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Woodbridge Urban District.



# Survey Report

BY THE

MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH



For the year

• 1925 •

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By

WILLIAM REDPATH, M.B., Lond.

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,



REPORT  
OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health,  
WOODBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT.

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### Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

The area of this district is 1,097 acres.

The estimated population in 1925 is 4,600, that of Census 1921 was 4,589.

No. of inhabited houses (1921) was 1,300.

No. of families or separate occupiers (1921) was 1,300.

Rateable value—£22,438 10s. 0d.

Sum represented by penny rate—£73.

The town, which is of ancient date, is situated on rising ground overlooking a valley, through which the River Deben runs into the sea about 8 miles distant; the river is tidal at this place. The soil is chiefly formed by sand and ferruginous crag of a porous nature, and the general trend of its surface towards the valley of the Deben allows of natural drainage of surface waters.

The residents are composed roughly of two classes, those who trade in the town and those who are private residents.

There are no factories. The Manual Workers follow chiefly agricultural and building pursuits. The main road to Yarmouth passes through the centre of the town, and traffic has increased enormously of late years.

The amount of Poor Law Relief this last year has been £476 11s. 9d.

The General Hospital which takes the majority of cases for surgical and medical relief is the East Suffolk Hospital situated in Ipswich, 8 miles away.

Gratuitous medical treatment is rendered by the Seckford Dispensary. The Poor Law Guardians send their cases to Tattingstone Infirmary when necessary.

During the period under review (1920—1925) only one year (1923) was characterised by any abnormal occurrence of note; I refer to the epidemic of Diphtheria in 1923, which was the subject of a special report to the Ministry of Health at the time. Beyond a few cases of Scarlet Fever from year to year there is nothing of sufficient importance to comment upon, except the general freedom from anything of this sort in ordinary times—one may mention that no case of typhoid or paratyphoid has occurred for years; in fact generally speaking Woodbridge is a very healthy place.

## Vital Statistics for 1925.

(Population 4,600)

*Deaths.* Males, 33. Females, 32. Total, 65.

Death-rate per 1,000 population, 14·1

England and Wales being 12·2.

No particular disease being responsible for the increase over last year's figures.

Deaths at 70 years and upwards occurred in 30 of the 65 deaths registered.

*Births.* Males, 47. Females, 37. Total, 84.

Birth-rate, 18·2 per 1,000.

England and Wales being 28·3.

	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	81	44	<b>37</b>
Illegitimate	3	3	—

Deaths of Infants under one year of age:—1 males, 3 females Total 4, one female being illegitimate.

Death-rate per 1,000 births :—47·6

Corresponding rate for England and Wales :—75.

Deaths—from Measles all ages	...	...	nil
Whooping Cough	...	...	nil
Diarrhoea, under 2 years of age			nil

There was no unusual or excessive mortality during the year.

#### General Remarks.

1 death from Suicide			
3 deaths from Violence	2 males.	1 female	
9 deaths from Cancer	5 males.	4 females	
8 deaths from Heart Disease	4 males.	4 females	
7 deaths from Bronchitis	3 males.	4 females	
4 deaths from Tuberculosis	4 males		

#### Notifiable Diseases for 1295.

	Total Cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Diphtheria	...	1	0
Scarlet Feve	...	1	0
Smallpox ...	...	0	0
Enteric ...	...	0	0
Pneumonia	...	5	5
	—		
	Total 7		

Other diseases generally notifiable—Nil

Other diseases locally notifiable—Nil

Two deaths from Influenza are recorded

Ophthalmia Neonatorum—Nil

## TUBERULOSIS TABLE

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
25	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
45	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0
55	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
65 up.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	4	4	0	1	3	1	0	0

## The Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

### WATER

By far the greater part of the dwellings are supplied by the Woodbridge Waterworks, the purity of which supply is excellent. A few wells are still used by those who like them although every effort is made to induce people to take the safer supply. As regards constancy of supply the Waterworks have never yet failed to give all required, even during drought season, although they have asked the public to practice economy.

Contamination of the Waterworks supply is not possible —of the supply from Wells possible at all times—these when found polluted are condemned and closed.

Approximately houses to the number of 723 have the Waterworks supply laid on, assuming an average of four persons per house this would number about 2,600 persons receiving this source of water supply, or about two-thirds of the population of the town; there is only one standpipe, that is in the public playground (i.e. the Fen Meadow).

As the water is hard from both Well and Waterworks works supply there is little or no danger from plumbo solvent action. There is a certain amount of pollution of the River Deben as our sewers and drains empty themselves into it—the water, as I have before noted, is tidal, and the pollution is innocuous.

## **DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE**

There is no proper sewerage system at present; the town sewers receive the overflows from tanks and the surface waters; these run into the river in a falling tide and are carried towards the sea by the river. The Council have been advised by me that it would be a good plan if all drainage works were laid according to a scheme which would fit in with a sewerage system should the Council decide upon installing one at a future date. More building has taken place during the last five years than during twenty years preceding, it therefore would be as well to think ahead of future requirements.

At the present time some houses have overflows into the sewers, the majority have the pail earth system, the emptying being carried out by the Council's men with special carts, the material is then taken just outside the town where it is dumped and sold to the farmers. Lately these dumps of night soil have not been sold so readily as one would wish and as the summer months are approaching the Council has decided to get rid of the existing dumps forthwith and to have future night soil interred in pits or trenches and covered in, as being more in accordance with proper sanitation.

## **SEWER OUTFALLS**

During the last year the Council has paved in the sewer outfall on the Eastern side of the Railway Station, thereby greatly improving the condition of that outlet.

I note that it was in 1908 when I first called attention to these outfalls. The main one was paved in 1909 and the other this year. A further improvement I think might be effected in No. 1 Outfall on the river side as that tends to become offensive at low tide.

Twenty-five years ago this town was full of privy bins and typhoid fever was not unknown.

The policy has been to do away with these and put in the pail closet system.

The Privy bins exist no longer, neither does Typhoid fever, and the pail closet system has proved satisfactory on the whole.

## **SCAVENGING**

House refuse is collected at stated intervals by the Council's men and removed to the before mentioned dump where formerly it was burnt on the ground, but since the War it has been buried. The Council have decided to use incinerators for the burning of this material and are building one at the time of writing.

Earth closets, Ashpits and Cesspools are likewise dealt with by the Council's men. After emptying, these receptacles are treated with disinfectant.

## **Inspection and Supervision of Food**

### **(a) MILK SUPPLY**

There are on the Register of this District only two Dairy Farms and one other place.

The condition of these dairies is satisfactory.

Milk from outside the District comes from many sources in the Rural District. The milk supply of this town is excellent in quality, and clean. Samples are taken periodically by the County Police and by the Council's Officers if thought necessary at any time. I have had access to the reports of analysis taken and am, therefore, cognisant as to the quality of the milk from time to time.

- i. There has been no need to take any action up to the present on account of tuberculous milk or cattle.
- ii. No licences have been granted or asked for under 4th Schedule to the Milk Order, 1923. No milk is pasteurised.

### **(b). MEAT INSPECTION**

All butchers' shops in the town have glass windows to keep off flies and dust—the greatest care is exercised to keep the meat clean and wholesome—some keep their meat in cold storage and little or none in the shop itself in warm weather, and no meat is exposed outside or in barrows.

Vehicles, such as are in use, are closed, ventilated vans, specially fitted.

There is no public slaughter-house — this is a matter which I have frequently advocated and there is special need of such an institution to render possible the new Regulations (P.H. Meat), 1920, and without such it is an impossibility to carry them out. There are seven registered slaughter-houses in different parts of the town, rendering supervision of slaughtering and meat difficult—these slaughter-houses are as clean as such improvised places can be, but are generally speaking satisfactory from my point of view.

No. of Slaughter-houses—

	In 1920.	Jan. 1925.	Dec. 1925.
Registered			
Licensed	8	7	7

Never, or very rarely, is meat condemned, the standard of excellence of the meat killed in this town is exceptionally high, and the butchers themselves are keen to keep up the quality.

(c). FOOD INSPECTION

Very few cases of condemned food have occurred, none this last year. The bake-houses are periodically inspected. No cases of food poisoning have come under my notice.

With regard to the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts—the Local Authority has had no occasion to take any action.

No action has been necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.

Tuberculosis is dealt with by the Council apart from domiciliary treatment.

There is no Maternity and Child Welfare Centre in the town—it not being thought necessary.

## Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

Reviewing the period 1920—1925 inclusive, the following are the figures of notified Infectious Diseases :—

		1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Diphtheria	...	5	13	8	45	0	1
Scarlet Fever	...	0	3	3	2	1	1
Pneumonia	...	2	3	8	3	1	5
Enteric Fever	...	0	0	0	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	...	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Tuberculosis	...	4	4	8	10	5	9
Other Diseases	...	0	0	0	0	0	0

It will be seen from this table that apart from the diphtheria epidemic in 1923 there has been little infectious disease ; the outbreak was the subject of a special report to the Ministry at the time. Diphtheria antitoxin is supplied by the Council to all necessitous cases promptly, and practitioners in the district use it as early as possible with excellent result invariably.

Pathological specimens are examined and reported on by the County Council Laboratory in Ipswich and these facilities are freely used by Medical Practitioners in the district with great benefit to the public whether they be actual cases, contracts, or carriers. No use has been made of the Schick or Dick tests.

**SMALLPOX.**—No cases have been notified ; it has therefore not been necessary for the Medical Officer of Health to vaccinate under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917.

Regarding the disposal in hospital of infectious disease, it has been customary to remove, when considered necessary these cases to our small Isolation Cottage on the outskirts of the town until the present time ; this policy is now altered and the Council have decided to send these cases to the Ipswich Borough Isolation Hospital and to close the Isolation Cottage ; negotiations to this end have just been concluded.

Disinfection of bedding, clothing, etc., is carried out by the Council by means of a Thresh Disinfector.

# Inspector's Report of Sanitary Work for the Year ending 31st December, 1925.

No. of Complaints received	...	...	...	5
,, Houses, Premises, etc., inspected	...	...	332	
(Housing 215, Public Health 117)				
,, Re-inspections of houses, premises, etc.	...	...	207	
,, House drains laid, repaired, cleansed, trapped, etc.	...	...	9	
,, Defected drains, traps, etc., condemned	...	...	3	
,, Houses, etc., disinfected and cleansed	...	...	12	
,, Defective cesspools, privies, and dustbins abolished	...	...	1	
,, New earth and water closets provided	...	...	1	
,, Accumulations of filth, etc., removed	...	...	7	
,, Backyards (paving repaired)	...	...	6	
,, Cases of food condemned as unsound	...	...	1	
,, Structural defects remedied	...	...	32	
,, Slaughter-houses inspected	...	...	7	
,, Bake-houses inspected	...	...	10	
,, Lodging-houses inspected	...	...	1	
,, Factories and workshops inspected	...	...	23	
,, Defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in con- sequence of informal action	...	...	37	
	(Housing 33, Public Health 4).			

W. GROUT WHISSTOCK,

*Sanitary Inspector and Inspector under the Housing Act 1925.*

	£	s.	d.
Rateable Value	22,438	10	0
1d. Rate raises	73	0	0
Number of Houses connected with water supply	...	723	
Approximate number of Earth closets	...	1047	
Approximate number of Water closets	...	336	

W. GROUT WHISSTOCK

22nd February, 1926.

## Housing.

No. of new houses erected during the year :—			
(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b))	...	...	24
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts:			
(i) By the Local Authority	...	...	Nil
(ii) By other bodies or persons	...	...	24

### 1.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES

#### I.—Inspection

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	332
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	215
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so 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 head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	37

#### II.—Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	...	...	...	...	...	...
						37

#### 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	...	...	...	1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—				
(a) By owners	...	...	...	1
(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
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##### B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—				
(a) By owners	...	...	...	Nil
(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 Closed 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

## **Acts and Regulations in force in the Woodbridge Urban District relating to health.**

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### **Date of Adoption**

- 20th May, 1896. Infectious Diseases Prevention Act.
- 20th May, 1896. Infectious Diseases Notification Act.
- 13th Feb., 1923. Regulations for Dairy Cowsheds and Milk Shops.
- 22nd July, 1923. Bye-laws in respect of Slaughter Houses (humane killer).
- 20th Dec., 1924. The Public Health (Meat) Regulations.
1925. \* Public Health Act, 1925, partly in force, partly adoptive.
- July 13th, 1925. Tuberculosis Order, 1925. Animals.
- August, 1925. Tuberculosis Order, 1925. No. 2. Meat Inspection.
- Aug. 7th, 1925. Public Health Prevention of Tuberculosis Regulation, 1925.
- Sept. 1st, 1925. Milk and Dairies Consolidation Act, 1915 (Commencement of Operation) Order, 1925.
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\*Public Health Act, 1925, is partly in force, partly adoptive.

Parts II—V have not been adopted.

Part VI is not in force in this District.

Part VII (Infectious Diseases and Hospitals) and Part VIII Miscellaneous are in force.

Part IX is not in force in this District.

**WILLIAM REDPATH,**

M.B., Lond., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., Lond.,

Medical Officer of Health.





