

[Report 1895] / Medical Officer of Health, Peterborough City & Borough.

Contributors

Peterborough (England). City & Borough Council.

Publication/Creation

1895

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MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT, 1895

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

Having only been appointed Medical Officer of Health, in September last, to fill the vacancy caused by the lamented death of the late Dr. W. E. Paley, my report must necessarily be somewhat brief.

During the past year, there have been registered, 764 births and 418 deaths, from which latter total must be deducted 30, as the number of persons dying, either in the Infirmary or in the Workhouse, but not actually residents of the district. These figures give the following results, calculated per 1,000 of the population.

General Birth Rate	27.99
.. Death	14.02

very satisfactory figures, compared with the latest returns for five years in the whole of England and Wales which were 30.5 and 18.7 respectively.

The detailed mortality as shown by the accompanying tables is as follows:—

	North Ward.	East Ward.	South Ward.
Area in Acres ..	1030	510	278
Population (to middle of 1895) ..	14938	9332	3028
Births ..	396	251	101
Deaths ..	185	128	44
General Birth Rate	26.51	27.53	33.35
General Death Rate	12.31	13.71	14.53
Zymotic Diseases			
Total Deaths	14	13	2
Zymotic Diseases			
rate per 100 ..	.93	1.5	.65

The only notable features of these returns are the high birth rate, and the comparative freedom from Zymotic Diseases in the South Ward. During the past year, the Borough has been remarkably free from any Epidemic of Infectious Disease; the number of such diseases notified was 98, whilst the deaths registered were 29, equal to 1.05 per 1,000.

During the three months that I have held office, several cases of Typhoid Fever have been reported, only one however fortunately proving fatal, and in that case, the disease had undoubtedly been contracted away from home. In another instance the origin of the disease was traced to impure well water, and steps were at once taken to prevent its being again used for drinking purposes.

There has not been a single case of Small Pox during the past year. Two cases of Diphtheria proved fatal during my tenure of office, but although every investigation was made, no very definite cause could be discovered.

38 deaths from Phthisis have been registered in 1895, being at the rate of 1.03 per 1,000. The death rate from Phthisis is often taken as an indication of the Sanitary condition of any particular locality; as 1.4 per 1,000 is the lowest rate that has ever been recorded in London, we may take it, I think, on that basis, that the Borough is in a healthy state.

At the same time I should like to see every room thoroughly disinfected in which a fatal case has occurred.

Since entering upon my duties I have endeavoured to make a thorough and Systematic inspection of the whole Borough; and as a general rule I can report that it is in a most Sanitary condition, Goodyer's and Gray's yards being a striking exception. These yards are certainly in a most deplorable state; but I sincerely hope that the prompt action which the Corporation is now taking with reference to these particular localities, will soon result in their being rendered fit habitations for the poorer classes.

With regard to the Water supply, I cannot, I am sorry, report quite so favorably, there are many houses in which the old cesspool and well water arrangement still exists; should Typhoid Fever occur in any of these houses, it must inevitably spread to the rest of the inmates. It seems like shutting the stable door after the horse is stolen, to wait for the occurrence of such an outbreak before taking action.

When the water is laid on for domestic purposes, there is often no flushing apparatus for the closets; even in such thickly populated parts of the town as Narrow street. The inevitable bad smells follow owing to an insufficient supply of water in the drains to carry off the sewage. Moreover I am credibly informed, that where water, acting under notice from the Authorities, has been laid on, the supply has subsequently been quietly cut off. To remedy this defect, I would suggest a house to house inspection with regard to the water supply, to be followed by vigorous proceedings where the above-named evils are found to exist.

In several instances, we found houses in a most filthy and neglected condition, notice was at once served upon the occupiers to cleanse and purify their dwellings. In one case the head of the house had to be summoned, and a small fine inflicted by the bench, before compliance with our orders could be obtained. The publicity attaching to his appearance at the police court, has acted as a most salutary warning upon those who do not appreciate the beneficial effects of soap and water.

I can only reiterate my late predecessors opinion as to the pressing need of an isolation hospital for Infectious Diseases, notification, without the means of isolating, and thus stopping an outbreak at its first onset, is almost valueless.

Accompanying my report is that of the Inspector of Nuisances, I have to express my great indebtedness to him for his aid and assistance, rendered doubly valuable by his intimate knowledge of the drainage system of the district, in investigating the cause of any outbreak of disease.

I have the honor to remain,

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. W. JOLLY,

Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH SURVEYOR'S OFFICE,

PETERBOROUGH,

11th February, 1896.

*To the Urban District Council of the City and Borough
of Peterborough.*

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to present to you my Report upon Sanitary matters which came under my notice during the year 1895.

During the year much trouble was experienced with many of the somewhat thickly populated yards in the Borough, particularly those in which several Water Closets are situate common to several houses; in some cases the closet drains were frequently found to be choked and the pans of some broken, it is a most troublesome matter for the owners of such premises to keep the flushing cistern in good order.

The existing system of Water Closet arrangement in connection with the class of property above referred to, is not a satisfactory one, even when the cisterns are in good order, which is seldom the case, a two gallon flush of water is insufficient for the purpose of effectually cleansing the water closet pan and flushing the drain connected thereto; in my opinion trough closets should be used and the flushing of same be either automatic or under the control of a duly authorized officer, if these means were adopted, sanitary matters would be greatly improved.

In two cases dirty Bakehouses came under notice, immediate action was taken and the premises were cleansed and limewhited.

Pig keeping, and the accompanying heap of manure, in situations near to dwelling-houses, has again been a source of trouble, in all cases coming under notice the nuisance was abated; if the distance from dwelling-houses, at which swine could be kept, was regulated by a Bye Law, a difficulty would be removed.

The flushing of the sewers received great attention during the year and additional ventilating shafts of varying sizes were erected, some against buildings and one against a tree, another ventilating gas column 9in. diameter has also been fixed, and permission has been obtained and arrangements are being made for the erection of several additional ventilating shafts—in all cases the ventilating shafts have been taken from the offending manholes, the outlets from which were but partially closed with a view to their becoming air inlets, they would not however act as such in all cases, particularly one at Westgate; in this instance the erection of the shaft did not effect an improvement and after several experiments had been made with respect to size of opening left in manhole cover, it was found necessary to close it by a moveable wooden lid. In Birmingham all offending manholes are closed where ventilating pipes are fixed near thereto, and in some towns several of those in the vicinity of the ventilator are closed with a view to inducing an up current in the shaft.

The periodical collection of house refuse has been duly attended to, the total quantity removed during the year being 3,832 loads.

Seven houses have been disinfected during the year and the disinfecting stove has been used upon 35 occasions.

I am glad to state that the small pox Hospital has not been required.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. W. WALSHAW,

Sanitary Inspector.

1895.

City and Borough of Peterborough.

REPORT

OF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.