

Epping and the problem of Public Health

Stan Newens

In the early years of the nineteenth century, public health standards in Epping and the surrounding district, as in much of the rest of the country, were quite appalling. Most people obtained their water, as their ancestors had done for centuries past, from ponds, ditches, streams and shallow wells. This was frequently polluted by human and animal waste which was disposed of on middens, dunghills, in cesspits and open ditches. Housing conditions for the majority of the population were primitive and medical care was rudimentary if available at all. Unpleasant and dangerous practices were rife and, not surprisingly, mortality — and in particular, infant mortality — was high.

Previous generations, from time immemorial, had accepted this as inevitable but by the middle of the century a consciousness of the possibilities of preventive measures had begun to develop. Undoubtedly the work of great pioneers like Edwin Chadwick, stimulated by the cholera epidemics and other public health disasters, was a major factor and affected even the remotest rural areas. It certainly prompted the report submitted by the Medical Officer to Epping Poor Law Union on the district, which was published in *The General Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* in 1842, from which the following extract is taken:

“The state of some of the dwellings of the poor is most deplorable as it regards their health and also in a moral point of view. As relates to the former, many of the cottages are neither wind or water tight. As relates to the latter, in my opinion, a great want of accommodation for bedrooms often occurs, so that you may frequently find the father, mother and children all sleeping in the same apartment, and in some instances the children having attained the age of 16 or 17 years and of both sexes, and if a death occurs in the house, let the person die of the most contagious disease, they must either sleep in the same room or take there repose in the room they live in, which most frequently is a stone or brick floor, which is most detrimental to health.”¹

Other Essex medical officers commented on the lack of wholesome water and the lack of proper sanitation, drainage, and refuse disposal in their areas. Their remarks applied equally to Epping.² This state of affairs particularly concerned Dr. Joseph Clegg,³ a local doctor, who was appointed Medical Officer of Health to the Epping Poor Law Union several years later. Undeterred by a powerful local opposition, he embarked upon a lifelong crusade to bring sanitary reform to the town.

At the Workhouse on the site of St. Margaret's Hospital, where he was responsible for the health of the inmates, typhoid and diarrhoea were common when Dr. Clegg arrived. In 1854 there was an outbreak of cholera, and he diagnosed 54 cases in addition to 154 of diarrhoea. Twenty-one deaths occurred.

At this time, the well from which the inmates obtained their water was surrounded by 22 cesspools, so a decision was taken to sink a new well and filter the water. As a result, over the next thirteen years not a single case of diarrhoea or typhoid occurred.

Elsewhere in Epping, however, no such action was taken. Water supplies continued to be polluted and typhoid and waterborne diseases were a regular occurrence. In 1856, Epping Vestry appointed a Nuisance Removal Committee, which met at the Workhouse, but no progress was made in dealing with the problem, largely owing to the opposition of property owners who feared that they would be required to meet the cost on the rates.⁴

Their resistance to the pleas of Dr. Clegg and those who supported him was assisted by the decision of central Government to allow the Second Board of Health to expire in 1858 and transfer its residual powers to the Local Government Act Office. This was constituted as a sub-department of the Home Office, but it was intended to end Government responsibility for sanitary improvements.⁵ Not surprisingly, no progress was made following this decision.

In 1866, however, a new Sanitary Act empowered the Local Government Act Office, acting on behalf of the Home Office, to enquire into examples of specific or general sanitary neglect by a local authority and if necessary

to intervene and carry out works deemed necessary. Although the Clerk to the Epping Nuisance Removal Committee advised its members that they had no further powers and no authority for the removal of nuisances, Dr. Clegg decided to go above their heads.⁶

Prompted by the outbreak of fever at the school run by the Day sisters in the High Street, in which a pupil died, he wrote to the Magistrates and the Board of Guardians asking for action. When this failed to produce results, he used his endeavours to get a parish meeting called with the aim of using the powers granted by the 1866 Act.

The meeting took place on 25 April 1867 but was adjourned for a month in the hope that the parishioners of Theydon Garnon, which then included all the property on the eastern side of Hemnall Street, might be persuaded to agree to a proposal to form a joint special district for sanitary purposes. In due course, however, they turned the idea down and Epping residents accepted only minimal proposals. At this point, Dr. Clegg sent a letter to the Privy Council requesting the Home Secretary to implement Section 49 of the 1866 Sanitary Act and intervene in Epping.⁷

The result was that the Home Secretary established a public enquiry, which was held in Epping on 11 and 18 July 1867, under the chairmanship of Arnold Taylor, a Government Inspector and keen sanitary reformer.

Dr. Clegg was the main witness. Recalling the fever outbreak at Day's School in 1866, he described the drainage system at this establishment:-

"At the back of these premises, there was an open drain and there is a well on the premises, so impure from drainage they cannot use it; they obtained their water from a neighbouring house; that was also impure. Open privies run into the drain at the back of the house. The year previous, I attended a Mrs. Rowe, residing two doors from Miss Day's. She was also suffering from typhoid fever arising from bad drainage and water and she died. There were two other cases of fever last March in the same locality, arising from the same causes."

Dr. Clegg quoted further cases and said he had taken sixteen samples of water from wells and found them impure in fifteen cases.

"The whole of the drainage of the town is on the cesspool system. The town is surrounded by field ditches which evaporate noisom stenches, most injurious to the health of the place."

Dr. J. D. Amys, however, representing the local sanitary committee disagreed:

"I can bring fifty people who can prove that the water in Epping is beautiful", he declared to laughter and applause.

At the reconvened enquiry a week later, Mr. George Hine, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, said that until a few cases of fever had broken out in the recent past he had considered Epping one of the healthiest towns in England.

Mr. Thomas Loft, an Epping surgeon with 45 years residence, supported him and said he had always boasted of the purity of the Epping water.

Mr. Duncan McNab, another Epping surgeon, testified in a similar vein:

"I have lived in Epping all my life; never suffered from drinking the water, but I do not drink much of it (loud laughter). My patients suffer less and less every year."

The Chairman, Arnold Taylor, at this asked whether his patients became less and less each year, which the worthy surgeon denied.⁸

The Chairman clearly rejected these claims backed by the evidence of local property owners like Mr. George Lawrence, who claimed to own fifty small houses in the town, and in due course formulated a list of recommendations for a main water supply and the construction of a drainage system.

These were announced at a meeting of ratepayers on 11 October 1867, but only nine turned up and it had to be adjourned.⁹ Subsequently, at a Vestry meeting, Mr. G. J. Lawrence, quoted above, proposed a resolution to establish a drainage committee of eleven to seek to improve the sanitary condition of the parish but not to adopt the very expensive system of sewers and water supply, recommended in Arnold Taylor's Report, without further evidence. This was carried unanimously.¹⁰

Joseph Clegg's response to this was to collect signatures for a petition, which a quarter of the ratepayers of Epping, Theydon Bois and Theydon Garnon eventually signed, for an enquiry under the Sewage Utilisation Act of 1867 to fix boundaries for the establishment of a special drainage district. When this was presented to the Home Secretary he set up a new public enquiry, again under the chairmanship of Arnold Taylor. This met at the Police Court on 12 November 1867.

The opponents of sanitary reform turned up in force, led on this occasion by a respected local landowner, Thomas Chisenhale March of Gaynes Park, who was loudly cheered when he stated his opposition to the formation of a special drainage system.¹¹

The Enquiry, however, came down in favour of a special drainage district when its report was published on 13 January 1868. Despite Dr. Clegg's efforts, however, election of a committee of 21 members was put off until a meeting held on 7 May under the chairmanship of Mr. Chisenhale Marsh, and the majority view was reflected in the fact that Dr. Clegg did not secure election to it.¹² The latter was not, however, prepared to accept its

procrastinations and wrote once again to the Home Secretary appealing for Section 49 of the 1866 Act to be implemented and in November the Committee resigned en bloc.

A ratepayers' meeting followed and Dr. Clegg, together with the Reverend Teesdale Davies, Minister at the Congregational Church, whose daughter and servant had both died of typhoid,¹³ pressed for the formation of a new committee. They were supported by two other sanitary reformers, J. Smee and Charles Whipps, but could muster only 12 votes in favour of a motion to appoint a clerk to a sewer authority while the opposition received 45. A poll produced an even bigger majority against the appointment.¹⁴

However, the Home Secretary from above yielded to Dr. Clegg's appeals and used his powers to appoint a civil engineer, Mr. Jabez Church, to carry out the necessary works to provide the town with an adequate water supply and drainage system and charge the ratepayers for it.

Dr. Clegg pointed out that Epping's mortality rate was the highest in Essex and amounted to 26.5 per 1000 in 1876.¹⁶ His opponents, however, were not prepared to give way, and in August 1868 convened a meeting to hear a report for a less expensive scheme prepared by another civil engineer, a Mr. Stevenson, who had been called in by the former Special Drainage Committee.¹⁷

Following further consultation among the opposition, John Windus, the Parish Clerk, and Walter Metcalfe, Clerk to the Magistrates, both of whom practised locally as solicitors, determined to challenge interference by Central Government in the Courts. Ratepayers met to discuss how the expenses of this action on their behalf could be defrayed.¹⁸

When the case was finally heard before the Queen's Bench on 30 January 1871, however, the verdict went against them. The Court found that the Secretary of State had acted in accordance with the law,¹⁹ and after further protests the objectors were forced to concede that ratepayers would have to meet the cost of the works carried out by Jabez Church.

Unfortunately, the sinking of an artesian well and the construction of Epping Water Tower undertaken by Mr. Church had failed to produce a supply of fresh water. As the result, a new impetus was given to the objectors, who passed a resolution at a meeting of ratepayers held in November 1871 expressing alarm at the heavy financial outlay incurred without resolving the problem.²⁰

By this time, under the terms of the 1871 Local Government Act, the Local Government Act Office had been absorbed into the newly created Local Government Board and in 1872, following the passage of the Rural Sanitation Act, the Epping Board of Guardians became the Rural Sanitary Authority. This body was required to take over the works carried out by Mr. Jabez Church under the Act, and in November 1872 the indefatigable Arnold Taylor again visited Epping to instruct the members on their responsibilities.²¹

The Guardians, however, were most reluctant to accept the works even as a gift, and a year afterwards were still stoutly refusing to comply with the law and accept the expense involved. They were backed in their resolve by a meeting of ratepayers held at Epping Police Court on the 18 November 1873, at which a motion moved by Mr. G. J. Lawrence not to pay any of the bill of £2,800 until someone was imprisoned or his goods distrained, was carried.

In the hope of making progress, Joseph Clegg led a deputation of ratepayers to see the President of the Board of Trade to try to work out a compromise, but was informed that Epping must pay.²² The Guardians, however, were adamant in their refusal, even after the Government's position had been restated in the House of Commons in July 1874.

While this battle was still being fought out, the sanitary problems of Epping remained and Dr. Clegg wrote to the *Essex Weekly News* alleging that twenty lives a year were being sacrificed. This was stoutly denied by Henry Doubleday, the Epping naturalist, in a reply which the paper printed.²³ The Lee Conservators Board at this time decided to sue the Guardians for pollution of the River Lea.²⁴ In November 1874 the *Lancet* published a special report on Epping suggesting that there had been 500 cases of typhoid in the district and painting a lurid picture of Epping's sanitary shortcomings.

The President of the Local Government Board, now appointed the well known civil engineer, Sir Joseph Bazalgette, to investigate the situation. He reported that a total expenditure of £11,900 was required to pay for what had been done and what remained to be done and recommended that Epping Rural Sanitary Authority, i.e. the Board of Guardians, should meet £5,000 of this sum.²⁶

Again a meeting of the ratepayers carried a resolution moved by Mr. G. J. Lawrence not to accept the Water Tower and the well which Jabez Church had constructed. He urged the opposition to stand firm.²⁷ After a further year of confrontation, however, the Board of Guardians hit upon their own solution. They would accept the Works but immediately sell them to two enterprising businessmen, William Russ and Charles Minns, thus finally disposing their liabilities.

This proposal provoked a fresh storm, particularly when it came to light that the Clerk to the Guardians and the Vestry, Mr. John Windus, was also acting in a private capacity for Messrs. Russ and Minns. Once again the Local Government Board was petitioned and yet another local enquiry was held — this time under Major Marinden of the Board of Trade.²⁸

On this occasion, however, Joseph Clegg failed to get the backing he sought and Major Marinden recommended the sale of the works for £2,000 which the Guardians wished to make, and in due course this went ahead.²⁹ In 1883, Messrs. Russ and Minns sold Epping sanitary and water works to Edward Easton, founder of the Herts. and Essex Water Company.

By this time, a main water supply had been laid from Sawbridgeworth to Epping — actually in 1880 — but by 1884 there were still only 392 consumers. As for sewage disposal, most cesspits remained in use despite the Works constructed in 1869; comparatively few houses were connected.

A decade later, the report of the Medical Officer to Epping Union Rural District Sanitary Authority, now Dr. Trevor Fowler, noted that of 599 houses on the line of the main sewer, 64 were still not connected. Of 545 houses, 382 were supplied with main water by the Herts. and Essex Water Company but 163 still depended on surface wells.³⁰ Not surprisingly, in view of new buildings, he reported an increase in the number of cases of infectious diseases from 194 in the previous year to 290, including 16 of typhoid fever. He reported as follows:

“The defaulting owners of houses in the Epping Special Drainage District ought to be compelled to connect their premises with the sewerage system; the provision of a public sewer for St. John’s Road ought not to be delayed . . . It is also high time that the water supply from polluted surface wells should be superseded by that from the Water Companies”.

In a summary of the period 1874-94, Dr. Fowler referred to an appalling range of problems throughout the district: poor housing, overcrowding, polluted water supplies and defective drainage systems — a theme to which his reports referred every year thereafter until the new century.³¹

The continuing problem led to the demand that Epping Special Drainage District should become an urban district under the new Act of Parliament of 1894 — an idea mooted some years before.³² A petition signed by 113 residents in favour of this proposal led to a new public enquiry, chaired by Essex County Councillor W. Lloyd Wise on the issue which was held on the 1 November 1894.³³

As of old, Joseph Clegg was present to put the sanitary reformer’s case. Quoting from Dr. Trevor Fowler’s reports, he argued that the Rural Sanitary Authority was still neglecting its duties. His main opponents were as ever those who were fearful of increased rates, but they lost the day and a motion in favour of forming an urban district with its own council was carried.

The next Report of the Medical Officer of Health in 1895 underlined the appalling sanitary conditions which still prevailed. Of 274 houses from Queens Alley to the Bank including Hemnall Street, 91 (of which 51 were the property of the redoubtable Mr. G. J. Lawrence) were still dependent on well water. Eighty-three were not connected to the sewers. Dr. Fowler quoted the County Analyst, Mr. Pooley, and the County Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Thresh, on the dangers inherent in this state of affairs.³⁴

Shortly afterwards, the Parish Council determined to send a resolution to the Rural District Council asking for notice to be served on the owners of 18 houses in Twankham’s Alley in the centre of the town requiring them to be supplied with wholesome water and asking for an approach to be made to the Essex County Council for Dr. Thresh to make an inspection and report on the situation in Epping. The Rural District Council rejected the motion.

This served only to strengthen the demand for urban status and after further pressure the idea was accepted. As the result, Epping Urban District Council was established and the first members were elected on 30 March 1896. Despite the part played by sanitary reformers in the campaign which led to this, those candidates who were the strongest advocates of sanitary reform and who were, incidentally, Liberals — Mr. A. Whipps, Mr. William Cable, and his son Alfred Cable — all failed to gain seats.

Even so, the new Council appointed a Sanitary Inspector, Mr. G. Whiffin,³⁵ and instructed him to make a visitation of Ivy Chimneys and Alnutts Estate, where 4 cases of scarlet fever had been reported. It also adopted the 1889 Infectious Diseases Act.

The Sanitary Inspector’s Report came before the Council on 19 July 1896, and showed that of 68 houses, only one was not on the main water supply. There were, however, no receptacles for refuse or ashes and the brooks took all drainage and sewer water. In August, Dr. Fowler reported that 19 houses with 82 occupants in Twankhams Alley were without a proper water supply and relied upon a shallow well which the County Analyst had declared to be badly polluted twelve months previously. Water from another well, in Hemnall Street, was also polluted.³⁷

In September, Mr. Whiffin reported on further houses between the Duke of Wellington Lane and Station Road. In October he informed the Council that of 182 houses on the south side of the High Street, 114 were supplied by the Herts. and Essex Water Company and 68 (53 belonging to one owner) were dependent on surface wells.

Shortly afterwards the Council agreed to give further consideration to a drainage scheme for Ivy Chimneys, Bell Common, and Kendall Avenue. According to *Health News*, however, the Magistrates refused to grant an order to close a polluted well because it had not been shewn to their satisfaction that injury to health to any great extent resulted from it.

In October 1896, Dr. Fowler reported a case of typhoid fever in Queen's Alley and described the conditions thus:

"The cottage was separated from the backs of others in Crown Court by", he considered, "only four or five feet and the smell from the closets and cesspits was sickening in the extreme, added to which there were emanations from a number of hen coops".

"Side by side with the old barrel sewer in Hemnall Street was the new sewer, but it did not appear that any attempt had been made to alter the connections of the old sewer to take the new. The water supply to Mrs. Brewer's cottage was from a well close to a saw pit in the small paddock in front of the house. Mrs. Pegram took a sample of the water on the 29th inst. which he had examined and found to contain a quantity of oxidisable organic material, rendering it quite unfit for drinking purposes."³⁹

On 13 November 1896, the Council instructed the Clerk to take legal steps to declare the cottages unfit for human habitation, but the Clerk, Mr. George Creed, strongly opposed this on the grounds that there were 150 cottages in Epping in a similar or worse condition and action could create a precedent. He was, however, overruled.

In December, Dr. Fowler reported an outbreak of typhoid fever at Union Terrace which had ended fatally, and a further outbreak affecting three other families.³⁰

In the face of this, the resistance to reform was slowly overcome and some of the worse dangers to public health were removed. This was due in no small measure to Alfred J. Cable,⁴⁹ a Liberal at this period and a member of a local building firm, established by his family, who gradually assumed the leadership of the reform movement after he eventually gained a seat on the Urban District Council in 1902. He was supported by W. Bullock, a Cottagers' Candidate, who was returned with him.

New sewerage works were completed to provide for Bell Common, Ivy Chimneys, Allnutts Estate, Kendall Avenue, Hartland Road, Station Road, Bower Hill, Stewards Gree (Strood Green), Coopersale Common, and Fiddlers Hamlet, on the southern side of town in 1901. Nineteen homes previously dependent on polluted surface wells were put on main water or closed.

Even so, Dr. Fowler, Medical Officer of Health still reported in 1901 that the water supply was far from adequate and housing conditions for the poor were appalling:

"The wretched condition of many of the labourers' cottages almost beggars description. Insanitary, old, wooden or lath and plaster structures, undeserving even of the name of houses, are in a vast proportion of the cases the sole dwelling places of the poor people of the district. It would not be difficult to point out 50 or more of such houses at Ivy Chimneys, at the Rookery and in Hemnall Street which are utterly unfit for human habitation . . . It is in such places as these that overcrowding of the worst description is to be found, and is it to be wondered at that in addition to the deterioration of health as is seen in the pale faces and haggard mien of men, women and children occupying these houses, there are also the inevitable concomitant evils of social and moral degradation."⁴¹

On 19 May 1902, Cllr. T. W. Bullock moved a resolution drawing attention to the condition of the cottages mentioned in Dr. Fowler's Report and asked "if the erection of houses for the working classes was not likely to be carried out by private enterprise, the Council should consider the advisability of using the powers entrusted to them under the Housing of the Working Classes Act".⁴²

Councillor Alfred Cable seconded, but Cllr. Sudul said Dr. Fowler had perhaps made too much of blots in the town. Councillor C. B. Sworder said that even if the Council demolished unsanitary cottages, some tenants would make their homes as bad as before. After amendment, the resolution was carried, but it was only after further controversy and a stormy Council meeting in October that a majority resolved to establish a Special Sanitary Committee to deal with the problem. This reported in December on the cottages mentioned in Dr. Fowler's 1902 Report in strong terms:

"The building of these cottages should never have been allowed . . . We recommend that the Council take steps to prevent overcrowding and not allow more than two adults and two children to occupy any of them".⁴³ Councillor Alfred Cable, at the Council meeting which discussed this said there were fifty more unsanitary cottages which should be inspected but could not find a seconder for a resolution to arrange this.

At the next Council meeting there were heated exchanges with Mr. George Creed, the Clerk. This adjourned and at a further meeting from which Mr. Creed was absent a decision was taken, in the presence of Dr. Fowler, to serve notices on the owners of four houses requiring them to be made habitable within six weeks under Part II of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890.

This was duly done, but Dr. Fowler's 1903 Report, while referring to progress made and the completion of the Southern Outfall and Sewerage Works, urged the Special Committee not to allow the matter to rest until every unsanitary house had been made habitable or had been closed. The intractable nature of Epping's problem is illustrated by an official reply to a question asked by Cllr. Cable in July 1903, which stated that 28 residents still had to fetch their drinking water some 800 yards.

References continued to be made to unsanitary and slum houses in the reports of the Medical Officer of Health, and progress was slow. In 1909 the Report referred to the dearth of decent dwellings and stated many

houses would be condemned but for this. In 1910 the Report again referred to unhealthy dwellings and said improvements had fallen far short of requirements. Meanwhile, the Sanitary Committee, continually prodded by Councillor Cable, visited slum dwellings and pressed for them to be closed or made habitable.

Despite this, the *Epping Gazette* in a special report on housing in 1914 described 30 out of 700 houses visited as overcrowded, half being in Ivy Chimneys. Conditions in "the lower class parts of Hemnall Street" were said to be "filthy and unhealthy". Dwellings and their inhabitants in Lindsey Street, Garden Terrace, Trankhams Alley, Bell Common and the High Road also came in for severe criticism.⁴⁴

The First World War, however, marked the end of an epoch in a number of respects. Dr. Fowler⁴⁵ retired in 1914, to be succeeded by Dr. H. Watney, and when peace returned a wind of change was blowing in Epping. The Workers' Union called a meeting and put up two working men as candidates for the Urban District Council — Arthur Plumb, a mechanic, and William A. Sullivan, Secretary of the Oddfellows. The former said that "the working men of Epping had been asleep until the war, for housing had been a scandal for years", and both were elected.⁴⁶

Though they did not long retain their seats, a special meeting of Epping Urban District Council held on 24 July 1920, determined to erect eight council houses. Poor quality housing was not eliminated for years, but public opinion now accepted that unsanitary conditions and polluted water supplies could not be tolerated, whatever the effects on the rates. Cesspits and wells survived in the rural area surrounding Epping, but the Urban District in the inter-war period at last achieved a satisfactory standard of public health.⁴⁷

In many ways, Epping's experience was paralleled elsewhere. The pages of the local newspapers of the Victorian period contain many reports of the struggle for sanitary reform in Essex and, for that matter, the country as a whole. As far as Essex is concerned, however, no town or village experienced the like of the battle which took place. Nowhere else was it as fierce or prolonged. In the end, Epping enjoyed conditions as good as any other community, but Joseph Clegg, Trevor Fowler, Alfred Cable and their supporters deserve a special place of honour in the annals of the town.

Other aspects of public health in Epping have not been discussed, owing to space considerations, but it should perhaps be mentioned that a prolonged struggle for hospital facilities for infectious diseases in the area also occurred. A meeting chaired by Mr. W. Perry Watlington, a well-known Essex figure who lived at Harlow, was held at the Cock Hotel on 31 March 1871, as the result of the efforts of Joseph Clegg. The proposal was opposed by ratepayers, led by Mr. Thomas Chisenhale Marsh, who defeated a resolution in favour of a cottage hospital.⁴⁸ Eventually, a smallpox hospital was erected on land at Rood Street, many years later.⁴⁹

[Stan Newens is Member of Parliament for Harlow]

Notes on Epping and the Problems of Public Health

1. The General Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain (The Chadwick Report) quoted by Hubert Collar, *Essex Review*, April 1947, No. 222, Vol. LVI, Pages 97-98.
2. Hubert Collar, *op.cit.*
3. Joseph Clegg was born at Newchurch-in-Rossendale, the son of Joseph and Elizabeth Clegg, and baptised 9 August 1821. After qualifying as a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, he came to Epping in 1849 or thereabouts to take up an appointment as Medical Officer of Health to the Epping Poor Law Union. With his wife Sarah, who came from Westminster, he lived at Chapel House, High Street, Epping (next to the Chapel, later the Church of St. John) and practised medicine from this address. He played a prominent part in local affairs until his death at the age of 80 in 1901. There were apparently no children but he was a member of a large Lancashire family and for a time a niece lived at his address.
4. Report of Public Enquiry in the *Essex Weekly News*, 12 July 1867. See also Victoria County History of Essex, Vol. V, P. 131-139, for the whole story of the early period.
5. See Royston Lambert: *Victorian Studies* VI, December 1966, P. 121.
6. Evidence of Joseph Clegg to Royal Sanitary Commission, 3 May, 1869, (H. of C.) P. 49.
7. Evidence of Joseph Clegg to Royal Sanitary Commission.
8. Report of Public Enquiry in *Essex Weekly News*, 12 July 1867.
9. *Essex Weekly News*, 11 October 1867.
10. *Essex Weekly News*, 18 October 1867.
11. *Essex Weekly News*, 15 November 1867.
12. *Essex Weekly News*, 15 May 1868.
13. *Essex Weekly News*, 13 November 1868.
14. Evidence of Joseph Clegg to Royal Sanitary Commission, 3 May 1869, (H. of C.) P. 50.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Essex Weekly News*, 13 August 1869.
18. *Essex Weekly News*, 2 September 1870, and Victoria County History of Essex, Vol. V, P. 132.
19. *Essex Weekly News*, 3 February 1871.
20. *Essex Weekly News*, 17 November 1871.
21. *Essex Weekly News*, 1 November 1872.
22. *Essex Weekly News*, 19 December 1873.
23. *Essex Weekly News*, 24 July, 31 July and 14 August 1874.
24. *Essex Weekly News*, 21 August 1874.
25. *Lancet*, 14 November 1874.
26. *Essex Weekly News*, 3 March 1876.
27. *Essex Weekly News*, 17 March 1876.
28. *Essex Weekly News*, 14 March 1879, & VCH, Vol. V, P. 132.
29. *Essex Weekly News*, 28 March 1879, & Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health for the Epping Union Rural District, 1894.
30. Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health for the Epping Union Rural District Sanitary Committee, Dr. Trevor Fowler, 1894.
31. *Ibid.*
32. e.g. Views expressed at a meeting of ratepayers on the drainage question reported in *Essex Weekly News*, 14 March 1879.
33. *Essex Weekly News*, 2 November 1879.
34. Report of M.o.H., Dr. Trevor Fowler, also reported in *Essex Weekly News*, 18 October 1895.
35. Details of Election given in *Epping Monthly Record*, 16 April 1896.
36. *Epping Monthly Record*, 15 June 1896.
37. *Epping Monthly Record*, 13 August 1896.
38. *Epping Monthly Record*, 15 October 1896.
39. *Epping Monthly Record*, 16 December 1896.
40. Alfred John Cable, born 19 July 1863 at Epping, son of William and Hannah Cable. William Cable was a timber merchant and builder who later took his son into the business, which remains in the family to this day. Alfred John Cable

was active in local affairs, perhaps influenced by his father who had been associated with Charles Bradlaugh, and he was instrumental in the formation of Epping Co-operative Society in 1894. Later he served on Epping Urban District Council with two short interruptions owing to defeats at the polls from 1902 to 1944, when he resigned because of ill health. He died on 5 November 1950, after a lifetime of vigorous and frequently controversial activity.

41. Report of M.o.H., Dr. Trevor Fowler, 1901.
42. *Epping Gazette*, 24 May 1902.
43. *Epping Gazette*, 6 December 1902.
44. *Epping Gazette*, 22 August 1914.
45. Dr. Trevor Fowler, born at Ballybrook, County Dublin on

24 April 1845, came to Epping in September 1865 after completing his medical training as an assistant to Dr. Duncan McNab, and lived at 265 High Street. Appointed as Medical Officer of Health to successive local authorities, he retired in October 1914 and went on to live at Redhill, where he died on 21 October 1921.

46. *Epping Gazette*, 5 April 1919.
47. In February 1931, there was an outbreak of paratyphoid leading to 6 deaths, but the water was found to be pure and the source traced to contaminated milk from another district.
48. *Essex Weekly News*, 7 April 1871.
49. *Epping Gazette*, 10 January 1903: Retrospect of the Year 1902.

[The illustrations are from a recent series published by the Epping Forest District Museums Service, Hemnall Street, Epping at five for 30p + post].