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Contributors

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ASHINGTON
Urban District Council.

REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
For the Year 1923.

M. BRUCE, M.B., C.M.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Ashington :
Portland House Printing Works Co., Ltd.

1925.

Report of Medical Officer for 1923.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF :

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH: M. BRUCE, (part time).

SANITARY INSPECTOR : THOS. COOK.

HEALTH VISITORS : M. BRAITHWAITE & J. TAYLOR.

1. NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Population—At the census in 1911 our population was 24,583.

1922	29,406.
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For this year :—

The Registrar General estimates our population in the middle of this year at 30,910—This estimate will be used in all the necessary calculations for Birth and Death rates, etc.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS—During the year the total number of births registered in the district was 889. This is equivalent to a birth-rate of 28·71 per 1000 population. For 1922 the rate was 29·91 per 1000 and the total births 912 in number. Comparing the figures for this district with the Registrar General's table X, we find the birth-rate per 1000 population to be :—

For England and Wales	...	...	19·7	
„ London alone	...	...	20·7	
„ 105 Great Towns...	...	...	20·4	(population over 50,000)
„ 157 Smaller „	...	...	19·8	(„ from 20,000 to 50,000)

Our birth-rate is therefore practically 45% over the average of 157 smaller towns amongst whom we are classified. It was 46% last year.

The illegitimate births registered in the district are 21, to which 6 inward transfers are to be added giving 27 as the correct total (11 males and 16 females). This gives an illegitimate birth-rate of .873 per 1000 and 30.37 per 1000 children born.

The following table gives the monthly births, sex and distribution :—

Ashington Urban District. BIRTHS—SEX AND DISTRIBUTION, 1923.

Months	Ashington Ward.			Hirst Ward.			District.			Illegitimate.				
										Ash'gt'n		Hirst.		Dist.
	Male	F'm'l'e	Total	Male	F'm'l'e	Total	Male	F'm'l'e	Total	M	F	M	F	
January ...	8	5	13	34	21	55	44	26	68	0	0	0	1	1
February ...	6	9	15	36	24	60	42	33	75	0	1	0	1	2
March ...	8	5	13	38	27	65	46	32	78	1	0	0	0	1
April ...	8	11	19	35	21	56	43	32	75	1	0	1	2	4
May ...	11	4	15	27	25	52	38	29	67	0	0	0	0	0
June ...	9	4	13	24	34	58	33	38	71	0	0	1	1	2
July ...	13	10	23	23	26	49	36	36	72	0	0	0	0	0
August ...	12	8	20	32	21	53	44	29	73	0	0	2	1	3
September ...	4	11	15	34	31	65	38	42	80	0	0	2	1	3
October ...	7	7	14	28	27	55	35	34	69	0	0	1	1	2
November ...	6	9	15	27	26	53	33	35	68	0	1	0	2	3
December ...	11	5	16	27	22	49	38	27	65	0	0	0	0	0
Total ...	103	88	191	365	305	670	468	393	861	2	2	7	10	21

DEATHS—The total number of deaths from all causes registered in the district for the year is 311, but there were 7 deaths of non-residents registered here (outward transfers) to be deducted, and there were 32 deaths of residents in the district registered elsewhere (inward transfers) to be added giving 336 as the corrected total number of deaths for the year. This is equal to a death-rate of 10·87 per 1000 population. The corrected total last year was 447 and the death-rate was 14·66.

Comparing those figures with the Registrar's table X. the annual death-rates per 1000 population are :—

For England Wales	...	11·6
„ London alone	...	11·2
„ 105 Large Towns	...	11·6 population over 50,000
„ 157 Smaller Towns	...	10·6 „ between 20,000 to 50,000

Our death-rate therefore is less than that for England and Wales by 73 per 1000 and exceeds that of the 157 Smaller towns amongst which we are classified, by only 27 per 1000. It was 2·96 per 1000 last year.

Ashington Urban District. CAUSES OF AND AGES AT DEATH.
(M.O.H. Table No. 3).

Causes of Death.	Nett Deaths at the Sub-joined Ages of Residents whether occurring within or without the district.									Total Deaths in Public Institutions
	All Ages	Under 1 yr.	1 and und 2	2 and und 5	5 and und 15	15 and und 25	25 and und 45	45 and und 65	65 and up wd 2	
Enteric Fever	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1
Small Pox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles	5	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Whooping Cough	15	5	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria and Croup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Influenza	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Erysipelas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	27	1	0	0	1	8	10	7	0	5
Tuberculous Meningitis	6	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Other Tuberculo's diseases	6	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
Cancer, malignant disease	19	0	0	0	0	0	4	11	4	5
Rheumatic Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meningitis	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Organic heart disease	27	0	0	0	1	2	5	8	11	2
Bronchitis	26	3	2	0	0	0	0	5	16	2
Pneumonia	47	10	7	12	3	3	4	5	3	5
Other respiratory disease	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diarrhoea etc (under 2 yrs)	14	10	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appendicitis & Typhlitis	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Cirrhosis of Liver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcoholism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	11	0	0	0	2	0	2	4	3	4
Puerperal Fever	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Parturition	4	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	4
Congenital Debility	49	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Violence, not suicide	14	0	0	1	2	0	10	0	1	5
Suicide	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0
Other defined diseases	43	5	1	2	1	1	7	12	14	14
Causes ill-defined or unknown	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Diabetes	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Cerebral Hemorrhage	10	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	4	1
Arteriosclerosis	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Ulcer Stomach	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	343	88	27	23	16	17	53	60	59	54

INFANTILE MORTALITY—The total number of deaths of children under 1 year is 82 this year compared with 105 for 1922. This gives a death-rate of 2.65 per 1000 population and a mortality rate of 92.24 per 1000 children born. Last year the death-rate was 3.31 and the mortality rate 116.2.

Comparing these figures again with the Registrar General's table X. the Infantile Mortality Rates are given :—

For England and Wales 69 deaths per 1000 children born.

„ London alone	60	„	„
„ 105 Great Towns	72	„	„
„ 157 Smaller Towns	69	„	„

Our Infantile Mortality rate is therefore over 33% in excess of that of the 157 smaller towns among which we are classified. It is noteworthy however that a large proportion of the deaths (28% of them) are due to premature birth and causes associated therewith, e.g. Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus, and Injury at Birth, and 12% are due to Pneumonia.

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR, 1922.

Causes of Death.	Under 1 wk.	1-2 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total und. 1 month	1-3 months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months	Total Deaths under 1 year
Small Pox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chicken Pox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria and Croup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	4
Diarrhæa and Enteritis	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	0	10
Tuberculous Meningitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abdominal Tuberculosis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Other Tubercular Diseases	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Premature Birth, Atrophy										
Debility and Marasmus	23	2	3	0	28	0	1	0	1	30
Congenital Malformation... ..	7	0	0	0	7	0	0	1	0	8
Atelectasis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Injury at Birth	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Erysipelas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Syphilis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rickets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meningitis <i>not</i> Tuberculous	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Convulsions... ..	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	2	2	7
Gastritis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laryngitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bronchitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
Pneumonia (all forms)	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	4	9
Suffocation, overlaying	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Causes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Influenza	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	32	3	3	0	38	5	10	13	10	76

Ashington Urban District. **VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT**
DURING YEARS 1918-1923 INCLUSIVE. (L.G. B. Table No. 1).

Year.	Popul- ation esti- mated to middle of each year.	Births.			Total Deaths Registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.			
		Uncorrected Number	Nett		No.	Rate.	Of Non- residents Regist- ered in the District	Of Resi- dents not Regist- ered in the District	Under 1 Year of age		At All Ages	
			No.	Rate.					No.	Rate	No.	Rate
1918	29000	754	759	27'1	425	17'00	25	38	91	119'8	438	17'5
1919	29600	810	813	27'46	397	13'07	3	43		137'6	437	15'3
1920	29565	1094	1090	37'00	411	13'90	3	44	146	133'9	411	13'9
1921	29900	993	1006	33'6	351	11'72	5	34	121	121'7	380	12'70
1922	30490	879	912	29'91	400	13'12	3	50	105	116'7	447	14'66
1923	30910	884	889	28'71	311	10'95	7	33	82	92.24	337	12'02

ZYMOTIC DEATH RATE—This term includes deaths from the following 7 diseases only
 They are included among others in Table III. :—

Disease.	No. of Deaths.		Rate per 1000 population.	
Smallpox ...	0	...	0	
Scarlet Fever ...	3	...	.097	
Enteric Fever ...	2	...	.065	
Enteritis (Diarrhoea) under 2 yrs	15	...	.495	
Diphtheria ...	0	...	0	
Measles ...	14	...	.452	
Whooping Cough	19	...	.613	
	53	...	1.712	

Among the other principal causes of death are the following :—

	Cases	Death Rate
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	26	.840
Non-Pulmonary	11	.355
Pneumonia—both forms	16	1.131
Bronchitis	23	.742
Influenza	0	0

Registrar General's Table—BIRTH RATE, DEATH RATE, AND ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1923.

(Provisional figures. The rates for England and Wales have been calculated on a population estimated to the middle of 1923, while those for the towns have been calculated on populations estimated to the middle of 1922. The mortality rates refer to the whole population as regards England and Wales, but only to civilians as regards London and the groups of towns,

	Birth-Rate per 1000 Total Population	Annual Death Rate per 1000 Population.										Rate per 1000 Births.		Percentage of Total Deaths		
		All Causes	Enteric Fever	Small Pox	Measles	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Diphtheria	Influenza	Violence	Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years.	Total Deaths under 1 year.	Causes of Death certified by Registered Medical Practitioners	Inquest Cases	Uncertified Causes of Death.	
England and Wales	19.7	11.6	0.61	0.60	0.14	0.03	0.10	0.07	0.22	0.44	7.7	69	92.0	6.9	1.1	
105 County Boroughs & Great Towns including London .	20.4	11.6	0.61	0.60	0.15	0.03	0.12	0.09	0.22	0.40	9.9	72	92.2	7.2	0.6	
157 Smaller Towns (1921 Adjusted Populations 20,000—50,000)	19.8	10.6	0.61	—	0.19	0.02	0.10	0.06	0.21	0.38	6.4	69	92.6	6.1	1.3	
London	20.2	11.2	0.61	0.60	0.08	0.02	0.09	0.13	0.17	0.45	10.2	60	90.8	9.1	0.1	

NETT MONTHLY DEATHS IN EACH WARD.

Months.	Ashington Ward		Hirst Ward		Total All Ages
	All Ages	Under 1 year	All Ages	Under 1 year	
January ..	7	1	15	4	22
February ..	8	1	14	6	22
March ..	4	0	24	9	28
April ..	16	2	15	5	31
May ..	10	0	10	6	28
June ..	13	0	18	4	29
July ..	9	0	26	9	35
August ..	8	1	21	3	29
September ..	5	1	19	8	24
October ..	5	1	12	3	17
November ..	8	1	10	2	18
December ..	5	2	23	9	28
Total ..	98	10	213	68	311

The Registrar General supplies the following Table ;—

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1923.

Causes of Death.				M	F	Causes of Death.				M	F
All Causes	...	...	...	202	137	23	Appendicitis and typhlitis	...	...	1	1
1 Enteric Fever	...	...	...	2	0	24	Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	0	0
2 Small-pox	...	...	...	0	0	25	Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	...	5	3
3 Measles	...	...	...	9	5	26	Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	0	3
4 Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	1	2	27	Other accidents and diseases	...	...	...	...
5 Whooping Cough	...	...	...	11	8		of pregnancy and parturition	...	...	0	3
6 Diphtheria	...	...	...	0	0	27	Congenital debility and malformation, premature birth	...	...	27	13
7 Influenza	...	...	...	0	0	29	Suicide	...	...	1	2
8 Encephalitis lethargica	...	...	...	0	0	30	Other Deaths from Violence	...	...	10	2
9 Meningococcal meningitis	...	...	...	0	0	31	Other Defined Disease	...	...	34	12
10 Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	16	10	32	Causes Ill-defined or unknown	...	...	0	2
11 Other Tuberculous diseases	...	...	...	6	5		Special Causes (including above)	...	...	...	...
12 Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	...	10	10		Poliomyelitis	...	...	0	0
13 Rheumatic Fever	...	...	...	0	1		Polioencephalitis	...	...	0	0
14 Diabetes	...	...	...	1	0		Deaths of Infants (Total under 1 year)	...	...	50	30
15 Cerebral Hæmorrhage, &c.	...	...	...	8	8		Illegitimate	...	...	0	2
16 Heart Disease	...	...	...	15	13		Total Births	...	...	477	412
17 Arterio-sclerosis	...	...	...	2	1		Legitimate	...	...	466	396
18 Bronchitis	...	...	...	15	8		Illegitimate	...	...	11	16
19 Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	22	13		Population—30,910	...	...	...	...
20 Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	1	1						
21 Ulcer Stomach or duodenum	...	...	...	1	0						
22 Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	4	11						

MEDICAL RELIEF—ASHINGTON, &c., HOSPITAL.

MEDICAL RELIEF—The “Ashington and District Nursing Association Hospital and Infirmary” is situated to the south-east of the railway station, and in close proximity thereto. It has accommodation for about 40 beds.

The minimum annual subscription is ten shillings for :—

1. The services of the District Nurses.
2. Care at the Hospital if necessary.
3. Use of Motor Ambulance for Stretcher Cases.

Two Motor Ambulances for non-infectious and accident cases.

The following is extracted from the Association's Report for the year 1923 :—

ADMISSIONS.	Adult—Males	...	377
	Females	...	152
	Children	...	69
			598
	Medical Cases	...	100
	Surgical Cases	...	271
	Accident Cases	...	227
			598

II.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

(a) WATER.—This needs no further description, the supply from the Tynemouth Corporation continues to be ample and constant and averages about 300,000 gallons per day.

At the beginning of this year there were 1786 houses with private taps and 3740 houses supplied with water from stand pipes in the back streets. During the year 110 houses have been supplied with private taps and 145 water closets and 84 baths have been fixed.

There are 42 houses situated in outlying parts of the district which are not connected with the public sewers.

All new and reconstructed drains are tested with water or smoke machine before being covered in.

(c) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION. There are approximately 4539 privies and 1091 water closets in the district.

During the year 27 privies have been converted into water closets.

It seems to be impracticable to recommend the conversion on a large scale of privies to water closets with our present sewerage difficulties—directly these are rectified there need be no further delay in proceeding with the conversion—with the probability then of abolishing in great part the fly nuisance to which we are always subject in warm weather and which contributes to a large extent in the spread of infectious disease.

(d) SCAVENGING—This work is partly carried out by contract, the contractors providing tips, vehicles and labour. The ashpits are emptied fortnightly and the ashbins twice weekly. The collected material is deposited on tips approved by the Council.

The town is divided into seven districts, four of the districts are cleansed by private contractors and three districts by our own motors.

The work is under the supervision of the Council's Surveyor..

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.—In accordance with the general order of the Ministry of Health your Inspector has by systematic inspection kept himself informed in respect of any nuisances existing within this district and the following list gives the nature of nuisances dealt with :—

54 complaints were received and investigated, and steps were taken to have the causes of complaints removed.

INSPECTIONS—

To premises generally re nuisances	...	...	963
To Slaughter Houses	...	...	321
To Offensive Trades	...	...	65
To Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	...	...	43
To Factories and Workshops	...	...	178
To Cases of Infectious Disease	...	...	155
			—
			1725

NOTICES—

		Issued	Complied with.
Informal Notices	..	166	155
Statutory Notices	...	11	10
		—	—
		177	165

NUISANCES—

	Found.	Remedied.
Insufficient Sanitary Accommodation	5	5
Structurally Defective Sanitary Accommodation	18	17
Foul Sanitary Accommodation	2	2
Defective Drains	1	1
Choked Drains	43	41
Defective Yard Paving	20	18
Defective House Roofs	4	4
Defective Eaves, Gutters and Down Spouts	19	13
Other Structural Defects	39	38
Offensive Accumulations	18	18
Animals kept so as to be a nuisance	2	2
Filthy Houses	4	4
Defective Ashbins	1	1
Insufficient Water Supply	1	1
	177	165

The following nuisances are still common in the district :—

- 1 Insufficient drainage.
- 2 Unpaved Yards.
- 3 Animals kept in close proximity to buildings.
- 4 Fouling of middens with water.
- 5 Overcrowding.

In accordance with circular 120 dated 25th of August, 1920, from the Ministry of Health, theatres and cinemas in the district have been regularly inspected by the Sanitary Inspector.

(e) OFFENSIVE TRADES :—

Fish Friers	...	...	19
Gut Scrapers	...	...	2
Tripe Boilers	...	...	1
			22

The trades of gut scrapers and tripe boiler are conducted on modern premises erected for the purpose, and were satisfactorily maintained.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS. The number on the register at the end of the year was as follows :—

Factories	...	5	Workshops	...	44	Bakehouses	...	7
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The various premises were inspected from time to time, a total of 178 visits having been made. A number of defects were found and the undermentioned notices served :—

To provide sufficient Sanitary Accommodation	...	2
To repair or cleanse Sanitary Convenience	...	0
To Limewash	...	2
To cleanse Bakehouse Walls and Floor	...	3
To repair Defective Sinks and Waste Pipes	...	0
Miscellaneous	...	3

5 Notices were received from H. M. Inspector of Factories and Workshops giving information of defects remediable under the Public Health Acts.

REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.

Workshops on the Register at the end of the year.						Number
Bakers	...	...	...	...	...	8
Blacksmiths	...	...	...	...	...	4
Bootmakers and Repairers	...	...	...	...	...	8
Cycle Repairers	...	...	...	...	...	5
Dressmakers and Milliners	...	...	...	...	...	9
Joiners and undertaker	...	...	...	...	...	6
Monumental Masons	...	...	...	...	...	1
Picture Framers	...	...	...	...	...	1
Plumbers	...	...	...	...	...	3
Stocking Knitter	...	...	...	...	...	1
Tailors	...	...	...	...	...	3
Underclothing	...	...	...	...	...	1
Watch Repairers	...	...	...	...	...	3
Wheelwrights and Coachbuilders	...	...	...	...	...	1
Saddler	...	...	...	...	...	1
Total Numbers of Workshops on Register						55

(f) SCHOOLS—There are 5 elementary schools providing 4,230 places. 3 of the schools are quite modern.

Under Regulations made by the Board of Education and by arrangement with the County School Medical Officer, 92 certificates of exclusion from attendance at public elementary schools on account of infectious diseases were issued. The number of children effected at each School is shown in the following table:—

Disease.	North		South		East		Bothal		St. Aidan's		Total
	Patients	Contacts	Patients	Contacts	Patients	Contacts	Patients	Contacts	Patients	Contacts	
Scarlet Fever ..	17	17	9	6	10	11	8	4	5	5	92
Diphtheria ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	17	17	9	6	10	11	8	4	5	5	92

Previous remarks on the subject of excluding all the children in any one home from school for six weeks during illness, due to the above infectious diseases and convalescence therefrom seems to be as applicable as ever. The child suffering ought to be removed to an Isolation Hospital immediately the case is notified, and after disinfection of the house and bedding and the clothing of the other inmates, it ought to be quite a practical proposition to allow the other children to return to school at once. Facilities for disinfection are now provided at the Isolation Hospital, and were these conditions fulfilled I think our past policy in regard to this matter might now be reconsidered with advantage to all concerned.

III. FOOD.

(a) **MILK SUPPLY.**—The bulk of the milk is imported into the district, and its condition during the summer months—probably due to delay and exposure in transit—gives rise to many complaints.

Registered under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshop Orders are :—

Wholesale Traders and Producers of Milk	...	8
Purveyors		23

The number of cowsheds is 8, and approximately 95 cows are kept. The sheds were generally found in a fairly clean condition, and regularly lime-washed.

(b) **MILK (MOTHERS AND CHILDREN) ORDER, 1918.**—Under this Order dried milk of various brands was supplied by the Council through the Health Visitors to nursing mothers to the value of £1086. Approximately £101 16s. 6d. was given free to necessitous cases.

(c) **OTHER FOODS.**—The class of cattle slaughtered is very good, but adequate examination of meat is impracticable, owing to the numerous premises on which slaughtering is conducted, and the irregular hours during which the work is done.

The following food was destroyed after inspection, having been found unfit for human consumption :—

29 Tins of various kinds of Foods.

There are 15 slaughter houses, all subject to annual licence. Some are in close proximity to dwellings, and 6 of them are unsatisfactory, for one or more of the following reasons :—

Situated in close proximity to dwellings.
 Inadequate in size, e.g., converted stables and wash-houses.
 Lacking in facilities for the storage of refuse and for the maintainance of cleanliness.
 Slaughter house the only lairage available.

The erection of an abattoir has been under consideration for several years.

Meat was retailed from 30 shops in this district and 7 butchers living outside the district regularly retailed meat from carts.

There are 7 bakehouses in the district—3 factory and 4 workshops—which require considerable supervision to secure the maintainance of reasonable cleanliness.

IV. PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The Total number of Infectious disease notified this year is less than last year. Last year 217 cases were notified of which 91 were Scarlet Fever ; this year the total is 168 with 70 cases of Scarlet Fever.

The following tables gives the incidence, etc , of Enteric Fever in the district for the last 15 years :—

Enteric Fever	1909	1910	1911	1912	1912	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
No. of Cases..	21	11	78	20	25	24	3	10	30	88	76	13	19	1	3
Cases per 1000 population	0.95	0.47	3.18	0.74	0.89	0.80	0.12	0.38	1.17	3.30	2.81	.44	.63	.033	.10
No. of Deaths	3	3	12	2	5	5	0	2	0	19	8	4	6	0	2
Mortality rate per 1000 population	0.13	0.13	0.48	0.07	0.17	0.16		0.98		0.76	0.30	.135	.20	0	.065
Mortality rate per 1000 cases	142	272	158	100	002	208		200		216	105	207	316	0	.666

In regard to other Infectious diseases :—

SMALL POX.—Although we are still experiencing immunity from visitation by this disease, it is prevalent in many parts of the country—many of them mining districts like our own, it behoves us to be prepared to deal with an epidemic should it occur. That this is almost certain is evidenced by the fact that during the last 4 weeks of the year nearly 300 cases were reported in England and Wales and these were almost entirely in the smaller towns, villages and rural areas. The only absolute preventive—vaccination in infancy—having practically ceased to be compulsory we find that in the great majority of cases it is not adopted. Out of 889 births registered during the year only 55 were vaccinated and re-vaccination is resorted to only by those who are emigrating and who find that the emigration authorities make no provision for conscientious objectors.

SCARLET FEVER.—Notifications have decreased this year to 70 in place of 91 last year of these 9 were below 5 years of age and 61 were of school age.

	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
Number of cases	... 120	417	83	91	70
„ deaths	... 1	4	1	0	3
Attack rate per 1,000 population	4.2	14.47	2.7	2.89	2.23
Deaths „	035	.136	.033	0	.097
Case Mortality	... 83%	.95%	1.23%	0	4.35%

DIPHTHERIA.—Has decreased considerably—Notifications this year being only 1 compared with 5 last year. The case was a male 38 years of age.

	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
Number of cases	... 92	51	23	5	1
„ deaths	... 4	7	0	2	0
Attack rate per 1,000	... 3.2	1.73	.768	.164	.03
Death „	14	.24	0	.066	0
Case Mortality	... 4.3%	13.7%	0	40%	0

5 cases were submitted for bacteriological examination and all were found to be negative. The antitoxin supplied by the Council for prophylaxis and for treatment amounted to 13 tubes containing 46,000 units.

PNEUMONIA.—Notifications this year are 16 compared with 37 last year—with 35 deaths.

TUBERCULOSIS (PULMONARY) —Notifications were 40 in number, with 27 deaths

	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
Number of cases	55	21	24	36	40
„ deaths	20	27	18	27	27
Attack rate per 1,000	1·96	1·05	·801	1·181	1·29
Death „	·700	·918	·601	·885	840
Case Mortality	35·7%	87%	75%	75%	67·5%

There are also 18 notifications of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis, with 11 deaths, giving a case mortality of over 61%.

With housing conditions improving it is to be hoped that next year may show some definite improvement in our tuberculosis mortality. The figures for this year are similar to those for last year, and Tuberculosis still remains the most fatal notifiable disease in the district. The total Tuberculosis cases notified is 58, and the deaths registered therefrom is 38, giving a case mortality of 65·6%.

The following table gives the number of houses from which cases of the three principle infectious diseases were notified :—

Disease	Number of cases	Houses affected
Enteric Fever ...	3	3
Scarlet Fever ...	70	62
Diphtheria ...	1	1

The following table issued by the Registrar General gives the attack rate of certain Infectious diseases throughout England and Wales in the second column. The incidence of these diseases seems to vary very little, as the figures in the third column shew :—

Disease	Cases Notified in the District	Case rate per 1,000 living England & Wales	Case rate per 1,000 living in Ashington
Small Pox ...	0	·06	0
Scarlet Fever ...	70	2·24	2·23
Diphtheria ...	1	1·05	·03
Enteric Fever ...	3	·08	·10
Puerperal Fever ...	2	0·06	0·06
Erysipelas ...	16	·32	·49

64 houses were disinfected on account of infectious disease. The disinfectants used were "Sulphume" and "Formalin."

The following tables gives the ages at incidence and the distribution of cases of notifiable infectious diseases during the year :—

Ashington Urban District. NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Ages at Incidence, 1923. (Ministry of Health Table No. 2).

Notifiable Disease	Cases notified in whole district At Ages—Years.							Total cases in each Ward		Cases removed to Hospital	
	At all Ages	Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 etc.	A	H	A	H
Diphtheria ...	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Scarlet Fever ...	70	0	10	17	10	3	0	15	55	0	0
Erysipelas ...	16	0	1	0	1	10	4	7	9	0	0
Enteric Fever ...	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	1	2	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tuberculosis, Lung ...	40	0	0	3	14	23	0	10	30	0	0
Tuberculosis, Other Forms	18	0	2	7	4	5	0	8	10	0	0
Pneumonia ...	16	0	0	4	7	3	2	4	12	0	1
Puerperal Fever ...	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0
Dysentery ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total ...	168	2	13	31	37	49	6	46	122	2	15

Ashington Urban District. NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES
DISTRIBUTION, 1923.

Month	Diphtheria		Scarlet Fever		Erysipeles		Enteric Fever		Ophthalmia Neonatorum		Phthisis		Other Tuberculae Diseases		Pneumonia		Dysentery		Monthly Total		
	A	H	A	H	A	H	A	H	A	H	A	H	A	H	A	H	A	H	A	H	Both
January ...	0	0	7	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	12	19
February ...	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	2	9	11
March ...	0	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	5	7	12
April ...	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	3	3	1	2	0	9	8	11	19
May ...	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	8	7	15
June ...	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	8	10
July ...	0	0	0	8	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	11	14
August ...	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
September ...	0	0	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	9	13
October ...	0	0	3	4	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	10	1	2	0	1	0	0	5	19	24
November ...	0	0	0	5	1	2	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	11	14
December ...	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	7	8
Total ...	0	1	17	53	7	9	2	1	0	2	10	30	8	10	4	12	0	0	48	120	168
	1		70		16		3		2		40		18		16		0				

V. MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The Centre during the year has been held in the Wesleyan Mission Hall, Woodhorn Road, on Tuesdays, between 2 and 4 p.m.

The Centre was open 48 times during the year. The total attendance for the year has been 1971, or an average weekly attendance of 41, an increase on last year.

The M.O.H. is the doctor in attendance each week. He is assisted by two Health Visitors and a number of voluntary lady workers. Babies are weighed and records kept. Mothers are advised on matters relating to their own or their babies health. No treatment is given, mothers being usually advised to consult their own medical attendant.

Several brands of dried milk and other preparations are supplied at cost price and in a few necessitous cases it is supplied free of cost.

The following is the Health Visitors' Report —

Number of Births registered	...	...	...	882
Number of Birth Notifications received	...	...	...	692
Number of Birth Notifications from Doctor	...	...	...	559
Number of Birth Notifications from other persons	...	...	...	133
Number of Births not notified	...	...	...	190
Number of Infants supervised—First Visits	...	...	...	900
Re-Visits	...	...	...	2530
Wholly breast fed	...	...	...	556
Wholly hand fed	...	...	...	102
Partly hand fed	...	...	...	168

There have been 8 cases of Scarlet Fever, 1 of Meningitis, 2 Ophthalmia Neonatorum and 1 Erysipelas notified amongst supervised infants. All have made satisfactory recovery.

Owing to Nurse Walters leaving the staff, there was only 1 Health Visitor during 3 months of the year.

INWARD TRANSFERS.

Year of Birth.	Male or Female.	Date of Transfer.
1923 ...	M ...	31-10-23
1923 ...	F ...	28- 9-23
1921 December	F ...	" "
1918 ...	F ...	" "
1921 December	F ...	" "
1922 December	F ...	" "
1921 May	F ...	" "
1911 December	— ...	" "

The deaths from Infantile Diarrhoea and Enteritis show an increase of 10 over 1922. The following table gives the infant deaths from this cause, and the Infantile Mortality for the past 10 years :—

Year	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
Infant deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis	57	12	15	8	19	25	22	17	5	15
Infantile Mortality ...	248	123	151	112	119	147	134	113	105	82

VI. SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

DISINFECTION.—A Velox Steam Disinfector has been installed at the Fever Hospital 7ft by 3ft 6in diameter, capacity of about 67 cubic feet. This disinfector is for Hospital use and also for infected bedding and clothes removed from houses in the district.

The following Statistics are printed in accordance with the Ministry of Health's memorandum

1. GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)—3056·996.

Population—30,910.

Rateable Value—£99,376.

No. of inhabited houses (1921)—5,506. Sum represented by a penny rate—£404/9/7

2. EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

		Total		Male		Female	
Births	Legitimate	...	862	...	466	...	396
	Illegitimate	...	27	...	11	...	16
Deaths	...	...	339	...	202	...	137

} Birth Rate (R.G.) 19·7.

Death Rate (R.G.) 11·6

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of Child-birth } from sepsis—3.
 } „ other causes—3.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age :—

Legitimate—80. Illegitimate—2. Total—82.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)—14.

„ Whooping Cough (all ages)—19.

„ Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)—15.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES HOSPITAL.—There were two patients in Hospital, 1st January, 1923

The number of cases admitted to Hospital during the year 1923, were 24, of these 2 were Enteric, and 5 Scarlet Fever. 17 of the above were admitted from Morpeth R.D. Council's area.

The Hospital was occupied on 317 days in the year. The expenditure amounting to £846/10/3. The average stay in Hospital per patient was 13·21 days.

Ambulance facilities—one horse ambulance for infectious cases.

ADOPTIVE ACTS IN OPERATION IN THE DISTRICT :—

Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.

Private Street Works Act, 1892.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907 (part of).

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK.—The bacteriological examination of specimens in aid of diagnosis are carried out by arrangement with the County Council at the College of Medicine, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The following Table shows to what extent this arrangement is utilised :—

**ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS
AND RESULTS DURING THE YEAR 1923.**

	Diphtheria.			Tubercle.			Enteric Fever.			Total Specimens Examined,		
	Pos.	Neg.	Total	Pos.	Neg.	Total	Pos.	Neg.	Total	Pos.	Neg.	Total
Sent in by Dr. Moore, County Tuberculosis Officer ...	—	—	—	10	34	44	—	—	—	10	34	44
Sent in by Dr. Hunter, Assistant Tuberculosis Officers...	—	—	—	4	52	36	—	—	—	4	32	36
Sent in by other Medical Practitioners ...	0	5	5	1	16	17	1	5	6	2	26	28
Totals ...	0	5	5	15	82	97	1	5	6	16	92	108
Cases notified ...			1			59			3			

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.				Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria	...	...	...	1	0	0
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	70	5	3
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	...	...	...	3	2	2
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	2	0	2
Pneumonia	...	...	...	16	1	33
Tuberculosis :—						
(a) Pulmonary	{ M	23	...	40	0	26
	{ F	17	...			
(b) Non. do.	{ M	11	...	18	2	11
	{ F	7	...			

HOUSING.

The Sanitary inspector is the Designated Officer under the Housing Regulations, 1910.

The original estimate of the number of houses required to meet the needs of the district was 2,000 under the State Aided Scheme ; 230 houses have been erected.

The shortage of houses in the district is still very acute, 1,400 applications are in hand and new applications are received daily.

At the present rate of house building the prospects of the majority of these applicants getting a house is very remote.

The principal defects are matters remediable under the Public Health Acts, *e.g.*, defective and insufficient drainage, unpaved yards, insanitary privies and middens, and dampness due to defective house roofs, downspouts and eaves gutters. None of the houses were provided with a scullery sink with a water supply over it, and the accommodation for washing clothing was generally unsatisfactory. The Council considered it impracticable to demand a remedy to these defects which are common in a greater or lesser degree in at least 75% of the houses in the district, under post-war conditions still prevailing.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total	...	...	...	88
(b) As part of a municipal housing scheme	...	...	...	64

1. UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES.

Inspection.—(1) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	185
(2) Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations 1910	...	...	...	—
(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for habitation	...	...	...	—
(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive to those referred to under the proceeding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	177

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	...	...	...	155
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A—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing Town Planning, &c. Act, 1919.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	8
(2) Number of dwelling houses which are rendered fit :—				
(a) by owners	...	...	...	8
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	—
(3) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	...	...	...	—

B—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	177
(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied :—				
(a) by owners	...	...	...	165
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	—

C—Proceedings under sections 17 & 18 of the Housing Town Planning Acts, 1919.

(1) Number of representations made with a view of the making of Closing Orders	20
(2) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	—
(3) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling houses have been rendered fit	20
(4) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	—
(5) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	—

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS.

The following is summary of my recommendations :—

- 1—That adequate hospital accommodation for the isolation and treatment of cases of infectious disease other than Typhoid, be provided.
- 2—That refuse collection be undertaken by direct labour, that disposal by "tipping" be discontinued and disposal by incineration or pulverization be substituted.
- 3—The Sections 39 to 42 (inclusive) Public Health Acts (Ammended) Act, 1907, be adopted, and that the Council consider the desirability of carrying out the conversions by loan.
- 4—That the provision of a public abattoir be again considered.
- 5—That a separate water supply be provided for each house in the district.

In conclusion I have to thank the various Council Officials who have so kindly co-operated in the preparation of the various Tables and other statistical matter necessary for the preparation of this Report.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

M. BRUCE, M.B., C.M.,

Medical Officer of Health.

