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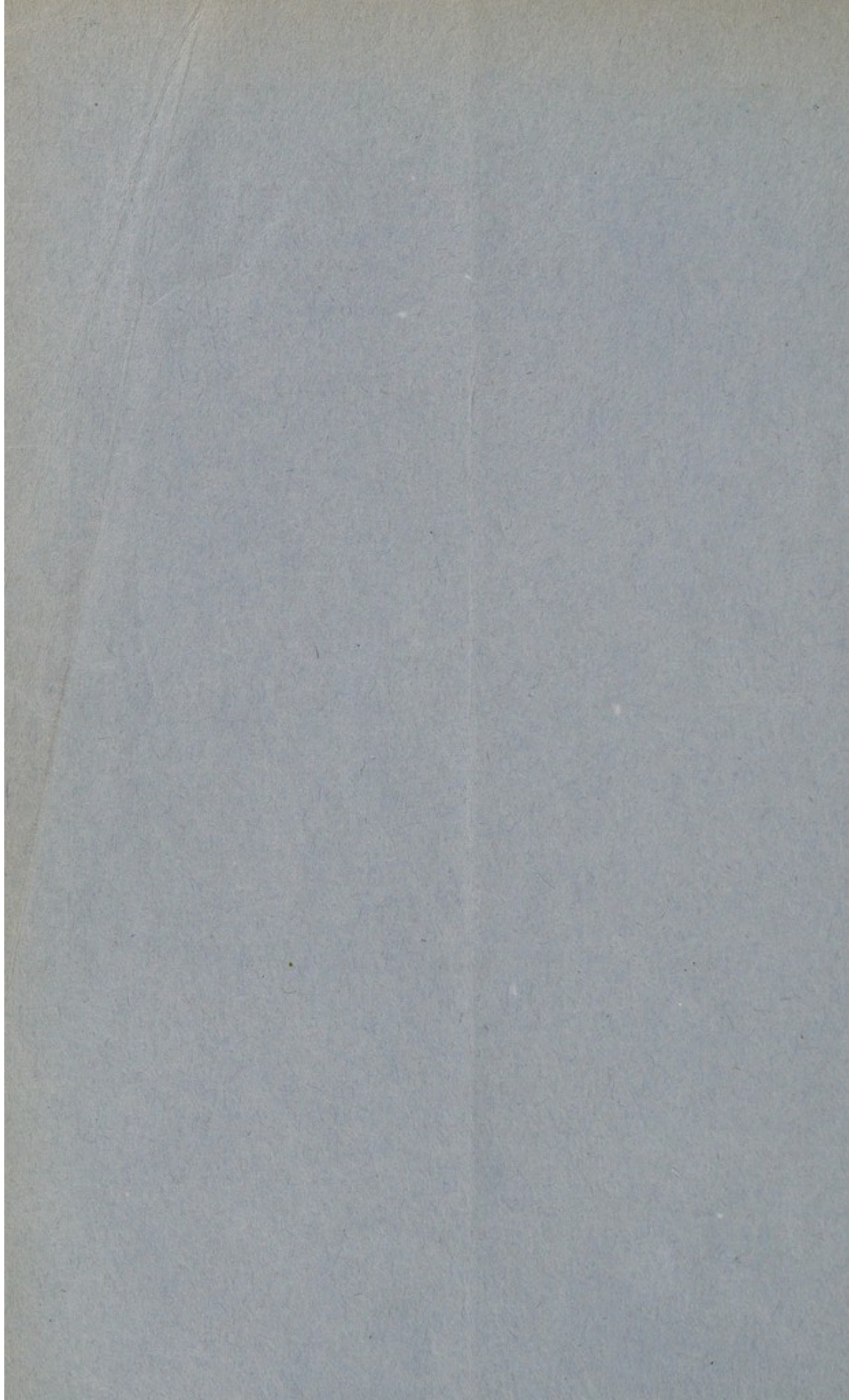
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**ANNUAL REPORT**  
ON  
**THE HEALTH**  
OF THE  
**URBAN DISTRICT OF WALMER,**  
FOR THE YEAR  
**1920,**

BY  
**FRANK M. HUGHES, M.D., M.R.C.S.,**  
**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.**

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DEAL,  
MINERVA PRINTING WORKS, OAK STREET.



## URBAN DISTRICT OF WALMER.

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### HEALTH REPORT 1920.

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To the Chairman and Members of the Walmer Urban  
District Council.

Gentlemen,—

I have the honour to submit my first annual report.

#### NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT. POPULATION.

The population of Walmer, according to the 1911 census,  
was

Civilians	...	...	...	...	4003
Military	...	...	...	...	1344
Total	...	...	...	...	<u>5347</u>

I estimate the population at Midsummer 1920 as follows :

Civilian (including Marines living out of barracks)	..	...	4433
Military (actual) living in barracks			<u>729</u>
Total	...	...	<u>5162</u>

#### PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

Walmer has a seafrontage of about two miles. The surface-levels vary from 20 feet above Ordnance Datum in parts of Lower Walmer to about 100 feet above in Upper Walmer.

The subsoil throughout the district is chalk, but the depth of the overlying soil varies considerably. In parts of Upper Walmer chalk is met with within about one foot from the

surface of the ground, while in parts of both Upper and Lower Walmer it is covered by brick-earth (about 18 feet, in some places), and in others by a mixture of sand and shingle.

As a result of good surface-levels and the chalk subsoil the district is free from dampness. Spring water is met with at about Ordnance Datum level at any point in the district.

### SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Walmer is a residential district. A large proportion of the civilian population is composed of persons of independent means and others employed by them directly or indirectly. A number are employed by a local brewery, and the building and allied trades in Walmer and adjacent districts provide employment for others. Walmer has no staple trade.

### VITAL STATISTICS.

#### BIRTHS.

The number of births in this district during 1920 was 101.

This figure, calculated on a population of 5734 (which is a figure supplied by the Registrar General) gives a rate of

17.61 per 1,000, as compared with

75	giving a rate of	18.20	..	..	in	1919
68	..	..	..	17.70	..	..
62	..	..	..	16.25	..	..
53	..	..	..	18.20	..	..

The birth-rate for England and Wales during 1920 was 25.40 per 1000.

#### DEATHS.

40 deaths were registered in Walmer during 1920.

4 of these belonged to other districts. The Registrar General's figure, after taking into account both inward and outward returns, is 47. This figure does not include deaths among Marines.

Calculated on a population of 4113 (which is the number of non-military residents according to the Registrar General's return)

47 gives a rate of 11.67 per 1,000 for 1920  
compared with

63 giving a rate of 15.93 per 1,000 for 1919  
and

46 giving a rate of 11.70 per 1,000 for 1918

The death rate for England and Wales during 1920 was 12.04 per 1,000.

The causes of death were certified as follows :

	Males.	Females.
Influenza	2	
Pulmonary tuberculosis	1	1
Other tuberculosis diseases		1
Cancer, malignant disease	4	
Meningitis		1
Organic heart disease	3	4
Bronchitis	1	
Pneumonia (all forms)		2
Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years)	1	
Cirrhosis of liver		1
Congenital debility, etc.	2	
Violence, apart from suicide		1
Other defined diseases	10	11
Causes ill-defined or unknown	1	

#### POOR LAW RELIEF.

The extent of the Poor Law relief in this district may be judged by the fact that just under £3 is paid out each week to aged and infirm persons in Walmer.

#### GENERAL HOSPITAL.

The Deal and Walmer Victoria Hospital, which is a general hospital, supported by voluntary contributions, provides gratuitous medical relief in cases where patients are unable to afford to pay. Small charges are made according to the means of those able to pay. Full advantage is taken of the hospital accommodation.

#### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

##### WATER SUPPLY.

The district has an excellent supply of water, which is obtained from deep wells. It is pumped about 100 feet to the ground level, and into service reservoirs, whence it is delivered by gravitation. The actual raising of this water is under the control of a Joint Board composed of an equal number of members appointed by the Deal Corporation and the Walmer Urban Council.

The water is delivered into the mains of the respective Authorities, who are then responsible for its distribution.

The quantity of water delivered into the Walmer mains during 1920 was 51,179,900 gallons.

A constant supply is maintained to all parts of the district.

Samples of water are collected from the mains every three months. These are sent to the Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine by the Walmer Council and to the Clinical Research Association by the Deal Corporation on alternate quarters.

The following is the copy of the last report:

25th November, 1920.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Chemical.				Parts per 100,000.
Suspended matter	...	...	...	—
Dissolved Solids	...	...	...	34.2
Chlorine	...	...	...	2.8
Alkalinity	...	...	...	18.5
Total Hardness	...	...	...	28.2
Permanent Hardness	...	...	...	5.9
Free and Saline Ammonia	...	...	...	—
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	...	0.001
Nitrogen as Nitrites	...	...	...	—
Nitrogen as Nitrates	...	...	...	0.72
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate at 80 F.				
(a) 15 minutes	...	...	...	—
(b) 3 hours	...	...	...	0.013
Lead, Zinc, Iron	...	...	...	Absent.

### BACTERIOLOGICAL.

No. of Organisms per c.c. growing on agar :

At 37 C. in 2 days ... 10

At 22 C. in 4 days ... 22

No true B. Coli or organisms of the coliform group were found in quantities of 100 c.c. or less.

The sample is chemically and bacteriologically satisfactory.

### RIVERS AND STREAMS.

As there are no rivers or streams in the Walmer district the question of pollution does not arise.

### DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Practically the whole of the district is drained by a water-carriage system, and most of the sewers are comparatively new.

A scheme of sewerage was completed in 1915. This not only provided new main sewers, but also abolished three old sea-outfalls, which had long been the subject of numerous complaints. This new arrangement delivers the sewage by gravitation into a large storage tank, from which it is discharged into the sea, once a day, at a suitable state of the south-flowing tide. The new outfall pipe is continued one thousand feet seawards from low-water mark. The whole of the sewers are well flushed and ventilated, and are quite free from deposit.

The scheme, both as regards sewerage and sewage disposal, is working well, and I am assured that not one complaint has been received since it has been in operation.

The only portion of the district which is not sewered, known locally as The Bungalows, is situated on beachy land along the foreshore at the southern end of the district. There are 32 dwelling houses and Walmer Castle on this area. The houses are all modern and have up-to-date sanitary arrangements but the drainage from the houses is discharged into cesspools. A scheme for the drainage of this area was approved by the Local Government Board in 1914, but has not been carried out. Desirable as it is that the area in question should be properly drained, the present arrangement gives no trouble from a sanitary point of view.

Every house in the district is properly drained by stoneware pipe drains, and, with the exceptions stated in the previous paragraph, all the drains discharge into the public sewers. The private drains are frequently inspected, and are generally known to be working well.

#### CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Every house in the district has at least one water closet. A small number of these closets are still hand-flushed, but, as a result of formal and informal steps, proper flushing apparatus is being provided, and I hope that in the course of a year or two hand-flushed closets will be a thing of the past so far as Walmer is concerned.

#### SCAVENGING.

The collection of house-refuse is performed by the Council's workmen. Every house in the district is visited once each week.

The refuse is dealt with in the Cornwall Road Nurseries—paper and similar rubbish being burned in a heap, while ashes and refuse having a manurial value is given away to farmers. At the present time the Council are endeavouring to secure a site for this purpose remote from the built-up portion of the district, as it is generally admitted that the present site is too near a considerable number of dwelling houses.

At one time the Council seriously considered the question of building a refuse destructor, but, for financial reasons, such a scheme now seems impracticable.

With a depôt at a distance, which will involve a considerable addition to the carting, it will be imperative that everything possible be done to facilitate the work of collection. For this reason, and also for sanitary advancement, it is very desirable that the Council should obtain a bye-law requiring the provision of sanitary dustbins each having a proper cover. It may also be



necessary to stipulate that such dust-bins shall be placed in a reasonably convenient position.

For years past your Inspector has been quietly persuading owners to provide proper sanitary bins, but the progress which results from such informal action is altogether too slow; indeed, in the case of cottage property there has been practically no result, therefore I again urge the Council to take steps to obtain the necessary bye-law at the earliest opportunity.

#### SANITARY INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.

441 inspections were made by your Inspector of Nuisances during the twelve months under review. In addition to the ordinary sanitary inspection, when visits are made to premises for the purpose of inspecting water fittings all sanitary fittings are examined at the same time.

In consequence of these inspections :

9 formal notices and 48 informal notices were served.

These had reference to 60 premises and to 4 lots of condemned meat.

8 drains were uncovered and repaired.

3 drains were unblocked.

1 drain was ventilated.

37 flushing cisterns, with pans to suit, were fixed in existing hand-flushed water closets.

4 water-closets were provided with new fittings throughout.

1 water-closet was rebuilt.

4 sinks, with slop drains, were fixed in existing cottages.

5 back-yards were paved.

3 ash-pits were demolished.

1 delapidated cottage was thoroughly repaired.

2 dirty cottages were cleaned and minor repairs carried out at 17 cottages.

#### OFFENSIVE TRADES, &c

There are no offensive trades, no common lodging-houses, and no underground rooms ordinarily used as sleeping-rooms.

#### SCHOOLS.

There are two public elementary schools and four private schools in the Walmer district. All are in good order, have modern sanitary conveniences, are drained through stoneware pipe drains which discharge into public sewers, and have a constant supply of water.

As soon as a case of infectious disease is notified among the scholars the school concerned is visited and the schoolmaster or mistress is informed of the necessary steps to be taken in dealing with the matter.

**FOOD.****MILK SUPPLY.**

Nearly all the milk consumed in Walmer is produced on farms within the district or in the adjacent rural districts.

The cowsheds and dairies within this district are regularly inspected by your Inspector. I also have made an inspection of these premises. All the buildings are in good order, and have a constant supply of water from the Council's mains. Most of them are brick built. They seem to be regularly limewashed, and are cleanly kept.

**MILK (MOTHERS AND CHILDREN) ORDER, 1919.**

This order is now administered from the Infant Welfare Centre by the Kent County Council.

**MEAT.**

Your Inspector has condemned four lots of meat during the year, and these were all destroyed.

The slaughter-houses in use in the district were all inspected at least once in every three months. I have already visited these premises. In my opinion they are in need of some repair, and arrangements should be made to ensure prompt removal of offal and manure right away from buildings where meat is stored.

The carcase of one heifer was condemned for tuberculosis, and was destroyed.

All slaughtering is done in private slaughter-houses. There is no special arrangement for inspecting meat at the time of slaughter, but if the animals are being slaughtered when the Inspector is making his ordinary visits he takes advantage of the opportunity to inspect the carcasses.

Particulars of the slaughterhouses in this district are as follows:—

	In 1914.	In Jan., 1920.	In Dec., 1920.
Registered	Four.	Three.	Three.
Licensed	None.	None.	None.

**OTHER FOODS.****BAKEHOUSES.**

There are six bakehouses in your district. These have been visited at regular intervals during the year. I have visited all of them since my appointment. I found them structurally in good order, although two of the buildings are decidedly old and dark, but on the other hand they are very cleanly kept. In one case the baker has a stable and manure-heap within a very short distance of the bakehouse-door. This I consider unsatisfactory.

It should not be permissible for manure to be stored even for one day so close to a bakehouse.

### PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The district was wonderfully free from notifiable infectious disease during 1920.

The total number of notifications received was 9, made up as follows :—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	1
Small Pox	...	...	...	1
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	6
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	1

Infectious cases among Marines are not notified to me, so that the above figures are exclusive of any cases which may have occurred among them.

The puerperal patient died a month later, the cause of death being certified as pneumonia and pleurisy.

Directly a notification of infectious disease is received the premises on which it has occurred are inspected and inquiries are made as to the source of infection. Patients are almost invariably removed to the Isolation Hospital. The infected rooms are then fumigated with formaldehyde. Afterwards infected wearing apparel, carpets and bedding are subjected to steam disinfection.

6 houses were fumigated during the past year.

### SMALL POX.

One case of small-pox was notified during the year. The patient had just returned from a holiday in France, where he must have been infected. He was promptly removed to the emergency small-pox hospital at Hammill and made a good recovery.

So far as I am aware only two primary vaccinations and two re-vaccinations were made by the Medical Officer of Health during the past year.

The joint Councils of Deal, Walmer, Sandwich, Eastry and Bridge still have the use of the buildings at Hammill which were fitted up as an emergency small-pox hospital in 1914. The case reported above was the only patient treated during 1920.

### TUBERCULOSIS.

Persons suffering from tuberculosis avail themselves of the County Council local centre, which is at Sandwich. They are also visited at home by the County Tuberculosis Officer.

When the severity of the case justifies it, and accommodation is available, the patients are sent to the Kent County Council's sanatorium at Lenham.

A Tuberculosis Centre is shortly to be opened at Deal for this district. The County Tuberculosis Medical Officer will attend weekly.

#### MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The Councils of Deal and Walmer still combine to maintain the Maternity and Infant Welfare centre. For this purpose they hire part of the Masonic Hall, which is situated in a convenient position in Deal.

Mothers are encouraged to take their infants to the centre on Friday afternoons. The infants are examined, and helpful advice is given regarding their general welfare and feeding. Infant's food is supplied at a reduced cost where the circumstances of the parents warrant it.

A local medical practitioner attends the centre every fortnight, and the Welfare Nurse attends every week. The Nurse visits the homes of all newly-born children, inspects the premises, and gives advice to the parents.

Parents evidently appreciate the advantages of the centre, as the number of attendances from Walmer shew.

The number of attendances from Walmer during the past year was 409.

The number of visits made by the Welfare Nurse in Walmer during the same period was 460.

The work of providing milk for expectant and nursing mothers is now worked from the welfare centre in conjunction with the County Medical Officer.

One case of puerperal fever, as referred to in a previous paragraph, was reported during the year, but no case of ophthalmia neonatorum.

#### SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

##### STAFF.

The sanitary staff consist of myself as Medical Officer of Health, and Mr. Herbert W. Barker, Inspector of Nuisances.

##### INSPECTION.

The property in the district is systematically visited in order to detect any insanitary conditions. Where necessary notices, preferably informal, are served, and formal steps follow if informal measures fail to produced the desired effect. Bake-houses, slaughter-houses, cowsheds, dairies, workshops, and the homes of outworkers are visited periodically, and appropriate steps taken whenever conditions call for it. The records shew tha

this work has been satisfactorily performed during the year. Many minor nuisances have been abated, and cottage properties improved.

#### ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

Accommodation for isolating infectious diseases is provided by the Infectious Diseases Hospital which is jointly maintained by the Councils of Deal and Walmer.

This hospital stands on high ground on the southern boundary of the Deal district. The site is perfectly dry.

There are no other buildings within a considerable radius of the hospital.

The main building is constructed of timber framing covered on the outside by felt packing and corrugated iron sheets, and on the inside with match-boarding. It has two wards, with kitchen and nurse's quarters in between. Each ward has six beds, is heated by a central stove, and has separate sanitary accommodation, disinfecting pan, and bath.

A small detached building of similar construction provides the means of isolating a second disease.

A new brick building is provided as a residence for the caretaker and his wife.

The drainage from the hospital is discharged through a stoneware pipe drain into the Deal drainage system.

The water supply is drawn from the Deal water mains.

#### BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK.

Bacteriological aids to diagnosis have been obtained either through private laboratories or through the laboratory managed by the County Medical Officer of Health.

#### HOUSING.

##### GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS.

The total number of dwelling-houses in the district of Walmer at the end of 1920 was

1,103, of these

39 were empty

2 Cottages suitable for working-class families were completed during the year.

1 Building was converted into a dwelling-house.

Of the 1,103 houses referred to above 680 are occupied by the people of the working classes.

During the war and until some time after the Armistice there was a considerable number of cottages in which two families were living. This was due to the fact that many of the men called up for service in the Royal Marine Light Infantry brought

their wives and families with them. The camp at Richborough attracted thousands of workers. Many of these also brought their families with them. The housing accommodation in the immediate vicinity of Richborough was totally inadequate, consequently the surplus overflowed into the surrounding districts. Quite a considerable number found lodgings in Walmer.

Demobilisation liberated a large number of men from the Royal Marines, and all the short service men, including those who brought their families to Walmer, have since left the district.

The closing down of Richborough camp has had a similar result, as most, if not all, of those who found accommodation in Walmer have now gone away.

The number of persons residing within the barracks has declined from 1,260 to 729 during the year.

So far as the inhabitants of Walmer are concerned, the need for additional housing accommodation cannot be correctly described as pressing.

No doubt if a number of new cottages were erected they would be occupied very promptly --by people from surrounding districts. The Council feel that such prospective tenants should be provided for by the Councils in whose districts they now reside.

The housing question has been considered by the Council and they have always decided that the local conditions do not justify them in embarking on a housing scheme.

#### OVERCROWDING.

There are very few houses in the occupation of two families, and I very much doubt if, after considering each case on its merits, any of these houses could be termed overcrowded.

The only house with respect to which a complaint as to overcrowding was received during the year was sent to your Medical Officer of Health in error, as the house was outside your area.

#### FITNESS OF HOUSES.

The dwelling-houses in this district are all substantially built of bricks and roofed with slates or tiles, and are generally in very good order. They all have a constant supply of water, and are properly drained.

With the exception of two small cottages which are occupied by aged females, every house in the district has a separate water-closet.

Refuse is collected from every house in the district once each week.

None of the houses have been found to be unfit for human habitation so that no action under this heading has been necessary.

Many of the smaller houses, although in good order structurally, were not originally provided with yard paving, flushing apparatus in the water closets, or, in many cases, sinks and slop-drainage. As a result of constant pressure most of the back-yards are now provided with some impervious paving; the number of water-closets without flushing apparatus has been reduced to a comparatively small one, and only four or five cottages are now without sinks and slop-drains.

#### UNHEALTHY AREAS.

No action has been taken under Part 1 or Part 2 of the Housing Act of 1890, as there are no unhealthy areas in this district.

#### HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT.

The Council are to be congratulated on the very satisfactory condition of the health of the district.

I would again emphasise the necessity for the Council to obtain a bye-law requiring each house to have sanitary dust-bins with a proper cover. Much infection and waste of infant life can be caused by flies having access to waste food material and thus conveying infection.

FRANK M. HUGHES, M.D., M.R.C.S.,

Medical Officer of Health.

March 31st, 1921.