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ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER

OF HEALTH

For the Year 1948.

J. H. MAUGHAN, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.



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*To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council
of Hexham :—*

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1948.

The 5th July, 1948, saw the coming into force of the National Health Service Act, 1946. The effects of this Act upon the Public Health duties of the Council were comparatively few. A noteworthy result of the Act, however, was the setting up in the area of the West Area Health Sub-Committee under the Northumberland Area Health Administration Scheme, 1948. Four members of this Sub-Committee are appointed by the Council and through them the Council shares in the administration of certain of the County Health Services in operation in the Area.

The birth rate is 17.7 per 1,000 of the estimated population and shows a decrease compared with last year, as does the rate for England and Wales.

The death rate of 12.2 per 1,000 of the estimated population shows a decrease compared with last year and also follows the national trend.

The infant mortality rate has decreased to 12.4 per 1,000 live births and is the lowest on record for the district. The rate has fluctuated a good deal during the last twenty years as will be seen from the table of statistics but it should be kept in mind that rates based on comparatively small figures are apt to be misleading.

During the year there were 109 cases of infectious diseases notified compared with 90 during the previous year, the increase being chiefly due to a slight rise in the incidence of whooping cough and measles,

11 cases of tuberculosis were notified compared with 6 during last year.

The water supply continued as in previous years and bacteriological examinations carried out during the year proved satisfactory. Chemical analyses, however, show the water to be slightly plumbo solvent but on investigation no evidence has been found of any ill effects having resulted during the 60 years that the water supply has been in use. Steps are to be taken to reduce the water's plumbo solvency.

Sewage disposal facilities are unchanged and sewage from the town continues to be treated by three sewage works. Treatment at these works is not as complete as is desirable as all three are overloaded and some are in need of modification. Plans are being drawn up however to modify and extend existing works and to improve the standard of treatment.

In conclusion may I express my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Committees for the great interest they have shown in the work of my department and for their unfailing support during the year.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. H. MAUGHAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area in Acres	...	...	...	...	...	5,926
Estimated Population	...	...	...	...	...	9,110

Vital Statistics.

BIRTHS.

LIVE BIRTHS.	M.	F.	TOTAL.
Legitimate ...	89	66	155
Illegitimate ...	3	3	6
			161

STILL BIRTHS.	M.	F.	TOTAL.
Legitimate ...	2	2	4
Illegitimate ...	—	—	—
			4

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	...	17.7
Total (Live and Still) Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population	...	18.1

DEATHS.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

Puer. and post-abort.-sepsis	...	Nil
Other maternal causes	...	Nil

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age.

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births	...	12.4
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births	...	12.9
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births	...	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	16
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	Nil
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population (all causes and all ages)	...	12.2

The following Table classifies deaths according to their age groups and as to their certification :—

	CERTIFIED		UNCERTIFIED	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0—1 ...	1	1	—	—
1—2	—	—	—	—
2—5 ...	—	—	—	—
5—15...	2	1	—	—
15—25...	1	1	—	—
25—45...	3	4	—	—
45—65...	13	11	1	—
65—75...	16	12	—	—
Over 75	20	21	2	1
	56	51	3	1

The chief causes of death are as follows :—

	M.	F.
Typhoid and Parat. Fevers	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever	—	—
Scarlet Fever	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—
Tub. of resp. system	4	2
Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	1
Syphilitic Diseases	—	—
Influenza	—	—
Measles	—	—
Ac. polio-myel. and polio-enceph	—	—
Ac. inf. enceph	—	—
Cancer of b. cav. and oesoph (M) uterus (F)	—	2
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	2	—
Cancer of breast	—	3
Cancer of all other sites	5	4
Diabetes	—	—
Intra-cran. vasc. lesions	6	6
Heart diseases	22	15
Other dis. of circ. system	1	1
Bronchitis	2	—
Pneumonia	1	1
Other resp. dis.	—	1
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	—	—
Diarrhoea under 2 years	—	—
Appendicitis	—	—
Other digestive dis.	2	1
Nephritis	2	6
Puer. and post-abort. sepsis	—	—
Other maternal causes	—	—
Premature birth	—	—
Con. mal. birth inj. infant dis.	1	—
Suicide	—	—
Road Traffic Accident	4	2
Other violent causes	1	—
All other causes	6	7
	59	52
TOTAL	111	

VITAL & MORTALITY STATISTICS.

Year	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Infant Mortality Rate
1928	17.9	13.1	89.7
1929	17.5	16.1	114.0
1930	17.4	11.5	67.0
1931	17.7	13.7	44.8
1932	14.9	13.1	112.8
1933	12.4	14.4	62.5
1934	13.9	12.5	88.7
1935	13.7	12.3	80.6
1936	16.6	13.4	59.6
1937	13.2	15.8	132.2
1938	14.0	13.5	47.2
1939	12.1	15.6	36.6
1940	12.8	13.4	43.4
1941	12.6	13.3	93.9
1942	11.9	12.9	64.5
1943	13.2	12.8	50.7
1944	14.0	13.6	37.5
1945	13.2	11.8	15.4
1946	16.6	12.4	18.5
1947	18.5	14.3	54.9
1948	17.7	12.2	12.4

BIRTH-RATE, DEATH-RATE, AND ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1948

	Rate per 1,000 total Population		Annual Death-rate per 1,000 Population									Rate per 1,000 Live Births	
	Live Births	Still Births	All Causes	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers.	Whooping Cough	Diphtheria	Tuberculosis	Influenza	Smallpox	Acute Polio-myelitis & Polio-encephalitis	Pneumonia	Diarrhoea & Enteritis (under 2 years)	Total Deaths under one year
England and Wales ...	17.9	0.42	10.8	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.51	0.03	—	0.01	0.41	3.3	34
126 County Boroughs & Great Towns, including London ...	20.0	0.52	11.6	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.59	0.03	—	0.01	0.38	4.5	39
148 Smaller Towns (estimated Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,000 at Census 1931)	19.2	0.43	10.7	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.46	0.04	—	0.01	0.36	2.1	32
London Adm. County	20.1	0.39	11.6	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.63	0.02	—	0.00	0.54	2.4	31
Hexham U.D. ...	17.7	0.44	12.2	—	—	—	0.77	—	—	—	0.22	—	12.4

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED (other than Tuberculosis) DURING THE YEAR 1948.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	At all Ages.	Under 1.	1 to 2.	2 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 45.	45 to 65.	65 & upward
Scarlet Fever ...	7	4	3	1	4	2			
Whooping Cough ...	31			13	11				
Diphtheria ...	60	1	6	10	43				
Measles ...	4			1	2			1	
Pneumonia ...	5			1	1	1	2		
Cerebro-spinal Fever	1				1				
Acute poliomyelitis									
Acute polioencephalitis									
Acute polioencephalitis									
Lethargica ...									
Dysentery ...									
Ophthalmia Neonatorum...	1					1			
Puerperal Pyrexia									
Smallpox ...									
Paratyphoid Fever									
Typhoid Fever ...									
Erysipelas ...									
TOTALS ...	109	5	9	26	62	4	2	1	1

INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 1928-1948.

Year.	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Diphtheria	Measles	Ac. Pneumonia	Cerebrospinal Fever	Acute Polio-myelitis	Acute Polio-encephalitis	Acute Encephalitis Lethargica	Dysentery	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Puerperal Pyrexia	Smallpox	Paratyphoid Fevers	Enteric or Typhoid Fever	Erysipelae
1928	5	—	—	—	40	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	1	1	—	—
1929	17	—	3	—	21	—	—	—	4	10	—	2	2	—	—	10
1930	20	—	3	—	8	—	—	—	—	5	—	1	—	—	—	2
1931	12	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	1	—	—	—	10
1932	4	—	1	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	4
1933	10	—	2	—	38	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
1934	56	—	2	—	8	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	9
1935	57	—	20	—	6	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
1936	117	—	17	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
1937	10	—	2	—	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
1938	32	—	5	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
1939	25	—	1	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
1940	11	—	10	212	10	12	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	4
1941	20	39	80	46	14	4	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	1
1942	12	1	15	6	39	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
1943	17	7	3	116	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
1944	18	1	17	—	5	—	—	—	—	3	—	2	—	—	—	1
1945	34	—	1	8	7	1	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	1
1946	7	24	1	93	7	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	2
1947	6	18	1	29	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
1948	7	31	—	60	4	4	26	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS.—New cases and Mortality during 1948 :—

Age periods	New Cases				Nett Deaths in Hexham Urban District			
	Pulmonary		Non. Pulm.		Pulmonary		Non. Pulm.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	1
15—25	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	—
45—55	1	1	—	—	2	—	—	—
55—65	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
65 & over	—	—	1	—	1	1	—	—
TOTALS	4	3	2	2	4	2	—	1

		Cases Notified	Deaths
Gilesgate Ward ...	...	3	3
Leazes Ward ...	...	2	2
Priestpottle Ward ...	...	6	2
Hencotes Ward ...	...	—	—
		11	7

Diphtheria Immunisation, 1948.

No of children who completed a full course of primary immunisation during year ended 31st December, 1948.			Total No. of children who were given a secondary injection.
Age at date of final injection.		Total	During year ended 31st December, 1948.
Under 5	5—14		
117	9	126	84

Immunisation in Relation to Child Population.

No. of children who had completed a full course of Immunisation at any time up to 31st December, 1948.								
Age at 31/12/48, i.e., Born in year	Under 1 1948	1 1947	2 1946	3 1945	4 1944	5—9 1939-1943	10—14 1934-1938	Total Under 15
Number immunised ...	6	89	145	175	142	666	528	1751
Estimated mid-year child population 1948 ...	650					1459		
Percentage of child population immunised ...	86%					82%		

HEALTH SERVICES OF THE AREA.

1. Hospitals.

There are in the district two hospitals, namely the Hexham General Hospital and the Hexham War Memorial Hospital under the management of the Hexham and District Hospital Management Committee. These hospitals together with others in the area under the Hexham and District Hospital Management Committee and the Newcastle group of hospitals are available to cases from the area.

Cases of infectious diseases requiring admission to hospital are now all referred to the City Hospital for Infectious Diseases, Newcastle upon Tyne.

2. Ambulance Service.

The British Red Cross acting as agents for the Northumberland County Council provide an ambulance service which serves the district. An ambulance station is situated at West Orchard, Hexham.

3. Home Help Service.

The Northumberland County Council Home Help Service is in operation in the district. Home Helps are available to householders where such help is required owing to illness or confinement and their services are obtained through the office of the West Area Health Sub-Committee.

4. Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics.

The following Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics are held in the district :—

CHILD WELFARE CLINIC :—Hexham General Hospital, Friday, 10 a.m.—4 p.m.

ANTE-NATAL CLINIC :—Hexham General Hospital, Wednesday, 1-30 p.m.—4 p.m.

5. Midwifery and Home Nursing Service.

These services are now administered by the Northumberland County Council and in this district are combined. There are two Nurse Midwives working in the Hexham Urban District.

6. Mobile Mass Radiography Unit.

The Newcastle upon Tyne Regional Hospital Board's Mobile Mass Radiography Unit visited Hexham during the year and examined persons from all parts of the district. The Medical Director reported that the number of people who presented themselves for examination was satisfactory and it is hoped that the Unit will be able to make a yearly visit to the district.

Report of the Sanitary Inspector

(Hugh Mitchell)

INSPECTIONS AND VISITS.

Factories, Inspections and Revisits	...	...	...	...	73
„ „ (Bakehouses)	...	...	...	...	35
Farms, Dairies, Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	153
Common Lodging Houses	...	...	...	...	17
Disinfestation of Rats and Mice	...	...	...	...	328
Drainage, Choked	...	...	...	...	9
„ Reconstructed	...	...	...	...	19
„ New Works	...	...	...	...	31
Sanitary Conveniences	...	...	...	...	47
Houses Inspected (Including Public Health)	...	...	...	...	271
„ „ (Revisits)	...	...	...	...	117
„ Filthy	...	...	...	...	4
„ Verminous and Revisits	...	...	...	...	4
House to House Inspections	...	...	...	...	Nil
„ Revisits	...	...	...	...	Nil
Water Supply	...	...	...	...	52
Moveable Dwellings	...	...	...	...	17
Slaughter Houses and Knackers' Yards	...	...	...	...	416
Shops, Foodstores	...	...	...	...	160
Markets and Marts	...	...	...	...	35
Infectious Diseases Visits and Revisits	...	...	...	...	12
Other Public Health Visits and Nuisances	...	...	...	...	49
TOTAL					1,849

SUMMARY OF WORK EFFECTED.

	Hexham Urban District.	After Letter or Interview	After Informal Notice	After Statutory Notice	Total
Sanitary Conveniences	Privies abolished... ..	5	—	—	5
	„ repaired	—	—	—	—
	Privy ashpits abolished	—	—	—	—
	„ „ roofed or repaired	—	—	—	—
	Pail-closets abolished	—	—	—	—
	Water closets provided	18	—	—	18
	„ „ repaired	11	—	—	11
	Sanitary bins provided } ...	69	—	—	69
	„ „ renewed } ...	—	—	—	—
Drainage	New drains constructed	22	—	—	22
	Drains repaired or reconstructed	9	—	—	9
	Additional gullies provided	19	—	—	19
	Old gullies replaced	11	—	—	11
	Scullery sinks provided	19	—	—	19
	„ waste pipes repaired	3	—	—	3
	„ „ trapped	3	—	—	3
	Yards repaired or reconstructed	5	—	—	5
Water supply	Sources closed or discontinued Nil	No. of houses affected Nil			
	New service provided	„	„	„	„

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle, exclgd. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	1,294	304	75	4,107	104
Number inspected ...	1,294	304	75	4,107	104
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	11	9	7	43	1
<i>Tuberculosis only</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	18	23	4	—	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	123	85	1	—	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	10.9	35.7	6.6	—	1.9

FOOD INSPECTION.

UNSOUND FOOD					Surrendered	Seized	Legal Proceedings
					sts.	lbs.	
1. Beef (Home-killed)...	...	...	...	...	4,545	2	Nil
2. „ (Imported) ...	...	...	...	...	24	6	—
3. Mutton (Home-killed)	...	...	...	...	331	12	—
4. „ (Imported) ...	...	...	...	...	Nil	—	—
5. Pork	...	...	...	...	75	1	—
6. Game... ..	...	...	...	...	Nil	—	—
7. Poultry	...	...	...	...	Nil	—	—
					lbs.	ozs.	
8. Fish	...	...	...	...	15	0	—
9. Fruit	...	...	...	...	35	4	—
10. Canned goods ...	...	...	...	...	1,173	3	—
11. Bacon	...	...	...	...	27	6	—
12. Cheese	...	...	...	...	1	8	—
13. Butter	...	...	...	...	Nil	—	—
14. Lard	...	...	...	...	Nil	—	—
15. Eggs	...	...	...	...	Nil	—	—
16. Other foods	...	...	...	...	264	15	—
TOTAL ...					5,084 st.	12 lbs. 4 ozs.	

SUMMARY OF UNSOUND MEAT AND OFFAL.

	Tuberculosis	Other Diseases	Total
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
Cows	16,303	13,226	29,529
Other Animals...	13,892	26,250	40,142
TOTAL ...	30,195	39,476	69,671

NUMBER OF ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED AT THE ABATTOIR.

Beasts	Calves	Sheep	Pigs	Total
1,598	75	4,107	104	5,884

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.**INSPECTIONS (including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors)**

PREMISES	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(I) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities... ..	38	60	3	—
(II) Factories not included in (I) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority... ..	41	48	Nil	—
(III) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Outworkers Premises)	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...	79	108	3	—

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

PARTICULARS	Number of Cases in which Defects were Found				
	Found	Remedied	Referred		Pro-secutions.
			To H.M.I.	By H.M.I.	
Want of Cleanliness	4	4	—	—	—
Overcrowding	1	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective Drainage of Floors ...	1	1	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	1	1	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or Defective ...	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Not Separate for Sexes ...	—	—	—	—	—
Other Offences (not including Offences relating to Homework)	3	3	—	—	—
TOTAL	10	9	—	—	—

HOUSING.

HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR 1948.

	With State Assistance	Unaided	TOTAL
(a) By Local Authority	37	—	37
(b) By other Bodies or Persons	—	5	5
1.—Inspection of Dwellinghouses during the Year :			
(1) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)			271
(2) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous as to be unfit for human habitation			4
(3) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...			29
2.—Remedy of Defects without Service of Formal Notices :			
Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or its officers			39
3.—Action under Statutory Powers :			
(A) <i>Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :</i>			
(1) No of dwelling houses in respect of which " notices " were served requiring repairs ...			Nil
(2) No. of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices—			
(a) By owners		—	Nil
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ...		—	Nil
(B) <i>Proceedings under Public Health Acts :</i>			
(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which " notices " were served requiring defects to be remedied			1
(2) No. of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—			
(a) By owners		—	Nil
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ...			Nil
(C) <i>Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of Housing Act, 1936 :</i>			
(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made			1
(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders			Nil
(D) <i>Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:</i>			
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made			Nil
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit			Nil
4.—Number of houses permanently discontinued as dwellings and not included above			
			3

MILK AND DAIRIES ORDER, 1926.

Section 6 (1) and (4).

Number of Cowkeepers (registered) in district	...	26
Approximate number of cows kept	... ..	600

THE MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS) ORDERS,
1936 and 1946.

Supplementary Licences Granted (" Pasteurised ")	3
Dealer's Licences Granted (" Tuberculin Tested ")	1

SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933.

Renewals of Licence to Slaughter	... ..	13
New Licences Granted	... ..	2

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT, 1919.

Administered by the Urban District Council of Hexham (with their consent) under delegated powers by resolution of the County Council of Northumberland.

Surface Treatments,	Number of Rats killed	... ..	9,290
" "	Number of Mice killed	... ..	1,652
Sewer Treatments,	Number of Rats killed	... ..	1,049
TOTAL		... ..	11,016

DISINFECTION.

Premises after cases of Scarlet Fever	... ..	7
do. do. Tuberculosis	... ..	3
School Rooms and Outbuildings	... ..	3
Bedding, etc., (Lots)	... ..	10
Bedding Destroyed (Lots)	... ..	1



