

[Report 1896] / Medical Officer of Health, Rye Borough.

Contributors

Rye (England). Borough Council.

Publication/Creation

1896.

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183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
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To the Mayor and Members of the Rye Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have again the honour of placing before you my Annual Report of the Health and Sanitary condition of the Borough of Rye, and of the measures adopted to control the occurrence and spread of disease.

Birth Rate.—The number of births registered was 107 (the same number as last year). Of these 48 were boys, and 59 girls; giving a rate of 26·8 per 1000.

Death Rate.—The number of deaths registered was 54 (one less than last year); 33 females and 21 males, which, calculated on a population of 3871 gives the low death rate of 14·2 per 1000. Out of this number 21 persons were over 70 years of age.

The principal causes of death were:—Bronchitis, 9. Paralysis, 6. Heart Disease, 4. Cancer, 4. Decay of Nature, 4. Pneumonia, 4. Phthisis, 2. Influenza, 2.

Death rate from Respiratory diseases, 4·6 per 1000.

“ “ “ Zymotic diseases, 2·3 per 1000.

“ “ “ Phthisis 50 per 1000.

“ “ among persons over 65 years of age, percentage of total deaths 63·3. That for the whole County being 36·4.

Deaths under 1 year of age, 11; making an infant death-rate of 102·8 per 1000.

PREVALENCE OF DISEASE.

INFLUENZA.—During the month of March Influenza again prevailed, about 100 cases being treated, though at no time in the year has it been entirely absent. Only two deaths were actually ascribed to its influence both in persons over 65 years of age.

CHICKEN POX.—Five cases in June and July, all mild ones, and terminating without complications.

MEASLES.—In May and June twelve cases came under my notice; all of which were mild in character, no deaths occurring.

DIPHTHERIA.—Four cases have been notified during the year; one of which proved fatal. These cases arose in entirely different parts of the District, and no common source of infection could be discovered. On investigation two were attributed to defective drain sinks, but in the remaining two the Sanitary conditions of the household and surroundings appeared to be satisfactory, and no one in their immediate neighbourhood had any suspicious sore throats.

I think this clearly emphasizes the important advantage that the Infectious Disease Notification Act exercised in this instance, as, without early knowledge of these cases, each might have formed a focus for widespread infection.

ERYSIPELAS.—One case of the idiopathic form was notified in July; but with timely precautions further spread was prevented. There have been no other cases of Zymotic disease.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION.—I am unable to report any progress towards establishing an Infectious Hospital in our District. Our present system of home isolation and disinfection has, fortunately, not been put to any severe test at present, and, consequently, a feeling of false security is indulged in by the public. At the same time one is convinced that this system would assuredly collapse in the panic which would certainly follow the first appearance of a case of Small Pox or Cholera.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

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Water Supply.—Though of good quality the water has been insufficient in quantity for the increased requirements of the District. New Works have been in progress at Cadboro' during the past year, and a large supply of water obtained, but on analysis it was found to contain too large a percentage of vegetable matter to allow of use as drinking water. A new Scheme for boring by the advice of an expert is now under consideration.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.—The drainage on the water-carriage system has worked exceedingly well this year, in spite of the exceptionally dry summer and scarcity of water.

Bake Houses, Slaughter Houses, and Dairies.—These have been frequently visited and in their condition and management show considerable improvement upon former years.

Sanitation.—Numerous house to house inspections have been made during the past year, and alterations carried out for improving house-drains and cleansing water storage tanks. The removal of refuse is performed satisfactorily by the scavenger. A considerable abatement of the nuisance caused by the refuse heaps at Pollard's Wharf has resulted from burning the most offensive portions in a Destructor lately erected there.

ADOPTION OF ACTS & BYE-LAWS.

THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE (PREVENTION) ACT, 1890, has been adopted by the Authority during the past year; and will undoubtedly show itself to be a most valuable provision. The new code of Bye-Laws drawn up by the Authority, mentioned in my last report, will now shortly come into force.

From the foregoing Report, Gentlemen, I think we may very reasonably consider the Health and Sanitary condition of our Borough as very satisfactory, and we continue to hold a high place among the Healthiest Towns of England.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

ALBERT E. VIDLER,

Medical Officer of Health.

MINT HOUSE, RYE,
FEBRUARY 1ST, 1897.

