

**Report on the epidemic of typhus in Aberdeen during the years 1863-1866
/ by R. Beveridge.**

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REPORT

ON THE

EPIDEMIC OF TYPHUS

IN

ABERDEEN,

DURING THE YEARS 1863-1866.

BY

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PATHOLOGIST TO THE ROYAL INFIRMARY.

ABERDEEN:

PRINTED BY ARTHUR KING & COMPANY,

CONCERT COURT, BROAD STREET.

1868.

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The first table
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The ninety-first table
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The ninety-third table
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The ninety-seventh table
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The hundredth table

TO THE

PRESIDENT AND MANAGERS

OF THE

ROYAL INFIRMARY.

MY LORD PROVOST AND GENTLEMEN,—

I take leave to submit to you a set of Tables exhibiting the condition of Aberdeen as to Epidemic disease during the three years, commencing September 1, 1863—being the time during which the last outbreak of Typhus raged—in the hope that they may prove useful in considering the question of the necessity for a Fever Hospital.

Table No. 1, with the detailed remarks appended to it, shows the progress of Typhus during this time the localities where it chiefly raged, and the mode in which it spread through the town. From this it appears very plainly :—

1st. That Typhus is chiefly to be found not so much in low lying, imperfectly drained, and consequently dirty parts of the town, as in the crowded districts, and there-

fore that overcrowding, if not the actual cause of the disease (as I believe it to be), is certainly the most active means of disseminating it.

2nd. That the most effectual means of checking the disease is by diminishing the number of inmates of an infected house, and removing at once the individuals labouring under the disease. The remarks appended to the Table show that in many cases where this was done, the disease ceased.

Table No. 1 is deduced solely from the residences of patients admitted into the Hospital, but that it represents fairly the general progress of the disease over the town, is shown by Table No. 2, which exhibits a comparison of the number of deaths occurring in the Hospital with those occurring in the different localities, as taken from the books of the Registrars. From this it appears that the number of cases and of deaths in the Hospital did not amount to the half of all that occurred in town, and from this also an estimate may be formed of the actual extent of the disease.

It is frequently stated that when an Epidemic occurs, other contagious diseases subside. That such is not the case, is shown by Table No. 3, which exhibits the number of cases of contagious disease actually accommodated

in the Infirmary at the beginning of each week during the period referred to. This Table shows that during the attack of Typhus, Smallpox and Scarlatina were both epidemic ; and it will also afford the means of arriving at an estimate of the amount of accommodation requisite for the treatment of such diseases.

I am,

MY LORD PROVOST AND GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient Servant,

R. BEVERIDGE.

THE appended Table shows the places of residence of all the cases of Typhus admitted into the Infirmary during the three years commencing September, 1863; and although the numbers here given do not probably much exceed one-third of the total number of cases occurring in Aberdeen during that period, yet a consideration of them may afford a fair idea of the course taken by this disease in spreading through the poorer part of the population. The following remarks may serve to elicit the leading points noticeable:—

SEPTEMBER, 1863.

Commencing in this month, the Epidemic seems to have appeared nearly simultaneously in several different situations. Setting aside those where merely isolated cases occurred, the leading places of outbreak seem to have been Ragg's Lane (from which came five cases, all members of the same family), Water Lane, Benzie's Brae, Shuttle Lane, Hutcheon Street, West North Street, and Peacock's Close. At the same time three cases were brought in from the country; one (fatal one) from Old Aberdeen, while the result of the rapid filling of the Infirmary Wards showed itself towards the end of the month, by three of the nurses being attacked by the disease.

OCTOBER.

During this month the disease continued on the increase in all the places above-mentioned, with the exception of Ragg's Lane, where the removal of the whole family first attacked seems, at this time, to have cut short the spread of the disease,—only one other case occurring here prior to November, 1864. The disease also appeared in Jack's Brae, Causewayend (where it continued with more or less severity for two years), Berry Lane (where it continued for three months, but with nothing like the severity which marked its re-appearance there in 1865 and 1866), Thornton Place (where the removal of eleven cases, comprising two families, seems to have stopped the disease, as only one other case was brought from that locality, namely, in November, 1865), Gardiner's Lane (where it continued to spread for seven months), College Street, Lower Denburn, House of Refuge, Loch Street, East North Street, and Gallowgate, which last place, along with the courts opening off it, continued to provide a steady supply of cases from this date to the end of the Epidemic. Cases still continued to arrive from the country, and three more of the nurses in the Infirmary were attacked, one of whom died. During this month also one of the Infirmary Physicians fell a victim to the disease.

NOVEMBER.

During this month the disease ceased in Benzie's Brae, but continued to spread in the other localities named, especially Causewayend, and extended also to

Albion Street, Green, Smith's Court, Castle Street, (where it continued three months, and where the simultaneous removal, at this time, of four of the same family seems to have checked its spread for three weeks), Upper Denburn, Littlejohn Street (where it continued for five months), and Woolmanhill. Cases still continued from the country, and two more of the nurses, with three of the patients of the Infirmary, were attacked.

DECEMBER.

This month witnessed the close of the attack in Berry Lane, Loch Street, and East North Street, for the time at least, but it continued in the other localities named, and most notably so in Shuttle Lane (which furnished ten cases from eight different families), and extended to Spring Garden (where it lingered four months), Shiprow (where, with occasional intervals, it continued for two years), Leadside (where it lasted five months), Catherine Street (where the removal of four members of the same family, within the space of two days, seems to have checked its spread, as only one other case was brought from that locality, and that in June, 1864), Frederick Street (where the removal at intervals of two members of one family, and five of another, was followed in the succeeding month by three more cases which comprised the whole number there), the Poor-House (which for four months continued to furnish cases), Links Street, and Virginia Street (where the disease continued steadily for a year). Cases still continued to arrive from the country, and three nurses and three patients in the Infirmary were attacked.

JANUARY, 1864.

In this month occurred the last of the cases from Smith's Court, Castle Street, Hutcheon Street, and from the Green, but the disease continued in the other localities named, and especially in Water Lane, Causewayend, Lower Denburn (where, after this time, it ceased for three months), and it also appeared in Pork Lane (where it raged with severity for four months), Church Street (where the simultaneous removal of four members of the same family seems to have stopped its progress, as only one other case appears from that quarter), Meal Market Street (where it lasted but two months), Guestrow (where it continued five months at this time), the Victoria Lodging House (where it also continued five months), Nelson Street (where, including Nelson Lane, it lasted three months), George Street (where at this time it continued four months), Park Street (where it continued five months), and Upperkirkgate (where, with one or two intervals, it continued sixteen months). Five cases were brought from the outskirts of the town, and two patients and two nurses in the Infirmary were attacked.

FEBRUARY.

During this month the chief seats of the disease, among places already mentioned, were Albion Street, Gardiner's Lane, Guestrow, the Poor-House, West North Street, and Virginia Street, while of new localities it appeared in Footdee (where it continued for four months), and Trinity Street (where it lasted for three months);

and at the same time one nurse and four patients in the Infirmary were attacked; and another of the Physicians fell a victim to the disease.

MARCH.

This month was characterized chiefly by a continuance of the disease in localities already specified, but especially in Pork Lane and Water Lane, while the principal attack of the disease was now closed in Jack's Brae, Peacock's Close, the Poor-House, and Littlejohn Street. Ten cases were brought from the country, and four patients in the Infirmary were attacked.

APRIL.

In this month the disease died down in several places, as in West North Street, Gardiner's Lane, Albion Street, Leadside, Spring Garden, George Street, Trinity Street, and Pork Lane, in which last, however, it was during this month severe, as it was also in Water Lane and Footdee. It appeared also in James Street, from which came seven cases, but seems not to have spread there, as only one other case was brought from that quarter; and a second outburst occurred in Loch Street, which lasted four months. The numbers in the Infirmary having been by this time much thinned, only one patient there was attacked.

MAY.

The chief sources of cases during this month were Causewayend, Gallowgate, Virginia Street, and Shuttle

Lane, in which last place, the disease now ceased, as it did also in Footdee, Park Street, and Victoria Lodging House ; of new localities it appeared in Seamount Place (where, however, it did not last—only one case occurring next month, and none for three months subsequent), and in Hardgate (where it lasted for three months). No case appeared in the Infirmary during either this or the succeeding month.

JUNE.

In this month cases came chiefly from Gallowgate, Lower Denburn, and Virginia Street, while in College Street they ceased for a time.

JULY.

Gallowgate still continued the principal source of cases, and these now ceased in Hardgate, Loch Street, and Upper Denburn. A fresh outbreak occurred in Pork Lane, which, however, did not last, while from East North Street came five of the same family at the end of this and beginning of the succeeding month. One patient in the Infirmary was attacked in this and each of the three succeeding months.

AUGUST.

Gallowgate still remained the chief source of supply, while in all the other localities where the disease continued to prevail, it had dwindled much.

With this month closes the first year of the epidemic,

and the situations where it most prevailed might be enumerated thus, the order in which they are put being according to the number of cases in each, and none being mentioned where fewer than ten cases occurred—Gallowgate, Causewayend, Park Lane, Water Lane, Infirmary, Shuttle Lane, Virginia Street, Loch Street, West North Street, Gardiner's Lane, Shiprow, Poor-House, Lower Denburn, Upper Denburn, East North Street, College Street, Albion Street, Peacock's Close, House of Refuge, Guestrow, Victoria Lodging House, Footdee, Frederick Street, Woolmanhill, George Street, Park Street, Thornton Place, Upperkirkgate, Jack's Brae, and Leadside.

SEPTEMBER, 1864.

The disease still continued to some extent in Gallowgate and Virginia Street, while it seemed drawing to a close in Lower Denburn and Woolmanhill. A fresh attack occurred in Littlejohn Street, but four of the same family having been at once removed, the disease did not again recur; and precisely the same thing happened in Burnett's Court.

OCTOBER.

The same course seemed to be continued, except that the disease now ceased in Virginia Street for a time. In College Street it re-appeared, but on the removal of four of the same family, it ceased, and did not re-appear for a year.

NOVEMBER.

Gallowgate still furnished the greatest number of cases, while the disease appeared again to a small extent in Leadside and Ragg's Lane, and an outbreak, lasting four months, occurred in Waterloo Street. No case originated in the Infirmary during this or the succeeding month.

DECEMBER.

Gallowgate still continued the chief seat of the disease, while in Shiprow it seemed to be nearly exhausted; and a fresh outbreak, much more serious than the former, and lasting seven months, occurred in Berry Lane, where, although six of the same family were removed at once, the disease, after a fortnight, continued to spread.

JANUARY, 1865.

Gallowgate and Berry Lane now formed the chief seats of the disease, which re-appeared in Woolmanhill, lasting now for five months, and in West North Street, where, with scarcely an interval, it lasted till the close of the epidemic. Four cases from the same family appeared from Upper Denburn, but were not followed by any more from that locality for two months.

FEBRUARY.

In this month the numbers from Berry Lane and Gallowgate dwindled considerably, so that John Street (where the disease now temporarily appeared), Upperkirkgate, and Waterloo Street, furnished the greatest number of cases.

MARCH.

This month furnished no cases from Gallowgate, a circumstance which had not occurred since October, 1863, and did not again occur till the close of the epidemic; but Berry Lane showed a largely increased number; and an outbreak occurred in Mutton Brae which lasted four months.

APRIL.

Berry Lane, Causewayend, Gallowgate, and Mutton Brae were this month the principal places, especially the last named, from which came at intervals, four of one family, and five of another. Both the parents in the latter case died, while the children recovered.

MAY.

The circumstances of this month scarcely differ from the last, except that the cases from Mutton Brae diminished, and that an outbreak occurred in Longacre and Upper Denburn.

JUNE.

In this month, the cases from Berry Lane and Mutton Brae ceased, as did also those in Longacre, but not until they had trebled the number occurring in the previous month. One nurse and two patients in the Infirmary were attacked.

JULY.

In this month, the localities were the same as last, with the addition of Guestrow, where an outbreak occurred, lasting three months; and one patient in the Infirmary was attacked.

AUGUST.

Causewayend and Guestrow now furnished the largest number, although the disease still continued in Gallowgate and West North Street, and three cases occurred in Trinity Street—being the first that year.

This closed the second year of the epidemic, and the localities arranged as before would stand thus—Gallowgate, Berry Lane, Causewayend, West North Street, Mutton Brae, Longacre, Upper Denburn, Upperkirkgate, Virginia Street, Waterloo Street, Woolmanhill.

SEPTEMBER, 1865.

In this month, the cases in Guestrow ceased for a time, and in Causewayend they ceased permanently. Some cases occurred in George Street during this and the next month, and a considerable number in Gordon's Court, Broad Street, Maberly Street, and East North Street. One patient in the Infirmary was attacked—being the last case of the kind.

OCTOBER.

The circumstances in this month were little altered—Gallowgate affording the largest number of cases, and one family of three members coming from Netherkirkgate.

NOVEMBER.

In this month the majority of cases were drawn from Gordon's Court and Maberly Street, and in the latter place the disease now ceased.

DECEMBER.

In this month occurred another serious outbreak in Berry Lane, which lasted till the close of the epidemic. An outbreak also occurred in College Lane, which lasted four months, while the number of cases in Gallowgate diminished, and those in Gordon's Court ceased. One family of four members was attacked in Carmelite Street, but no farther cases occurred there.

JANUARY, 1866.

In this month, the numbers were greatest from Gallowgate and West North Street, while a fresh attack occurred in Guestrow, lasting till the close of the epidemic.

FEBRUARY.

The only difference during this month was the cessation of cases from East North Street, their diminution in West North Street, and their increase in Guestrow, caused by three members of one family coming together.

MARCH.

This month witnessed the cessation of the outbreak in College Lane, where all the cases, although not belonging to the same family, came from the same house. The cases in West North Street now also ceased, so that the principal localities remaining were Berry Lane, Gallowgate, and Guestrow.

APRIL.

April presented no marked change, but the small number of localities where the disease continued, indicated the approach of the end.

MAY.

In this month the cases from Berry Lane ceased, as did those from Guestrow, but they still continued from Gallowgate, and six cases came from one house in Causewayend.

JUNE.

The cases from Gallowgate now ceased, and a rapid diminution of the disease occurred. It may, in fact, be said to have now ended, as with the exception of three cases from one house in Dee Village, occurring in July, that month and August presented only a very few isolated cases.

For the third year the localities arranged as before stand thus, Gallowgate, Berry Lane, Guestrow, Maberly Street, Gordon's Court, Broad Street, East North Street, West North Street, and College Lane.

For the whole period of the Epidemic, the localities chiefly affected (enumerating those only where upwards of 20 cases occurred) would stand thus :—Gallowgate, Causewayend, Berry Lane, West North Street, College Street, Infirmary, Virginia Street, Guestrow, Pork Lane, East North Street, Shuttle Lane, Water Lane, Upper Denburn, Castle Street, Shiprow, Broad Street, Upperkirkgate, Mutton Brae, Gardiner's Lane, Woolmanhill, Old Aberdeen, Lower Denburn, Longacre.

1803-1804

Page

1803-1804

1803-1804

1803-1804

1803-1804

1803-1804

1803-1804

1803-1804

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1803-1804

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TABLE No. 1. Showing places of Residence of Patients admitted into the Royal Infirmary labouring under Typhus during the Epidemic, 1863-1866.

[illegible]

TABLE No. 2. Comparison of cases and deaths occurring in the Infirmary, with deaths from Typhus in the town generally, as taken from the Registers of Deaths.

	Parish of St. Nicholas, exclusive of Infirmary.	INFIRMARY.			Parish of Old Machar.	INFIRMARY.	
		Deaths.	Cases.			Deaths.	Cases.
Gallowgate . . .	16	23	117	College Street . .	14	9	51
Causewayend . . .	8	6	66	Woodside . . .	10	0	
Shiprow . . .	8	2	30	Old Aberdeen . .	9	3	22
Guestrow . . .	7	4	39	Upper Denburn . .	8	4	32
West North St.	7	10	53	Leadside . . .	4	3	13
Virginia Street . .	7	3	40	Lower Denburn . .	3	2	21
Berry Lane . . .	6	8	61	Ten streets, Two			
George Street . .	6	3	17	each	20	9	50
Footdee . . .	5	3	13	Twenty streets, 1			
Nelson Street and	5	2	15	each	20	4	36
Lane							
Hanover Street . .	4	0	3	Deaths in Old			
Hutcheon Street . .	4	3	10	Machar Parish	88		
Wales Street . . .	4	2	6				
Water Lane . . .	4	5	34				
Loch Street . . .	4	3	25				
Nine streets, 3							
each, viz :--							
Catherine St. ;							
Frederick St. ;							
Garvock St. ;							
East North St. ;							
Park St. ; Park							
Lane ; Spa St. ;							
Shoe Lane ;							
Yeats' Lane . .	27	14	114				
Eighteen streets,							
2 each	36	28	169				
Forty streets, 1							
each	40	11	136				
Deaths in St. Nicholas Parish,							
exclusive of							
those in Hospital	198						

