

SANITARY CONDITIONS IN NABURN IN THE 1890s Ref:NAB.5

A vivid picture of rural sanitary conditions emerges in a report dated 14.01.1893. (1). It examines conditions in the York Rural Sanitary District which included Naburn.

The general picture is of a very unsatisfactory water supply. Wells are dry stained, a number polluted due to proximity to privies, middens, foldyards and pigsties. Sanitary conditions vary from village to village, Escrick in advance of many.

NABURN -2636 acres with a rateable value of £8292- receives criticism:

“For slop water disposal the village is drained by 3 unventilated pipes, 2 of which unite at the apex of the triangle and discharge their crude contents into a beck by the roadside. The other “sewer” running along the base of the triangle..silted up at the outfall, and having burst higher up was discharging on the river bank.

Water supply...from pump wells some of which are badly placed in that they are liable to contamination. That good water might without much difficulty be obtained...seems likely from the fact that a farmer whose shallow well was found by the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) to be polluted, appears to have a plentiful supply of water..obtained from the sandstone formation beneath a bed of clay 80 feet in thickness.

General sanitary conditions in many instances leaves much to be desired. In some cases the eave-spouting and yard paving were found to be very defective: other cottages were unprovided with any proper receptacle for ashes and house refuse, which are accordingly heaped up in the gardens. For excrement disposal, privies with fixed receptacles, some of which are connected with middens, are provided. Certain privies were found discharging into pigsties. One pigsty, in which a pig was kept, and into which a privy discharged, was found adjoining the corner of a dwelling. Another pigsty, into which a privy was discharging, drained into a small catchpit, which was overflowing onto the garden path. Some middens were uncovered, deep and wet. One large midden, with 2 privies connected with it, though covered, was within about 3 yards of a house door and was quite full. In another instance a wooden privy seat had been placed in the little “barn” behind a cottage, the excrement from this privy finding its way into a small hole in the garden behind.”