

**[Report 1914] / Medical Officer of Health, Felixstowe U.D.C.**

**Contributors**

Felixstowe (England). Urban District Council.

**Publication/Creation**

1914

**Persistent URL**

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URBAN DISTRICT OF  
FELIXSTOWE.

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Medical Officer's  
Annual Report  
For 1914.



# URBAN DISTRICT OF FELIXSTOWE

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## Medical Officer's Annual Report FOR 1914.

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE FELIXSTOWE  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report for the year 1914.

### **VITAL STATISTICS.**

These are to some extent complicated by the circumstance that we have had a large and increasing body of troops in the district since the beginning of August, and none but a very small and variable proportion of these belong to the place.

I have accordingly excluded deaths among the troops from the figures on which the net death rate is calculated, as none of them belonged to this district, and they can, no doubt, be referred to the areas from which they came.

Thus, there were 106 deaths registered in the district, 24 of whom were of non-residents and nine of the latter were soldiers. To the 82 remaining, however, must be added eight deaths of former residents who died elsewhere, bringing our net total up to 90.

This gives a death rate of 9·3 per thousand, the highest during the last five years, though it compares favourably with the death rate for the whole country, which is 13·9.

The corrected death rate found by multiplying the crude rate calculated as above, by the factor provided for this district by the Registrar General, is 9·8.

Our birth rate is 16·8 per thousand, which as usual is much lower than the rate for the whole country, the latter being 23·6.

The number of births registered in the district was 158, and to this number four have to be added, children of residents born outside the district, bringing the total to 162.

Of this number, 92 were males and 70 females, the proportion of the former being much greater than usual, a somewhat favourable circumstance, considering the heavy loss of life entailed by the War upon our male population.

The total number of deaths of children under one year of age was 16, giving an infantile mortality rate of 98·7 per thousand births registered. This again is much higher than last year and not much below the rate for the whole country, which is 105 per thousand.

Of the deaths registered in the district, but not included in the figures from which the net death rate was calculated, the causes and ages were as follows :—

Accidents, four cases aged 54, 35, 27 and 21 years respectively.

Cancer, one case aged 42 years.

Arterio-sclerosis, one case aged 59 years.

Cerebral hæmorrhage, three cases aged 71, 57 and 50 years.

Cerebro-spinal meningitis, one case aged 15 years.

Cerebral tumour, one case aged 33 years.

Cirrhosis of liver, one case aged 40 years.

Enteric fever, one case aged 20 years.

Cystitis, one case aged 51 years.

Heart disease, three cases aged 75, 68 and 44 years.

Nephritis, one case aged 34 years.

Lobar pneumonia, two cases aged 35 and 36 years.

Pulmonary tuberculosis, two cases aged 38 and 40 years.

Tubercular peritonitis, one case aged 24 years.

Suicide, one case aged 24 years.

The population estimated to the middle of 1914 was 9,658. This estimate is arrived at by a method suggested by the County Medical Officer of Health. The method is to multiply the increase in population between 1901 and 1911 by a factor varying for each year, and based on a study of the natural increase in

the population of England and Wales. These factors are calculated in the Registrar General's Office, and the figure for 1914 is .34790096. The result of this multiplication is added to the population for 1911, and gives the total mentioned above.

The death rate from all forms of Tuberculosis is .61 per thousand.

### **INFECTIOUS DISEASE.**

The total number of infectious cases notified in the district was 72, including 17 cases of Tuberculosis, 15 of which were Pulmonary.

The other cases included 30 of Scarlet fever, 12 of whom were soldiers ; 16 of Diphtheria, four soldiers and 12 civilians ; four of Enteric fever, all soldiers ; four of Erysipelas, one soldier and three civilians ; and one case of Cerebro-spinal Meningitis, a child between one and two years of age.

The cases of Enteric fever were all imported into the district, as they all occurred shortly after their arrival and well within the incubation period. Another case occurred, however, which, though not notified within the district must have taken the infection here, as he was not taken ill until more than a month after his arrival. He was sent to Harwich without having been diagnosed and notified there. The source of infection could not be ascertained and a bacteriological examination of the stools of the only other man in his billet who might have been a carrier proved negative.

## ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

The Isolation Hospital was open at the beginning of the year, and has not been closed during the whole time.

Forty-nine cases were admitted, of whom 27 were civilians and 22 soldiers. After the outbreak of War, and the quartering of some thousands of soldiers in the town, it was considered advisable to admit soldiers and civilians indiscriminately, as no other means of isolation was practicable.

The total number of infectious cases is very small considering the close aggregation of soldiers in billets, and the severe outbreak of Scarlet Fever which was prevalent in Ipswich during the latter half of the year.

Of the cases admitted to Hospital, 27 were Scarlet fever, 12 soldiers and 15 civilians. Thirteen cases of Diphtheria were admitted, four of whom were soldiers and nine civilians. One case of Erysipelas was admitted from the Felixstowe Cottage Hospital. The remaining eight cases were all soldiers, and included three cases of Tonsillitis, sent in on suspicion of being Diphtheria, three cases of Mumps, one case of Measles, and one case suffering from a pedicular rash mistaken for Measles.

The War Office decided to build a temporary additional Hospital in the grounds of the building already existing, for the accommodation of 28 extra beds, and this, though not fully completed at the end of the year was used during the latter part of the time for convalescent cases. The additional building is provided with a duty room and two wards, arrangements being



made for bathing, and washing utensils, but not for cooking, as the intention is to use the kitchen of the original Hospital.

### **GENERAL HOSPITALS.**

At the commencement of August, the Pier Hotel was taken over by the War Office as a Military Hospital, but was found to be ill-arranged, and altogether unsuitable for this purpose. The Cliff Hotel was accordingly commandeered for the accommodation of the sick, and was opened during November. It has about 150 beds. Sixty beds are available at the Herman-de-Stearn Home of the London Hospital, which has also been taken by the Military Authorities.

Private benevolence and the Red Cross Society have also furnished two or three dwelling houses as places of rest for soldiers who are suffering from over fatigue or slight ailments, which render them unfit for duty, but who are not sufficiently ill to require treatment in Hospital.

### **SANITARY WORK.**

The sanitary work of the district was carried out as usual until the outbreak of War at the beginning of August, when it was found that the presence of large numbers of troops was putting a much greater strain upon the resources of the Sanitary Staff than has usually resulted from the ingress of the summer season visitors.

At the commencement of the War there were probably about 5,000 troops in Felixstowe and the district, and this number has been increased from time to time until it has been more than doubled. The troops were billeted somewhat irregularly in accordance with Military requirements, and many parts of the town were undoubtedly overcrowded.

Apart, however, from actual overcrowding, the system of close billeting which must almost necessarily be adopted in defended places, makes much heavier demands upon the drainage and the arrangements for refuse disposal than the appointments of ordinary dwelling houses or the Sanitary Staff of an Urban District as usually constituted are capable of meeting. Some attempt was made to meet the difficulty by the appointment of a Contractor by the Military Authorities, who was engaged to remove refuse and the contents of latrines and urinals. It was found, however, that the work was apparently beyond his scope, and that it had to be supplemented by the Officials of the Council. It was finally decided, after the matter had been fully represented to the War Office and the Local Government Board, that it would be better for the Council to undertake all the work of sewage and refuse removal, engaging the Contractor to assist them and supervising his work.

In addition to the large amount of conservancy work rendered necessary by the construction of pail latrines in many places, it was found that the volume of sewage from the houses occupied had very greatly increased since the occupation of the troops, and more

work was thrown upon the air compressing pumps than is usual in the height of the season. This of course resulted from the careless use and wastage of water as proved by the figures of the Water Company, which showed that much more than 20 gallons of water per head were being used or wasted daily. In a district such as Felixstowe, where the water has to be pumped from a deep well and the sewage lifted from sunk ejectors by means of compressed air, this wastage is a doubly serious matter.

Difficulties have further had to be met in places where there was no connection with the main sewer, as in these cases the cesspools became full so rapidly that they required emptying at least once a week instead of once in three months, which is sufficient under normal conditions.

In some parts of the district the houses were found to be in very bad repair and defects had to be made good in walls and floors. This was particularly noticeable in Old Felixstowe, where the state of the yards and surroundings unpaved and ill-kept rendered the condition of the billets very unsatisfactory at first.

It is remarkable, however, that notwithstanding these defects, and the fact that overcrowding of billets was more noticeable in this part of the district than in any other, no infectious disease was notified from the Lancashire Regiment, which was billeted in this area.

Almost the whole of the infectious disease was notified from the neighbourhood of Walton and Lower Walton, where the Norfolk Regiments were billeted.

Most of the cases were notified from King Street and Cornwall Road, and in both these streets the houses are new and much care has been taken in drain testing, yard paving, etc.

In Lower Walton the state of the yards has often been the subject of unfavourable comment, but it is very difficult to get improvements carried out in poor-class property of this description where the rents are very low and the return for outlay practically nil. The Military Authorities have given much help in the matter of yard paving in Old Felixstowe, and in some of the larger houses in Lower Walton as well as in many of the houses facing the sea, where the yards though satisfactory enough for the comparatively small number of occupants in time of peace became a veritable quagmire with the increased amount of traffic and the exceptionally wet weather in the latter part of the year.

Under normal conditions the general refuse collection of the district can be done by three vans with two men to each, who call at each house twice a week, but under the conditions prevailing during the latter half of the year, five additional vans have been required and nine additional men.

The eight carts carry, on an average, two and a half loads a day each, making a total of twenty loads a day. Each load averages in weight one ton and a half, so that thirty tons of refuse are collected every day.

The collection for Military occupation is a daily one, and for the houses occupied by civilians only twice a week.

The Destructor deals with 18 tons of refuse a day, and the remaining 12 tons is emptied on to the marsh heap, near the Outfall Works.

The need of a Steam Disinfector has been felt for some time past, and the ingress of the troops into the district rendered this need acute. It was accordingly decided at the end of September to purchase a Disinfector of the Washington-Lyons pattern, which was installed at the Outfall Works in the middle of November.

Vermin are very apt to spread with alarming rapidity when men are so situated that they are unable to remove their clothes at night, and opportunities of washing the body, and body linen are not easily obtained. It was this circumstance which rendered the purchase of a Steam Disinfector an urgent necessity, as the clothing of many of the troops was found to be verminous, and other means of disinfection such as spraying with antiseptics were found to be ineffective. The apparatus is available for the disinfection of clothes or bedding at a cost of five shillings for each half day's use, and has proved a great advantage to the civil population as well as to the military in the disinfection of bedding, etc., after infectious disease.

The slaughter houses, bakehouses and dairies have been regularly inspected, 35 inspections having been made during the year. The slaughter houses are kept in a satisfactory condition, but as I have remarked every year since my appointment, I consider their situation in every instance undesirable. A closely populated area is most unsuitable for a slaughter house, as it tends

to cramp the available space for the fasting pens and for cleansing purposes. It is also undesirable from a humanitarian point of view.

The two underground bakehouses are well kept, and satisfactory apart from their situation.

The following particulars of Sanitary Work have been given to me by the Surveyor :—

New Sewers constructed	..	213 yards.
New Surface Water Drains		1,036 ,,
Sewer Connections made	..	32
Surface Water Connections made		2
Houses completed	.. ..	55
Nuisances abated	.. ..	7
Rooms disinfected	.. ..	68 in 42 premises.
Privies emptied	.. ..	22
Cesspools emptied	.. ..	104

In addition to the above work. 29 rooms were disinfected at the request of the Military Authorities, 104 privies emptied, and 127 cesspools emptied.

In connection with refuse collection, a great deal of work has also had to be done in emptying and cleaning latrine buckets. There are 65 latrines in the district with an average of 15 buckets apiece, making a total of 950 buckets, with an additional 100 urine buckets. All of these have to be emptied and cleaned daily. They are distributed as follows :—

On Landguard Common and the central part of the town, 39 latrines. In Old Felixstowe, 13 latrines ; and in Walton, 13 latrines.

In conclusion, I may say, that the excessive work thrown upon the Sanitary Staff has been done in a most satisfactory manner, especially when we consider the short time available for the increase of plant and material. The cheerful readiness with which difficulties have been met and the unsparing expenditure of time and trouble in overcoming them are deserving of the highest praise.

This, I may add, has been especially the case of the Isolation Hospital, where the conditions have been exceedingly difficult, and the greatest resourcefulness has been displayed by the nurse in charge.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

G. J. CONFORD, M.D., OXON.,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

TABLE I.

**FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT.**  
**Vital Statistics of the Whole District during 1914 and Previous Years.**

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.				
		Un-corrected Number.	Nett.	Number.	Rate.*	of Non-residents registered in the District.	of Residents registered in the District.	Under 1 Year of Age		At all Ages.		
								Number.	Rate per 1000 Nett Births.		Number.	Rate.*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1909	8550		144	16·7	81	9·4			13	90·27	83	9·7
1910	8825		145	16·4	76	8·6			10	68·9	76	8·6
1911	8666		150	17·3	76	8·7	11	7	9	60·0	72	8·3
1912	9109	152	155	17·0	76	8·3	10	4	12	77·4	70	7·6
1913	9479	164	166	17·5	71	7·49	5	16	10	60·2	82	8·6
<b>1914</b>	9658	158	162	16·8	106	10·97	24	8	16	98·7	90	9·3

\* Rates in Columns 5, 7, and 13 calculated per 1000 of estimated population.

Area of District in acres (land and inland water) 4,281. Number of inhabited houses, 2,028. Rateable value, £68,500.



TABLE II.

## FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1914.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases Notified in Whole District.							Total Cases removed to Hospital.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.						
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 45.	45 to 65.	
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) . . . . .	16	1	8	5	2			13
Erysipelas . . . . .	4			1	2		1	1
Scarlet fever . . . . .	30	1	15	12	2			27
Enteric fever . . . . .	4			4				
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis . . . . .	1	1						
Pulmonary Tuberculosis . . . . .	15		1	3	11			
Other forms of Tuberculosis . . . . .	2		1		1			
Tonsillitis isolated on suspicion of Diphtheria . . . . .								3
Mumps . . . . .								3
Measles . . . . .								1
Pedicular rash—mistaken for measles . . . . .								1
<b>Totals . . . . .</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>49</b>



TABLE IV.  
 FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT.  
 INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1914.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

Causes of Death.	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-3 Months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 Year.
Convulsions .. .. .				1				1
Bronchitis .. .. .	1		1				1	2
Pneumonia (all forms) .. .. .					1	1		2
Diarrhoea .. .. .				1		1		2
Enteritis .. .. .					1			1
Congenital Malformations .. .. .				1				1
Premature birth .. .. .	5	1	6					6
Other causes .. .. .	1		1					1
Totals .. .. .	7	1	8	3	2	2	1	16

Net Births in the year { Legitimate .. 154  
 Illegitimate .. 8

Net Deaths in the year { Legitimate, infants .. 15  
 Illegitimate, " .. 1