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NEWBURN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Northumberland



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and the

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

for the

year ended 31st December 1972



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SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1972-1973

Chairman:

Councillor S. Chapman

Deputy Chairman:

Councillor E. Stephens, J.P.

Councillor Mrs. M. Cook

" F. W. L. Dixon, J.P.

" D. Hodson

" R. Hunter

" J. Lackenby

" J. C. Patterson

" T. G. Rogers

OFFICERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Medical Officer of Health:

H.C.T. Smith, M.B., Ch.B., M.F.C.M., D.P.H., D.P.A.

Chief Public Health Inspector:

J. Corney, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors:

F.W. Dixon, M.A.P.H.I.

D.J. Farquhar, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

K. Buchan, M.A.P.H.I.

Pupil Public Health Inspector:

P. Dryden

Foreman:

W.H.S. Gray

Senior Clerk/Shorthand Typist:

Miss M.K. Brown (resigned 22nd September, 1972)

Miss S. Lackenby (appointed 30th October, 1972)

Junior Clerk/Typist:

Mrs. E.W. Wright

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Telephone: Lemington 674112/3
675872
673191

Council Offices,
Newburn,
Newcastle upon Tyne.
NE15 8QJ

To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council of Newburn.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the health of the district for 1972.

The Registrar General's estimated population and the comparability factors supplied for births and deaths have been adjusted in the light of the figures obtained from the 1971 census. The locally adjusted birth and death rates are very close to the figures for England and Wales. Last year, only one stillbirth occurred compared with 11 the previous year. There were 11 infant deaths, seven of them within 48 hours of birth.

Since this may be the last full Annual Report an opportunity has been taken to review the public health of the district since its foundation in 1893. Newburn has an excellent record of being first in many fields. In the year 1912 Newburn appointed a health visitor, opened a tuberculosis dispensary and built 58 Council houses. Three Child Welfare Clinics were in operation by 1914 and a dental clinic by 1918. The pioneering spirit has continued and it is excellent to be able to record the opening of Newburn House at Scarborough in July, 1973. This holiday home for the elderly has been provided by the Council, aided by voluntary subscription, and has already proved to be very popular with old persons in the area.

I would like to thank Mr. Corney and all the members of the health department for the capable way they have carried out their duties. Other officers of the Council have always been very willing to co-operate. Lastly, I would convey my thanks to the members of the Council for being so interested in and so ready to support the work of the department.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

H. C. T. SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health

NEWBURN URBAN DISTRICT

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area in acres	4,648
Registrar General's estimated population	39,900
Number of inhabited houses as at 31.12.72.	13,841
Number of premises (inc. inhabited houses)	15,587
Rateable value as at 31.3.73.	£1,422,817
Sum represented by Penny Rate (1p) as at 31.3.73.	£13,200

Population trends:

1951	21,890
1956	25,020
1961	27,980
1966	32,480
1971	39,260
1972	39,900

VITAL STATISTICS

	Numbers			Rates
	M	F	Total	
Live Births	297	314	611	
Crude birth rate per 1,000 population				15.3
Comparability factor 0.95				
Adjusted birth rate per 1,000 population				14.5
Ratio of local adjusted rate to national rate				0.98
Illegitimate Live Births	16	10	26	
Illegitimate live birth rate per 100 live births				4.3
Still-births	1	-	1	
Still-birth rate per 1,000 live and still-births				1.6
Total Live and Still-births	298	314	612	
Infant Deaths (Deaths in first year of life) ..	8	3	11	
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births				18.0
Legitimate infant mortality rate per 1,000 legitimate live births				16.9
Illegitimate infant mortality rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births				38.5
Neonatal Deaths (Deaths in first four weeks of life)	8	1	9	
Neonatal mortality rate per 1,000 live births				14.7
Early Neonatal Deaths (Deaths in first week of life)	6	1	7	
Perinatal Deaths (Still-births, plus deaths in first week of life)	7	1	8	
Perinatal mortality rate per 1,000 total live and still-births				13.1
Maternal Deaths (Deaths resulting from childbirth or abortion)	Nil			
Deaths	198	137	385	
Crude death rate per 1,000 population				9.6
Comparability factor 1.27				
Adjusted death rate per 1,000 population				12.2
Ratio of local adjusted rate to national rate				1.01

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEARS

Year	(Adjusted) Birth Rate	Illegitimate Live Birth Rate	Still-Birth Rate	Infant Mortality Rate	Neonatal Mortality Rate	Perinatal Mortality Rate	(Adjusted) Death Rate
1956-1960	16.7	1.9	22.2	33.6	25.6	44.4	13.6
1961-1965	17.5	3.3	18.6	19.5	14.1	31.4	13.3
1966-1970	16.8	4.8	8.8	18.7	11.2	16.8	12.8
1971	16.5	5.0	17.5	8.1	8.1	25.5	14.0
1972	14.5	4.3	1.6	18.0	14.7	13.1	12.2

COMPARISON WITH OTHER AREAS - 1972

	Adjusted Birth Rate	Illegitimate Birth Rate	Still-birth Rate	Infant Mortality Rate	Neonatal Mortality Rate	Perinatal Mortality Rate	Adjusted Death Rate	Comparability Factors	
								Births	Deaths
England and Wales	14.8	8.5	12.0	17.3	11.5	21.7	12.1	1.00	1.00
Northumberland A.C.	14.0	6.2	10.2	15.5	12.0	19.6	12.5	1.04	1.03
Newcastle/Tyne C.B.	13.0	13.9	14.8	20.6	14.7	27.1	13.7	1.04	0.94
Gosforth U.D.	12.2	5.4	6.0	18.1	12.1	15.0	11.1	0.99	0.71
Newburn U.D.	14.5	4.3	1.6	18.0	14.7	13.1	12.2	0.95	1.27
Prudhoe U.D.	11.2	7.2	7.1	21.6	21.6	28.6	15.7	0.90	1.16
Castle Ward R.D.	9.8	3.1	-	15.4	15.4	12.4	10.4	1.10	0.68

CAUSE OF STILL-BIRTH

Intra-uterine anoxia

CAUSES OF INFANT DEATHS

Congenital defects	Sex	Age	Place of Death
1. Meningomyelocoele	M	1 hour	In hospital
2. Polycystic kidneys	M	1 hour	" "
3. Polycystic kidneys	M	2 hours	" "
4. Coarctation of the aorta	M	11 days	" "
5. Congenital heart disease	F	14 weeks	At home
6. Congenital heart and aortic disease	F	11 months	In hospital
Other causes			
7. Prematurity	M	1 hour	In hospital
8. Prematurity	M	1 day	" "
9. Prematurity	M	1 week	" "
10. Hyaline membrane disease and prematurity	M	18 hours	" "
11. Hyaline membrane disease and prematurity	F	2 days	" "

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATHS 1972

Cause of Death	M	F	Total	%
Cancer	46	36	82	21.3
Ischaemic heart disease	64	43	107	27.8
Cerebro-vascular disease	16	42	58	15.2
All other heart and circulatory disease	18	28	46	11.9
Respiratory disease	24	20	44	11.4
All other disease	23	13	36	9.3
Accidents and suicide	7	5	12	3.1
	198	187	385	100.0

CAUSES OF DEATH AT DIFFERENT AGES DURING 1972

Cause of Death	Sex	Total all ages	Under 4 wks.	4 wks -1 year	Age in Years							75 & over		
					1-4	5-	15-	25-	35-	45-	55-		65-	
B19(2) Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus	M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
B19(3) Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	F	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
B19(4) Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine	M	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
B19(5) Malignant Neoplasm, Larynx	F	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
B19(6) Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
B19(7) Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	F	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B19(8) Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
B19(9) Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate	M	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B19(10) Leukaemia	F	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
B19(11) Other Malignant Neoplasms	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
B20 Benign and unspecified Neoplasms	M	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
B21 Diabetes Mellitus	F	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B46(1) Other Endocrine Etc. Diseases	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
B46(3) Mental Disorders	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
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CAUSES OF DEATH AT DIFFERENT AGES DURING 1972 (Continued)

Cause of Death	Sex	Total all ages	Under 4 wks.	4 wks. - 1 year	Age in Years									
					1-4	5-	15-	25-	35-	45-	55-	65-	75 & over	
B46(5) Other diseases of nervous system	M	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
B26 Chronic rheumatic heart disease	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B27 Hypertensive disease	M	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
B28 Ischaemic heart disease	M	64	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	11	21	2	1
B29 Other forms of heart disease	F	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	18	16	19
B30 Cerebrovascular disease	M	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	7
	F	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	8	8
B46(6) Other diseases of circulatory system	M	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	4	4	23
B31 Influenza	F	42	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	15	3	3
	M	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	-
	F	9	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B32 Pneumonia	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B33(1) Bronchitis and emphysema	M	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B46(7) Other diseases of respiratory system	M	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	7	2
B34 Peptic ulcer	F	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	2	5
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B37 Cirrhosis of liver	M	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B46(8) Other diseases of digestive system	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

CAUSES OF DEATH AT DIFFERENT AGES DURING 1972 (Continued)

Cause of Death	Sex	Total all ages	Under 4 wks.	4 wks - 1 year	Age in Years							75 & over	
					1-4	5-	15-	25-	35-	45-	55-		65-
B39 Hyperplasia of prostate	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
B46(9) Other diseases, genito-urinary system	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
B46(11) Diseases of musculo-skeletal system	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B42 Congenital anomalies	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
B43 Birth injury, difficult labour, etc.	F	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B44 Other causes of perinatal mortality	F	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BE47 Motor vehicle accidents	M	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BE48 All other accidents	F	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BE49 Suicide and self-inflicted injuries	M	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BE50 All other external causes	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

ACCIDENTAL DEATHS 1972

Cause of Death	Sex	Age					Total
		5-14	25-34	55-64	75+		
<u>Motor vehicle accidents</u>							
Pedestrian/Motor car	M	1	-	2	-	3	
<u>Accident at work</u>	M	-	1	-	-	1	
<u>Falls - Fractured femur</u>	M	-	-	-	1	1	
	F	-	-	-	2	2	
<u>Drowning (open verdict)</u>	M	-	-	-	1	1	
	M	1	1	2	2	6	
	F	-	-	-	2	2	

TUBERCULOSIS

Age Periods	New Cases Notified				Inward Transfers			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
20-24 years	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-34 years	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
35-44 years	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
45-54 years	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
55-64 years	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65-74 years	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	6	2	-	2	-	1	-	-

Comparison with previous years

Years	New Cases	Inward Transfers	Deaths
Average 1946-50	38	-	13
" 1951-55	37	17	5
" 1956-60	20	13	2
" 1961-65	16	4	1
1966	7	1	-
1967	8	3	-
1968	7	2	1
1969	4	2	3
1970	13	4	1
1971	4	-	1
1972	10	1	-

TUBERCULOSIS REGISTER 1972

	Number of cases on register at commencement of year		Number of cases notified for the first time		Inward Transfers		Number of cases which have been restored to the register during the year		Number of cases removed from register		Number of cases remaining on register at end of year	
	P.	N.P.	P.	N.P.	P.	N.P.	P.	N.P.	P.	N.P.	P.	N.P.
Males	54	4	6	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	56	4
Females	26	13	2	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	28	15

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Notifications Received 1972

Disease	Age						
	0-1	1-4	5-14	15-44	45-64	65+	Total
Measles	7	169	76	-	1	-	253
Infective Jaundice	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Scarlet Fever	-	6	3	-	-	-	9
Meningitis	1	-	-	-	-	-	1

MONTH OF NOTIFICATION

Disease	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Measles	33	127	29	9	-	8	15	3	3	4	12	10	253
Infective Jaundice	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Scarlet Fever	3	1	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Meningitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

SALMONELLA INFECTIONS

Three isolated cases came to light. Two, one an infection with *Salmonella thompson* and the other *Salmonella eastbourne*, were thought to have been contracted abroad, the latter by a man who had been in Algeria. The remaining case was an infection with *Salmonella agona*. The source of this infection was not traced. In all three cases, specimens were taken from family contacts with negative results. Specimens were taken from the infected persons until consecutive negative specimens were obtained.

DYSENTERY

A small outbreak occurred in Westerhope late in 1971 and continued during early January, 1972.

INFECTIVE JAUNDICE

Only two cases were notified. In neither instance was a history of contact with another case obtained.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Local government in County areas can be said to begin with the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. This required the setting up of a Board of Guardians in each area and various Unions of Parishes were formed. The Castle Ward Union comprised 77 townships in 12 ecclesiastical parishes. It consisted of the present Castle Ward Rural District, Gosforth and Newburn Urban Districts and also Kenton, Fawdon and Denton Burn, which were annexed by Newcastle in 1935.

In 1872, a Public Health Act required the setting up of local Health Boards over the whole country and the appointment of Medical Officers of Health. The Rural Sanitary Authority of the Castle Ward Union was formed, comprising all the districts in the Union with the exception of Gosforth, who formed their own Local Board. The first Medical Officer of Health of Castle Ward was Dr. G. H. Fitzgerald, who was in practice in Ponteland, and was also Medical Officer to the Ponteland Workhouse.

The industrial development of the Newburn area, however, made the needs of this part different from the rural area and in 1893, a separate Local Board was formed. The Newburn District Local Board met for the first time on 10th May, 1893 in the Almshouses Library at Newburn. After the Local Government Act of 1894, this body became the Newburn Urban District Council which met for the first time in January, 1895.

Dr. Andrew Messer was appointed Part-time Medical Officer of Health in July, 1893 at a salary of £30 per annum. The annual report which he wrote for 1894 well describes the conditions then existing and is given in full.

Annual Report for Year Ending December, 1894

Extent

The Newburn District Local Board comprises the townships of

East Denton
West Denton
Sugley
Newburn Hall
Newburn
Walbottle
Throckley

Population

The district is essentially rural in its character, the population of each of the townships at the last census being

East Denton	1060
West Denton	460
Sugley	233
Newburn Hall	1865
Newburn	1691
Walbottle	1190
Throckley	<u>1464</u>

7963

At the census in 1881, the population was 5841.

Industries

The chief industries which are carried on are coal mining, steel manufacturing, glass making and agricultural.

Dwellings

The dwellings are fairly good in some parts of the district, notably in Lemington, Throckley, and Newburn, but there are at the same time very ruinous and dilapidated houses used for habitation, especially is this true of the older parts of Newburn, Lemington and Walbottle. In these instances, many of the rows are back to back with no sufficient means of ventilation or lighting and the walls and roofs are extremely bad. In fact, the greater part of the old houses are not in a state fit for human habitation. Attempts have been made to improve them by putting up spouting to remedy the dampness in the walls but this has only been a partial success for in none of the cases are the sites drained nor are there any damp proof courses in the walls.

In no part of the district has any attention been paid to surface drainage and in many rows of houses the floors are not cemented but have simply bricks laid upon the soil. This, as I have pointed out on several previous occasions, is a very serious state of affairs and simply engenders disease.

All the streams passing through the district are very highly polluted with sewage.

Water Supply

The district is on the whole fairly well supplied with water from the mains of the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company. The High Pit near Walbottle has no sufficient water supply, it only having a well for about 80 houses, and the same is true of the New Winning and Sugley.

In the two latter cases, a supply could easily be got from the mains of the Water Company but as yet nothing definite has been done.

The sewerage system of the district is of a very primitive character with the exception of Lemington and Newburn, which have in the newer parts a definite system of drainage, the sewage being carried directly into the River Tyne. The sewage in Throckley is carried off by means of open drains, most of them made with bricks, which allows of a percolation of sewage into the soil.

In Walbottle, there are rubble drains but in the greater part of it there is no drainage whatever, the slop waters being simply thrown out onto the roadway. In the older part of Lemington and in Denton Burn, Sugley and Scotswood, there is nothing but large open drains which are a huge nuisance in the hot weather and a continual source of annoyance to the inhabitants.

Excrement and Refuse Disposal

Excrement and refuse disposal is universally by means of midden privies and the middens are usually of a huge size and entirely uncovered. They are so constructed as to prevent the admixture of ashes with excrement. The whole of the method of refuse disposal is extremely unsatisfactory, especially the large open middens. In Throckley, the privies are without spouting and as a consequence the rain fall is simply drained into the ashpit. The scavenging is principally done by the owners of the houses, who make some arrangement with the local farmers.

The Burial Ground

The burial ground is that of the Newburn Parish Church, which has been extended recently.

Isolation

There is, at present, no means of isolation and no disinfecting apparatus.

Infectious Disease

The Notification of Diseases Act and Prevention of Infectious Disease Act are in force.

During the year there have been notified

28	cases	of	Scarletina
17	"	"	Enteric
26	"	"	Erysipelas
1	case	"	Puerperal Fever
1	"	"	Diphtheretic Sore Throat

which might or might not be diphtheria.

Twelve of the cases of typhoid occurred at Newburn. During the year there has been an extensive epidemic of measles in all the townships but as it is not a notifiable disease, the number of cases is not known.

Bye-laws

Bye-laws have not been made as yet, those of the Ponteland Rural Sanitary Authority being in force until the Board make their own.

Regulated Buildings

There are 33 dairies in the district, all registered and under the supervision of the Inspector of Nuisance. There are eight slaughterhouses but only three are in a satisfactory condition.

Vital Statistics

During the year there have been 133 deaths and 306 births, giving a total death rate for the year of 15.2 per thousand living and a birth rate of 35.1 per thousand living. This looks on the whole satisfactory but it is not so satisfactory when you consider it a little more in detail.

Out of the 133 deaths, 44 or 33-1/3% are in children under one year and many of the causes of death in these cases are preventible. Appended is a table showing the mortality in the various townships:

East Denton	Death Rate 19.4 per 1000 living 33% under one year 72% under five years
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West Denton	Death Rate 19.5 per 1000 living 33% under one year 55% under five years
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Sugley	Death Rate 12.6 per 1000 living
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Newburn Hall	Death Rate 8:6 per 1000 living 26% under one year 42% under five years
Newburn	Death Rate 19:7 per 1000 living 27% under one year 36% under five years
Walbottle	Death Rate 17:9 per 1000 living 23% under one year 15% under five years
Throckley	Death Rate 14:2 per 1000 living 36% under one year 59% under five years

The infantile death rate per 1000 births is 143:7. This is on the whole a more satisfactory report than was presented last year when the death rate was 23:7 and when there was a great mortality from diarrhoea.

Those portions of the district which have the best houses and the better systems of drainage have the cleanest bill of health. I would urge on the authority the great necessity there is for a more complete water supply to the High Pit, New Winning and Sugley, to attack the sewerage system of the district as soon as practicable and to proceed with the closing of all houses which are unfit for habitation. When these items are accomplished, then we may hope for a general death rate of 10 per 1000 and a considerably lower infantile mortality.

Andrew Messer - January 1895

This report sets out the main needs of the district at that time.

1. Better housing
2. Paving and concreting of yards and streets
3. Drainage of surface and sullage water
4. Water carriage system of excrement disposal
5. An Isolation hospital for infectious disease

Items not mentioned were

1. The water supply was from the Newcastle and Gateshead Company but in most instances was not carried into the houses
2. The burden of the enormous birth rate and the tremendous ignorance then prevailing on the nurture of infants

3. Ignorance on the prevention of spread of infectious disease
4. The problem of tuberculosis

Attention in all these matters was to be ably advocated by Dr. Messer in later years.

Population

At the foundation of the Local Board, the population was around 8,000 and this increased to around 20,000 in 1920, as the local industries expanded. While most people were by modern standards very poor, there was little of what Dr. Messer called "that hungry poverty which does not know where the next meal is coming from".

Between 1920 and 1940 the population remained static and there was great hardship due to the closure of Spencers Steel Works in 1927 and to the troubles which beset industry in general and the mining industry in particular.

After the war, despite further contractions of the coal industry involving the closure of all the mines in the district, the population rapidly increased to the present figure of around 40,000. This was due to the district becoming residential in character.

The only boundary change was in 1935 when the district lost Denton Burn to Newcastle and gained Blayney Row and Moor Court from Castle Ward.

Vital Statistics

In the early years the birth rate was very high, being over 40 per 1,000 population in 1898, 1900, 1903 and 1904. The first year it was below 30 per 1,000 was 1914. In 1908 there were 620 births for a population of 16,000, which can be compared with 627 births in 1970 for a population of 39,000. The infant mortality rate was very high averaging over 160 per 1,000 between 1896 and 1905. In 1905 there were 105 deaths of children under one year, 41 of them from diarrhoea. With 549 births in that year this gives an infant mortality of 191 per 1,000.

The general death rate was also high, being over 17 per 1,000 between 1901 and 1905. Around 40% of the deaths were in babies and a further 20% in children. Diarrhoea and whooping cough were prominent among the causes of death of babies, and diphtheria and scarlet fever among the causes in older children. In adults, typhoid accounted for 18 deaths in the first four years of this century and tuberculosis 131 deaths, i.e. over 10% of all deaths.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR 5 YEAR PERIODS

	Crude Birth Rate		Crude Death Rate		Infant Mortality Rate	
	Newborn	England & Wales	Newborn	England & Wales	Newborn	England & Wales
1896-1900	34.6	29.3	15.2	17.7	166	156
1901-1905	39.9	28.2	17.1	16.0	161	138
1906-1910	35.1	26.3	13.1	14.7	118	117
1911-1915	29.6	23.6	13.5	14.3	116	110
1916-1920	23.3	20.1	11.4	14.4	85	90
1921-1925	23.3	19.9	11.1	12.1	74	76
1926-1930	17.8	16.7	10.5	12.1	81	68
1931-1935	16.7	15.0	11.9	12.0	77	62
1936-1940	16.9	14.7	11.7	12.5	56	55
1941-1945	19.6	15.9	12.5	12.8	63	50
1946-1950	19.5	18.0	11.7	11.8	41	36
1951-1955	15.5	15.3	11.1	11.7	36	27
1956-1960	17.6	16.4	11.1	11.6	34	23
1961-1965	17.5	18.1	10.5	11.8	20	21
1968-1970	16.8	16.1	9.6	11.7	19	18

Smallpox

One of the first things Dr. Messer had to deal with in August 1893 was an outbreak of smallpox at Walbottle.

"The first case was that of Mary Keating. Previous to her coming to the Blucher Pit she stayed in a house at Blaydon-on-Tyne along with some people who already had smallpox in the family. After staying with these people for a few nights she came to the Blucher Pit and there took ill.

There were no means for isolation but I vaccinated the people in the house. The patient died on August 10th and was buried the same day. The house was then disinfected and the bedding, etc. burned.

Whilst this girl lay ill she was attended by her sister who has since had a very mild form of the disease and is now making satisfactory progress towards recovery.

A third case has occurred in the village of Walbottle, viz. that of William Wilson Joiner.

This case can be traced to the fact that he made the coffin for the girl Keating and assisted in putting her into it. He died on the 28th inst. and was buried the same day. In this case too the house was disinfected and the bedding, etc. burned.

Up to the present time, there are no further outbreaks of the disease."

By the end of the century, the Council possessed a "smallpox hospital", an iron and wood structure first of all situated at Lemington but later moved to Throckley. There were four beds but the building was capable of expansion. The building had no water supply, no gas or electricity and a somewhat primitive drainage system. Six cases of smallpox occurred in 1904 and 1905 and were removed to this hospital in "Messrs Slaters' infectious brougham".

The hospital was again used between 1925 and 1928 when throughout the country there were extensive outbreaks of minor smallpox or alastrim. Two hundred and forty seven cases occurred in this area, most of them in 1925. Dr. Messer refused to treat these mild cases as smallpox, a view which brought him into conflict with the Ministry of Health and led to him resigning his appointment as Medical Officer of Health in 1926.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

TOTAL NOTIFICATIONS AND DEATHS FOR 5 YEAR PERIODS

	Tuberculosis		Paratyphoid & typhoid		Diphtheria		Scarlet Fever		Whooping cough		Measles		Diarrhoea Under 2	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Deaths	Deaths	Deaths	Deaths	Deaths	Deaths
1896-1900	NA	65	116	17	(75)	(8)	(247)	(7)	(18)	(10)			89	
1901-1905	NA	117	82	13	124	13	643	20	33	(15)			96	
1906-1910	NA	95	59	7	338	23	191	5	20	(23)			68	
1911-1915	234	113	53	10	245	20	382	10	24	43			79	
1916-1920	205	118	17	7	186	30	318	11	17	21			32	
1921-1925	202	126	9	2	47	6	232	6	18	13			17	
1926-1930	276	90	19	3	34	1	243	-	17	4			11	
1931-1935	244	106	13	1	60	1	425	9	4	11			4	
1936-1940	134	72	5	-	109	11	227	1	1	3			4	
1941-1945	142	72	4	-	335	16	250	NA	NA	NA			NA	
1946-1950	192	69	1	1	22	-	143	-	2	-			12	
1951-1955	167	23	2	-	-	-	135	-	-	1			1	
1956-1960	102	8	-	-	-	-	92	-	-	-			2	
1961-1965	80	7	3	-	-	-	18	-	-	-			2	
1966-1970	39	5	1	-	-	-	28	-	-	-			-	

Figures in brackets are incomplete.

NA - Figures not available.

Typhoid

In the early days a great deal of typhoid occurred, the worst year being 1895 when there were 55 cases and eight deaths. It remained a serious problem until 1919 and recurred in the late 1920s. Dr. Messer attributed the outbreaks to infected soil around houses. The worst areas were the pit houses at Lemington, Mount Pleasant at Throckley and parts of Newburn. With the combination of defective surface drainage, lack of cementing of yard spaces and the privy midden system, it must have been common for infected material to be trodden into houses and assuming some carriers of the disease it is not surprising that outbreaks occurred.

Joint Infectious Diseases Hospital

Until 1905, typhoid and other serious infectious diseases had to be nursed at home. A joint infectious diseases hospital shared between Castle Ward, Gosforth and Newburn had been for a long time in the planning stage, being mentioned in the minutes of the Castle Ward Rural Sanitary Authority as early as 1888 with the site at Lemington then being talked about. In 1905, the hospital, now the Lemington Hospital, was completed. It had eight small wards and at first 32 beds, although in the late 1930s the hospital was extended so that patients from the Hexham area could be admitted. The hospital was used for cases of diphtheria, scarlet fever and typhoid from Newburn, Castle Ward and Gosforth and was run by a joint board consisting of representatives of the three authorities. Dr. Messer was made medical officer and continued in this post until the 1940s. In the early 1900s, an isolation hospital often meant just that and was used to prevent the spread of infection rather than to treat the patient. However, the Lemington Hospital was well equipped and as time went on was used for treatment as much as for isolation.

Acute Infections of Childhood

Diphtheria was the most serious of the acute infectious diseases of childhood and caused a mortality of between 10 and 20% in the early years of this century but the mortality diminished as treatment with antitoxin was given in the early stages. From 1910 onwards stocks of antitoxin were issued free by the Newburn Health Department to doctors practicing in the area. In 1935 active immunisation against diphtheria was introduced but it was not until the campaign of 1941 that more than a minority of children were immunised. These campaigns and the subsequent routine immunisation of infants have led to the virtual disappearance of the disease and in this area there have been no cases since 1948.

Scarlet fever was exceedingly common. In 1901 and 1902 epidemics occurred and a total of 474 cases were notified. There were 16 deaths in these outbreaks. As late as 1934 there were 123 cases with five deaths. Since the War the disease has become very mild.

Measles and whooping cough were not notifiable in the early stages but epidemics of both diseases had a significant mortality, particularly in babies. All told this century there have been 134 deaths from measles and 136 from whooping cough in Newburn.

Acute poliomyelitis was first notified in 1915 when there were two cases but the disease did not become a serious problem until 1947 when five cases occurred. In the next decade there were 16 cases. Salk vaccine was introduced in 1956 and Sabin oral vaccine in 1961 and the disease is now very uncommon.

Tuberculosis

The diseases so far mentioned have caused about 500 deaths this century but there have been over 800 deaths from tuberculosis. Curiously enough it was not until this century that tuberculosis was thought of as a preventible disease. It did not become notifiable until 1912. In this year Newburn became the first Urban District Council in England to run a tuberculosis dispensary. This was conducted on two evenings per week by Dr. Messer. The dispensary was taken over by the County Council in 1914 and continued until 1948. Dr. Messer had wanted to reserve two wards at the Infectious Diseases Hospital for tuberculosis but this was not sanctioned by the County Council, who were responsible for the tuberculosis services. The County were slow to build their own sanatorium at Wooley which was not ready until 1920. Barrasford, which was Newcastle's sanatorium, had by then been going for some years and had been taking a few patients from the County. The sanatorium at Stannington took in children and all non-pulmonary cases.

The story of the conquest of non-pulmonary tuberculosis by the pasteurisation of milk and by the gradual elimination of tuberculosis from cattle is a long one and will not be gone into. In the last 25 years the pulmonary tuberculosis position has also been transformed due to effective antibiotic treatment, B.C.G. vaccination and improvements in the nutritional and housing standards of the population.

Child Welfare

Over 10% of babies died in the first year of life and there was great concern about this in the first years of this century. While Newburn's sanitation was still somewhat primitive it had been found in other areas that sanitary improvements had not led to a corresponding decline in infant deaths and in particular had not diminished the deaths from diarrhoea. Outbreaks occurred in the late summer, particularly when the weather was warm. Newburn's worst year was 1905 when 41 deaths occurred due to diarrhoea. It was thought that many such deaths were due to the ignorance of mothers in the feeding and care of their babies. Dr. Messer says of the 1905 epidemic "when one sees children sucking curdled milk out of dirty and foul smelling bottles, there is small wonder that they get diarrhoea". He advocated the appointment

of a lady health visitor but had to wait seven years before this appointment could be made. In the meantime, handbills were prepared and distributed on the care of infants but later the District Auditor informed the Council that they had no authority to distribute handbills.

The Notification of Births Act of 1912 made the appointment of a Health Visitor practicable and Newburn were one of the first District Councils to appoint one in February, 1912. A "School for Mothers" was opened in Westerhope in 1914 and Clinics were commenced at Throckley and Lemington shortly afterwards. These schools or clinics were conducted by the health visitor with voluntary assistance and have continued ever since.

Mr. H. Davies, a dental surgeon, had a part-time appointment with the Council from 1918 onwards and looked after the teeth of the pre-school children. Miss R. E. Stead was the longest serving health visitor, being in the Council's employment from 1920-1940.

In 1928 the Council made arrangements with the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital for the admission of women "whose confinement is or may be attended by difficulty or complications and also for normal cases whose conditions are such as to render confinement at home undesirable". Financial arrangements were also made for a panel of consultants who could be called on by local doctors if complications arose in the course of confinement at home.

In 1929 arrangements were made with the Babies Hospital in Newcastle whereby infants were in certain approved cases admitted to the hospital for treatment, the Council paying 15/- per week towards maintenance.

Throckley Clinic was built by the Council at a cost of £1,540 with an additional £680 for furnishing and equipment. It was opened early in 1936 and became the main centre for ante-natal care, child welfare, dentistry and ultra-violet light therapy.

In 1937 the Council attempted to start a Home Help Scheme but were unsuccessful. Post-war, after one or two further unsuccessful attempts, the scheme got going in 1947 and five home helps were employed. Dr. Messer had advocated such a scheme in 1919 during the influenza epidemic.

Ambulance

All these services were handed over to the County Council in 1948. So also was the Newburn Ambulance Service which had started in 1922. It was run at first as an offshoot of the fire service but in 1930 became the responsibility of the Health Department. In 1925 the vehicle was used as little as five times per month but by 1946 the Council possessed three ambulances and in that year 2,800 cases were conveyed.

Water Supply

In the realm of environmental health only a few items can be highlighted. The supply of the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company was available to the area from the Council's foundation. No record exists of the number of houses with an indoor water supply and of those relying upon standpipes.

Sewerage

At the beginning the district had no sewerage system and with a rapidly growing population this was something which had to be tackled urgently. Indeed it was probably because of the need for a sewerage system that a separate Board had been formed. Work commenced in 1895 and was completed in 1898, the sewage being discharged into the River Tyne. The system in the first instance took care of domestic and surface water.

Privies

Each house in Newburn now has its own water closet, although there are still about 10% of properties where this is outside. As the 1894 report states there were no WCs in Newburn and midden privies were the rule.

By 1914 there were 1,368 water closets
739 earth closets
23 pail closets
and 1,393 privies

for a total of 3,623 houses. Thus the number of houses sharing privy accommodation was around 100. At that time a privy conversion scheme had been prepared but it had to be abandoned because of the War and this work did not commence until 1930. At this time 1,950 houses required conversion and by 1932 all but 450 had been completed. The remaining houses were presumably those shortly due for condemnation. However, a few remained in 1946 when there were 41 privies and 23 pail closets, including those at the Westerhope Schools which were not converted until 1953.

Scavenging

Scavenging was first undertaken by the Council in 1901, having previously been done in some cases by the owners of the property. At first contractors were employed but later the Council had its own direct labour force. Scavenging of course included the emptying of the midden privies and there were complaints in 1912 that the work should be done at night and not during the daytime. In the 1920s there was much solemn discussion on the economics of horse drawn and motorised transport. It was 1932 before the Council purchased their first motorised refuse vehicle.

Food Hygiene

The inspection and supervisison of food began in the 1880s and at first was confined to milk and meat. Farming was a major occupation in the district. In 1911 there were 22 cowkeepers and four purveyors of milk. Dr. Messer describes the scene.

"During the month I have, along with the Inspector of Nuisances, visited most of the cowsheds in the area and the general impression left is far from being an agreeable one. However satisfactory these places may be for forcing milk, they are not sanitary in the widest sense of the term. What makes the question still more disquieting is the knowledge that milk is a fruitful source of consumption and these dark, ill ventilated places with few or no windows present the ideal conditions for the growth of the Tubercle Bacillus.

Generally speaking the walls are rough and uneven, floors laid with no proper fall for carrying off the surface drainage and middens situated within a few feet of the byre door.

Cleansing is too frequently a most perfunctory operation both in regard to the byre and the cow. In nearly every instance the hind quarters of the cows are besmeared with dung, while the moist damp atmosphere acting on an imperfectly cleaned floor gives rise to an effluvium so heavy and offensive as to render the air of the byre overpowering and suffocating in character."

Until the Milk and Dairies Order of 1926, the amount of control that could be exercised was strictly limited. From then on the milk supply was properly supervised, regular sampling was done and steps were taken to eliminate unhealthy cows. The work was shared between the County and the District Councils and as it happened the County Bacteriological Laboratory was at Newburn and Dr. Andrew I. Messer, the County Bacteriologist, was Medical Officer of Health of Newburn from 1927-1935.

Although slaughterhouses had been inspected regularly it was not until 1924 that all meat was inspected. At that time there were 11 licenced slaughterhouses in the area and about 2,000 animals were slaughtered each year. During the War slaughtering was centralised and since then only one slaughterhouse has been operative in the area.

A chip shop at Walbottle is described in 1903.

"I found also a potato chip shop owned by a Mr. Nesbit, which I consider to be a nuisance. It is not constructed in such a fashion as to be any otherwise than to be dangerous to health. I measured the distances with a tape and found it was within 6 ft. 6 ins. of one privy, 12 ft. of another and 19 ft. from one of these insanitary stables and there was another insanitary stable 26 ft. away. The floor of this place is bare earth and there is no chimney to try and take away the smell of the cooking. I am informed that he had his plan passed by the Council, a statement I hardly believe for a more dilapidated building it would be difficult to conceive".

Housing

Houses were being condemned regularly from the commencement of the Council's activities but before Council house building started in 1912 it is not clear what happened to the inhabitants of the condemned houses.

Mr. Roy Gazzard tells me that the famous American architect Sergei Chermayeff, author of the book "Community and Privacy", visited the North-East in 1963. He told Mr. Gazzard that his views had been much influenced by Dr. Andrew Messer. This is mentioned as Dr. Messer is quoted extensively in this section. In 1910 he wrote

"If the slum areas in the district at present have cost the Authority much worry and anxiety, one can hardly conjecture the frame of mind with which the future administrators of the Council's affairs will view the present type of building. For, be it remembered, a slum is not necessarily badly drained, or dilapidated, or old, but usually all this, and small roomed, and so hemmed in by other houses, so wanting in light and air and cleanliness as to be wholly unfit for habitation".

"In every township almost in this district, there is growing up row upon row of houses which for ugliness and dreariness it would be difficult to match anywhere, and compared with which, many of the old unhealthy slums were, from the point of picturesqueness and beauty, infinitely more attractive. We never seem to have grasped the idea that endless rows of brick boxes looking out on dreary streets and squalid backyards are not really homes for people, however complete their system of drainage, or however satisfactory may be their water supply. The soul destroying phrase, "That'll do", has satisfied us, and not a desire for the best or the utmost that can be achieved. It is the small margin between the thing not done well and the thing well done, to which attention has to be directed in the future. One of the worst features of our

building has been the covering of areas with houses of exactly the same size and type, and for this there can be no justification whatever. The erection of these areas to be occupied solely by one class is bad socially, economically and aesthetically, and must result in misunderstanding and want of trust between different classes of people and in the development of exaggerated differences of thought and habit. More than this, it leads to a dreary monotony of effect, whose depressing effect is only equalled by its ugliness. In any old English village, the essential charm is the mixture of houses of different values and types, and one is glad to note that this is one of the main features of the various systems of garden city building. In the garden city of Hampstead you can get a cottage of 3/3 per week rent linked up to a house standing in its own ground at £250 per annum, with all sorts of gradations between. No-one will seriously contend that the same sort of principle cannot be used here. Further, one does not complain so much of our building in straight lines, for these can be made beautiful just as a waggle can become monotonous. It is the utter want of ideas that pervades the whole countryside in the matter of laying out these lines that is complained of. Even in the few places where detached houses have been built they are erected in such a way as to emphasise their detachment and difference from their neighbours. But beauty does not arise from mere detachment. So long as we are confined to the endless multiplicity of carefully fenced villas and rows of cottages all toeing the same building line, each with its little garden securely railed, reminding one of a cattle pen, the result is bound to be monotonous and devoid of beauty. These front gardens with their dividing fences serve little purpose. Rarely do they secure any privacy. The reason they exist at all is to shield the house from the dust and noise of the street, and prevent overlooking of the windows and incidentally, I suppose, as a means of extended street decoration. For neither the one nor the other of these purposes is a dividing fence of any service. How much better it would be if divisions were marked by groups of houses, and if a fence were still desired, what could be better than a shrub or hedge, or even a trellis work with a climber on it. Unfortunately, it is all too true what R. Louis Stephenson said: "Houses belong to no style of art, only to a form of business much to be regretted".

After the first world war there was great overcrowding and this is described graphically by Dr. Messer.

"It is important that we ought to think out in detail how we should feel if our whole life, personal

and family, were to shrink within the limits of two or three apartments; if our refined ideas of delicacy and propriety in times of sickness; or in the events of birth and death, were suddenly deprived of the conditions of space which we have come to regard as essential. It is almost too horrible to express in naked, uncompromising language, the jostling of birth and death, and the functions of life which must be the daily experience of these small houses. The argument that such houses must be permitted because only such are within the means of their occupants is like that for winking at the sale of adulterated and unwholesome food, because they cannot afford better and will starve. Just think, nearly 8,000 of the people in this area are living at more than two to a room. I ask you to imagine yourselves, with all your appetites and passions, your bodily necessities and functions, your feelings of modesty and propriety, your births, your sickness, your deaths, your children - in short your lives - in the whole round of their relationship with the seen and the unseen, suddenly shrivelled and shrunk into such conditions of space. I might ask, and I do ask you to consider and honestly confess what would the result be to you. Where can I find language in which to clothe the facts of these poor people's lives, and yet be tolerable? The words of Herr Teufelsdröckh when at mid-night from his attic lodgings as he looked down on the town of Weissnichtwo, will help a little. He said to his friend; "Oh under that hideous coverlet of vapors and putrefactions, and unimaginable gases, what a fermenting vat lies simmering and hid. The joyful and the sorrowful are there, men are dying there, men are being born, men are praying, on the other side of a brick partition men are cursing and around them all is the last vast void night, wretchedness cowers into truckle beds, riot, cries aloud and staggers and swaggers in his rank dens of shame, and the mother with streaming hair kneels over her pallid dying infant, whose cracked lips only her tears now moisten. All these heaped and huddled together with nothing but a little carpentry and masonry between them, crammed in like salted fish in a barrel - such work goes on under that smoky counterpane".

"In this great scheme of housing which you have been considering for some time past, an opportunity is given you to rectify the blunders of the past. The important thing to keep in mind is to set the standard high, aim at ideal conditions, remembering that you are in a great measure determining the mode of life of thousands for generations yet to come. It may be that in a newly developing community houses containing two bedrooms meet all the requirements of a small section

of the people. Here, however, you have an old established township with the greater proportion of their houses already of this character. It surely is unnecessary to urge that in future and for a long time to come the balance shall be altogether in the other direction".

Newburn were one of the first councils to build houses and 58 houses were completed at Walbottle in 1912. Between the wars a total of 1,300 houses were erected by the Council. At first all the houses were required for the relief of overcrowding and it was not until the 1930s that slum clearance was resumed. About 200 houses were condemned in this period.

Since 1945 the Council have had much greater financial resources at their disposal and were able to tackle much more ambitious building schemes. The Council now have a total of 4,193 houses. Since 1955, 1,094 houses have been condemned as unfit. A further 414 old houses have been improved by standard grant schemes and 381 by discretionary grants.

Clean Air

Smoke abatement was first mentioned in 1919. At that time the costs of smoke pollution were being worked out and it was realised that a centrally heated house could well be more economical. It was also realised that the domestic fire contributed as much smoke as did industry. At the same time in this area people were only too glad to see the local factory chimney smoking and to have a fire in their grate.

During the 1930s the Council subsidised the attendance of boiler-men on courses in smoke abatement at Rutherford College. The Clean Air Act of 1956 was the real beginning of modern smoke control and the activities of local authorities have been complemented by industry and the railways moving from coal to oil and by the voluntary movement away from the domestic coal fire. The first local Smoke Control Order was introduced in 1959. At present 45% of the premises in the district are in Smoke Control Areas.

Dr. Messer

It would not do to end an account of the public health history of Newburn without paying some tribute to Dr. Andrew Messer, who was Medical Officer of Health of Newburn for its first 33 years. He was a man of many interests and of wide vision. He started as a general practitioner in Lemington, became Medical Officer of Health and later Superintendant of the infectious diseases hospital. He also had an interest in ophthalmology and spent some time in Edinburgh and in Heidelberg studying this subject. However, his interests were by no means confined to medicine. Astronomy, economics, philosophy and above all literature were his favourite subjects. He acted as adviser to one publishing house and lexicographers would ask his advice on the definition of words.

In 1907 he founded the Lemington Adult School which met at his home until the building at Montague Street was completed in 1912 with a grant from the Rowntree Foundation. He lectured there on literature and economics. Dr. Messer had a very wide circle of friends, including many famous names of the day, Arthur Henderson, James Maxton, Ramsay MacDonald, Earl de la Warr, J. B. S. Haldane, J. Arthur Thompson and Sir Cyril Burt. All of these came to lecture at the Adult School or to visit Dr. Messer in Lemington.

Dr. Messer became a County Councillor in 1918 and subsequently became a County Alderman. He was for some time vice-chairman of the County Education Committee.

These are the bare facts of his career but it is soon apparent from talking to those who knew him that not only was he a remarkable scholar and a man well ahead of his time but also a very warm hearted individual.

POPULATION OF NEWBURN URBAN DISTRICT

NEWBURN URBAN DISTRICT

Medical Officers of Health

1896 8,810

1901 12,500

1906 14,760

1911 17,150

1916 19,480

1921 19,160

1926 20,950

1931 19,720

1936 19,250

1941 19,800

1946 20,290

1951 21,890

1956 25,020

1961 27,980

1966 32,480

1971 39,260

Inspector of Nuisances, Sanitary Inspector, and Public Health

Inspector

George Hubbard

Charles Ward B.Sc.I., M.B.I., M.S.I.

Edward Swift, M.B., B.S., San. I.

Harry Hall, M.B., B.S., San. I.

Thomas Wilson, M.B., B.S., San. I.

John Gordon, M.B., B.S., M.A.P.H.I.

NEWBURN URBAN DISTRICT

Medical Officers of Health

Andrew W. Messer, M.B., C.M., B.Sc.	1893-1926
William F. J. Whitley, M.D., D.P.H., County Medical Officer, Acting Medical Officer of Health.	1926-1927
Andrew I. Messer, M.A., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.	1927-1935
Anna M. M. Reid, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.	1935-1936
Frances Irvine, M.B., C.M.	1936-1942
Guy B. Picton, M.B., B.S.	1942-1948
Madge Hopper, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.	1949-1964
Harry C. T. Smith, M.B., Ch.B., M.F.C.M., D.P.H., D.P.A.	1965-

Inspector of Nuisances, Sanitary Inspectors, Chief Public Health Inspector

George Redhead	1893-1912
Charles Ward C.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.	1912-1924
Stewart Swift, M.R., San. 1, M.S.I.A.	1925-1929
Harry Hill, M.R., San. 1, M.S.I.A.	1929-1932
Thomas Walton, M.R., San. 1, M.S.I.A.	1932-1944
John Corney, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.	1944-

A N N U A L R E P O R T
OF THE
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

To the Chairman and Members of the Council

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have much pleasure in presenting my report for 1972.

The first table of statistics in the report shows the number of inspections made to secure compliance with the various Acts and Regulations covering the duties a Public Health Inspector has to perform. The number of visits made is some 800 more than in the previous year and while this gives some indication of the volume of work carried out, numbers alone do not provide the whole picture. In order to achieve the desired result it may be necessary for an Inspector to spend a relatively long time with, for example, the occupier of food premises explaining the reasons for requiring compliance with Regulations rather than quickly to inspect the premises and subsequently send a Notice requiring the remedying of a contravention. Time spent "educating" a shopkeeper is well spent when it results in the prevention of contraventions which may give rise to health hazards. It has always been the Department's policy to work in this way rather than aim at what might appear to be an impressive total number of inspections. Nevertheless a minimum number of inspections is essential and the increase this year over previous years is worth noting.

The largest increase is in housing visits where, apart from inspections in connection with slum clearance and repairs, inspections for Improvement Grants are included. Advantage of the 75% grant continued to be taken, particularly for "discretionary" rather than standard grants, the main item of improvement being enlargement of inadequate kitchens.

Consultants were engaged by the Council to carry out surveys in the Westmacott Street/Davison Street area in Newburn and the Rokeby Street/Montague Street area in Lemington with a view to the declaration of General Improvement Areas and as a result of meetings with the residents, it was found that the majority were in favour of the schemes.

Progress continued with slum clearance, Compulsory Purchase Orders being confirmed on Grasmere and Derwent Avenues, Newburn, and inspections completed on Algernon Road, Lemington.

The number of contraventions found under the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act was less than in the previous year and again defects were remedied without recourse to legal proceedings. There were seven accidents reported and investigated, two involving cut hands, three caused by falls, one by lifting a heavy oil drum and one by an object falling against an employee. None of the accidents was attributable to neglect by the occupiers of the premises.

There were no proceedings necessary under the Food Hygiene Regulations, contraventions discovered being remedied after informal action.

Details of the Smoke Control Programme are set out in the Report. During the year an Order was confirmed in respect of 66 houses in Hilda and Orchard Terraces, Throckley, as a result of which the whole area from the Royal French Arms to Throckley Cross Roads, along the West side of Newburn Road to Hallow Drive and then to South Farm is now covered by Smoke Control Orders. At the request of a Clean Air Panel set up to investigate the progress of smoke control in the North East, a programme was prepared to secure the inclusion of all houses in the Urban District in Smoke Control Areas by 1978. As will be seen from the table on Smoke Control Areas, almost half of the houses in the district are covered by Smoke Control Orders. In addition, a further 2000 Council houses have had heating appliances converted to smokeless fuel so that almost 9000 houses out of a total of 13840 houses in the district are contributing to a smoke free atmosphere. Over the last 12 years, there has been a steady reduction in the amount of smoke recorded by the volumetric apparatus sited in Newburn and Westerhope. The amount of sulphur dioxide recorded has remained similar even though the number of houses has increased from 8700 to 13800 showing the increasing use of fuels without sulphur content, i.e. electricity and gas as opposed to oil and solid smokeless fuel.

The volume of refuse continued to increase, modern methods of packaging together with the increase of central heating and consequent loss of a means of burning rubbish being responsible for bulky but relatively light weight refuse being produced. Some householders found difficulty in getting one week's refuse into the 3 cu. ft. sack provided but in many cases by the simple process of compressing cartons much better use of storage accommodation could have been made. It would seem, however, if the present trend continues sacks of greater capacity will have to be provided or a twice weekly service operated. Not only had more household refuse to be dealt with but the number of requests for removal of unwanted furniture, bedding, etc. increased dramatically and there were occasions when, because of absence of employees on sick leave, this service was almost overwhelmed. In addition, arrangements had to be made for the removal of 48 abandoned cars. For many months during the year the refuse collection crews were working below strength through sickness and when suitable temporary labour was not available difficulty in keeping this service operating at the required standard was experienced.

Disposal of refuse continued at the Grange Farm Tip which, as previously reported, will probably be filled by the end of 1973. The prospects of the proposed incineration plant being completed at Byker in Newcastle were unfortunately as remote as ever at the end of the year and arrangements will have to be made with Newcastle for alternative means of disposing of Newburn's refuse.

All members of the staff have performed their duties conscientiously and in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Department and my best thanks are due to them.

The co-operation of Dr. Smith and the other Chief Officers has been readily available as in previous years and is much appreciated as is the interest and encouragement shown by Councillor Chapman and members of the Committee.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

J. CORNEY,

Chief Public Health Inspector.

INSPECTION OF DISTRICT

Nature of Inspection											Visits
Caravan Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Clean Air Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	493
Civic Amenities Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	120
Disinfestation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	197
Food & Drugs Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	120
Food Hygiene Regulations	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	408
Factories Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	46
Housing	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,054
Infectious Disease	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	95
Meat Inspection	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	48
National Assistance Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Noise Abatement Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Nuisance	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	222
Offices, Shops & Railway Premises Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	504
Refuse Collection	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	154
Rodent Control	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	814
Slum Clearance	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	66
Special	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	177
Water Supply	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	<u>41</u>
											<u>4,579</u>

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR YEAR 1972

New houses completed during the year	With State assistance	Unaided	Total
(a) By Local Authority	21	-	21
(b) By any other Housing Authority	-	-	-
(c) By private persons	-	345	345

Total number of inhabited houses in district 13,841
Total number of houses owned by Local Authority 4,148

CLOSING AND DEMOLITION

(1) Houses demolished in Clearance Areas 53
(2) Houses demolished not in Clearance Areas Nil
(3) Houses closed, not demolished 7
(4) Any other house permanently discontinued as dwelling and not included in above Nil

REPAIRS

Houses made fit

(5) By informal action 29
(6) By owners, following statutory notice 30
(7) By Local Authority in default of owners Nil
(8) Demolition orders revoked after reconstruction Nil

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

1972

(A) Discretionary

1. Applications submitted during year:-	78
2. Applications approved during year:- (Average grant:-	77 £800)
3. Applications rejected during year:-	NIL
4. Grant works completed in year:- (Average grant:-	35 £700)
5. Total number of applications approved since inception of scheme:-	381
6. Total number of grant works completed since inception of scheme:-	334

(B) Standard

1. Applications submitted during year:-	62
2. Applications approved during year:- (Average grant:-	59 £252)
3. Applications rejected during year:-	NIL
4. Grant works completed in year:- (Average grant:-	54 £259)
5. Total number of applications approved since inception of scheme:-	447
6. Total number of grant works completed since inception of scheme:-	414
7. Number of houses (i.e. where works <u>completed</u>) provided with:-	

	<u>During Year</u>	<u>Total to Date</u>
(a) Bath or shower	29	237
(b) Wash-hand basin	34	266
(c) Hot water supply	34	247
(d) Water closet	52	377
(e) Sink	3	14

CLEARANCE AREA PROGRAMME

No. of houses demolished 1957 to 1971	-	872
Individual Unfit Houses closed	-	89

1972

Location	No. of dwellings to be demolished
Lucker Street, Lemington.	57
Grasmere Avenue, Newburn.	33
Derwent Avenue, Newburn.	<u>18</u>
	108

Individual Unfit Houses Closed:-

North Walbottle - 5

Common Lodging Houses

There are no common lodging houses in the district.

During Year Total to Date

237
222
207
217
21

(a) Bath or shower
(b) Wash-hand basin
(c) Hot water supply
(d) Water closet
(e) Sink

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

PART 1 OF THE ACT

INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written Notices (4)	Occupiers Prosecuted (5)
1. Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority.	1	1	-	-
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	47	32	2	-
3. Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises).	24	13	-	-
TOTAL	72	46	2	-

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	2	-	-	-
TOTAL	2	2	-	-	-

PART VIII - OUTWORK (SECTION 113)

Nature of work	No. of Out-workers in August list required by Section 113 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists
1. Making of wearing apparel	2	-	-
2. Labelling of containers	2	-	-

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

(a) Unsound Food - Section 2

No legal proceedings were instituted during the year.

(b) Milk Supplies

Samples of milk retailed in the Urban District are taken by the County Health Inspector. Twenty-nine samples were submitted for examination and all passed the appropriate tests except one which failed the Methylene Blue Test.

(c) Liquid Egg (Pasteurisation) Regulations, 1963

There are no egg pasteurisation plants in the district.

(d) Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960

The total number of food premises subject to these regulations is 169, comprising 109 shops, 27 canteens, 6 factories, 16 public houses, 10 clubs and 1 mussel bottling factory.

The number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 is as follows:-

Butcher	10
Fried Fish	8
Ice Cream	74
Mussels	1
Factory	2
Bakery	1
Chinese Take-Away	2

98

(e) Poultry Inspection

There are no poultry processing premises within the district.

(f) Food Inspections

Unsound Food Surrendered	lbs.
Carcase Meat	20
Canned Meats	59
Other Canned Food	291
Fish (fresh)	42
Frozen foods due to cabinet breakdown	214

(g) Milk and Dairies (General) Regulations, 1959

Number of Registered Dairies	3
Number of Registered Distributors	38

(h) Ice Cream Premises

Number on Register at end of year	74
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(i) Slaughterhouses

Number of Registered Slaughterhouses	1
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(j) Meat Inspection

Number of carcasses inspected:-

Cattle	Sheep	Pigs
242	861	40

Total weight of condemned meat - 320 lbs.

Condemned meat was disposed of by means of an incinerator operated by the owners of the slaughterhouse.

WATER SUPPLY

The district's water is supplied direct to every dwelling house by the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company. There are no standpipes in use.

Laboratory reports submitted by the Company indicate that a total of 1,334 samples were taken throughout the year for bacteriological examination. All were "satisfactory" save one which proved "satisfactory" after checking.

Twelve samples were taken in the Urban District during the year, all of which were "satisfactory".

There were no significant changes in the average chemical composition of the water and the concentration of fluoride ion was maintained at 1.0 milligrammes per litre, the optimum dose for the promotion of dental health.

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

REGISTRATION AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS

Class of Premises (1)	Number of premises registered during the year (2)	Number of Registered Premises at end of year (3)	Number of Registered Premises receiving a general inspection during the year (4)
Offices	1	11	7
Retail Shops	13	131	97
Wholesale shops and Warehouses	-	5	3
Catering establishments open to the public	-	15	15
TOTAL	14	162	122

ANALYSIS OF CONTRAVENTIONS

Section	Nature of contraventions found								
4	Cleanliness	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
5	Overcrowding	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
6	Temperature	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
7	Ventilation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
8	Lighting	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
9	Sanitary Conveniences	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
10	Washing Facilities	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
16	Floors, passage and stairs	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
24	First Aid	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
	Other Matters - Abstract	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
									50

CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

SMOKE CONTROL AREAS

<u>Area</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>No. of Premises</u>	<u>No. of Houses</u>	<u>Date of coming into Operation</u>
1. (Throckley)	128	1,329	1,317	1 Oct., 1962
2. (Chapel House Est.)	190	1,719	1,690	1 Oct., 1961
3. (West Denton)	22	239	234	1 Sep., 1965
4. (West Denton/ Westerhope)	222	1,903	1,867	1 Jul., 1966
5. (West Avenue)	5	58	58	1 Jan., 1966
6. (South Denton)	11	135	135	1 Jul., 1966
7. (Walbottle)	14	84	80	1 Aug., 1967
8. (Lemington)	31	279	279	1 Aug., 1967
9. (Lemington)	17	262	262	1 Jul., 1969
10. (Lemington)*	52	244	244	1 Jul., 1969
11. (Throckley)	104	216	198	1 Aug., 1971
12. (Chapel Park Est.)*	130	510	510	1 Sep., 1971
13. (South Dumpling Hall)**	73	0	0	1 Sep., 1971

14. (Hilda/Orchard Terrace)	11.5	79	66	1 Jul., 1973
15. (South Hospital Lane)**	24.5	2	1	1 Feb., 1973
16. (Hill Head Farm)**	17.5	3	3	Not yet submitted
17. (North Walbottle)**	45	2	2	
18. (North Hill Head Road)**	14	1	0	
19. (Dilston Drive, Westerhope.)	32	269	268	

* - In process of development for private housing

** - To be developed for private housing

Total premises in district	15,587 (13,841 houses)
Total premises in Smoke Control Areas	6,978 (6,874 houses)
% Premises in Smoke Control Areas	44.7
% Houses in Smoke Control Areas	49.7
Total area of district	4,648 acres
Total area of Smoke Control Areas	999 acres
% of district under Smoke Control	21.5 (by area)

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION - ANNUAL AVERAGES ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)

	<u>Smoke</u>		<u>SO₂</u>		<u>Inhabited Houses</u> (In thousands)	<u>Population</u>
	<u>CO</u>	<u>WL</u>	<u>CO</u>	<u>WL</u>		
1960	217	185	62	69	8.7	27.6
1961	203	188	70	93	8.9	28.0
1962	165	171	75	84	9.1	29.0
1963	136	136	98	90	9.3	30.1
1964	127	129	91	95	9.6	30.7
1965	134	152	99	111	10.2	31.6
1966	59*	134	122	125	10.5	32.5
1967	136	112	98	102	10.9	33.2
1968	173	133	112	116	11.7	34.1
1969	137	128	98	109	12.7	37.6
1970	127	94	84	93	13.3	38.7
1971	110	84	72	74	13.6	39.3
1972	109	68	85	62	13.8	39.3

*Unusually low average - cause unknown

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The following return is forwarded to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food relating to action taken during the year ended 31st December, 1972.

	Type of Property	
	Non Agricultural	Agricultural
1. Number of properties in district	15,549	38
2. (a) Total number of properties (including nearby premises) inspected following notification	329	-
(b) Number infested by		
(i) Rats	306	-
(ii) Mice	23	-
3. (a) Total number of properties inspected for rats and/or mice for reasons other than notification	-	-
(b) Number infested by		
(i) Rats	-	-
(ii) Mice	-	-

