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1903.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

Year
Town and Port of Newhaven.

T. PONSFORD CANN, M.D.

Newhaven:

P. C. RANKIN, PRINTER, BRIDGE STREET.

NEWHAVEN,

SUSSEX,

MARCH, 1903.

To the Newhaven Urban and Port Sanitary Authorities.

GENTLEMEN.

I have the honour to present herewith my Annual Report for the year 1902.

During the year the health of the town has been exceedingly good, and the death rate is the lowest recorded during the last ten years.

The proposed new Isolation Hospital has not yet been commenced, but negotiations for the purchase of the site are nearly complete, and it is to be hoped that this urgently needed Sanatorium will soon be under construction.

The drainage system of the town is working satisfactorily and the benefit of the new sewer from High Street to Fort Road, via Meeching Road, Dacre and South Roads, has been felt.

The Milk and Water supplies continue to be very good.

The pollution of the river by Lewes sewage is a great danger to the town and it is quite possible the large number of cases of Enteric Fever which annually occur in the proximity of the river may be attributed to this cause. I hope that with the aid of the County Council the Tidal Ouse may be made a stream within the meaning of the Rivers Pollution Prevention Act, 1876, in which case the Lewes Authorities will not be allowed to continue to discharge their sewage into the river in a crude state as at present.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

T. PONSFORD CANN, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The population of the District at the census of 1901 was 6772 (viz., Urban District 6136, Port 636), and I estimate the population at the middle of the year 1902 to be 7,000.

During the year forty-nine new dwelling-houses were erected and passed by the Surveyor. The total Acreage of the district is 11,000 statute acres.

There were 190 births and 71 deaths registered in the district during the year 1902, giving a birth rate of 27·14 per thousand, and a gross death rate of 10·14, as compared with 34·4 and 13·27 the previous year.

The rates for England and Wales for 1902 are : birth rate 28·075 and death rate 16·525.

From the gross death rate should be deducted the deaths of six persons not belonging to the district, giving an actual death rate of 9·29 per thousand.

The Infant Mortality was below the average, 19 infants under one year having died, as compared with 21·4, the average for the last 10 years. Thus the infant mortality per thousand births is exactly 100.

The births of 11 illegitimate children were notified during the year.

THE ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

The Zymotic death rate, or death rate per 1,000 living from the seven principal Infectious Diseases—Smallpox, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, the Fevers (Typhus, Typhoid and Puerperal) and Diarrhœa—was only ·43, there being only two deaths from Measles and one from Diarrhœa.

There were six deaths from Phthisis and five from other Tubercular Diseases as against seven and three last year. The death rate from Phthisis is therefore ·857, and from all Tubercular Diseases 1·57.

The deaths in, or belonging to the whole district from all causes at subjoined ages is shown in the table below :—

	1902.	1901.
At all ages	71	88
Under One Year	19	34
One year and under 5 ...	2	5
Five Years and under 15 ...	2	4
15 " " " 25 ...	2	2
25 " " " 65 ...	30	21
65 " and upwards ...	16	22

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year 23 cases of Infectious Disease have been notified, viz. :—Small-pox, 1 ; Diphtheria, 1 ; Erysipelas, 10 ; Scarlet Fever, 2 ; Typhoid Fever, 9.

In his Annual Report for the year 1901, the County Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Foulerton, comments very strongly on the large number of cases of Typhoid Fever that occur annually in this district, and although the number is much less this year and three of the nine cases were imported from other districts, we still have more cases than one would expect with our present population.

The subjoined table shows the number of notifications since the year 1895 :—

YEAR.	1902.	1901.	1900.	1899.	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.
Total Notifications ...	23	47	53	48	27	11	31	27
Typhoid Fever ...	9	22	6	8	6	9	13	10
Diphtheria ...	1	4	3	16	2	0	3	3
Scarlet Fever ...	2	12	33	2	4	0	9	10
Erysipelas ...	10	9	10	21	15	2	6	4
Puerperal Fever ...	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Small-Pox ...	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Small-Pox. One case was notified ; the patient, a tramp, was admitted to the Casual Ward on February 25th, and was seen by the Medical Officer who, as the man was unwell and seemed a suspicious case, had him immediately isolated. On March 1st the typical symptoms appeared and the case was notified. In the absence of a proper hospital for Small-Pox cases, a temporary ward was constructed in a few hours by boarding in three of the divisions in the tramps' labour shed, and here under the care of an inmate of the workhouse, the patient was treated till his removal to the Sedgebrook Hospital. Those tramps who were at the workhouse were vaccinated, and not having been in contact with the patient were discharged. The Casual Wards were then closed, all tramps being accommodated for one night in Thew's Lodging House, after inspection by the Medical Officer if they had any symptom of illness. As soon as the patient was sent to Sedgebrook the Casual Wards were most carefully disinfected with sulphur, then syringed on two successive days with a strong solution of chloride of lime, and afterwards whitewashed. All the officials and inmates of the Workhouse and Infirmary (excepting the very aged) were re-vaccinated and no further case appeared.

The greatest praise is due to all the Officials at the Workhouse for the admirable way in which all instructions regarding isolation, &c., were carried out, and but for their co-operation there is little doubt that we should have had great difficulty in preventing the spread of the disease.

Several tramps, who on admission to the Casual Ward complained of being unwell, were detained by the Medical Officer for observation; they were all vaccinated by him unless the operation had been recently performed, and fortunately in each case the suspicious symptoms disappeared.

The patient's movements were traced for the previous two weeks and it is probable that he became infected with the disease between Feb. 16th and 20th, when he was in the neighbourhood of Tunbridge Wells. He reached Newhaven after spending two nights in each of the Workhouses at Bletchingley, Cuckfield and Brighton.

The erection of a special hospital for the reception of Small-Pox patients was under the consideration of the Council in the Autumn of 1901, but they were unable to secure a site in the district. Early in the year however a joint sub-committee of the Urban Council's of Newhaven and Seaford and the Rural Council of Newhaven was formed, and at the time that the case was notified, they had already decided on a site for a joint hospital at Stump Bottom, about a mile north-east of Denton. This sub-committee met immediately after the notification of the case, and ordered a temporary hospital to be erected without delay. This hospital was almost completed when it was decided to send the patient to Sedgebrook, and it was subsequently sold at a great loss. Had it been ready before the occurrence of the case, it would have been the means of saving an immense amount of trouble and expense.

Vaccination. Owing to the occurrence of a case of Small-Pox in our midst, a great many people were re-vaccinated, and a greater proportion of children than usual were vaccinated. The Public Vaccinator's figures are as follows:—Primary Vaccinations, 142—successful, 140—refused, 5. Re-vaccinations, 179—successful, 168. I am not able to discover the number of those who obtained exemptions.

Diphtheria was only notified once, the patient a boy 5 years of age lived in a somewhat unhealthy house, and spent a large part of his time in an underground kitchen. He made a good recovery.

Erysipelas. There were nine cases notified during the year, none of which proved fatal.

Scarlet Fever was only notified twice during the year, in February and April. In the first case defective sanitary conditions were discovered, and in the second, the child had been away from home for five weeks and probably contracted the disease out of the town. She was removed to the Infectious Hospital and made a good recovery.

Enteric Fever. It is satisfactory to be able to report that there were only eight cases of this disease compared with the 22 notified last year, and further that in two of the eight cases, the disease was contracted in other districts; thus in only six cases was the disease developed in our own district.

Of the two imported cases, the first was a tramp at the Casual Ward of the Workhouse. This case was notified on Jan. 2nd, and was treated at the Workhouse Infirmary. The other was a girl who had been living in a house in Piddinghoe, where two cases had already occurred a few weeks previously; she felt ill and came to her home in St. Luke's Lane, there she was seen by a doctor who notified the case on Sept. 15th. She was removed to the Infectious Hospital. Both patients made a good recovery.

The six cases which developed in the town occurred as follows:—the first in Lower's Place, notified on Feb. 4th; the house was in an insanitary condition, but the patient wished to be treated at home and recovered.

The second in High Street, notified on May 20th, a mild case, caused by bad sanitary defects. The soil pipe from a w.c. upstairs was leaky and passed through the house.

The third was in Fort Road, notified on May 25th. The probable source of infection was watercress which the patient had eaten on several occasions about 10 days before he was taken ill.

The fourth and sixth cases occurred in Chapel Street: both were severe cases and were notified respectively on the 31st Aug. and 4th Nov. It was impossible to discover a satisfactory cause for these cases, although certain minor nuisances existed in neighbouring backyards. There are no flushing cisterns to the w.c.'s in this block of houses, and bad smells were often complained of in connection with them. Both patients recovered.

The fifth case was in Florence Place, notified on Sept. 1st and removed to the Hospital on the next day. The house was in a filthy condition and the cellar under the living room was very foul and damp, containing a quantity of refuse. The water, supplied from a well, was suspicious and acting on the authority of the Council, I sent samples for analysis, which showed the water to be polluted, so I had the well closed and water from the public supply laid on to all the houses in the row which were inhabited. The patient made a satisfactory recovery after a protracted illness.

Whooping Cough was almost absent from the town.

Measles and Chicken-Pox. A very large number of children suffered from these complaints in the early part of the year, and in consequence I made an order for the closing of the schools from February 26th to April 1st. There were two deaths attributable to measles.

Diarrhæa. There were again comparatively few cases during the year.

Influenza appeared towards the latter end of the year; two deaths were certified as caused by this disease.

Water Supply. The Public Water Supply has been plentiful and of good quality; I have received no complaints concerning it.

Unsound Food. Two cases of poisoning by unsound food have been reported to me, neither case being fatal. The first was caused by eating oysters and the second by sausages; in each case the stock had been exhausted before the Inspector's visit so that no sample could be taken for examination.

Slaughter Houses have all been inspected at frequent intervals, especially during the summer. All have been kept clean and have complied with the necessary sanitary requirements. Two complaints of bad smells emanating from the slaughter house in Folly Hill have been received; in each case decomposing offal was found in a disused pigstye, and an order was made for its immediate removal. Since the Co-operative Society have acquired this property a proper receptacle for offal has been provided and a recurrence of the nuisance is now improbable.

Sewage Disposal. The drainage of the town continues to be satisfactory. Several closets still remain without proper flushing tanks, and thus a nuisance is constituted. On the subject of providing flushing cisterns to closets, the Council instituted proceedings against the late Mr. J. B. Lee in respect of 22, Chapel Street, but owing to a technical error in the Council's report book the magistrates dismissed the case. I trust that at an early date this important matter will be taken up again and further proceedings instituted.

Complaints were received in August concerning the drainage of some new houses on the Heighton Road, it was found that the cesspools were full and discharging over into a ditch, thus causing the stench and nuisance complained of. The owner quickly carried out the necessary work to remedy the trouble.

A new Surface Water Drain is in contemplation for Lawes' Avenue, Lewes, Elphick and Harper's Roads and Essex Place ; it will be of great value when complete.

Refuse Disposal. Scavenging has been well carried out ; ash bins and tubs being emptied and cleansed weekly. The refuse is carted out of the town for brickmaking. No nuisance has arisen therefrom.

Disinfection, &c. In cases of infectious disease Perchloride of Mercury Solution has been supplied to the poor free of charge ; the drains are flushed freely and frequently and on the termination of the case, the room, bedding and clothing have been thoroughly fumigated with sulphur di-oxide gas.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901. Under this Act certain duties devolve upon the Medical Officer of Health and he is required to deal specifically with the administration of the Act in his Annual Report and to send a copy of this part to the Secretary of State.

A register is kept by the Council of all Workshops within its district. The Factories and Workshops have been inspected from time to time by myself and the inspector ; the sanitation is satisfactory in all cases and no nuisances or defects have required our attention. There are seven retail bakehouses in the district (none underground). Mechanical power is employed in one of them. They are all kept clean, are well ventilated, the floors are dry and clean and the walls and ceilings are limewashed about every three months.

There is only one outworker to whom needlework is sent from a draper's shop.

TABLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES, ETC.

YEARS.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.
Population estimated to the middle of Year...	5,098	5,246	5,394	5,543	5,691	5,339	5,988	6,136	*7,000
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the Population ...	32'4	32'5	30'94	30	31'07	32'75	31'35	34'4	27'14
Deaths under One Year of Age to 1,000 Births	91'46	100'59	103'66	139'33	103'44	205'26	36'48	113'74	100
Total Death Rate per 1,000	15	14'61	17'73	16'54	11'96	18'1	14'74	14'42	10'14
Nett General Rate per 1,000	14'2	14'03	15'84	14'18	9'46	15	14	13'27	9'29
Zymotic Death Rate per 1,000... ..	'21	1'27	2'6	'6	'82	2'15	1'28	2'26	'43
Death Rate from Phthisis per 1,000	2'32	'92	'52	1	'65	'3	'85	1'14	'857
Death Rate from Respiratory Diseases per 1,000	1'68	1'91	1'73	2'66	'82	1'84	1'28	2'7	1'42
Senile Mortality, deaths at ages 65 and over as per centage of Total Deaths	24'6	15'2	23'8	25'2	26'2	23'8	16'8	25	22'53

* Includes the Port.

1902.

PORT SANITARY REPORT.

To the Newhaven Port Sanitary Authority.

GENTLEMEN,

I am pleased to report that during the past year the health of the crews of the ships in the harbour has been very good.

Only two cases of infectious disease have been notified; the first, on April 19th, was a case of Erysipelas on a small sailing vessel and the second a case of Enteric Fever notified on August 14th, on the German Tug "Terschelling;" the patient, a German, was removed to the Infectious Hospital where he recovered and was sent to his home by the German Consul General in London. The Tug after disinfection left for sea.

The ships have been frequently inspected and no serious sanitary defects have been discovered. The condition of the men's forecastles on the French cargo boats was often found to be very dirty, owing chiefly to débris of food, &c., being thrown about the floors; on calling the attention of the Captains however, the places were immediately cleaned.

In nearly all cases the water tanks were found to be clean and the water good; where necessary, orders have been given for the tanks to be cleaned, and these orders were at once complied with.

Particulars of Passengers carried between Newhaven and Dieppe for the years 1901 and 1902:—

1901.

Newhaven to Dieppe.

Voyages.	Passengers.
745	86,386

Dieppe to Newhaven.

Voyages.	Passengers.
745	95,650

1902.

738	93,017
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737	101,677
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Return of the Number and Tonnage of Steam and Sailing Vessels entered and cleared at the Port of Newhaven during the year 1902 :—

I.—FOREIGN TRADE.

		STEAM VESSELS.		SAILING VESSELS.		TOTAL VESSELS.	
		No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
Entered	...	1652	336,845	314	23,407	1966	360,252
Cleared	...	1647	323,411	253	20,330	1900	343,741

II.—COASTING TRADE.

Entered	...	423	102,580	154	25,476	577	128,056
Cleared	...	449	109,022	171	26,551	620	135,573

My best thanks are due to Mr. Durie, Collector of Customs, and Captain Morris, Marine Superintendent, for information they have kindly given me concerning the Trade of the Port.

