

[Report 1915] / Medical Officer of Health, Daventry Borough.

Contributors

Daventry (England). Borough Council.

Publication/Creation

1915

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THE
Borough of Daventry.



REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE
. YEAR .

1915.

March 11th, 1916.

Report

OF

The Medical Officer of Health.

TO THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE
DAVENTRY TOWN COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting my Report for the Year 1915, as follows:—

A.—Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

Daventry (area of Borough 3633 acres) is situated in a hilly district, 480 feet above the sea level, 12 miles W. of Northampton, and 11 miles S.E. of Rugby. The soil is principally a brownish loam on a substratum of porous rock or gravel; the greater part of the land surrounding the town is meadow and pasture land.

Population.

Census, 1911	3516
Estimated, 1915	3247 (civilian).
Density of population per acre	·96

Poor Law Relief.

The amount for the year was £182 2s. 5d.

The average weekly number of Inmates at the Workhouse, 70.

Industry.

The staple trade of the town is boot and shoe manufacture. There is one cycle factory. These factories give employment, in normal times, to about 500 hands.

A good number of agricultural labourers are resident in the town, employed within or just outside the district. The principal landowners live outside the town with one or two exceptions, but there are several small freeholders.

Isolation Hospital.

Situated about one mile from the town and providing accommodation for 16 patients. This Hospital is maintained by the Corporation for the reception of cases of Infectious disease—during the continuance of the War it will be used for treatment of Small-pox cases only, other infectious cases requiring isolation being sent to the Staverton Isolation Hospital.

The nearest General Hospital is at Northampton.

B.-Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

Water Supply.

From two sources—

1. **DODFORD:** The property of the Corporation—a *constant* and abundant supply—derived from a deep spring in the middle lias. The water is pure but rather hard, 20°; this hardness is reduced to about 8° by means of a softening process (Lasson & Hjorts) carried out on Borough Hill, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the town by means of which the water is greatly improved for domestic purposes.

2. **BOROUGH HILL SUPPLY:** A private supply from shallow springs flowing from the Northampton Sands at the junction with the clay beds, capable of supplying one-third of the town. This water is of excellent quality and possesses only a small degree of hardness.

Pollution of Streams and Rivers.

There are two small streams (brooks) running through the town, both running to the Grand Junction Canal reservoir.

No instance of pollution has come to my notice.

Drainage and Sewerage.

This is well carried out and in every way satisfactory—the sewage is conveyed to Sewage Works and Farm for proper treatment and disposal.

Closet Accommodation.

Water Closets to every house except in solitary houses away from the town where the privy system is still retained; the majority of the cottages in the Borough are *not* supplied with a flushing apparatus.

Scavenging.

House refuse and ashes are removed to Sewage works on certain days of the week by the Corporation, and there incinerated, the removal being effected in open carts, covered down by a sheet when filled. About 80 Sanitary bins are in use in the Borough and owners and occupiers of existing houses should be encouraged to provide covered sanitary bins in place of other refuse receptacles.

It is very advisable *that a sanitary bin be provided in connection with all new houses and buildings*, and that a bye-law to that effect be made.

Sanitary Inspection of the District.

A weekly inspection of lodging-houses has been made throughout the year, and all cow-sheds, slaughter-houses, dairies, bakehouses, workshops and petrol-stores inspected at frequent intervals.

DRAINS :—New drains inspected .. 7
Drains blocked 11

One drain was disconnected from the Brook at the bottom of Brook-street.

NUISANCES :—23 removed; Water supply condemned in one case, after analysis.

Schools.

Four in number.

- (1) Grammar School (mixed).
- (2) Girls' High School.
- (3) and (4) Public Elementary Schools.

There was no Public Elementary School closure during the year. One private school was closed owing to a mild outbreak of Scarlet Fever—(two weeks).

The following cases of infectious disease were notified to me by the School authorities :—

Ringworm	4
Mumps	1
Whooping Cough	1
Chicken Pox (during October)	16
	—
	22

The general health of the children attending the Public Elementary Schools has been exceptionally good, and the notification of infectious disease by the School Authorities is of the utmost value in aiding the means at our disposal in checking the spread of epidemic disease.

Food.

(a) MILK SUPPLY—satisfactory. No case of adulteration or contamination has been reported.

MILK-SHOPS, DAIRIES—quite satisfactory.

COW-SHEDS—satisfactory.

(b) OTHER FOODS. One beast and one kit of fish were condemned.

The condition of the BAKEHOUSES was satisfactory.

Slaughterhouses.

These have been frequently inspected and on the whole are well kept. In one case insufficient cleaning of walls and floors was found and a notice served on the owner.

Housing.

Ninety-one houses were inspected during the year—in many cases the work required to be carried out to place them in proper habitable repair has been completed.

The number of *re-inspections* was 178.

Fifty-four *Preliminary Notices* were served.

OVER-CROWDING : One case occurred and was remedied.

Tabular Statement.

(Article 5 Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations 1910.—

No. of dwelling houses inspected	..	91
" " considered unfit for habitation	.. .. .	0
No. of representations made to local Authority with a view of making closing order	.. .. .	0
No. of closing orders made	.. .. .	0
No. of dwelling houses the defects of which were remedied without the making of a closing order	.. .. .	0

DEFECTS FOUND :—General repairs ; defective drainage, roofs, floors and walls ; dirty walls and ceilings ; want of paving.

The housing of the working classes in the Borough is adequate.

Workshops, Workplaces.

The administration of the Factory and Workshop Acts, 1901, in the Borough is satisfactory.

One bakehouse has been closed, the premises being unsuitable.

Insufficient closet accommodation at one factory has been remedied.

C.—Sanitary Administration of the District.

Staff.

One Medical Officer of Health and one Sanitary Inspector.

Isolation Hospital

or "Sanatorium" is capable of accommodating twelve cases in the new block and four in the old wing, 16 in all, and is in charge of two caretakers, resident in the

building, who undertake the duties of nursing, etc., when required. The building is in every way sufficient for the requirements of the Borough, and is well kept.

Recent improvements include the connection of the Hospital with the Post Office Telephone, and the erection of a pump inside the building for supply of water for domestic purposes. It is to be regretted that there is still no Disinfecting Apparatus.

No cases were admitted during the year.

Administration of Local Acts or General Adoptive Acts

The following Acts have been adopted since April 9th, 1889:—

Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889.

Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Parts 2, 3, 4, 5

Private Street Works Act, 1892.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, Parts 2, 3, 4, 5, (except Sections 43, 61).

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, Part 6, (Recreation Grounds).

Notification of Births Act, 1907. (Adopted March, 1914—came into force May 1st, 1914)

The Public Health (Ophthalmia Neonatorum) Regulations, 1914.

Public Health (Measles and German Measles) Regulations, 1915.

Special arrangements made in consequence of the War

The Isolation Hospital is reserved for the use of Small-pox cases only, during the continuance of the War.

BILLETING OF TROOPS.—During February, March and April four officers and 150 men of the Royal Field Artillery were quartered in the town—no sickness was reported.

D.—Prevalence of and Control over Acute Infectious Disease.

During the year 17 cases of infectious disease were notified:—

	Cases.	Deaths.
Diphtheria	1	0
Erysipelas	2	0
Scarlet Fever	4	0
Cerebro, Spinal Meningitis	1	0
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ..	9	6
	—	—
	17	6

Diphtheria.

This case is the only one that has occurred in the Borough since 1912.

Scarlet Fever.

Very mild type. One case, a boarder at a school, was removed home outside the Borough—the other cases were isolated at home.

Cerebro, Spinal Meningitis.

This case was removed to the General Hospital at Northampton and occurred in a boy aged 12 years—the origin was obscure.

E.—Prevalence of and Control over Tuberculosis.

The number of cases of Tuberculosis occurring in the Borough shews no decrease and is the largest recorded.

1913	..	6 cases	..	3 deaths during year.
1914	..	7 cases	..	1 death during year.
1915	..	9 cases	..	6 deaths during year.

Three of the cases notified during the year were shoe-operatives, one being a girl aged 14 years.

Cases are visited on receipt of notification and printed instructions given to the patients, disinfectants and spitting cups being provided if necessary. Subsequent visits are made and on change of residence, or death, disinfection of rooms, etc., is carried out as completely as possible. In fatal cases the bedding is mostly destroyed to prevent further infection, there being no disinfecting apparatus in the Borough whereby complete sterilisation can be carried out.

F.—Investigation of other Diseases.

Under this heading there is nothing to report.

G.—Means for Preventing Mortality in Childbirth and in Infancy.

Systematic visiting is carried out in the Borough by the County Health Visitor. 325 visits were paid to 48 new-born infants and 213 visits to children born in 1914.

Besides the above, 55 visits were made to new cases by request of the parents, and 18 visits to others not on routine lists.

Methods of Feeding.

Breast fed	..	..	31
Partly breast fed	..	..	3
Bottle fed	..	..	14
			—
			48
			—

Condition of Children at First Visit.

Good	..	..	..	34
Fair	..	..	..	11
Weakly	..	..	..	3
				—
				48
				—

There were *no* cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum, and *no* deaths of infants occurred amongst those under supervision.

The record for the year is remarkably good, and testifies well to the work of the Health Visitor.

H.—Vital Statistics of the District.

Births.

		Legitimate.		Illegitimate.		Total.
Males	..	32	..	3	..	35
Females	..	32	..	2	..	34
		—		—		—
		64		5		69
		—		—		—

One illegitimate birth did not belong to the Borough, giving the nett births 68 in number, or a *Birth Rate of 19.33* per 1,000, a slightly *lower* figure than last year.

N.B.—The Birth Rate is calculated on the population given in the last Census (1911) and not on the estimated civilian population for the year which would obviously be an erroneous figure on which to base the rate.

Two illegitimate births occurred in the Workhouse, besides two still-born children not included in the above figures.

Deaths.

N.B.—In this report the deaths recorded refer only to the civilian population, and no account is taken in this return of the deaths of those serving with His Majesty's Forces in the present War who belong to the Borough.

67 deaths were registered during the year, including 13 non-residents—the deaths of 8 residents besides were registered *outside* the District.

	Resident.	Non-Resident.	Total.
Borough, excluding Workhouse	49	2	51
Workhouse	5	11	16
Sanatorium	0	0	0
	—	—	—
	54	13	67
	—	—	—

The nett deaths belonging to the District is therefore $54 - 8 = 62$, giving a *Death Rate* of 19·09 per 1,000 based on the estimated civilian population.

The rates for previous years are as follows:—

1910	..	..	11·37
1911	..	..	11·65
1912	..	..	12·51
1913	..	..	16·49
1914	..	..	12·22

Again, as in 1913, the abnormally high Death Rate is explained by the exceptionally large number of deaths during this particular year of the older inhabitants, and not to any prevailing disease, no less than 31 being above the age of 65 years and of these

14 died from Senile Decay
5 died from Cerebral Hæmorrhage

Deaths at Various Ages.

	No. of Deaths.	Rate per 1,000.
Under 1 year	5	1·54
Between 1 and 2 years..	2	·61
" 2 " 5 " ..	2	·61
" 5 " 15 " ..	2	·61
" 15 " 25 " ..	1	·30
" 25 " 45 " ..	10	3·07
" 45 " 65 " ..	9	2·77
Over 65 years	31	9·54

Infant Mortality.

5 deaths occurred under one year of age, of which 4 were due to defects at birth, the remaining one being due to diarrhœa; all were *below* the age of 2 weeks. The Infant Mortality rate is therefore 73·53 per 1,000, a very satisfactory figure for the Borough.

Analysis of Causes of Death.

	No. of Deaths.	Rate per 1,000.
Influenza	4	1·23
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	6	1·84
Cancer	4	1·23
Meningitis	1	·30
Organic Heart Disease	4	1·23
Bronchitis	3	·92
Pneumonia	2	·61
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs	1	·30
Diarrhœa and Enteritis	1	·30
Bright's Disease	2	·61
Congenital Debility and Malformation	3	·92
Other defined diseases	31	9·54

Reviewing the above returns the following points are to be noted:—

1. The small amount of epidemic disease.
2. The very slight infant mortality.
3. The continued low birth rate.
4. The abnormally high death rate—this has been explained in a previous section.
5. The increase in the number of cases of Tuberculosis. The incidence of this disease does not compare as favourably with other districts as could be wished

I would again call attention to the importance of the general use of covered sanitary bins for house refuse, without which there is always a danger in warm seasons of the spread of disease by flies.

Trusting the ensuing year may be a healthy one for the Borough.

I beg to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. H. SEDGWICK,

Medical Officer of Health.

March 11, 1916.

