year. At the end of 1909 there was an outbreak at Marham. When the school reopened, in January, the County Medical Officer of Health and myself were present and inspected the children. We only found it necessary to exclude 4 children whose history, and condition of throats we deemed it inadvisable to admit until a further bacteriological examination had been made. A final bacteriological examination was also made in all the cases that had been notified before they were allowed to return to School,

One of the cases notified during the past year was the mother of one of the children notified during the outbreak at Marham in 1909. The other was a child of four whose symptoms were obscure. I took a "swab" from the throat and the report was of a semi negative character. A Pseudo bacillus being present instead of the true Diphtheritic bacilli. By the advice of the County Medical Officer of Health I kept the child from school for six months as he was under school age. In August last the Local Government Board issued a memorandum sanctioning the provision of Antitoxin and Medical Assistance for the poorer inhabitants of a district, subject to this condition—"The arrangements with respect to the keeping, distribution and use of Diphtheria Antitoxin shall be made in accordance with the advice of the Medical Officer of Health."



This order practically confirms what your Council have for several years authorised me to carry out and supply Medical Men practising in this District with Antitoxin and take steps for verifying a diagnosis. Outbreaks of Diphtheria being fortunately comparatively rare I have not considered it necessary to keep each practitioner supplied with Antitoxin, but on receipt of a wire I can arrange to send a supply the same day.

During the past year I have examined and taken "swabs" from the throats of 10 children for the purpose of having a Bacteriological examination made. The value of doing this has been lately very strikingly exemplified. A few weeks ago I saw a child who showed all the clinical signs of Diphtheria, so much so that I injected Antitoxin not only in the child but in two other children in the same house, and took all the other precautions as regard isolation etc. The following day I received a negative report of the "swab" I had taken. The child, however, was so bad that I sent another "swab". This was also negative. It was not until I received this second negative report that I felt justified in withdrawing my notification. On the other hand it is quite possible to have a condition of the throat which might not be thought to indicate Diphtheria and yet a Bacteriological examinations might show this to be one of Diphtheria and highly infectious. It must therefore be a source of great satisfaction to know that we have the means of ascertaining whether a case is Diphtheria or not and a remedy which undoubtedly does lessen the severity of this dread disease.

### ENTERIC FEVER.

Five cases of Enteric Fever were notified.

**TABLE G.**

Case	Age	Sex.	Village.	Sanitary Conditions	Water	Milk Supply	Remarks.
1	11	M	Wereham..	No drainage	Well polluted	Satisfactory	No unusual food taken
2	37	F	Ten mile bank	No drainage	Rain Water	"	
3	65	M	Holme ..	No drainage	Shallow well slightly polluted	"	Five weeks after confinement Fatal
4	28	M	St.Germans	Satisfactory	Good ..	"	Worked outside the district
5	23	M	Magdalen ..	No drainage	Good ..	"	Had been cleaning out foul dykes



## ERYSIPELAS.

This disease is included in the schedule of dangerous infectious diseases and there have been doubts whether the expenses incurred in its notification is justified. During the past year I have investigated all the cases notified. Some of these have been more of the nature of acute or suppurative cellulitis which though allied in its pathology to cutaneous erysipelas is generally differentiated by its deep origin and does not appear to be so liable to cause infection. In only one case was there any evidence of any other person contracting the disease. With one exception the cases were very mild, the persons affected seldom being confined to bed. No deaths resulted. Nevertheless I think it would be unwise to exclude this disease since investigations often lead to the discovery of sanitary defects which otherwise might be overlooked.

### TABLE H.

Case	Age.	Sex.	Village	Description of Disease.	Remarks.	Sanitary
1	38	M	Wretton..	Inflamed leg injury		No drainage
2	57	F	Hilgay ..	Inflamed leg and Influenza		Privy defective water bad
3	67	F	Downham West	Eruptions on face		
4	24	F	Hilgay ..	Inflamed heel	Visited No. 2 frequently a month previously	Privy defective
5	42	F	Hilgay ..	Face .. ..	Used river water	Good
6	84		Welney ..	Bad leg and foot	" "	
7	25	F	Holme ..	Cold in eye ..		Good
8	52	F	Hilgay ..	Feet and legs acheing and swollen	Patient attributed to tight boots	
9	46	M	Denver ..	Cold, Swollen glands of neck		
10	66	M	Southeay	Head and face bad 6 weeks		Bad
11	20	M	Hilgay ..	Patient had spots on the leg and his boot chafed them	Children with scabies, &c.	
12	5	M	Stow Bridge	Inflamed arm after burn of the hand		

## MEASLES.

In September an outbreak of Measles started at Stoke Ferry and spread to Wretton. A large number of children were affected. A smaller outbreak occurred later in the year at Tottenhill. There were no deaths.



## PUBLIC HEALTH (TUBERCULOSIS) REGULATIONS ACT, 1908

Under this Act four notifications of poor persons suffering from Tuberculosis have been received since the Act came into force. One of these were sent to Sandgate Sanatorium. She was discharged as incurable and was admitted to Downham Union Workhouse. Shortly before her death she returned home. It was impossible to let her have a separate bedroom, but precautions were taken as far as possible and the house and bedclothes were afterwards disinfected.

One case was not reported until some months after the case became notifiable.

All the cases are visited periodically and advice given.

If anything can be done further in these cases no efforts will be spared to mitigate their sufferings.

It will be seen from the Tables that the Mortality from Phthisis is considerably less than in past years.

## MIDWIVES ACT.

The notification of Births Act is not in force.

There are 5 registered midwives practising in the District, 4 of these are Parish District Nurses.

The County Medical Officer of Health in his Annual Report considers that it would be desirable to adopt this and points out how useful it would be in the control of Ophthalmia Neonatorum, and also in supervising the work of the midwives and in obtaining an estimate of the number of still born children in their practice.

In my Annual Report 1907 the advisability of adopting this Act was discussed. Dr. Nash says "The Act can only be adopted with the consent of the Local Government Board who would not be satisfied with anything less than some definite arrangements for the visitation of mothers and infants for the purpose of giving definite guidance, where necessary, in feeding, hygiene etc.

If your Council feel disposed to make such arrangements I shall be glad to do my best to carry out your instructions.

VACCINATION—TABLE I.

Sub-District	No. of Births registered during year	Successful Vaccinations during year	No. of Exemptions during the year.	Died without being vaccinated	No. removed outside the district
Downham, including Urflam District	191	110	68	10	3
Wiggenhall	134	64	65	5	...
Fincham ...	78	43	32	2	1
Totals ...	403	217	165	17	4



## VITAL STATISTICS.

The total number of deaths in the district, including 5 persons dying in the Union Workhouse and 1 person dying outside the district, was 182, equal to the annual death rate of 12·6. Of this number 79 persons died over 70 years of age, 38 over 80 years of age, and 4 over 90 years of age.

The following table will compare the annual births, deaths and infantile mortality rates in various parts of the kingdom.

TABLE J.

Year 1910.	Annual rates per 1000 living			Deaths under 1 year to 1000 Births
	Births	Deaths	Principal Epidemic Diseases	
England and Wales .. ..	24·8	13·4	0·99	106
77 Great Towns .. ..	25·0	13·4	1·23	115
136 Small Towns .. ..	23·7	12·4	0·88	104
England and Wales (less the 213 Towns)	25·0	13·6	0·74	96
<b>Downham Rural District</b> ..	24·8	12·3	0·48	91·38

There was one death from Scarlet Fever and one from Enteric Fever, but none from Diphtheria.

The deaths from the principal Zymotic diseases gives a death rate of ·48.

17 persons died from Cancer. Of these 9 were males and 8 females and were evenly distributed throughout the district.

The total number of births registered was 360, giving a birth rate of 24·8.

There were 23 illegitimate children born of which 2 died.

The number of deaths in children below one year of age was 33 equal to a death rate of 91·38. This is the lowest death rate during the past 15 years. In 1897 it was 192·06.



TABLE 1.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1910 and previous years.

Year	Population estimated to the middle of each year.	Births.		Total deaths registered in the District				Deaths of residents regis- tered in public institu- tions beyond the district.	Nett deaths at all ages belonging to the district	
		Number.	Rate	under 1 year		At all ages.				
				Number.	Rate per 1000 Births registered.	Number.	Rate.			
									Nmbr.	Rate
1900	15000	417	27·1	48	115·1	243	16·2	9	252	16·8
1901	14873	411	27·6	44	106·1	220	14·8	5	225	15·51
1902	14850	342	23·03	54	157·9	216	14·5	15	215	14·5
1903	14830	362	24·4	36	99·4	198	13·3	15	213	14·3
1904	14800	360	24·3	53	146·8	233	15·7	15	248	16·7
1905	15000	365	24·3	35	95·8	205	13·6	16	221	14·7
1906	15000	359	23·9	40	111·4	193	12·8	16	209	13·9
1907	15000	341	22·6	40	117·3	199	13·2	19	218	14·5
1908	15000	358	23·8	48	131·2	211	14·06	11	222	14·8
1909	15000	362	24·13	35	96·68	197	13·13	13	210	14·0
Averages for years 1900- 1909	14931·7	367·7	24·516	43·3	117·768	211·5	14·129	13·4	223·3	14·97
1910	14500	360	24·8	33	91·38	177	12·20	6	183	12·62

Area of district in acres (exclusive of area covered by water) 82,834. Total population at all ages 14,837. Number of inhabited houses, 3,851 (according to Rate Books).



TABLE 2.

Vital Statistics of separate Localities in 1910 and previous years.

Names of Localities	1. Downham.				2. Wiggenhall.				3. Fincham			
YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages	Deaths under One year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages	Deaths under One year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages	Deaths under One year.
1900	5615	168	100	25	6061	160	89	12	4164	89	63	9
1901	5233	160	70	13	5863	161	106	21	3741	90	54	10
1902	5230	135	73	19	5860	127	90	23	3740	80	52	12
1903	5230	151	84	14	5860	131	70	12	3740	80	59	10
1804	5220	136	83	19	5850	142	100	21	3730	82	65	13
1905	5290	142	84	13	5910	147	79	17	3800	76	58	5
1906	5290	129	61	17	5910	152	79	16	3800	78	53	7
1907	5290	143	77	16	5910	126	86	16	3800	72	55	8
1908	5290	129	81	16	5910	151	86	19	3800	78	55	13
1909	5290	140	83	18	5910	147	67	12	3800	75	60	5
Averages of Years 1900 to 1909	5297·8	143·3	79·6	17·0	5904·4	144·4	85·2	16·9	3811·5	80·0	57·4	9·2
1910	5000	146	60	12	5800	101	71	17	3700	83	52	4



**TABLE 3.**

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1910.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in whole district.							Total cases notified in each locality.		
	At all ages	At Ages—Years						Downham.	Wiggenhall.	Fincham.
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upwards			
Small-pox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	2	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	1
Erysipelas .. ..	12	..	1	..	2	6	3	9	2	1
Scarlet fever ..	20	1	4	13	2	..	..	10	10	..
Typhus fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Enteric fever ..	5	..	..	1	1	2	1	1	3	1
Relapsing fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Continued fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Puerperal fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plague .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals .. ..	39	1	6	14	5	9	4	20	16	3

Isolation Hospital—TENT.

Total available Beds—FOUR.

Number of Diseases that can be concurrently treated—  
ONE—(small-pox).



TABLE 4.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during year 1910.

Causes of Death.	Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the District.							Downham.	Wiggenhall.	Fincbam.
	All ages	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.			
1.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Small-pox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet fever ..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Whooping-cough ..	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Croup .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Fever { Typhus ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Enteric ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..
Epidemic influenza ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plague .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diarrhoea .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Enteritis .. ..	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Gasteritis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Puerperal fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ..	3	..	..	..	..	3	..	1	1	1
Other tuberculous dis- eases .. ..	9	3	..	4	..	1	1	5	3	1
Cancer, malignant dis- ease .. ..	17	..	..	..	..	7	10	5	6	6
Bronchitis .. ..	10	3	4	..	..	..	3	1	6	3
Pneumonia .. ..	6	2	..	..	..	1	3	2	2	2
Pleurisy .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Diseases of Re- spiratory organs ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Alcoholism .. ..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Cirrhosis of liver }	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Venereal disease ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Premature Birth ..	9	9	..	..	..	..	..	4	4	1
Diseases and accidents of parturition ..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Heart Disease ..	16	..	..	1	..	9	6	4	8	4
Accidents .. ..	7	..	2	1	..	1	3	3	3	1
Suicides .. ..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Debility .. ..	9	9	..	..	..	..	..	4	4	1
Convulsions .. ..	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
All other cases ..	85	2	1	3	1	13	65	28	28	29
All causes ..	183	33	10	9	1	38	92	60	71	52



## INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1910.

TABLE 5.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year

Cause of Death.	All Causes Certified	
	..	13
Under 1 Week.	13	1
1-2 Weeks.	1	3
2-3 Weeks.	3	1
3-4 Weeks.	1	1
Total under 1 Month	17	1
1-2 Months.	1	2
2-3 Months.	2	2
3-4 Months.	2	1
4-5 Months.	1	1
5-6 Months.	1	1
6-7 Months.	3	1
7-8 Months.	1	1
8-9 Months.	5	1
9-10 Months.	1	1
10-11 Months.	1	1
11-12 Months.	1	1
Total Deaths under 1 Year.	33	1

Population estimated to middle of 1910—14,500

Births in the year { legitimate—337  
 { illegitimate—23

Deaths in the year of { legitimate infants—31  
 { illegitimate infants—2

Deaths from all Causes at all Ages—183



Remarks on Inspectors Report on Hilgay, see pages 10 and 11.

The chief points of this report are

- (1.) The water supply.
- (2.) The number of houses with 2 or less bedrooms.
- (3.) The number of houses with brick floors,
- (4.) The number of back to back houses.
- (5.) The absence of properly constructed ashbins.
- (6.) The absence of drains.
- (7.) The discharge of the sewerage into the river,

One good feature is that out of the 174 houses 146 are through houses which therefore ensure good ventilation. It will be noticed that a row of cottages (7 in number) with an open space back and front have no back doors and only very small windows at the back. This could be easily remedied.

The points which require immediate attention are :—

- (1.) Water supply (this I have elsewhere dealt with).
- (2.) The question of bedroom accommodation.

In conclusion I take this opportunity of thanking you for the support which you have always given me and to assure you that I shall endeavour to do my best to retain your confidence. Having given expression as to the amount of work that has been added to the duties of a Medical Officer of Health, whilst willing to devote as much time as possible to the work, I cannot accept responsibility should some of this work not be carried out.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant.

GEO. FREDK. CROSS.