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Contributors

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NORTH WITCHFORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1925.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—

The report which I now submit to you is a Survey Report, being an account of the measure of progress made during the preceding five years. It is also an account of the extent and character of the changes, during that period, in various services such as Water Supply, Inspection of Food, Sanitation and like matters. It will also deal with Infectious Diseases, and there will be a comparison with the past four years.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area in Acres	26,088
Population, 1921	5,130
Population, estimated to 1925	5,195
Number of inhabited houses, 1921... ..	1,234
Number of families or separate occupiers	1,213
Rateable value	£41,206
Sum represented by a penny rate	£108/15/1

Physical Features and General Character of the District.

The district varies in different parts. It is flat, with slight elevations, but no hills.

The villages of Doddington, Wimblington and Manea are built on these elevations, while the village of Benwick and the scattered hamlet of Welches-dam are on drained Fen soil.

I may here point out that the main part of the district is composed of Fen land, which is drained by artificial means. This land is rich and fertile, and, owing to its fertility, it provides the inhabitants with abundant occupation.

From facts, gleaned from reliable sources, and from my own knowledge of the various conditions of the people, the North Witchford district is in a state of prosperity.

There is little poverty, and Poor Law relief is not excessive. The social conditions are therefore good. The chief occupation of the people is Agriculture, indeed it is practically the only one. A great many women and girls are employed in this.

The new industry of producing Sugar Beet gives additional work.

Vital Statistics for the Year 1925.

		Total	Males	Females	Rate.
Births {	Legitimate	107	45	62	21.7
	Illegitimate	6	4	2	

It will be noticed that this birth rate does not come up to pre-war conditions, when it was (1913) 26.05 per thousand.

The figure, however, compares favourably with the four preceding years, and very favourably with the rate for the whole of England and Wales, which was 18.3 per 1,000 of the population.

	Males.	Females.	Rate.
Deaths	30	39	13.5

The death rate is therefore higher than for the preceding four years. It is also higher than the rate for the whole of England and Wales for 1925; this was 12.2 per thousand of the population.

No woman died in consequence of Childbirth or from Puerperal Sepsis.

The deaths in your district and their causes, divided up into males and females, were as follows:

	Males.	Females.
Whooping Cough		1
Diphtheria		1
Encephalitis Lethargica	1	
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System... ..	1	4
Cancer	1	7
Diabetes		1
Cerebral Hemorrhage	1	
Heart Disease		7
Arterial Schlerosis		1
Bronchitis	1	2
Pneumonia	3	1
Other Respiratory Disease... ..	1	
Ulcer of stomach	1	
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1	
Nephritis	1	
Congenital Debility	2	1
Suicide		1
Other deaths from Violence	2	
Other defined Diseases	14	12
	30	39

	Males	Females	Total
Infant Deaths under 1 year {	4	2	6
		1	Illegitimate

The Infantile death rate was, for 1925, 53.09 per thousand registered births.

This compares favourably with the rates during the preceding five years, and especially so for the whole of England and Wales, which for 1925 was 75.

There appears to have been no special cause for sickness during the period under review, nor any conditions of occupation or environment which have had any prejudicial effects on the health of the inhabitants.

General Provision of Health Services in the District, Hospitals provided or subsidized by the Local Authority.

There are none, either for Tuberculosis, Maternity, Children, Fever, Small Pox, or any other.

There are no Infectious Hospitals available. One case of Diphtheria went to Cambridge, and was paid for by the Council. All other cases of an infectious nature have to be treated in their homes.

There are General Hospitals at Cambridge and Peterborough, also a Cottage Hospital at Wisbech, which are used by the inhabitants of the District.

These are not supported by the Council. There is no General or Cottage Hospital in the District itself.

The only Institution for unmarried mothers, illegitimate and homeless children, is that of the Poor Law, situated at Doddington.

There are no Ambulances in the District, but for non-infectious cases there is one available from March.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

There is a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre at March. It is open on Wednesday afternoons. There are no day Nurseries.

A Tubercular Clinic is held at the County Hall, March, also on Wednesday afternoons.

The Schools are attended to by the School Medical Officer and by the Health Visitors of the County Council.

These Visitors also visit Tubercular cases and Babies.

There is also a Dentist provided by the County Council for School Children.

General Provision of Health Services in the District Hospital provided or supervised by the Local Authority

The Local Authority is responsible for the provision of health services in the district hospital. This includes the provision of medical, nursing, and other health services. The Local Authority is also responsible for the supervision of the health services provided in the district hospital. This includes the supervision of the medical, nursing, and other health services. The Local Authority is also responsible for the provision of health services in the district hospital. This includes the provision of medical, nursing, and other health services. The Local Authority is also responsible for the supervision of the health services provided in the district hospital. This includes the supervision of the medical, nursing, and other health services.

Clinical and Treatment Centres

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Public Health Officers of the Local Authority.

The Officers of the Council are the Medical Officer of Health, whose salary is contributed to by the County Council and the Sanitary Inspector, who is certified. They are both part-time officers. The Sanitary Inspector is also Meat Inspector.

There are no Health Visitors or Special Nurses directed by the Council.

Professional Nursing at the Home.

At Manea only is there a District Nurse. There are no Midwives, practising as such, in the District.

The Chemical work is undertaken by the County Council, who employ a Public Analyst when required.

With regard to any Legislation in force, there are no Local Acts, but Special Regulations as regards meat, which are dated May 29, 1925. These Meat Regulations appear to embody all that is required.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.—The Water Supply of the District remains practically the same as it was five years ago.

For a Rural District it is fortunate in that three of its villages—Doddington, Wimblington and Manea—are supplied with excellent water by the Wisbech Water Co., and this is a constant supply.

The parish of Welches-dam is so scattered that a public supply is out of the question—it relies on rain water and water from the river.

The village of Benwick is in a very difficult position, as it is built on Fen soil, and has to rely for its water supply on rain water and a pump, which receives its water from the river through a gravel bed. At times the river is low and putrid. Both these are intermittent. It has happened on occasions, in drought, that water has had to be carted to the village by the Council.

There is little doubt that this imperfect supply has a detrimental effect on the health of the inhabitants.

The Wisbech water passes through Doddington, and the Council has approached the Company with a view to getting it piped some four miles to Benwick.

They say, however, that there is insufficient pressure. There is just a question of there being water at Field's End, Doddington, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the village of Benwick, and whether it would be advisable to bore there.

My only information on this point is from a water diviner, and I know the Council cannot risk the ratepayers' money on such information. If, however, the inhabitants of Benwick cared to take every risk connected with such an enterprise, they might raise the money to bore, by public subscription. If water was found, and if it should be pure and of constant supply, I have no doubt the Council would take the matter up. Personally I neither advise or recommend on this matter.

Rivers and Streams.—The Rivers or Drainage Water Courses are more or less polluted in the Fen District, but not to any serious extent, except in very dry seasons, when there is hardly any flow of water.

Drainage and Sewerage.—Each of the larger and more thickly populated villages, i.e., Doddington, Wimblington and Manea, is sewered, and, in the case of the first two, the Sewage is passed through gravel beds and later into open Fen ditches, which are periodically cleaned out by the Council.

Benwick is partly sewered. Welches-dam is entirely a scattered parish, and is not sewered at all.

Closet Accommodation.—There have been very few changes from earth to water system during either this or the preceding four years. The earth closets, from which the pails are emptied by the Council's Scavenger, number 270. There are a hundred water closets, these being all in the larger villages. The contents of the pails are used for manuring the agricultural land. A very few cesspits exist in isolated places, and these are emptied by the occupiers.

Scavenging.—This is done by contract in the four villages. The collection of house refuse is not undertaken by the Council. Moveable ashbins are not in vogue; the area being quite rural, nearly all the houses have gardens or land in which they dispose of their refuse.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authorities

Professional Training at the Home

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

Cost Accounting

Sanitary Inspection.—Inspections are continually being made by myself and the Inspector, throughout the district.

(a) Number of Inspections by Sanitary Inspector ...	245
(b) Number of Notices (Informal)	24
(c) Number of Results	24

There is no nuisance from smoke, nor are Bye-laws required for premises or occupations.

There are no underground sleeping rooms.

Schools.—The sanitary condition of these appears to be good. The water supply to these is good except at Benwick. There they share the same trouble as the inhabitants of the village.

The Closure of Schools is arranged for by the County Medical and School Medical Officer.

HOUSING

I. The general housing conditions in the area are fair. There is no excess of houses, but the shortage which has existed for some years past is being gradually made up by the erection of new ones.

No change of any importance has taken place in the population, nor is there a likelihood of any in the near future.

II. There is little overcrowding.

III. Fitness of Houses :—

- (1) (a) The general standard is fair.
- (b) The defects found are in most cases minor ones, but many of the windows are small and do not open properly.
- (c) In many cases the defects have been due to negligence on the part of the tenants and insufficient supervision of the owners.
- (2) There has been no legal action taken under any acts, all the defects have been remedied on informal request.
- (3) There are no back to back houses.
- (4) The water supply is good throughout the district except in isolated spots and at Benwick, closet accommodation has much improved. Refuse is dealt with by the occupiers, and is generally burnt or buried.

IV. There are no specially unhealthy areas with no complaints or representations made concerning any.

Housing Statistics, 1925.

Number of New Houses erected during the year.

- (a) Total number: 9.
- (b) With state assistance under the Housing Acts :—
 - (1) By Local Authority: Nil.
 - (2) By other persons: 3.

I. Unfit Dwelling Houses.

(1) Total number of Houses inspected for defects	240
(2) Recorded	5
(3) Totally unfit	1
(4) Not reasonably fit for occupation	20

II. Remedied without formal notice 20

III. There were no proceedings under Housing Act, 1925, or under Public Health Acts.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(a) Milk Supply :—

No milk is brought into the district. Sufficient is produced in the area for its use. Very few, if any, cows, are kept in close stalls. They are grazed nearly all the year.

- (1) No action has been taken as to tubercular milk or cattle. No Veterinary Surgeon is appointed by the Council for this purpose.
- (2) No licences have been granted for the sale of milk under the Special Designations Order, 1923. There is no apparatus licensed for the Pasteurization of Milk.

Section 1000—The Commission on the Housing Problem
The Commission on the Housing Problem was organized in 1922
to study the housing problem in the United States. It was
composed of representatives of the Federal Government, the
States, and the private housing industry. The Commission
has since that time held numerous public hearings and has
issued several reports on the housing problem. Its most
recent report, issued in 1929, is entitled "The Housing
Problem in the United States."

HOUSING

The housing problem in the United States is one of the
most serious and widespread of the social problems of
the country. It is a problem which affects the health,
morale, and economic well-being of the entire nation.
The Commission on the Housing Problem has endeavored
to bring about a better understanding of the housing
problem and to secure the adoption of effective measures
for its solution. It has held numerous public hearings
and has issued several reports on the housing problem.
Its most recent report, issued in 1929, is entitled
"The Housing Problem in the United States."

Housing Statistics, 1925

Number of new houses started during the year
The following table shows the number of new houses
started during the year 1925, by State and Territory.
The total number of new houses started during the
year 1925 was 1,000,000.

Inspection and Supervision of Food

The Commission on the Housing Problem has also
concerned itself with the problem of food inspection
and supervision. It has held numerous public hearings
and has issued several reports on the food inspection
and supervision problem. Its most recent report, issued
in 1929, is entitled "The Food Inspection and
Supervision Problem in the United States."

- (3) None (i.e. Refusal or Revocation of Registration, etc.).
 (4) None (i.e., Summarised results of Bacterial Examinations).

(b) **Meat:—**

- (i) The Sanitary Officer is the designated Meat Inspector under the 1924 Regulations, and the inspections of animals and carcasses is continually proceeding. Diseased meat is buried. There is no incinerator in the Area.
 (ii) Stalls, shops, stores, and vehicles are constantly under observation. The traders readily comply with the Order.
 (iii) There are no public slaughter houses in the district.

Private Slaughter Houses.

	1920	Jan., 1925	Dec., 1925
Registered	0	7	7
Licensed	0	0	0
Total	0	7	7

In 1920 there were seven Slaughter Houses in use.

- (c) **Other Foods.** No unsound food has been found. The sanitary condition of Bakehouses, and where food has been manufactured, prepared, stored or exposed for sale, is satisfactory.
 (d) **Food Poisoning.** There has been no case of this which has come to my knowledge.

Prevalence and Control over Infectious Disease.

During the period since 1920 there have been two epidemics; one in 1921 of Scarlet Fever, in which 14 cases were recorded, and one of Measles in 1924 in which 174 cases were notified. Beyond these two epidemics nothing approaching one has occurred.

Diphtheria Antitoxin is now readily obtained; being supplied by the Council—also Anti-tenanus Serum.

There have been no cases of Encephalitis Lethargica during the period under review, except one in 1925, which ended fatally, nor were there any Scarlet Fever "return" cases.

Pneumonia has not been prevalent. No cases of Malaria, Dysentery, or Trench Fever have been notified during the period under review.

Arrangements are now made for the examination of swabs and specimens.

No use has up to now been made of the Schick tests in Scarlet Fever or the Dick test in Diphtheria.

All the Vaccinations and Re-Vaccinations have been performed by the Public Vaccinators.

During 1925 there were no deaths from Influenza, and the total during the preceding four years was eleven.

Verminous persons can be cleansed at the Institution and the premises disinfected by the Sanitary Officer.

The notifiable diseases during 1925 were as follows:

Scarlet Fever	4
Diphtheria	2
Erysipelas	1
Tuberculosis Pulmonary	3
Other forms	3
Chicken Pox	5
Whooping Cough	7
Measles	3
Pneumonia	2
Encephalitis Lethargica	1

Deaths from the above: Whooping Cough 1, Diphtheria 1, Encephalitis Lethargica 1, Tuberculosis of Respiratory System 5.

During the past 5 years there have been comparatively few deaths from notifiable diseases.

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Private-Sanitary House.

Year	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Population	100	100	100	100	100	100
Sanitary	100	100	100	100	100	100
Private	100	100	100	100	100	100

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Prevalence and Control of Infectious Diseases.

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TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods	NEW CASES.				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
5				1				
10			1					
15		1						
20		1				1		
25					1	1		
35		1				1		
45			1			1		
55								
Totals		3	2	1	1	4		

There have been no actions taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or under the Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62.

It does not appear that there are any deaths from Tuberculosis in cases not notified. The notification in this district is good.

I consider that a Veterinary Inspector should be appointed to examine the cows for tubercular disease.

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

I have the honour to be,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

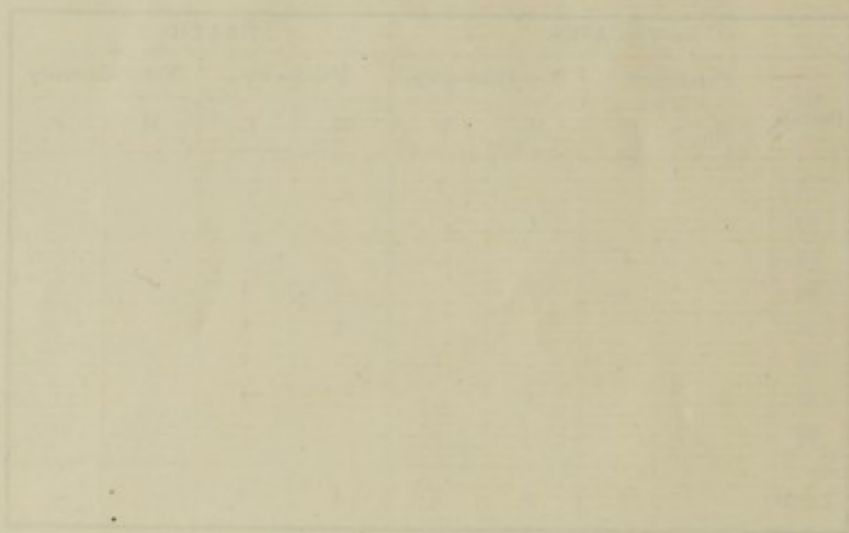
Your obedient servant,

CECIL E. STEPHENS, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

May 17, 1926.

TUBERCULOSIS



The following is a list of the most common symptoms of tuberculosis, which is a disease of the lungs. It is caused by a germ called the tubercle bacillus. The disease is often spread by coughing and sneezing. The symptoms are as follows:

- 1. Coughing, which may be dry or with sputum.
- 2. Spitting of blood, or haemoptoe.
- 3. Loss of weight and strength.
- 4. Night sweats.
- 5. Fever, especially in the evening.
- 6. Shortness of breath.
- 7. Pain in the chest.
- 8. Loss of appetite.
- 9. General debility.
- 10. Coughing up of sputum, which may contain the germ.

These symptoms are often accompanied by a general feeling of weakness and a loss of interest in life. The disease is often fatal, but it can be cured if it is detected early and treated properly.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1925, for the Rural District of North Witchford

on the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in connection with

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

1—INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

INCLUDING INSPECTIONS MADE BY SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Premises. (1)	Number of		
	Inspections. (2)	Written Notices (3)	Occupiers prosecuted. (4)
Factories (Including Factory Laundries)			
Workshops (Including Workshop Laundries)	30	None	None
Workplaces (Other than Outworkers' premises)			
Total	30	0	0

2—DEFECTS FOUND IN FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

NONE.

OUTWORK IN UNWHOLESOME PREMISES, SECTION 108.

NONE.

(Signature) CECIL E. STEPHENS,

Medical Officer of Health.

(Date) May 17th, 1926.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year
1925, for the Rural District of North Wiltshire

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND WORKPLACES

1. INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND WORKPLACES

Name of Factory, Workshop, or Workplace	Date of Inspection	Inspector	No. of Persons Employed	
			Male	Female
Factories (not including Workshops)				
Workshops (not including Factories)				
Workplaces (not including Factories or Workshops)				
Total				

2. DEFECTS FOUND IN FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND WORKPLACES

OUTWORK IN UNWHOLE SOME PREMISES SECTION 108

in (a) and (b) is returned
to the Local Authority
and the Inspector