

Report on the emptying of cesspools : 12th March, 1849.

Contributors

London (England). Metropolitan Commission of Sewers.

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Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
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Metropolitan Sewers.

REPORT on the Emptying of Cesspools.

THE emptying of cesspools by pump and hose into the common drains and sewers, and there washing away the soil, having, after a trial of more than twelve months, been proved to be far more cleanly, innoxious, expeditious, and economical than the former mode of bucketing out the soil and carting it away, it appears to be extremely desirable that the plan should be reduced to an organised system so soon as arrangements can be made to effect that object.

With this view, we beg to submit for the consideration of the Commissioners the following report thereon :

There are two descriptions of cesspools, namely, public and private. The public ones are those which are situated in courts, alleys, and other public places ; and the private ones are those in and about private houses. It is the practice to defray the expense of emptying the former out of the sewers rates, and of the latter by the owners or occupiers of the houses.

Under the present system, the emptying of private cesspools is charged at per cubic yard ; and the applicant is called upon to deposit a sum of money at the particular District Office at the time of making the application. The exact cubic contents of the cesspools cannot be ascertained, nor can the proper amount to be paid for the work be arrived at, until after it is executed ; and if, after the cesspool has been emptied, the cost is found to amount to more or less than the sum deposited, either the deficiency must be collected of, or the excess returned to the applicant.

This system occasions loss and inconvenience to both parties.

We therefore recommend that the private cesspools be divided into four classes, as follows ; and that the class of cesspool be ascertained, and the charge for emptying it paid, previously to the work being put in hand.

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The present mode of emptying the cesspools by day-work is unsatisfactory; and the amount paid for the work is considerably in excess of the amount received.

We recommend that the day-work system be abolished forthwith, and that the labour of emptying each cesspool according to its class be executed by contracts to be taken by the most intelligent of the workmen now employed, the Commissioners providing them with pumps, hose, machinery, water, and deodorising fluid.

During the last few weeks there has not been sufficient private work to keep the pumps fully at work, although there are a vast number of cesspools overflowing, and therefore requiring to be emptied. This the owners or tenants of the houses refuse to have done, unless they are compelled; and the consequence of their perverseness or neglect is, that the surfaces of the yards, areas, or floors are covered with soil, the emanations from which corrupt the atmosphere, and create disease to a considerable extent.

We recommend that the Court issue such orders thereon as may seem expedient under section 49 of the Metropolitan Sewers Act.

There are six pumps now in use, employing one collector, six foremen, twenty-four men, and six boys; altogether 37 hands, whose pay comes to 43*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* per week, or 2,268*l.* 10*s.* per annum. The superintendence alone costs 10*l.* 19*s.* per week, or 569*l.* 8*s.* per annum.

The expenses of superintendence may be reduced nearly one-half; and, at the same time, the entire work and the keeping of the accounts could be far better managed than they now are.

In order to effect this we recommend as follows:—

First. That a book (see Form No. 1) be kept at each District Office by the District Clerk, for the purpose of entering therein the names and addresses of all persons applying to have cesspools emptied.

Secondly. That at four o'clock in the afternoon of each day the District Clerk forward by post to the principal Office a list of all applications received by him during the day.

Thirdly. That a properly-qualified Superintendent of Cesspools be appointed under the Surveyor at a salary of 150*l.* per annum, who should give security, and the whole of whose time should be devoted to the service of the Commission.

That the Superintendent attend at the principal Office every morning at nine o'clock to receive and examine the lists of applications communicated from the District Offices; he should then, with as little delay as possible, proceed to each of the addresses, and there ascertain the class of cesspool required to be emptied.

That on the spot he make out a bill (see Form No. 2) to the proper person to pay for the work, charging the amount according to the class of the cesspool, receive the money at once, and write his name on the bill as an acknowledgment for the receipt of the same; and that he forthwith pay all monies thus collected by him into the hands of the Treasurer to the Commissioners.

Fourthly. That district books (see Forms Nos. 3 and 4) be kept by the

Superintendent, in which he should enter the dates of application, the names of streets and the numbers of houses in which the cesspools are situated, the dates when the amounts were received, the cubic yards of soil contained in each cesspool, the dates when the cesspools were emptied, and such remarks as may be needful.

Fifthly. That the Superintendent shall make up, and send in to the Surveyor in the afternoon of Wednesday in each week, returns (see Forms Nos. 4 and 5) of the private and public cesspools emptied during the week by each Contractor, with the classes of the cesspools, the cubic contents in yards of soil removed from each, and the sums of money to be paid to the Contractor for the work. That on these returns he certify that the cesspools have been emptied satisfactorily, and in conformity with the regulations of the Commissioners, and that the Contractor is entitled to receive the sum of _____ pounds _____ shillings and _____ pence, in accordance with his contract.

That the Surveyors certify as to the general correctness of the returns, and hand the same to the Clerk of Accounts, who should take the returns so certified as proper orders for payment to the Contractors.

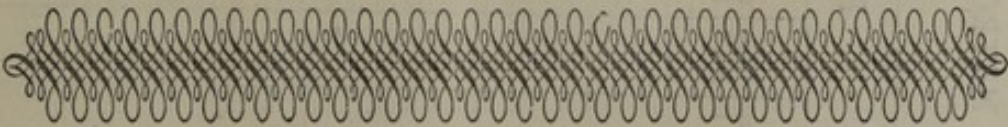
Sixthly. That the Superintendent -be held responsible to the Surveyors, and also to the Commissioners, for the due and proper performance of the work by the Contractors, and also for the correctness of the measurements, and the accounts returned by him; and that he have under the Surveyors the arrangement and direction of the Contractors' operations, and the care and management of all pumps, hose, and other machinery thereto belonging, seeing that the same are kept in good order and repair.

Seventhly. That two Assistant-Superintendents be appointed at a salary of 80*l.* per annum each, the whole of whose time should be devoted to the service of the Commissioners. They should attend to the directions of the Surveyors and also of the Superintendent, and see that the Contractors and their workmen execute the work in a careful, cleanly, and proper manner, in accordance with such instructions as shall be issued from time to time. They should also ascertain the cubic contents of the cesspools, see that the pumps, hose, &c. are taken care of by the Contractors and their workmen, and report to the Surveyor and to the Superintendent any neglect or omission.

LEWIS C HERTSLET, ORDER CLERK.
HENRY AUSTIN, CONSULTING ENGINEER.
JOHN PHILLIPS, CHIEF SURVEYOR.
THOS. LOVICK, ASSISTANT SURVEYOR.

12th March, 1849.

No. 2.



No. _____
METROPOLITAN SEWERS.
_____ District.
_____ 1849.
_____ class Cesspool to be emptied at

No. _____
for Mr _____
Contained _____ cubic yards
of soil. _____
£ s. d. _____

Received, _____
Superintendent.

No. _____
METROPOLITAN SEWERS.
_____ District.
Principal Office, 1 Greek street, Soho square,
_____ 1849.

Mr _____
To the Commissioners of Sewers.
For _____ class Cesspool to be emptied, situated
at No. _____

Received the above amount,
_____ Superintendent.

N.B. The Superintendent requests that any complaint of incivility
or of improper conduct on execution of the work by the workmen be for-
warded to him without delay.

No. 3.
METROPOLITAN SEWERS.

District.

PRIVATE CESSPOOLS.

Dates of Application.	Names of Streets and Nos. of Houses in which the Cesspools are situated.	Class No. 1.	Class No. 2.	Class No. 3.	Class No. 4.	Cubic Yards of Soil removed from each Cesspool.	Amount received for emptying the Cesspools. £ s. d.	Dates when the Cesspools were emptied.	Remarks.

No. 4.
METROPOLITAN SEWERS.

District.

PUBLIC CESSPOOLS.

Names of Places in which Cesspools are situated.	Class No. 1.	Class No. 2.	Class No. 3.	Class No. 4.	Cubic Yards of Soil removed from each Cesspool.	Amounts paid to Contractors.	Dates when the Cesspools were emptied.	Remarks.
						f s. d.		

No. 6.

METROPOLITAN SEWERS.

District.

RETURN of PUBLIC CESSPOOLS emptied from _____ to _____ 1849.

By _____

Names of Places where public Cesspools have been emptied.	Class No. 1.	Class No. 2.	Class No. 3.	Class No. 4.	Cubic Yards of Soil removed from each Cesspool.	Amounts to be paid to the Contractors.	Remarks.
						£ s. d.	

I hereby certify, that the foregoing cesspools have been emptied satisfactorily, and in accordance with the regulations of the Commissioners, and that the Contractor is entitled to receive the sum of _____ pounds, _____ shillings, and _____ pence, in accordance with his contract.

Superintendent.

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Metropolitan Sewers.

REPORT

ON THE

EMPTYING OF CESSPOOLS

12th March, 1849.