

[Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Teddington UDC 1893].

Contributors

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ANNUAL REPORT
ON THE
SANITARY CONDITION
OF THE
DISTRICT OF TEDDINGTON
FOR THE YEAR 1893.

The Urban Sanitary Authority of Teddington.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to place before you my Annual Report on the Mortality, Health, and Sanitary Condition of the District for the year 1893.

The total number of deaths which occurred and were registered was 163 and included—

7	from Influenza
4	„ Scarlatina
3	„ Diphtheria
5	„ Membranous Croup
1	„ Measles
6	„ Whooping Cough
2	„ Diarrhœa
20	„ Phthisis
11	„ Bronchitis and Pneumonia
8	„ Diseases of the Heart
23	„ Diseases of the Nervous System
10	„ Cancer
27	„ Premature Birth and Debility from Birth
7	„ Old Age
7	„ Injuries
22	„ Various cases

163

89 were males and 74 females

47 were under 1 year of age and 33 above 65.

The Population of the district was, according to the Census of 1891, 10025, and it is estimated in 1893 that it was about 11,000, and taking this number to be approximately correct, the Mortality from all causes is at the average annual rate of 14·81 for every 1,000 persons living.

Compared with former years the Mortality is slightly higher. This is not due to any prevailing epidemic disease, but to the great mortality amongst infants. 47 deaths were infants under one year which gives an infant mortality of 169·6 per 1,000 births.

The number of births was 277 giving a birth-rate of 25·18.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

I.—NOTIFIABLE.

One hundred and eighty-four notifications were received: 1 of Small-pox, 2 of Typhoid Fever, 148 of Scarlatina, 13 of Diphtheria, 5 of Membranous Croup and 15 of Erysipelas.

Small-pox.—As soon as I received a notification in April that a case of Small-pox had occurred in Wellington Road, I visited the house. The patient was a tailor, who had a work-room, which contained cloth, patterns, several half-made suits, and general furniture. Besides the patient, only his wife and a lodger were living in the house. As soon as the latter became aware of the nature of his landlord's illness, he left the house, and at the time could not be traced. The wife was at once re-vaccinated, and also the runaway lodger, who was found several days after his escape. As there is no Isolation Hospital in the district, the patient had to remain in his own house. Disinfectants were freely used, and the room containing the clothes was at once disinfected and closed. Every precaution was taken to prevent his having any intercourse with other persons. I paid frequent visits to the house, and so did the Inspector, who assisted the wife by supplying her with the necessary food. The disinfection of the workshop was twice repeated. After recovery of the patient the rooms were disinfected. The bed-room furniture and the wearing apparel of husband and wife were burned; the un-made clothes and other articles in the work-room were taken away by a trustworthy professional disinfector and disinfected by steam. The rooms were cleansed, the ceilings white-washed and the paper stripped from the walls. Compensation was given by your Board for every article destroyed or spoiled in the process of disinfection. No other case occurred in the District.

Vaccination.—The regulations regarding Vaccination were by the recently appointed Vaccination Officer strictly enforced and he has taken steps to make the Vaccination of the district as complete as possible.

Scarlatina.—One hundred and forty-eight notifications were received and 4 cases proved fatal.

The number of cases of Scarlatina was far greater than of any previous year and the disease, although more prevalent in the early part of the year, and again in November and December, was never absent from the district. The causes for this Epidemic are certainly not to be found in altered Sanitary conditions, but are due—

- 1.—To the prevalence of the disease throughout the country and especially in the Metropolis. Considering the daily intercourse of this suburban district with London, and the visits of thousands of school-children who come in public conveyances almost daily during the summer months, it is hardly possible for the district to escape a disease which is so highly infectious, and whose contagion clings with great pertinacity to the bodies, clothes and other articles belonging to persons who are suffering from the disease, or who came into contact with infected persons.
- 2.—The liability to infection was in this district very great, as the number of Scarlatina cases was during many years comparatively small and very few children were protected by a previous attack.
- 3.—A great danger for the dissemination arose from the mildness of the Epidemic. Outbreaks occurred where the first case in a family was overlooked, remained medically unattended, and the disease was only recognised when other members of the same household became more seriously attacked. There is no doubt that children suffering in such a mild way attended schools and spread the infection quite unintentionally.

In consequence of the prevalence of Scarlatina and also of Diphtheria in South Teddington during September, I sent the requisite notice to the managers of the two Public Elementary Schools in that district to close those schools until the end of September, but as fresh cases occurred at that period it was found necessary to postpone the re-opening till the middle of October. A special inspection of that district was made in July, but no great sanitary defects were found and the majority of infectious cases were in the more recently erected and better class of cottages. Disinfectants were freely used and the roads were watered with an admixture of disinfectants. Nearly half the numbers of notified cases occurred in South Teddington, a large proportion were in Upper Teddington and Teddington Park and comparatively few in the centre of the parish. Whenever practicable the patients were isolated, but the limited accommodation in the dwellings of the poorer classes made the separation of the sick from the healthy in some cases impossible.

Instructions were always given to exclude from school those children who lived in houses where infectious disease existed, and they were kept away as long as there was any danger of infection. All the sick rooms of those who

had neither the means nor the knowledge, were disinfected by your Inspector. A difficulty arose in one case, where a family consisting of mother and four children lodged in a house and occupied only one room. One child was suffering from Scarlatina, all the others, although occupying the same room escaped the infection. As there is no place for temporary shelter during disinfection in the district, the process of disinfection was greatly delayed, but the difficulty was eventually overcome.

Diphtheria and Membranous Croup.—Fourteen cases of Diphtheria and five of Membranous Croup were notified, three of the former and all of the latter died. These diseases, like Scarlatina, have also increased during the year. The same measures were adopted as in the cases of Scarlatina. Inquiries were made regarding the milk supply, but no connection was found. No infectious disease occurred amongst the persons employed in the various dairies and milk shops.

Two cases of *Typhoid* fever were notified: one was a child of two years and the other a man in Church Lane, who went into the Hospital. The water supply was in both cases good, and they were unusually mild cases.

II.—NOT NOTIFIABLE.

Measles.—Only a few isolated cases occurred in the beginning of the year—one child died in January.

Whooping Cough.—This disease existed in a very moderate degree; six deaths of very young children were registered and four of those occurred in December.

Diarrhœa.—Considering the extremely hot summer, the number of severe cases of Diarrhœa was very small. Two deaths of children under one year were registered.

Influenza.—Epidemic Influenza prevailed in the beginning of the year, a few scattered cases occurred during the Summer, but in November and December it became very active; a great number of people were attacked and four persons died in December. There is now little doubt that Epidemic Influenza is a highly infectious disease, and the proper means of checking it are as for other infectious diseases, isolation of the sick and disinfection of premises.

INSPECTIONS AND OTHER SANITARY WORK.

At different times special inspections were made of various localities in connection with infectious diseases. The result of those inspections and various other matters were brought before you and dealt with at the regular monthly meetings. A systematic inspection of the District was made in September. An important sanitary defect was caused by the want of ash-pits

and by ash-pits without proper covers. It is of importance that every receptacle for dust, house and kitchen refuse should be kept dry and protected from rain, as the presence of moisture hastens putrefaction and the production of bad and offensive smells. Many of the brick dust-bins and also some of the galvanized-iron boxes were found without covers. The attention of the inhabitants was called to the necessity of frequently cleansing their cisterns and to the importance of keeping them covered. Some of the cisterns are placed in improper places, as under floors where access is difficult and therefore the cleansing neglected. In the back gardens of many cottages, animals such as fowls, rabbits and ducks were kept. No objection could be raised in cases where the animals are kept clean and dry, but in many places the animals were crowded together with no proper shelter and the yards were kept in a dirty condition and were much worse after a fall of rain. Wherever such conditions existed, the owners were warned that notices would be served if the sanitary condition of their premises were not improved.

In some cottages it was found that the sink-pipes discharged directly into the w.c. pans. In every case the attention of the owners was called to remedy that defect which was highly prejudicial to health.

The Sanitary Arrangements of the Schools were also found in an unsatisfactory condition, and the Managers now contemplate erecting new conveniences, and connecting them with the main sewer.

Sanitary defects were found in the w.c's. of the South Western Railway Station, and information was given to the Officers of the Company, who lost no time in causing the necessary alterations to be made. A letter was also written to the same company to discontinue the practice of unloading trucks of London manure at the station, as those trucks often contained offal, putrid fish, and decomposing vegetable matter.

In March, I inspected a piece of grazing land near Fulwell Road, where the contents of a cess-pool were thrown on the grass about ten yards from the dwelling houses and close to the gardens, and no attempt was made to cover the filth. Three persons who committed the offence were summoned before the Magistrates and they were fined two shillings each.

The Slaughter-houses, Dairies and Bake-houses were periodically inspected and found in a satisfactory condition.

REMOVAL OF DUST AND HOUSE REFUSE.

There are at present two horses and carts employed to remove the contents of the dust-bins, and as the number of houses in the district is over 2,000, they can only visit a house once in three weeks. I should advise the Sanitary Authority to employ additional labour for a more frequent removal, especially during the summer.

WATER SUPPLY.

The Water Supply from the Grand Junction Water Works Company was good during the year. During the frost in January, many pipes got frozen and the attention of the Company was called to the insufficient number of stand-pipes.

The Water of 25 wells was analysed and eighteen were found contaminated with organic matter. Notices were served and in each case a proper supply of water has been provided.

In view of a probable invasion of Cholera, the Sanitary Committee took into consideration the danger which might arise from the great and increasing number of house-boats on the River Thames, whose inmates throw into the water a variety of refuse which imperils the purity of the water. As great danger in the propagation of Cholera poison is caused by the impregnation of drinking water with sewage impurities, the Committee has appealed to the Thames Conservancy Board, calling attention to the subject and asking the Conservators to enforce the regulations thoroughly for maintaining the purity of the river.

Two notices were received from the Port Medical Officer in Greenwich of the arrival of three persons in Teddington, who came from Cholera infected Continental Ports. They were all visited and found to be in good health.

One case of *Over-Crowding* came under notice. One woman and eight children occupied one room, which contained only one bed. A notice was served on the owner and was at once complied with.

Private Roads.—I made a special report about the condition of Coburg, Coleshill, Clarence and Florence roads, which are all Private Roads. They are all badly drained and many stagnant pools contaminated with putrid organic matter weree prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants. Notices were served on the various owners, to put these roads into proper repair. The work is at present not completed and the west end of Florence Road is still in a very unsatisfactory condition.

Nuisances.—About 300 nuisances were reported and dealt with:—

171	arose from Overflowing Cess-Pools
10	from Broken and Defective w.c.'s
19	„ Choked Drains
5	„ Improper Deposit of Cess-Pool Matter
5	„ Insufficient Ventilation of Drains
7	„ Defective Flushing Arrangements of w.c.'s
30	„ Defective Traps of Drains and Drains without Traps
8	„ Defective Drains
6	„ Accumulation of Offensive Matter

7	from Damp Walls
25	„ Drinking Water Cisterns having no Covers
1	„ Dirty Cistern
1	„ Defective Roof Guttering
3	„ Water in Cellars
1	„ Bad Smells from Pig Styes
1	„ Defective Urinal

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

It is with much satisfaction that I have to report that the sewers were opened for the reception of Sewage in the beginning of May, since which time 725 houses have made their connection with the system. This has been the means of affording relief to many parts of the district where cesspools were so numerous that the subsoil may be said to have been literally saturated with liquid filth and the emanations therefrom were decidedly injurious to health. It now remains only for the sewers to be carried through the private roads to give every owner of house property in the district an opportunity of ridding himself of a large and generally increasing expense, and his tenants of a continually recurring nuisance caused by the emptying of overflowing cess-pools.

The scheme of sewerage Private Roads is now in hand, and there is no doubt that in a few months the work will be in progress.

During the summer great nuisance was caused by the offensive smells, which came from the sewer-manholes in the roads. These smells arose no doubt chiefly in consequence of the exceptionally dry and warm weather which prevailed during the summer, but many of them arose also by reason of the quantity of the sewage in the sewers being small, and consequently the rate of flow being not sufficient to cause the sewers to be self-cleansing. Another cause of the bad smells no doubt was that cess-pool matter was emptied or allowed to run into the sewers when connections were being made. One case of wilful emptying of cess-pool matter down a water-closet, was discovered and the offender proceeded against, a small fine being imposed by the Magistrates.

The Board have under their consideration the question of erecting Ventilating Shafts, and a few have been ordered to be erected as specimens. If it is found that these are successful in removing the offensive smells, it would be advisable to erect a number of them throughout the district.

The disposal of the sewage is satisfactorily effected at the Works in Broom Road. The Sewage is precipitated by Lime and Sulphate of Alumina in four tanks. It is intended to pass the effluent over about 7 acres of land, which has been underdrained and sown with Rye-grass, but up to the present

the land filtration has not commenced, the effluent running direct from the settling-tanks into the river. The Inspectors of the Thames Conservancy Board frequently examine this effluent, and it has been found satisfactory.

The Works have been carried on without causing any nuisance to adjoining owners.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

Your Board have fully considered the necessity of the district possessing hospital accommodation for the reception of Infectious Diseases. As a preliminary step of grappling with this difficult question your Chairman has invited representatives of three adjoining Sanitary Authorities—East Molesey, Hampton, and Hampton Wick, to a Conference, in order to ascertain whether those districts are inclined to form a combined district. It is evident that such a combination would be a great advantage, as greater efficiency and considerable saving of expenses could be effected. After the second meeting, the Delegates of Hampton and East Molesey gave notice that they were not prepared to proceed further in the matter. Teddington and Hampton Wick were the only two Boards favorable to the combination. The Conference was held in December, and since then nothing has been done, and the need of such an Institution still continues. Strict isolation is acknowledged to be of paramount importance in any attempt to check the spread of Infectious Diseases, and if this cannot be carried out, the Infectious Diseases Notification Act loses much of its value. Although the proposal of a combination of districts has fallen through, I hope the Board will not relax their efforts to overcome the obstacles and to bring the matter to an early satisfactory conclusion.

I remain,

GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient Servant,

TH. GUNTHER, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Hampton Wick,
January, 1894.

Tabular Statements accompanying Medical Officer of Health's
Annual Report on the Sanitary condition of the District of Teddington,
for the year 1893.

Table A of Deaths during 1893.

Under one year	.....	.....	.....	47
1 and under 5	.....	.....	.....	21
5 „ 15	.....	.....	.....	14
15 „ 25	.....	.....	.....	3
25 „ 65	.....	.....	.....	45
65 and upwards	.....	.....	.....	33
				—
At all ages				163
				—

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Scarlatina	....	....	...	4
Diphtheria	....	....	....	1 under five years.
„	....	....	....	2 five years and upward.
Membranous Croup	....	....	....	4 under five years
„	„	....	....	1 five years and upwards
Measles	....	....	..	1 five years and upwards
Whooping Cough	....	....	....	6 under five years
Diarrhœa	....	....	....	2 „ „
Phthisis	....	....	....	4 „ „
„	....	....	....	16 five years and upwards
Bronchitis	....	....	}	4 under five years
Pneumonia	....	....		7 five years and upwards
Pleurisy	....	....	....	
Heart Disease	....	....	...	8 „ „
Injuries	....	....	....	1 under five years
„	....	....	....	6 five years and upwards
All other diseases	....	....	....	45 under five years
„	„	....	....	51 five years and upwards
Total				67 under five years
„				96 five years and upwards

Table B of Population, Births, and New Cases of
Infectious Sickness.

Population Census 1891	10,025
Estimated to middle of 1893.....	11,000
Registered Births	277

CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS.

Small pox	1 five years and upwards
Scarlatina	24 under five years
„	124 five years and upwards
Diphtheria	1 under 5 years
„	13 five years and upwards
Membranous Croup	4 under five years
„	1 five years and upwards
Enteric or Typhoid Fever...	1 under five years
„ „ „	1 five years and upwards
Erysipelas	14 five years and upwards

The Notification of Infectious Disease has been compulsory in the District since February, 1890.

There is no Isolation Hospital.