



1912-09-11

## Letter from George W. Goler to E[dward] T. Parsons, 1912 Sep 11.

George W. Goler

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*City of Rochester.*  
*Executive Division.*

*George W. Goler, M.D.*  
*Health Officer.*

*Health Bureau.* Sept. 11, 1912

Mr. E. T. Parsons,  
#1 Mosswood Road,  
Berkeley, Calif.

My dear Mr. Parsons:-

Mr. Adelbert Cronise has enclosed to me your letter of Sept. 4th and asked me to answer your questions.

First, as to the outbreaks of typhoid occurring as a result of the pollution of the Hemlock water supply: Ten years ago last March when the ground about the Hemlock hills was well covered with snow, a sudden rise in the air temperature occurred and the snow melted and rapidly ran into the lake. The water at that time was found to contain some colon bacilli, but no rise in typhoid took place. Nevertheless, at that time the people were warned to boil the water. Two years ago this present month, we found that the water mains in the north-western section of the city, with a population of about 50,000 people, the water had become contaminated with the river water. Upon examination it was found that someone had made a connection between the pipes of the Holley system (river water) and the Hemlock system, and that this polluted the Hemlock water. A marked rise in typhoid took place within the next month or two, some of which was no doubt due to this carelessness.

I am sending to you a copy of the laws and ordinances covering the water supply of Hemlock Lake. The city now owns most of the bed of the lake as well as 80% of the shore for 200 feet surrounding

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*City of Rochester*  
*Executive Division*

*Health Bureau*

*George W. Loefer, M.D.*  
*Health Officer*

E.T.P. #2- 9-11/12

the lake.

Rochester does not filter the water from the lake. The out-lying eastern section of the city is getting some water from the Rochester & Ontario Water Co., a company supplying filtered water from Lake Ontario. Not more than 5,000 people are supplied with this water at the present time.

I am sending you a copy of the last printed monthly report, giving the typhoid rate for a number of years. The death rate for Rochester last year was 14.87.

Trusting this information may be what you desire, and assuring you that I shall be glad to answer any further questions, I am,

Sincerely yours,

*G. W. Loefer*  
Health Officer.

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