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Contributors

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**RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF PETERBOROUGH.**

Annual Report

For the Year 1920,

... OF THE ...


Medical Officer of Health

... AND ...

Inspector of Nuisances.

PETERBOROUGH :

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Rural District Council of Peterborough.

ANNUAL REPORT

— OF THE —

Medical Officer of Health, 1920.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

The following report on matters appertaining to the Public Health of the District has been prepared according to the suggestions of the Ministry of Health.

1. Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

The estimated population of the district is 9,200, compared with 9,007 at the time of the 1911 census. The area concerned is 35,169 acres, chiefly agricultural land, situated between the Rivers Nene on the South and Welland on the North. About one quarter of the area towards the North East is Fenland, the remaining three quarters being higher land, gently undulating and varying from 176 feet to 5½ feet above ordnance datum. The neighbouring authorities are the Rural Districts of Thorney and of Whittlesea (Isle of Ely C.C.), the Borough of Peterborough (Soke of Peterborough C.C.), the Urban District of Old Fletton, Rural Districts of Norman Cross and of Stibbington (Hunts. C.C.), of Barnack (Soke of Peterborough C.C.), of Bourne (Lincs. Kesteven C.C.), and of Crowland (Lincs. Holland C.C.).

2. Social Conditions.

Engineering works at Walton, Brickyards at Eye and at Dogsthorpe, a Paper Mill at Helpston employ a varying number of hands, otherwise the population is chiefly occupied in agricultural work.

There are five Poor Law Medical Officers appointed, whose duties partially occupy them in the district, but since the Old Age Pensions and State Insurance arrangements came into force there is much less demand for relief under the Poor Law than formerly.

There is a Workhouse and Infirmary in the City of Peterborough at which people from contributing rural districts can be dealt with.

The Peterborough Infirmary and Dispensary is the General Hospital available, at which about 60 beds are provided, together with the usual out-patient department. Arrangements are made between the County Council of the Soke of Peterborough and the Infirmary Authorities for the treatment of Venereal Diseases.

There is usually a waiting list of 10 to 20 patients on the books and a scheme is a foot to provide further hospital accommodation.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

1. Water.

Portions of the District are supplied by water mains deriving their supply from the Peterborough Corporation sources, namely from deep springs issuing from the Lincolnshire Limestones at Braceborough and a supplementary boring tapping the same strata at Etton. The supply is a continuous one and the two separate mains are interconnected at various points. The portions of the District thus supplied are Walton, Werrington (part of), Gunthorpe, Dogsthorpe and Garton End, Newark, Eye and Fengate. The water is hard and if stagnant in the main at the end becomes sulphuretted, and yields on standing a yellowish red deposit.

There are borings at Helpston, Etton, Glington, Peakirk, Newborough and Deeping Gate.

The rest of the District depends on shallow wells, and in the Fen area the inhabitants are dependent upon soft water, stored in tanks, and when this supply fails, water is fetched from the nearest available dyke. In a scattered Rural Fen District it is difficult to arrange a suitable supply of good water.

Parts of Newborough and Borough Fen are supplied with water from the Werrington Brook and from the Folley River and Car Dyke. Since the sewerage of Werrington, Walton and Dogsthorpe, there is much less contamination of the Werrington Brook.

Periodical analyses of samples from wells in the District have been made by Dr. Rolleston the County Medical Officer of Health.

2. Drainage and Sewerage.

The Sewerage of Walton, Werrington and Dogsthorpe is pumped into sewers of the Peterborough Corporation. The question of sewerage Fengate is deferred until the question of the extension of the Boundaries of the Corporation of Peterborough is settled.

3. Closet Accommodation, Scavenging, &c.

The prevailing type is the privy vault.

At Castor arrangements are made for scavenging night soil. In the purely rural area, the inhabitants are responsible for the disposal of their own refuse, &c.

For an urban area like Walton regular systematic scavenging should be undertaken, as also for Dogsthorpe and Garton End.

4. Sanitary Inspection of the District.

The Sanitary Inspector reports on defects, and others are found when inspecting cases of infectious disease, &c. In such cases the houses are visited with the Inspector and suggestions made for remedying defects or nuisances.

Some 60 inspections were made during the year. Several dwelling houses in the District are unfit for habitation, but drastic action cannot be taken until further accommodation is available.

5. Premises and Occupations which can be controlled by Bye-Laws and Regulations.

No common lodging houses exist in the District, nor are there any cellar dwellings.

Offensive Trades.—Knackers 3. Tanning 1. Being of comparatively small size, there is no great nuisance arising from them.

Factories include engineering works, a manufactory of shop fittings at Walton, paper mill at Helpston, brickyards at Eye and Dogsthorpe, a tannery at Fengate. The 18 bakehouses are satisfactorily kept.

6. Schools.

Periodical inspection of the children is carried out by the School Medical Officer.

The Schools at Werrington and Walton are connected with the sewers, that at Dogsthorpe ought to be connected ; in the remainder of the Schools the closet accommodation is of the midden type. The Werrington, Walton, Dogsthorpe, Newark and Eye Schools derive their water supply from the public source ; the remaining Schools depend upon rain water or shallow wells.

7. Food.

(a) MILK SUPPLY.—There are numerous small dairies in the District, most of the owners merely supplying the needs of a few neighbours.

There are three larger dairy farmers whose premises are reasonably well looked after. As a rule the cow-houses are old buildings usually built round a crew yard into which manure is thrown. Attempts have been made to suitably drain the sheds, but short of entirely re-constructing the premises no great improvements can be made. The absence or inadequacy of a supply of water is another factor adversely affecting the management of the dairies.

Milk shops as such do not exist in the District.

(b) OTHER FOODS.—The carcase of one heifer was condemned on the ground of its being tuberculous.

Notice of the importation of food unfit for human consumption was received from the Port of London Authorities and in each case the consignee undertook to use it only for pig feeding (unsound dates).

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

During the year sixty-three cases of Infectious Disease were notified. The following table shows the distribution and details of the various diseases.

		Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Pneumonia	Tuberculosis Pulmonary	Tuberculosis other forms	Encephalitis Lethargica	Puerperal Fever	Erysipelas
Walton	...	7	6	1	2	...	..	..	..
Werrington	...	1	...	1	2	1	...	..	...
Dogsthorpe	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gunthorpe	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Garton End	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Newark	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eye	...	2	3	...	...	...	2	...	...
Paston	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Etton	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Sutton	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fengate	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Northborough	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Helpston	...	5	...	...	2	...	...	...	1
Castor & Ailsworth	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
Glington	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
Peakirk	...	...	...	...	1	...	..	...	...
Longthorpe	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...
Maxey	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Totals		26	12	4	11	5	2	1	2

A stock of Diphtheria Antitoxin and Antitetanic Serum is kept in hand and are available for the use of practitioners requiring them in the District.

Two fatal cases of Encephalitis Lethargica occurred in Eye, one patient being a boy of 2½, the other a girl of 10.

Swabs from throats or other pathological specimens are sent for examination when necessary. There is no isolation hospital for the District, but in special circumstances and if beds are available, the Borough Authorities will admit cases to the very great advantage of your Council.

There were no notifications of any cases of Malaria, Dysentery, Anthrax, Rabies, Small Pox.

There is a Tuberculosis Dispensary in the City of Peterborough under the direction of Dr. Rolleston, Tuberculosis Officer and County Medical Officer of Health. Patients from the Rural District appear to avail themselves of its use; there are no residential institutions for Tuberculosis in the District, which is an unsuitable locality. Insured persons needing Sanatorium treatment are sent to various Sanatoria with which the Local Insurance Committee have agreements, and other cases are dealt with by the County Council.

Cases of Tuberculosis appear to be notified readily by practitioners.

Sanitary Administration.

The staff consists of the Medical Officer, the Inspector of Nuisances and Sanitary Inspector who employs extra help in disinfecting, &c., when necessary.

Housing.

This subject is fully dealt with in the Inspector's Report, which shows that during the year eighteen houses were erected in Peterborough Without, two at Peakirk, ten at Borough Fen, one at Walton.

There are in course of erection, 32 houses at Walton, 12 at Eye, 50 in Peterborough Without.

There are several undesirable houses in the District, but it is useless closing them until proper accommodation is made for those now living in the bad houses.

Delay in delivery of materials is the chief cause hindering progress with the building scheme arranged by the Council.

There are 2295 houses in the District. The general standard is good in the more urban part of the District, but there are many houses of a poor type in the rural area. As new houses are completed these houses can gradually be closed. The conditions affecting industry are varying and in view of the possible diminishing demand for labour, more houses will probably be available in the District.

Vital Statistics.

There were 224 births notified during the year, of these 118 were boys (6 still-born) and 102 were girls (1 still-born), and in four cases the sex was not stated. Twins were reported 4 times.

The birth rate was 24'34 per thousand.

The deaths registered numbered 104; of these 50 were males, 54 females. The deaths of 14 residents not registered in the District, and of 8 non-residents which were registered in the District have to be adjusted, leaving the nett deaths 98, a rate of 10'65 per thousand; 45 deaths were of persons 65 years old and upwards, 11 children under 1 year and two under 2 years died.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

Harold Copham
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

March 1921

ANNUAL REPORT

— OF THE —

Inspector of Nuisances, Building
and Sanitary Surveyor, Inspector
under the Housing and Town
Planning Act, 1909, and Water
Works Manager.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my (fourteenth) Annual Report for the year 1920.

One hundred and twenty-two Sanitary Inspections have been made during the year. As in late years, only cases of complaint have been dealt with because the conditions as to rents and cost of repairs practically still exist.

Notices dealing with the drainage of several properties are still not complied with.

Again, owing to the neglect of the owner of 12 houses at Fengate, the Council has had to cleanse the cesspools and drains, the cost to be recovered from the owner.

The pail closets at these houses are still being emptied by the Peterborough Corporation at a higher cost than last year.

Nine informal notices, chiefly for blocked drains have been served and all have been complied with.

Six Statutory notices have been served, chiefly to provide drains and water supply.

Water Supply.

The supply from the Peterborough Corporation Mains has been well maintained without a break.

Werrington.—The scheme for supplying the whole of the Village is being proceeded with and one of the Ministry of Health Inspectors held an inquiry on December 10th.

The quantity of water purchased during the year from the Peterborough Corporation was 827,000 gallons, an increase of 171,000 over 1919.

Walton.—13,485,000 gallons were purchased, a decrease of 592,000 gallons from the previous year and a decrease of 12,609,000 gallons from 1918.

Messrs. Brotherhood and Sage's Works consumed 9,548,000 gallons, a decrease of 1,006,000 gallons, leaving a nett consumption for the Parish (exclusive of the Factories) of 3,937,000 gallons, an increase of 414,000 gallons from 1919.

The water used for the Housing Scheme accounts for some of the increase.

An additional connection has been made to Messrs. Brotherhood's Works as a safeguard against breakdown and fire.

Peterborough Without.—

The quantity of water purchased has been :—

Dogsthorpe	...	4,408,000	increase	1,179,000
Newark	...	959,000	„	175,000
Fengate	...	450,000	decrease	35,000
Total	...	5,817,000	gallons.	

An increase of 1,319,000 gallons.

The increase at Dogsthorpe is due to the Brick-yard having worked for the whole year, the Housing Scheme operations on Dogsthorpe Road, and 14 additional occupied houses since July.

The increase at Newark is due to the purchase meter having been put in repair.

Longthorpe.—The quantity purchased has been 575,000 gallons, an increase of 84,000 gallons.

Eye, Gunthorpe and Paston.

The quantities purchased are :—

Eye	...	3,361,000	increase	278,000
Gunthorpe	...	635,000	decrease	54,000
Paston	...	23,000	„	10,000

Twenty houses in Paston take their water supply through the Gunthorpe meter.

The total quantity of water purchased from the Peterborough Corporation during the year has been 24,723,000 gallons, an increase of 916,000 gallons.

The general increase is no doubt due to the abnormal dry season and the shortage of rain water for washing.

The 4 inch main at Eastfield burst on the evening of December 21st, which cut off the supply to Newark and Eye for a whole day.

A faulty pipe had been laid, although it could not be detected at the time and it had gone through the usual tests.

Mr. Britten, the manager for Eye, resigned and a successor has been appointed.

The bores in the District continue to yield.

An attempt is being made to repair the Peakirk bore.

A bore was sunk about 300 feet at the Avenue Farm, Borough Fen, for the Olympic Agricultural Company, but water was not found.

Three samples of water have been taken and submitted to Dr. Rolleston for report.

The ones from Longthorpe and Castor were condemned, but the sample from the public well at Werrington was not sufficiently polluted to be condemned.

Housing of the Working Classes.

In the month of March the 32 houses at Walton were commenced and after considerable difficulty in obtaining delivery of materials (although we were assured by the D.B.M.S. that there would be no delay in this respect) the buildings are at the end of the year nearing completion.

There was considerable delay in carrying out the works for sewage, water main, gas main and the new road.

I commenced the work late in December, although some of the materials which had been ordered in July had not then come to hand.

It has been found impossible to carry out many of the modifications which had been ordered and insisted upon by the Ministry's Officials and now will probably cost more to rectify than if it had not been interfered with.

The scheme for the 106 houses in the remaining part of the District has not proceeded far.

During the early part of the year an attempt was made to arrive at an agreed price with the Building Employers' Federation, and after a conference between the surrounding Local Authorities, held at Thrapston, on August 5th, that method of obtaining an estimate was abandoned as being impracticable and impossible.

Open tenders were then advertised for and Mr. Cracknell's tender of £98,000 was the lowest.

Work was shortly commenced at Eye, and owing to the delay in the delivery of cement and to the shortage of skilled labour, very little progress had been made at the end of the year. (The shortage of bricklayers delays all other trades).

A considerable amount of work was done in preparing plans for these houses, which were eventually turned down by the Housing Commissioner who insisted that one of the Ministry's Type Plans with Quantities and Specifications should be used. It is very problematical what the resulting houses and cost will be, as neither the plan, Quantities nor Specifications agree, and when the Ministry is appealed to for information the Officials attempt to place the responsibility of sorting out the discrepancy upon your Officials, which I am pleased to say they have not yet succeeded in doing.

When endeavours were being made to reduce the estimates, we suggested an alteration in the method of constructing the roof and shortly afterwards Major Abbot from the Commissioner's Office gave us instructions that it should be done. A plan was submitted and the Commissioner would not accept the proposal. On a protest being made Major Abbot denied having given instructions. These suggestions if carried out would have made a considerable saving in the cost of the houses.

The 14 houses on Dogsthorpe Road commenced in 1919 for the Peterborough Corporation were completed in October and are now occupied.

50 houses are in course of erection for the Peterborough Corporation on a site fronting St. Paul's Road and Paston Lane, Dogsthorpe. As these are being constructed to one of the Ministry's Type Plans, no plans were submitted. It was then found out that it was proposed to lay the drains at a gradient of 1 in 150 which violates all theory and practice and will no doubt result in continual blocking of the drains. I wrote to the Housing

Commissioner asking if this was being done with his approval and his reply was in the affirmative, although it is usually recognized that the gradient for such drains should be 1 in 40 and the Ministry's Housing Regulations state that the gradient must not be less than 1 in 60.

New Buildings.

Plans have been deposited for houses as follows :—

Peterborough Without.	Werrington.	Peakirk.	Walton.	Glington.	Total
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16	2	2	1	2	23
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as against 12 in 1919.

Houses erected during the year :—

Peterborough Without.	Peakirk.	Borough Fen.	Walton.	Total
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18	2	10	1	31
----	---	----	---	----

as against 2 in 1919.

The plans submitted for 1 house at Werrington, 2 at Peakirk, 1 at Walton and 2 at Glinton were for the conversion of Army Huts.

Of the completed houses, 2 in Peterborough Without, 1 at Peakirk and 1 at Walton are converted Army Huts.

14 of the houses erected in Peterborough Without (Dogsthorpe Road) form part of the Peterborough Corporation Housing Scheme.

Houses which are in the course of erection are :—

32 at Walton and 12 at Eye for the Council's Housing Scheme, 50 in Peterborough Without (Paston Lane and St. Paul's Road) for the Peterborough Corporation Housing Scheme (for which no plans were submitted) and 2 at Glinton.

Other buildings that have been erected are an addition to a cottage at Longthorpe, shops at Eye and Walton, stables at Garton End, Castor, Walton and Eye, a garage at Park Crescent, a warehouse at Walton and temporary buildings at the Hound Show Ground, Eastfield.

Factories and Workshops.

Very little has arisen in connection with these.

Some re-arranging of the drainage at Messrs. Brotherhood's has been carried out to prevent the pollution of the surface water sewer and more is still required.

Slaughter Houses.

The slaughter houses have been periodically inspected during the year.

The occupier of one at Eye has obtained a license.

A beast killed at the Co-operative Society's slaughter house at Newark for a Peterborough butcher was condemned by the Medical Officer of Health, as being badly infected with tubercle and was destroyed at Mr. Marshall's Knackers Yard.

Offensive Trades.

Five premises are being used for offensive trades and are all in the Parish of Peterborough Without.

Three are licensed Knackers Yards with the addition of Manure making, one manure factory and one tanyard.

A Knacker's license has been granted to Mr. Marshall for premises at Eastfield, previously used as a gut factory.

Scavenging.

The collection of night soil from the pail closets at Castor and Ailsworth and that of house refuse at Walton is carried out by contract and appears to be done satisfactorily.

The pail closets of 12 houses at Fengate is still being done by the Peterborough Corporation workmen.

The house refuse of the 14 houses on Dogsthorpe Road, erected for the Peterborough Corporation is collected by the Peterborough Corporation dustmen and the cost charged to your Council.

The Parish badly needs a system of refuse collection.

Infectious Diseases.

The number of cases of infectious diseases (investigated by my department) enumerated in the following table is 36 (as against 30 in 1919, and 24 in 1918) distributed as follows :—

Parish.	Scarlet	Fever.	Diphtheria.
Walton ...		6	4
Helpston ...		5	
Peterborough Without		3	4
Eye ...		2	3
Sutton ...		1	
Glington ...		1	
Etton ...		1	
Northborough		1	1
Werrington ...		1	
Castor ...		1	
Ailsworth ...		1	
Gunthorpe ...		1	
Totals		24	12—36

Five cases were sent to the Peterborough Isolation Hospital, one each of Scarlet Fever from Ailsworth and Gunthorpe, a Diphtheria from Walton and two Diphtherias from a house in St. Paul's Road. These last were sent before the Medical Practitioner attending the cases realized that the house was outside the Borough.

The case of Diphtheria from a house at Northborough was imported from London. The case of Scarlet Fever was in the same house but six months later.

Two cases of Diphtheria at Walton were in one house at the same time as also were two cases of Scarlet Fever.

The cases of Scarlet Fever at Glington and Etton were connected.

The Scarlet Fever cases at Helpston were spread over a period of six months, two being in one house but at different dates.

Five of the Scarlet Fever cases at Walton were in the months of January and February and the last in September.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

The custom in the District of keeping one or two cows (often under the most filthy conditions) ostensibly for their own use and to oblige neighbours is a very dangerous practice. Under the present laws we have no control over these cowsheds or cow-keepers which lessens the benefits that may be derived from Dairy and Cowshed inspection and whilst such conditions exist it is impossible to ask the owners of larger dairies to bring them to a higher standard.

Drainage and Sewage Disposal.

According to the approximate records I am able to keep, the quantity of sewage pumped has increased at all the Pumping Stations except Werrington, where so few houses are connected a large portion of the amount pumped is due to leaks in the sewer and the "sock" water being much lower than usual, so much has not leaked in as in former years.

Twenty-four houses were connected to the Sewers in Dogsthorpe.

On May 26th there was an outbreak of fire at the Walton Pumping Station doing considerable damage before being discovered.

The cost of repairs was recovered from the Insurance Company.

The fire occurred after a thunder storm and it was suggested that the station acted as a lightning conductor to the tramway system, causing a "short" in the "resistance" allowing the electric current to continue to pass through to earth, thus making it red hot and setting fire to the adjoining woodwork.

This also happened at the Dogsthorpe Station but was discovered before any damage other than the "shorting" of the "resistance" was done.

The "resistance" has been moved to a new position and should the same thing happen again there will be no risk of fire.

No further steps have been taken to drain Fengate as requested by the Peterborough Corporation, who are preparing plans for alterations at the Disposal Works.

Nothing has been done in connection with the drainage of 20 houses in the Parish of Paston.

The sewer at Gunthorpe has been extended, thus partly mitigating the nuisance but not preventing the pollution of the stream.

Housing and Town Planning Act, 1908.

Very little has been done under this Act for the same reason as in the past few years, i.e., the shortage of labour and materials and the high cost of work.

Two demolition orders have been served and not complied with.

I am,

Sir, and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

G. A. Penwell

February, 1921.

- PETER

The Committee has been asked to report on the progress of the work of the Committee and to recommend the steps which should be taken to carry out the recommendations of the Committee.

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Flourishing and Young Flamingo Act, 1908

Very little has been done under this Act for the purpose of securing the preservation of the birds and the land on which they live.

It is suggested that the Government should take steps to secure the preservation of the birds and the land on which they live.

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