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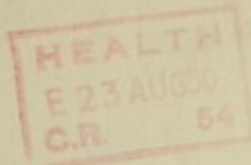
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ALNWICK

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1949



THOMAS NEWELL

(6/13)

1871

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THOMAS NEWELL

(6/13)

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer of Health B. Trevor-Roper, M.B.,C.L.B.,
M.R.C.S.,L.R.C.P.

Engineer and Surveyor..... Oswald M. Farrell, M.S.I.A.,A.F.A.S.

Sanitary Inspector..... Rowland E. Dunn, A.R.San.I.
Meat and Foods Inspector .

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Alnwick,
Northumberland.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Medical Officer of Health S. Trevor-Roper, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.
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Sanitary Inspector Ronald E. Dunn, A.R.P.S., D.P.H.
Food and Food Inspector

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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The report for 1949 is again of a brief interim character.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

The area of the District remains the same at 92,946 acres.

The number of inhabited houses is 3,842. Of the 70 new houses completed during the year 58 were with state assistance and 12 by private enterprise.

The Rateable Value is £49,015.

The sum represented by a penny rate is £198. 11. 11.

The population is estimated at 11,850, and this figure is taken as a basis in calculating the birth and death rates.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.

The number of births - corrected for inward and outward transfers - was 179, of which 98 were males and 81 females. Five of these were still-births and five were illegitimate.

Birth Rate 1949 - 15.1 per thousand per annum

" " 1948 - 16.5 " " "

" " 1947 - 19.6 " " "

Birth Rate 1949 - 17.09 " " "
(England and Wales)

Deaths.

The number of deaths - corrected for inward and outward transfer - was 154 of which 79 were males and 75 females.

Death Rate 1949 - 12.9

" " 1948 - 11.8

" " 1947 - 12.7

Death Rate 1949 - 11.7
(England and Wales)

Infantile Deaths.

The number of deaths in infants under one year of age was 9 (all legitimate) of which 3 were males and six were females.

2.

Infantile Death Rate 1949 - 55.8 per thousand births

" " " 1948 - 35.0 " " "

" " " 1947 - 34.6 " " "

Infantile Death Rate 1949 - 32 " " "
(England and Wales)

Causes of Death at all Ages.

Heart Disease.....	45.	Bronchitis.....	2.
Other Circulatory Diseases...	10.	Pneumonia.....	5.
Cancer.....	28.	Other Respiratory Diseases	2.
Pulmonary Tuberculosis.....	3.	Ulcer of Stomach.....	1.
Syphilitic Diseases.....	1.	Other Digestive Diseases..	2.
Influenza.....	2.	Nephritis.....	4.
Intra-cranial Vascular Diseases.....	19.	Premature Birth.....	4.
Road Traffic Accidents.....	1.	All Other Causes.....	23.
Infantile Diarrhoea.....	2.		

There were no deaths from Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Measles, Typhoid Fever, Infantile Paralysis or Puerperal Fever.

Infectious Diseases.

The number of Infectious Diseases - excluding Tuberculosis - notified during the year was 54, as follows:-

Scarlet Fever..... 31.

Measles..... 22.

Diphtheria..... 1.

Ten cases of Infectious Disease from the Rural District were admitted to the Alnwick Fever Hospital. Nine of these were cases of Scarlet Fever and one was a case of Diphtheria.

Tuberculosis.

Three cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified - there were no notifications of other forms of Tuberculosis.

LOCAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The ambulance, nursing and domestic help services are under the control of the County Council, and are quite satisfactory.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.WATER SUPPLY.

Despite the long drought during the summer, supplies of water to the main centres of population withstood the demands made upon them in a satisfactory manner. Where possible, failing supplies were augmented, either by the private owners of the supply, or by the Council. In some of the less populous areas and at isolated farms, where supplies failed, water had to be transported, usually from the nearest mains supply. Dairy farmers in these areas were hard pressed to maintain a water supply for all purposes and it was obvious that milk cooling by the normal method would often be impracticable.

Routine sampling of water supplies was carried out during the year, principally during the drought period. The following samples were taken from privately owned supplies:-

Location	Bacillus Coli per 100 ml.
1. Broome Park Farm Cottages (Spring Supply).....	Nil.
2. Bolton Hall, Bolton Village " "	Nil.
3. North Charlton Farm Cottages " "	Nil.
4. South Charlton Village " "	Nil.
5. East Bolton (Jenny's Lantern) " "	Nil.
6. Abberwick Farm " "	Nil.
7. Denwick Village " "	Nil.
8. Waterside Farm, Denwick " "	Nil.
(Supply to field trough proposed to be used by Girl Guide Camp)	
9. Edlingham, Lumby Law Farm " "	160
10. South Hedgeley, Powburn " "	30.
11. Howick Village Supply " "	Nil.
12. Edlingham Village Supply, Main Spring	7.
13. Lemmington Mill Farm Spring Supply	Nil.
14. Rennington, Low Hocket (Pipe in field)	90.
15. Rennington, Low Hocket (From Small Stream).....	Nil.
16. Rennington, Low Hocket (Pipe in field to South of house)	180.
17. Lemmington Branch Farm	8.
	Nil.

Routine samples from all Public Supplies were taken during the year by the Council's Surveyor, with, I understand, satisfactory results.

Two serious cases of contamination are worth recording, to demonstrate the danger from inadequate protection of water storage tanks. Both were in private supplies and in both cases there was a history, first of an increasingly unpleasant smell and then of foul taste. Only when the taste of the water became foul, was the Sanitary Inspector called in to investigate. The decomposed and maggot ridden bodies of rats in one case, and rabbits in the other, were extracted from storage tanks on the supply. Cleansing and heavy chlorination of tanks, pipes, etc., was carried out and the tanks were subsequently rendered vermin-proof.

WATER SUPPLY IMPROVEMENTS.

The Council having obtained authority to commence work on a new supply to Embleton and District, being part of the major scheme of water supply proposed for the District, work actually commenced on 2nd May. Two pump houses, a 200,000 gallon reservoir, and pipe laying to Christon Bank had been completed by the end of the year and the laying of a 5 inch main to Craster was in progress.

In the rest of the District, a piped water supply was laid into 19 houses and scullery sinks provided. This does not include houses which, after extensive re-construction, were completed and brought up to modern standards during the year.

The number of dwelling houses and the population supplied from Public Mains (a) direct to the Houses, and (b) by means of standpipes, is as follows

PARISH	No. of Houses.		Population.	
	Supplied direct to House.	By Stand-Pipe.	Supplied direct to House.	By Stand-Pipe.
Acklington.	50	-	196	-
Acklington Park.	4	-	15	-
Alnmouth.	196	5	748	20
Birling.	17	2	60	8
Craster.	42	25	154	89
Dunstan.	51	31	164	108
Eglington.	10	20	40	70
Embleton.	155	53	410	166
Felton.	158	6	468	16
Glanton.	94	7	280	20
Greens and Glantlees.	2	2	9	9
Hauxley.	24	301	100	1357
Howick.	1	3	3	12
Newton-on-the-Moor.	10	36	34	113
Newton-by-the-Sea.	27	32	83	86
Shilbottle.	341	-	1516	-
Sturton Grange.	18	6	66	30
Swarland.	87	-	304	-
Togston.	200	-	607	-
Warkworth.	325	-	1000	-
Woodhouse.	2	2	14	14
	1814	531	6271	2118

Summary.

Total number of houses supplied from Public Mains.

Direct..... 1814
By Standpipe..... 531

Total 2345

Total Population (Estimated) supplied from
Public Mains.

Direct..... 6271
By Standpipe..... 2118

Total 8389

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

No material progress was made during the year, in the augmentation of recommendations made by the Council's Consulting Engineers with regard to sewerage and sewage disposal. Works of this nature appear to be entirely inadequate, almost throughout the District.

In order to revise and extend existing records, a survey was commenced in September, which entailed a house-to-house visit to obtain such information as availability of taps, hot and cold, baths, sinks, sanitary fittings, etc. This survey had been completed in four Parishes by the end of the year and 807 houses had been visited. It is hoped that when further Parishes are completed, much vital information may be made available to the Consulting Engineers so that they may be in a position to proceed with detailed proposals for new works of sewerage and sewage disposal as the time becomes opportune.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

During the year, seven ash closets, fifteen privy-middens and one pail closet were converted into water closets under Section 47 of the Public Health Act, 1936. The Council made grants of £10 in twenty-two of these cases and of £8. 5. 0. in one case. The number of closet conversions exceeded that of the previous year by two. The Council refused to require compulsory conversion of several closets of conservancy type in Felton Village, but four of these were converted, following an informal approach by the Clerk.

Of the twenty-three completed conversions, thirteen required provision of either individual or collective septic tanks before conversion could be effected.

PUBLIC SCAVENGING.

This was undertaken in twenty-one Parishes by private contractors and while some of these persons were conscientious and completely satisfactory, the rest were quite irresponsible and heedless of the high importance of the work. Complaints from districts covered by these latter persons became so numerous that it was virtually impossible to check each one, and this became increasingly difficult after it was made public that the Council were going to carry out the work with their own vehicles and personnel at the beginning of the next financial year.

Collection frequency in the different Parishes varied from twice weekly to monthly, but some isolated dwellings were only visited quarterly for a collection of tins and bottles.

SALVAGE.

The salvage of waste paper during the year was practised for only the first six months, approximately. Paper collected by scavenging contractors was negligible and no collection of any sort would have been maintained without the help and co-operation of a voluntary organisation within the Women's Institutes, by whose efforts roughly 85% of the salvaged paper was collected. Sales of waste paper and rags during the year amounted to £46. 13. 0.

The middle of the year saw a complete cessation of waste paper demand by local merchants. Following subsequent withdrawal of the Direction on Local Authorities to salvage paper, the Council made it known that waste paper would no longer be acceptable. By that time the Salvage Depot contained some three tons of paper.

SANITARY INSPECTION.

Summary of Inspections & Reinspections under Public Health Acts.	No. of Visits.	No. of informal Notices.	No of defects remedied.
Structural defects (houses)	48	19	16
Dampness	32	16	9
Overcrowding	1	-	-
Water supplies (excluding sampling)	3	-	2
Food premises	15	8	6
Dairies	16	-	6
Slaughterhouses	4	-	-
Tents, Vans, etc.	7	-	-
Factories	13	6	2
Insanitary Ashpits, etc.	7	6	7
Offensive accumulations	4	2	3
Smoke nuisances.	3	1	1
Totals	153	58	52

GENERAL INSPECTIONS.

	No. of Visits.
Refuse Depots	38
Refuse Collection	24
Rodent Control	17
Dangerous Buildings	2
Fumigations	8
Public Conveniences	7
Street Cleansing	6
Petrol Stores	10
New Drainage (including re-inspections)	56
Nuisances (actual and alleged)	28
Miscellaneous (unmade streets, etc.)	14
Totals	210

DISINFESTATION.

Three cases of infestation by fleas and one of earwigs, were treated during the year. A re-infestation occurred in the case of the earwigs and a second, and completely successful treatment was carried out.

DISINFECTION.

Disinfection (formalin) of rooms, bedding, etc., after infectious disease, were carried out directly by the Sanitary Inspector in 7 cases. One case of disinfection of library books was carried out.

Disinfection after infectious disease in other cases was carried out by private contractors.

There was no occasion when steam disinfection of bedding was called for.

RODENT CONTROL.

The Council's Rodent Operator continued in full employment on the destruction of rats and mice in the District. Treatments of sewers, sewage disposal works, refuse tips, private and business premises, were carried out satisfactorily and there were no cases of domestic animals or fowls being destroyed.

A notable and heavy infestation by both rats and mice was dealt with at a Co-Operative Store in the District. Despite the availability of any number of alternative food supplies in the grocery department, a successful treatment was carried out.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The following foods (totals) were surrendered and condemnation certificates issued in respect thereof:-

Fish.....	28 lbs.
Fruit.....	15 cases.
Canned Goods.....	123 cans.
Bacon.....	5 lbs.
Butter.....	15½ lbs.
French Mayonnaise.....	228 jars.
Tomato Sauce.....	46 bottles.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.

At the 1st October, 1949, there were 115 registered cowkeepers in the District. In conforming with the Milk Regulations, 1949, lists of registered cowkeepers were prepared and submitted to the County Milk Regulations Officer, immediately prior to the ceding by the Council, of most of their powers in connection with the production of clean milk.

Under the Milk Regulations 1949, there are five registered distributors supplying milk in this district.

ICE CREAM.

There are no ice cream manufacturers in the District, but during the year six new registrations were made under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. These were all in respect of premises from which ice cream was sold from refrigerator cabinets in pre-wrapped blocks, purchased from manufacturers outside the district.

It has not been possible to take routine samples for a variety of reasons.

FOOD PREMISES.

Inspections of food premises during the year included two colliery canteens, a mussel bottling factory and a mineral water factory. Three fried fish establishments commenced operation after prior approval of the premises. The Council agreed to allow the manufacture of pickles to continue for a further two years, in a factory established in a temporary building, the condition of which was clean and satisfactory.

One mobile fish and chip van commenced operation during the year. This vehicle was converted for the purpose, entirely by the owner and was admirably equipped. A static preparation room for this van was converted from an existing building and approved for the purpose.

HOUSING.

The Council completed 58 permanent houses during the year and a further 12 houses were completed by private enterprise building. Demolition of 16 permanent houses was carried out and a further 3 were discontinued as houses and rendered un-inhabitable.

Two Nissen Huts, of ten, which had been converted for use as temporary dwellings, were demolished, and one which was closed for habitation was used as a store for salvaged paper.

In three cases, "squatters" re-occupied condemned houses where the tenants had been moved into Council Houses. Licences authorising temporary re-occupation were subsequently issued to the owners in respect of these houses. It is believed that a survey of condemned houses would reveal further unauthorised changes of tenancy, particularly prevalent during the war years, but it has not yet been expedient to carry out such a survey and it is doubtful moreover, whether any useful purpose could be served at the present time.

Under the Rural Housing Survey, inspections of dwelling houses were made in 13 cases. Of these, 6 were placed in Category 5 as being unfit and incapable of repair at reasonable cost, 5 were placed in Category 4, and 2 in Category 3.

During a house-to-house survey commenced in connection with obtaining statistics for purposes of sewerage and sewage disposal, provisional categorisations of each house were made, according to the impression given by the external structural condition, coupled with the previous local knowledge of the Inspector. Of the 807 houses visited, the following provisional categorisations were recorded:-

	Category				
	1	2	3	4	5
Acklington Parish	10	11	31	9	2
Longhoughton Parish (inc. Boulmer)	10	15	85	43	12
Shilbottle Parish	60	109	128	83	12
Togston Parish	10	6	134	20	17
	90	141	378	155	43

FACTORIES.

There are 55 Factories on the register and of these 33 are Factories in which mechanical power is used and the Council is responsible for ensuring that sufficient and suitable sanitary conveniences are provided. In the remaining 22 Factories, where no mechanical power is used, the Council are also responsible for ventilation, overcrowding, cleanliness, temperature, and drainage of floors.

There were, during the year, 5 sites where building operations were in progress and on these the Council were responsible for ensuring that sanitary conveniences were provided as set out in Section 7 of the Factories Act, 1937.

Only 13 visits were made to Factories during the year and of the 3 written informal notices served, all were complied with. They all concerned provision of sanitary accommodation.

(Signed) B. TREVOR-ROPER,

Medical Officer of Health.

