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MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT,

For the Year Ending December 31st, 1900.

GENTLEMEN,

It again becomes my duty to present the usual annual report, which I shall make as concise as possible.

The Wellingborough Rural District consists of three sub-divisions, with an estimated population of 17,169, of which Earls Barton contains 8,964, Finedon 1,997, and Higham Ferrers 6,208.

The registered births have been 476 for the whole district, or 201 for the Earls Barton, 61 for the Finedon, and 214 for the Higham Ferrers districts. This gives a birth-rate of 27·724 per 1,000 for the whole district, or 22·432 per 1,000 for the Earls Barton district, 30·505 per 1,000 for the Finedon, and 34·471 per 1,000 for the Higham Ferrers districts.

The deaths registered have been 259 for the whole district, or 121 for the Earls Barton district, 45 for the Finedon, and 93 for the Higham Ferrers districts. This gives a death rate of 15·085 per 1,000 for the whole district, or 13·487 per 1,000 for the Earls Barton district, 22·533 per 1,000 for the Finedon, and 14·980 for the Higham Ferrers districts. This is a very slight increase on last year, viz., 177 per 1,000.

INFANT MORTALITY.

The infant mortality has been 111·344 per 1,000 for the whole district, or 124·079 for the Earls Barton district, 98·360 for the Finedon, and 102·893 for the Higham Ferrers districts. This is about the same as last year and much less than previous years.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

One hundred and thirty cases of infectious diseases have been reported, 55 in the Earls Barton district, 47 in the Finedon, and 29 in the Higham Ferrers districts. The deaths have been 22 for the whole district, giving a mortality of 1·281 per 1,000, or 1·115 for the Earls Barton district, 2·003 for the Finedon, and 1·281 for the Higham Ferrers districts.

Smallpox.—No case has occurred, but vaccination has been almost at a standstill.

Scarlet Fever.—Thirty-two cases have been notified—10 in the Earls Barton district, six in the Finedon, and 16 in the Higham Ferrers districts, with no death.

Diphtheria and Membranous Croup.—Forty-four cases have been reported—four in the Earls Barton district, with one death; 39 in the Finedon district, with four deaths; and one in the Higham Ferrers district, with no death. This gives an extraordinarily low mortality of 11·363 per cent. of cases attacked, which must, I think, be attributed to the measures adopted in combating the disease by a vigorous method of inspection and disinfection.

Measles is not notified. It is therefore impossible to tell the number of cases. The deaths, however, have been six, viz., four in the Earls Barton district and two in the Higham Ferrers district.

Whooping Cough.—This also is not a notifiable disease. Only one death has been registered in the Higham Ferrers district.

ENTERIC FEVER.

Thirty-one cases have been reported—27 in the Earls Barton district and four in the Higham Ferrers district, with three deaths (two being in the Earls Barton district and one in the Higham Ferrers district.)

ERYSIPELAS.

Twenty-three cases have been notified—14 in the Earls Barton district, one in the Finedon, and eight in the Higham Ferrers districts, with no death, and no other inmate of the house being attacked.

DIARRHŒA AND ENTERITIS.

Seven deaths have been registered—three in the Earls Barton district, and four in the Higham Ferrers district.

INFLUENZA.

Six deaths have been registered—five in the Earls Barton district, and one in the Finedon district; one between the ages of 25 and 65 years, and five over 65 years.

CHEST DISEASES.

Bronchitis has been fatal in 39 cases — 16 in the Earls Barton district, five in the Finedon, and 18 in the Higham Ferrers districts.

Pneumonia.—Nineteen cases of death have been registered, six in the Earls Barton district, three in the Finedon, and ten in the Higham Ferrers districts.

Phthisis has been accountable for 23 deaths—12 in the Earls Barton, two in the Finedon, and nine in the Higham Ferrers districts.

HEART DISEASE.

Twenty-six cases of death from heart disease have been registered — 16 in the Earls Barton, four in the Finedon, and six in the Higham Ferrers districts.

CANCER

has caused one death in the Finedon district.

ALCOHOLISM AND CIRRHOSIS OF THE LIVER

has caused five deaths — two in the Earls Barton, one in the Finedon, and two in the Higham Ferrers districts.

There have been four deaths from accidents and one from suicide.

WATER SUPPLY.

Earls Barton has now a good supply of water. Wilby is still *in statu quo*. During the dry weather the supply was scarce. The Parish Council are still considering a scheme, and I hope they will soon come to a decision.

DRAINAGE.

Earls Barton has had new sewers laid, but there is not sufficient ventilation. I have suggested more ventilating shafts being erected, one at least in every 100 yards. The gratings of the manholes ought to be kept open; the majority are completely blocked, thus preventing ventilation.

REMARKS.

Typhoid fever has been prevalent at Earls Barton, 26 cases having occurred during the year, viz., ten in January, two in March, two in April, three in May, one in June. Then there was no case until October — a period of three months — when there were three cases: one in November; and four in December. I attribute this outbreak in a great measure to the closets being constructed on the water system, but without any water being laid on, and being therefore dependent upon hand flushing, which is often neglected, or at best very imperfectly carried out.

There has also been an outbreak of diphtheria at Little Harrowden, 27 cases being notified. It evidently originated among the school children and spread over the village and also to Great Harrowden. The school was closed, thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, and since July no case has been reported. The deaths, as stated under the heading, only amounted to 11·363 per cent.

During the past year a crusade against phthisis has been carried on and opinions expressed as to its preventibility. It has been the same with every infectious disease. They still exist, and will continue to do so. That much has been done by health officers to render them less malignant and to considerably reduce the mortality is amply proved by a reference to the accompanying returns, which shew a death rate of only 1·281 per 1,000. That the sanitary state of the whole district must be considered satisfactory is also proved by the general death rate of 15·085 per 1,000, the average rate for England and Wales being 17·6 per 1,000.

I wish to express my thanks to your Inspector for the valuable assistance I have received from him and the excellent way in which he has carried out any suggestions made.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

FRED H. MORRIS, M.D.,

Fd. Royal Inst. of Public Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

As Inspector for your district I beg to submit to you my report for the year ending 31st December, 1900.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year I have received 130 notifications of cases of infectious diseases (a decrease of 86 on the previous year), viz. : 32 cases of scarlet fever, 44 cases of diphtheria and membranous croup ; 31 cases of typhoid or enteric fever ; and 23 cases of erysipelas. All have been visited, and dwellings fumigated and cleansed, etc., a good supply of disinfectants being used in every case. In three cases only I found it necessary to destroy clothing and bedding, for which compensation was given.

Table shewing cases of Infectious Disease in each Parish.

DISTRICT.	Scarlet Fever.	Typhoid Fever.	Diphtheria.	Erysipelas.
Bozeat ...	0	0	1	2
Doddington ...	2	0	0	0
Earls Barton	9	26 (2 deaths)	3 (1 death)	10
Easton Maudit	0	1	0	0
Harrowden Great	0	0	8 (1 death)	0
Harrowden Little	0	0	22 (2 deaths)	0
Hardwick	0	0	3	0
Irchester	4	0	1	4
Irthlingborough	12	4 (1 death)	0	3
Isham ...	4	0	6 (1 death)	0
Mears Ashby	0	0	0	1
Newton Bromshold	0	0	0	1
Wilby ...	0	0	0	1
Wollaston ...	1	0	0	1
	32	31	44	23

It is satisfactory to learn that at Ecton, Grendon, Orlingbury, Strixton, and Sywell not a single case has been reported to exist. At Wilby, Newton Bromshold, and Mears Ashby, only one case at each village, viz., erysipelas ; at Easton Maudit, one of typhoid fever ; Wollaston, one scarlet fever and one erysipelas ; Doddington, two scarlet fever ; and at Bozeat, one diphtheria and two erysipelas. Owing to the outbreak of diphtheria at Harrowden and Isham the schools were closed for six weeks. The schools at Wollaston, Orlingbury, Irchester, Little Harrowden, and Grendon have also been closed by the Council for three weeks on the recommendation of the Medical Officer of Health for the district owing to an epidemic of measles. The schools were fumigated, etc., before being re-opened.

DWELLING HOUSES.

About 50 new houses have been erected during the year and water certificates granted ; 26 dwellings have been cleaned and repaired ; two delapidated ones closed ; eight overcrowded cases and 13 filthy dwellings have been dealt with.

FOUL ACCUMULATIONS, Etc.

Thirty-one foul accumulations, several pigs, and the carcase of a dead animal have been removed; four ashpits, three pigstyes, and ten privy cesspits abolished and in each case closets made on the pail or dry earth system; 11 new closets erected, 12 w.c's, which were blocked and defective, have been cleaned and repaired, and 14 receptacles provided.

PRIVATE DRAINS.

Twenty-one blocked and defective drains were repaired and cleaned; seven sink pipes disconnected from the drain were made to discharge into a gully; six urinals provided; three stables re-floored and drained; nine old drains (affecting 16 houses) laid with common clay tiles were taken up and re-laid with glaze socket pipes, 22 gulleys being used in place of open gratings.

WATER SUPPLY.

Earls Barton and Easton Maudit have now a good supply of pure and wholesome water. Irthlingborough and Wilby are both engaged in obtaining a public supply. At Irchester, Ecton, Doddington, and Wollaston great complaints were made during the dry weather of the scarcity of water for domestic use, and it behoves each parish to take steps towards obtaining a permanent supply.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILKSHOPS

have been visited and inspected and in only three instances did I find it necessary to complain. Factories and workshops have also been visited from time to time.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES AND BAKEHOUSES

have been regularly visited and inspected and found on each visit well kept and clean.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

In May last I seized from two fish dealers at Irthlingborough a quantity of fish, which was unfit for food. It was destroyed, but no proceedings were taken against the offenders.

I have to thank the Council for the courtesy and kindness with which they have invariably received any matters I have brought before them.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE BAYES,

Sanitary Inspector.

February 20th, 1901.