

[Report 1913] / Medical Officer of Health, Cockermouth U.D.C.

Contributors

Cockermouth (England). Urban District Council.

Publication/Creation

1913

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/amj5g7sp>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution license.

This licence permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	2
REPORT—	
Area	2
Physical Features, &c.	2
Climate	2
Rainfall Records	3
Chief occupation of the Inhabitants	3
Population	3
Hospital Accommodation	3
Persons per House	3
Births	3
Deaths	4
Ages at Death	5
Inquests	5
Uncertified Deaths	5
Cancer	5
Infantile Mortality	6
Senile Death-rate	6
Zymotic Death-rate	6
SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT—	
Water Supply	7
Rivers Pollution	7
Closet Accommodation	7
Scavenging	7
Sanitary Inspection	7
Offensive Trades	7
Common Lodging-houses	7
Schools	7
FOOD—	
Milk Supply	8
Other Foods	8
Slaughter-houses	8
Housing	8
SANITARY ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT—	
Staff	8
Chemical and Bacteriological Work	9
Prevalance and Control over Acute Infectious Diseases	9
Tuberculosis Regulations	9
Statistical Tables	Sanitary Inspector's Report

Cockermouth Urban District.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

As I only took up office on December first, it is not possible for me to report completely on the health of the district. The following report has been compiled from such records as are available, but naturally as the town was without a Medical Officer for several months these are not complete. On several points I have also made use of information which I have acquired during my short tenure of office.

The statistics compiled from the death returns are accurate. It is to be regretted that Housing Inspection in the district has been practically a dead letter.

My thanks are due to the Clerk and Inspector for some of the information contained in the report.

Your obedient servant,

D. J. McLEISH,

March 6th, 1914.

Medical Officer of Health.

REPORT.

Area

The area of the district in statute acres (exclusive of area covered by water) is 2389.144.

Physical Features, etc.

The geological formation of the larger portions of the district is gravel with Skiddaw slate and limestone on the boundary covered in parts with glacial drifts, boulder clay, and waterborne sediment, sand and gravel. The town is intersected by two very fast flowing rivers, the Cocker which flows from lake Crummock (thereby draining the Buttermere, Loweswater and Lorton Vales), and joins the other, the Derwent, which flows from lakes Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite, about the centre of your Urban area.

Climate

The climate is very variable, the prevailing winds are from the south-west with a heavy rainfall.

1913.

Josiah Hall, Esq., Elmhurst.

MONTH.	INCHES OF RAIN.
January	2'61
February	2'71
March	4'41
April	4'86
May	2'45
June	3'95
July	'09
August	2'76
September	2'59
October	4'78
November	4'17
December	3'8
TOTAL	39'78

Rainfall in 1910—41'89 inches.

"	1911—45'06	"	Rainfall
"	1912—44'03	"	Records
"	1913—39'78	"	

Last year was a fairly dry year for this district.

Cockermouth is a market town. Most of the inhabitants work at the usual businesses and trades of an ordinary small town. There is a Thread Mill in the adjoining rural district, employing a gradually diminishing amount of female labour (about 200 hands). A certain number work about the Cattle Marts, and a few find employment in the Coal Mines and Granite Quarry, outside the district.

Chief
Occupation
of the
Inhabitants

The census population of 1911, of 5203 showed a reduction of 152 on the census population of 1901. This gives an estimated population for the middle of 1913, of 5167.

Population

There is a Nursing Home of eight beds in the Main Street. A new Hospital with the same number of beds, is shortly to be built just outside the town on an open site. The Workhouse with its Hospital contains about 180 inmates about one sixth of whom are sick persons. Most of these belong to outside districts.

Hospital
Accommod-
ation

The number of inhabited houses in 1911 was 1167, and the average number of persons per house was 4'4. In 1901 the number of inhabited houses was 1156, and the average number of persons was 4'6.

Persons per
House

There were registered in the district 113 births (62 males and 51 females).

Births

Births in town.—Males, 56 ; females, 48 ; Total, 104.

Births in Workhouse.—Males, 6 ; females, 3 ; Total, 9.

Of these births 12 were illegitimate (9 males and 3 females) including 6 males and 2 females in the Workhouse. Seven of the illegitimate, and one of the legitimate births belonged to the outside districts so that the net births amount to 105, and the birth rate is 20·9 per 1,000 of the population as compared with 24·2 the average birth rate for the preceeding five years.

This is calculated on the estimated population less the estimated number of residents in the Workhouse who belong to outside districts.

BIRTH RATES FOR 1913.

<i>England & Wales</i>	..	..	..	23·9
<i>145 Smaller Towns</i>	..	..	..	23·9
<i>England & Wales (less 241 largest towns)</i>	..	..	..	22·2
<i>Cockermouth</i>	..	..	..	20·9

Deaths

The total number of deaths registered was 88.

To obtain the correct number of deaths for the district 20 deaths of non-residents must be subtracted, and 3 deaths of residents dying without the district must be added. This leaves 71 deaths of persons whose usual residence is within the district, and corresponds to a death rate of 14·1 per 1,000 of the population, (allowance is made for the portion of non-residents in the Workhouse, whose deaths are transferred to other districts). The average death rate for the previous five years was 15·1 per 1,000 of the population.

THE STANDARDISED DEATH-RATE.

This is the death-rate that would have been recorded if the age and sex of the population in Cockermouth corresponded to the age and sex of the population of all England at the 1901 census. N.B. It will be readily understood for instance that if there were an abnormally large proportion of old persons or very young children in a district the death rate would be high irrespective of unhealthy conditions, and accordingly it is necessary to standardise the death rate so that it can be compared with the rest of the Country.

The standardised death-rate for this district is 12·8 per 1,000 of the population. The following table is therefore a true comparison between Cockermouth and the rest of the Country:—

<i>England and Wales</i>	..	..	..	13·4
<i>145 Smaller Towns</i>	..	..	..	13·0
<i>England and Wales (less 241 largest towns)</i>	..	..	..	12·1
<i>Cockermouth</i>	..	..	..	12·8

The death-rate is therefore less than that of all England, and of the 145 smaller towns, but greater than that of rural England.

The following table gives the ages at death :—

Ages at
Death

YEAR	At all ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 2 years	2 and under 5 years	5 and under 15 years	15 and under 25 years	25 and under 65 years	65 and up- wards
1913	71	9	2	3	1	5	24	27
1912	63	6	2	3	3	2	19	28
1911	75	12	3	4	2	4	21	32
1910	88	23	..	3	3	4	26	29
1909	87	11	..	3	4	5	34	30
1908	92	21	..	5	1	3	29	33
1907	86	11	..	11	2	2	25	35
1906	78	17	..	6	3	3	25	24
1905	90	15	..	5	..	5	33	32
1904	97	23	..	7	4	8	27	28

There were 3 inquests during the year, the verdicts being heart failure due to rheumatism, accidental fall, and death from misadventure from laudanum poisoning.

Inquests

One death was uncertified.

Uncertified
Deaths

Cancer caused 5 deaths during the year.

Cancer

Pulmonary Tuberculosis caused 8 deaths, and there was 1 death from other forms of tuberculous disease.

Tuberculous
Diseases

The death-rate from pulmonary tuberculosis (consumption) is accordingly 1.59 per 1,000 of the population as compared with .76 per 1,000 for 1912.

The following table gives the ages at death :—

YEAR	At all ages	Under 1 year	1-5	5-15	15-25	25-65	Over 65 years
1913	8	...	...	...	4	4	...
1912	4	...	...	...	2	2	1
1911	4	...	...	...	3	1	...
1910	13	...	...	...	3	9	...
1909	6	...	...	...	2	4	...
1908	6	...	...	...	0	6	...
1907	8	1	1	...	1	5	...
1906	6	...	...	1	3	2	...
1905	7	...	...	...	2	5	...
1904	5	...	1	...	2	2	...

Infantile Mortality

Nine deaths of infants under 1 year of age were registered during the year. This gives an infantile mortality rate of 86 per 1,000 births. This is a fairly satisfactory rate, and is considerably below the average for the whole country.

The following comparison with the rate for different areas of England and Wales shows this superiority of the Cokermonth rate.

<i>England & Wales, less the 241 largest towns</i>	..	96
<i>145 Smaller Towns</i>	..	112
<i>Cokermonth Urban District</i>	..	86

The following is a comparison of the average infantile mortality for the past 6 years with the corresponding average for the surrounding rural district.

<i>Cokermonth Urban—</i>	<i>Cokermonth Rural—</i>
107.	118.7.

It is difficult to accurately say how this superiority arises. The main reasons are probably, the water carriage system of sewage disposal with the absence of privies, the regular scavenging and the invariably pure water supply. Infantile mortality rates are always less in towns where water carriage is adopted, than where insanitary privies exist.

The Notification of Births Act, 1907, has not been adopted by the District Council, but it has now been adopted by the County Council for all districts where it has not been adopted by the local Councils.

Senile Death-rate

Of the 71 deaths belonging to the district, 27 were of persons who had attained the age of 65 years and upwards, which gives a senile death-rate of 38 per cent as compared with 29.1 per cent for 1912.

Zymotic Death-rate

The following table gives the seven principal zymotic diseases and the deaths recorded from each :—

				1912	1913
Smallpox	...	...	...	0	0
Measles	...	...	...	4	2
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	1	0
Diphtheria	...	...	...	0	0
Fever	{	Typhus	...	...	...
		Enteric	...	0	0
		Continued	...	...	...
Diarrhoea	...	...	...	3	1
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	1	0
				<hr/>	<hr/>
			Totals	9	3

This gives a zymotic death-rate of .6 per 1,000 of the population as compared with 1.8 per 1,000 for 1912.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

This is by gravitation from Crummock Lake, and is Water Supply
ample in quantity and very pure.

A considerable amount of pollution of the rivers and streams flowing through the town takes place both from the amount of tipping of refuse by private individuals, and by drainage of slop water. Notices have been erected at various points calling attention to the penalties attached to tipping refuse into streams, but apparently this has little effect. Rivers
Pollution

From the Sanitary Inspector's report it is evident that 7 owners during the year have ceased to pollute the streams either with drainage from tanpits, slop water or water closets.

There are now very few privies in the town. W.C.'s Closet Accommodation
are almost the invariable rule.

The refuse is collected twice weekly in uncovered carts. Scavenging
There are a large number of unsuitable receptacles used for holding refuse. No fixed receptacles are in use.

A classified statement of nuisances detected and Sanitary
Inspection
remedied is given at the end of this report.

There are 2 licensed knackers and bone boilers in the town. No nuisance has been caused by these during the Offensive
Trades
year.

One gut scraper's business is carried on. It is in a very unsuitable place being in the centre of a crowded area. As a building it is quite suitable, and has good impervious floors and walls, and is connected to the sewer. It was the cause of very considerable nuisance during the year as it was not kept in a cleanly state. There is now a new occupier in the place and the management is much improved. There are 2 tallow melters in the town and also 2 tanneries.

There are 2 common lodging-houses. These are old Common
Lodging-
Houses
buildings, but are kept in a reasonably cleanly condition and are properly ventilated.

The medical inspection of the public elementary schools is carried out by the County Staff. Notifications of Schools
infectious disease are sent by teachers and attendance officers in duplicate to the County and the District Medical Officer. The drains of one private school have been relaid during the year.

FOOD.

Milk Supply Veterinary inspection of the cattle in dairies supplying milk to the town is carried out quarterly. Favourable reports of the health of the cattle have been received from the inspector.

Other Foods The food stuffs seized during the year are mentioned in the inspector's report.

Slaughter-Houses There is one small public slaughter-house where a small amount of slaughtering is carried out. The floor of this slaughter-house which was previously flagged is now being made quite impervious with a concrete floor. Most of the slaughtering is done in private slaughter-houses. These are in a crowded neighbourhood quite close to houses, and no new slaughter-houses would be permitted in such a position.

The Sale of Food and Drugs Act, and the Milk and Cream regulations are carried out by the County Council.

Housing There are many old houses in the town situated in narrow courts and alleys, but there is no deficiency of houses in the district.

No new houses have been built during the past 3 years.

In 1911 some offices were converted into a house.

In 1910 an addition was made to a cottage and one better class house was built. The population of the town is decreasing as shown by the last census returns.

No returns are given because no work was done under the Regulations during the year.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT.

Staff The Medical Officer of Health died in June of the present year, and the present Medical Officer took office on December first. The Sanitary inspector resigned at the end of the year. The Sanitary Inspector is also Surveyor and Housing Inspector.

There is a joint Smallpox Hospital.

No Hospital is provided for other infectious diseases.

The Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890.

The Public Health Amendment Act, 1890, Pt. iii, and several sections of The Public Health Amendment Act, 1907, are in force in the district.

CHEMICAL & BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK.

A few Diptheric swabs were examined during the year by the Clinical Research Association.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER ACUTE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

In infectious cases disinfectants are supplied, and houses are disinfected when the cases are free from infection. Inquiries are made as to the origin of the disease.

There is no steam disinfectant at the service of the Council.

TUBERCULOSIS REGULATIONS.

Seven cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were notified. This number is one less than the deaths during the year. All the cases have not been notified during the year. Notification in tuberculosis is private and is to the Medical Officer of Health. When there is no Medical Officer, as was the case for at least five months during the year, it is natural that practitioners would not notify cases.

Disinfectants are supplied to tuberculous cases, and disinfection is carried out after death.

TABLE I—Cockermouth Urban District.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1913 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.			Total Deaths registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths.		Net Deaths belonging to the District.			
		Un-corrected Number	Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate.	of Non-residents registered in the District.	of Residents not registered in the District.	Under 1 year of age.		At all Ages.	
									Number.	Rate per 1000 Net Births.	Number.	Rate.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1908	5410	134	134	24.2	135	24.9	44	1	21	160	92	17.0
1909	5410	136	136	24.2	111	20.5	29	5	11	80	87	16.0
1910	5410	136	136	25.1	117	21.6	33	4	23	176	88	16.2
1911	5203	138	138	26.5	93	17.8	24	6	12	87	75	14.4
1912	5203	129	110	21.1	91	17.4	33	5	6	54	63	12.1
1913	5167	113	105	20.9*	88	17.03	20	3	9	86	71	14.1*

NOTES.—This Table is arranged to show the gross births and deaths in the district, and the births and deaths properly belonging to it with the corresponding rates. For years before 1911 some of the corrected rates probably will not be available. The rates should be calculated per 1000 of the estimated gross population. In a district in which large Public Institutions for the sick or infirm seriously affect the statistics, the rates in Columns 5 and 13 may be calculated on a net population, obtained by deducting from the estimated gross population the average number of inmates not belonging to the district in such institutions.

* In calculating these rates allowance has been made for the population in the Workhouse, eleven-twelfths of which belong to other districts. The deaths and births among these eleven-twelfths (150 persons) are transferred to their own districts.

In the case of the standardised death-rate for the district this allowance is not made because the Registrar General states he has made this allowance in calculating his standardising factor.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water) { 2389.144.

Total population at all ages
Number of inhabited houses
Average number of persons per house

... 5203
... 1167
... 4.4 } At Census of 1911.

TABLE II.—Cockermouth Urban District.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the
Year 1913.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	Cases notified in Whole District.							Total Cases removed to Hospital.
	At all Ages.	Ages.†—Years.						
		1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 45.	45 to 65.	65 & upwards.	
Smallpox ...								
Cholera, Plague ...								
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) ...	5		4	1				
Erysipelas ...	2				2			
Scarlet fever ...	4	1	3					
Typhus fever ...								
Enteric fever ...								
Relapsing fever ...								
Continued fever ...								
Puerperal fever ...								
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis ...								
Poliomyelitis ...								
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	7			2	3	1	1	2
Other forms of do.	3	1	2					
TOTALS ...	21	2	9	3	5	1	1	2

There is no Isolation Hospital.

Blencathra in Penrith Rural District is nearest Sanatorium (voluntary).

Three of the Tuberculous cases were in the Union Workhouse Infirmary, Cockermouth, but there is no special accommodation provided for these cases.

TABLE III—*Cockermouth Urban District.*

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1913.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Nett Deaths in whole District at subjoined Ages.										Total Deaths whether of residents or non-residents in Institutions in the District.
	All ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 2	2 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 45	45 and under 65	65 and upwards		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Enteric Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Small-pox ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles ...	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping-cough ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria & croup ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Influenza ...	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	
Erysipelas ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ...	8	...	...	...	...	4	3	1	...	3
Tuberculous Meningitis ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other tuberculous diseases ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	
Cancer, malignant disease ...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3	3
Rheumatic Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Meningitis ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Organic Heart disease ...	9	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	6	
Bronchitis ...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	7	1	1	1	...	1	...	1	2	2	
Other diseases of Respiratory organs ...	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	
Diarrhoea and Enteritis ...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Appendicitis and Typhlitis ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cirrhosis of liver ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Alcoholism ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	
Nephritis and Bright's Disease ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	
Puerperal fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and accidents of pregnancy & parturition ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Congenital Debility and Malformation, including Premature Birth ...	4	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide ...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	
Suicide ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other defined diseases ...	22	1	...	...	...	...	2	6	13	12
Diseases ill-defined or unknown ...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
All causes—Certified ...	70	8	2	3	1	5	7	17	27	21	
—Uncertified ...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Cockermouth Urban District

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year
1913, on the administration of the Factory and Workshop
Act, 1901, in connection with—

Factories. Workshops, &c.

	*Inspections.	Written Notices.
Workshops	Unknown	8

Defects found in Factories, Workshops, &c.

	Found.	Remedied.
Nuisances	8	8
Totals	8	8

Home Work—Nil.

Registered Workshops.

Bakehouses	9
Dressmakers and Milliners	10
Printers	3
Bootmakers and Cloggers	6
Stonemason	1
Smiths and Fitters	7
Joiners	8
Coachbuilders	2
Saddlers	1
Cabinet Makers and Upholsterers	2
Tallow Chandlers	2
Tanners	2
Plumbers and Painters	4
Tailors	11
Brewers	1
Woollen Mill	1
Basket Maker	1
Churnmaker	1
Total	72

D. J. McLEISH,

March 10th, 1914.

Medical Officer of Health.

* N.B.—The District from May to December was without a Medical Officer of Health, and no record can be found of the year's inspections.

ANNUAL REPORT ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1913.

D. J. McLeish, M.D., D.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health,
Cockermouth U.D.C.

Dear Sir,

I have pleasure in submitting to you the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1913.

Nuisances reported to the Council	..	..	153
do. Notices complied with	..	..	48

DETAILS OF SANITARY IMPROVEMENT WORK.

Defective drains repaired, cleansed, etc.	..	..	9
Laying of new drains to premises	..	..	2
Defective or dirty W.C.'s cleansed, repaired, or pans replaced			57
do. W.C. walls and floors repaired	..	..	4
do. downspouts and eaves gutters repaired	..	..	3
do. yard gullies and sink wastes repaired	..	..	45
do. urinal drains repaired	..	..	1
Number of Cowshed floors repaired	..	..	2
Accumulation of stables manure removed	..	..	2
Number of cowsheds limewashed	..	..	9
Defective and insufficient water supply remedied	..	..	2
Poultry kept in dwelling house removed	..	..	3
Defective washhouse floors repaired	..	..	2
Pigs kept in cowsheds removed	..	..	1
Pollution of river from tan pits and slop water remedied	..	..	3
Defective yards repaired	..	..	1
W.C.'s and bath water, etc., emptying into river remedied			4
Factories and Workshops limewashed and Abstracts obtained			8
Accumulation of rubbish removed	..	..	1
Premises in a dirty condition cleansed	..	..	1

FOOD STUFFS SEIZED AND DESTROYED

On the 3rd of May last a carcase of a cow, which was found to be diseased and unfit for human consumption, was seized and destroyed.

On the 2nd of June last four boxes of Haddock were seized and destroyed as they were found to be unfit for human food.

A regular bi-weekly collection of domestic refuse and a weekly collection of trade refuse is maintained throughout the town.

All the sewers have been regularly flushed and kept clean.

COWSHEDS, SLAUGHTER-HOUSES & OFFENSIVE TRADES.

Frequent visits have been made to the Cowsheds, Slaughter-houses, and Offensive Trades during the past year, and they have been found generally in a satisfactory condition.

DISINFECTION.

During the Summer and Xmas holidays the Fairfield Schools were disinfected with formalin as a matter of precaution.

The premises where infectious disease occurred were properly disinfected, as were also the premises where persons suffering from Tuberculosis had resided.

F. J. REILLY,

Assoc. Mem. Inst., Mun. Eng., C.R.S.I.,

Dated 28th February, 1914.

Surveyor and Sanitary

Inspector.