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BENWELL AND FENHAM URBAN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF

N. HARDCASTLE,

M.R.C.S., L.M., L.A.C., & L.S.Sc.,

Medical Officer of Health,

FOR THE

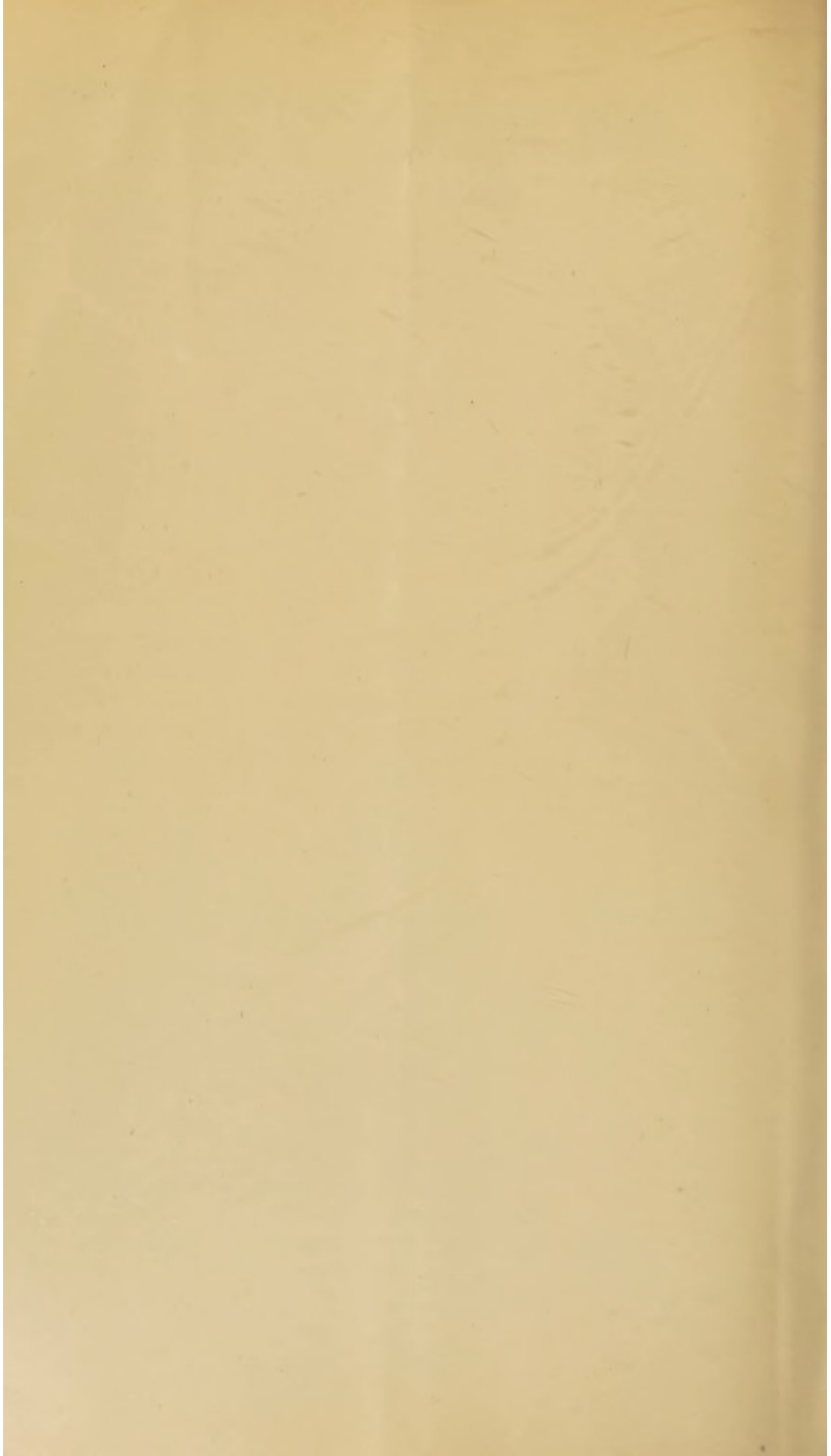
*YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1901.*

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Newcastle-on-Tyne:

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1902.



TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE  
BENWELL AND FENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg respectfully to lay before you my annual report for 1901, and in doing so have to acknowledge the uniformly fair consideration they have previously received. Having had the misfortune to be unfit for duty for over two months I feel that I owe some acknowledgement for the kind sympathy expressed by the Council during my illness. The services of an efficient deputy however being available, the sanitary work in no way suffered, as he entered into my work with zeal and energy, and, I believe, to your satisfaction.

The following compendium of statistics and other information will, I think, prove interesting and will show that a due grasp has always been taken of the situation, and that your medical officer is desirous, above all things, to discharge his duties properly and to keep you "*au courant*" with the necessities of the district from a medical point of view—the incidence of disease and all other matters with which the M.O.H. is necessarily associated.

Prominently as the necessity of an isolation hospital put before you its erection is not an accomplished fact; its want has on many occasions been severely felt; cases are frequently occurring where home treatment does not meet requirements—typhoid cases more especially are in this category; the necessary processes of disinfection being neglected and ignored. In houses also containing numerous inmates of one family the removal of the first infectious case at an early stage stays disease, it would not then expend its infectability on all the infectable members of the household and so be actually encouraged to spread.

With the provision of an infectious hospital a disinfecter would necessarily be associated; the present method of disinfection by sulphur fumes does not satisfy modern requirements.

I am aware that the necessity of an isolation hospital and disinfecter has previously and often been impressed upon you, it is only however by reiteration that the subject can be kept green and its importance be recognised and acknowledged.

POPULATION.—Nothing can indicate more clearly the progress of your district in importance than the increase of population :—

In	1883 it was	...	6,000
in	1891 ,,	...	10,500
and now in	1901 it is	...	18,470
Number of inhabited houses		...	2,256
„	Families	...	3,808
	Population	...	18,470

The above is the official census return. This discloses an average of 8·1 per house, which certainly is not correct. I find, however, that where an upper and lower flat are under one roof, what ought to have been reckoned as two houses, was registered in the census return as one. In order, therefore, to get at the real average number of inmates in each house it is necessary to take this into consideration. The surveyor informs me that the number of inhabited houses, including flats, is 4,517, and the average number of inmates 4·2 per house. The number of houses erected this year, 1901, is 291 (affording accommodation as 580 tenements or flats), of these, 438 tenements (as above), or 219 houses, have been erected since the census was taken.

The population is principally of the artisan class. The houses erected in recent years are satisfactory; in many of the older ones privies and ashpits are provided. Their condition is a pregnant source of difficulty, criticism, and complaint; they are injurious to health and unsatisfactory; their presence maintains a radius of detriment which ought to be abolished. Of their noxious influence on infantile life I have no doubt.

With sanitary dwellings, efficient sewerage and drainage the natural lie of the district ought to conduce to a high standard of health. The people's park, solely for public use, augments the natural advantages of the district. Open to the south and west the breezes freely circulate. The sloping nature of the ground facing the south, more especially in New and South Benwell, is favourable to health, its open character favouring a free circulation of air. There are no noxious trades in the district, though the smoke act might at times perhaps be brought more actively into operation.

The sewerage is fairly effective. Sometimes by the incidence of disease, defective drains are discovered in some of the older houses. A question of liability for repairs has at times arisen. A fair rule

to make, however, is the authority to open the drain. If found efficient Council to restore it, if defective the expense to be paid for by landlord. This should be the uniform practice.

The sewers empty themselves into the Tyne, a tidal river. Reaching it, the dispersal of the outfall is speedy and effective. Refuse is collected daily, weekly, and monthly until a sufficient amount is secured to fill a hopper; it is accumulated on a quay at side of river whence it is taken to sea and discharged beyond the limits fixed by Tyne Commissioners. This is an expensive process and the provision of a destructor has occupied the attention of the Board and been decided on.

The amount of refuse collected during the year 1901 was:—Daily and weekly collections, 8285 loads; monthly collections, 2,145 loads; of these 9,315 loads were sent to sea, 1,115 loads laid on land.

THE WATER SUPPLY is continuous and efficient, it is wholesome and free from risks of pollution. In its passage to Newcastle this authority is supplied.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFICATION is in active operation. The question of the elimination of erysipelas from the catalogue of infectious diseases has been advocated by the Council, who are not supported by the Local Government Board.

SLAUGHTER HOUSE.—Licensed premises are now used for slaughtering. Its condition is supervised by the Board's offices.

THE MAIN TRADES of the district are shipbuilding, engineering, ordnance, colliery, and brick works. The building trade is brisk and will continue to be so as long as the several works continue to be so actively employed. Accommodation for the artisans renders the erection of houses by no means risky speculation. They are occupied as soon as ever they are certified to be in a completed and satisfactory condition. The Factory and Workshop Act confers powers in the control of trades. Coming into operation only on January, 1st, 1901, I am unable to say anything as to its working.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—Every endeavour is made to trace the origin and source of infectious disease. Immediately on notification the sanitary inspector visits and makes his report. Being so supplied with information as to sanitary surroundings, accommodation, isolation, etc., either visits or satisfies himself that all available measures for prevention are in operation.

SMALL POX.—The outbreaks of small pox in London and other places bring before us the necessity of preventing its spread. The means whereby spread can be prevented are:—1st, vaccination *compulsory*; 2nd, isolation hospitals both for the sick and those who have been in contact with them.

The importance of vaccination cannot be too strongly urged on the public. Vaccination is not in the hands of the Sanitary Authority (as it ought to be). It is, however, our duty to declare its efficiency.

We are entrusted with all measures and means for combatting infectious diseases, but in small pox the main means are not our function. This should be altered.

It is my firm opinion that the *non-compulsory* nature of the Vaccination Act seriously impairs its efficiency.

Vaccination is, as has been proved over and over again, a *certain* preventive against small pox.

We have had, near our district, a serious outbreak quelled by its means. To sap the roots of its efficiency by allowing conscientious objectors to endanger its success and affect its complete protective nature is against common sense.

I recommend, therefore, that the Benwell and Fenham District Council petition for the enactment of compulsory vaccination.

A CONTINUOUS DAILY HOUSE TO HOUSE VISITATION is made by the Sanitary Inspector. No part of the district escapes his attention. The round occupies three months; it is thus done 4 times a year. In his journal is recorded the result of his observations. Informal notices are at once served on every insanitary condition, followed, if unabated, by formal notices at ensuing meeting of Board.

THE SURVEYOR'S AND SANITARY INSPECTOR'S DUTIES have now been disassociated. With the exception of testing new drains, which ought fairly to be in the surveyor's province, the entire attention of the sanitary inspector is devoted to sanitary duties. These, I think, he discharges with zeal and efficiency.

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION.—Very little use has been made of the free examination granted by the Council. I understand in other authorities every doubtful case is so tested. Circulars are issued diffusing the information that this boon is freely accorded without cost to all medical men practising in the district and urging its utility.

## BIRTHS.

During the year, 768 births were registered, equal to a rate of 41.5. In 1899, 40.6, the average rate for the last ten years, 42.2.

The death rate per 1,000 births registered is 186.

## DEATHS.

During the year, 308 deaths at all ages and from all causes were registered.

1901	...	...	308	1898	...	...	269
1900	...	...	295	1897	...	...	201
1899	...	...	265				

## THE MORTALITY.—

1901	...	...	16.6	1898	...	...	20.7
1900	...	...	18.4	1897	...	...	16.8
1899	...	...	18.9				

## MONTHLY RETURNS—

January	...	...	20	July	...	...	24
February	...	...	12	August	...	...	48
March	...	...	28	September	...	...	22
April	...	...	20	October	...	...	26
May	...	...	25	November	...	...	22
June	...	...	22	December	...	...	39—308

As in previous years, August is the month when the highest mortality prevails. 32 infantile deaths were registered in that month, mainly from diarrhœa, there is no doubt that these epidemics occur in hot weather, in bottle fed children, and in my experience the disorder is more prevalent in houses to which privies and ashpits are attached. 70 per cent. of the deaths from all causes in children are due to some abdominal disease, and 30 per cent of this number are due to defective or faulty nutrition. The exciting cause is fermentation of the food caused by development of bacteria. Hot weather favours fermentation, the dynamic force of solar heat together with telluric influences acting upon vegetable and animal matter during the heated season gives rise to micro-organisms that increase the prevalence of infantile diarrhœa. The organs of digestion in children anatomically and physiologically favour the production of fermentation. There is an insufficient quantity of acid in the gastric juice which has a tendency to produce bacteria.

Numerous bacteria spring into existence generated by the action of the heat on decomposing vegetable and animal substances. These are now known to be the causal agents or specific principles



of many of the most important diseases of childhood. These enter the stomach and find conditions favourable for their development. It is reasonable to suppose that nature will make an effort to expel the offending material; it is irritating and harmful, causing diarrhoea, the severity, mismanagement or neglect of which too frequently causes a fatal issue.

## DEATHS.

LOCALITIES—	1901	1900	1899	1898
South Benwell ...	133	125	123	103
New Benwell...	77	67	48	72
Priestman's Cottages & Handyside's Bldgs...	8	14	17	8
Delaval ...	19	19	15	13
Benwell and Denton...	18	18	10	16
Fenham ...	8	2	4	6
Scotswood ...	44	46	47	50

## DEATHS— AGES—

Under 1 year ...	...	143
1 and under 5 years ...	...	36
5 ,, 15 ,, ...	...	12
15 ,, 25 ,, ...	...	15
25 ,, 60 ,, ...	...	70
60 and above ...	...	32—308

INFANTILE DEATHS.—143 were of children under one year of age. 46·4 per cent. of the entire mortality.

1900 ...	42·7	1898 ...	43·4
1899 ...	43·3	1897 ...	41·3

## CAUSES (INFANTILE DEATHS)—

Measles ...	...	2
Diphtheria ...	...	1
Diarrhoea ...	...	34
Enteritis ...	...	18
Tubercular Disease ...	...	9
Bronchitis ...	...	11
Premature Birth ...	...	16
Accident... ...	...	1
All other causes ...	...	51—143

## GENERAL DEATH RATE.

DEATHS—CAUSES.—DISORDERS OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM caused 39 deaths, against 34 in 1900, and 51 in 1899, and account for 12·6 per cent. of the mortality, against 11·5 in 1900.

PHTHISIS caused 21 deaths, 26 in 1900, 13 in 1899, and account for 6·8 per cent. of the mortality, against 8·8 in 1900.

HEART DISEASE caused 19 deaths, 22 in 1900, and account for 6·1 per cent. of the mortality, against 7·4 in 1900.

DEATHS OVER 60—32 persons died over 60 years of age, against 40 in 1900, and 35 in 1899.

ACCIDENTS caused 3 deaths.

SUICIDES caused 5 deaths.

## ZYMOTIC DEATHS—

	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897
Measles ... ..	3	2	6	4	11
Whooping Cough ..	4	3	2	8	1
Diphtheria ... ..	1	1	6	1	0
Puerperal Fever ...	1	0	1	0	0
Typhoid ... ..	1	0	2	1	2
Scarlet Fever ... ..	4	2	2	4	1

These zymotic diseases are responsible for 4·5 per cent. of the mortality, against 2·7 in 1900, and a zymotic rate of ·74 against ·5 last year.

## ZYMOTIC DEATHS—LOCALITIES—

	1901	1900	1899	1898
South Benwell ... ..	8	3	6	5
New Benwell ... ..	2	3	8	6
Scotswood ... ..	3	1	1	8
Benwell ... ..	1	1	0	1

## COMPULSORY NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the year 248 cases of infectious disease have been notified.

Scarlet Fever ... ..	173
Erysipelas ... ..	44
Enteric Fever ... ..	16
Diphtheria ... ..	14
Puerperal Fever ... ..	1—248

## LOCALITIES—

New Benwell	...	...	61
South Benwell	...	...	140
Delaval	...	...	15
Benwell	...	...	15
Scotswood	...	...	12
Paradise	...	...	1
Handyside's Buildings	...	...	3
Fenham	...	...	1—248

## TYPHOID —

South Benwell	...	...	11
New Benwell	...	...	4
Scotswood	...	...	1—16

TYPHOID.—It will be seen that these cases were scattered over the district. They occurred chiefly in houses with privies and ash-pits, and in several cases local sanitary defects were discovered and remedied. The proper treatment to prevent the spread of typhoid cannot be undertaken by working people (of which this district is mainly composed) in their own homes.

SCARLET FEVER.—The notifications are numerous, and exceed those of previous years. It will be seen, however, that the death rate from this disease does not exceed 2·2 per cent. Four deaths in 173 cases. This is even milder than some previous epidemics.

The very mildness of the cases is, however, a source of danger, and until desquamation shows itself some parents are dubious of its presence, and ignore the necessity of precautionary measures.

## SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR 1901.

THE SCHOOLS have been visited 13 times. All the out-buildings were found in good order.

COW SHEDS.—There are 13 in the district. Their condition is seen to periodically. One prosecution was necessary for filthy premises and tainted water supply. A conviction was obtained, and a fine of £5 imposed.

215 cows are accommodated in these sheds, to which twelve visits of inspection have been made.

Thirteen milk shops are registered.

## SANITARY WORK.

	Found.	Abated.
Choked and defective drains ...	96	92
Do. do. gullies ...	78	78
Do. do. water closets ...	154	151
Do. do. waste pipes ...	86	81
Foul and defective privies ...	14	14
Defective hatches ...	35	31
Leakage from ashpits ...	20	20
Foul and defective ashpits ...	81	81
Defective yard paving ...	27	20
No water supply ...	2	2
Passages limewashed ...	4	4
Cases of overcrowding ...	6	6
Dangerous walls ...	5	5
Slaughtering on unregistered premises ...	1	1
Infected bedding destroyed ...	2	2
Sewers choked ...	10	2
Rubbish thrown on street ...	27	27
Number of houses disinfected ...	189	
Visits to infected houses ...	852	
Disinfectants supplied ...	150	
Occupiers and owners interviewed ...	1507	
Informal notices served ...	302	
Formal notices served ...	50	
Notices complied with ...	305	
Prosecutions ...	2	

## DRAIN TESTING.

Outside drains inspected ...	612
Do. found defective ...	35
Inside drains tested ...	436
Do. found defective ...	172
Length of new sewer inspected ...	69
Do. found defective ...	10

I am,

Yours obediently,

N. HARDCASTLE,

Medical Officer of Health.

Newcastle-on-Tyne,

January, 1902.

TABLE I.—BENWELL AND FENHAM. For whole District.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.		DEATHS AT ALL AGES. TOTAL.		DEATHS AT ALL AGES. NETT.	
		Number	Rate.*	Number.	Rate per 1,000 Births registered.	Number.	Rate.*	Number.	Rate.*
1891 ... ..	10,000	463	46.3	84	181	197	19.7	197	19.7
1892 ... ..	10,000	442	44.2	68	153	177	17.7	177	17.7
1893 ... ..	10,000	399	39	70	175	215	21.5	215	21.5
1894 ... ..	10,000	397	39.7	84	211	130	13	130	13
1895 ... ..	10,500	410	39	81	197	210	20	210	20
1896 ... ..	10,500	425	40	65	152	173	16.4	173	16.4
1897 ... ..	12,000	484	48.4	83	172	201	20.1	201	20.1
1898 ... ..	13,000	545	41.9	117	214	269	20.6	269	20.6
1899 ... ..	14,000	603	43	115	190	265	18.9	265	18.9
1900 ... ..	16,000	650	40.6	126	198	295	18.4	295	18.4
Averages for years 1891-1900 ...	11,600	481	42.2	89	184	213	18.6	213	18.6
1901 ... ..	18,470	768	41.5	143	186	308	16.6	308	16.6

\* Rates calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water) ... ..	1,367	} At Census of 1901.
Total Population at all Ages...	18,470	
Number of Inhabited Houses ... ..	4,517	
Average Number of Persons per House ... ..	4.2	

TABLE II.—BENWELL AND FENHAM.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births Regis- tered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 Year.
1890... ..	10,000	437	182	78
1891... ..	10,400	463	197	84
1892... ..	10,400	442	177	68
1893... ..	10,400	399	215	70
1894... ..	10,400	397	130	34
1895... ..	10,500	410	210	81
1896... ..	10,500	425	173	65
1897... ..	12,000	484	201	83
1898... ..	13,000	545	269	117
1899... ..	14,000	603	265	115
Average of years 1890 to 1899 ...	11,160	460	201	79
1900... ..	16,000	650	295	126
1901... ..	18,470	768	308	143

TABLE III.—BENWELL AND FENHAM.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year 1900.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.						
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.					
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 and upwards.
Small-pox ... ..	...	...	...	..	...	...	...
Cholera ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria ... ..	14	1	2	4	3	4	...
Membranous Croup...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas ... ..	44	...	3	8	12	20	1
Scarlet Fever ...	173	3	52	100	15	3	...
Typhus ,, ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric ,, ... ..	16	...	2	3	5	6	...
Relapsing ,, ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Continued ,, ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal ,, ... ..	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
Plague ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ... ..	248	4	59	115	36	33	1

No Hospital provided.

TABLE IV.—BENWELL AND FENHAM.  
Causes of and Ages at Death during year 1901.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	DEATHS IN WHOLE DISTRICT AT SUBJOINED AGES.						
	All Ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
Small-pox ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles ... ..	3	2	1	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever ... ..	4	...	3	1	...	...	...
Whooping Cough ... ..	4	...	3	1	...	...	...
Diphtheria and Membranous Croup ... ..	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Croup ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Typhus Fever ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever ... ..	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
Other Continued Fever ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Epidemic Influenza ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cholera ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plague ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhœa ... ..	38	34	4	...	...	...	...
Enteritis ... ..	20	18	2	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ... ..	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
Erysipelas ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Septic Diseases ... ..	2	...	...	...	...	2	...
Phthisis ... ..	21	...	...	2	5	14	...
Other Tubercular Diseases ... ..	14	9	3	2	...	...	...
Cancer, Malignant Disease ... ..	12	...	...	...	...	7	5
Bronchitis ... ..	23	11	7	...	...	3	2
Pneumonia ... ..	16	...	8	1	2	3	2
Pleurisy ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Alcoholism ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cirrhosis of Liver } ... ..	3	...	...	...	...	3	...
Venereal Diseases ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature Birth ... ..	16	16	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and Accidents of Par- turition ... ..	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
Heart Diseases ... ..	19	...	...	...	1	12	6
Accidents ... ..	3	1	...	...	...	1	1
Suicides ... ..	5	...	...	...	...	5	...
All other Causes ... ..	101	51	5	4	6	19	16
All Causes ... ..	308	143	36	12	15	70	32



