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ANNUAL REPORT

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UPON THE HEALTH AND
SANITARY CONDITION OF
THE BELFORD RURAL
SANITARY DISTRICT :: ::

FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1921.

ANNUAL REPORT
UPON THE
Health and Sanitary Condition
OF THE
Belford Rural Sanitary District
for the Year ending December 31st, 1921.

Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

Population. (Census 1911), 5006. Population (estimated 1921), 4940.

Physical Features and General Character of the District.

THE District is bounded by the sea on the East and moorland on the West. It is, generally speaking, undulating and well cultivated land, excepting the extreme Western portion, which is moorland and more hilly. The district is well watered, well drained and healthy: there are no congested areas nor any industrial works leading to smoke nuisance.

The chief occupations are agriculture and sea fishing, both of which are conducive to health.

Total Number of Births, 80. Birth Rate, 16·15 per 1000. (Illegitimate Births), 7. Number of Vaccinations, 75. Number of Deaths, 50. Death Rate, 10·12 per 1000. Number of Deaths in Children under 1 year, 6. Rate per 1000 Births 75.

The amount of Poor Law Relief (Out Relief) for the Year 1920 was £406 3s. 0d. Money £365 15s 6d. Kind £13 7s. 6d. In 1920 the Total amount was £332 8s. 0d.

There is no Hospital in the District which has been utilised for gratuitous Medical Relief except the relief of the sick poor in the Workhouse at Belford.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

WATER SUPPLIES.—The District generally is, as a rule, well supplied with water. A large number of farm premises have water laid on, and the others obtain water from wells by means of pumps, etc.

BAMBURGH obtains its supply chiefly from a Reservoir on Sandyford Moor

SEAHOUSES AND NORTH SUNDERLAND are supplied from a reservoir on Brockdam Moor, and there is a storage reservoir at Sea Houses in connection with this supply, capable of holding 60,000 gallons.

BEADNELL AND SWINHOLE are supplied from Brockdam reservoir by means of a connection to the North Sunderland Water Works Company's main at Swinhoe Cottage.

Several farm places and villages on the line of the North Sunderland and Bamburgh water mains are supplied from them.

BELFORD.—The main supply is piped from a spring at the Blue Bell farm to a reservoir on the North Bank, and thence piped to various houses on the Main Street. There are 2 supplies in West Street from springs, and one from a spring near the National Schools in High Street. There is also a supply of water from Belford Moor, which supplies most of West Street, and also supplements the High Street supply.

All the supplies of the District are constant except in some instances in seasons of unusual drought.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The Sewage, with few exceptions, passes into streams, ditches, or into the Sea, and is untreated before doing so.

Most of the houses in the town of **BELFORD** are drained into Sewer conduits, and a large number of the drains are formed with sanitary pipes.

What however, is required is a new drainage system properly laid and the sewage dealt with according to modern views before being discharged into the Belford Stream. This I have advocated for years.

SEA HOUSES is drained direct into the sea, the sewers discharging in four different places.

Most of the houses in **BEADNELL** village are drained into a sewer, which conveys the sewage into the sea. Beadnell Square and Bent Hall are also provided with sewers. Beadnell Stead is drained directly into the sea. Several of the large houses in Beadnell are drained into cesspools, which are periodically emptied.

Isolated houses and farm places throughout the District are in many cases drained into cesspools; although in some places the sewage is discharged into streams. No complaints have, however, recently been made as to any nuisance arising from this cause.

At Belford Station, Bellshill farm House and Middleton Hall the sewage is dealt with by means of septic tanks.

At Shoreston Hall there is a small sewage scheme on modern lines comprising septic tank and continuous filters.

Closet Accomodation.

The ashpit and privy system is in vogue at all the farm premises and most of the villages have the same. With a few exceptions, BELFORD has the ashpit and privy method in use.

Most of the houses in BAMBURGH are now provided with water closets. Exceptions are at Victoria and South Victoria Terraces, where the pail closet system is out of harmony with the property and might well be substituted by w.c.'s, as has been previously recommended.

A large number of the houses in Sea Houses now have water closets and the privy system is gradually being abolished.

A few of the larger houses in BEADNELL have water closets.

The approximate number of each type of closet are: Privy Ashpit, with privy for one house, 673; Privy ashpits, with privy for more than one house, 97; Pail closets, 72; w.c.'s, 238; Since 1911 some 42 w.c.'s, have been put in.

SCAVENGING.—Public scavengers are appointed to remove house refuse in BELFORD and NORTH SUNDERLAND.

At Belford the refuse is deposited on agricultural land, and old tins, etc., are removed to a disused claypit at the Brick Sheds.

The refuse from privies and ashpits at North Sunderland is mostly put on agricultural land, and the other refuse is removed to a public rubbish depot at the Old Quarry on the South Links.

In the case of other villages and farm places, the ashpits, etc., are usually emptied by the occupiers and tenants.

At BAMBURGH the Scavenging has been largely carried out by the Castle Authorities, and in some instances by the occupiers, no public scavenger having been appointed. This arrangement has now been cancelled and the duty devolves upon the occupiers entirely, it remains to be seen whether this will prove satisfactory, otherwise it will be necessary to employ a public scavenger.

An increasing number of houses are using movable ashbins as water closet accomodation is being introduced.

Sanitary Inspection of the District.

During the year visits have been paid by the Inspector of Nuisances and myself to various parts of the District, and enquiries made into the general healthiness, the water supply, the drainage and the condition of dwelling houses. Defective conditions have been reported to the District Council, and notices sent to the occupiers or owner. A detailed table of inspections made by the Inspector of nuisances is appended to this report.

The workshops, slaughter houses, bakehouses and cowsheds have been inspected.

Cowsheds. In some instances orders have been given to lime-wash, and these have been complied with. Speaking generally they are kept fairly well.

There are 22 Cowsheds on the Register.

Proceedings Under the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.

Under the above Act special visits have been paid to the various workshops in the District, and an enquiry made into their sanitary condition in reference to :—

- (1) Cleanliness
- (2) Air Space
- (3) Ventilation
- (4) Drainage and Wet Floors
- (5) Provisions of Sanitary Conveniences

Bake Houses, four in number, have received special attention, and found to be in a satisfactory condition.

The Names of tenants of all workshops have been placed upon a Register

In none of the workshops are any out-workers employed.

The following is a list of the occupations carried on in the various workshops :—

Dressmakers	...	11	Bakers	...	4
Bootmakers	...	7	Blacksmiths	...	8
Tailors	...	2	Saddlers	...	1
Joiners	...	9	Painters	...	4
Cycle Agents & Garages	6		Herring Curers	...	5
Gas Works	...	2	Plumbers	...	3
Sawmills	...	2	Millwrights	...	1
	Sculptors	...	1		

In the great majority of cases I have found the air space to be ample.

- * In all cases there has been sufficient air space for the number employed during working hours.

The general cleanliness and drainage have been found satisfactory.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1921.

For the Rural District of Belford, on the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in connection with Factories, Workshops, Workplaces and Housework.

Workshops and Workplaces :—			
Number of Inspections	...	90	
Written Notices	...	Nil	
Prosecutions	...	Nil	
Workshops on Register (s. 131) at the end of 1921	...		66

Causes of Death in Belford Rural District, 1921.

Civilians only.

	Males.	Females.
All Causes	29	21
Influenza	1	
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	2	1
Cancer	3	
Diabetes	1	1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	1	3
Heart Disease	5	2
Arterio-Sclerosis		1
Bronchitis	2	1
Pneumonia (all forms)	2	1
Ulcer of Stomach	1	
Nephritis		1
Congenital Debility and malformation,		
premature birth	1	2
Other deaths from violence	1	
Other defined diseases	8	7
Causes ill defined	1	1
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age	3	2
Total Illegitimate		1
TOTAL BIRTHS	42	38
Legitimate	39	34
Illegitimate	3	4
Population		4940

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE,

SOMERSET HOUSE,

LONDON, W.C.

April 1922

The rainfall recorded at Bamburgh by Mr Little amounted to 19·31 inches for the year.

In February there was no rain, in March, April, May and June there was less than one inch in each month.

Schools.—In May the School at Ellingham was closed on account of an epidemic of Measles and in July the School in West Street, Belford was closed for the same reason.

After closure Schools should always be disinfected and an abundant supply of air passed through them. Sanitary conveniences are provided for all the Schools. There are facilities for obtaining drinking water, though in the case of Newham and Ellingham not sufficiently near.

Food:—Attention has been paid to milk supplies by inspections made of cowsheds and cows. Speaking generally, the former are airy and well ventilated, the chief faults found are need for more frequent cleaning of the walls, and attention to the cleanliness of the cows themselves. Regulations in reference to light, ventilation, air space, floor area, and general construction should be carefully fixed.

Number of Slaughter Houses in 1914—5. January 1921—5
December 1921—5

No public abattoir has been established in the district but opportunities are afforded of inspecting meat at the time of slaughter.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

Thirteen cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year, principally in North Sunderland in March. There were also seven cases of Pneumonia, four of Erysipelas, two of Tuberculosis and one of Acute Polio Myelitis. Though there were three deaths from Pneumonia there were no deaths due to the other diseases.

No cases of Malaria, Dysentery, Trench Fever or Enteric Fever were notified.

In cases of Diphtheria anti-toxin is promptly resorted to, and in all suspicious throat cases swabs are taken and sent off for immediate examination at Newcastle. Table XV of England and Wales (appended) shews that the mortality in 1921 due to Whooping Cough and Diphtheria was the same, and from Influenza double either of them.

Tuberculosis.—There is no institution in the district for the treatment of this disease.

Small-Pox.—No primary vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health, (Smallpox Prevention), Regulations, 1917. In May 1920 I reported to the District Council upon the Small-Pox Hospital, and recommended one central Hospital for all the Northern Districts in the County. This would lead to efficiency as patients can be readily and safely removed considerable distances by motor ambulances.

The nearest centre for the treatment of Venereal Disease is at the Royal Victoria Hospital Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Belford Rural District.

Bacteriological Examinations during the Year January 1st to December 31st, 1921.

	Diphtheria.			Tubercle.			Total Specimens Examined.		
	Pos.	Neg.	Total.	Pos.	Neg.	Total.	Pos.	Neg.	Total.
January									
February									
March									
April		2	2		2	2		4	4
May									
June	Nil.								
July		1	1	1		1	1	1	2
August		2	2					2	2
September				1		1	1		1
October									
November				1	1	2	1	1	2
December				1		1	1		1
Totals		5	5	4	3	7	4	8	12

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The County Council provides lady inspectors who visit mothers and give useful advice in child welfare.

The physical welfare of the child is of paramount importance to the Nation. It is well known that many of the deaths in children under one year are due to improper care and feeding which lead to atrophy (or wasting) so that when these children are attacked by disease their chances of recovery are small indeed. Excessive diarrhoeal mortality occurs during the summer months especially if the weather is unusually hot, and the close connection between this disease and bottle feeding is too well known to need comment. Education in infant feeding and management is needed if the mortality in young children is to be reduced.

Under the Local Government Board Order in reference to Child Welfare the County Council have appointed Health Visitors for all the districts under the Order. The County Health Committee encourages the formation of child-welfare centres and have asked their Health Visitors to give whatever information and help they can in connection with the above, and have impressed upon them the absolute necessity of carrying with them the co-operation of the local medical officer of health and all other medical practitioners, district nurses and midwives. When consulted about any infant they have been warned to ascertain first whether any medical man is in attendance and if so to give no advice as to food or other treatment; and in any acute case such as inflamed eyes in new born children (which often leads to blindness) to impress upon the parents the necessity of calling in a doctor at once, and to ask the doctor if he approves of the Health Visitor acting in conjunction with the district nurse in carrying out the treatment.

Sanitary Administration.

STAFF.—(1) The Clerk, (2) The Medical Officer of Health, (3) The Sanitary Inspector.

Isolation Hospital for Small-pox situated near the Town of Belford. Total available beds, 8, provided by the Belford Rural District Council. The necessity of making use of them has not yet arisen.

Local Acts, Special Local Orders, or general adoptive Acts in force in the District.

The Bye Laws in force in the District relate to—

- (1) The prevention of nuisances in the keeping of animals;
- (2) Common Lodging Houses
- (3) Slaughter Houses.
- (4) Tents, Vans, Sheds, etc.
- (5) New Streets and Buildings.

Regulations under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order, 1885 were adopted in 1887.

Housing.

The total number of houses in the district is 1252. The number for working classes, 1036.

During the year 3 additional houses were provided ; one at North Sunderland and two at Shoreston Hall.

The Housing Schemes in view to provide 39 houses were unfortunately cancelled just before actual building was imminent. The position is therefore at a standstill. It is hoped however that private enterprise may partly relieve the scarcity.

OVERCROWDING.—According to the last completed housing inspections there were 233 houses with more than 2 occupants per room. Occasionally marked cases of overcrowding arise at farm places where there are 2 roomed cottages, and the occupier has 5 or 6 children ; the housing on the farms is a difficult problem on account of the frequent changes of tenancies among the workers, as the numbers in each household vary so frequently.

The general Standard of housing, as in most other Rural Districts does not reach a high level. A considerable number of houses are defective in a variety of ways. Some have no damp courses, and the walls are more or less damp, and many are lacking in general accommodation and conveniences.

No necessity has arisen during the year to make closing orders.

Jas. G. Macaskie, D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

1922.

Report of the Inspector of Nuisances, 1921.

The general sanitary administration during the year 1921 has been entirely of a routine nature. General supervision has been maintained, and the instructions of the Medical Officer carried out. There are few improvements of a permanent character to record, and it has been largely a case of making the best of existing conditions. The position so far as the improvement of Housing is concerned has been rendered more difficult by the cancellation of the Housing Scheme, which, though comparatively small, yet paved the way to exerting more pressure on owners or alternatively applying for closing orders. The position in the district generally is not so much actual shortage of houses as the quality of the housing. The question of repairing some of the oldest type of houses means reconstruction practically, and no doubt these would be closed altogether were there other suitable accommodation available. From a sanitary point of view, the abandonment of housing schemes is to be regretted. Unless, or until, local authorities are empowered to take this matter up again, private enterprise in housebuilding, particularly of a small type of house, should be encouraged in every conceivable way.

A few improvements of which special mention might be made are :— At Detchant, combined washhouses and bath houses have been provided for the farm cottages. This is a great convenience to the tenants, and is an example that might well be followed. The conditions at most farm cottages where the kitchen is also the wash-house are far from satisfactory. Irrespective even of health conditions, one is inclined to think that if owners of property suffered the same inconveniences more effort would be made to study the comfort of tenants. At Easington Grange farm cottages, which are very old, extensive improvements have been effected, two of the houses having been converted into one, and floors, walls, etc., repaired. The property at the top of Taylor Street, Sea Houses, regarding which a special report was made as to its bad condition, was sold during the year. One of the new owners has had his house repaired, and a new porch and w.c. put in, which is a marked improvement. Other owners it is understood are to have w.c.'s put in and the old pail closets done away

with, as well as other necessary improvements effected, otherwise the Council will need to take action. An old ashpit of long-standing complaint in Taylor Street has been abolished and the privies converted into ash closets. While w.c.'s would have been preferable, yet the conditions are greatly improved. Two w.c.'s and urinal have been built in connection with the West Street Memorial Hall, Belford, conveniences which were badly needed.

A great deal remains to be done in regard to sanitary accommodation generally. Structurally many of the conveniences are lacking, and as previously reported, until it is made compulsory for one house one sanitary convenience, the matter will always be troublesome to deal with. Attention is also drawn to the dilapidated state and unsuitability of many of the ashbins at Sea Houses, which the owners are liable to provide and maintain in proper condition. As in previous years, the scavenging at Belford and Sea Houses has been carried out by contract. Elsewhere the duty devolves upon occupiers, though at Bamburgh the estate houses were attended to by the Castle Authorities until recently.

During the year, plans were approved for buildings as follows :— New house at North Sunderland for Mrs Fordy ; Wash-house for Mr A. Jeffray, Sea Hoeses ; Extensions to Bank premises, Sea Houses ; New bakehouse for Mrs Young, Sea Houses—a very desirable improvement, the existing being too small for the staff ; Wash-house at Old Kennell's Cottage, Middleton ; 2 Houses at Shoreston Hall ; Extensions to Mr. Tully's house, Belford ; Conveniences, Belford Memorial Hall ; New Cowshed for Mr Mole, North Sunderland—the old one being condemned ; New Porch and W.C. at top of Taylor Street, Sea Houses ; and 2 Houses at St. Aidans.

THOS. W. DODD,

A. R. San. I.

Form A.

Amount of Shipping entering the District during the Year 1921.

	Number.	Tonnage.	Number Inspected.		Number reported to be defective.	Number of Orders Issued.
			By the Medical Officer of Health.	By the Inspector of Nuisances.		
FOREIGN (Steamers Sailing Fishing Total Foreign	Nil					
	Nil.					
	Nil.					
	Nil.					
COASTWISE (Steamers Sailing Fishing Total Coastwise	4	292				
	4	39				
	40					
Total Coastwise	48	331				
Total Foreign and Coastwise	48	331	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.

Form B.

Names of Vessels arriving in the District.		Names of Vessels subjected to measures of rat destruction.			Method employed.	No. of rats killed.
Plague infected.	Plague suspected.	Plague infected.	Plague suspected.	Other vessels.		
Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil		Nil.

Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report—1921.

[illegible]

Table XV.

Birth-Rate, Death-Rate and Analysis of Mortality during the Year 1921.

(Provisional figures. Provisional Populations estimated to the middle of 1920 have been used for the purposes of this Table. 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 1,000 Total Population	Annual Death-Rate per 1,000 Population.								Rate per 1,000 Births.		Percentage of Total Deaths.*				
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence.	Diarrhoea & Enteritis (under 2 Years).	Total Deaths under One Year.	Deaths in Public Institutions.	Certified Causes.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.
England and Wales	22.4	12.1	0.02	0.00	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.12	0.23	0.44	15.5	83	25.5	92.5	6.4	1.1
96 Great Towns, including London (Census Populations exceeding 50,000) ...	23.3	12.3	0.01	0.00	0.08	0.04	0.13	0.15	0.23	0.40	19.3	87	33.2	92.5	6.8	0.7
148 Smaller Towns (cen. pop. 20,000-50,000)	22.7	11.3	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.03	0.11	0.11	0.26	0.35	15.6	84	17.7	93.5	5.1	1.4
London	22.3	12.4	0.01		0.05	0.06	0.12	0.25	0.23	0.42	21.3	80	49.2	91.6	8.2	0.2

