

Contributors

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Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year ending 31st December, 1897.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SANITARY COMMITTEE OF THE
DARLINGTON CORPORATION.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the following Report of the Health of the Borough, and the operations carried out by the Sanitary Department during the past year.

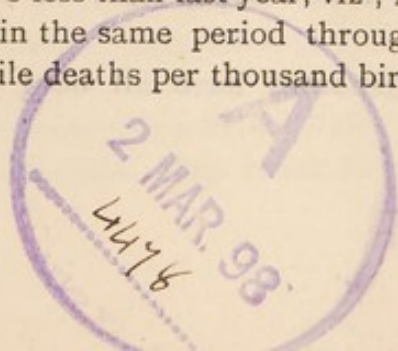
ACREAGE AND POPULATION.—The acreage of the Borough has remained the same as it has been for the last one or two decades. The population has not, of course, remained the same, and the probability is that it has increased, as a considerable number of new houses have been occupied during the year. If the population is increasing this decade at the same rate as it increased in the preceding decade, we should have had in Darlington at the middle of 1896 a population of 39,710, and at the middle of 1897 a population of 40,030. Owing to the activity in the building trade, and the ready manner in which new houses are occupied, it is believed that the increase has been more rapid than in the ten years preceding the last census. I, therefore, estimated the population at the middle of 1896 at 41,000, and if that estimate was correct, there must have been at the middle of 1897 a further increase of 400 or 500. I am not willing to take too optimistic a view of our position and statistics, and will consequently base the statistics to be found in this report on the same population as those of 1896.

BIRTHS.—There were registered during the first quarter 134 male and 131 female, second quarter 163 male and 144 female, third quarter 158 male and 141 female, and in the last quarter 177 male and 143 female births, being 632 males and 559 females, total 1,191, or 44 more than in the preceding year. This gives a birth rate of 29·0 per thousand.

DEATHS.—During the first quarter there were registered in the Borough 75 male and 72 female, second quarter 89 male and 72 female, during the third quarter 74 male and 65 female, and in the last quarter 76 male and 77 female deaths, being 314 males and 286 females, total 600, or 6 more than during 1896. This gives a death rate for the year of 14·6 per thousand. From the above figures, it will be seen that 73 more males were born during the year, and that there were only 28 more deaths among males than among females.

The tables appended to this report give the numbers that died during different periods of life, and the causes of death.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.—The deaths under this class, *i.e.*, in children under one year, are five less than last year, viz., 148, and compare favourably with the average of deaths in the same period throughout England. The Darlington returns are 124 Infantile deaths per thousand births, and the average of England about 148.



ZYMOTIC DEATH RATE.—The death rate from Zymotic Diseases has been low, slightly over 1 per thousand, unless Influenza be reckoned as one, which would make the rate 1·4 compared with 1·8 in 1896. It is interesting to note that there were no deaths from Measles, while Whooping Cough and Diarrhoea were responsible for almost identical numbers, 13 and 14 respectively, or 0·3 per thousand of population. Scarlatina is credited with 9 deaths, or 0·3 per thousand. The deaths from Enteric Fever is the lowest recorded for five years, being only 3. During the year the deaths from Phthisis numbered 54, or 4 more than in 1896, and give a Phthisis mortality of 1·3 per thousand.

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—On referring to table B. annexed to this report, it will be found that 298 cases of Infectious Disease were reported to the Authority, viz., 228 cases of Scarlatina, 7 of Diphtheria, 1 of Croup, 35 of Enteric Fever, 1 of Continued Fever, 1 of Puerperal Fever, and 25 of Erysipelas.

FEVER HOSPITAL.—During the year there were 165 cases admitted into the Hospital, made up of 143 cases of Scarlatina, 18 of Enteric Fever, 2 of Diphtheria, 1 of Erysipelas, and 1 of Tuberculosis. It will be seen that more than half of the Scarlatina and Enteric Fever were isolated in the Hospital. Ten years ago, not more than one in three cases would go to Hospital, but wider views are beginning to obtain, and it is to be hoped that the number of parents who are willing to have their children and relations isolated whilst suffering from Infectious Diseases will increase. If it were compulsory for every case to be isolated, there would soon be very little Infectious Disease.

SCAVENGING.—The streets have been well kept and well watered during the drought, so that dust, which is often germ laden, has been prevented from flying about as much as possible. The sewers have also been regularly flushed, and all nuisances arising from odours from ventilating holes attended to. The cleansing of the ash-pits is done more frequently than it used to be, and I must admit there is an improvement on the old system of not emptying them until they were full, still I must repeat that no ash-pit should be left unemptied longer than a month in winter, and, if possible, should be cleansed every fortnight in summer.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—The Slaughter Houses have all been regularly visited and inspected during the year, and, with few exceptions, have been well kept and clean and the bye-laws complied with. The supervision of these houses requires a great deal of time and attention, as they are scattered over the whole town nearly, and as the Inspector takes these on his round for other objects. This is the place to mention the difficulty that exists with regard to meat inspection, owing to the system of slaughtering in private places. The tuberculous carcase, which will be mentioned later, was seized in a private slaughter house; and, unless butchers are very strict about the animals they kill for food, it will be the duty of the Sanitary Authority to erect a public Abattoir, have all the meat slaughtered and inspected there before being removed to their shops or the market for sale.

BAKEHOUSES.—The Bakehouses have all been regularly visited and

inspected in the same way as the Slaughter Houses by the Inspector on his rounds, and they have been well kept and regularly lime-washed and cleansed as the bye-laws direct.

DAIRIES AND MILK SHOPS.—The Dairies and Milk Shops have all been visited and inspected during the year, and a regular oversight kept to see that proper care and cleanliness was exercised in the management of them. As a rule, they have been kept clean and sweet, and a word of advice here and there has been all that has needed to insure their proper conduct.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.—There has been no breach of the Factories and Workshops Act, and any nuisance that has arisen has been remedied upon notice being given by the Inspector.

FOOD AND DRUGS.—During the year 11 samples of milk were taken for analysis. Ten of these were reported pure and one doubtful. The vendor of the doubtful sample was warned by letter and no proceedings taken. There were 18 stones weight of crabs and 1 hundred weight of cockles, which had become odorous in transit, seized and destroyed. No proceedings were taken as the vendors gave them up willingly. One carcase of meat from a tuberculous animal, weighing $4\frac{1}{2}$ hundred weight, was seized and destroyed by a magistrate's order. Proceedings were taken in the Police Court against the vendors (two brothers), who were each fined £10 and costs, £3 2s., making a total of £23 2s.

There were 4 samples of well water analysed, and 3 of these were condemned as unfit for domestic use.

During the year there were 156 lots of bedding, &c., disinfected, and 151 cases of house disinfection by the Authority, and 5 by the owners themselves, after Infectious Disease removal to Hospital, &c.

The Free Library has been warned by post card of the occurrence of Infectious Disease in every house in which it has occurred, and the lending of books to such houses stopped until a certificate of health and freedom from infection has been given by the medical practitioner reporting the case.

NUISANCES ABATED —During the year 904 nuisances have been abated after notice, and in no case has it been necessary to take proceedings for this purpose. The nuisances were of the usual kind, viz., structural defects in dwellings, ash-pits, privies, closets, defective pavement of yards, defective traps, drains stopped, filthy yards, &c., &c.

During the year, in company with the Inspector or Assistant Inspector, I have made house-to-house visits in many districts of the town, and in some districts more than one visit. The number of cases in which I have recommended that the old pavement by cobble stones should be replaced by Common-dale or Scoria bricks, and the number of cases in which this has been carried out is most satisfactory. If one visits these yards after being re-paved in this way, the whole aspect is changed from one of squalid discomfort to that of cleanliness and tidiness, and such surroundings cannot fail to impress the inhabitants of these yards with a desire for cleanliness, and a hopefulness that they can keep their yards neat and clean with a little trouble, which was impossible before: as, though they might be clean, they never looked like it. In one of my former

reports I advocated the adoption of water carriage for our sewage as far as possible, and I again reiterate that recommendation. With an abundant water supply, and a large Sewage Farm, that should be the best means of dealing with the sewage of a town like Darlington. I am glad to find that during the year almost a hundred of the privies which I condemned have been altered into closets, and the huge ash-pit replaced by a box, which will be emptied weekly or twice a week if necessary.

The paving of the yards, and draining them so that their surfaces will always be dry, and the removal of the large privy midden, is the work that has chiefly occupied the attention of the Sanitary Authorities for the past year, and the amount of progress that has been made with this work is both gratifying and encouraging. A few more years perseverance in the same course, and the portions of the town that are an opprobrium will be nowhere to be found.

Just as I have concluded this report, a very serious outbreak of Smallpox is reported from a neighbouring town. We can hardly expect that Darlington will escape altogether free from invasion by it. I think the public of Darlington generally is in a most unprotected state for such an invasion, from the lax manner in which those responsible for the carrying out of the Vaccination Laws have done their duty. It is unfortunate that the power of enforcing this law is not placed in the hands of those responsible for the health of the community,—I mean the Sanitary Committee of the Corporation. When one considers that the Poor Law Guardians have a staff of capable medical officers whose opinions they can obtain on this subject, it seems incredible that they should not take means to obtain that opinion, and it is also incredible and culpable that they do not act upon it. It has been established by evidence, which is conclusive to a mind of ordinary receptivity, that re-vaccination is an almost certain preventive of Smallpox; and, that being so, it is the duty of every unprotected person to be re-vaccinated on the approach of an epidemic. The well educated and wealthy, who are able to pay for vaccination or any other means of warding off these epidemic diseases, are keenly alive to the necessity of re-vaccination as a prophylaxis; but, if it protects the rich, why should not the working man protect himself and family by the same means? I commend the study of this question, and the necessity of setting their house in order, to the Board of Guardians of the Darlington Union.

In conclusion, my thanks are due to its able Chairman, and the various members of the Committee, for the courtesy they have extended to me and the confidence they have reposed in me during the past year. I must also acknowledge my indebtedness to the Town Clerk, and his lamented father and predecessor, for valuable advice, to the Borough Surveyor for his assistance and co-operation, and lastly to the Sanitary Inspector, for the able manner in which he has carried out my instructions.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES LAWRENCE, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Table of **Deaths** during the year 1897, in the Darlington Urban Sanitary District, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Mortality from all causes, at subjoined Ages.

At all ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards
600	148	66	33	38	181	134
Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto.						
14	0	0	1	2	10	1

Mortality from subjoined causes, distinguishing Deaths of Children under Five Years of Age.

	Smallpox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Fevers					Cholera	Erysipelas	Measles	Whooping Cough	Diarrhoea and Dysentery	Rheumatic Fever	Phthisis	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy	Heart Disease	Influenza	Injuries	All other Diseases	Total
					Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal													
Under 5	0	5	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	13	0	1	38	0	3	3	135	214
5 upwards .	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	53	43	56	12	17	193	386
Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto.																						
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	2	0	3	2	14

Table of **Population, Births, and of New Cases of Infectious Sickness**, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1897, in the Urban Sanitary District of Darlington, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Population at all Ages		Registered Births	New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.											
Last Census.	Estimated to middle of 1897		Smallpox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Fevers					Cholera	Erysipelas	
							Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal			
38060	41000	1191	0	228	7	1	0	35	1	0	1	0	25	
Number of such Cases Removed from their homes in the several Localities for Treatment in Isolation Hospital.														
Smallpox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Fevers					Cholera	Erysipelas				
				Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal						
0	143	2	0	0	18	1	0	0	0	1				

JAMES LAWRENCE,
Medical Officer of Health.

**Area and Population of the District or Division
to which this Return relates.**

Area in Acres, 3909

Population (Last Census), 38,060

„ (estimated to middle of 1897), 41,000.

Death Rates	{	General 14·6	{	per 1,000 population, estimated to middle of 1897.
		Infant (under 1 year of age) 124·0		



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Annual Report of the Board of Directors
for the Year ending 1891

The Board of Directors of the
Company has the honor to
present to the stockholders
the following report for the
year ending 1891. The
year has been a successful
one for the Company, and
the Board has the pleasure
to announce that the
profits have been
considerably increased
over the previous year.
The Board has also the
pleasure to announce that
the Company has been
able to pay a dividend
of \$1.00 per share for
the year ending 1891.
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able to pay a dividend
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the year ending 1891.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Board of Directors
has caused this report to be signed by its
President, and attested by its Secretary,
this 1st day of January, 1892.