

[Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Romford UDC 1897].

Contributors

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ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,
FOR THE
URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF ROMFORD
FOR THE YEAR 1897.

To the Romford Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report on the Health of Romford, for the year ending December 31st, 1897.

194 deaths were registered as having occurred in the Romford Urban District, during the year; of these sixty occurred amongst non-residents of the town, a number which had to be deducted from the total number of deaths registered in order to form a proper estimate of the mortality of the town itself. Making this necessary deduction from

the total number of deaths which took place in the Urban District, I estimate the number of deaths to have been 127. The population of Romford, which in 1891, was 8,408, may now, I think, be fairly estimated to be 9,500, so that the death-rate for the past year was 12·3 per 1,000 of the population.

The number of births registered during the year was 313, the birth-rate therefore being 32·9 per 1,000.

The following table shows the Birth-rate and Death-rate for the last five years.

ROMFORD.	BIRTH-RATE.	DEATH-RATE.
1893	35·1	17·1
1894	32·3	14·3
1895	32·5	15·1
1896	35·8	12·3
1897	32·9	12·3

Of the whole number of deaths, 9 were caused by zymotic diseases, the death-rate from this class of disease, which may be called preventable diseases, for the last three years, being respectively, 1·4, 1·7, and 0·9 per 1,000 of the population.

110 cases of infectious diseases were notified during 1897, a number considerably less than in the previous year, when 153 cases occurred. The improvement, however, although satisfactory, ought not to be considered as sufficient. A town of 9,500 inhabitants ought not to have 110 cases of infectious disease, when there has been no

wave of epidemic disease (Scarlet Fever, for instance) passing over it. There must be a Sanitary failing somewhere, and I think it is to be found as suggested in a subsequent part of this report.

The following table shows the causes of death. arranged in alphabetical order. There were registered during the year deaths of 12 persons who had exceeded the age of 80 years. 37 children died under the age of one year.

Cancer	..	..	..	..	6
Diarrhoea	..	..	..	..	13
Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	3
Disease of Brain	..	..	..	..	6
Disease of Heart	..	..	..	..	17
Disease of Liver	..	..	..	..	2
Disease of Kidney	..	..	..	..	2
Injuries	..	..	..	..	5
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	1
Phthisis	..	..	..	..	13
Pulmonary Affections (Bronchitis, &c.)	..	..	..	..	16
Premature Birth (Debility, &c.)	..	..	..	..	6
Senile Decay	..	..	..	..	9
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	1
Typhoid Fever	..	..	..	..	3
Other Diseases	..	..	..	..	24
					—
Total	..	..	..	..	127
					—

*Summary of Action taken during the Year for
preventing the spread of disease:—*

During the year, 110 cases of infectious disease were notified, the different diseases occurring as tabled below.

Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	32
Diphtheria	..	..	..	39
Typhoid Fever	..	..	..	22
Puerpural Fever	..	..	..	0
Erysipelas ..	..	..	..	17
				—
Total			..	110
				—

The general practice, in the action taken to prevent the spread of infectious disease is to give instructions (either personally or through the Sanitary Inspector) as to isolation, &c., to supply disinfectants, and in necessary cases the Sanitary Inspector disinfects the premises, bedding, &c.

I append special remarks on the various infectious diseases which prevailed.

Scarlet Fever.—Thirty-two cases of this disease were notified, most of the cases being mild, and one only proving fatal.

Diphtheria.—Numbered 39 cases, 4 deaths being caused by this disease. A large proportion of these cases were undoubtedly due to the facility existing for the escape of

sewer gas, owing to the faulty condition of the water-closets connected with nearly the whole of the cottage property of the town.

Typhoid Fever.—Twenty-two cases occurred, of which 3 were fatal.

An Account of the Sanitary Condition of the District at the end of the year, and of enquiries made and advice given respecting conditions injurious to the Public Health :—

At the end of the year there was no infectious disease existing in the Town, except a few cases of Typhoid.

Periodical inspections of the various parts of the district have been made, a few samples of drinking water, whose purity was suspected, have been submitted to me for analysis by the Sanitary Inspector, and where found to be contaminated, the South Essex Company's water has been laid on.

The various bake-houses and slaughter-houses have been inspected and found in a satisfactory condition.

Reviewing the sanitary conditions of the district generally, the Special Sanitary Improvements, which it is my duty to recommend to the Council are :—

1.—The provision of an Isolation Hospital, a desirable Sanitary Improvement now, I hope, in course of being established.

2. The provision of a water supply for the water closets connected with cottages.

With regard to the second suggestion, I repeat the remark made by me in my last Annual Report :

“The second, Sanitary Improvement—which is, in my opinion, necessary, in order to ensure a more perfect freedom from zymotic diseases, requires your serious consideration. I have in previous reports alluded to the facilities existing for the escape of sewer gas, caused by the absence of a proper system of flushing water closets, a defect existing in nearly all the cottage dwellings in Romford. Knowing that my views differed from the views of some members of the Council, and holding a strong conviction that this defect was a serious blot on the sanitary condition of the town, I suggested, in my last Annual Report, that the Council should take the opinion of a Sanitary Expert, for instance, the Medical Officer to the County Council, who would confirm or reject the accuracy of my views; I am sorry that this has not been done, as it places me in an unpleasant antagonism to members of the Council which I much deplore, and creates a feeling of insecurity amongst residents of the town which it is desirable in the interests of the town to allay.”

Since the last report a very valuable report has been issued by Dr. Thresh on hand-flushed closets, a copy of which, I understand, was placed before you. In it he forcibly proves the truth of what I have so long advocated, that the means adopted for cleansing and preventing the escape of sewer gas from the water closets of the vast majority of the

smaller dwellings in this town, is utterly inefficient, and so long as this is allowed to continue, disease such as typhoid fever, diphtheria, etc., are liable to occur.

Tables of mortality and of sickness compiled in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Board's instructions are appended to this report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ALFRED WRIGHT.

THE LODGE, ROMFORD.

March 5th, 1898.



TABLE (A).

TABLE OF DEATHS during the Year 1897, in the Romford Urban Sanitary

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities. (Columns for Population and Births are in Table B.) (a)	MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES, AT SUBJOINED AGES.							MORTALITY FROM				
	At all Ages (b)	Under 1 year. (c)	1 and under 5. (d)	5 and under 15. (e)	15 and under 25. (f)	25 and under 65. (g)	65 and up- wards. (h)	(i)	Small-pox. 1.	Scarlatina. 2.	Diphtheria. 3.	Membranous Croup. 4.
Romford	127	37	6	4	7	36	37	Under 5 5 upwds.	... ...	1 ...	2 1	1 ...
TOTALS - -	127	37	6	4	7	36	37	Under 5 5 upwds.	... ...	1 ...	2 1	1 ...
The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into												
Deaths occurring outside the district among persons be- longing thereto - -	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Under 5 5 upwds.	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...
Deaths occurring within the district among persons not belonging thereto - -	...	1	...	1	4	20	41	Under 5 5 upwds.	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...

TABLE (A).

District classified according to DISEASES, AGES, and LOCALITIES.

UNJOINED CAUSES, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE.

FEVERS.					Cholera.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Rheumatic Fever.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.		Injuries.	All other Diseases.	Total.
Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal													
5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13	...	...	2	1	...	...	24	41
...	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	16	4	16	...	4	39	84
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13	...	...	2	1	...	...	24	44
...	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	16	4	16	...	4	39	84

on account in judging of the above records of Mortality.

...
...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	5	11	10	...	2	36	66

TABLE (B).

TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, AND OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS
year 1897, in the Romford Urban Sanitary District

<p>NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.</p> <p>(a)</p>	POPULATION AT ALL AGES.		Registered Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.
	Census. Last	Estimated to middle of 1897.		
	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Romford	8,408	9,500	313	Under 5 5upwds.
TOTALS -	8,408	9,500	313	Under 5 5upwds.

TABLE (B).

coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the
classified according to DISEASES, AGES, and LOCALITIES.

Few Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.										
1 Small-pox.	2 Scarlatina.	3 Diphtheria.	4 Membranous Croup.	FEVERS.					10 Cholera.	11 Erysipelas.
				5 Typhus.	6 Enteric or Typhoid.	7 Continued.	8 Relapsing.	9 Puerperal.		
...	14	24	1	1
..	18	15	22	16
...	14	24	1	1
...	18	15	22	16



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