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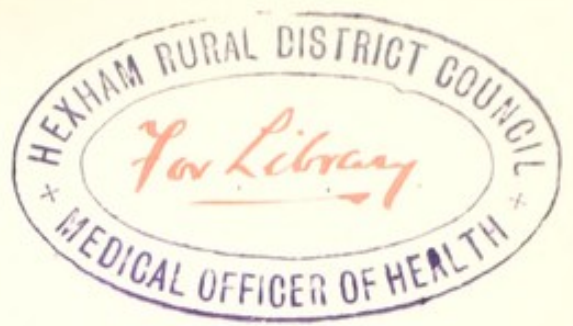
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REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
TO THE
HEXHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL,
WITH
TABULAR RETURNS OF MORTALITY,
FOR THE YEAR 1918,
BY
R. BOUSTEAD,
Deputy Medical Officer.

FORTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT,
1918.



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Births for the Year 1918.

District.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Totals.
ALLENDALÉ ...	68	8	76
BYWELL ...	114	9	123
CHOLLERTON ...	82	1	83
HEXHAM ...	69 s	6	75
Totals ...	333	24	357

Deaths for the Year 1918.

Causes of Death.	Allendale.	Bywell.	Chollerton.	Hexham.
Influenza	28	16	8	19
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	7	8	9	5
Tuberculous Meningitis ...	1	...	1	1
Other Tuberculous Diseases ...	2	...	...	...
Cancer	5	4	4	6
Rheumatic Fever	5	1	1	...
Meningitis	1	2	...	...
Heart Disease	15	15	9	16
Bronchitis	7	4	1	5
Pneumonia	5	5	10	3
Other Respiratory Diseases ...	2	1	2	...
Nephritis	3	3	3	1
Premature Birth	2	4	4	3
Violence	1	1	5	3
Other Defined Diseases ...	23	16	16	23
Diseases Ill-defined	1	...	1	...
Whooping Cough	...	1	...	...
Suicides	...	...	1	1
Measles	...	...	...	1
Diarrhœa	...	..	...	1
Other Accidents and Diseases of Pregnacy	...	...	...	1
Totals ...	108	81	75	89

Infectious Diseases for the Year 1918.

District.		Diphtheria	Scarlat Fever	Measles	Erysipelas	Tuberculosis
ALLENDALE	...	1	13	4	...	4
BYWELL	...	1	7	45	7	6
CHOLLERTON	...	...	8	35	...	1
HEXHAM	...	4	8	82	...	4
Totals ...		6	36	166	7	15

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to lay before you the Annual Report for the year 1918.

Births.—There have been returned 357, which is at the rate of 15·9 per thousand, and of these 24 were illegitimate. Last year there were 394, and 17 were illegitimate.

Deaths.—There have been 353, and which is a rate of 17·1, which last year was 13·08 per thousand.

Infectious Diseases.—There have been notified 230 cases, against 321 last year.

Measles.—Of this there has been 166 cases, as against 219 last year. The epidemic all through has been of a particularly mild character, there having been only one death from it this year, and not one during last year. It is a most fortunate and unusual occurrence to have 385 cases of this disease in two consecutive years, and only one death.

Scarlat Fever.—There have been 36 cases of this notified, as against 24 last year; and amongst this number there was fortunately not one death, nor was there one last year, and both this and the Measles epidemic seem to have passed away.

Diphtheria.—Of this there were only 6 cases notified, against 24 last year. These cases were isolated, and in no instance did one communicate it to any other of the household. This I am quite sure is altogether due to the directions given, and precautions used in each case, and there was no death from it.

Typhoid Fever.—There has not been a case reported during the year. The year before last there were only 4 cases, and last year 3, and of these last year, two were most certainly imported ones.

The comparative rarity of this disease now, and the control we have over it, is truly one of the triumphs of medical research and sanitation.

Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis or Spotted Fever.—The great excitement at the fatality and the probable spread of the outbreak of the disease, which occurred last year, will be remembered. There has, however, not been a case reported this year, so it is to be hoped the danger has passed away.

Phthisis Pulmonalis.—There have been 29 deaths from this, as against 20 last year, and 6 from other Tuberculous Diseases, as against 8 last year.

It is most gratifying to note the very great improvement there is in the whole of the district in regard to sanitary matters generally. In every case that is visited great pains is taken to teach them how and what to do ; not only in regard to the case visited, but in regard to matters generally, and is evidently much appreciated. The same course has been adopted when visiting the schools, and I have had every assistance from all the teachers, and the result is very apparent indeed.

Influenza.—During the year 1917, there were 7 deaths from this disease, but the 1918 record is a much sadder one.

The epidemic continued with but a comparative light mortality during the first three quarters of the year, there having been only 11 deaths up till the month of November. It then suddenly assumed a more dangerous type, and a large increase in numbers, and during this month there were 39 deaths, and during December there were 19 from it, making a total of 58 during these two months. The Allendale sub-district suffered the most heavily.

The cases occurred in all conditions in life, and in the most varied surroundings, even in the most isolated places, and what in normal times would be considered the most healthy situations. In a large number of cases the origin could not be accounted for, those affected not having been, so far as they knew, where it was, and no case having occurred near them.

It began to abate about the middle of December, and continued to do so in so far as the mortality was concerned, but

there still continued a great number of cases, though not of that virulent type.

All the schools in the district were closed from Nov. 26th until after the Christmas holidays, and re-opened on Jan. 6th.

There have been 71 deaths altogether, and of these 28 were in the Allendale, 19 in the Hexham, 16 in the Bywell, and 8 in the Chollerton sub-districts. They occurred at the following ages :—5 were under 5 years ; 2 were between 5 and 10 years ; 14 were between 10 and 20 years ; 7 were between 20 and 30 years ; 24 were between 30 and 40 years ; 7 were between 40 and 50 years ; 2 were between 70 and 80 years ; and 2 were between 80 and 85 years. There were 23 deaths from Pneumonia.

Isolation Hospital.—There have been admitted 7 cases to the Edgewell Hospital, all of which were Scarlet Fever. There has been no fatal case, and the average stay has been 40 days.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. BOUSTEAD.