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Contributors

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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1925.



To the Chairman and Members of the
Woodhall Spa U.D.C.

GENTLEMEN,—

I now have to place before you a survey report for 1925, which means that I have to summarise the measure of progress made in the area during the preceding five years in the improvement of the public Health.

This district is one which has been prevented from making fast progress since the termination of the Great War. Being situated comparatively near the East Coast, it naturally suffered during the War from depopulation. This no doubt would have been overcome in the course of time, but a worse calamity was in store, for in the early part of the year 1920, one of the leading Hotels in the place was burnt down, and although everything possible has been done to build another Hotel it has not up to the present been re-built. However, the natural conditions are such that they must in time triumph over this set-back, as there is no doubt that the area is ideal for an inland health resort, being situated in the main upon a sandy sub-soil with a rainfall practically the lowest in England. It is well noted for its unique Bromo-Iodine waters, which are of benefit in cases of rheumatic arthritis, muscular rheumatism, gouty affections and some diseases of women.

APPENDIX.

Area, in acres, 1,575.

Population in 1921, 1,635.

Population in 1925, estimated by the Register General to be 1,535.

Physical features and general character of

The area slopes from the Tower-o'-Moor in the east of the district down to the town, and from there it is a dead level or thereabouts, down to the River Witham, which is our boundary on the West. All the land from Tower-o'-Moor down to the town is clean sand, and below the town blue clay crops up here and there, but the bulk of the land down the Witham and chiefly consists of sand and gravel. The area is protected by pine woods on the north and east from the winds from these quarters.

Number of inhabited houses (1921) 372; (1925) 409.

Number of families, or separate occupiers (1921) 300; (1925) 411.

Rateable value, £11,583.

Sum represented by penny rate, £44 4s. 9d.

Assessable value, £1,617.

Amount of Poor Law Relief given, £71.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS INCLUDING CHIEF OCCUPATIONS OF INHABITANTS.

This is chiefly a residential area, and what inhabitants there are besides are mainly occupied in catering for the visitors in the season. There are comparatively few of the working classes, and that is why the housing problem has never become very acute.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births: Legitimate, males 11, females 4; Illegitimate, males nil, females 1; Total 16.

Birth-rate, 11.55.

Deaths, 15. Death-rate, 10.23.

Number of women dying in or in consequence of child-birth: From sepsis, nil; from other causes, nil.

Deaths of infants under one year of age, per 1,000 births: Legitimate nil, Illegitimate nil, Total nil.

Deaths from measles (all ages), nil.

Deaths from whooping cough (all ages), nil.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years), nil.

HOSPITALS PROVIDED OR SUBSIDISED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY OR COUNTY COUNCIL.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Beds are reserved in 14 Sanatoria by the County Council in different Counties where patients are taken from the U.D. of Woodhall Spa as vacancies arise.

MATERNITY. NIL.

CHILDREN.

There is no hospital for children except the County Hospital at Lincoln, which has been promised £150 a year by Woodhall Spa, and which in the past has done invaluable work.

FEVER.

There is no Infections Diseases Hospital in the area, though the Lincoln City Infections Diseases Hospital will take cases, if not full, in emergency, on payment of £4 10s. a week, and Horncastle Urban District has a small Infections Diseases Hospital which might be used in emergency on payment per case.

SMALL-POX.

There is no Small-pox Hospital nearer than Lincoln, but we arranged in 1922 that in case of any out-break of small-pox an ambulance would be sent from the City Small-pox Hospital, the Council agreeing to pay all expenses of getting the Hospital into working order if not in use at the time.

There is no Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the area.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(a). For infectious cases.

In case of necessity we should phone for an ambulance to be sent from the Lincoln City Infections Hospital to convey a patient there, and if we thought good to send it to Horncastle we should send for a motor vehicle from there which would be disinfected under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector immediately it had delivered the case at the I.D. Hospital.

(b). For non-infectious and accident cases.

An ambulance is kept at the Bull Hotel Garage, Bull Ring, Horncastle, provided by the British Red Cross, which would be available in cases of emergency. A small mileage charge is payable for its use.

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

Maternity and Child Welfare centres are held at Rolleston House, Bridge Street, Horncastle, every Tuesday, but none at Woodhall Spa; however, Horncastle is within 10 minutes distance by train, as are also a Tuberculosis Dispensary for consultation and treatment every Saturday, and School Clinics on the same day. A Clinic is held for Venereal Diseases at 11, Bank Street, Lincoln, on Wednesday and Saturday, for consultation and treatment. These centres are well provided and kept by the Lindsey County Council.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Myself, D.P.H., M.O.H., part time, and Mr. Edgar Salmon, certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, Sanitary Inspector, whole-time official. He is also Surveyor and Collector and Assistant Surveyor.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

(a). General.

The Urban District possesses a professional nurse, but the Council does not make a grant in aid; she is paid by a Nursing Association, by voluntary subscriptions.

(b). For Infectious Diseases.
There are two nurses provided by the County Council in Lindsey to visit severe cases of measles and whooping cough where no other nursing is available, and also to attend cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum and Puerperal Fever under the Doctor's instructions.
These nurses are stationed at Louth and Lincoln respectively.

MEASURE OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE AREA DURING THE PRECEDING FIVE YEARS IS AS UNDER:—

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

These have altered but little in the last five years as the district has been built up within the last forty or fifty years, and as such does not lend itself to great sanitary developments.

Practically the whole of the area is sewered and the sewage treated bacteriologically, which results in a very good effluent. This discharges into a drain and eventually by a circuitous route into the River Witham. The filtering media in the contact beds and the secondary filters are cleansed and renewed at required intervals.

A new 17 B.H.P. crude oil engine and compressor has been installed during the year, so that we are now capable of dealing with an increased amount of sewage. The western part of the district, which is of the rural type, is the only part which is not connected to the sewage system. The closet accommodation comprises pail closets, privies and cesspools, the contents of which are dealt with by the occupiers, by burying in the gardens attached to the dwellings without causing any nuisance as the water is laid on to the end of the district, and so there are few wells to become polluted. With the exception of about 40 cottages the property is all comparatively new, therefore there are no serious sanitary defects to record over and above the ordinary nuisances which are likely to occur in any district.

HOUSING.

The housing conditions are gradually improving, and it has not been found necessary for the U.D.C. to enter into any scheme of their own.

During the year, five subsidy houses have been approved by the Local Authority; of these, three are completed and in occupation, and two are in progress and will be completed shortly.

During the past five years 14 houses have been built (not including the two subsidy houses not yet completed). Seven of these are of the small parlour type, and the remainder of the villa type, all of which are of a class suitable to the district; and during the same period only two cottages have been built in that part of the district which is not yet sewered.

DRAINAGE.

The drainage system forms part of the old sewerage system, which proves to be sufficient and satisfactory and is constructed of 12in. sanitary pipes throughout the greater portion of the area.

The lower portion of the district has recently been improved by cutting a new ditch which gives a more direct flow into the River Witham.

A 12in. sanitary pipe drain replaces old 6in. tiles from Mill Lane corner for about 125 yards, which discharges into a new ditch 225 yards long to the River Witham.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Every house within the area of the sewerage system is connected up to the sewer. There are 71 cottages that dispose of their own sewage, 25 privies, 40 pails, 2 cesspools, and 3 deal with their own sewage on the water carriage system. Cleansing of privies, ashpits, and cesspools, is done by the occupiers and placed on adjoining land as previously described.

SCAVENGING.

The whole district with the exception of about 34 cottages have their house refuse removed once a week or in some cases twice, by the Council's own workmen by means of a ton Ford lorry. This is finally disposed of at the Sewage Works by burning. (There have been no complaints of inefficiency or otherwise during the year).

Moveable sanitary bins with lids are gradually taking the place of crude moveable and fixed receptacles.

During recent years at least 50 conversions have been made, and only about 20 covered ashpits are now actually in use.

The district generally is well provided with sanitary moveable receptacles.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Number.	Times inspected.
3 Cowkeepers	12
5 Milk-sellers (retail)	15
3 Bakehouses	12
2 Butchers	8
2 Fishmongers	8
1 Slaughterhouse	5
2 Dressmakers	3
4 Laundries	8
1 Livery Stable	2
3 Bootmakers	12
3 Builders	6
2 Cabinet Makers	4
3 Plumbers	6
2 Blacksmiths	4
3 Motor Repairers	6
1 Wheelwright	2
1 Painter	2

Number of premises inspected on complaint	4
Number of premises inspected in connection with infectious disease	6
Under periodical inspection (all classes)	40
Under periodical inspection (house to house)	15
Total number of inspections and re-inspections	65

PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYE-LAWS OR REGULATIONS.

There is in my opinion no need for any byelaws or regulations for any of the houses in the Spa, though a large proportion of them take in lodgers during the season, but they are lodgers who come to take the waters and are not of the type requiring any regulations.

SCHOOLS.

The only Public Elementary School in the Town in the Church of England school. There are 155 mixed scholars. The closet accommodation is on the trough system, and four closets are used by the girls and two and a urinal, of three stands, by the boys. The water is obtained from the Public Supply.

IV.—BYELAWS RELATING TO HOUSES, TO HOUSES LET IN LODGINGS, AND TO TENTS, VANS AND SHEDS.

1.—The general byelaws for this district have been revised during 1925. As there is no common lodging-house in the district, and only first-class apartments houses, there is no necessity for any further byelaws.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a). The greater portion of the milk is obtained from the rural area. There are only three small cowsheds situated in the district, all of which have been much improved in recent years, and although I had to remark upon the ventilation in one of the three, I find they are kept in a fairly satisfactory condition.

There is no grade A milk sold in this district. Two contraventions of the regulations were found and remedied. Number of milch cows in the district is about 16. There is no Veterinary Inspector appointed. The cows are periodically inspected and should there be any sign of tuberculosis a veterinary surgeon would be called in.

MEAT.

There is only one slaughterhouse in the district, and two butchers use the same. During the summer months, slaughtering is carried on daily, and periodical inspections are made. The slaughtering is done with the humane killer, which I have seen used myself and found it very expeditious and effective. The administration of the Public Health (meat) Regulations, 1924, is in the hands of the Sanitary Inspector, who is the Meat Inspector appointed by the Council, and as regards shops, stores, and vehicles it is carried out and enforced by him.

	in 1923	Jan., 1925.	Dec., 1925.
Registered	1	1	1
Licensed	nil.	nil.	nil.

BAKEHOUSES

Three in the District, no underground bakehouses.

Number of inspections: 12.

Conventions of Factory Acts, 2; defects remedied, 2; one of these was the keeping of pits too close to the bakehouses.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND WORKPLACES.

The majority of factories and workshops in this area are but small and in very few instances more than three hands are employed. There are no outworkers within the district, and nothing has been brought to my notice by H.M. Inspector of Factories.

The only defects during the year are as follows:—
Two cases of Limewashing;

One case of keeping a pig too near a bake-house;
One case of cleansing a butcher's premises;
One W.C. repaired and put in sanitary order.

There is no trade of offensive character, and the larger portion of the inhabitants outside Hotel and Boarding-house keepers, and shop proprietors, are employed on the land.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply is owned by a Water Company and is a mixture of upland surface water from the Tattershall Thorpe gathering ground, with spring water from Cawkwell, about seven miles from Horncastle.

The supply is constant, and at least 96% of the dwellings are directly connected; slight contamination has been traced at intervals, caused no doubt by the excreta of rabbits, rats and birds, which inhabit the gathering ground, but in no case has any disease been traced to use of the water. When such occurs it is soon remedied by the use of chloris, and more efficient filtration at the source. Samples have been taken during the year 1925, and proved satisfactory on Bacteriological analysis. The sufficiency of the supply is enough for domestic purposes, but inadequate from a fire-fighting point of view.

MOSQUITOES.

As in the past few years, spraying with crude petroleum was again carried in the early spring, all stagnant ponds, swamps, ditches and the like being sprayed with a view to destroy or prevent the mosquito larva from hatching out. After this spraying has been repeated about 3 or 4 times, at intervals of a week or ten days, it has been noticed that a considerable amount of good has been done towards limiting the breeding of mosquitoes.

CEMETERY SITE.

Nothing further has been done, and the site, which is the gift of Major Hotchkin, has not yet been handed over.

HOUSING (general conditions in the area).

On the whole the conditions are good; the town having sprung up in the last 40 or 50 years, there are no old houses, no slums, no insanitary areas. This applies more especially to the Urban portion of the area.

There is no serious shortage of houses, as any temporary shortage which may have existed just after the war has been overcome by private enterprise.

I have good reason to believe that the housing accommodation will continue to improve as there are other small schemes of the smaller type of cottage contemplated.

II.—OVERCROWDING.

No serious case of overcrowding has come to my knowledge. There are two which might be improved by the older members leaving home.

III.—FITNESS OF HOUSES.

The general standard of houses is good, the chief character of defects being defective drains, closets, soil pipes, dampness, yard paving, defective roofs, which is due chiefly to lack of ownership supervision. Most of these are dealt with by informal action.

REPORT OF WORK DONE AND HOUSING STATISTICS FOR YEAR, 1925.

- (a) Number of dwelling-houses erected during the year . . . 4
(b) Number of State assisted . . . 4

1.—Number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under P.H. of Housing Acts) . . . 22

2.—Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Inspection of District Regulations, 1910 . . . 10

3.—Number of dwelling-houses found dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation . . . nil

4.—Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation . . . 1

II.—Remedy of defects without services of formal notices.

Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal notice by Local Authority or their Officers . . . 5

III.—Action under Statutory Powers.

- (a) Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

- 1.—Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs . . . nil
2.—Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:
(a) by Owners nil
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners nil
3.—Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close . . . nil
(b) Proceedings under the Public Health Acts.

- 1.—Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 1
2.—Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied:
(a) by owners 1
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners nil

- (c) Proceedings under Sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.
1.—Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders . . . nil
2.—Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made nil
3.—Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit nil
4.—Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made nil
5.—Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders nil

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	2		1
Small-Pox			1
Diphtheria			
Enteric Fever	1		
Puerperal Fever			
Pneumonia			
Erysipelas			
Encephalitis Lethargica			
Totals	3	nil	2

The two cases of scarlet fever both occurred at different times, but in both cases, by good luck or good management, the case did not spread beyond the first attacked.

In the case of Encephalitis Lethargica, the patient was sinking into what used to be called a typhoid condition, and he died next day. He was very somnolent, but could be roused and had no diplopia.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	M	F	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	M	F
0-4								
5-9								
10-14								
15-19								
20-24								
25-29								
30-34								
35-39								
40-44								
45-49								
50-54								
55-59								
60-64								
65 and upwards								
Totals	1	1						

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ARTHUR BOULTON, D.P.H.,

4th April, 1926.

