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Contributors

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ALNWICK

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

R E P O R T

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1950



1875

1875

1875

1875

1875

1875

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.

Old Court Buildings,
34, Green Batt,
ALNWICK,
Northumberland.

PHILIP HALLS OFFICE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

1911

Medical Officer of Health..... Dr. Fisher-Rogers, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.
M.B., B.S., D.P.H.

Engineer and Surveyor..... Charles W. Hurrell, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector..... Mr. Howland E. Smith, A.R. San. I.
Barr and Public Inspector.

Old Court Building,
10, Green Hall,
Aldershot,
Hants.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1950.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Report for 1950 is again of a brief character.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

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

The Number of inhabited houses is 3,886. Of the new houses completed during the year 30 were erected with state assistance and 14 by private enterprise.

The Rateable Value is £50,632.

The sum represented by a penny rate is £202. 3. 9.

The population is estimated at 11,770 and this figure is taken in calculating the birth and death rates.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.

The number of live births - corrected for inward and outward transfers - was 189, of which 100 were males and 89 females. Five of these - 2 males and 3 females were illegitimate. There was only one still birth.

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|------|-------------------------|
| Birth Rate 1950 | - | 16.2 | per thousand per annum. |
| " | " | 1949 | - 15.1 " " " |
| " | " | 1948 | - 16.5 " " " |

Birth Rate 1950 - 16.17 " " "
(England & Wales)

Deaths.

The number of deaths - corrected for inward and outward transfers - was 149 of which 67 were males and 82 females.

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------|
| Death Rate 1950 | - | 12.65 |
| " | " | 1949 - 12.9 |
| " | " | 1948 - 11.8 |

Death Rate 1950 - 11.6
(England & Wales)

Infantile Deaths.

The number of deaths in infants under one year of age was 4 (3 males and 1 female) all legitimate.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------|----------------------|
| Infantile Death Rate 1950 | - | 21.0 | per thousand births. |
| " | " | 1949 | - 55.8 " " " |
| " | " | 1948 | - 35.0 " " " |

Infantile Death Rate 1950 - 29.8 " " "
(England & Wales)

Causes of Death at all ages.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|----|
| Pulmonary Tuberculosis..... | 3 | Diabetes..... | 5 |
| Other Tubercular Diseases..... | 2 | Heart Disease..... | 41 |
| Syphilitic Disease..... | 1 | Other Circulatory Diseases..... | 25 |
| Infantile Paralysis..... | 1 | Influenza..... | 1 |
| Cancer..... | 27 | Pneumonia..... | 5 |
| Gastric & Duodenal Ulcer..... | 4 | Bronchitis..... | 4 |
| Nephritis..... | 3 | Other Respiratory Diseases..... | 3 |
| Prostatic Disease..... | 3 | Congenital Malformations..... | 1 |
| Accidents..... | 6 | Other Diseases..... | 14 |

Infectious Diseases.

The number of Infectious Diseases - excluding Tuberculosis - notified during 1950, was 62, made up as follows:-

| | | | |
|--------------------|----|--------------------------------|----|
| Scarlet Fever..... | 7 | Whooping Cough..... | 23 |
| Measles..... | 11 | Dysentery..... | 1 |
| Erysipelas..... | 1 | Infantile Paralysis..... | 13 |
| Chicken-pox..... | 6 | (9 Paralytic; 4 Non-Paralytic) | |

The cases of Infantile Paralysis were distributed in various parts of the District and were part of a general epidemic in the Country.

Tuberculosis.

Eight cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and three cases of other Tubercular Infections were notified during the year.

Local Health Services.

A Welfare Centre with Dental, Orthopaedic and Ante-natal Clinics, is situated in the Town of Alnwick, and provides advice and treatment for patients in the Rural District as well as the Urban District. Ambulance, Nursing and Domestic Health Services are under the control of the County Council, as are the Clinics already mentioned. The Infirmary and Fever Hospital are also available for persons from the Rural District.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.Water Supply.

The new Embleton and District Water Supply Scheme was completed and put into operation, serving Craster, Dunstan, Embleton including Christon Bank, and Newton by the Sea.

A Ministry of Health enquiry was held in June into proposals to extend the Embleton and District Supply as far South as Longhoughton, including Boulmer.

Complaints of discolouration were made by the Hauxley consumers, and shortage was experienced at Newburgh, on the Hauxley and Togston Supply.

Householders in Foxton Drive, Alnmouth, served by a private water supply also suffered acute shortage and water had to be supplied by cart during several weeks in the summer.

With one exception, the bacteriological quality of the public supplies was satisfactory.

A piped supply was laid to 10 houses during the year. The estimated number of houses supplied from public mains is 1,824, with 521 supplied by Standpipe.

The following are reports of water samples taken during the year:-

| Location. | Bacillus Coli per 100 millilitres. |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Bank House, Acklington (Spring) | Nil. |
| 2. Boulmer Moor (Well) | 8 |
| 3. Old Felton (Spring) | Nil. |
| 4. Lemmington Mill (") | 180 plus |
| 5. Lemmington Mill (") | 11 |
| 6. Alnmouth Village Supply | Nil. |
| 7. Swarland Shaft | Nil. |
| 8. Felton Mill | Nil. |
| 9. Swarland Shaft | Nil. |
| 10. Newton on the Moor | Nil. |
| 11. Station Cottages, Warkworth (Hauxley Supply) | 17 |

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

No progress has been made with new schemes for Sewerage and Sewage Disposal. The construction of a new sea outfall sewer at Craster, in connection with the Council's Housing estate there, is the only other work of note.

Refusal by the appropriate Government Department to allow submission of individual or combined new schemes in advance of the comprehensive details for the whole of the District, will mean that the house to house survey at present being conducted, must be completed for each Parish scheduled for new works, before any individual progress can be made. Unfortunately, the time available for survey work fluctuates considerably, and progress is not rapid.

Closet Accommodation.

During the year, 26 privies, 16 ash closets and 2 pail closets were converted to the water carriage system. Of these 32 were drained into septic tanks used either individually or in combination with other properties.

There was an increase of 21 over the number of conversions carried out during the previous year, and of the total of 44 the Council made a grant of £10 in 43 of the cases.

Following representation from Shilbottle Parish Council regarding 27 properties in Shilbottle Old Village which were provided with closets of conservancy type, an approach was made to the owners concerned and agreement reached regarding conversion for the most part, during the next financial year.

Public Scavenging.

In April, the Council made their first major venture into the field of direct labour, when they commenced the collection of refuse with their own vehicles and crews. Those Parishes in which Contract labour had been employed on this work were now covered by two vehicles, each manned by two men.

Up to the end of the year the new system had worked smoothly and despite an increase of 9d. per gallon in the price of petrol, there were encouraging signs that the estimates would not be exceeded and that overall, the service would be

DISINFESTATION.

No case of infestation of premises by insect pests was notified this year.

DISINFECTION.

Disinfection (formaldehyde) of rooms, bedding, etc., after infectious disease, were carried out directly by the Sanitary Inspector in 5 cases. In one case, after the death of a T.B. patient, clothing and bedding was taken to Walkergate Hospital, Newcastle, and steam disinfected without charge. The Sanitary Inspector was subsequently advised that no further work of this nature could be accepted by the hospital authorities and that future consignments should go to Ashington, where payment would be required.

RODENT CONTROL.

With modifications, a re-enactment of the Rats and Mice Destruction Act, 1919, was embodied in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, which came into operation on the 31st March.

Local Authority activities under the Act of 1919 were mainly through delegated powers from the County Council, whereas the new Act transfers almost the whole of the responsibility for operation, to the Local Authority. The work of the Council's Rodent Operator, however, continues to be much the same as before, although there is potentially greater power for the control of rats and mice.

Apart from routine and regular treatments, many interesting infestations occurred, one of note being in newly occupied houses on the Council's Estate at Craster. It was found here that the rats were obtaining entry by climbing some 8ft. up a pebble-dashed wall to a hole in the ceiling of a covered passage between two houses, and had actually nested below the hot water cylinder in one house.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The following are totals of various foods surrendered and condemnation certificates issued in respect thereof:-

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Canned Goods..... | 74 cans. |
| Bacon..... | 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. |
| Butter..... | 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. |
| Sugar..... | 1 cwt. |
| Eggs..... | 720. |
| Flour..... | 56 lbs. |
| Tomato Ketchup..... | 21 bottles. |
| Pudding Mixture..... | 11 packets. |

At a School Canteen in the District, the cook and staff noted a peculiar odour during the cooking of some minced steak. The opinion of the Sanitary Inspector was sought early on the following morning. At that time the stewed mince had neither abnormal smell nor appearance, but as it is not normally possible to judge cooked meat, particularly mince, a sample was submitted to the Public Analyst, who subsequently confirmed that the meat was innocuous.

It was felt that refusal to condemn, might deter the cook from reporting any suspicious circumstances in the future and on this account, unsound food might be served to the children. For this reason, every effort was made through

Ministry of Food channels, to have the meat replaced, but in the absence of a condemnation certificate, the efforts proved fruitless.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.

The County Milk Regulations Officer reports that at the 31st December, the number of Registered Dairy Farms in the District was 112. This is a decrease of 4 on the figure for last year, four registrations having been terminated and one new registration approved.

There are still five registered distributors supplying milk in this District.

ICE CREAM.

No ice cream is manufactured in this District, but during the year, 9 new registrations were approved 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 manufactured outside the District.

A number of vans, mainly centred in the Urban Districts of Alnwick and Amble, sell loose ice cream in the Rural District.

FOOD PREMISES.

Inspections of food premises included colliery canteens, three school canteens, a mussel bottling factory and a mineral water factory. Visits were also paid to 7 shops selling food and there were a number of inspections of proposed catering establishments prior to the issue of a catering licence by the local Food Office.

Two static fried fish shops and one mobile fried fish shop ceased to operate during the year and have presumably been abandoned as such.

HOUSING.

The Council completed 30 permanent houses and a further 7 houses were built by other persons. Additional housing accommodation was also provided, in the form of conversions to flats, in 7 cases.

13 permanent houses and 3 temporary hutments were demolished during the year.

In conjunction with the survey for sewerage and sewage disposal, the following provisional categorisations under the Rural Housing Survey, were made.

| | | <u>Category</u> | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| | | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Alnmouth Parish | | 13 | 46 | 92 | 40 | 11 |
| Lesbury | " | 43 | 125 | 62 | 61 | 59 |
| Howick | " | 4 | 18 | 19 | 23 | 5 |
| | | <u>60</u> | <u>189</u> | <u>173</u> | <u>124</u> | <u>75</u> |

Under the Housing Act, 1949, two applications for improvement grants were received. One case, concerning the improvement of a block of 3 houses at Newton on the Moor was disapproved by the Ministry, but the other, a case of converting 6 houses into 4 at Beanley, was approved and work commenced.

FACTORIES.

There are 52 factories on the register and of these, 31 are factories in which mechanical power is used. The remaining 21 are not provided with powered equipment.

Three Council building sites were in operation and the temporary latrines were inspected from time to time. Insanitary conditions at these latrines were invariably remedied by verbal arrangement with the site foreman.

Only 12 visits were paid to Factories, and 3 informal notices were served in connection with them. At the end of the year, one notice (requiring means of escape in case of fire) was still outstanding.

(Signed) B. TREVOR-ROPER,

Medical Officer of Health.

