

[Report 1896] / Medical Officer of Health, Wisbech U.D.C. / Borough.

Contributors

Wisbech (England). Urban District Council.

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Dr. HARRY GROOM.

AT HOME,

9 to 10 a.m., 2 to 3 p.m.

AT SURGERY,

10 to 10.30 a.m., 7 to 8 p.m.

The Crescent,
Wisbech.

27 Feb 1894

Dear Sir

Enclosed I have
pleasure in sending you
copies of my reports
to the Wisbech, and
Walsoken Urban Districts.

Yours faithfully
Harry Groom



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to the Local Government.
Summary approval.

THE MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT: A GREAT
IMPROVEMENT IN THE DEATH-RATE.

The Medical Officer of Health's (Dr. Harry Groom's) report for the year 1896 was received, and handed to the Press. It was remarked that when the Local Health Act was applied to Walsoken the death-rate was as high as 28·6 per 1,000, whereas the report for the past year showed as low a death-rate as 15·6.—The SURVEYOR observed that the adoption of the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act had been very beneficial in that district.—The Medical Officer's report was as follows:—

To the Chairman and Members of the Walsoken Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,—Herewith I have the pleasure of again submitting to you my report for the past twelve months ending Dec. 31st, 1896, with the record of the measures we have taken, with a view to preventing the spread of infectious disease, and the maintenance of the district in as healthy a condition as possible. I regret that I am not able to tell you that during the last twelve months, we have been so free from zymotic diseases as in the previous year (which as you will remember was remarkable for the scarcity of infectious illness), as we have been visited with outbreaks of scarlet fever, measles, whooping cough, mumps, and influenza, but with the exception of the epidemic of measles, none of the outbreaks have caused me much anxiety. I have been pleased to find that the condition of the yards at the backs of the cottages continue to improve, as many have been paved and rendered more sanitary. There have been several nuisances reported, but each has speedily been removed without much trouble. There were three cases of scarlet fever came to my knowledge, all exceptionally mild, one of these being at once removed to the infectious hospital, the others liberally supplied with disinfectants. The outbreak of measles occurred in March and speedily attacked a very large number of the children attending the public schools. It undoubtedly was imported from the neighbouring town of Wisbech, and appeared in both Old and New Walsoken. Closing the schools for a short time very rapidly diminished the number of cases. During the same time, mumps was very prevalent, as well as a few isolated cases of whooping cough, but fortunately no fatal result followed any these diseases. During the year I have frequently visited the district, and found the sanitary requirements well looked after, the slaughter-houses, cowsheds, dairies, &c., being better kept and now in a fairly good condition. Frequent attention has been given to the various sewers, house and surface drains, and these have been periodically disinfected, as well as disinfectants liberally supplied and used, whilst the partially blocked surface drains are being speedily renovated, the sewers taken as a whole continuing to work satisfactorily. The number of births during the year was large, viz., 72. Of these 44 were males, 28 females, giving a birth rate of 25·6 per 1000. The number of deaths which occurred from all diseases was 44 only, being a considerable diminution from the number, viz., 60 last year, giving a death-rate for the district of 15·6 per 1000. Of these 26 were females and 18 males, whilst 23 occurred in the first half and 21 in the later half of the year. Again I regret to find that the infantile mortality was large in comparison, as out of the 44 deaths, 11 were of children under the age of one year, giving an infantile death-rate of 3·9 per 1000. The number of deaths arising from pulmonary and heart affections were few, 14 being attributable to these causes, viz., bronchitis, pneumonia, and pleurisy 3, and heart disease 6, whilst only five deaths were returned from phthisis. The deaths in the district at the various ages were:—Under 1 year, 11; over 1 and under 5, 7; over 5 and under 15, 5; over 15 and under 25, 2; over 25 and under 65, 8; over 65, 11. Herewith I beg to hand you the tabular statement of births, deaths, and sickness during this period.—I am, gentlemen, yours faithfully,

HARRY GROOM, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

January 22nd, 1897.

Mr. KERRIDGE also presented his annual report

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the result was in
 night about a quarter to eleven o'clock
 Marylebone Court House. The return of
 account Royston makes no difference in the
 ance of parties in the Council. The figures
 re :

Lord Royston (Mod.).....	3,338
Mr. Straus (Prog.).....	2,395

Majority 940

At the last election the Moderate majority was
 y 46. Lord Royston, who now enters the
 nty Council for West Marylebone, is the eldest
 of the Earl of Hardwicke. He will be 30
 rs of age on the 14th of next month. He was
 cated at Eton, and has been in the Diplomatic
 vice—attached to the British Embassy at
 nna. He is a Deputy Lieutenant for Cam-
 lgeshire.

LEVERINGTON.

THE PARISH COUNCIL met in the Endowed School,
 verington, on Monday, Mr. J. Peacock presiding.
 The Clerk read letters dealing with the Indian
 mine, lamps at post offices, her Majesty's
 omend Jubilee and the Parish meeting. It was
 anged to have the parish meeting on March
 b, after the business of the election allowed by
 Local Government Board.—The names of the
 e six men for constables as last year were
 roved.—After a short discussion on the letting
 he recreation ground it was decided that for the
 sent year it be let by auction on the same con-
 ons as last year; but that if desirable the
 son hiring it may pay half of the sum it fetches
 auction at the time of letting and the other half
 October 11th.—Mr. Frier brought before the
 ncil a matter of interest to the parish, but it
 s resolved before taking any action to ascertain
 particulars of the case from the authorities.

GUYHIRN.

PIG CLUB.—The first anniversary was held at
 e Wheatsheaf Inn, on the 16th inst., when
 pper was provided by Host Johnson. About 30
 down, including visitors. Afterwards the
 airman of the club, Mr. J. W. Payne, proposed
 vote of thanks to the host and the visitors, re-
 rring to the advantages of self-help, and remark-
 that it was far better than charity. It had
 n intimated to him that they ought to incor-
 ate with it a cow club, but he thought they
 l better not at present, as they had not all yet
 the "three acres and a cow." Mr. W. Weston
 onded the vote. The financial statement showed
 at there were 31 members on the books and no
 ses had taken place during the year. The
 lance in hand was a little over £8. Mr. G. E.
 vell, had audited the books and one new member
 s enrolled. The officers were all re-elected.
 e remainder of the evening was spent in an
 oyable manner.

NORWICH.

THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION MEETINGS.
 The Earl of Crewe, Viscount Oxenbridge, Lord
 ttersen, Mr. Jos. Arch, Mr. Augustine Birrell,
 Cozens Hardy, and many others have promised
 addition to Sir W. Harcourt and Lord Kimber-
 to attend these meetings. District meetings
 l be held at King's Lynn and Yarmouth. Other
 etings to be held at Norwich at the same time
 lude a conference and public meeting under the
 pices of the Women's Liberal Federation, meetings
 the Liberal Agents and Organisers, a breakfast
 en jointly to Liberal Agents and Secretaries by
 Chief Whip and the President of the National
 eral Federation. The proceedings close with a
 eption to be given by the officers of the Norwich
 d District Liberal Associations. This reception,
 which a large number of invitations have been
 sed, will be held in the St. Andrew's Hall,
 which is one of the finest halls of the kind in the

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MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

The following report of the medical officer of health was handed to the Press :—

To the Mayor, Aldermen, and Members of the Wisbech Corporation acting as the Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,—Herewith I have the pleasure of submitting to you my report for the past twelve months, with a record of the measures we have taken, with a view to limiting, as far as possible, the spread of infectious diseases in this borough. It is with regret that I am obliged to state to you that during the year we have experienced visitations of zymotic sicknesses, which have caused considerable anxiety, but, fortunately, the outbreaks of scarlet fever, measles, influenza, typhoid fever, and whooping cough were only of a mild nature, and but very few deaths were caused by these infectious diseases. The value of the adoption of the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act has been marked, and has enabled me to have a perfect knowledge of the number of infectious cases under treatment in the town, and more especially what precautions have been taken to limit the spread of the disease. At the commencement of the year, we, in common with the surrounding district, shared an outbreak of influenza. It was widespread, but not nearly so severe as in the previous years. The most troublesome outbreak was with the epidemic of the measles, the first case appearing in February, and very quickly the whole town became involved, chiefly through the want of care in dealing with this affection, which is most infectious in its early stages, and isolation is seldom thought necessary. Taken as a whole, the cases were very mild, but I regret that 6 deaths were directly caused by it. In the following month, the numbers attending the various educational establishments became so seriously diminished that I deemed it advisable to close all the boys', girls', and infants public schools, there being no less than 138 cases connected with the infant school alone. Very soon a very rapid improvement was obvious, and although several cases followed, the chief cause of anxiety soon ceased. Scarlet fever again followed; an extremely mild course, but was widespread, and cases appeared in all parts of the town. Forty-six cases were reported to me. Through the want of care during the disquamation period (especially with two families), this disease spread. In every case disinfectants were liberally supplied and freely used, whilst 15 cases were removed to the Infectious Diseases Hospital. The mildness of the cases can best be judged from the fact that no fatal result followed any case. Four cases of typhoid fever were reported to me, the two most serious being in young persons in all, the cause was undoubtedly the result of drinking polluted water, out of these, two of the cases were imported, the other two arising in the town. Whooping cough which was so conspicuous by its absence last year, was somewhat prevalent this, and as usual lasted a considerable time, several of the cases were severe, four ending fatally. There were during the year five cases of erysipelas, and one case of puerperal fever came to my knowledge, but these did not give rise to any considerable anxiety. During the year I have at times visited the various parts of the town, which continues to be well kept and carefully looked after, the cases of over-crowding being few, whilst the conditions of the public buildings, slaughter houses, &c., are fairly satisfactory. The Russell-street sewer remains decidedly improved. The chief cause of complaint now is the condition of

OF FEBRUARY 10, 1897.

the sewers, which is to be regretted, as the mains keep fairly satisfactory, but there have been a large number of small blockages, mainly attributable to the fault of the tenants. The nuisance referred to arises from the escape of the sewer gas from the ventilators over the manholes, and at times has caused the most serious inconvenience. In several parts of the town, this has been more or less temporarily relieved by blocking these outlets up entirely, but as this often increases the nuisance elsewhere, and is fraught with considerable danger, I cannot too strongly urge upon the authority, the desirability of adopting a system of ventilation of the sewers, which will entirely remove this serious and dangerous nuisance. The parts more immediately concerned are Barton-lane, Leverington-road, New Wisbech, and the Colville Estates. During the year, the number of births were 239 or 21 more than last year, of these 124 were males, 115 females, giving a birth rate of 25.2 per 1000. The number of deaths were 163, which is a considerable diminution from the number, viz, 180 last year. As well as these, there were 32 deaths occurring in the Workhouse and 9 in the Hospital, the death rate for the town being 17.2 per 1000. The infantile death rate was 4.2 per 1000, there being 40 deaths in children under one year of age, this being the same number as in the preceding year. Deaths from pulmonary and heart affections were very few, 26 only of the deaths being attributable to these causes, viz: phthisis 10, bronchitis, pleurisy, and pneumonia 12, heart disease 4. In the Workhouse bronchitis, pleurisy, and pneumonia caused 2 and heart disease 5 deaths. In the Hospital bronchitis 1, and heart disease 1 death. In the town the deaths under 1 year were 40, over 1 year and under 5 years 15, over 5 years and under 15 years 10, over 15 years and under 25 years 5, over 25 years and under 65 years 41, over 65 years 52. In the Workhouse, over 25 years and under 65 years 5, over 65 years 27. In the Hospital, over 5 years and under 15 years 1, over 15 years and under 25 years 1, over 25 years and under 65 years 6, over 65 years 1. Herewith I beg to hand you the tabular statements of births, sickness, and mortality for this period.—I am, Gentlemen, yours faithfully,

HARRY GROOM, M.D.,
Jan. 22nd, 1897. Medical Officer of Health.

This concluded the business.