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Witham

Urban District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR

1910.

BY


KARL C. GIMSON,

M.B., B.C.

WITHAM:

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To The Witham Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to make the following Report on the Witham Urban District for the year ending December 31st, 1910.

The number of Births registered during the year was 69, consisting of 34 Males and 35 Females: giving a Birth Rate of 18·9 per 1000.

The number of Deaths registered in the District during the year was 39, giving a Death Rate of 10·7 per 1000.

Deaths classified according to age were as follows:—

Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	4
1 year and under 5	...	...	...	...	1
5 years and under 15	...	...	...	...	2
15 years and under 25	...	...	...	...	1
25 years and under 65	...	...	...	...	9
65 years and upwards	...	...	...	...	22

Of the 22 deaths at 65 and upwards, 1 was 90: 8 were 80 or over: 10 were 70 or over: and 3 were under 70.

Of the 4 deaths under 1 year, 2 were due to Bronchitis: 1 to Convulsions: and 1 to debility from birth.

There were four deaths due to Tubercular Disease. Two of these were due to Pulmonary Tuberculosis and two to Tubercular Meningitis.

There were four deaths due to Malignant Disease.

The Cases of Notifiable Infectious Disease occurring in the District were as follows:— Diphtheria four: Erysipelas one: Scarlet Fever two: Enteric Fever six.

There were no deaths from any of these diseases.

The cause of the four cases of Diphtheria could not be traced: they occurred in different parts of the Town, and at considerable intervals as regards time and the Milk supply was good: the Water supply also, except in one case in which the well water used for drinking was found to be contaminated by manure: this well is not now used for domestic purposes: and the Town water supply has been laid on to the cottage.

The two cases of Scarlet Fever occurred at Chipping Hill, in two houses close to one another, but the origin could not be discovered.

Five of the cases of Enteric Fever were directly traceable to the first case which occurred.

The first case occurred at "The Retreat," a private Asylum for the Insane.

One of the patients contracted the disease and, although some slight sanitary defects were found (and remedied), these did not appear sufficient to have been the cause of the disease.

The actual cause has not been discovered, but it was thought probable that it may have been through a "carrier" case.

The second case also occurred at "The Retreat" and was evidently contracted directly from the first: the nurse, who was looking after the patient, developing the disease.

Three of the other four cases occurred at the house of the woman who did the washing for the Asylum and were due to infected clothing being sent to the wash before the first case was diagnosed.

The remaining case was a young man who was engaged to the washerwoman's daughter and had been frequently at her house taking meals.

The two cases which occurred at the Asylum were isolated and treated there.

The other four were treated in tents erected on the piece of ground presented to the Council for the erection of an Isolation Hospital some years ago.

Two cases being Male and two Female, two separate tents had to be used for treating the cases in addition to others for the nurses and kitchen.

The expense of this small outbreak was therefore considerable and once again emphasizes the necessity for the erection of some permanent Isolation Hospital or conjunction with some other Isolation Hospital already existing in the neighbourhood.

There is no staple industry or large manufactory at Witham: a large proportion of the lower classes are agricultural labourers and, as they can only afford a small rent for their cottages, the housing of this part of the population in proper and sanitary dwellings becomes a difficult problem to solve.

The house accommodation for the working classes has been improved considerably of late years by the erection by private individuals of a number of cottages: but these cost at least four shillings a week for rent and are therefore occupied by men of the artisan class and beyond the means of the ordinary agricultural labourer: and therefore do not help the class of people who most require it.

There are a considerable number of cottages, some of which ought probably to be condemned and others put in a state of sanitary repair: but if this is done a number of the inhabitants would be homeless: and where repairs are done the landlord raises the rent and thus the onus falls on the tenant, who cannot afford the increased rent.

The Council have appointed a Sub-Committee to enquire into the possibility of erecting cottages under the Housing of the Working Classes and Town Planning Act.

It appears from calculations made by the Surveyor, Mr. Perkins, that cottages to meet the requirements of the bye laws could probably not be erected to be let at a less rent than 3/9 a week, if they are to be self-supporting.

It appears therefore that, if they are inhabited by agricultural labourers (who are the class who require most help in this direction), an extra burden will fall on the Rates which are already high: the Council have this subject still under consideration.

WATER SUPPLY: The greater part of the District is supplied by water from the Council's "New" Waterworks. The supply is from wells sunk some few years ago by the Council. It is continuous and satisfactory in every way.

THE MILK SUPPLY when it has been tested has been found quite satisfactory: this however has only been done on the occurrence of Infectious Disease: there is no regular inspection of the Milk supplied in the District.

The Condition of the Dairies, Cow Sheds and Milk Shops is on the whole satisfactory: but there are no regulations adopted for dairies, cow sheds and milk shops: nor is there any Veterinary inspection of Milch Cows ordered by the Council for the detection of tuberculosis.

OTHER FOODS: There is no regular inspection of Meat or other foods.

No action taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

No action under Section 117 of the Public Health Act 1875.

No carcasses or parts of carcasses condemned for Tuberculosis.

There are four *Slaughter houses* in the District: Three of these are in populous parts of the Town and surrounded by houses, which is hardly satisfactory, the other one is apart from houses and is a good slaughter house.

New Bye Laws are required for Slaughter Houses.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE : The sewers are not perfect and are liable to overflow during very heavy rains : though this rarely occurs.

They are kept in very fair order and are flushed frequently by water cart when necessary.

The Sewage is treated by broad irrigation on the Sewage Farm, which consists of about forty acres of land : in very wet seasons a considerable quantity of sewage has to flow on to the meadows adjoining the River Blackwater and during floods some portion must get into the river.

HOUSE DRAINAGE is fairly satisfactory.

Most of the houses are connected with the sewers, but a few cannot be owing to being at too low a level : and some are beyond the area which is sewered.

POLLUTION OF RIVERS : The River Blackwater is in very wet seasons polluted by sewage, as stated above.

EXCREMENT DISPOSAL : Most of the houses have water closets, but where there are blocks of cottages there are often several water closets erected side by side : these are flushed by a single tank and are liable to get out of order.

A few of the cottages have privies and pail closets, which are emptied by the householder on the land adjoining.

REFUSE REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL is done by means of the Sanitary Authority's carts as occasion requires and disposed of on the Sewage Farm : where there are ash pits the householders send notice to the Inspector of Nuisances when they require them emptied : where there are moveable dust bins they are emptied every week.

NUISANCES : Only very old Bye Laws with regard to Nuisances : New Bye Laws are required.

SCHOOLS : Sanitary condition good : water from the town supply : The children are inspected once a year by a medical man appointed by the Board of Education.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES : There is no Isolation Hospital and no apparatus for disinfecting bedding, clothing, &c.

TUBERCULOSIS: There is no compulsory notification of Tuberculosis.

After the death of a person known to have suffered from tuberculosis the house is disinfected.

There is no hospital accommodation for cases of pulmonary tuberculosis in the District; but in the case of paupers the Guardians make arrangements for the treatment of early cases in some sanatorium.

INFANT MORTALITY: There were four deaths under one year: One of these was certified by the Coroner and was due to bronchitis, possibly this life might have been saved if a medical man had been called in to see it; another due to bronchitis may have been owing to want of proper care on the part of the mother from ignorance: One was due to convulsions, the cause of which was not stated: One, due to debility from birth, possibly might have been prevented by proper attention of the mother to her own health during pregnancy.

There are no Health Visitors appointed.

I should like here to recapitulate a few improvements most urgently required in the District.

1. New Regulations and Bye Laws with regard to milk.
2. Veterinary Inspection of Milch Cows for the detection of tuberculosis.
3. New Bye Laws for Slaughter Houses.
4. New Bye Laws for Nuisances.
5. An Isolation Hospital.

I am,

Your Obedient Servant,

K. C. GIMSON.

Table 1.—Witham Urban District.
Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1910 and Previous Years.

YEAR.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		DEATHS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE.		DEATHS AT ALL AGES. TOTAL.		DEATHS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	Deaths of Non-residents registe'd in District	Deaths of residents registe'd beyond District.	DEATHS AT ALL AGES. NETT.	
		Number.	Rate.*	Number.	Rate.*	Number.	Rate.*				Number.	Rate.*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1900	3,430	71	20.7	9	126	37	10.7	0	0	0	37	10.7
1901	3,454	83	24	15	180	47	13.6	0	0	0	47	13.6
1902	3,476	57	16.4	5	88	54	15.5	0	0	0	54	15.5
1903	3,498	73	20.8	4	54.8	38	10.8	0	0	1	39	11
1904	3,520	85	24	5	58.8	52	14.8	0	0	0	52	14.8
1905	3,542	60	17.3	10	166.6	64	18.5	0	0	0	64	18.5
1906	3,564	71	19.9	6	84.5	50	14	0	0	0	49	13.7
1907	3,580	53	14.8	4	75.4	36	10	0	0	1	37	10.3
1908	3,598	80	22.2	3	37.5	37	10.2	0	0	0	37	10.2
1909	3,620	59	16.3	6	101.7	49	13.5	1	0	0	49	13.5
Averages for years 1900—1909.	3,528	69	18	6	96	46	12	.1	0	.2	46	12
1910	3,640	69	18.9	4	58	39	10.7	0	0	0	39	10.7

* Rates in Columns 4, 8 and 13 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.
 Total population at all ages, 3,454. Number of inhabited houses, 759. At Census of 1901.
 Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water) 3,633. Average number of persons per house, 4.55.

I.		II.		III.	
Institutions within the District receiving sick and infirm persons from outside the District.	Bridge Industrial Home	Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District.	Workhouse Infirmary Braintree. Chelmsford Infirmary. Colchester Hospital. Brentwood Asylum.	Other Institutions, the deaths in which have been distributed among the several localities in the District.	
(1)		(1)			
(2)		(2)			
(3)		(3)			
(4)		(4)			

Table III.—Witham Urban District.
Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year 1910.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT						
	At all Ages.	Years.					
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 and upwards.
Small-pox ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cholera ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria (including Membranous crop)	4	...	4	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas ...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
Scarlet fever ...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...
Typhus ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric fever ...	6	1	...	4	1	...	...
Relapsing fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Continued fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plague ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	13	0	1	6	5	1	0

Table IV.—Witham Urban District.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1910.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	DEATHS IN WHOLE DISTRICT AT SUBJOINED AGES.						
	All Ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 & upwards.
Small-pox ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet fever ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping-cough ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria including membranous croup ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Croup ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fever { Typhus ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Enteric .. ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Other continued ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Epidemic Influenza	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cholera ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plague ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhœa ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteritis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gastritis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal fever ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phthisis, Pulmonary Tuberculosis... ..	2	...	...	...	2	...	...
Other tuberculous diseases	2	...	...	2	...	...	...
Cancer, malignant disease	4	...	...	...	2	...	2
Bronchitis	7	2	...	...	...	...	5
Pneumonia	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
Pleurisy ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other diseases of Respiratory organs	3	...	...	...	1	...	2
Alcoholism, Cirrhosis of liver ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Venereal diseases ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature birth ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and accidents of parturition	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Heart diseases	6	...	...	...	2	...	4
Accidents	3	...	...	...	2	...	1
Suicides ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
All other causes	10	2	...	1	...	...	7
All causes	39	4	0	3	1	9	22

Table VI.

Summary of Work done through the Sanitary Inspector in the Urban District of Witham during the year ending December 31st, 1910.

	Total No. for Year.
1 Complaints received	5
2 Nuisances detected without complaint ...	71
3 Nuisances abated	16
4 Notices served	3
5 Summonses taken out	—
6 Convictions	—
7 Cottages inspected	26
8 Lodging-houses inspected	—
9 Slaughter-houses inspected	4
10 Bake-houses inspected	5
11 Dairies and Milk Shops inspected ...	1
12 Cowsheds inspected	9
13 Workshops inspected	35
14 Filthy houses cleansed, sec. 46 Public Health Act, 1875	—
15 Houses disinfected	9
16 Overcrowding abated	—
17 Houses placed in habitable repair ...	—
18 Houses closed	—
19 Houses erected or re-built for which Habitation "Certificates" were applied	7
20 Habitation "Certificates" granted ...	7
21 " " deferred	—
22 Wells sunk or improved supplies of Water afforded	—
23 Wells cleansed or repaired	—
24 Wells closed... ..	1
25 Houses connected with sewers	7
26 " " with water mains	7
27 Earth, pail, or improved Privies con- structed or existing Privies altered	—
28 Privies and W.C.'s repaired; W.C.'s supplied with water	—
29 Cisterns cleansed, repaired or covered	—
30 Animals improperly kept removed ...	2
31 Samples of water taken for Analysis	1
" Milk	1
32 Compensation paid for destruction of infected bedding	—
33 Seizures of unsound Meat, &c.	—

(Signed) W. P. PERKINS.

Table VII.—Witham Urban District.

On the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in connection with
 FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, LAUNDRIES, WORKPLACES AND HOMEWORK.

1.—INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Nuisances.

Premises. (1)	Number of		
	Inspections. (2)	Written Notices. (3)	Prosecutions. (4)
Factories (Including Factory Laundries.)	3	—	—
Workshops (Including Workshop Laundries.)	32	—	—
Workplaces (Other than Outworkers' premises included in Part 3 of this Report.)	—	—	—
TOTAL	35	—	—

Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces, Nil. Number of addresses of Outworkers received, Nil.
 Registered Workshops, No Register.

Matters referred to by H. M. Inspectors Nil. Reports sent to H. M. Inspectors, Nil.

