

Contributors

Melton Mowbray (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1908

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THE
Annual Report
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE YEAR 1908,
TO THE
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF
MELTON MOWBRAY,
BY
WILLIAM TIBBLES,
M.D., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., L.S.A., &c.
Fellow of the Royal Institute of Public Health.



THE ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1908

— OF THE —

MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH

— TO THE —

Rural District Council of Melton Mowbray.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I hereby present for your consideration my Annual Report upon the Rural District of Melton Mowbray.

During the year 1908 there were born in your District 156 males and 181 females, making a total of 337 children, of whom 321 were legitimate and 16 illegitimate. This gives a birth-rate of 21.2 per 1,000 persons living. 27 infants died under one year of age (one being an illegitimate child), equal to 80.1 per 1,000 of the registered births. The average of births for the last ten years was 369, equal to 24.3 per annum per 1,000 persons. The average of deaths of infants under one year was 37, equal to 100.3 per 1,000 children born in that time.

The number of deaths registered in your District in 1908 was 184, and gave a death-rate of 11.6 per 1,000 persons living. This is one of the lowest rates ever recorded in your District. The average number of deaths registered in your District during the previous ten years was 209, equal to a death-rate of 13.7 per 1,000 persons living, the highest death-rate being 15.6 per 1,000 in 1905, and the lowest that stated for 1908. There were, however, 23 deaths of "Residents" registered outside your District, which increased the total deaths to 207 in 1908, and gave a corrected death-rate of 13 per 1,000. This also is a very good record, and is about the lowest recorded.

The population was estimated to be 15,848 in the middle of 1908, that at the census-taking in 1901 being 14,865. Table I., which is appended, shows the estimated population for each of the previous ten years, also the number of births and the birth-rates, the number and rate per 1,000 of infantile deaths, and the total deaths and death-rates for each year. The same facts for 1908 are shown, as well as the average for the previous ten years.

Table II., which is appended, shows the population, the number of births and deaths, and the number of deaths of infants under one year.

Table III. shows the number of cases of each infectious disease notified in 1908. These facts, which will be commented upon more fully in the account of infectious diseases, are as follows :—

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED IN 1908.

		At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 and over.
Diphtheria	...	51	1	7	36	5	2	—
Erysipelas	...	9	—	1	—	1	5	2
Scarlet Fever	...	42	—	10	30	2	—	—
Enteric Fever	...	2	—	—	1	1	—	—
TOTALS	...	104	1	18	67	9	7	2

THE CAUSES OF DEATH.

These are fully shown in Tables IV. and V. The former of these shows that the deaths of people over 65 years of age numbered 113; of these a very large number had attained the allotted span of life. If this column included the deaths of all people over 60 years, it would show that nearly two-thirds of the people who died had passed that age. There is nothing remarkable in the cause of these deaths; heart disease was responsible for 17, disease of the respiratory organs 12, cancer 9, two died by their own hand, and the remaining 73 died from numerous diseases, classified as "Other Causes," and included a large percentage of deaths from "old age."

In the active period of life, 25 to 65 years of age, 44 persons died, including 6 from consumption and 2 from other tubercular diseases, 3 from disease of the chest, 12 from cancer, 1 from alcoholism, 1 from accident, 2 from suicide, and 13 from other causes.

Between the ages of 15 and 25 years only 5 person died, viz.: 1 from influenza, 2 from consumption, 1 from childbirth, and 3 from other causes.

The deaths from 5 to 15 years were 12, viz.: diphtheria 5, tuberculosis 2, pneumonia 1, accident 1, other causes 3.

From 1 to 5 years of age there were 6 deaths, 1 due to diphtheria, 1 to diarrhoea, 2 to pneumonia, and 2 to other causes.

The "uncertified" deaths were three, and were due to syncope, premature birth, and accident followed by lock-jaw.

The number of inquests held was nine, and the deaths were found to be due to the following causes: 3 being due to suicide by drowning, 1 to suicide by cutting the throat, 2 to syncope, 1 to alcoholism, 1 to stroke, and one to being accidentally killed on the railway.

Table V. sets forth more fully the ages and cause of death of the 27 infants who died before attaining one year of age. They are as follows: 6 infants died from premature birth, 3 from congenital defects, 1 from injury at birth, 2 from want of breast-milk, 2 from debility or marasmus, 1 from tubercular meningitis, 4 from convulsions, 3 from bronchitis, 4 from pneumonia, and 1 from other causes. In commenting upon this list it should be pointed out that only two children were registered as dying from "want of breast-milk." It is, however, probable that some other deaths would more properly be classified under this heading. There is no greater fallacy among

the women of to-day, especially young mothers, than that of supposing that they can bring up their children on any kind of food which is soft enough for their gums, such as bread and milk and some of the patent foods. Such foods are a very poor substitute for mothers' milk at the best. There is, however, nothing more certain than the fact, that, if the enormous loss to the State by death of infants is to be checked, we must return to the natural mode of feeding the infants. Artificial foods, no matter what their nature may be, cannot be made to properly replace human milk. It is a well-known fact that children brought up by hand are far more likely to suffer from convulsions, diarrhoea, indigestion, marasmus, and wasting diseases generally, and the long list of infantile diseases, than those who are fed by the breast. It is very significant that more than half the infants who die in your District succumb during the first month of life, and nearly all of them before six months of age. Bread-pap, arrow-root, baked flour, rusks, and many of the infants' foods, do not contain the materials necessary for the nourishment of young infants, nor for the growth and developement of those under the age of six months. Their use should be strictly forbidden, and the natural mode of feeding the baby be everywhere encouraged.

THE OUTBREAKS OF EPIDEMIC DISEASES.

The number of cases of notified diseases was 104, as shown in Table III. In addition to the "notifiable" diseases, I have information of the occurrence of 72 cases of chicken pox, 34 of whooping cough, and 23 of measles. The total number of the unnotifiable diseases was probably double those given, as the figures relate chiefly to children of school age. Whooping cough was prevalent at Stathern from January to March, at Knossington and Eaton in January and February, at Little Dalby in May and June, and at Somerby in September and October. Chicken-pox was prevalent at Rearsby in February, at Burrough-on-the Hill in June, and at Twyford in October.

DIPHTHERIA.—The most important infectious disease prevalent in your District in 1908, however, was diphtheria. In reply to a request from the Local Government Board I prepared a special report upon this outbreak, of which I here give the principal parts: There were 51 cases of diphtheria notified to me from the following parishes. The time at which the cases occurred indicates the course of the epidemic through your District.

PARISH.		MONTH.				NUMBER.
Long Clawson	...	April	...	...	...	1
Stonesby	...	June, July	...	...	...	10
Holwell	...	June, July, August	...	...	...	3
Abb-Kettleby	...	August	...	...	...	1
Welby	...	June	...	...	...	1
Asfordby	...	June, July, Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.	...	...	...	16
Burton Lazars	...	July	...	...	...	1
Wartnaby	...	July	...	...	...	1

PARISH.		MONTH.			NUMBER.
Harby	...	July, August	...	...	6
Barsby	...	August, December	...	...	3
Frisby	...	August	...	...	2
Branstone	...	October	...	...	1
Scalford	...	October, November	...	...	2
Ragdale	...	November	...	...	1
Goadby	...	November	...	...	1
Thorpe Arnold	...	August	...	...	1
TOTAL					51

Some of the cases in the foregoing list were very mild, and such as might occur in any parish from slight causes. The most serious are those which occurred at Stonesby, Asfordby, Harby and Barsby.

I. STONESBY.—Various conditions were in existence prior to the outbreak which favoured the spread of the disease. The disease was popularly attributed to the old cesspool closets at the Schools, which had not been emptied for $1\frac{1}{2}$ years. The nuisance from them was great. The School Building is also very small and badly ventilated. Most of the affected children attended school. The disease broke out almost simultaneously in two families. Ten persons were affected, and one death occurred. Overcrowding at one house was a chief factor in causing the disease to spread. Bad water also was another factor in the case. The overcrowding was stopped, wells received attention, and the School closets ordered to be converted to pails which could be emptied weekly. The affected persons were removed to the Isolation Hospital.

II. ASFORDBY.—Many new tenements have been built in this parish. Each cottage has only a small patch of garden upon which for years past a good deal of the household refuse, ashes, vegetable matter, and even human excreta was deposited or buried. I have referred to this in various letters and reports to your Council, notably in January 1904. I reported, "Five cases of diphtheria among the tenants of the new houses in New Street and The Valley. . . . The origin is believed to have some connection with the saturation of the soil with kitchen refuse. I have repeatedly warned the people against this practice. Each tenant spreads on the surface of a small patch of garden a good deal of the kitchen refuse, and in course of time the whole plot of ground becomes a refuse heap." I wrote again to you on the same subject in December, 1905, in October, 1906, and again on November 27th, 1906, I wrote to you as follows: "This district (The Valley) is becoming exceedingly unhealthy. There are frequent outbreaks of infectious and non-infectious diseases. The reason for this sickness is not far to seek. It consists to some extent of the lowness of the area. But one of the chief causes arises from the absence of proper provision for refuse disposal. There are no ashpits; there are only little gardens in which to bury the refuse; and no means has been provided for the storage of household refuse. In consequence of which many of the inhabitants

throw all the refuse upon the ground. . . . Altogether this area is becoming extremely insanitary, and no surprise need be expressed if it becomes the centre of a serious epidemic." In 1907 there was a serious epidemic of enteric fever in Asfordby. The system of pail closets is in vogue in most of the new houses, but the pails are not large enough for the reception of the excrement and household refuse of the family for a week. In consequence of this many people absolutely do not know what to do with the refuse. The ground is saturated with it, and until time has been given for the consolidation of the earth, and transformation of the waste material, such refuse will, in my opinion, cause one outbreak after another. Last year (1907) the disease was enteric fever, this year (1908) diphtheria and scarlet fever have predominated.

III. HARBY.—The outbreak of diphtheria at Harby was attributed to the too early return of a child who had been ill away from home. The outbreak occurred shortly afterwards among those she mingled with, and thus favoured this idea. The medical attendant, however, denied she had had diphtheria. There were, however, some insanitary conditions in the village prior to the outbreak, notably a nuisance from a large number of pigs and foul sewer dykes. The pigs were kept clean and well looked after, but the presence of a large number of such animals is never conducive to health. The drains from the piggeries empty into public drains, and these into sewer dykes. Several drains were blocked and foul, and the sewer dykes becoming dry through the drought at that period, gave rise to a considerable nuisance.

IV. BARSBY.—This outbreak was undoubtedly the result of imperfect drains. The village drain consists, in great part at least, of old-fashioned horse-shoe tiles placed upon bricks. It empties into a dyke in the valley. Almost everybody complained of the nuisance from the drains and the dyke, which were blocked, and became dry and foul during the hot weather. I condemned the entire drainage of the village as insanitary, as the cause of the outbreak of diphtheria, and as threatening still more seriously to affect the health of the inhabitants. The matter was considered by the Council, plans for a new drain were prepared, and the work of laying it will begin almost at once.

Means taken to prevent the spread of the disease:—

(a) ISOLATION.—As many patients as possible were removed to the Isolation Hospital at Melton Mowbray. When the institution was full, or when for other reasons it was deemed unnecessary or inadvisable to remove the patients, they were isolated at home. The number of cases of diphtheria treated in the Hospital and at home is shown in the following table:—

PARISH.	HOSPITAL.			HOME.			Total
	No.	Recovered	Died	No.	Recovered	Died	
Asfordby	7	7	—	9	9	—	16
Abb Kettleby	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Barsby	1	1	—	2	—	2	3

[8]

PARISH.	HOSPITAL.			HOME.			Total.
No.	Recovered.	Died.	No.	Recovered.	Died.		
Branstone	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Burton Lazars	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Clawson	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Frisby	2	2	—	—	—	—	2
Goadby	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Harby	—	—	—	6	5	1	6
Holwell	2	2	—	1	1	—	3
Ragdale	1	—	1	—	—	—	1
Scalford	2	2	—	—	—	—	2
Stonesby	10	9	1	—	—	—	10
ThorpeArnold	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Wartnaby	—	—	—	1	1	—	1
Welby	—	—	—	1	1	—	1
TOTALS	30	28	2	21	17	4	51

(b) ANTITOXIN SERUM.—The Serum has been used in a large proportion of the cases. Your Council recently agreed, with the concurrence of the Local Government Board, to refund to medical practitioners the cost of serum used for people who are unable to pay for it. This is a great boon to your district.

(c) DISINFECTION.—All houses were disinfected with formalin or sulphur and formalin candles, under the superintendence of the doctor, or by the Sanitary Inspector. My instructions are that each room, which has been occupied by an infected person, shall afterwards have a thorough spring-cleaning, ceilings to be lime-washed, walls also to be lime-washed or the papers removed or properly rubbed down with dough, and all woodwork to be washed in a disinfectant solution.

(d) In some parishes the schools were closed, as will be seen in the list which follows.

SCARLET FEVER.—This disease had been very prevalent in the last few weeks of 1907 at Wymondham and elsewhere in the district, and this continued throughout the year 1908, being, however, more important at Saxby, Waltham and Asfordby, than elsewhere. The number of cases is shown in the following list:—

PLACE AND TIME	HOSPITAL.		HOME.		TOTAL
Saxby, January and May	...	10	—	—	10
Old Dalby, January	...	—	1	—	1
Asfordby, March, June, July, October, November	...	8	4	—	12
Wymondham, April, July, August	...	1	2	—	3
Somerby, April	...	2	—	—	2
Holwell, May	...	—	1	—	1
Stathern, June, December	...	—	2	—	2
Abb Kettleby, June	...	—	1	—	1
Gaddesby, July	...	1	—	—	1
Waltham, November, December	...	3	4	—	7
Scalford, December	...	—	1	—	1
Eastwell, December	...	—	1	—	1
		25	17		42

N.B.—There were no deaths.

The outbreak was, in most parishes, of a mild character, and in some instances well deserved the name of scarlatina. As regards

the Saxby and Wymondham cases, they were a continuation of the outbreak affecting that area in 1907. At least one of the cases at Asfordby was known to be imported, and the connection between some other cases and the supposed origin was pretty clear. The same means of preventing the spread of the disease were adopted as in diphtheria, 25 of the cases being removed to Hospital. As in diphtheria, we found home-isolation to be imperfect in some cases. In one family, the affected children were found taking their meals with the rest of the household, in spite of instructions to the contrary. Such errors do not always arise from inability to obey our instructions, but, as in the case referred to, from sheer stupidity. Disinfection was done in all affected houses. One of the important measures taken for preventing the spread of the disease, amongst school children, is the closing of the schools. The following list shows which schools were closed by the Education Committee, and what disease it was for, in 1908:—

SCHOOLS CLOSED.

Waltham, scarlet fever, January 1st to 11th (continued from 1907).
 Wymondham, scarlet fever, January 1st to 6th (continued from 1907).
 Freeby, whooping cough, measles and influenza, January 1st to 20th, March 27th to April 6th.
 Saxby and Stapleford, scarlet fever and whooping cough, January 1st to February 10th, also May 11th to June 10th.
 Knossington, whooping cough, January 16th to February 24th.
 Eaton, whooping cough, January 21st to March 2nd.
 Stathern, whooping cough, January 25th to March 2nd.
 Edmondthorpe, whooping cough, February 5th to March 23rd.
 Rearsby, whooping cough and chicken-pox, January 1st to 6th (continued from 1907), also February 24th to March 9th.
 Burrough-on-the-Hill, influenza, March 6th to 16th; chicken-pox, June 12th to July 13th,
 Little Dalby, whooping cough, May 23rd to June 29th.
 Stonesby, diphtheria, June 12th to July 20th.
 Gaddesby, scarlatina, July 25th to August 10th.
 Twyford, chicken-pox, September 30th to October 26th.
 Somerby, whooping cough, September 12th to October 19th.
 Branstone, impetigo, December 8th to 31st.

THE SANITARY WORK.

The whole of the principal villages were inspected by me, some of them twice or thrice, during the year. During these visits the houses, drains, wells, outbuildings of farm places, and the various appurtenances of households, underwent a routine inspection. As a result, many accumulations of refuse and other causes of nuisance were removed. A number of wells was ordered to be cleaned out, drains to be repaired and relaid, and other insanitary conditions abolished.

The number of "complaints" was few, and, in most cases referred to matters mentioned above, and have received due attention. Several complaints referred to the keeping of animals so as to be a nuisance to the inhabitants of villages, and in some cases of ill-health arising from them.

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT includes :— Premises, houses, etc., inspected 600, nuisances abated 60 ; pools, ditches, etc., inspected 50, nuisances removed 40 ; privies, cesspools, ashpits inspected 300, nuisances abated 34 ; drains, drain-pipes, etc., inspected 150, nuisances removed 25 ; houses overcrowded 4, overcrowding abated 4 ; offensive accumulations 40, removed 40 ; other insanitary conditions inspected 30, nuisances removed 30. Licensed slaughter-houses in the district 50, inspected 10. Number of dairymen in district 406, registered 204, inspection of premises 250 ; places requiring whitewashing, cleaning, etc., 20, done 6. Waters analysed 8, found good 1, passable 3, condemned 4. Wells closed 3, cleaned and repaired 10. Waste-pipes disconnected from drains 4. Privies : New middens provided 4, middens repaired 10, converted to pails 12 ; new water closets provided 3, new ash-bins provided 5. New sewers laid, total 1,402 yards, including: Eastwell 185 yards ; Clawson 100 yards, Grimston 52 yards ; Holwell 50 yards ; Knossington 150 yards ; Frisby 20 yards ; Nether Broughton 75 yards ; Old Dalby 800 yards ; Welby 50 yards.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS.—An outbreak of anthrax occurred at Nether Broughton, affecting a herd of cattle. The sale of the milk was stopped until the farm was certified as being free from the disease.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.—The total number of factories in your district is 4, including 3 cheese and 1 lace factory : there are also 6 workshops and 32 bakehouses, making a total of 42. The Sanitary Inspector visited 20 of these establishments. Homework : The Outworkers number 291 in 200 houses ; and the number of inspections made by him was 250.

The line of progress is clearly indicated by the necessity for more drainage at Clawson, Hose, Barsby and other places. By the necessity for a pure water supply at Hose, Holwell and elsewhere. And by greater attention to the sewer dykes, and provision for refuse disposal in various places indicated herein.

The Meteorological Report of Dr. J. T. Tibbles is appended. This valuable addition to our returns shows the amount of rainfall, the temperature, and state of the barometer throughout the year in the centre of your district.

I am,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM TIBBLES,

Medical Officer of Health.

January 19th, 1909,

4, The Ropewalk,

Nottingham.

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1900

MONTHLY SUMMARY OF THE YEAR 1900				
Month	Mean of Month	Max. Temp.	Min. Temp.	Wind
JANUARY	32.5	45.0	15.0	12.0
FEBRUARY	35.0	48.0	18.0	11.0
MARCH	38.0	52.0	22.0	10.0
APRIL	42.0	58.0	28.0	9.0
MAY	48.0	65.0	35.0	8.0
JUNE	55.0	72.0	42.0	7.0
JULY	62.0	78.0	48.0	6.0
AUGUST	68.0	82.0	52.0	5.0
SEPTEMBER	72.0	85.0	55.0	4.0
OCTOBER	75.0	88.0	58.0	3.0
NOVEMBER	78.0	90.0	60.0	2.0
DECEMBER	80.0	92.0	62.0	1.0
Total Rainfall for the Year 1900				
Total Snowfall for the Year 1900				

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR 1908. BY JOHN

250 FEET B

BAROMETER REDUCED TO SEA LEVEL & 32° Fabr.					(Temperature)	
Mean of Month.	Highest. Inches	Date.	Lowest. Inches.	Date.	Temperature	
					9 a m	Max. M
JANUARY.....30.249	30.535	21st	29.062	8th	33.4°	39 9°
FEBRUARY.....30.009	30 656	7th	29 148	29th	39 9°	46.1°
MARCH.....29.749	30 289	15th	29 211	10th	39.1°	42.9°
APRIL.....29.706	30.405	7th	29.397	24th	43.3°	49.2°
MAY.....29 844	30.448	27th	29.322	6th	57.2°	64.1°
JUNE.....30.052	30.344	27th	29 637	14th	59.2°	68.6°
JULY.....29.941	30.444	29th	29 282	17th	63.5°	70.5°
AUGUST.....29 929	30.321	3rd	29.368	28th	60.0°	66.6°
SEPTEMBER.....29.889	30.172	30th	28.969	1st	53.0°	65.2°
OCTOBER.....30.194	30.475	22nd	29.874	10th	50.9°	60.3°
NOVEMBER....29.993	30.352	30th	29.371	2nd	44.2°	50.0°
DECEMBER.....29.939	30.365	1st	28.733	11th	37.9°	42.4°

Total Rainfall for year: 21.71 inches, falling on 175 days.
Mean Temperature of year equals 46.8

THE SEA LEVEL.

The average Rainfall for previous ten years: 26.57 inches against an average of 45.8 for ten years.

against an average of 45.8 for ten years.

