

**[Report 1902] / Medical Officer of Health, Watchet U.D.C.**

**Contributors**

Watchet (England). Urban District Council.

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1902

# Watchet Urban Council. M. O. H's Report.

H. C. Linder

Population estimated in 1901. 1887  
 Area 700 Acres  
 Birth Rate per 1000 living 25.8  
 Death Rate " " " 13.1  
 Zymotic Rate " " " 2.2  
 Infantile Mortality per 1000 births 104.8

Geology - At the Cliffs large quantities of limestone and Gypsum are obtained the latter being used largely in the manufacture of paper at the Mills; in the surrounding neighbourhood there is loam, clay & marl but in Watchet there are beds of Walsley carrying gravel.

Occupation, mainly Paper Mills, Flour Mills, Saw Mills and Harbour; the Harbour which was destroyed in 1900 is now about to be re-constructed the loss of which has been severely felt as there was a large trade with Wales & Ireland & even the Continent which has fallen off owing to the dangerous condition of the Harbour.

Water Supply - There is a good & sufficient supply from a private company except during dry seasons when it is cut off in the evenings but an unlimited supply could be obtained in the event of the town increasing and at a moderate cost.

Sewerage and drainage & Sewerage disposal. A sewerage and drainage scheme has been before the Local Government Board and a Local Government Board inquiry was held at Watchet on Jan. 30. 1902, and although the drains are not everything that could be desired being old masonry ones yet during my term of office there have been no cases directly traceable to drainage & the town is a healthy one and compares favourably with others similarly situated. The Scavenging in Watchet is not carried out as it should be especially in West Street. The Ashpits generally are in a bad condition and don't come up to the

Local Government Board requirements especially  
those at Almyr Terrace being without covers & in  
a dilapidated condition in many instances the brick  
walls having fallen down. - I have repeatedly drawn  
attention to them but nothing has been done.

Prevalence of Disease & Notification. 39 Cases notified -  
Scarlet Fever 33; Diphtheria 1; Membranous Croup 1;  
Erysipelas 1. An outbreak of Scarlet Fever occurred in  
November which necessitated the closing of the schools  
due to carelessness on the part of parents in neglecting  
to take proper precautions in exposing infected children  
and sending them to school. There was a slight  
outbreak in the latter end of 1901 & beginning of 1902  
but of a mild type and not so severe as the present  
epidemic. There were three deaths caused by Scarlet  
Fever all in children under 5 years of age; Membranous  
Croup 1; Diarrhoea 1; Enteritis 2; Bronchitis 4  
Acute Laryngitis 1; Heart disease 1. Peritonitis 1.  
Hemiplegia 1. Biliary obstruction 1; Tetanus and  
Convulsions 2; Mollities Cerebri 3; Uræmic Convulsions  
1. Pneumonia 1; Smile Decay 3 in all 26 in the Watchet  
Urban District & a native of Watchet died in the  
Liliton Union.

Isolation Hospital, Disinfection. Although some  
parents are careful and endeavour to do their best  
to isolate but owing often to large families and  
lack of accommodation isolation is at the best  
very imperfectly carried out; on the other hand  
some parents are exceedingly careless and absolutely  
indifferent to their moral & legal obligation to the  
public in preventing the spread of infectious  
diseases and all one can do in the  
absence of proper Isolation Hospital is to provide them  
with disinfectants & fumigate with Sulphur at  
the end of the illness. A good heat disinfecter  
whereby all clothes, bedding etc could be thoroughly  
disinfected would be of great service especially

is a highly infectious disease like Scarlet Fever.  
Dairies, Bath Houses, & Stauyler House have been  
inspected & found satisfactory.

Housing of the Working Classes are above the average  
in size and accommodations to most country districts  
with a few exceptions.

Inspector of Nuisances Report. None.

Henry C. Liden  
M. C. H.

Watchet Urban District

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*[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*