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Contributors

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

TO THE

PRUDHOE URBAN DISTRICT

COUNCIL.

FOR THE

Year Ending 31st December, 1921.

Hexham :

Herald Co., Ltd. St. Mary's Chare

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
TO THE
PRUDHOE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,—

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health, the Report for the Year 1921 is now placed before you.

The instructions of the Ministry of Health state that in future Annual Reports should be modified by the omission of detail as to conditions which do not vary from year to year, and the curtailment of the information asked for in certain years.

It is hoped by this means to effect a reduction both in the cost of printing the Report, and the time required by the Medical Officer of Health in preparing it, without detriment to the principal objects which the Report is designed to serve.

A Report of a full and detailed character will be given every five years, and will be known as an Ordinary Report, and the Reports given in the intervening years will be known as Survey Reports.

The Annual Reports for the years 1919 and 1920 will be treated as constituting the first two Survey Reports, and this Report is therefore the third Survey Report.

There were no cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum notified during the year.

There was one non-notified Tuberculosis death during the year.

The chief features which come under the heading of notifiable diseases are:—

1. The large number of Scarlet Fever cases reported.
2. The epidemic of Measles.
3. The large number of Tuberculosis notifications.

Scarlet Fever.—As was predicted last year, the death rate from Scarlet Fever has increased; ever since this Council was formed I have been crying out for a Hospital, a Hospital where we could isolate our cases in a respectable manner, where we could treat cases other than Scarlet Fever, and where we could bathe our cases in a full-sized bath in a proper bathroom; in other words, your Council require a Hospital worthy of the district, and not an antiquated and useless tin shed.

As I have pointed out to you repeatedly, and again this year, that one of the chief factors—which in my opinion is remediable—concerning your unnecessarily high infectious diseases death rate is the immediate provision of Hospital accommodation in your own Urban area. This matter, which I have advocated repeatedly, ought to be entirely in your own hands as a Council, and I would suggest to you that it would be well to reconsider the decision you arrived at in this matter, namely, to have a Joint Hospital with a neighbouring Authority. It may not yet be too late to alter that decision. The chief points in my argument at that time and now are the nearness of your patient in your district to your own Hospital, thereby lowering expenses of removal, and also the risks to your patient necessary in long transit, especially in cold weather, the relieving of mothers of attendance upon sick children in houses already overcrowded. It would also do away with a great deal of the infection which is seen in our back-to-back houses.

The present building is absolutely inadequate, and insanitary, and as I have remarked before, patients are unable to obtain a thorough ablution of the skin after having been resident for six weeks in a Hospital for Infectious Diseases.

As the points mentioned cannot possibly be gainsaid by any body of thinking men, I trust that you will give this matter your earnest consideration at your earliest opportunity.

Measles.—A serious epidemic of Measles occurred during the Summer—there were four deaths from the disease, and the Schools were closed.

Tuberculosis.—I am also compelled to draw your attention to the fact that the notifications received for Tuberculosis are higher than at any period since the formation of your Council. This may, I think, be justly attributed to the want of light and ventilation in some of the houses, and want of proper nourishment for the children owing to economic conditions. With regard to economic conditions, I can see no prospect of any improvement in that direction at the present time, but with regard to light and ventilation I trust that with the improving Housing conditions now on the way that we may look for a diminution of such cases before I have to place my next Report before you.

SUMMARY OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITALS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

(a). *General.*—There are three Nurses practising in the District, viz., one at Stocksfield, one at Prudhoe, and one at Mickley. These Nurses are provided by Private Associations, helped by private and Workmen's subscriptions.

(b). *Infectious Diseases.*—There are no Infectious Diseases Nurses practising in the district.

(c). *Midwives.* There are five Midwives known to your Local Authority who practice in the District, viz., one at Stocksfield, one at Mickley, and three in Prudhoe. Three of these are provided by Private Associations, whilst two practice privately.

The Local Authority neither employs nor subsidises any Nurses in the District.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.—The Child Welfare Centre passed into the hands of the County Council at the end of the year, and all the books are now in their hands. I have no doubt, however, that the Officer in charge will be most pleased to supply any detailed information which may be desired by Councillors. The work of the Centre has, in my opinion, done a great deal of good, as is shewn by the decrease in our Infantile Mortality, and the thanks of the Council are due to the Voluntary Committee of Ladies who have so willingly helped in the furtherance of the object for which it was designed.

HOSPITALS.

Tuberculosis.—The Sanatoria used by this Authority are at Barrasford and at Stannington. These are under the supervision of the County Council.

Children and Maternity.—The nearest Hospitals of this description are at Newcastle.

Fever.—The Joint Fever Hospital is situated in this area. It supplies the Hexham Rural and the Prudhoe Urban Area, which have a joint population of approximately 30,000. It contains two wards with six beds in each. There is no Institution for unmarried mothers, illegitimate, or homeless children in the district.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

A Tabular Summary of the work of the Sanitary Departments during the year, and action taken under the Public Health Act, or Bye-Laws, is given in appendix.

The principal features under the heading of Sanitary Administration are as follows:—

No. of Inhabited houses	1850
No. of Houses with water closets	240
No. of Houses using 790 privies	1602
No. of privies converted into water closets	8
No. of Slaughter Houses registered	6

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

The Public Health Officials serving your Council are:—

1. A part time Medical Officer of Health.
2. A full time Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances.

LABORATORY WORK.

Pathological and Bacteriological examinations continue as before to be done by the Bacteriologist of the University of Durham College of Medicine.

Diphtheria Antitoxin is issued by the Sanitary Authorities free of charge to Medical Practitioners in the District.

HOUSING.

Number of new Houses erected during the year...	132
(a). Total	132
(b). As part of a municipal scheme	132
1. Unfit dwelling houses.	
Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	245
2. Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of Districts) Regulations, 1910	161
3. Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.	
4. Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	323
2. Remedy of Defects without service of formal notices. Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	nil

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

(A). Proceeding under section 28 of the Housing Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919.

1. No. of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	nil
2. No. of dwelling houses which were rendered fit.	
(a) by owners	nil
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	nil
3. No. of dwelling houses in respect of which closing orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	4

(B). Proceeding under Public Health Acts.

1. No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	84
2. No. of houses in which defects were remedied.	
(a) by Owners	76
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	nil

(C). Proceedings under Sections 17 and 18 of the Housing Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919

No action was taken

In conclusion, I beg to tender my grateful thanks to your Clerk (Mr. Baty) and also to Mr. T. Burnie (your Surveyor) for their valuable assistance and co-operation in my work during the year.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant.

ROBERT McCOULL,

Medical Officer of Health.

APPENDIX 1

Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Analysis of Mortality during the Year 1921.

	BIRTH-RATE PER 1,000 TOTAL POPULATION.	ANNUAL DEATH-RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION.										RATE PER 1,000 BIRTHS.	
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping-cough.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence.	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under 2 Years).	Total Deaths under One Year.	
England and Wales	22.4	12.1	0.02	0.00	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.12	0.23	0.44	15.5	83	
95 Great Towns, including London (Census Populations exceeding 50,000)	23.3	12.3	0.01	0.00	0.08	0.04	0.13	0.15	0.23	0.40	19.3	87	
148 Smaller Towns (Census Populations 20,000—50,000).	22.7	11.3	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.03	0.11	0.11	0.26	0.35	15.6	84	
London	22.3	12.4	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.12	0.25	9.23	0.42	21.3	80	
PRUDHON	26.60	10.83	9.00	0.00	0.45	0.45	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.00	8.48	59.07	

APPENDIX 2.

Showing the Number and Age Incidence of Notifiable Diseases during the Year 1921.

Diseases.	At All Ages.	Under 1.							65 upwards.
		1.	1-2	2-5	5-15	15-25	25-45	45-65	
Smallpox ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cholera ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria ...	2	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...
Erysipelas ...	6	...	...	...	2	...	1	2	1
Scarlet Fever	97	3	12	29	45	4	4	...	...
Typhus ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	16	...	1	...	2	6	6	...	1
(Non-Pulmonary)	8	...	4	...	3	1	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia ...	47	3	10	14	6	6	3	5	...
Ophthalmia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Letha ca	2	...	...	...	2	..	...	...	...
Totals ...	178	6	27	43	61	18	14	7	2

APPENDIX 3.

Table Showing Causes of Death during 1921.

CAUSES.	Tuberculosis.		Influenza	Whooping Cough.	Scarlet Fever.	Measles	Other Forms.	Cancer	Cerebral Hemorrhage	Heart Disease.	Bronchitis.	Pneumonia.	Other Respiratory Diseases.	Ulcer of Stomach	Diarrhoea (under 2).	Nephritis.	Diseases of Pregnancy	Congenital Debility	Other Defined Diseases.	TOTAL.	
	Pulmonary.																				
MALES	-	-	2	3	0	1	3	0	4	2	4	0	5	1	1	2	7	0	3	7	45
FEMALES	-	-	2	1	1	0	4	2	3	2	9	1	5	1	0	0	1	1	3	15	51
TOTALS	-	-	4	4	1	1	7	2	7	4	13	1	10	2	1	2	8	1	6	22	96

