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MORPETH
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL
REPORT

For the Year 1913,

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

(J. P. PHILIP, M.D., D.P.H.,

Fellow of the Royal Institute of Public Health).

Including the REPORTS of

The Sanitary Inspectors


(ANDREW ADAMS, A.S.I., and

H. WALKER, R.S.I.).

Newcastle-on-Tyne :

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Morpeth Rural District Council.

Annual Report on the Public Health and Sanitary Condition of the Morpeth Rural District in the year 1913.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my report on the sanitary conditions existing in your district during the year 1913. It is drawn up, as usual, according to the instructions of the Local Government Board. Hence the constant repetition year after year of the same facts and circumstances.

Physical Features of the District.—The district, which mainly lies between the River Coquet on the north and the Wansbeck on the south, a distance averaging 12 miles, runs some 20 miles inland and is bounded on the west by Knowesgate and Nunnykirk. The urban districts of Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Ashington, once included in the district, are now administrated by local authorities. Excepting for the deep river beds, the district is comparatively flat, but rises gradually towards the west. The north-eastern part is so flat that it has been very difficult for the engineers, who have been engaged lately planning a sewerage system, to find sufficient gradient for their plans. This, however, has been accomplished, and the plans submitted to the Local Government Board's Inspector. We now await their sanction of a grant to commence the work. Two water supplies are carried through the district—one for Tynemouth taken from the River Font near Ewesley, and the other for the County Asylum taken from springs at Doehill. Both these supply many houses within easy reach of their track throughout the district. Much more might still be done with the Tynemouth supply which traverses the whole length of the district from west to east. Coal is found almost everywhere, but chiefly towards the sea, where there are some very large colliery villages. New collieries have been opened recently at Woodhorn, Ferneybeds and Ellington, and these are likely to be largely developed in the future.

Divisions of the District.—So distinct and so different are the two great industries—mining and agricultural—that the district naturally divides itself into these, and the dividing line is the main road running between Morpeth and Felton. The County Asylum forms a community by itself. Naturally it has a very high death rate, and as this has to be added to the death rate of your district, the local rate appears much higher than it really is. I have, therefore, calculated the death rate inclusive and exclusive of the Asylum. But as there are always some “Residents in the district” included in the Asylum death rates, this complicates the tables, given at the end, considerably as these have to be doubly recorded.

Industries.—Mining and agricultural are the two industries of the district. The pits are all in good condition and are well ventilated. The danger from explosive gases seems to be less than in other parts of the country. In my experience of over twenty years in the district, accidents have chiefly been from pitfalls, and these are not frequent.

Population.—The usual method of estimating the population has proved, on account of the large amount of emigration, so unreliable that I have calculated the average increase for the past 10 years and have taken that as the estimated increase. This average shows that 250 may be considered as very nearly correct, so that the population, which was estimated at 17,750 the previous year, may be calculated at 18,000 for 1913. This increase is, as usual, in the collieries, and the population of that area will now be 13,500, whilst the agricultural population remains at 4,500.

Rivers and Streams.—The joy of Northumberland is its beautiful rivers. The northern boundary of the district is the Coquet, the most famous of all the Northumberland streams. From source to sea, receiving very few tributaries of any size, it is a clear and beautiful stream with very little contamination. On the south side of the district is the Wansbeck, which with its main tributaries, the Font and the Hart, drain almost the whole district. Although not perhaps so free from contamination as the Coquet, there is comparatively little until it nears the sea. Not so famous as its sister stream, the Wansbeck and its tributaries are more beautiful. The deep valleys and wooded gorges rejoice in the clear water which is so free from impurities. The lesser streams are not so free from pollution, more especially as they reach the collieries. Happily they are then near the sea, so that the pollutions though bad are not so dangerous. The list of contaminated places is the same as those reported last year. The streams at Broomhill, Chevington, Stobswood, Widdrington and Hepscott are polluted. We also suffer from other districts discharging sewage into our streams at Togston from Alnwick, and at Haydon Letch from Ashington.

Scavenging.—The scavenging has been very satisfactory throughout the district. During the year 25 notices had to be sent out for the cleansing of full and foul ashpits and 15 for defective drains. These all received prompt attention.

Sanitary Inspection of the District.—The inspectors, both in the East and West, have been very busy. The systematic inspection for the House and Town Planning Act is slow, but most useful. The most defective houses have been selected first. The defects have been remedied and some closures made to effect improvements. These were at Stamp Steads, Widdrington, where six houses were found defective. Referring to the reports of the Sanitary Inspectors it will be found that in the collieries besides those mentioned 43 houses have had improvements carried out to windows, roofs, spouting, floors, drainage and ventilation, besides the renewal of all the 42 privies at Stobswood. In the western, which is the agricultural district, improvements have been made at Cambo, Scots Gap, Netherwitton schoolhouse, Meldon, Angerton, Hartburn School, and at the Abbey Mills. Notices had to be served in 43 cases to remedy defects or to abate nuisances. There were 6 cases of overcrowding. In most cases the remedies were speedily effected. There is a vast amount of work in this department. In the colliery villages dilapidation occurs quickly. The work done may be imagined when the inspectors' tables are examined and it is seen that over 2,000 inspections have been made and 197 defects found, and 78 informal notices given and 43 statutory notices served. All except 4 defects were remedied after those notices.

Factories and Workshops.—These have been regularly inspected and the sanitary conditions are satisfactory. Some lime-washing had to be insisted upon. In the Colliery district there are 10 workshops registered, and in the Agricultural 2 factories and 6 workshops. These have been inspected quarterly.

Schools.—The schools are all in fairly good condition. The new ones are excellent buildings. Infectious diseases have been even more prevalent than in 1912, and school closure has been necessary in some places either for scarlet fever or measles. In January, Hartburn school was closed for concurrent epidemics of measles and whooping cough. In February, Stobswood school was closed on account of a three-fold epidemic of measles, whooping cough and scarlet fever. Ulgham and Widdrington schools had both short closures. Towards the end of the year, Stobswood was so affected by diphtheria that the school was closed for three weeks, and no children from infected houses were allowed to return until declared by the doctor, after testing, to be free from infection. These schools were all disinfected by the Sanitary Officers.

Dairies, etc.—Inspection of dairies, milkshops, cowsheds and slaughter-houses has been done regularly and they are in a satisfactory condition. There are 35 registered dairies and milkshops, and during the year 210 visits of inspection have been made in the Eastern and 160 in the Western districts. The method of wet milking, which I recommended as being the correct method, was, unfortunately, misunderstood. It seems that by the term "wet milking" in Northumberland is meant that the hands should be made wet by the milk from the cow and kept wet in that way. That is certainly not what sanitary authorities recommend. "Wet milking" in sanitary language is that the cow's udder should be washed with water and left damp so that no dust should be raised, as happens with the dry udder. It is this dust which carries the germs into the milk, causing it to sour and deteriorate early. This must be clear to everyone; but old habits and customs are not easily broken down. Milk is so important as a food for children that I feel very strongly on this point. It should be compulsory that scientific wet milking should be the only legal hand method in dairy farms.

Housing.—Although 158 plans for new houses have been submitted and approved during the year, only 12 have been completed and occupied. This is the smallest number I have ever known in one year, and can only be accounted for, in a prosperous year, by the large increase in emigration. Six houses have been closed to be put in habitable condition. To existing houses a larger number of improvements have been carried out than ever before, so that the houses in the district are on the whole in a better condition. There are very few really bad houses left. The crying evil is not the housing, but the drainage. This will be greatly altered when the proposed sewerage system is completed in the north-eastern part of the district. Some of the old farms and cottages erected without any damp course are faulty and cannot be improved. These will gradually disappear and be replaced by more modern dwellings. It is quite unreasonable to expect that this can be done at once. The outcry for sanitary cottages in rural districts, which is now the fashion, does not apply to your district, but I cannot too strongly deprecate the erection of cheap £110 cottages which in some places is being done. No definite sum can be laid down all over the country for housing expenses. It is very much higher in Northumberland than in, say, Norfolk or Devon, because wages range higher. Forty-three statutory notices were served to repair defects in houses. This involved some 500 inspections of dwelling-houses, such a demand on the time of the Sanitary Inspectors makes the work of registration slow, especially as many of the places visited are 14 or 15 miles apart.

Improvements Required.—With the systematic house inspection so many minor defects, such as defects in roofing, in spouting, in want of sufficient ventilation, and numerous other details, have been brought to light and remedied, that the houses have been

greatly improved. The result is more marked this year in the reduction in deaths from Tubercular diseases, the very few cases of Enteric Fever, and the very low death rate from Epidemic Diarrhœa. I have not the least doubt that this will be reduced when the long looked-for sewerage system is provided for the North-Eastern portion of the district. This is now distinctly nearer a reality than it was at the end of the year, for since then a Local Government inquiry has been held and it is anticipated that the necessary loan will be granted. The details of this scheme most of you know, but for those who do not, I may briefly say that the outflow will be into the sea at a point a little to the north of Chevington Drift. This main sewer would receive from a northern branch the whole of the sewage from North and South Broomhill, Stone Row, and perhaps, by agreement, the Togston Terrace branch, Bartes Town, Red Row and Chevington Drift. Then by a southern branch the whole of the sewage from Chevington Crescent, The Steads, Widdrington Village, Widdrington Colliery, Bus Row and Square, and finally Stobswood Colliery. This is an enormous area, but anyone who knows the district and its flatness, with very little rise above sea level, will realize the engineer's difficulties with the gradients. These have been wonderfully overcome, and the resulting plans of the scheme are a triumph. One can hardly realize the enormous improvement this will effect to the 15 or 16 square miles of country thickly populated by mining villages with their workers who have lived in insanitary conditions for many years. Since the notification of Tuberculous diseases has been introduced, by far the largest number has been returned from this area. This is so with the cases of enteric fever. With this scheme in view, I need not make complaint of the sanitary conditions which require attention in the area, such as the serious pollution of the different streams, the lack of footpaths in the villages, and, worst of all, the bad condition of the open channel sewers. Cement footpaths have been promised and the other conditions will disappear. Although this is the most crying need, there are other places where improvements are required. Further south, the colliery of Ellington, where there are plans for a large number of new houses, will require an extensive sewerage system to the sea. This might with advantage include the village of Ellington. At present the sewage from the colliery is discharged into an open ditch. At Stobswood, where all the old disgusting privy middens have been replaced by modern privies and thus a great improvement effected, slops are still thrown out on the road in many cases where the gullies are too few and far apart. This will, of course, be remedied when the new sewerage will drain this village. I do not doubt but that the removal of the old foul ashpits and privies was the cause of an outbreak of diphtheria in this village. There is pollution of the stream at Togston Terrace as well from this district as from the Alnwick side. Also at Haydon Letch from Ashington. The discharge of sewage into the Hepscott burn occurs at Hepscott as well as at Coalburn.

The Housing requirements are being more satisfactorily got with the regular inspection. As I have mentioned, 43 notices produced a like number of improvements, but there are many houses and farm cottages which require improving and more accommodation supplied. At Hadstone Farm cottages there are only two rooms, badly lighted, badly drained, and in one 5 adults occupied the two rooms. In another of these two-roomed cottages 3 boys, two being adults, and 2 adult girls occupied one room. The ashpits and privies are very dilapidated. At High and Low Coldrife the cottages are damp and badly lighted and badly ventilated, and one was overcrowded. At Throphill the accumulated manure heap just under the pantry windows continues the same and the byre is still used, and the drains are in an unsatisfactory condition. At Stamp Steads, Widdrington, the cottages are in a bad condition. They have now been closed for alteration. These were also overcrowded. At Whitefield Cottages, Chevington, there is want of privy accommodation, and the cottages are very damp. At Ulgham Grange cottages the privy accommodation is in a very dilapidated condition. This is also the case in the cottages in Widdrington Village. At Middle Coldside everything was in a very bad state, but repairs are now in progress. At Ellington Village one of the two-roomed cottages has damp walls and is occupied by 6 adults and 3 children, and new privies are required.

The water supply to most of the district is good, but in a dry season such places as Longhirst and Hepscott feel the want. In many of those cases the remedy is either in progress or has been promised by the owners.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Birth Rate.—The rather rapid decline in the birth rate of the district has to a slight degree received a check. The number, 444, is larger than it has been for three years, but calculating the increased population the rate is only slightly higher than it was in the previous year. For 1913 it stands second lowest on the record, *viz.*, 24·5 per 1,000 of the population.

Death Rate.—The year 1912 proved a record year. It had the lowest death rate ever recorded, and that was 13·3 per 1,000 for England and Wales. The total number of deaths in your district in 1913 was 320, including the Asylum. 114 of these were transferable deaths, that is, of strangers dying in the district. This total gives a death rate of 17·7 per 1,000, but if we exclude the transferable deaths the death rate for your district is 11·6 per 1,000, which stands next to the record year of 1912. There were 19 violent deaths and 25 from premature birth. If those were excluded the death rate from disease would be almost the same as in 1912, when there were 13 violent deaths and 25 from premature birth and debility from birth.

Infantile Death Rate.—As in the general death rate, so also the death rate amongst infants reached a record in 1912, when it came down over 30 per cent. from 1911 to between 96 and 97 per 1,000 infants born. In your district it was 96·6, but in the past year it has run up a little to 117·6 per 1,000. This, however, is the third lowest recorded. The average for the whole country amongst artisans is 113, amongst miners 160, among unskilled labourers 152, and among agricultural labourers 97 per 1,000 births. So as our population is largely miners, our infantile death rate is not high. I am quoting these figures from the report of the Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, and further figures may be of interest. “Among the families of army officers in 1911, the infantile mortality per 1,000 births was only 44, of naval officers and solicitors 41, of medical practitioners 39, and the rate of infant mortality of the middle classes generally was only 61 per cent. of the total mortality rate of the country among legitimate children.” The cause of the slight rise in the infant mortality is due to the large number of premature and weakling births, of which there are 25, from pneumonias there are 8 deaths, and 6 from diarrhœa. Of deaths from infectious diseases there are 3 from whooping cough and 1 from measles. There is only 1 from any Tubercular disease. One woman after her baby was born boasted that the child had been to a picture hall at least twice a week. Can one wonder that there are so many premature births?

Special Diseases.—As usual, I have selected in tabular form some of the most common and important diseases so that the past year may be readily contrasted with the three previous years.

TABLE V.

DISEASES.	1910.		1911.		1912.		1913.	
	No. of Cases.	Rate per 1000.	No. of Cases.	Rate per 1000.	No. of Cases.	Rate per 1000.	No. of Cases.	Rate per 1000.
Phthisis Pulmonalis ...	17	0·91	15	0·86	11	0·61	5	0·27
All Tubercular Diseases	27	1·44	26	1·49	22	0·24	7	0·38
All Respiratory Diseases	60	3·21	49	3·02	32	1·80	42	2·33
Cancer	14	0·75	10	0·57	22	1·24	10	0·55
Infectious Diseases ...	7	0·37	17	0·97	15	0·84	17	0·94
Diarrhœa (all forms) ...	6	0·32	14	0·80	1	0·05	10	0·55

It will be noticed that the year 1912 was a record year, but with regard to deaths from Tubercular diseases of all kinds no year

has ever such a reduction as the past year. This is not a local record, for in the whole country the same thing has occurred. You will notice that with an increasing population, since 1910, when there were 44 deaths from Tuberculosis, in 1911 there were 41, in 1912 there were 31, and last year only 12 deaths. This reduction is not caused by removal to sanatoria, because all deaths occurring in these institutions are referred back to their own districts. Perhaps it is that more care is taken in the early stages and there is less careless exposure to infection, but the most likely cause was that the year was the finest we have had as regards weather in the memory of most, and so more exposure out of doors was possible. However well ventilated a room may be, it is not like being in the fresh air outside. The other diseases are not remarkable. There were many more cases of infectious diseases and so the deaths are slightly increased. The number of deaths from diarrhoea, in a hot season, is not high, but it compares badly with the previous year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

A very large number of Infectious Diseases has been notified during the year. The increase is in every one of the usual diseases, excepting in Pulmonary Phthisis. Other Tuberculous diseases were not notified in the previous year, whilst 25 have been recorded for 1913. The total number notified was 218. Of these 85 were Scarlet Fever, 57 Diphtheria, 22 Erysipelas, 4 Enteric Fever, 25 Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and 25 other forms of Tubercular diseases. They were nearly all in the colliery districts, only 5 being in the agricultural district and 3 in the Asylum. While the necessity for an Isolation Hospital is under discussion it may guide us in choosing a position if I give a table of the distribution of the different diseases:—

District.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Erysipelas.	Enteric Fever.
Broomhill	16	1	6	2
Chevington Drift... ..	14	8	3	...
Stobswood	18	26	...	...
Widdrington	5	6	1	...
Ferneybeds	3	1	...	...
Whitefield... ..	2	1	...	...
Ulgham	3	...	...	...
Ellington Colliery	5	...	2	...
Woodhorn	3	2	...	...
Pegswood	6	4	...	...
Longhirst ... ..	...	1	...	...
North Seaton	7	4	7	2
Hepscott	2	...	...	...
Asylum ... ..	...	...	3	...
East Cottingwood	1	...	...	...
East Shieldhill ... ..	...	1	...	...
Agricultural ... ..	...	2	...	...

I have not included Tubercular diseases, as they would not be treated in the same hospital. The first four districts are those which will be affected by the new sewerage scheme and which is now so greatly requiring it. Out of 168 notifications, 106 came from this district.

Scarlet Fever.—The cases and epidemics have been numerous and widely spread, as will be seen by referring to the above table. There have been no deaths attributed to it, and the type generally has been mild.

Diphtheria.—This, although not in such numbers, has been almost as widespread as the Scarlet Fever. Again the largest number is in the badly drained area. The Stobswood epidemics occurred in spring and autumn, evidently transmitted by a carrier, who, though well, had the germs in nose and throat. There were four deaths in the 57 cases, which is a very small percentage. The use of Antitoxin serum, in almost all the cases, has, I feel sure, been the means of saving many lives.

Erysipelas.—There were 22 cases reported, which is a larger number than usual. Only one was fatal and it occurred in the Asylum. The others were all in the colliery districts; none were reported in the agricultural districts.

Enteric Fever.—Four cases were notified. Two were in one family at North Seaton Colliery. The houses were found very good, with plenty air space. The new privies, which are very good in construction, are too near the larder windows, which are not in any way protected from the invasion of flies. The substitution of fine zinc gauze for the wooden slots would be a great advantage. The other two were at Broomhill; one in January in the Cross Row, where the drainage is open and offensive, and the other in Swarland Terrace at the end of August, a time when Typhoid is most common in a very dry season. I could find nothing about the premises insanitary, and the house was an exceedingly clean one.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis and other Tuberculous Diseases.—There were 25 cases of each notified during the year. The distribution of the Pulmonary cases in the district were as follows:—Widdrington, Stobswood and district, 10; Broomhill, 3; Chevington Drift, 3; Chevington Crescent, 1; South Linton, 1; Longhirst, 1; Thriston, 1; Longhorsley, 1; Pegswood, 3; Mitford, 1. Here again the majority of the cases is in the badly drained and poorly housed north-east district. Sanatorium treatment is not possible for all cases as there is insufficient accommodation. Preference is given to insured workers, and out of the above only 8 so qualify. One or two have received domiciliary treatment and one at least sanatorium benefit. Twenty-five cases of other Tuberculous diseases

have been notified. The distribution of these provides very little certain statistics as some medical men do not notify all the minor forms, such as enlarged glands, but again the result is the same—Widdrington district 3, Broomhill 14, Chevington Drift 4, Pegswood 3, and East Cottingwood 1. Nearly all are in the same district. This must not, however, be translated as a true state. There are hundreds more who have not consulted a doctor, and also there may be, nay are, many whom doctors have not considered it necessary to notify and unnecessary to alarm the patient.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

J. P. PHILIP.

TABLE I.
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.		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Nett.						Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.	
		Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate.		
1	2	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1908	16582	520	32.3	326	19.6	86	6	82	155.7	245	14.7
1909	16832	508	31.3	308	18.9	115	5	49	96.4	198	11.7
1910	17082	455	26.6	299	17.5	84	3	57	125.2	215	13.9
1911	17383	428	24.6	347	19.9	110	6	64	149.5	237	13.2
1912	17750	424	23.8	288	16.2	107	8	41	96.6	189	10.5
1913	18000	444	24.5	320	17.7	114	4	52	117.6	210	11.6

Area of District in acres (land and inland water), 74,748.

Total population at all ages, 17,383

Number of inhabited houses, 3,378

Average number of persons per house, 5.2

At Census, 1911

(cf. Census, Vol. V.)

TABLE II.
Cases of Infectious Disease Notified during the Year 1913.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED.						TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED IN EACH LOCALITY.		
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.					1	2	3
		Under 1.	1 and under 5 years.	5 and under 15 years.	15 and under 25 years.	25 and under 45 years.			
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) ...	57	...	11	40	...	5	55	2	...
Erysipelas ...	22	...	...	1	1	11	19	...	3
Scarlet fever ...	85	...	18	62	3	2	84	1	...
Enteric fever ...	4	...	...	3	...	1	4	...	...
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	25	...	6	4	7	6	23	2	Not Notified.
Other forms of Tuberculosis ...	25	1	6	10	3	2	25	...	...
Totals ...	218	1	41	120	14	27	210	5	3

Smallpox Hospital for 24 patients.

TABLE III A.

Allocation of zymotic and tubercular deaths to sub-districts.

	Colliery.		Agricultural.		Asylum.	
Enteric Fever ...	1		...		...
Small-pox ...	...		...		...
Measles ...	4		...		...
Scarlet Fever ...	...		...		...
Whooping Cough ...	7		...		...
Diphtheria and Croup	2		2		...	
Phthisis ...	4		1		26	
Tuberculous Meningitis ...	2		0		1	
Other Tuberculous Diseases ...	4		1		1	
	Under 2 years.	2 years and above.	Under 2 years.	2 years and above.	Under 2 years.	2 years and above.
Diarrhoea and Enteritis	9	1	...	...	...	6

TABLE IV.
Infant Mortality.

Causes of Death.	Under 1 week.	1-2 weeks.	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	4 weeks & under 3 months.	3 months & under 6 months.	6 months & under 9 months.	9 months & under 12 months.	Total Deaths under 1 year.
Measles ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Whooping-Cough ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Abdominal Tuberculosis ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Meningitis (<i>not Tuberculous</i>) ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Convulsions ... ..	...	...	...	2	2	...	1	...	...	3
Bronchitis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	1	3
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	5	1	1	8
Diarrhoea ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Enteritis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	1	4
Premature birth	11	1	...	...	12	...	...	...	...	12
Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus ...	2	2	3	...	7	4	...	1	1	13
Other causes ... ..	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1
Totals	13	3	3	3	22	8	8	8	6	52

Nett Births in the year (legitimate), 444.

Nett Deaths in the year of (legitimate infants), 52.

4 Agricultural ; 48 Colliery = 52.

TABLE VI.

COLLIERY.				AGRICULTURAL.			
Population.	Births (nett).	Deaths (nett).	Deaths under 1 year.	Population	Births (nett).	Deaths (nett).	Deaths under 1 year.
13,500	878 380	166	48	4,500	64	44	4

TABLE VIII.
Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910.
Tabular Statement as required by Article V.

	No. of dwelling houses inspected.	No. of dwelling houses which, on inspection, considered unfit for human habitation.	No. of representations made to local authority with a view to closing orders being made.	CLOSING ORDERS.		No. of dwellings in which defects remedied without closing orders being made.	No. of dwellings put into fit state for human habitation after closing orders made.	General character of defects found.
				No. of orders made.	No. of houses vacated at end of each year in consequence.			
SANITARY DISTRICT.								
Parishes or sub-districts—								
Eastern 	78	6	6	6	2	72	Work in progress on six houses	Defective windows 4 Defective roofs 12 Defective spouting 1 Defective floor 2 Defective drainage 4 Defective ventilation 7 Defective privies 13
Western 	70	Nil.	Nil.	...	...	39	Nil	Dampness 12 Defective spouting 7 Defective drains 7 Defective privies 5 Insufficient drainage 7 Overcrowding 1
Total for whole district	148	6	6	6	2	111	...	

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

(Eastern District).

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the pleasure of submitting an annual report on the sanitary work accomplished during the year ending 31st December, 1913, in which is included the work done under the Housing and Town Planning Act (Inspection of District).

Infectious Diseases.—More cases have been notified during the year, involving more inspections, and more disinfections. In all, fifty-four houses have been disinfected, as compared with twenty-eight done last year, the method adopted having been fumigation by formaldehyde, using McDougall's Vap Lamps, with in some cases a spraying of diluted carbolic. This has been found satisfactory, and no complaints have been received as to any damage having been done. The majority of the houses treated have been of the mining class, and on inspection, as a rule, these were found to be clean and well kept.

Factories and Workshops.—There are no factories in the division and the workshops and workplaces now on the register comprise—

General Smiths	...	...	...	...	2
Bakeries	...	...	...	...	1
Tailors and Dressmakers	...	...	...	...	4
Joiners	...	...	...	...	3
					—
					10
					—

Casual inspections are made quarterly of these premises, and the sanitary conditions have been found satisfactory. During the year the Factory Inspector requested (through the order of the Rural Council) the limewashing of the bakery and even of two country smiths' shops, and the necessary notices were sent out. Special inspections were afterwards made, when it was found that the work had not been carried out, except in the case of the bakery.

Cow Byres.—These have been frequently inspected and found satisfactory. Eight verbal notices were served to secure necessary cleansing and limewashing.

Scavenging.—Two townships, *viz.*, Widdrington and West Chevington, are scavenged by contract under the Council, and the work has been done in a thorough manner. The same report can be made of the private scavenging throughout the division.

Nuisances.—On inspection the under-mentioned nuisances were found, and preliminary notices were served to secure abatements—

Full and foul ashpits	25
Defective drainage	15
Overcrowding	5
Improper keeping of pigs	1
Improper discharge of sewage	2

These notices received prompt attention except in a case of the improper discharge of sewage. This occurred at Ellington Colliery, where a 24-inch pipe discharged the sewage of the new houses erected there. This matter, however, is one that the Council will have to deal with, and a sea outfall has been suggested; but before any work can be done, the developments of the Coal Company, who intend building about other 500 houses at this place, are awaited.

New Buildings.—Plans for the under-mentioned buildings have been submitted and approved of, *viz.*:—

Dwelling houses	164
Additions to dwelling houses	3
Business premises	4
Churches	1

Building work has been very slowly carried out, and during the year only 12 houses have been completed and certified for occupation under the Public Health Water Act. Forty-two new privies have been built at Stobswood to replace the old privy-middens.

Improvements.—The north-east portion of the division still awaits the proposed main drainage scheme and sea outfall, and for which an inquiry has recently been held by an Inspector of the Local Government Board. It is anticipated that the loan will be granted, after which the work will be put in hand. When this scheme is completed the road will be open to the carrying out of the many necessary improvements, such as the proper paving and making up of streets, etc., which could not be tackled owing to the want of drainage.

Water Supply.—The water supply continues to be satisfactory. In the case of Hepscott and Longhirst Villages, the supply is from a spring and well respectively, and both villages are well supplied in quantity and quality, but hardship is felt by a few of the residents through the water having to be carried.

In view of the fact that in neither village is there any building development, or, so far as we know, any possibility of such, I cannot recommend that any scheme, to embrace the distribution of the water to the houses, should be contemplated.

At Druridge Farm and cottages, hitherto supplied by means of a ram, forcing water from a borehole, a shortage has been felt, but if this continues a connection can be made with the Widdrington village supply.

Housing and Town Planning Act.—Inspections have been continued under this Act, and during the year seventy-two houses have been inspected and registered. This has necessitated the service of notices for the under-mentioned defects, *viz.* :—

Defective windows	...	...	...	...	4
Defective roofs	...	...	...	...	12
Defective spouting	...	...	...	...	1
Defective floors	...	...	...	...	2
Defective drainage	...	...	...	...	4
Defective ventilation	...	...	...	...	7
Defective privies	...	...	...	...	13

In addition to this, six houses, situated at Stamp Steads, Widdrington, were found in such a bad condition that I was obliged to recommend a closing order. This was agreed upon, but before the order was made the owners cleared the property of the tenants and commenced with such improvements as will, I think, satisfy the requirements.

Such a large number of outstanding notices has, of course, involved a great amount of re-inspection, some of the properties having been visited five or six times, but the pacific obtaining of the necessary improvements is a greater factor than the mere registration, and in addition the very worst property in the division has been tackled first.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ANDREW ADAMS.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

(Western Division).

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my Annual Sanitary Report for your Western District.

Infectious Diseases.—The district has kept remarkably free from infectious diseases during the year, only two cases being notified, *viz.*, one of diphtheria at Middle Coldside and one at River Green Kennels. The necessary disinfections were carried out. Acting on the instructions of your Medical Officer of Health, the schools at Meldon and Mitford were disinfected after a closure for diphtheria.

Dairies and Cow Sheds.—The dairies and cow sheds in the district continue to be kept in a satisfactory condition. Limewashing and cleansing has been well attended to. Registration as cow-keeper was granted to Messrs. Clavering of Abbey Mills, Morpeth.

Workshops.—The workshops in the district have been regularly inspected, only one preliminary notice was sent out to order lime-washing in a blacksmith's shop.

Nuisances.—Complaints as to nuisances have been very few, and in all cases have been remedied by a verbal or preliminary written notice.

Housing.—The housing conditions in your western district are satisfactory. The following plans for new houses and additions were presented to the Plans Committee and approved:—

- Additions to Residence at Cambo.
- New Byres at Scotsgap Auction Mart.
- Bathroom at Netherwitton School House.
- Laundry and Alterations at Meldon Park.
- Three Piggeries at Temple Thornton.
- Racquet Ground and Motor Houses at Angerton Hall.
- Additions at Low Angerton.
- Privies and Outoffices at Hartburn School.
- Three Cottages at Abbey Mills, Morpeth.
- Byres and Piggeries at Abbey Mills, Morpeth.
- Cottage at Ghyllheugh, Longhorsley.

Private Improvements.—Several private drainage schemes and water supplies have been carried out in the district, including a new water supply to Mitford Hall and Mitford Steads Farm, Throphill Farm and Cottages, and Newton Underwood Farm and Farm Cottages.

The drainage schemes for the villages of Mitford, Cambo, Netherwitton and Longhorsley continue to work satisfactorily.

Housing and Town Planning Act.—During the year seventy houses were inspected and entered on the register, and it was found necessary to serve thirty-nine notices to secure the requirements under the Act.

Dampness	...	...	...	...	...	12
Defective Spouting	...	...	...	...	...	7
Defective Drains	...	...	...	...	...	7
Defective Privies	...	...	...	...	...	5
Insufficient Drainage	...	...	...	...	...	7
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	...	1

The notices were readily complied with except in one or two cases of dampness where houses had been erected without a proper damp proof course.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. WALKER.