

Report to the Sanitary Committee of the Honourable the Commissioners of Sewers of the City of London, on the appointment of additional inspector of meat and slaughter-houses / by W. Sedgwick Saunders.

Contributors

Saunders, W. Sedgwick 1824-1901.
City of London (England). Commissioners of Sewers.
Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

London : Charles Skipper and East, printers, 1880.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/cchbr4vr>

Provider

Royal College of Surgeons

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The Royal College of Surgeons of England. The original may be consulted at The Royal College of Surgeons of England. where the originals may be consulted. This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

271

19

REPORT

TO THE

SANITARY COMMITTEE

OF THE

HONOURABLE THE COMMISSIONERS OF SEWERS
OF THE CITY OF LONDON,

ON THE APPOINTMENT OF

ADDITIONAL INSPECTOR OF MEAT AND
SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

BY

W. SEDGWICK SAUNDERS, M.D., F.S.A.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC ANALYST FOR THE
CITY OF LONDON,

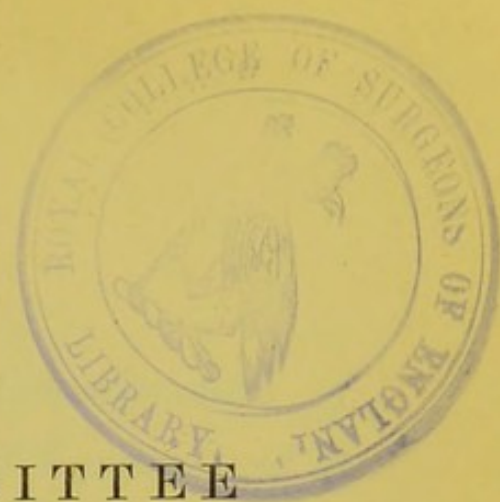
LATE PRESIDENT OF THE HUNTERIAN SOCIETY, &c., &c.

September, 1880.

LONDON :

CHARLES SKIPPER AND EAST, PRINTERS, ST. DUNSTON'S HILL, E.C.

1880.



REPORT

of the

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION OF THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED MAY 10, 1870

RELATIVE TO THE

LANDS BELONGING TO THE

UNITED STATES

AND THE

LANDS BELONGING TO THE

INDIAN TRIBES

AND THE

LANDS BELONGING TO THE

INDIAN TRIBES

AND THE

LANDS BELONGING TO THE

INDIAN TRIBES

AND THE

LANDS BELONGING TO THE

INDIAN TRIBES

*At a Meeting of the Commissioners of
Sewers of the City of London, held at
the Guildhall, on Tuesday, the 21st
day of September, 1880.*

THOMAS RUDKIN, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

A Report from the SANITARY COMMITTEE (HENRY
HODSOLL HEATH, Esq., Deputy-Chairman),
dated this day, was read—

On the References of the 22nd June last and
7th instant, relative to Meat Inspectors ; sub-
mitting a Report from the Medical Officer of
Health upon the subject, and recommending that
Inspector Newman be permitted to retire on an
allowance of £125 per annum (being half his
Salary).

AGREED TO. ORDERED, That the Report of
the Medical Officer therein referred to
be printed and circulated as usual.

That the Salary of William Wylde be increased from £275 to £325 per annum, and that he be entitled Chief Inspector of Meat and Slaughter-houses.

AGREED TO, and ORDERED accordingly.

That Two Assistant Inspectors (under 35 years of age) be appointed at a Salary of £150 a year each, to act under the general guidance of the Chief Inspector, and subject to the suggestions contained in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

AGREED TO, and referred back to the COMMITTEE for execution.

HENRY BLAKE,
Principal Clerk.

TO THE SANITARY COMMITTEE OF THE
HONOURABLE THE COMMISSIONERS OF SEWERS
OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

SANITARY DEPARTMENT,

SEWERS' OFFICE, GUILDHALL,

14th September, 1880.

ADDITIONAL INSPECTOR OF MEAT AND
SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

GENTLEMEN,

In the Autumn of 1877, I brought before the notice of the Sanitary Committee the necessity of appointing an additional Inspector of Meat and Slaughter-houses.

I was led to make this recommendation from the fact that the business at the "London Central Meat and Poultry and Provision Markets" had increased to a considerable extent since the appointment of the two present officers, owing, amongst other causes, to the importation of meat

from abroad, and seeing that the gross bulk of material received and disposed of had reached a point of such magnitude as to require the undivided attention of the two present Inspectors I further pointed out, that with the existing staff it would be impossible to secure, in the future, efficient, and skilled, inspection at Smithfield, excepting at the cost of entirely neglecting the daily supervision of the Markets situated at Aldgate and Leadenhall, which are only second in importance to the larger ones, and also require experienced and constant surveillance.

The Sanitary Committee considered the subject on the 13th and 27th November, 1877, and on the 15th January, 1878, but no definite conclusion was arrived at, and the question has slept until the present time.

The progressive increase of the total weight of Meat sent to Smithfield alone during the last ten years will be seen from the subjoined table, kindly furnished by Mr. Stephens, the Superintendent at the Central Meat and Poultry Markets.

TOTAL WEIGHT OF GROSS SUPPLY SENT TO CENTRAL
MEAT MARKET.

				WEIGHT.			TOLL.		
				YEAR.	Tons	cwt. qrs.	£	s.	d.
Year ending	...	...	1870		142,038	6 3	15,782	0	9
"	"	...	1871		147,491	3 2	16,387	18	2
"	"	...	1872		154,045	17 2	17,116	4	2
"	"	...	1873		151,366	17 3	16,818	10	10½
"	"	...	1874		157,628	18 1	17,514	6	5½
"	"	...	1875		164,450	8 0	18,272	5	4
"	"	...	1876		176,162	17 0	19,573	13	0
"	"	...	1877		197,631	16 2	21,959	1	10
"	"	...	1878		195,993	10 2	21,777	1	2
"	"	...	1879		212,987	14 0	23,665	6	0
6 Months ending June 26th			1880		110,596	11 2	12,288	10	2

Enormous as this quantity is, the tendency is still upwards, and goes on *pari passu* with the growth of the population; thus the total weight of meat received at the above Market for the first half of this year exceeded the preceding six months by about four thousand five hundred (4,500) tons, and the quantity seized as *unfit for food* during the first six months of this year amounted to 169 tons

compared with 129 tons condemned in the last half of 1879.

The Meat Inspectors are responsible that the whole of the meat exposed for sale is free from disease and fit for human food, and that their duties in this respect are very onerous is shown by the following return of meat seized and condemned during the last ten years.

QUANTITY OF MEAT CONDEMNED IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

				YEAR.	WEIGHT.			Percentage of bad to good Meat.
					Tons	cwt.	qrs.	
Year ending	...	...		1870	56	3	1	0·039
" "	...	...		1871	59	2	0	0·040
" "	...	...		1872	87	5	2	0·056
" "	...	...		1873	79	14	3	0·052
" "	...	...		*1874	193	18	2	0·122
" "	...	...		1875	153	1	1	0·093
" "	...	...		1876	238	2	2	0·135
" "	...	...		1877	198	19	0	0·100
" "	...	...		1878	180	18	0	0·091
" "	...	...		1879	258	4	3	0·121

* The cause of this great increase over the preceding year is due to the importation of meat from abroad which then commenced,

The labour and anxiety attending the special work of the said Inspectors will be further enhanced when the New Fruit and Vegetable Market, now in the course of erection, is finished ; and the enlargement of Leadenhall Market, already determined upon, will augment the difficulty.

I may remind you that the Meat Inspectors attend the Market daily at 5 A.M., and remain on duty until all business is completed ; when telegrams are sent announcing the advent of suspected meat, the officers have to be in waiting at 3 A.M., in order to seize the same before it finds its way into the shops of the salesmen.

The area over which the Inspectors travel in their daily course is immense, the market alone being more than one thousand feet long. No office is provided for them, and their clerical duties are performed under circumstances of considerable inconvenience ; these have been recently added to by the Court adopting my suggestion of sending duplicate "*condemnation notes*" to the consignors, as well as serving them on the salesmen upon

whose premises the meat is seized (I may say, in parenthesis, that this plan has up to the present time been attended with promising results, and I am encouraged to think that the practice of sending diseased meat to the City Markets will be checked thereby to a sensible extent).

The absence of a proper office in which the Inspectors could attend to their correspondence, prepare their official notices, &c., is an omission which should be at once supplied, since apart from the inconvenience to themselves personally, the salesmen and the public generally are put to needless trouble and delay in finding an Inspector when he is wanted ; moreover, the lack of ordinary decent accommodation for the performance of necessary and important duties, imposed upon them in virtue of their office, and which inevitably involves a good deal of writing, is scarcely a state of things which a wealthy Sanitary Authority would wish to see perpetuated. In the discharge of my own functions, I have frequently to regret this want, and I hope the Commissioners will see their way clear to provide the obvious remedy without further delay.

The office should be situated in the Market, and a notice-board affixed when the Inspector is absent on duty stating the time of return, should the salesmen or the public require his services.

Reverting to the main question, viz., the inadequacy of the present staff, I may advance as a further reason for a third Inspector, the prodigious influx of business in the Market on Saturdays, during the afternoon and evening, when the public attend in swarms to purchase meat at a cheap rate from the retail butchers and "bumarees." On these occasions the efficient inspection of the huge quantities of meat sold is quite beyond the power of two men, who find themselves unable to afford the protection their skill and experience would dictate at a time when additional watchfulness is required in the interests of the poor, who are often imposed upon by the sale of inferior and unsound meat.

Again, the Inspectors are frequently taken from their duties in the Markets to go long distances into the country to procure evidence in the legal proceed-

ings which are instituted for the prosecution of the senders of bad meat, a practice which I submit more properly belongs to the legal department, and which in my opinion should be prohibited in the future.

As a matter of information it may be useful to describe briefly the course of procedure which obtains under the present system.

1. When suspected meat is sent from a given place to Smithfield, information is frequently forwarded to our Inspectors of Meat and Slaughter-houses by the police or sanitary authorities of the district, sometimes by letter, more often by telegram.
2. When any meat is seized by the Inspectors which is likely to be the subject of litigation, or the state of which is disputed by the salesman or consignee, it is seen by the Medical Officer of Health before being taken to the magistrate for condemnation.
3. After the case has been reported by the Medical Officer of Health to the Commissioners of Sewers, and the latter have

instructed the Solicitor to prosecute, the Inspector concerned goes into the country to collect evidence against the consignor ; the result is stated in a formal written Report from the Inspector, who hands the same to the Solicitor.

4. The first person the Inspector refers to when he goes into the country to collect evidence is the Superintendent of Police of the district, or his subordinate.*
5. The Solicitor determines upon the evidence produced whether a conviction is likely to be obtained.
6. If the Solicitor decides to proceed at law the Meat Inspector *goes again* into the country, and serves consignor and witnesses with the necessary summonses to appear at Guildhall for trial.
7. Inspectors present their bills of expenses to the Solicitor, who pays the same.

* The names and addresses of the officials are always to be found in the " Police and Constabulary Almanac and Official Register," published annually.

8. In the cases of diseased meat from Scotland, convictions have been obtained upon the evidence of the local authorities alone, the distance being too great to justify the expense of sending our own Inspectors. In the case of one Stewart some years ago (12 or 14) the prisoner was fined £50 and sentenced to one year's imprisonment.

During the absence of one of the Inspectors in the above business the inspection of all the markets east and west falls upon the remaining officer, who is totally unable to do the work with satisfaction to himself or justice to the public.

Inspector Wylde has long felt this anomaly, and some months ago made a formal application to be relieved of a service which imperilled his reputation as a conscientious and painstaking officer, in the legitimate groove to which he was originally appointed as an Inspector ; it will be seen, therefore, that the objection is not of recent growth.

I am credibly informed that the expenses incurred by the existing system are greater than

will be found necessary should we rely upon the local authorities alone.

I therefore recommend that all evidence required for meat prosecutions be obtained from the Police Authority of the district from which the diseased article may be sent, and that for the future the Meat Inspectors be employed exclusively at the Markets.

In a former Report I adverted to the urgency attaching to the general question from the circumstance of the failing health of the senior Inspector, James Newman, and I only now again refer to it to relieve myself of any responsibility should that officer be compelled to resign active duty before the necessary arrangements can be made for appointment of a successor.

Inspector Newman suffers during the winter months from bronchitis and rheumatism, and finds his duties increasingly irksome ; besides these he is

partially deaf, which is a source of delay and vexation to the authorities at the Justice Room, when he is giving evidence in meat prosecutions. I have reason to believe that Inspector Newman would be willing to resign, if some consideration were given him by way of a retiring allowance.

Upon the various grounds herein detailed, I recommend that immediate action be taken in this matter, and beg to offer the following suggestions :--

1st.—That an officer be appointed, to be termed Assistant Inspector of Meat and Slaughter-houses, at a salary of £150 per annum.

2nd.—That the person appointed should be under 35 years of age.

3rd.—That he should be a strong healthy man.

4th.—That he should be a butcher, or possess a practical knowledge of all classes of meat and slaughtering.

5th.—That he should reside within the City of London.

6th.—That he should act under the instructions of the Medical Officer of Health and the Meat Inspectors.

7th.—That he should not at first be trusted to seize any meat, excepting with the free consent of the salesmen, until the suspected article has been seen by the Medical Officer of Health or the Meat Inspectors.

8th.—That his hours of attendance on duty be the same as the Meat Inspectors.

9th.—That he shall be subordinate to the Meat Inspectors.

10th.—That he shall not absent himself from duty without permission from the Medical Officer of Health.

11th.—That he shall give his whole time to the duties of his office.

I further recommend that the appointment be of a tentative character, and for three months only, and that during such probationary period the Meat Inspectors should instruct him in the

routine duties of his office, so as to fit him for promotion in due time.

In the event of my suggestion that Inspector Newman be permitted to resign upon a suitable provision, I advise that the above plan be modified to this extent, viz., that two Assistant Inspectors be appointed, to act under the general guidance of Inspector Wylde, who should be entitled Chief Inspector of Meat and Slaughter-houses, and granted some increase of his salary to cover his additional responsibility.

I have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient Servant,

W. SEDGWICK SAUNDERS, M.D.