

**[Report 1925] / Medical Officer of Health, Longtown (Cumberland) R.D.C.**

**Contributors**

Longtown (Cumbria, England). Rural District Council.

**Publication/Creation**

1925

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# ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE

Longtown Rural District Council

*For the Year ending 31st December, 1925,*

BY

Dr. J. L. RANKINE,  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

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1926.





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ESK BANK.

LONGTOWN,

*May, 1926.*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1925, together with a Sanitary Report for the same period.

In regard to population there is a slight decrease on last year's figures, viz., from 6,505 to 6,449.

In regard to unemployment there is nothing to add to my last year's statement. A few men were given temporary work on the roads and others found work on the water scheme, but nothing has been done in direct effort to find work, and many continue to draw the unemployment allowances.

With regard to water supplies, the scheme to embrace the parishes of Hethersgill, Kirklington, Scaleby, and West Linton has been completed and many houses are in course of being connected to this supply. Nothing yet has been done in the other parishes previously reported on. A few private owners in these areas have put in private supplies of approved water.

The town of Longtown has been re-sewered during the period under review, but many houses are still unconnected and are still using the pail and privy system.

In regard to housing conditions there is nothing to add, no new building scheme has been adopted by public authority, and beyond a few houses built by private owners, only those minor improvements have been effected which inspection has called for.

## NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

An agricultural district of 88,475 acres carrying a population of 6,449, low-lying from sea level as far as the town of Longtown, then rising ground up to the extreme west of the district to a range of hills. The whole area is well wooded, though much timber that was cut for war purposes has not yet been replanted. Many streams from the hills ultimately join to form two main rivers, the Esk and the Lyne, which have a common exit to the sea. The number of inhabited houses is 1,550, the rateable value is £50,000, and the sum represented by a penny rate is £208 6s. 8d. With the exception of a few persons engaged at a local bobbin mill, a few more working at a local brick works, and a still fewer number working a small coal mine at Bewcastle, the majority of the population is engaged on the land in some form or other, and there is no special condition that can be said to have any particular influence on the health of the inhabitants.

With very few exceptions all cases of infectious diseases, other than tuberculosis, are removed, without any compulsion being needed, to the local Fever Hospital, and general cases, particularly those needing surgery, are sent to the Cumberland Infirmary situate in Carlisle, while those whose condition or other circumstances compel it are removed to the Union Infirmary.

With regard to Poor Law relief, in the year 1925 there were 114 persons, including children, granted relief, at a cost of £1,067 14s. 6d. There were also 7 other persons relieved through the Guardians, but who were chargeable to other Unions, at a cost of £97 10s. 0d.

There has been nothing to note of special interest as to causes of sickness during the period. The total number of cases of infectious diseases varies but little

from year to year, and in these may be included all forms of Tuberculosis. It is to be noted that, of the total deaths, 46.8 per cent, occur from causes that can most justly be attributed to age.

## **GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.**

### **Hospital Accommodation.**

An Isolation Hospital for infectious diseases is provided by the local Council. By special resolution permission was granted for the isolation of advanced cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis where the home conditions were such that infection of other members of the family seemed inevitable. This advance was taken advantage of in only three cases, but I have hopes that in the future, with more knowledge becoming common, this provision will fill a dangerous gap in the prevention of the disease.

As far as treatment of the early cases of this disease is concerned, this is in the hands of the County Authorities, who send such cases to the Sanatorium at Blencathra. This Authority also deal with Smallpox by a Hospital situate near Workington. Cases for this Hospital are removed thereto by an ambulance also in the charge of the County Authority. The only other Hospital accommodation provided is that at the Poor Law Infirmary. No institutional provision is made for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants, or homeless children.

Ambulance facilities are limited, locally, to the ambulance stationed at the Fever Hospital, which is for infectious diseases only. For other cases an ambulance is obtainable from the City Authorities in Carlisle.

There are no clinics or treatment centres in this area. The Health Staff is composed of one part-time

Medical Officer and one Sanitary Inspector, who also does the highways, and who holds the certificate M.I.M.C.E.

**Professional Nursing in the home.**

District nurses are working under the District Nursing Associations in all but two parishes. Small subsidies are paid by the County Authority where the welfare of children-visiting is carried out by them. All are certified midwives. There are two other certified and registered midwives practising in the area.

**SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.**

**Parish of West Linton.** Population 382.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses were erected.

(2) *Inspections*.—31 houses were inspected under the Public Health Acts or Housing Acts, and 5 were found not to be in all respects fit for habitation. Of these, 2 were put right by informal action, while 3, upon whose owners notices were served, were put right in consequence.

(3) *Water Supplies*.—A new water scheme has been completed for this parish having its source in springs at Hethersgill, and a continuous supply of proved excellent water, ample in quantity, is assured. Connections have not yet been completed.

(4) *Sewerage*.—There is no sewerage in the parish. Disposal of excrement and all scavenging is done satisfactorily by the occupiers. There are 5 water-closets and 86 privies.

**Parish of Kirkandrews Nether.** Population 439.

(1) *Housing*.—A total of 5 new houses have been erected, all by private owners.

(2) *Inspections*.—50 houses were inspected under the Public Health or Housing Acts, of which 3 were found

defective. Of these, 2 were remedied as the result of informal action, and one was done so after serving of formal notice by the owner.

(3) *Water Supply*.—The whole of this parish is now supplied from the Longtown and district water scheme, as the previous supply under H.M. Factory, Gretna, is not now in use. So far the supply is ample, of good quality, and the chances of contamination at the springs near Easton is very slight.

(4) *Sewerage*.—32 hutments at Gaitle and 24 at Mossband are sewered by H.M. Government. That at Gaitle is pumped to a filtration bed before being discharged into the Gaitle Burn; that at Mossband is now discharging into a ditch on the railway side before entering the river. So far, there is nothing to complain of. There are 80 water-closets and 31 privies, all scavenging and excrement is done by owners and occupiers, and so far satisfactorily.

**Parish of Scaleby.** Population 358.

(1) *Housing*.—Two new houses have been built by private persons. 21 houses have been inspected under the Public Health or Housing Acts. 2 were found not to be in all respects fit for habitation and the defects were put right after informal notice had been given to the owners.

(2) *Water Supply*.—The new scheme from the Temple Kern Springs at Hethersgill has now been completed, but all connections have not yet been made.

(3) *Sewerage*.—No parts are sewered. There are 3 water-closets and 85 privies; all scavenging is done by occupiers or owners and so far is satisfactory.

**Parish of Stapleton.** Population 179.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses have been erected.

(2) *Inspections*.—20 houses have been inspected under the Public Health or Housing Acts, and 3 were found de-

fective. Of these, 2 were put right after informal action, and the other after notice had been served by the owner.

(3) *Water Supply*.—This is entirely from wells and pumps, and while there are no complaints, some are open to suspicion, and the dip well at the Barrocks, which supplies six cottages, is liable to contamination from surface water and from dirty pails.

(4) *Sewerage*.—There is no sewerage. There are 3 water-closets and 87 privies; all scavenging is done satisfactorily by owners or occupiers.

**Parish of Trough.** Population 85.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses have been erected, and no inspections have been done in this small area.

(2) *Sewerage*.—There is no sewerage. There are 16 privies, and all scavenging is done by owners or occupiers satisfactorily.

**Parish of Arthuret.** Population 2,354.

(1) *Housing*.—One new house has been erected by private owner.

(2) *Inspections*.—330 inspections were made under Public Health or Housing Acts. 317 houses were found defective, 48 being remedied as a result of informal action. 265 notices were served under the Public Health Act, but only 49 were remedied as a result, and this was done by the owners. No further action has as yet been taken by the Council.

(3) *Water Supply*.—Longtown and 80 houses in the country area are supplied by the Longtown and district scheme, 11 houses are supplied from private pumping schemes, and 24 houses in Breconhill from wells and pumps. From the piped service the supply is ample and of good quality, with very small chance of any contamination at the springs. The supply to the Breconhill Estate remains unsatisfactory, no alterations except

to one farm, which has had a new well sunk and pump attached.

(4) *Sewerage*.—New sewerage for Longtown completed in 1921. This discharges into settling tanks before final discharge into the River Esk, and so far has been satisfactory in operation. There are 183 water-closets and 274 privies, which shows, for the time the new sewers have been in operation, rather too high a proportion of unconnected houses. No ashpits are allowed in Longtown and the Council's contractor removes the ashes twice weekly. The occupiers of isolated houses outside the town do their own scavenging, and on the whole it seems satisfactory.

**Parish of Bellbank.** Population 63.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses have been erected nor have any inspections been done.

(2) *Water Supply*.—Water supplies are all from wells and pumps; the supply is ample, and there are no complaints.

(3) *Sewerage*.—There are 13 privies, and all scavenging is done by owners or occupiers and appears satisfactory.

**Parish of Bewcastle.** Population 611.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses have been erected.

(2) *Inspections*.—21 houses have been inspected under the Public Health or Housing Acts, and 4 were found defective, but all these were remedied as a result of informal action.

(3) *Water Supply*.—Principally from wells and surface pumps. Some supplies are good, but others are open to suspicion, while the supply to 16 houses is inadequate and nothing has as yet been done to remedy this.

(4) *Sewerage*.—No parts are sewered; there are 2 water-closets and 146 privies. All scavenging is done by owners or occupiers and appears to be satisfactory.

**Parish of Kirklington Middle.** Population 296.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses have been erected.

(2) *Inspections*.—20 houses have been inspected and 4 of these were found defective. 3 were remedied as a result of informal notice, and 1 as a result of notice being served.

(3) *Water Supply*.—The new scheme completed from Temple Kern Springs near Hethersgill is ample in volume and of good quality, but many connections have yet to be made.

(4) *Sewerage*.—No sewerage. There are 5 water-closets and 70 privies. All scavenging is done by owners or occupiers satisfactorily.

**Parish of Kirkandrews Moat.** Population 141.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses have been erected.

(2) *Inspections*.—15 inspections were made under the Public Health or Housing Acts, and 1 house found defective is no longer occupied.

(3) *Water Supply*.—9 houses are supplied from the Longtown scheme, 13 houses from springs by private schemes, and the other houses from wells. The supply is adequate and of good quality.

(4) *Sewerage*.—No sewerage. There are 3 water-closets and 30 privies. All scavenging is done by owners or occupiers satisfactorily.

**Parish of Kirkandrews Middle.** Population 226.

(1) *Housing*.—Seven new houses have been erected by private owners.

(2) *Inspections*.—26 houses were inspected under the Public Health or Housing Acts and none required any comment.

(3) *Water Supply*.—All the houses are supplied by the Longtown and district supply, which is ample and of good quality.

(4) *Sewerage*.—No part is sewered. There are 9 water-closets and 49 privies. All the scavenging is done by owners and occupiers and appears to be satisfactory

**Parish of Nichol Fôrest.** Population 464.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses have been built.

(2) *Inspections*.—23 houses were inspected, of which 6 were found defective; 5 of these were remedied after informal action and one after notice was served.

(3) *Water Supply*.—24 houses are now supplied by gravitation from springs of ample quantity and of good quality, and 5 houses are supplied from springs, also of good quality and quantity, by pumped service through a windmill. 11 houses along the Scugg Road are supplied from wells or surface drains at roadside. These are of very doubtful purity and exposed to easy contamination.

(4) *Sewerage*.—No sewerage in district. There are 13 water-closets and 100 privies. All scavenging is done satisfactorily by owners or occupiers.

**Parish of Hethersgill.** Population 505.

(1) *Housing*.—No new houses were erected.

(2) *Inspections*.—28 houses were inspected and 8 were found defective. All were remedied in consequence of informal action.

(3) *Water Supply*.—Bolton Fell, Mossedge, Hethersgill, and part of the remainder of the parish are now supplied by an ample supply of good water from a piped service from the Temple Kern Springs, though house connections have not yet all been completed.

(4) *Sewerage*.—No sewerage in the district. There are 4 water-closets and 115 privies. All scavenging is done satisfactorily by owners or occupiers.

**Parish of Solport.** Population 179.

(1) No new houses were built.

(2) *Inspections*.—6 houses were inspected and no defects found.

(3) *Water Supply*.—13 houses have a piped service from springs, of ample quantity and quality, at Berties Town and Gibbstown. The remainder from wells and pumps which are satisfactory.

(3) *Sewerage*.—No sewerage in the district. There are 4 water-closets and 35 privies. All scavenging is done by owners or occupiers.

#### **Factories and Workshops.**

There are no lodging-houses or offensive trades in the district.

There are ten factories and 35 workshops in the district, all of a small nature, and 48 visits of inspection were paid. As a result of this, 7 notices were served, 7 of these referred to defective sanitary accommodation, and 2 have since been remedied. 1 referred to sanitary accommodation not separate for the two sexes, and in this case the time allowed has not yet expired.

#### **Cowsheds.**

There are 20 cowsheds, 2 dairies, and 1 milkshop. These have all been regularly inspected. 3 cases of uncleanness were found and all were remedied on informal notice being given. The care in handling milk shows a marked improvement all round, and the sealed bottle from the retailer is making its appearance.

#### **Slaughter-houses.**

	Jan., 1920.	Jan., 1925.	Dec., 1925.
Registered ...	4	3	3
Licensed ...	4	3	3

All 3 are in use, are regularly inspected, and have been found well kept.

No further action has been taken in regard to food supplies in this area.

The 2 dairies and the 1 milkshop have also been periodically inspected, and have been found to be kept clean and their utensils in a satisfactory state.

#### **Prevalence of Infectious Disease.**

There has been nothing of note in regard to infectious disease during the period under review. The variation from year to year is small, as also has been the total number of cases, the lowest years being 1920 and 1923 with a total of 16 cases, and the heaviest being 1925 with a total of 50.

Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria are isolated in hospital with very few exceptions. Any pneumonia is advised

to hospital if the home surroundings are such as to warrant this advice being given, and in a few cases this action has been taken with gratifying results.

Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever anti-toxins are kept at the hospital and are used promptly. In those few cases where hospital treatment has been refused both these sera are at the disposal of any practitioner who may ask for them. No use has, so far, been made of the Schick or Dick tests, nor have any artificial immunisations been carried out.

18 re-vaccinations have been done under the Public Health (Smallpox) Regulations, 1917.

Information is too scanty in regard to non-notifiable infectious disease to be of any value.

Of Malignant Disease there have been 38 cases during the period under review, an average of 7.6 per annum. During 1925 there were 8 deaths from this cause.

Disinfection in all infectious diseases is carried out by fumigation at the homes of the cases, and all clothing is further disinfected before any case leaves the hospital.

TABLE OF CASES.

<i>Disease.</i>	<i>Total.</i>	<i>To Hospital.</i>	<i>Deaths.</i>
Scarlatina ...	38	38	1
Diphtheria ...	12	12	0
Erysipelas ...	2	0	0
Pneumonia ...	2	2	0

## TUBERCULOSIS.

Age periods	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
1 ...	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
5 ...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...
10 ...	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
15 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
20 ...	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
25 ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
35 ...	3	...	...	...	1	2	...	...
45 ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
55 ...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
65 ..	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Totals ...	4	2	2	1	2	5	1	2

No action has been taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, nor under Section 62.

No case of Ophthalmia Neonatorum was notified during the year, nor any case of Puerperal Fever.

### Vital Statistics.

The total birth-rate for the year 1925 was 128—71 males and 57 females (illegitimate 9 males, 5 females)—which gives a rate of 19.8 per mille per annum.

The total deaths were 96—48 males, 48 females—which gives a rate of 14.8 per mille per annum. There were 11 deaths of infants under 1 year of age (1 illegitimate), which gives a rate of 95.49 per mille per annum.

Here follows table of deaths from all causes.

All Causes.	Total All Ages		Under 1	1-2	2-5	5-15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and up.
	M	F								
Scarlet Fever...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Pertussis ...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Influenza ...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Tb. Respiratory ...	3	4	...	...	...	...	2	4	1	...
Other Tb. Diseases ...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cancer.. ...	4	4	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	5
Diabetes ...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Cerebral Hæmorrhage ...	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Heart Disease ...	5	5	...	...	...	...	...	2	5	3
Arterio Sclerosis ...	7	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Bronchitis ..	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia ...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Respiratory Diseases ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Appendicitis ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Acute and Chronic Nephritis ...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Congenital Debility ...	3	2	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snicide ...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
Violent Death ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Other Defined ...	15	13	1	...	...	2	3	1	8	4
Ill Defined ...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Totals ...	48	48	11	...	1	3	6	12	18	45

There were two deaths from Tuberculosis occurring in persons who had not been notified during life. In each case the practitioner concerned was asked by the County Authority for an explanation.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

J. L. RANKINE,

*Medical Officer of Health.*



