

[Report 1902] / Medical Officer of Health, Turton Local Board / U.D.C.

Contributors

Turton (England). Local Board.

Publication/Creation

1902

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with Dr. Robinson's Supplement



TURTON DISTRICT COUNCIL.

**Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health
for 1902.**

The Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council of Turton.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit to you my twenty-first annual report on the health and sanitary condition of the Urban District of Turton, together with a summary of sanitary work during the year 1902.

I have calculated that the natural increase of population during the year to be about 100, and the total population for the purposes of the statistics which will be presented to you, I have estimated to the middle of the year as being 12,400.

The total number of births was 277; 147 males and 130 females; or an annual rate of 22·4 per thousand, the equivalent county rate for the year 1901 being 26·57. The number and rate for that year in your district being 275 and 20·8 respectively.

The total number of deaths was 164; 81 males and 83 females, an increase of 10 upon the previous year, this increase being accounted for by the prevalence of Diphtheria, which caused 11 deaths. The annual death rate was consequently higher, and stands at 13·3 per thousand as against 12·4 in 1901, and a county rate of 16·28 during the same period.

I have appended several tables upon which these statistics are based. Table 1 furnishes details relative to births and deaths. Table 2 gives similar information in respect of the several divisions of your district.

In table 4 will be found an analysis of the causes of death at all ages as well as at various age periods of life, with the total number of deaths in each division of your district.

The infant mortality was 20, equal to a rate 72·2 per thousand births. Zymotic diseases caused 22 deaths, or a rate of 1·7 per thousand of population. Phthisis caused 3 deaths, or a rate of 0·33 per thousand, and respiratory diseases 35, or a rate of 2·8 per thousand.

Reviewing and comparing these figures with the previous year I find that the infantile mortality rate is practically the same and compares favourably with the County rate which is given as 161 per thousand. The Zymotic rate is double that of the previous year in consequence of the exceptional circumstances of the presence of both Scarlatina and Diphtheria during the whole year, but still as compared with the County rate of 2·07 it may be considered not unsatisfactory. The deaths from Phthisis fell to one-third with an equivalent decrease in the annual rate, which is reduced to nearly one-third the County rate which stood at 0·97. This is a matter for congratulation and is highly satisfactory. I note with gratification that the deaths from Phthisis in this district have for many years been steadily declining. I regret the fact that a considerable increase in the deaths from Respiratory diseases is recorded, viz. :- Bronchitis, Pneumonia, &c., the number and rate being actually doubled. The incidence of these diseases was upon the months of November and December, and principally upon the aged. During November, which was marked by very changeable weather, one-half the total number of deaths was amongst persons over 60 years in age, whilst of the total year's mortality of 35, no less than 25 deaths were amongst persons over 60 years in age. I note with satisfaction the absence of any deaths from Diarrhœa, a disease of childhood most frequently and often due to improper feeding of infants as well as to gross insanitary conditions.

A legitimate deduction from the foregoing would be that the district is in a fairly satisfactory sanitary condition, but that more favourable conditions are to be aimed at and are quite possible of attainment.

I submit to you in the table following statistics relating to the several divisions of your district which will enable you to compare the sanitary condition of each with the other division. I would desire to emphasize the following items: total mortality, infant mortality, Phthisis and Zymotic rates—as important data in estimating their relative sanitary condition. The item of infantile mortality in this table requires some explanation lest a comparison be made unduly

favourable or unfavourable to the respective divisions. It will be noted that a material decrease in the mortality rate of Belmont and a very material increase in that of Edgworth is exhibited, whilst the actual mortality is very nearly the same in each of the years compared. The difference is more apparent than real and is due to the fact that the number of births in these localities increased and decreased respectively during the year 1902. In Bradshaw the infant mortality is only increased by two in number whilst the rate is trebled.

1902.	Birth		Death		Zymotic diseases.		Phthisis.		Respiratory diseases.		Infant mortality.	
	rate.	rate.	No.	rate.	No.	rate.	No.	rate.	No.	rate.	No.	rate.
Turton	23·02	15·2	21	3·7	4	0·58	13	1·9	12	76·5		
Belmont	26·2	11·9	1	1·1	0	0	1	1·1	1	45·4		
Edgworth	19·7	0·09	0	0	0	0	9	3·5	4	80·0		
Bradshaw	21·7	9·9	0	0	0	0	12	5·4	3	62·5		
1901.												
Turton	21·9	14·5	8	0·9	8	1·1	7	0·8	15	100·7		
Belmont	17·9	11·9	0	0	1	1·1	2	2·5	1	66·6		
Edgworth	24·2	8·7	2	0·8	1	0·4	4	1·7	3	49·1		
Bradshaw	22·6	10·4	0	0	2	0·9	4	1·9	1	20·0		

The subjoined table shows the rates and distribution of births and deaths in the four divisions of the district.

In respect of births it will be noted that there is slight increase in the rates for Turton and Bradshaw, a considerable increase in the case of Belmont, and a slight decrease in that of Edgworth.

In respect of deaths, Turton shows an unfavourable record in comparison with the other divisions because the deaths from Diphtheria with one exception occurred in that locality. In the other divisions there is no material difference in the rates of mortality, and they are also practically equivalent to those for the year 1901.

BIRTHS.

	Popula- tion.	1902.		1901.		Total.		Rate.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	1902.	1901.	1902.	1901.
Turton	6818	84	73	74	75	157	149	23·02	21·9
Belmont	839	11	11	5	10	22	15	26·2	17·9
Edgworth	2528	26	24	33	28	50	61	19·7	24·2
Bradshaw	2215	26	22	19	31	48	50	21·7	22·6

DEATHS.

	Popula- tion.	1902.		1901.		Total.		Rate.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	1902.	1901.	1902.	1901.
Turton	6818	47	59	56	43	106	99	15.5	14.5
Belmont	839	7	3	3	7	10	10	11.9	11.9
Edgworth	2528	14	10	14	8	24	22	9.4	8.7
Bradshaw	2215	13	11	9	14	24	23	10.8	10.4

During the year 139 cases of infectious diseases were notified; the number during the year 1901 was 166. The distribution of these cases over the four divisions of your district is shown in table 3 accompanying this report.

Scarlet Fever was present in all parts of the district during the whole year; its greatest intensity was during the months January to May, during which time 57 of the total number of 85 were recorded, whilst during the subsequent eight months only 28 were reported, and at the end of the year the disease had almost died out. Only 5 deaths were registered.

When Scarlet Fever began to decline, Diphtheria made its appearance, and 44 cases of this disease were notified. Only 7 cases were reported during the first three months of the year as occurring in various portions of the district, all of them being widely separated from each other, but in June the disease became very prevalent in Eagley, Dunscar and Bromley Cross, 17 cases being notified in those localities during that month. During the months July to December, a period of six months only, 14 cases were notified from those localities, the remaining 6 being spread over the rest of the district.

I attribute the origin of the infection to have been in children attending school from infected areas in the neighbouring borough of Bolton. With 3 exceptions all the children affected had been in attendance at the Eagley schools, and these children came into contact with others residing at Eagley Bank in the Bolton district where the disease had previously made its appearance. I made several inspections of the children attending these schools and gave precise instructions to the Head Master so as to enable him to discover early manifestations of the disease amongst the children in attendance. The epidemic at no time assumed such proportions as to necessitate the closing of these schools. The disease was almost extinct at the end of the year. Measles prevailed in varying intensity during the year, but as this disease is not a notifiable one it is very difficult to obtain reliable information as to the number, and its localization becomes impossible. The majority of the

cases are not under medical care and consequently they often are sent to school or are allowed to mix with other children before the period of infectivity has passed. Mainly as a result of this want of care the disease became epidemic during the month of December and I deemed it advisable to recommend the closing of the Eagley Schools for a period of a month. One death only was registered during the whole year.

Enteric Fever.—Two cases of this disease were notified and one death was registered. In one of these cases no local insanitary condition was discovered, whilst the other was probably due to the affected person living with and being associated with the attendant in charge of the Sewage Works at Eagley.

Erysipelas.—Six cases of this disease were notified but no deaths were registered.

Membranous Croup.—Two cases of this disease were notified and two deaths were registered. The disease was probably of diphtheritic origin.

All the cases of infectious disease were treated at home with as complete isolation as the circumstances would permit, which at the best is very unsatisfactory. In consequence of the extensive prevalence of infectious diseases in the Borough of Bolton no cases from your district could be admitted into the Borough Fever Hospital. The additional measures adopted with a view to the prevention of the spread of infection were fumigation of the rooms occupied, and the clothing of infected persons was also subjected to sulphur disinfection in the absence of any form of proper disinfecting apparatus, which is very much needed. The Public Elementary Schools in those portions of the district in which infectious disease was prevalent were fumigated with sulphur several times during the year. The question of Isolation Hospital accommodation has engaged your serious attention during the year, and as the result of conferences and discussions of the question with the Darwen Authorities a settlement will be obtained in all reasonable probability by the extension of the Darwen Isolation Hospital so as to meet the needs of both districts. The provision of temporary accommodation for the isolation of Small Pox has also engaged your attention. The Darwen Authority has been approached on this matter also, but no agreement had been arrived at before the close of the year. I compiled a memorandum calling attention to the fact that Small Pox was prevalent in the neighbouring districts and pointing out the measures to be adopted by the public against infection, emphasizing the protective value of vaccination and re-vaccination, and detailing the early symptoms of the disease. This was printed and distributed in the form of a leaflet during the month of November.

The water supply of the district, with the exception of a few outlying houses and farms which are dependent upon springs and shallow wells, is obtained from the Bolton Corporation Waterworks. An improvement in the quality of the water has been effected by the completion of filtration tanks at the Dingle reservoir, and the quantity and quality of the water supply of the whole district has been satisfactory, with the exception of the upper portion of Egerton, from which locality complaints were still made that very frequently on Sundays and Mondays the quantity was deficient and the quality indifferent. I have examined this water at various times, and found it contained a considerable quantity of suspended impurities, sediment from the mains apparently, and in colour of a reddish-yellow. I communicated with the Engineer of the Bolton Corporation Waterworks, and he attributed the cause to the large draughts of water from the mains by the mills in the lower portion of the district, on those days when the water was complained of as unfit for use. This is quite a reasonable explanation and suggestive of the remedy, enlargement of the mains, but which has not yet been applied.

The whole district has been properly sewered, but there still are some portions of Edgworth and Harwood without house connections. Your Surveyor informs me that the delay has been unavoidable, and that the work is progressing satisfactorily and with as much expedition as circumstances will permit. The Sewage Works at Eagley and Bradshaw are still equal to the requirements of the district and both are working satisfactorily.

The scavenging of the district is fairly well carried out, but during the summer months and the prevalence of dry east winds, dust becomes a very real inconvenience and nuisance. Dust contains very considerable quantities of effete matter of various kinds, as well as frequently the germs of disease, and so becomes not only a medium for the spread of disease, but productive of evil and deleterious influences upon health and well-being. The laying of dust is a sanitary measure of the highest importance, and I would recommend the question as one for your serious consideration.

The disposal of excrement is upon the ashpit system principally, very few houses having any system of water carriage. Your Sanitary Inspector states in his report that only 17 new houses have been provided with this method of disposal, and that only 42 old privies and ashpits have been converted into the water carriage system, although your Council, with the view of encouraging such conversion, offer to the owners one-half of the cost. The ashpit system is a real evil, and

I cannot too strongly recommend its discontinuance, only excepting those instances in which water carriage cannot be made available. I must point out to you an anomaly which exists in relation to this question, inasmuch as your Council offers a premium upon the conversion of existing ashpits into the water carriage system it still permits houses to be erected with the old and pernicious ashpit method of disposal. The nature of the subsoil in this district makes it well-nigh impossible to construct watertight ashpits, and as receptacles for dry ash need not be below the surface, from an economical point of view it would be to the advantage of the builder to discard the ashpit system entirely.

New duties are imposed upon me this year in relation to mills and workshops in your district, as well as other matters in connection with the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, which have received my attention

I am able to report that the sanitary condition of the workshops and workplaces is generally satisfactory, and that the regulations in relation to cleanliness, air-space, ventilation and drainage have been observed, and that with respect to the provision of suitable and efficient sanitary conveniences there are only a few instances where alterations or additions are necessary. The bake-houses have been periodically inspected, and have been found to be in a satisfactory condition. In your district no system of home-work or out-work is carried on.

I have made systematic inspections of your whole district during the year which have led to the discovery of some minor insanitary conditions which were notified to your Sanitary Inspector, who always promptly effected their removal.

As a consequence of the regrettable death of your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Barlow, the work of his department during the two last months of the year became somewhat disorganised, and his report is probably not so complete a record as it otherwise would have been. Your newly appointed Sanitary Inspector from the materials left by your late Inspector, Mr. Barlow, has compiled the following record :—

In relation to cowsheds and dairies.—178 visits have been paid and they were found to be kept in a fairly satisfactory condition. Several structural alterations are in progress in order to meet the requirements as to cubical air space, &c.

In respect of slaughter houses.—105 visits were paid, and they were found to be kept in a satisfactory condition as to cleanliness, removal of offal and limewashing.

The following is a summary of the Sanitary work performed during the year as per your Inspector's report :—

Number of Nuisances unabated at the end of the year 1901....	6
" " abatement notices during the year 1902	61
	67
Number of Notices of abatement unexpired	2
" Nuisances abated	65
	67
Houses fumigated after infectious disease	42
Ashpits scavenged	1282
Old privies and ash-pits converted into water carriage system	17
New houses erected adopting water carriage system	17
New houses erected with old privy system	9
Smoke observations	31
Notices of abatement of Smoke Nuisance	4
Carcases of animals slaughtered by farmers and passed as fit for human consumption	2
Rejected as unfit for food	1

I append the various tables alluded to in the course of this report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

J. ROBINSON, M.D., L.S.Sc.,

Medical Officer of Health.

21st January, 1903.

Dunscan
W Bolton