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Contributors

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R E P O R T
O F T H E
M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F H E A L T H
Y E A R 1 9 5 6

Richard Short, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S.Ed.,
L.R.F.P.S.(G), D.P.H.,
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Area Health Office,
Wagonway Road,
ALNWICK.

J.A. Staig, M.A.P.H.I.,
Public Health Inspector,
Council Offices,
36a Green Batt,
ALNWICK.



1956

To the Chairman and Members of the Alnwick Rural District Council.

It is my pleasure to present to you my second Annual Report, which is for the year 1956.

The Report shows a drop in the estimated population but this follows a possible peak year, i.e. 1955 when the estimated population rose by 290 to 12,530. This year the figure dropped by 20 and the number of births was reduced by 20. The birth rate of 14.22 is below the National provisional rate for 1956 of 15.7 per 1,000 of the population.

It is pleasing to report a drop in the Stillbirth Rate (21.97 per 1,000 total live and stillbirths) but the rise in the Infant Mortality Rate (28.08 per 1,000 live births) does not give ground for complacency. (The provisional National Infant Mortality Rate in 1956 was 23.8). Five babies died soon after birth, four of them within the first four weeks of life.

There was a decrease in the number of deaths but again the major cause was diseases of the heart and circulatory system, which accounted for 56% of deaths. Two cases of lung cancer were recorded against 1 last year, i.e. 22% of all male cancer deaths compared with 9% for 1955.

In my report for the previous year I referred to the changing pattern of disease and gave a table comparing pre-war years with 1955. This year I am including in my report two graphs, one showing the drop in diphtheria notifications and the more recent prevalence of poliomyelitis; the other showing the incidence and mortality from tuberculosis from 1921 onwards.

From the first graph it will be seen that during the pre-war period diphtheria was practically endemic. There ~~was~~^{were} two major epidemics viz: 1929 and 1945, and both epidemics occurred in the Radcliffe district. The immunisation programme against the disease started in 1943.

On the other hand, poliomyelitis was virtually unknown in the district before the war, but since 1945 has been more prevalent. This year 2 cases were notified, one paralytic and the second non-paralytic. Fortunately both cases were mild and recovery complete.

It is now hoped that the programme of anti-poliomyelitis vaccinations which started in October 1956 will prove as successful as that of diphtheria immunisation. A total of 57 children, born 1947 to 1954, received two inoculations of the British vaccine and parents were very pleasantly surprised by the lack of local or general reaction. There was certainly some apprehension before the start of the scheme, no doubt engendered by the National Press and the unfortunate experience of the Americans with the Salk vaccine. However, I was happy to find that this fear disappeared very quickly with the rising confidence in the British vaccine.

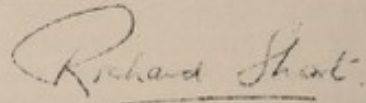
The incidence of tuberculosis has been declining, but the mortality rate has shown a greater reduction due to the effectiveness of modern treatment. As far as prevention is concerned, the County School Health Service is actively providing vaccination for school leavers to protect them during their most vulnerable years. From February 1955, B.C.G. vaccine was offered to the children and during that year 2,196 school children in the County were vaccinated; of these, 41 belonged to the district. During 1956, with only 18 leavers, 14 were given the vaccine. In addition 108 five year old children were tuberculin skin-tested and 4.6% gave positive reactions. The children who showed a reaction were referred to the chest clinic.

The cases of sonne dysentery were notified during the two middle quarters of the year and the infection was introduced from Amble. We were fortunately able to prevent a widespread epidemic and one interesting point resulting from our investigations was the isolation of 17 symptomless carriers from the 90 children attending a Shilbottle school.

The appointment of an additional public health inspector has been of considerable assistance to the department, and I am very grateful to the Council for their action. Soon after Mr. R. Lyall's appointment a start was made on a survey of the unfit houses in the district and the results will be found in the housing section of the public health inspector's report. There has also been a considerable improvement in the very vital duty of meat inspection and this is clearly visible in the increased figures for condemned meat.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee for their continued support and encouragement, and to express my gratitude to Mr. J. Staig and Mr. R. Lyall for their efforts and loyalty. I am also indebted to Mr. R. Rothwell, Clerk of the Council, and to Mr. O.M. Farrell, Engineer and Surveyor, for their help and advice.

I am,
Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard Hunt".

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS

The area of the district is 92,964 acres.

The number of inhabited houses is 4,107 and the number of new houses completed during the year was 15 by the Local Authority and 12 by private persons.

The rateable value is £103,399 and the sum represented by a penny rate is £406.

The estimated mid-year population is 12,510 and this figure is taken when calculating the Birth and Death rate.

VITAL STATISTICS

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	97	76	173
Illegitimate	2	3	5
Totals	<u>99</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>178</u>

Birth rate per 1,000 of the population .. 14.22

Still Births

Legitimate	4	-	4
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Totals	<u>4</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4</u>

Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births .. 21.97

Deaths of Infants under one year

Legitimate	5	-	5
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Totals	<u>5</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5</u>

Infant Mortality rate per 1,000 live births .. 28.08

Deaths from Measles	..	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough	..	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea	..	Nil

<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	62	73	135

Death rate per 1,000 of the population .. 10.79

Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis	..	Nil
Deaths from Other Puerperal Causes	..	Nil
Deaths from Cancer	..	18

<u>Table 1</u>	<u>CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tuberculosis (respiratory)		2	-	2
Tuberculosis (other)		-	-	-
Syphilitic disease		1	-	1
Diphtheria		-	-	-
Whooping cough		-	-	-
Meningococcal infections		-	-	-
Acute poliomyelitis		-	-	-
Measles		-	-	-
Other infective and parasitic diseases		-	-	-
Malignant neoplasm, stomach		3	3	6
" " lung, bronchus		2	-	2
" " breast		-	2	2
" " uterus		-	-	-
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms		4	3	7
Leukaemia, aleukaemia		1	-	1
Diabetes		1	1	2
Vascular lesions of nervous system		8	22	30
Coronary disease, angina		11	8	19
Hypertension with heart disease		-	4	4
Other heart disease		4	12	16
Other circulatory disease		3	4	7
Influenza		1	-	1
Bronchitis		-	3	3
Pneumonia		2	1	3
Other diseases of respiratory system		2	-	2
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum		1	1	2
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea		-	-	-
Nephritis and nephrosis		-	-	-
Hyperplasia of prostate		2	-	2
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion		-	-	-
Congenital malformations		-	-	-
Other defined and ill-defined diseases		10	4	14
Motor vehicle accidents		3	-	3
All other accidents		-	5	5
Suicide		1	-	1
Homicide and operations of war.		-	-	-
	Totals ..	<u>62</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>135</u>

Table 2 INFECTIOUS DISEASES

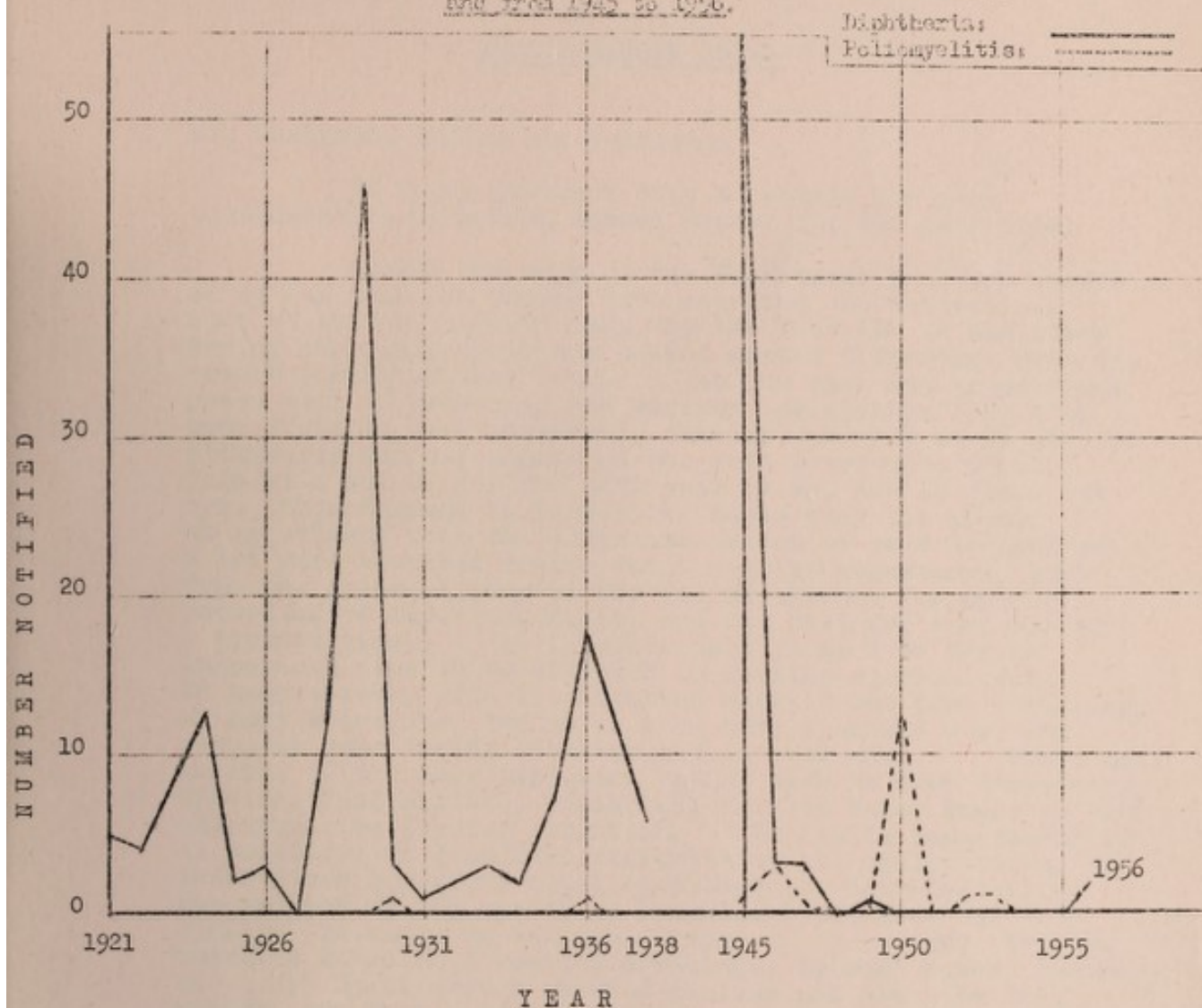
Scarlet Fever	4	Smallpox	-
Whooping Cough	20	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	2	Puerperal Pyrexia	-
Measles	18	Paratyphoid Fever	-
Diphtheria	-	Enteric Fever	-
Dysentery	27	Erysipelas	-
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	-	Food Poisoning	-
Pneumonia	2		

<u>Table 3</u>	<u>TUBERCULOSIS</u>	<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Other</u>	
		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
5 to 14 years		-	-	-	1
15 to 24 years		-	-	1	-
25 to 44 years		-	2	-	-
45 to 65 years		1	1	-	-
	Totals ..	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

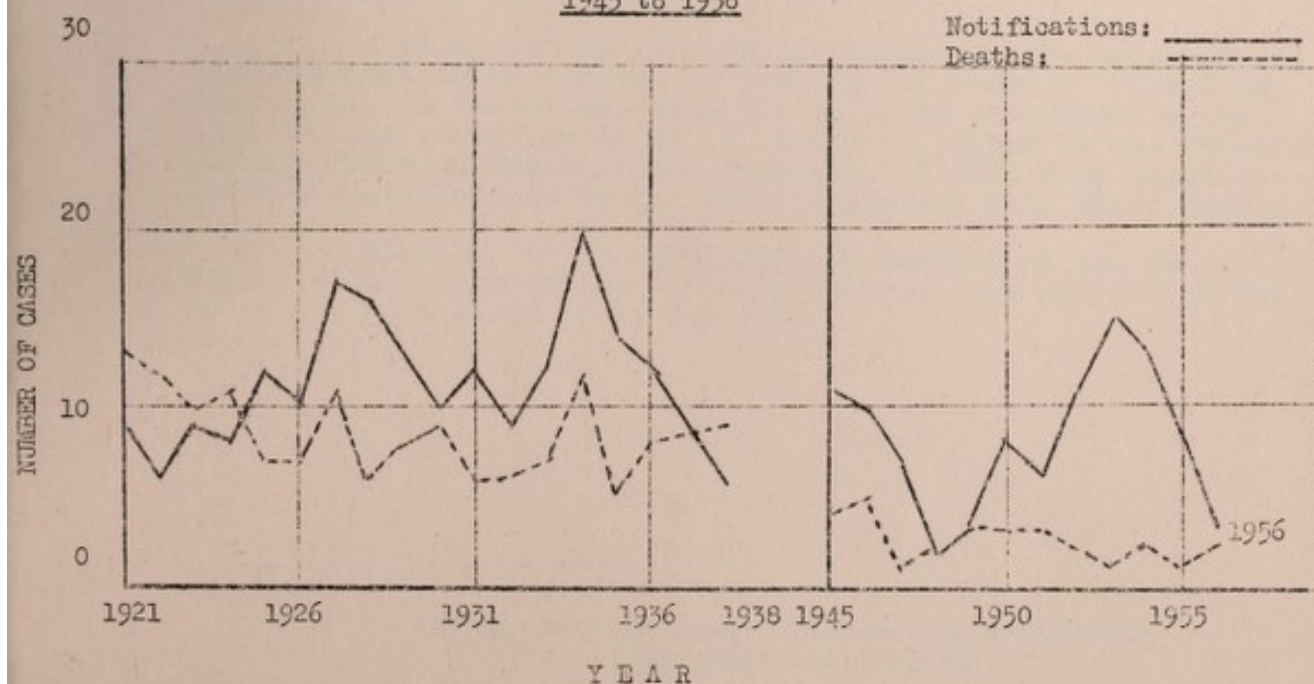
Table 4 INFANT MORTALITY

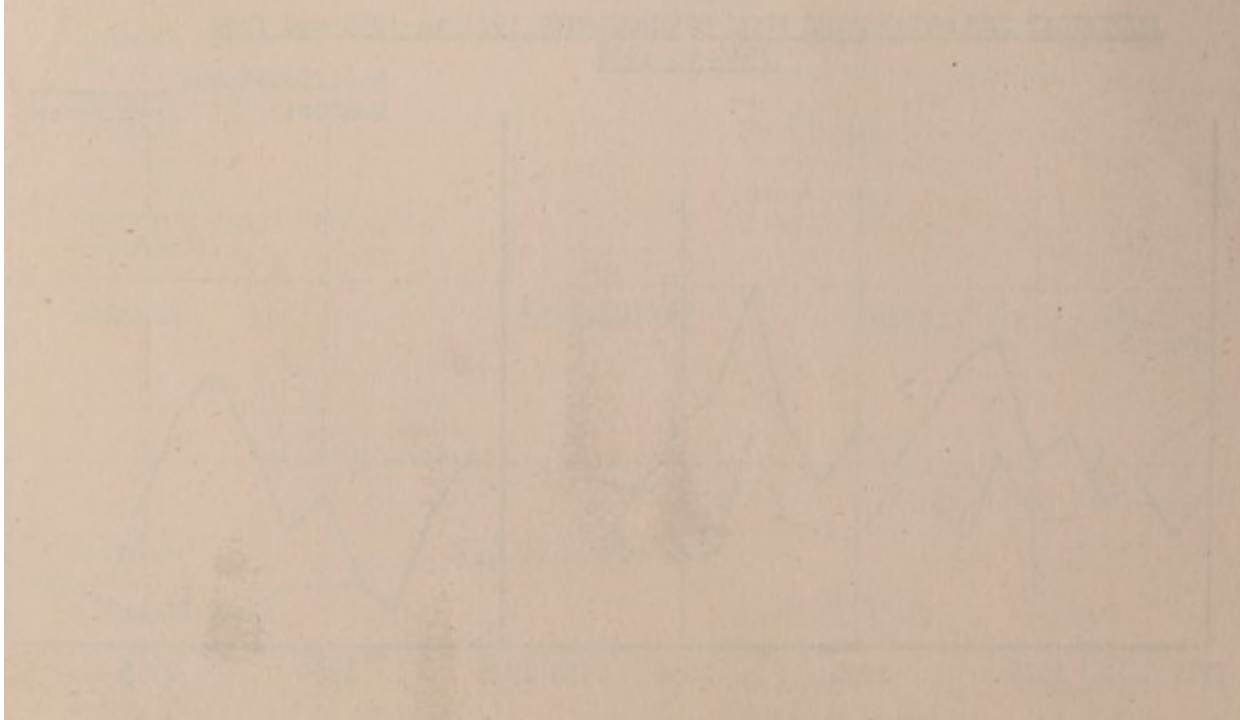
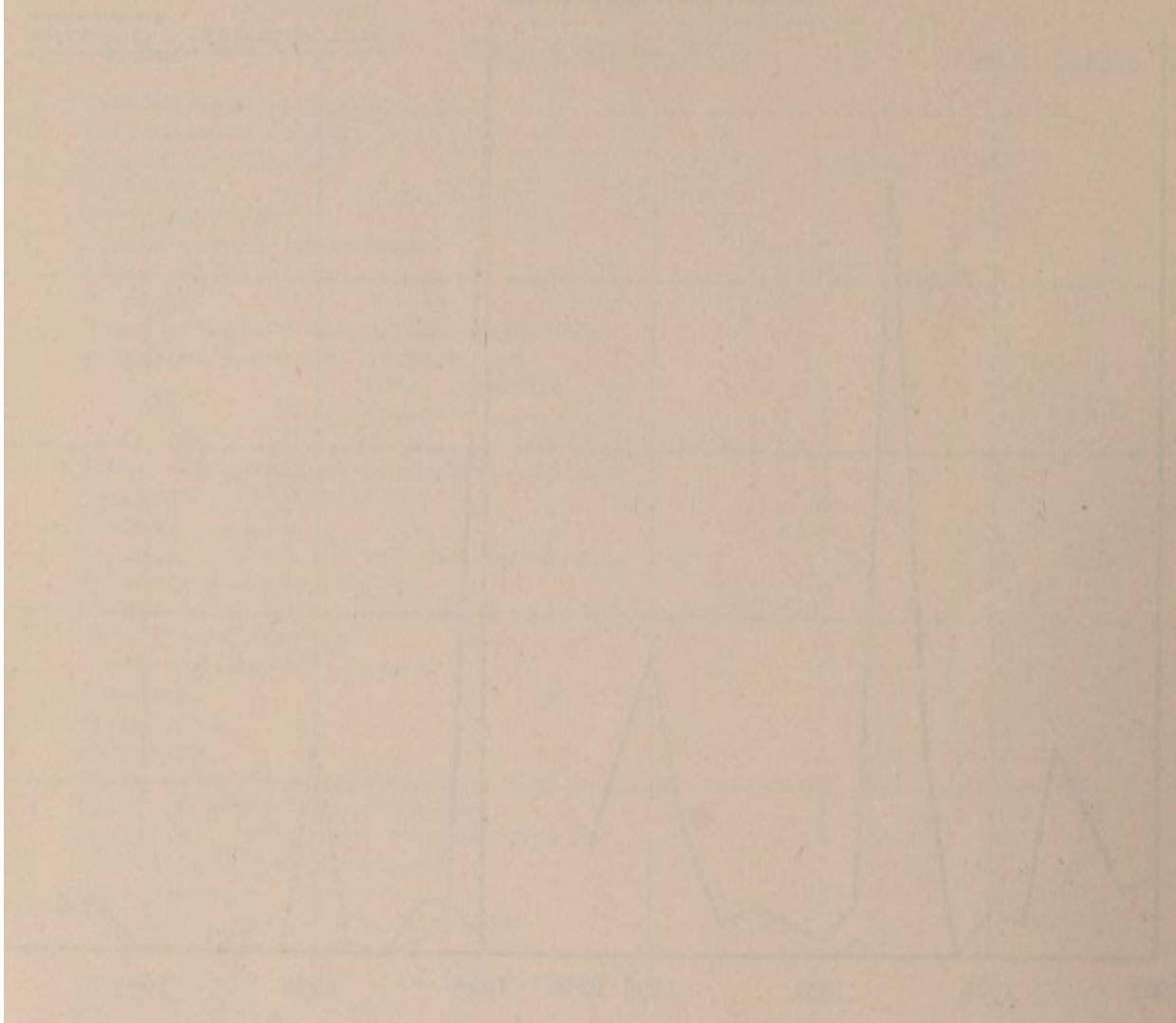
<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Place of Death</u>	<u>Age</u>
Intra-cranial haemorrhage, rapid birth.	Hospital	2 hours
Prematurity	Hospital	4 hours
Pulm. Atelectasis, prematurity	Hospital	1 day
Hydrocephalus, meningitis B. Coli.	Hospital	2 months
Haemorrhagic of newborn, pre-eclamptic toxaemia of mother.	Hospital	14 hours

NOTIFICATIONS OF DIPHTHERIA & POLIOMYELITIS 1921 to 1938
and from 1945 to 1956.



NOTIFICATIONS AND DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS 1921 to 1938 and from
1945 to 1956





ANNUAL REPORT 1956.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasant duty to submit for your consideration my Second Annual Report for the year 1956.

Whilst the work of the Department does not permit me to say that all duties have received one hundred per cent attention, nevertheless, by the increase in the staff during the year, there has been a marked difference from the report submitted last year. As the back-log in previous years work is overcome, and current legislation ceases to pour forth in ever increasing numbers, so will we be able to ultimately aim our sights at the full inspection target, This will not be for the next year or so, but it gives one more encouragement to tackle the tasks that lie ahead. It is evident that the increased amount of work necessitates a lot more clerical duties, which require adjustment, both from the re-organising of the filing systems for proper recording of important facts, and the need for more use of a typists time. It is uneconomic in my view for an Inspector's time to be absorbed in routine clerical work. To keep abreast with the incoming work it has been necessary, on many occasions for me to take home clerical work and complete same during evenings and at week ends. There are several of the more important tasks, such as Meat Inspection, Housing, Food Hygiene, Factories, Private Water Supplies etc. all requiring greater attention. In Health Departments it is essential to keep "case histories" of all action taken, as these facts can prove vital in subsequent administration. The present filing system is becoming overloaded and will require extension in the near future. A suitable storage cupboard would be a decided advantage, as many books, records, etc., are lying around on open shelves and not only look untidy, but they suffer from contamination by dust and soot.

I would like to record my appreciation of the assistance I have received from Mr. Lyall, who was appointed on 1st April, 1956. His value, particularly in regard to Housing and Meat Inspection duties, will increase as he becomes familiar with the District.

I wish also to express my thanks for the interest and encouragement shown towards my work by the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. R. Short, and also for the full co-operation and help on many occasions to Mr. R. Rothwell, Clerk of the Council and Mr. Farrell, Engineer and Surveyor, to whom I am indebted for his contributions to the section dealing with Water Supply.

Finally, to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee an appreciation of their interest and helpful advice which all have given me during 1956.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant

J.A. STAIG

Public Health Inspector.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC
INTEGRITY AND ETHICS. ANY STUDENT WHO IS
FOUND TO HAVE VIOLATED THESE STANDARDS
WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO IS COMMITTED TO
MAINTAINING THE INTEGRITY OF ITS ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS AND TO PROVIDING A FAIR AND
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TOTAL NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS, ETC.

Public Health Acts:-

Closest Conversions	36
Sewers & Drains	174
Infections Disease	
Dysentery	60
Others	4
Nuisances & Minor Defects	55
Dirty or Verminous Premises	7
Disinfection of Premises	1
Disinfestation of Premises	4
Moveable Dwellings	21
Watercourses	13
Water Supply	19
Public Conveniences & Street Cleansing	36

Food & Drugs Acts:-

Bakehouses	2
Cafes & Restaurants	1
Dairies	1
Food Shops	94
Food Preparation Rooms	5
Ice Cream Premises	3
Slaughterhouses	6
Meat Inspection	514
Unsound Food	11
Milk Supply	10

<u>Housing Acts</u>	213
<u>Factories</u>	7
<u>Petroleum Regulations</u>	15
<u>Pest Control</u>	11
<u>Cleansing Service:-</u>	
Collection	92
Disposal	83
<u>Erection of Public Signs</u>	18
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	32
<u>Interviews</u>	155
<u>Parish Councils</u>	8
<u>Area Meetings</u>	4
<u>Lectures</u>	2

WATER SUPPLY

Embleton and District Water Supply.

It was Resolved that instructions be given to the Engineer and Surveyor to proceed with the preparation of detailed drawings, etc., for the softening plant, for submission to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.

Pit Head Baths - Hauxley Colliery.

It was recommended to inform the National Coal Board that the Council have no water available to meet their requirements in this respect until such time as the Regional Scheme is completed and in operation.

County Water Supply - Consumption Figures.

The following is a summary of the estimated position of the gross total requirements for 1981, as submitted to the County Council after approval by the Alnwick Rural District Council.

Total population; 17,875.

1981 Domestic Allowance - galls per head per day;	40
Total Domestic Requirements at 40 G.p.h. per day;	715,000

Total Daily Agricultural Requirements	274,270
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Total Daily Other Non-Domestic Requirements	57,000
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Combined Total Non-Domestic Requirements	339,270
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Additional (Dom. and Non-Dom.) Allowance for Morpeth R.D.C. - Thirston:	8,000
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Gross Total, Requirements (Dom. and Non-Dom.);	1,054,270
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Temporary Shortages of Water Throughout District.

A prolonged dry spell prior to month of June gave rise to anxiety regarding the supplies, and public notices were displayed in several areas where these supplies were likely to be affected.

Following receipt of a letter from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, referring to the likelihood of serious water shortages, in many parts of the country before the end of the summer it was resolved that applications be made under the Public Health Act, 1936, for approval to extract and treat water from the Swarland Burn to augment the supply to Felton and District if the necessity should arise. It was resolved that the consulting Engineers furnish an estimate of the cost of bringing the Longframlington Borehole into use on a temporary basis.

Because of the continued low yield of the several sources at Snableazes and Denwick Drift it was felt necessary to send further warning notices out to all consumers in the Alnmouth area towards the end of July.

Water Sampling

Chemical

One sample taken from private piped supply at Charlton Mires - High iron content but otherwise satisfactory,

Bacteriological

Ten samples taken -

One from mains supply (tap in Radcliffe) - Unsatisfactory.

Five from private piped supplies - 3 Satisfactory - 2 Unsatisfactory.

Two from tank at Birling Slaughterhouse - Satisfactory.

Two from stream supplying tank - Unsatisfactory.

Water Connections.

During the year there were 8 connections to domestic premises and 8 to trade premises.

SEWERAGEShilbottle.

A commencement was made with the new sewage disposal works to this village.

Rennington.

A complaint of the unsatisfactory state of the alleged sewage ditch at Rennington by the Parish Council was investigated and after a meeting on the site, the Council cleaned the portion between the bridges, and a small tributary from the North Farm was cleared by the farmer. The Castle Estates Company have been informed of their responsibility regarding the remainder of the brook course to South Farm.

Priority List.

The Engineer and Surveyor (Mr. O.M. Farrell) after consultation with the Medical Officer of Health (Dr. R. Short), and myself, submitted a list of villages requiring new or improved sewerage in a suggested priority scheme. After consideration by the Council the list was agreed in the under-mentioned priority:-

Togston and Acklington
High Newton by the Sea
Embleton
Christon Bank
Low Newton by the Sea
Boulmer and Longhoughton (Remainder of Scheme)
Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton
Warkworth
Rennington
Eglington
Newton on the Moor
Dunstan
Glanton
Alnmouth
Craster
Radcliffe, High and Low Hauxley

Many of these villages have either no proper sewerage, inadequate sewerage, or creating health nuisances at outfalls. Housing development is being restricted and conversions to water carriage system is delayed.

HOUSING

The total number of inhabited houses in the District is approximately 4107. The number of new houses completed during the year was 15 by the Local Authority and 12 by private persons.

41 houses were made fit by minor repairs under the Housing and Public Health Acts.

Houses demolished in Clearance Areas	16
Unfit Houses closed - Section 11 Procedure	6
Unfit Houses Licensed for temporary use	2

Under the Housing Act 1949 (Improvement Grants) the following applications were dealt with:-

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS - HOUSING ACT 1949.

	<u>No. of separate houses</u>
1. Applications submitted to local authority during year	3
2. Applications rejected	-
3. Applications approved	3
4. Total number of applications approved in your area since inception of scheme	138
(In Rural District, houses not included, in above table approved during 1956 for grant under the Hill Farming and Livestock Rearing Act, 1946-54.)	1

Two hundred and thirteen visits were made to houses under the Housing and Public Health Acts.

Radcliffe.

The National Coal Board were asked to consider proposals concerning the improvements to houses outwith the Clearance Areas.

Alnmouth.

The question of the best method of dealing with the dilapidated and sub standard houses in the Old School, Marine Drive area was considered and after several meetings it was decided to include all houses and the Old School in a Clearance Area.

Review of Existing Unfit Houses.

During the latter part of the year, all officially condemned houses were re-inspected an up to date register made of the occupied, and unoccupied but not yet demolished houses. It was found that the total number of houses still remaining were 132 and of these 67 were occupied; 52 empty not demolished; and 13 partly demolished.

FOOD AND DRUGS.Food Premises

The new Act 1955, together with the Food Hygiene Regulations 1955, came into force, but shortage of staff and time precluded any efforts to visit all food premises. Circular letters to all premises were sent, alongwith explanatory leaflets and a supply of Wash Hand Notices were obtained. Visits were only made to premises where other duties were carried out at the same time. The number of visits to all classes of food premises, vans, etc. was 103.

Slaughterhouses.

A report was submitted during the year showing the general sub-standard conditions of slaughterhouses in the area, when the new Model Byelaws Series III and IIIA and the White Paper on moderate concentration were considered by the Council.

It was felt that any decisions affecting the future life of slaughterhouses in this Area should be deferred until the Government defined its policy concerning small private slaughterhouses. Whilst the existing slaughterhouses cannot be considered as being up-to-date with modern hygienic practices, it may be that some could attain a good standard, by extensions to property and the installation of modern sanitary services. All slaughterhouses were maintained reasonable clean, although during actual slaughtering periods, restricted hall areas do not lend themselves to hygienic practices.

The following are the licensed slaughterhouses in the District, there being no changes during the year:-

Dodds	Glanton
Roland	Alnmouth
Moore	Warkworth
Taylor	Shilbottle
Clark	Felton
Scott	Craster
Howick Co-op Soc.	Embleton

The number of licensed slaughtermen in the district is 18, all of whom use humane methods of slaughtering. The number of visits to slaughterhouses for inspection purposes, including meat, were 520.

Meat Inspection

The following table gives an indication of the total animals killed in the district for the year ended, together with details of the number of carcasses and offal inspected and condemned.

Appendix.

Carcasses and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	<u>Cattle excluding Cows</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Sheep & Lambs</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Horses</u>
Number Killed (if known)	838	3	18	2931	289	NIL
Number inspected	579	3	7	1347	101	NIL
<u>All diseased except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci</u>						
Whole Carcasses condemned	1	NIL	3	NIL	NIL	NIL
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	188	NIL	NIL	27	4	NIL
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than T.B. or cysticerci	32.5	-	42.8	2.0	3.9	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	14	3	NIL	NIL	2	NIL

6.

	<u>Cattle</u> <u>excluding</u> <u>Cows</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Sheep</u> <u>&</u> <u>Lambs</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Horses</u>
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	2.4	100	-	-	1.9	-
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	6					
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	Nil					
Generalised and Totally Condemned	Nil					

MEAT CONDEMNED DURING 1956.

<u>Disease or Condition</u>	<u>Whole Carcasses</u>				<u>Part Carcasses</u>			
	<u>cattle</u>	<u>sheep</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Calves</u>
Abscesses					6			
Actinomycosis					1			
Arthritis						2	1	
Angiomata					6			
Cirrhosis					23			
Cyst. Bovis					6			
Fascioliasis					58			
Injuries & Bruising					1			
Immaturity				1				
Jaundice	1							
Joint Ill				2				
Melanosia					1			
Necrosis								
Nephrosis							1	
Parasites						25		
Peritonitis					1			
Pneumonia							4	
Tuberculosis					17		2	
Pericarditis					1			
<u>Totals</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>-</u>

Approximate Total weight of Condemned Meat = 3552 lbs.

Food Premises

The following is an approximate classification of the food premises in this area:-

Bakery	1
Butcher	8
Cafe	7
Canteen	2
Clubs	8
Fish & Chip	2 plus 1 van
General Dealers	35
Greengrocer	3
Grocer	3
Hostel & Shop	1
Hotels	12
Kippering Sheds	1
Mineral Water Factory	1
Poultry Dressing	1
Public Houses	19

Food Inspection

The following foods were examined and Condemnation Certificates issued to enable claims to be made by the retailers concerned:-

Canned Goods	196 Tins
Meat	34 "
Milk	31 "
Sausage	25 lbs
Bacon	10 lbs

No legal proceedings were involved.

Ice Cream

No complaints were received of unsatisfactory ice cream. There are no manufacturers of ice cream in this area. The licences issued by the Council in respect of wrapped ice cream now total 36.

Milk & Dairies -
Special Designations.

The number of licences issued in respect of Special Designated milk are as follows:-

T.T. Raw	6
Pasteurised	18
Sterilised	7

The number of Distributors are:- 20

Milk Sampling

Two samples of ungraded milk were taken:-

One for Methylene Blue Test - Unsatisfactory
 One for Tuberculin Test - B. Tuberculosis not found.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTSNuisances

A total number of 67 routine visits were made to premises and sites in connection with nuisances, sewers and drains, minor housing defects, burial of animals on fore-shore, water courses, and so on.

Moveable Dwellings

Following receipt of several applications for the use of land to station caravans, a report was submitted to the Council for a more definite list of Conditions under Section 269 of the Public Health Act 1937 which would greatly assist in administration. This revision of new Conditions was deferred for further consideration. There is no doubt that the licensing of caravans is fraught with many difficulties, but, in my opinion, a clear and concise list of Conditions, covering all the items specified in Section 269 ie. number and classes of moveable dwellings, space to be kept free, water supply, and sanitary conditions would be of inestimable value in ensuring that each site was being run on hygienic lines. If these were made the responsibility of the owner of the site, then the chances of the site becoming a nuisance will be considerably lessened. It also means that an owner knows the specific requirements of a Local Authority prior to licensing, and violation of any of the Conditions would be tantamount to withdrawal of his licence. There are many unlicensed sites in the area which should be brought up to requirements but it would be better to consider new Conditions, in the light of past experience, before these owners are asked to submit applications. As far as the control over location of sites are concerned, this is a matter to be dealt with solely by the Planning Authority and is outwith the scope of Section 269 of the Public Health Act, provided there is no likelihood of interference with the health of anyone. Bearing in mind that the Council have only twenty eight days before giving a decision to the applicant, otherwise he receives unconditional approval, it will be apparent why it is desirable to have a list of Conditions which have been fully considered and approved.

Public Conveniences and Street Cleaning.

The total number of visits in respect of supervising these duties was 36. There are two Public Conveniences, situated at Warkworth and Alnmouth, which are under the control of the Council but in my opinion there is a great need for an extension of these facilities to other parts of the District, which receive numerous visitors during the summer. Because of illness Mr. J. Duns had to retire from duty at Alnmouth and this was serviced by part time labour, similar to that obtaining at Warkworth.

Conversions to Water Closet.

A further slight progress has been made in the abolition of insanitary privies and pail closets by the conversion to the water carriage system of 71 properties. Of these, 14 were grant aided directly from the Council resources to the extent of £10. per closet and the remainder were assisted under the Improvement Grant Scheme, 1949. Twenty six visits were made in respect of the conversion scheme. It is hoped that there will be no delay in providing sewerage to those villages which are without any system, so that many more people can enjoy the benefit of a sanitary service.

9.
FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 & 1949.

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health
(including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors)

<u>Premises</u>	<u>Number on Register</u>	<u>Inspections</u>	<u>Written Notices</u>
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	4	4	
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	51	19	2
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	1 (Bldg. Sites)	2	
TOTAL	56	25	2
2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND	5		

Fire Escapes - Section 34.

Following receipt of a reminder letter from the Ministry, a list of the factories in this area requiring fire escapes was sent to the Fire Prevention Department of the Northumberland County Fire Brigade. Subsequently, a Certificate was issued to the Swarland Tweed Mills, and the other factories will be reported on in due course.

CLEANSING.

The permanent staff of this service remains the same as last year namely, J. Bruce, P. Harle, J. Mather, G. Sanderson, E.T. Stewart, E.R. Bailey, E. Cox, with J.T. Coulson employed as temporary relief loader.

The complaints received have been very small in number considering the extent of the Service, and is a tribute to the conscientious manner of carrying out this work by the whole of the Staff.

Approval was given for the replacement of the worn and disreputable bodies of the two oldest vehicles. Apart from the usual hard wear that these vehicles have to undergo they also have to withstand the excessive corrosive action of urine. A systematic washing down by hose each week would probably assist greatly in retaining these bodies for longer service, as well as contributing to their appearance. It is a desirable policy to encourage the Staff to look after the vehicles by providing adequate servicing equipment.

A start was made on controlling the appearance of tips and considerable time was spent in levelling several, with the aid of a calf-dozer. A wheeled tractor was employed initially, but this did not prove satisfactory because of the soft nature of refuse. The calf-dozer expedited the work and was much more economical, there being very few stoppages due to being bogged down. There are several years of tipping which require levelling and this will have to be gradually carried out during the next year or two. If these are not reasonably maintained there may be difficulties in the future in obtaining tipping space. Again, if these are well maintained the staff take an added interest in the disposal side of public cleansing work. Indiscriminate tipping by unauthorised persons is frustrating, but the difficulty of

stopping this practice lies in ascertaining the offenders.

Apart from interviews in the office and at the garage, there were 175 visits made to houses, tips, obtaining relief staff, other garages, etc.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949

REPORT FOR 12 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1956.

	(1) Local Authority	(2) Dwelling Houses (inc. Council Houses)	(3) All other (Inc. Business Premises)	(4) Total of Cols. (1) (2) & (3)	(5) Agricul- tural
1. No. of Prop- erties	27	3231	350	3608	813
2. No. of Prop- erties inspected:					
(a) Notifications	Nil	65	7	72	3
(b) Survey	27	98	46	171	118
(c) Otherwise	Nil	40	50	90	14
3. Total Inspection & Re-Inspections	36	240	130	406	160
4. No. of Properties Infested:					
(a) Rats (Major	4	9	4	17	6
(Minor	18	50	8	76	62
(b) Mice (Major	-	8	3	11	2
(Minor	-	6	5	11	21
5. No. of Infested Properties	22	73	4	99	1
6. Total Treatment and Re-treatments	66	70	4	140	2
7. No. of Sec. 4 Notices-		4	5	9	4
8. No. of "Block" Controls	-	20	-	20	-

This work has been carried out in a most able and conscientious manner by J. Sisterson, who not only inspects and treats the premises but undertakes all clerical work, so that his time is fully occupied.

Two letters were received from the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, one concerning the supplying of Anticoagulant poison (ie. Warfarin) to householders, and the necessity for correct labelling and advice, but this is not a practice carried out in this Area. The other dealt with the avoidance of any risk in transmitting animal or poultry disease from one set of premises to another by the Pest Officer. It was agreed that rubber boots and a supply of disinfectant be supplied.

PETROLEUM ACTS & REGULATIONS.

A large proportion of office time was devoted to research amongst old files, etc. so that the whole system could be re-organised and brought up-to-date. This entailed a number of consultations with the Fire Prevention Department and owners of installations, but will prove of value for further administration. The outcome was, that an approximate list of licensed and cancelled installations was forwarded to the Fire Prevention Department for their inspection and recommendation. This was particularly necessary as new Regulations governing Licensing Conditions are imminent, and it would be as well to be prepared for this additional work, so that one initial inspection could avoid a series of inspections. I am pleased to report that the co-operation of the Fire Prevention Department Officials has been most cordial and co-operative, particularly Mr. Peet, who has been very helpful.

The number of licenses granted by the Council are 62 and there were fifteen visits made to premises and innumerable interviews, both personal and by telephone.

NAMING OF STREETS

A commencement was made in the naming of streets in villages and Swarland Parish Council was consulted in this respect. As time permits the remainder of villages will be dealt with in a similar manner although I feel that this work should not interfere with more urgent health duties. Before the work is completed in one village a considerable portion of staff time is absorbed in interviews with owners, contractors, and the inevitable checking and re-checking before issuing notices.

BEACH SIGNS AND LIFEBOOYS.

After a rather sad and unfortunate accident at Alnmouth it was decided to erect warning notices and lifebuoys on the South Bank of the River Aln. Eventually three notice boards and two lifebuoys were erected but I feel that more life saving equipment should be placed on other dangerous points along the coast line, particularly at the attractive and popular places with the increasing number of visitors.

