

Contributors

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City and Borough of Peterborough.

Medical Officer's Annual Report, 1896.

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

During the past year 743 births and 353 deaths have been registered; as 18 of the latter represent the deaths of persons not belonging to the district, the actual number to be taken into account is 345; these figures calculated at per 1000 of the population living, give the following results:—

General Birth Rate	25.38
Death Rate	12.45

The death rate is the lowest recorded for many years, but as there is no means of obtaining a return of persons belonging to the district, who die away, it necessarily follows that the calculation is a trifle too Utopian.

Sub-divided amongst the various Wards, the figures are as detailed below:—

	North Ward.	East Ward.	South Ward.
Area in acres	1030	510	278
Population (calculated to middle of 1896)	15157	9464	3072
Births (total)	414	225	98
Deaths "	147	136	41
General Birth Rate	27.31	23.77	31.90
Death Rate	9.69	14.37	13.34
Deaths from Zymotic Diseases (total)	16	17	14
Zymotic Death Rate	1.05	1.79	4.55

In studying these statistics, the following figures may be taken as a reliable guide, having been obtained from the Registrar's General's Office:—

Average Statistics, 33 large towns, England, 1892—1896.

General average Birth Rate per 1000 living... 31.4

" " Death " " " " 20.0

" " Zymotic Death Rate " " " 2.57

By comparison therefore, I think that in the matter of health, Peterborough can fairly hold her own with any other provincial town in England.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

Under this heading there has been a very considerable increase, 571 cases having been notified, with 48 deaths, representing a death rate of 1.73 per 1000 of the population. These large numbers were chiefly due to an epidemic of Scarlet Fever, the South Ward being the greatest sufferer. In that Ward, compared with last year, the difference is very marked, the Zymotic Death Rate having gone up to 4.55 against .65, or nearly double the ordinary average for the 33 largest towns.

Small Pox. Again I have the pleasure of reporting that the town has been free from a single case of this loathsome disease; but the Small Pox Hospital is kept in perfect condition to cope with any outbreak that may occur.

Typhoid Fever. The Borough has been remarkably free from this complaint, only six cases with one death having been reported. In the one case that did terminate fatally, no sanitary defect could be discovered in the house—a perfectly new one.

Scarlet Fever. During the past year, an epidemic of this disease has been raging with more or less severity since February, 1896. It commenced in the South Ward, having originally been imported from the Rural District of Woodstone. When it reached New Fletton, so many children were affected, that I advised that the Day Schools should be closed, and they were not opened again for two months. As far as the district itself was concerned, this extreme measure

was attended with complete success—no further cases occurring there; but owing to the fact that some children attended schools in the East Ward, the epidemic soon became general all over the town. The fever reached its height in July, since which time it has steadily declined, although a few isolated cases continue to be reported. The Day Schools were the chief medium for spreading the infection, but the mild type of the disease, considerably assisted thereto, as not only did some parents not deem it necessary to call in the services of a medical man, but they also neglected taking the most ordinary precautions against infecting their neighbours. The following figures will show the distribution of the disease:—

	North Ward.	East Ward.	South Ward.
Scarlet Fever—			
Cases reported	155	252	89
Deaths	4	6	7

Diphtheria. A slightly increased number of cases of this disease has been reported. In every instance a most thorough investigation of the sanitary surroundings has been made, and as a general rule, defects have been discovered in the shape of defective or faulty drains. What connection there is between sewer gas and Diphtheria remains at present a mystery, but I am perfectly convinced there is something more than mere accidental coincidence.

During the summer months, the smell from the man-holes was a constant source of complaint. Obviously considering the flatness of the locality, and the slight amount of fall obtainable, the only way to lessen the nuisance, is to ensure a more perfect flushing of the sewers. Roughly speaking, in about one-third of the houses in the Borough, there is still no water supply laid on to the closets; as a natural consequence, the solid part of the sewage is not carried away with sufficient rapidity, and becomes deposited in the pipes. This is what gives rise to the offensive effluvia from the man-holes.

To successfully cope with this question, the proper course would be for the Corporation to enforce the necessary clauses of the Amended Public Health Act of 1890. Bye-laws should be framed to deal with the water supply of the older houses. By decisive action of this kind, I feel confident that a nuisance, injurious alike to the health of the inhabitants, and detrimental to the best interests of the city, would be materially diminished.

The erection of an Isolation Hospital for infectious diseases at Fengate, now only awaits the sanction of the Local Government Board, and will be found to supply a very pressing want.

By a thorough inspection of almost every street in the Borough, numerous defects have been discovered in the sanitary condition of various houses; in such cases, notices were at once served upon the owners to carry out the improvements required. Resort to legal proceedings has only been necessary in a few isolated instances. Filthy dwellings still continue to come under my observation, but the dwellers in these homes (?) are rapidly becoming converted to a belief in the efficacy of soap and water.

Accompanying my report, is that of the Inspector of Nuisances, to whom my best thanks are due for his hearty co-operation in carrying out the duties of my office. His sound practical knowledge of the drainage system of the town, is of very valuable assistance in arriving at a correct conclusion.

I have the honor to be,

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. W. JOLLY,

Medical Officer of Health.

THIS BEING THE SPECIAL FULL COPY FOR
LIBRARY B. M. A., IT IS PARTICULARLY
REQUESTED THAT IT MAY BE RETURNED
AT AS EARLY A DATE AS POSSIBLE.

BOROUGH SURVEYOR'S OFFICE,
PETERBOROUGH,

4TH MARCH, 1897.

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

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honor of presenting to you my Report upon Sanitary Matters which came under my notice during the year ending 31st December last.

During the year an Inspection of the Borough was made with a view to ascertaining the number of Water Closets and the condition of them with respect to water supply; it is reported to me that there are 3744 Water Closets, to which the Town's Water is laid on, and 1786 without such supply; there are also about 60 privies, 19 of which are connected with houses situate at Cemetery Road, Woodstone. As the Water Main and Sewer have not been put down in that Road, there are at present no means of remedying this; steps, however, are being taken in the matter; action is also being taken with respect to the conversion into Water Closets of the other privies above referred to; they are all situate at a distance from any Dwelling-house.

The Medical Officer and myself have made systematic inspections of those parts of the Borough in which nuisances are most likely to occur. We have come across many dirty and overcrowded Dwelling-houses, immediate action was taken, and eventually the causes of complaint were removed.

During the year the erection of wooden buildings, many of them in very contracted yards of Dwelling-houses, became

very troublesome; the action taken by you about two months ago has been the means of stopping this dangerous practice.

A considerable number of offensive Pig Styes, several of which were situate very near to Dwelling-houses and Public Streets, have again been a source of much trouble; as stated in my report of last year, the adoption of Bye Laws regulating the matter is very desirable.

Several dirty cow sheds on premises, where milk is sold, have come under inspection; immediate steps were taken in these cases.

Additional Sewer Ventilators have been fixed, and more are in hand; the flushing of the Sewers has been attended to.

The adoption by you of the "Private Street Works Act" gives increased facilities for dealing with unsanitary areas; Goodyer's Yard has been dealt with under its clauses, and is now a Public Highway; the cleansing of the Yard, and the consequent better supervision of the premises connected therewith, is in the hands of the Authority.

The systematic removal of House refuse has been efficiently attended to, 4173 loads of stuff have been removed during the year.

73 Houses and 2 Public Schools have been disinfected, and the Disinfecting Stove used on 34 occasions.

The erection of the proposed Isolation Hospital will prove of great Service to the Town, and often be the means of preventing the spread of Infectious Diseases.

I am glad to state that there has been no occasion to use the Small Pox Hospital.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. W. WALSHAW.

Sanitary Inspector.



1898.

City & Borough of Peterborough

REPORT

OF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.