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Contributors

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Royston
(Herts)
Urban District Council.



REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR
THE YEAR 1925.



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ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1925.

To the Chairman and Members of the Urban Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year under review is one of the terms when the Ministry require an exact statement of the conditions of the town during the last five years in so far as they affect the health of the inhabitants.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres) 1003.

Number of inhabited houses 1007.

Number of families or separate occupiers 1025.

Rateable value £16,324.

Sum represented by a penny rate £66.

These figures have been verified by Mr. Witts. There have been ten new houses erected during the year and 7 for different reasons have become uninhabited. This is a net gain of 3, but in addition there is the Workhouse, the Childrens' Home, the two Convents and the New Royston Hospital.

There are 24 houses now being used for business premises.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The Population is now estimated to be 3745. There have been 47 births and 61 deaths including three deaths of infants under one year of age. These figures give the following rates, and a comparison with the rates for England and Wales.

	Royston.	England & Wales.
Birth rate (per 1000 persons)	12.5	18.3
Death rate (per 1000 persons)	16.2	12.2
Infant Mortality (per 1000 births)	63.8	75.

There has again been an improvement in the infant mortality figures, but the birth-rate is very low, and the death-rate has gone up.

There were no deaths of illegitimate infants, though two were born.

There was one death from enteric fever, two from diphtheria, one from influenza, one from encephalitis lethargica, three from pulmonary tuberculosis, fifteen from cancer, seventeen from diseases of the heart and blood vessels, nine from respiratory diseases, one from appendicitis, besides other diseases. There was no death from infantile diarrhoea.

EPIDEMIC DISEASE.

There were eight cases of scarlet fever, three of diphtheria, one of enteric fever, and one of erysipelas. Royston was not responsible for the infection in the case of the enteric fever.

Infectious disease is treated as far as is possible at the Royston, Ashwell and Melbourn Joint Hospital. There is a horse ambulance attached to the Hospital. There is no provision for small-pox isolation at Royston. The Council provides antitoxin and for the examination of swabs in connection with diphtheria cases.

SCHOOL INSPECTION.

108 children were inspected and the following defects were found :—

Malnutrition	...	...	...	3
Defective teeth	...	...	...	56
Tonsils and Adenoids	...	...	...	34
Defective eyes	...	...	...	4
Other defects	...	...	...	69
Unvaccinated	...	...	...	44

These cases are followed up, and treatment is obtained whenever possible by the County Council Health Visitor.

The Health Visitor also attends to the welfare of the babies and young children.

There is a Clinic provided by the Red Cross Society which does useful work in Royston and the villages around by physical treatment of deformities, injuries, and conditions requiring such treatment.

The County Council provides treatment for the defects of School Children.

HEALTH STAFF.

There is a part-time Medical Officer of Health, and a whole-time Sanitary Inspector. The latter Officer also acts as rate-collector and Surveyor. A qualified part-time Inspector of Food has also just been appointed.

Mr. Witts, the Sanitary Inspector has kindly helped me with the rest of this report.

Physical Features and General Character of the District.

The town of Royston is situate in the valley of the Cam on a gentle slope at the base of the chalk hills. The centre of the town is of some antiquity, but the town has been extended by the erection of modern buildings along the outskirts, especially the Melbourn, Kneesworth and Baldock Roads. Its slightly elevated position on the porous chalk renders it generally dry. An ancient watercourse runs through the town and loses itself in the direction of Kneesworth, in what would really be a lake were it not for the extreme porosity of the soil. This watercourse has been utilized as a surface water drain.

House Accommodation.

Ten new houses have been built during the year, namely : two in Melbourn Road, two in Baldock Road, one each in London Road, Victoria Crescent, Kneesworth Road and Barkway Road, and two in Priory Lane. The two last named have been built by the Herts. County Council, and the remainder by private enterprise. Four of these houses are subsidy houses. The Urban District Council has built no houses during the past year, but has recently accepted a Tender for 32 additional houses on the Briary Lane site, which, when completed will fill up all the remaining land on this site. Plans for five more subsidy houses to be built by private enterprise have also been recently approved by the Council, and others are likely to be erected owing to the opening out of a new building estate on the Newmarket Road.

During the past five years 82 new houses have been built in the Urban District of which 16 have been built by private enterprise, 64 by the Urban District Council, and 2 by the Herts. County Council.

One house has been put in habitable repair during the past year, but seven houses have been voluntarily closed for human habitation, namely : four houses in Red Lion Yard, Market Hill, not worth repairing, and three houses in Kneesworth Street, converted to business premises.

Roads and Streets.

During the past five years one new street has been constructed and made up, Lankester Road ; also one private street, Heath Avenue, and one public street, Briary Lane has been widened and made up, all this work of making up being necessitated by the erection of houses on the Council's Housing site.

Sewerage and Drainage.

The sewerage system of the town is partially dual, consisting of excremental and surface water systems. The sewers are ventilated partly by shafts at convenient spots along the line of streets, and

partly by surface gratings where crossing fields or open spaces. The general condition of the sewers is good, and the same are flushed weekly by means of flushing cart and automatic flushing tanks.

Two extensions of the sewer in Melbourn Road have been made during the last five years, necessitated by the erection of further houses in that district, and it has now been decided to construct a sewer on the New Housing estate in Newmarket Road and connect the same with the Melbourn Road Sewer, the new sewer being made at such levels and of such dimensions as would allow for further extension along the Newmarket Road. A branch Sewer from the Melbourn Road Sewer has also been laid in Garden Walk, and the Council's Housing Estate in Briary Lane, Heath Avenue and Lankester Road has also been connected by new Sewers with the Baldock Street Sewer.

Excrement Disposal.

Water closets are in general use in the District, but a few houses, chiefly outside the sewerage area, have earth closets.

The Sewage Disposal (Filtration and Broad Irrigation) Area continues to work well.

Excrement from earth closets outside the sewerage area is disposed of on garden ground.

Removal and Disposal of House Refuse.

There is a regular system of scavenging under the supervision of the Surveyor, with a weekly collection of House Refuse. The material is deposited on land at the Sewage Farm, where it is sifted, paper, rags, etc. burnt, and the old tins and crocks utilised for filling up hollows in roads on Sewage Farm and Farm Roads adjoining, and covered over with sifted ashes.

The receptacles used for the storage of house refuse are in some instances of a very unsatisfactory character, and sanitary dust bins have been substituted in several instances. Sanitary dust bins have also been supplied for all the Council Houses erected.

Water Supply.

The whole of the District is supplied with water from the chalk by the Royston Water Company Limited, with the exception of 9 houses at Wicker Hall which are supplied by a deep well in the chalk.

Places over which the Council have supervision.

The slaughterhouses, dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops have been regularly inspected, and cleansing, limewashing, and other orders of the regulations have been dealt with. The humane killer is now being used for slaughtering in accordance with new regulations adopted by the Council.

Factories and Workshops.

Factories :—There are no factories in the District where more than forty people are employed.

Workshops :—The workshops in the District are as follows :—Bakehouses 3, Bootmakers 5, Bicycle Makers 4, Builders 2, Coach-Builders 1, Dressmakers 3, Furniture Makers 3, Masons 2, Plumbers 3, Photographers 1, Saddlers 2, Smiths 3, Tailors 5, Watchmakers 2, Wheelwrights 1, Cabinet Makers and Upholsterers 2, all of which are kept under observation by the Sanitary Inspector.

Nuisances.

A number of minor nuisances arising from blocked drains, foul accumulations, keeping of animals, etc. have been dealt with, details of which are included in the Sanitary Inspector's Table.

Schools.

The Public Elementary Schools and two Private Schools in the District have all been inspected, and the Sanitary Accommodation in each is up to date and efficient.

Meat Regulations.

The duties of Inspection under the new Meat Regulations have been carried out by the Sanitary Inspector pending the appointment of a qualified Meat Inspector, which appointment has now been made. Nothing has been found calling for any action being taken under the Regulations.

Your obedient servant,

NORMAN MACFADYEN, M.B., D.P.H., M.O.H.

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ROYSTON.

—o—

Summary of Work done through the Sanitary Inspector in the
Urban District of Royston during the year
ending 31st December, 1925.

Complaints received	...	...	...	22
Nuisances detected without complaint	...	...	...	41
Nuisances abated	...	...	...	76
Notices Served	{ Preliminary & Letters	...	...	25
	{ Statutory	...	...	0
Summonses taken out	...	...	...	0
Convictions	...	...	...	0
Cottages Inspected	...	...	...	305
Lodging-houses inspected (none in the District)	...	...	...	0
Slaughter-houses inspected	...	...	...	4
Bake-houses inspected	...	...	...	3
Dairies and Milk-shops inspected	...	...	...	6
Cowsheds inspected	...	...	...	5
Workshops inspected	...	...	...	42
Filthy houses cleansed, sec. 46 Public Heath Act, 1875	...	...	...	0
Houses disinfected	...	...	...	20
Overcrowding abated	...	...	...	0
Houses placed in habitable repair	...	...	...	1
Houses closed	...	...	...	7
Wells sunk or improved supplies of water afforded	...	...	...	0
Wells cleansed or improved or repaired	...	...	...	0
Wells closed	...	...	...	0
Houses newly connected with main sewer	{ New Houses	...	...	9
	{ Old do.	...	...	0
Houses newly connected with water mains	...	...	...	10
W.C.'s repaired or supplied with water	...	...	...	3
Cisterns cleansed, repaired or covered	...	...	...	2
Animals improperly kept, removed	...	...	...	2
Samples of Water taken for Analysis	...	...	...	0
Compensation paid for destruction of infected bedding	...	...	...	0
Seizure of unsound Meat, etc.	...	...	...	1
Travellers' Vans visited	...	...	...	28
Drains to Cesspools, new houses	...	...	...	1
Private Streets Sewered and made up	...	...	...	0
Public Street made	...	...	...	0

THOS. W. WITTS,

Sanitary Inspector.

Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector for the year 1925 for the
URBAN DISTRICT OF ROYSTON on the administration of the Factory
and Workshop Act 1901, in connection with

Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplaces & Homework.

1.—INSPECTION.

*Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors
of Nuisances.*

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Prosecution.
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	4	none	none
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	45	3	none
Workplaces	—	none	none
Homeworkers' Premises	none	—	—
Total	49	3	—

2.—DEFECTS FOUND.

Particulars	Number of Defects.			Number of Prosecutions
	Found.	Remedied	Referred to H.M. inspector	
<i>Nuisances under the Public Health Acts:</i>				
Want of ventilation	none	none	none	Nil
Overcrowding				
Want of drainage or floors ...				
Other nuisances { Whitewashing of Bakehouses }	3	3	—	
Sanitary accommodation of Factories				
— unsuitable or defective ...	none	none	none	
— not separate for sexes ...	none	none	none	
<i>Offences under the Factory and Workshop Act:—</i>				
Illegal occupation of underground bakehouses (s. 101)	none	none	none	
Breach of special sanitary requirements for bakehouses (ss. 97 to 100)				
Failure as regards lists of outworkers (s. 107)				
Giving out work to be done in premises which are—				
unwholesome (s. 108)				
infected (s. 110)				
Allowing wearing apparel to be made in premises infected by scarlet fever or small pox (s. 109) ...				
Other offences				
Total	3	3	—	—

3.—OTHER MATTERS.

Class.	Number.
Matters notified to H.M. Inspector of Factories : Failure to affix Abstract of the Factory and Workshop Act (s. 133)	none
Underground Bakehouses (s. 101) :— Certificates granted during the year In use at the end of the year	none
	Number of
Homework :—	Lists Outworkers
Lists of Outworkers (s. 107)— Lists received	none none
Addresses of outworkers— Forwarded to other Authorities ... } Received from other Authorities ... }	none none
	Wearing Apparel Other
Homework in unwholesome or infected premises : Notices prohibiting homework in unwhole- some premises (s. 108) } Cases of infectious disease notified in home- workers' premises } Orders prohibiting home work in infected premises (s. 110) }	none
Workshops on the Register (s. 131) at the end of the year	42
Total number of workshops on Register...	42

