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Wm. Knibbs  
Couper



# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

### *Urban District of Soothill Upper,*

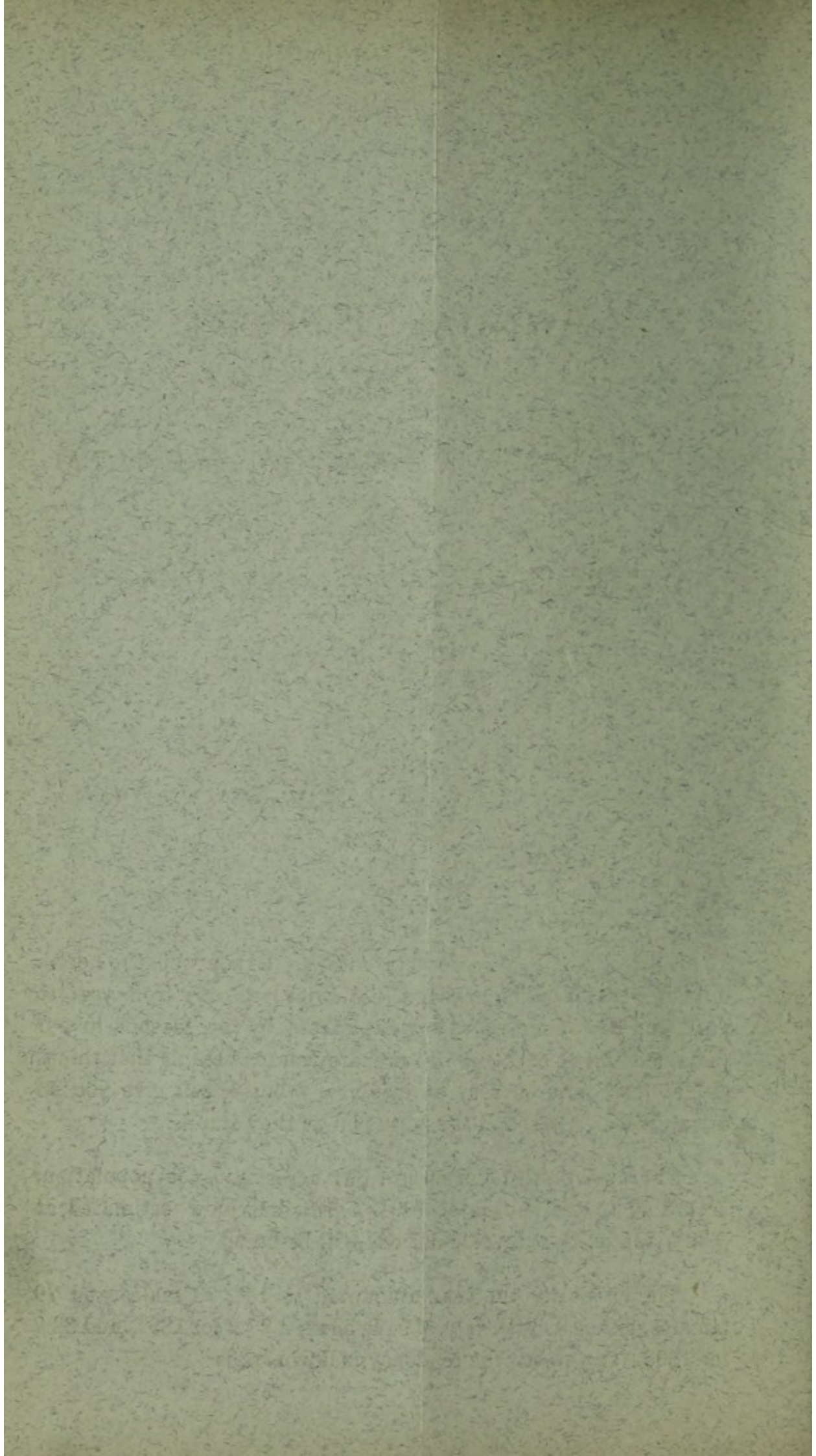
FOR

— 1898. —



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ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
*MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,*  
FOR THE  
URBAN DISTRICT OF SOOTHILL UPPER,  
FOR 1898.

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*To the Sanitary Committee of the Soothill Upper Urban  
District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my **FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT** on the health of your District. The health of a district will vary from year to year, and be influenced to a great extent by the seasons in our variable climate, and this will prepare you for hearing that things do not look quite so rosy as last year; but I will give you an unvarnished report, and the facts just as they stand.

The area of the district is 1,897 acres, and the population, according to the census of 1891, 5,848, but now estimated at 6,327, and on this my calculations will be based.

The births for the year amounted to 157, 78 males and 79 females, giving a birth rate of 24·8, against 28·8 for 1897, and 32·2 for 1896; so you see the tendency is downwards.

The deaths for the year amounted to 113, 53 males and 60 females, giving a death rate of 17·8 per 1,000, against 17·1 in 1897, and 18·3 for 1896.

#### AGES AT DEATH.

	Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	21
1 year and	„ 5 years	...	...	...	...	15
5 „	„ 15 „	...	...	...	...	2
15 „	„ 25 „	...	...	...	...	8
25 „	„ 65 „	...	...	...	...	38
65 „	and upwards	...	...	...	...	29
						<hr/> 113

It is generally supposed that the death rate is greatly determined by the mortality under 5 years of age, for here we get the results of the home and the home surroundings; for this year ours is determined by the deaths from 25 years upwards. You will see that 21 died under 1 year, which is equal to 133 per 1,000 of the children born, against 172 in 1897, and 125 in 1896. 15 died in the second period. 31 died in 1897 under 1 year, which nearly equals the total, 36, under 5 years. 29 died 65 years and upwards, and as showing the longevity in this district, 19 died ranging from 70 to 86 years.

#### CAUSES OF DEATH UNDER ONE YEAR.

Tubercular Peritonitis	...	...	...	...	...	1
Diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	...	6
Convulsions	...	...	...	...	...	4
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	8
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	1
Premature	...	...	...	...	...	1
						<hr/> 21

## CAUSES OF DEATH AT ALL AGES.



Scarlet Fever ... ..	2	} Zymotic Diseases.
Diphtheria ... ..	3	
Membraneous Croup ... ..	1	
Measles... ..	3	
Diarrhœa ... ..	9	
Erysipelas ... ..	1	
Enteric Fever ... ..	4	
Phthisis... ..	5	
Respiratory Diseases ... ..	32	
Heart Disease ... ..	9	
Injuries ... ..	1	
All other causes ... ..	43	

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This year is what may be called a good all round year for Zymotic Disease. Last year they were included under three heads, viz. :—Scarlet Fever, Diarrhœa, and Whooping Cough ; this year there are seven. The Zymotic death rate is 3·6, against 2·5 in 1897, and 2·7 in 1896. This year the increase is due to Diarrhœa ; the heaviest item last year was due to Whooping Cough. Phthisis death rate ·79, against ·6 in 1897, and 1·6 in 1896 : Respiratory Diseases 5, against 3·8 last year.

## VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1898.

1898.	England and Wales.	Thirty-three great towns.	Sixty-seven other large towns.	England and Wales less the 100 towns.	Soothill Upper.
Birth rate ...	29·4	—	—	—	24·8
Death rate ...	17·6	19·0	17·2	16·7	17·8
Zymotic death rate ... ..	2·22	2·85	2·41	1·75	3·6
Infantile mortality ...	161	178	173	145	133

The following Table of Infectious cases reported will give an idea of the comparative health of the district :—

## INFECTIOUS CASES REPORTED IN 1898.

DISTRICT.	Diphtheria.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Puerperal.	Erysipelas.	Membr'ne- ous Group.	TOTAL.
Willow Terrace ... ..		2						2
Spurr Street ... ..		5	2					7
Jack Lane ... ..		3	3					6
Low Bottoms ... ..		3						3
Whiteley Buildings ... ..			2					2
Common Side ... ..	1	7		1	1	1		11
Bromley Street ... ..		7						7
High Street ... ..		5	1					6
Chidswell... ..		2	2					4
Mill Lane ... ..		2						2
Greenwood Buildings ..		1						1
Bromley Road ... ..		11						11
Gregory's Road ... ..		2						2
Nursery Wood Road ... ..		7						7
Soothill Lane ... ..	1					2		3
New Street ... ..		3				1		4
Bridle Street ... ..		1						1
Newgate Street ... ..			1					1
Francis Street ... ..	2	1	1				1	5
Brewery Road ... ..		1						1
Shaw Cross ... ..			1					1
Gordon Terrace ... ..	1							1
Oxford Terrace ... ..		1						1
Lady Ann Road... ..		1						1
Spring Head Terrace ... ..			2					2
Harrop Buildings ... ..		1						1
Kirkgate ... ..			2					2
Towngate ... ..								1
TOTAL ... ..	5	66	17	1	1	5	1	96

Of the 96 cases reported, two-thirds were due to Scarlet Fever with two deaths. When I look to my Monthly Reports I find Scarlet Fever is mentioned in every one, with the single exception of June; and not only this, but from the table above it visited almost every street. To the two same causes I attribute the uniform diffusion — “neighbouring” and the elementary schools. In one case where I had reason to suspect a child had had Scarlet Fever, I sent to the school for him and found him in the peeling stage, and in other cases I traced the patients from

their personal visits to houses where they were supposed to be suffering "only" from measles.

Under the heads of Diphtheria and Membraneous Croup six cases were reported, with four deaths. In most of the cases no evident cause could be found, but in the case of France Street, I should like to see the traps in the cellar kitchens brought outside.

Enteric Fever during the year has not waned. Nor in the treatment of it have the new methods been more successful than the old (1 death in 5 cases); for here we have 17 cases with 4 deaths. In some of these cases no evident cause could be found, but in the cases at the top of Spurr Street, two deaths in one house, certain mysteries in drainage were cleared up at the back of the block, which I trust will prevent any further cases occurring in that neighbourhood. In this connection I must not forget that there are still open middens which require re-building and covering over. Much excitement was created by the rumour that this disease was contracted at Batley Feast by eating ice-creams. It is a fact that many of the patients were young and had partaken of ice-creams, but it is not so easily understood why one person should have the fever while her companion, who had eaten quite as much, got off free.

Diarrhœa is closely allied to Enteric and in some cases seems to be the latter aborted, and due to similar causes; but of the 9 cases 6 were in children under 1 year, many of them being delicate hand-fed children.

Measles gave three deaths, but not being a notifiable disease we cannot give the number attacked, yet can form some idea from the results. After the return from the summer holidays, the numbers were so reduced at Shaw Cross, from this complaint, that it was found necessary to extend the holidays for ten days. Mill Lane Infants' School was closed in November for three weeks owing to infantile diseases, principally Measles.

Phthisis is now recognised as an infectious disease, and I cannot leave this part of the subject without a bare mention. Some of the Consumption Crusade Lecturers put down the mortality from this cause as equal to that from all the so-called

Zymotic Diseases, but when we go into figures we find it falls far short of it. More on this subject when I come to the question of dwellings.

In August the Sanitary Inspector and I visited twice the premises of Messrs. Brooke, Jubb & Co., and found that there were grounds for complaint in the mill dam. This matter was very soon attended to and the nuisance removed.

In order to give an intelligent answer to the School Board as to the prevalence of illness in Bromley Street, Common Side and Mill Lane, I twice visited the Batley Destructor in November, and came away quite satisfied that no part of the illness was due to that source. There is no disinfection equal to complete combustion.

A complaint was made to the County Council in April regarding "long continued emission of black smoke from Lady Ann and Calvert Mills," but I may remark, as before, that this work can best be done by the County Council.

The water supply has been good and continuous, and no case of lead poisoning has been brought under my notice.

The Isolation Hospital has made little progress during the year, and although the site has been sanctioned by the Local Government Board, the conjoint Hospital Board hardly know where they stand. Disinfection has been carried out carefully by the Sanitary Staff, but I regret to say that some of the Medical Practitioners have not given us that help that their intelligence and experience would warrant us to expect. The bedding in some cases has been destroyed, but I think in others the clothing might with advantage be taken to a disinfector.

**Dwellings.**—None has been condemned as unfit for habitation, but one or two have been pulled down for improvements. One has been reported as unfit for habitation from damp rooms due to defective spouting. Additions have been made to a few houses, which is a healthy sign. 23 new houses have been erected during the year, but most of these are for the smallest families, especially as regards sleeping accommodation. Most of them have

been built on the plan of back-to back, in blocks of four. A great deal has been written and spoken on the comparative health of these blocks and the through houses. After giving much attention to this matter, I have come to the conclusion that the ventilation of these blocks is all that can be required; in fact what are the better class of through houses but back-to-back, and ventilated from the hall instead of directly from streets or gardens.

The crying want of our time is more bedrooms, where we spend one-third of our existence. The Crusaders against Consumption, praiseworthy as their object is, in my opinion, have got hold of the wrong end of the sanitary problem. What use is it to cure people in an airy sanatorium, and then send them back to their old haunts and homes. Better to instruct and encourage that every home should be a sanatorium, so that every person may have as much and as pure air as it is possible, from the cradle upwards.

I remain,

Yours obediently,

ROBERT BEATTIE, M.D.,

Dewsbury.

Medical Officer of Health.

10th March, 1899



**TABLE B.**  
**SOOTHILL UPPER URBAN DISTRICT.**

Population, Births, and New Cases of Infectious Sickness during the Year 1898.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all Ages.		Regist'r'd Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.						Number of such Cases Removed from their homes in the several Localities for Treatment in Isolation Hospital.		
	Last Census.	Estimated to middle of 1898.			Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Group.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Puerperal.		Erysipelas.	
Soothill Upper	5848	6327	157	{ Under 5 5 upwards	66	5	1	17	1	1	1	5	Small Pox.

*TABLE C.*  
SOOTHILL UPPER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

SUMMARY OF WORK executed and other matters carried out in the Sanitary Department  
for the year ended December 31st, 1898.

No. of water leakages and defective water pipes and fittings found and notices served.	Length of sewers laid.	No. of private drains laid and connections made with sewers.	No. of sink pipes altered and disconnected from house drains.	No. of nuisances abated by request only.	Notices served for abatement of nuisances.	No. of Prosecutions.	Remarks whether carried out or not.	No. of new W.C.'s fixed	No. of new trough closets fixed,	No. of new houses built during the year.	No. of new privies built to new houses.	Additional privy accommodation to existing dwellings built.	No. of existing privies reconstructed on model principle.	No. of existing ashpits reconstructed and covered in.	No. of loads of ashes, &c., removed from ashpits throughout the District.	Average No. of times each ashpit cleaned during the year.
3	yds. 30	5	34	—	26	—	17 notices carried out, 9 in hand at close of year.	3	—	23	21	3	20	8	2304	5 to 6

Shaw Cross,

Near Dewsbury,

February 10th, 1899.

JNO. BLACKBURN,

Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances.

