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# ANNUAL REPORT

Of the Medical Officer of Health  
FOR THE YEAR 1919.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council,—

GENTLEMEN,—

## SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF INHABITANTS.

This is mainly a residential neighbourhood; the remainder are shopkeepers and tradesmen who cater for the inhabitants and visitors who come to take the waters in the season, which begins at the end of March or beginning of April, and ends in October, and a small working class population, chiefly domesticated, in the Witham end of the district.

## WATER.

The water supply has been good during 1919. The Council had it bacteriologically analysed in the Spring and it was found satisfactory. It consists of spring water flowing by gravitation from Cawkwell, which also supplies Horncastle, diluted with about equal parts of upland surface water from a gathering ground at Tattershall Thorpe. By this admixture, the water from the chalk is made softer and the plumbo solvent action of the upland surface water is neutralised. There has been no outbreak of disease which can be attributed to the water supply, or in point of fact, to anything else.

The public supply is owned by a private Company and supplies 98 per cent. of the houses in No. 1 district.

Three cottages have been connected up during the year.

## RIVERS AND STREAMS.

I have not become aware of any gross pollution of streams necessitating any action.

## DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

No new work has been executed. The sewage disposal works are up-to-date and in good order. A very good effluent results. The sewage is conveyed by the Shone system on to the farm where it is treated bacteriologically; from the detritus tank it passes through septic tanks on to three contact beds and finally through two circular distributors by means of continuous sprinklers.

## CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

In the rural portion of the district, there are 30 houses with privy vaults, and 36 houses with pail closets. Three pail closets have been substituted during the year. The remainder of the houses have the water carriage system.

## SCAVENGING.

The Council undertakes the removal of house refuse, and it is collected twice weekly. This is disposed of by burning at the sewage farm. In the rural portion, householders deal with their own refuse, and the contents of privies after cleansing are disposed of on land adjoining their premises, no nuisance being created.

## SANITARY INSPECTION OF DISTRICT, WORKSHOPS, ETC.

Cowkeepers (3), 12 inspections; milkcellars (5), 20; bakehouses (3), 12; butchers (2), 8; fishmongers (2), 8; slaughterhouse (1), 5; dressmakers (2), 8; laundries (5), 12; livery stables (2), 6; bootmakers (2), 8; plumbers (3), 6; motor works (2), 4; builders (3), 6; cabinet makers (2), 4; blacksmiths (2), 4; wheelwright (1), 2; painter and decorator (1), 2.

Number of inspections made on complaint, 8; number of inspections in connection with E.D., 11; number of inspections under periodical inspection, 42; house-to-house inspections, 13; total number of inspections and re-inspections, 202 (all notices issued); cautionary or intimation notices given, 33; matters remedied as result of such notices, 33; statutory notices served, 1; matters remedied as result of such notice, 1; summonses served, nil; number of common lodging houses, offensive trades in the district, nil.

## SCHOOLS.

There is only one public elementary school in the district, which had its sanitary conveniences remodelled a few years ago. Its water supply is derived from the mains.

## MILK SUPPLY.

There are only three cowsheds in the district, which are inspected quarterly, as a result of which one contravention of regulations was found and remedied without the

aid of legal persuasion. No action has been taken with regard to tuberculous milk nor found necessary. The police are responsible for the carrying out of the Sale of Foods and Drugs Act.

There are five dairies on the register, which have been inspected 20 times.

## BAKEHOUSES.

There are three bakehouses in the district, which are inspected quarterly. Three defects were found and remedied during the year. They are all kept fairly clean.

## SLAUGHTERHOUSE.

There is only one in the district, which is kept well and clean. One defect was brought to the notice of the occupier and remedied. This slaughterhouse is very well lighted and thoroughly up-to-date in its construction.

## UN SOUND FOOD.

36-lbs. of fish, 128-lbs. of beef, and 104-lbs. of butter were voluntarily surrendered by the owners and destroyed.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

These comprise four cases of scarlet fever, of which two occurred at the Convent, but I was unable to trace their source, and two cases a little later in scholars at the public elementary school; at any rate, the precaution taken obviated any further outbreak. There were four cases of measles notified, two in July and two in November, which latter were the fore-runners of a pretty general outbreak. One case of phthisis was notified and proved fatal, and I sent the (at that time) Sanitary Inspector to disinfect the rooms occupied. One case of ophthalmia neonatorum was notified, and one case of pneumonia (post influenza).

Three cases of imported post-war malaria were also notified, but although the anophiles is indigenous to Woodhall Spa, I have not been made aware of any case of malaria occurring amongst the civilian population either before, or after the return of these cases. In tuberculosis cases, there is the Tuberculosis Dispensary at Horncastle open, and the County Laboratory at Lincoln, where sputum may be examined free in all cases where the diagnosis is at all doubtful.

Number of rooms disinfected, 5; number of nuisances found and abated, 10; number of drains unstopped, lime-washing, and general notices, 15.

## SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The staff consists of myself and the Inspector of Nuisances. There is no isolation hospital.

## NEW BUILDINGS.

One new building, an army hut, has been erected during the year.

## HOUSING.

A survey of the housing needs of this district was submitted to the Commission in October last, and the needs of the district are very much the same. Plans for 26 cottages have been provisionally approved, and no doubt developments are to be expected before very long.

There is no bad over-crowding in the urban district of Woodhall Spa. The houses are nearly all more or less new, and have been built after the requirements of the model bye-laws.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

The death rate comes out at a high figure compared with what it used to do, as in 1917 it was only 10.97, while in 1919 it was 17.58, but we must console ourselves with the reflection that the figures are too small to be taken seriously. There were two deaths from tuberculosis and no less than three from cancer. The deaths for males were 9 only and for females 16. The birth rate is lower than the death rate, only amounting to 12.15 per 1,000, as against 9.84 in 1917, there being 18 births during 1919 and only 13 in 1917 and 1918 respectively. For this, we must blame the age distribution and the fact that this is mainly a residential district. The infant mortality was higher in 1919 than last year, being 111.11 per 1,000 registered births, but as both the deaths (there were only two of infants under one year) were referred to congenital debility, it will be seen that very little notice can be taken of these figures which are far too small to be taken seriously.

ARTHUR BOULTON, D.P.H.

