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NORTHALLERTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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ANNUAL REPORT by Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector
for the year 1942.

Clerk. Joseph Hunt, Esq., Solicitor.
Medical Officer. J.A.Hutchinson M.D. M.S. M.R.C.S.
Inspector. H. Templeman. A.R.S.I. C.S.I.B.
Gert Meat & Other Foods.



April 1943.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I now beg to present my 49th Annual Report as your Medical Officer, together with Mr. Templeman's report as your Sanitary Inspector, dealing with the year 1942:-

The general health of your area has been quite good throughout the year; we had no serious outbreaks of infectious diseases - 26 notifications of Scarlet Fever were received, mostly of a mild type; there were few complications and all recovered; 15 cases of Diphtheria occurred; these were part of the outbreak we experienced in 1941; all except one developed early in the year; 13 of them had not been immunised and unhappily 2 proved fatal from heart failure. In regard to our Birth rate and Death rate it is again to be recognised that this is a scattered rural area, 7.9 acres per person, from which younger people tend to seek more opportunities elsewhere. Your birth rate was 14.38 per thousand and your Death Rate 13.37. Birth rate for the whole of England and Wales as 15.8 and the Death Rate 11.6 for the year 1942.

Owing to moderate restrictions in the supply of food stuffs, especially of fats, and other wartime disturbances, slight loss of weight by adults has been fairly general. In regard to children, however, they appear to be quite as well and thriving as in peace time. 700 children were immunised against Diphtheria during the year but the result of continued efforts to secure protection for all children under 5 years of age has not been very satisfactory.

Immunisation.

Continuous efforts have been made throughout your area to secure a satisfactory percentage of children immunised against diphtheria. It is found that until this is achieved an unsatisfactory number of cases of diphtheria will continue to occur. With the approval of the School Medical Officer, immunising Clinics were held at all 16 schools attended by children belonging to your area. Parents were requested to sign a written consent and to bring children under school age to the Clinics for immunisation. With regard to children on the school registers the response was gratifying. 98% have now been treated, while of those under school age only some 60% were brought for immunisation probably largely because of weather conditions, distance, and parents reluctance to hurt or alarm their infants; in any case this necessitated repeated visits, and much inconvenience. In consequence of the number of Diphtheria cases notified during the first six months of 1942 your Council authorised the offer of a free supplementary dose of antigen and this was accepted by the majority of parents for children attending school. Generous help is being given by District Nurses and teachers in any endeavour to induce parents to have all their children protected by immunisation.

Incidence and Control of Infectious Diseases.

Sixty two notifications were received. These were Scarlet Fever 26, Diphtheria 15, Pneumonia 9, measles 9, whooping cough 1, Dysentery 1, Erysipelas 1. All the Diphtherias were treated in Hospital (2 unhappily proved fatal from heart failure) One Scarlet Fever was isolated at home, the remainder in hospital.

6 Pneumonias were treated in the Rutson Hospital and these all recovered, the Dysentery patient had not been abroad; he was treated at home, dejecta disinfected and disposed of in a carefully placed trench. Of the 15 Diphtheria, 13 had not had immunising treatment and 2 yielded negative swabs on admission; 6 were soldiers.

Of the Scarlet Fever cases, one developed nephritis, one rheumatism and one was a carrier. Other cases all ran a normal course and were discharged in a apparent good health. During the last six months of the year only 1 case of Diphtheria was notified; further details relating to the hospital will be found in the Group Hospital report appended.

Tuberculosis.

Only 2 notifications of tuberculosis disease were received. One pulmonary (transferred to Sanatorium) and one nonpulmonary. This is the lowest notification record we ever had.

Scabies.

This is a scattered Rural District and we meet with comparatively little troubles from Scabies. Of 1200 school children seen at immunising clinics only 2 were deferred on account of scabies and I receive very few school reports of absences due to this ailment. Attention was called to one family and on examination the house was found overcrowded and the entire household infected; they were put on treatment and several follow-up visits were necessary before disinfection was complete. Two cases in evacuees billeted with families having children of their own were dealt with in the Hostel till cured.

Milk.

During the past year the practice of taking samples of milk at the first point of delivery for the purpose of making and recording results of tests as to the keeping qualities of the samples was continued at the Dried Milk Products, Romanby Dairy. Early results were very disturbing and your Council in their anxiety to secure better results obtained the assistance of Mr. Easdale to visit and report as to conditions and methods of production at farms from which milk samples failed to yield standard or satisfactory results.

Mr. Easdale's long experience as your Sanitary Inspector, his intimate knowledge of the sanitation of your area, and his personal acquaintance of the great majority of your producers tend to make him acceptable for the special duty. The importance of "follow up" inspection and repeated advisory discussions is not always recognised and these visits are sometimes resented when made by a total stranger. I am glad to report that the results of the tests for the month of March show considerable improvement on previous returns 92% of samples examined are recorded as satisfying the standard test. Amongst contributory causes of failure, mention should be made of the circumstances that in response to demands by the Ministry and consumers for more milk many butter making dairies are now devoting their resources to milk production for which they are not equipped; many have no means of sterilising by steam, numbers have no cooler, and few have a really satisfactory water supply.

Producers complain of delay in collection, and the occasional return of unsterilised churns. With regard to consignments to distant places it is to be noted that at present no refrigerator vans are available on the railways for the transport of milk.

On the whole however it may be said that efforts are being made to improve methods of production and recent results are encouraging. The present difficulty in obtaining experienced helpers on farms will continue for the duration of the War.

Water Supplies.

These remain as detailed in earlier reports and must continue until after the War and the Treasury authorises heavy expenditure on schemes already approved for a piped supply to the greater part of your area, meanwhile efforts are being made to improve and protect dangerously situated wells of which complaint is made. Drains have been diverted and concrete barriers put down against dangerous seepage with gratifying success at Danby Wiske, Langton and Fullicar.

Rivers and Streams.

The River Wiske has been dealt with by the Drainage Board from our southern boundary to Northallerton with satisfactory effects. One remaining cause of Wiske flooding is the difficult angle at which the Wiske joins the River Swale when the latter is in full flood. Brompton Beck overflowed and reached dwellinghouses on one occasion only during 1942. It is understood that the Drainage Board propose to suspend their cleaning operations of this stream short of the village and as property which has so often been flooded with damaging results pays the Drainage Board Rate all the residents feel that they have a legitimate grievance and claim that their case should be carefully considered. The whole of the beck at Water End should be thoroughly cleaned.

The water course behind Ainderby Village which should drain several acres of constantly flooded land is to be cleaned by the Drainage Board who claimed that your Authority seriously contributes to obstruction by passing overflow from a village tank receiving only kitchen waste from a few houses. This may cause a quite local offensive smell, away from the village but it is not causing obstruction. There are no water closets in the houses drained, obstruction and flooding here has been continuous throughout living memory; it is caused by patches of quicksands and failure to fence off against grazing stock and it will continue till the quicksands and patches are suitably piped in and the stream banks fenced against grazing stock.

Romanby Willow Garth as an interception and filter medium for Romanby sewage, has been entirely destroyed by milky discharge of wash and rinsing from the Dried Milk Products Dairy; lactic acid has killed off the Willows, and fatty matter has waterproofed the humus and subsoil. It has therefore been necessary to deliver the sewage into specially made lagoons where it is treated by precipitants before being turned into the beck. This treatment is fairly successful to date but it is very expensive, about £110 a year, and there is difficulty in disposing of the fatty deposit. I am satisfied that the Dairy effluent cannot be dealt with even on the proposed sewage disposal works unless it is first freed from fatty matter. The Dairy Company should be called upon to secure preliminary and satisfactory treatment for this purpose; present methods at the Dairy are not having any effect; Coke in the interception tanks requires to be constantly renewed and this is not being done satisfactorily notwithstanding repeated reminders by Mr. Templeman and myself.

Scavenging.

Isolated houses and hamlets are dealt with generally by private arrangement with neighbouring farmers and there have been no recent complaints. As regards your larger villages however difficulty is increasing, prices tendered increase year by year, the work is not sought after and often no tender is submitted for some of your villages. Your Council is therefore endeavouring to adopt the alternative,

traction with the employment of two full time men. Labour for this work is difficult to find.

Preparation of Food.

Meat Inspection. During the year your Inspector continued to assist the Urban Inspector in examinations at the Central Slaughtering Establishment.

Shops. There is only one bake house which has been visited from time to time and found satisfactory. Butchers' shops are visited frequently.

British Restaurant; During the year meals were served as under:-

Soups	10,600 @ 2d.
Meat & Veg.	31,605 @ 6d.
Sweets.	30,871 @ 2d.
Teas	25,117 @ 1d.
Sundries.	15,255

The Restaurant continues to be run by Mrs Godman assisted by Mrs Tough, a number of Voluntary helpers and some paid personnel. The Council and patrons of the restaurant are very appreciative of the excellent work being done by Mrs Godman and her band of volunteers.

Group Isolation Hospital for 1942.

In addition to cases already in hospital on January 1st 1942 146 new cases were received. These were; Scarlet Fever 72. Diphtheria 50, Cerebro Spinal Fever 1. Measles 5. Rubella 5. Mumps 8. Chicken Pox 5. All cases of the last four diseases which are not usually received here, were sent in for isolation by the Military. Of the 50 Diphtheria 30 had had no immunisation treatment, 3 gave negative swabs on admission, 6 were military cases and 2 were sent in as carriers resistant to treatment. One of these did not clear up for 12 weeks. Two cases proved fatal from heart failure, both were of type gravis neither had received any immunisation treatment. Two cases of Scarlet Fever developed renal and heart complications. Lumber puncture was the only surgical interference required. With the exception of the two fatal Diphtheria all made good recoveries and were discharged apparently in good health and we had no return cases. During the year it was necessary to transfer 6 cases owing to difficulty in isolating so many different diseases at one time. Of the 146 cases received 31 were sent in by the Military. In May a Ward-maid with a heart already damaged in childhood developed rheumatic endocarditis of which unhappily she died. We have not been able to replace her but a relief nurse for ten weeks enabled the staff, which is otherwise unchanged, to have their usual holiday. Both Hospital blocks, Matron's cottage and the hutments have been repainted. The corrugated roofing of the hutments is perishing and in constant need of repair; the hospital pathways are also in much need of renovation. The Ambulance and Service have been satisfactory.

With my acknowledgments and thanks for continued support by the Council, your other officials, and my professional neighbours, I beg to remain

Your obedient Servant,

J. A. HUTCHINSON.

Northallerton.

30th July 1943.

Sanitary Inspector's Report

As directed by the Ministry of Health the Report is a brief one. I must again stress the great variety of duties which are imposed upon the Council and which have the effect of seriously interfering with routine sanitary work.

350 letters were written in connection with Water Supplies, Sewerage, Scavenging, Milk & Dairies, Housing, Hospital, Cemeteries etc.

40 houses were fumigated in connection with Infectious Disease.

2 Verminous houses were fumigated (Bugs).
89 Disinfectants were supplied.

The sludge lagoons at Romanby Willowgarth were pumped off by means of hired pump. The Osmotases (precipitant and deodorant) were renewed twice during the year. As stressed in earlier reports, the provision of new sewage works for Romanby should receive attention at the first available opportunity as the present arrangements are incapable of dealing properly with the milk wastes entering the sewers.

Approx. 150 yards lin. of new sewer were laid down in the parish of Romanby. Approx. 50 yards. lin. were laid down in the parish of Brompton. 3 defective sewer connections were renewed in the parish of Osmotherley. A defective manhole in Great Langton was rebuilt.

All the sewage tanks in the area were cleaned out during the year.

A length of sewer along the south side of the Water End, Brompton, was scraped and cleansed by means of a "devil".

The sewerage system of Brompton needs frequent supervision owing to several lengths not being self-cleansing. When circumstances permit, consideration should be given to the question of re-planning the sewerage and sewage disposal of Brompton.

Shortage of water was experienced in several parishes during the late summer and autumn due to springs and wells becoming low. Osmotherley suffered a shortage in the latter part of the year the position being aggravated by a leak which was eventually discovered on a private service. There is too much negligence in the matter of reporting bursts on the Council's mains supplies. This caused inconvenience to other consumers, incurs unnecessary expense, and your Inspector is obliged to turn out in the night hours in an endeavour to trace same.

A new 2nd C.I. service approx. 40 yards lin. was extended from the Council's main st Brompton to a new Agricultural Hostel.

Appleton Wiske: A new C.I. pump was erected near the Council Houses and this has helped to relieve the shortage which occurs in the late summer and autumn.

Great Langton: The public well had to be closed during the year owing to pollution. The village at present take their water from a spring near the riverside. A satisfactory supply of water should be provided for this parish.

6 Samples of water were procured during the year and submitted for bacteriological and chemical examination.

30 houses were inspected and defects dealt with under the Public Health Act 1936. 1 notice was served under Sec. 11 of the Housing Act 1936 and an undertaking given by the owner that the

premises would not be used for habitation. 14 licences were renewed permitting the occupation of moveable dwellings at Osmotherley. 3 licences were granted permitting the temporary occupation of houses originally closed under the Housing Act 1936.

Milk & Dairies Order

70 Inspections of cowsheds were made during the year.

7 samples of milk were procured and submitted for examination.

34 informal notices were served for contraventions of the Order.

Towards the end of the year, the National Milk Testing Scheme came into operation and a number of adverse reports were addressed to the Council through the local War Agricultural Executive Committee. Premises were visited and advice given to producers. A large number of farms are now producing milk for the liquid market which did not before the war and this together with lack of even elementary cooling facilities in a large number of cases, delay in transport and collection, militates against milk of good keeping quality.

Shops, Factories, etc. are the same as last year.

Assistance was given to the Urban Inspector in connection with meat inspection at the Central Slaughtering Establishment.

Scavenging.

At the close of the year, the contractor for Romanby was obliged to relinquish his duties. A successor could not be found and arrangements were made to scavenge the parish by hired truck and direct labour. In my opinion, the time has now come when the Council must make arrangements for the scavenging of several parishes by a staff and truck of their own as contractors are fast becoming unable or disinclined to perform this work.

Burial Grounds

As last year.

I am, Mr Chairman & Gentlemen,
Your Obedient Servant,

H. TEMPLEMAN.

Sanitary Inspector.