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# Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report for the Year 1925.

TOWN HALL,
WISBECH,
*April 1926.*

*To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Wisbech.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year ending December 31st, 1925, being my Sixth Annual Report.

NUISANCES.

Four hundred and eighty inspections have been made of one hundred and thirty separate premises where nuisances remediable under Section 91 of the Public Health Acts, 1875, have occurred. In connection with these visits one hundred and twenty-eight preliminary notices, nine statutory notices and seventy-four letters have been issued. As a result of this action, one hundred and thirty-six cases were abated (including twelve cases remaining from last year), five of the remaining cases were in hand at the end of the year, and one case remained unabated.

I would point out in regard to the above matters, that only in the nine cases where statutory notices were served was it necessary to bring the matters to the notice of the Council. The one hundred and twenty-one remaining cases were successfully dealt with direct from your Sanitary Inspector's Office.

The details of the work carried out under notice, will be found in the summary at the end of this report and it will be noticed that the work of remedying defective house drainage has again had special attention.

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## Legal Proceedings.

Legal Proceedings were taken during the year, for a nuisance from defective drainage of a dwelling house. An Order for abatement with Costs was obtained, and the Order of the Court was subsequently complied with.

## Infectious Diseases.

During the year there were reported twenty-one cases of Diphtheria, fourteen cases of Scarlet Fever, one case of Typhoid Fever, and one case of Encephalitis Lethargicum.

Of the thirty-seven cases notified, thirty-three of the cases occurred between January and June, February contributed nine cases, and May and June ten cases and nine cases respectively.

The case of Encephalitis Lethargicum was an isolated one.

Of the twenty-two cases of Diphtheria, twenty-one houses were infected, three cases occurring in one house and two cases in another. The cases occurred in two small outbreaks, the first in February and the second in May. The disease was found to be spread by contact, and each outbreak was confined to one particular district. Fifteen of the cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital for treatment.

The cases of Scarlet Fever with the exception of two cases occurring in one house, were not directly connected. Eleven of the cases were treated in hospital.

The suspected cause of the case of Typhoid Fever occurring during the year was from contaminated drinking water. It was found that the storeage tank for this drinking water had become defective and was probably receiving the percolations from an adjoining privy and piggery. These defects were immediately remedied on the owners attention being called to the same.

## Housing.

Under the Housing Acts, two hundred and nine inspections were made during the year. One hundred and eighteen houses were found to be not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation as required by the Acts. In each case the owner was acquainted with the existing condition of the property, and in consequence, the number of houses rendered fit for habitation was, one hundred and three by informal action, ten by statutory action, and five houses were closed. The number of houses in course of repair at the end of the year was eleven, and nine cases remained not complied with. (These figures include twenty cases remaining over from last year.)

No Certificates have been issued under the Rent Restrictions Act for houses in bad repair.

The repairs to cottage property have been progressing at a steady rate throughout the year. It is necessary when dealing with property of this kind to differentiate between between the "repairable" and the "condemnable." In the case of "repairable" houses the owner is asked to do all the necessary work of putting the houses into proper tenantable condition. In the case of "condemnable" property, much difficulty is met with owing to the fact that no other accommodation is available for the tenants. Closing of this property has, therefore, to be left in abeyance pending the provision of houses to meet the demand, and in these cases, in view of the fact that at the earliest opportunity these houses will be condemned and demolished, the owner is asked to do what only is reasonably necessary to keep the houses watertight and safe. It is unfortunately probable, that some of this "condemnable" property will remain standing for some time to come, as there is yet a fairly formidable list of homeless families in the Borough to be dealt with, and again the rent of new houses built at the present time, is beyond the means of families most requiring accommodation. In these cases the only feasible solution is, that new houses built, should be let to people who wish to improve their accommodation and who can pay the enhansed rent, thereby releasing the houses they vacate to become available to those who are at present time living under more adverse conditions. It must be obvious that this principle, if followed, would raise the scale of occupied property in the Borough.

### Factories and Workshops.

Twenty-eight inspections of factories and ninety-seven inspections of workshops (including bakehouses) were made.

The defects met with may be classified as follows :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Factories with insufficient drainage of floors... ... ... ... | 1 |
| Workshops with insufficient sanitary accommodation ... ... | 2 |
| ,, ,, defective sanitary accommodation... ... ... | 1 |
| ,, ,, structural defects ... ... ... ... ... | 3 |
| ,, requiring limewashing ... ... ... ... ... | 2 |

The above defects were remedied under informal notice.

The premises generally are in good condition.

### Unsound Food.

The total quantity of unsound food condemned and destroyed as being unfit for human consumption amounted to 6724-lbs. or appoximately 3 tons. The whole of this on being declared so unfit was voluntarily surrendered by the owners.

The food condemned may be classified as follows:—

FRESH MEAT consisting of:—

| Condition. | | | | Weight. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bruising | ... | ... | ... | 140-lbs. |
| Hydremia | ... | ... | ... | 80-lbs. |
| Fevered | ... | ... | ... | 1146-lbs. |
| Tuberculosis | ... | ... | ... | 1788-lbs. |
| | | Total | ... | 3154-lbs. |

The above figures include the whole carcases of two cows, one bullock, two pigs and one sheep: the remainder is comprised of portions of other carcases and internal organs.

TINNED FOOD consisting of:—

12 boxes (1 gross) small tins of assorted meat paste.
11 boxes tinned sardines.
131 loose tins of sardines.
Condemned for decomposition and other defects.

FRUIT consisting of:—

85 tubs strawberries. In a state of decomposition.

The voluntary surrender of the above articles of food was made prior to the same being offered for sale, and again speaks well for the retailer in his endeavour to supply food of good quality.

The Meat Regulations 1924, have been in operation during the year and have been carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Minister of Health in his Circular thereon. The chief benefits from these Regulations have been improved conditions governing cleanliness. We no longer see meat hung outside shops exposed to the direct line of blowing street dust, and the covering of meat in transport together with the improved method in handling, go someway towards the provision of "clean meat."

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

There has been no change in the number of Slaughterhouses in the Borough. The existing Slaughterhouses number thirteen and have been kept in a satisfactory manner. The byelaws with regard to limewashing have been carried out and my visits as usual have been well received, and any suggestions I have made have been readily carried out.

The Slaughterhouses with three exceptions, are structually poor and the accommodation is more or less cramped, and considering the amount of meat which passes to the shops from these buildings, it is only with extreme care taken by the butchers, that the meat can be turned out to the public in such remarkably good condition.

### Dairies, Cowsheds and Workshops.

There are nine farms where milk is produced, with thirteen cowsheds and four dairies in the Borough.

There were at the end of the year twenty registered milk shops. Four only of these premises sell milk as a separate business. The remaining premises consist of four butchers' ten General Grocers, one Baker and one General Business.

Three new wholesale purveyors have been registered during the year.

These premises when visited were found to be conducted in a satisfactory manner.

One cowshed has been provided with improved drainage.

### Shops.

Two infringements only of the Shops Act have been met with, where assistants were not receiving their weekly half-holiday. Both these matters were remedied by informal action.

### Common Lodging Houses.

There are three Common Lodging Houses in the Borough, registered to accommodate a total of sixty lodgers. None of these houses provide accommodation for women lodgers.

The houses are fairly well kept. The premises themselves are old and consequently do not lend themselves to that scrupulous cleanliness which is so necessary in these premises, yet it has only been necessary on two occasions to call the keeper's attention during the year to laxity in this direction.

### General.

To review the year's activities from a sanitary standpoint, we may be congratulated on the low rate of infectious disease and the general good standard of health.

The summary following this report, shows the work carried out during the year in an endeavour to improve sanitary and housing conditions.

We are yet faced with the old conditions in regard to (1) the disgraceful state of the canal, (2) the lack of adequate flushing cisterns to water-closets, and (3) the provision of proper sanitary dust bins. These matters have been dealt with at length in my previous reports and are becoming "hardy annuals." Yet one wonders, for instance, how it will ever be possible to prevent the dust from the old dilapidated dust boxes which are arranged in piles on the roadside twice weekly, from being blown along the streets, and how the butcher, who is faced with carrying out the law in preventing this dust from covering his meat, will ever have any satisfaction until proper covered dust bins are provided.

It is satisfactory to note that movements are on foot in regard to the extension of sewers in certain directions in the town. It must be admitted that these extentions are necessary in the three roads in question, viz.: Harecroft Road, Railway Road and Elm Road. In Harecroft Road great hardship is experienced in disposing of the drainage which frequently becomes a great nuisance to the occupiers of the several properties. In Railway Road this also applies and in this case the gardens are so small that the whole area must be saturated with drainage matter, leaving much to be desired from a public health standpoint in the hot summer months. In Elm Road it is obvious that the drainage matter finds its way into the derelict canal and gradually flows towards the town.

The Licensed Premises have again had attention and three of these premises have had the drainage and sanitary arrangements reconstructed and put into proper order.

In conclusion, I again wish to thank you for your kind support and consideration in the matters brought to your notice for the welfare of the Borough during the year 1926.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

E. J. SUTCLIFFE, M.S.I.A.,

*Sanitary Inspector.*

# SUMMARY OF WORK DONE DURING THE YEAR 1925.

INSPECTION OF PREMISES.

| | |
|---|---|
| For Nuisances ... ... ... ... ... | 480 |
| Where infectious disease has occurred ... ... | 61 |
| Inspection of Factories ... ... ... ... | 28 |
| " " Workshops ... ... ... ... | 60 |
| " " Bakehouses ... ... ... ... | 37 |
| " " Shops, including Food Stalls ... | 175 |
| " " Cowsheds ... ... ... ... | 6 |
| " " Milkshops ... ... ... ... | 22 |
| " " Slaughterhouses ... ... ... | 395 |
| " " Common Lodging Houses... ... | 27 |
| " under Housing, Town Planning, &c. Acts ... ... ... ... ... | 209 |
| " of Caravans ... ... ... ... | 17 |
| " " Works in progress ... ... ... | 196 |
| Re-inspections as to compliances with notices ... | 246 |
| Total ... | 1959 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of premises disinfected ... ... ... | 59 |
| Samples of water analysed ... ... ... | 1 |
| Smoke tests applied to drains ... ... ... | 25 |
| Water " " " ... ... ... | 43 |
| Colour " " " ... ... ... | 6 |
| Number of complaints investigated ... ... | 101 |
| Cases abated under preliminary notice ... ... | 234 |
| " " " statutory " ... ... | 19 |

# SUMMARY OF WORKS CARRIED OUT IN COMPLIANCE WITH NOTICES DURING THE YEAR 1925.

## House Drainage.

| | |
|---|---|
| House drains repaired, cleansed, &c. ... ... ... | 76 |
| New pipe drains provided ... ... ... ... | 62 |
| New ventilating pipes provided ... ... ... | 12 |
| Waste pipes disconnected from house drains ... ... | 3 |
| Rainwater pipes " " " " ... ... | 4 |
| New wash-up sinks provided ... ... ... ... | 5 |
| New cesspools provided... ... ... ... ... | 1 |
| Cesspools emptied ... ... ... ... ... | 10 |
| Cesspools abolished ... ... ... ... ... | 1 |

## Sanitary Conveniences.

| | |
|---|---|
| Privies converted into water-closets ... ... ... | 3 |
| New privies built ... ... ... ... ... | 2 |
| New water-closets provided ... ... ... ... | 8 |
| Closets repaired, &c. ... ... ... ... ... | 34 |
| Closets abolished... ... ... ... ... ... | 3 |
| Flushing cisterns provided to W.Cs. ... ... ... | 4 |
| Urinals repaired ... ... ... ... ... ... | 4 |

## Factories, Workshops and Bakehouses.

| | |
|---|---|
| Factories provided with suitable drainage of floors ... | 1 |
| Workshops " " sufficient sanitary accommodation ... ... ... ... ... ... | 2 |
| Workshops provided with improved sanitary accommodation ... ... ... ... ... ... | 1 |
| Workshops cleansed, limewashed, &c.... ... ... | 2 |
| " repaired ... ... ... ... ... | 3 |

## Dairies and Cowsheds.

| | |
|---|---|
| Provided with improved drainage ... ... ... | 1 |

# SUMMARY OF WORKS CARRIED OUT IN CHIEF LANDS WITH NOTICES DURING THE YEAR 1925.

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## House Drainage.

| | |
|---|---|
| House drains repaired, cleansed, &c. ... ... ... | 75 |
| New pipe drains provided ... ... ... ... | 62 |
| New ventilating pipes provided ... ... ... | 72 |
| Waste pipes disconnected from house drains ... ... | 5 |
| Rainwater pipes " " " " ... | 4 |
| New wash-up sinks provided ... ... ... | 5 |
| New cesspools provided... ... ... ... | 1 |
| Cesspools emptied ... ... ... ... | 50 |
| Cesspools abolished ... ... ... ... | 1 |

## Sanitary Conveniences.

| | |
|---|---|
| Privies converted into water-closets ... ... ... | 5 |
| New privies built ... ... ... ... | 2 |
| New water-closets provided ... ... ... | 2 |
| Closets repaired, &c. ... ... ... ... | 24 |
| Closets abolished... ... ... ... ... | 3 |
| Flushing cisterns provided to W.C.s ... ... ... | 4 |
| Urinals repaired ... ... ... ... ... | 4 |

## Factories, Workshops and Bakehouses.

| | |
|---|---|
| Factories provided with sufficient sanitary accommodation ... | 2 |
| Workshops " " " ... ... ... ... | 2 |
| Workshops provided with sufficient sanitary accommodation ... ... ... ... ... | 2 |
| Workshops cleansed, limewashed, &c. ... ... ... | 1 |
| " repaired ... ... ... ... ... | 3 |

## Dwellings and Common.

| | |
|---|---|
| Provided with improved dustbins ... ... ... | 1 |