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**Contributors**

Tyne Port Health Authority.

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TYNE PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY.


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ANNUAL REPORT.

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

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TYNE PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY.

CONSTITUTED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD'S ORDER.  
Dated 29th. March 1897.

ELECTED BY THE CORPORATION OF NEWCASTLE.

Alderman E. G. King.  
Councillor E. F. Weidner.  
Councillor J. Carr, M.B.E.  
Councillor R. M. Rowe, (Chairman).  
Alderman J. Chapman.  
Alderman J. Pearson.  
Councillor Emille F. Davison.  
Councillor J. T. Horton.

ELECTED BY THE CORPORATION OF GATESHEAD.

Councillor G. Robertson, (Vice-Chairman).  
Councillor T. Etherington.  
Councillor G. Neilson.

ELECTED BY THE CORPORATION OF SOUTH SHIELDS.

Alderman J. W. Watson, J.P.  
Councillor R. Bainbridge, J.P.  
Councillor G. H. Press.

ELECTED BY THE CORPORATION OF TYNEMOUTH.

Alderman J. Harrison, J.P.  
Alderman R. Middlemiss, J.P.

ELECTED BY THE CORPORATION OF WALLSEND.

Alderman F. O. Howe.  
Councillor H. Gilchrist.

ELECTED BY THE CORPORATION OF JARROW.

Alderman J. Symonds.

ELECTED BY THE HEBBURN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Councillor W. Craig.

ELECTED BY THE FELLING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Councillor J. Burlison.

ELECTED BY THE BLAYDON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Councillor P. Murray.

ELECTED BY THE NEWBURN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Councillor D. Dawson, J.P.

ELECTED BY THE WHICKHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Councillor J. Mc'Dermott, J.P.



OFFICERS AND STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health,	T. L. J. Coxon, M.D., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.	
Clerk to the Authority,	J. English.	
Treasurer,	J. E. Kennedy.	
Chief Sanitary Inspector,	N. Park.	Cert. R.S.I.
Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector,	H. M. Coats.	Cert. R.S.I.
Food Inspector,	* R. O. Burn.	Cert. R.S.I.
Sanitary Inspector,	+* W. B. Weatherston.	Cert. R.S.I.
" "	X* W. P. Harrison.	Cert. R.S.I.
" "	X* W. S. Bruce.	Cert. R.S.I.
" "	=X J. H. Benjamin.	Cert. R.S.I.
Clerk, Mill Dam Office.	E. M. Glenny.	
Ratsearcher	J. H. Robinson.	
"	H. Burn.	
Launches.	J. W. Ray (Sencir Coxswain).	
"	J. Coltherd.	
"	= J. W. West.	
"	= R. S. Burn.	

\*Certificate of Inspection of Meat and Other Foods.

+Released for work of National Importance.

=Released for Service with H. M. Forces.

XTransferred to other districts.

OFFICES OF THE AUTHORITY.

		<u>Telephone Nos.</u>
Medical Officer of Health,	Mill Dam, South Shields.	South Shields 65
Chief Sanitary Inspector,	Mill Dam, South Shields.	South Shields 65.
Clerk to the Authority,	145, Pilgrim Street, Newcastle Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1.	22796.

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Mill Dam,

South Shields.

March 1945.

The Chairman,  
Vice-Chairman and Members  
of the Tyne Port Health Authority.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the abridged Annual Report on the sanitary conditions existing in the Port of Tyne, and a resumé of the work of your Officers for the year, 1944.

Generally speaking, there has been little change during the year in comparison with 1943.

No case of major infectious disease occurred within the area of the port administration, and the prompt hospitalisation of such cases of minor infectious disease, and disinfection of personal effects and quarters prevented further spread.

The number of vessels examined for the purpose of International Certification was somewhat reduced in 1944, but the proportion of Fumigation Certificates against Exemption Certificates shows once more, a percentage increase.

I am very grateful to my Staff for the way they have discharged the burden of work rendered heavier than the previous years, by the intensification of the anti-rat campaign and its extension to shore establishments, and the additional duties devolving on the Authority through the activities of the Ministry of Food and the Home Office.

May I again thank the Members of the Board for their sympathy and support throughout the year.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. L. J. Coxon.



AMOUNT OF SHIPPING ENTERING THE TYNE PORTS DURING THE YEAR 194TABLE A.

Number inspected		Number reported to be defective	Number of vessels on which defects were remedied	Number of vessels reported as having or having had during the voyage infectious disease on board
By the Medical Officer of Health	By the Sanitary Inspectors			
109	2,791	339	155	56

TABLE C.CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS LANDED FROM VESSELS.

Disease	No. of cases during the year		Number of vessels concerned
	Passengers	Crew	
Chicken-pox	-	2	2
Recurrent malaria	-	1	1
Mumps	-	1	1
Pneumonia	-	2	2
Rubella	-	5	3
Scarlet fever	-	3	2
Suspected scarlet fever	-	1	1

TABLE D.CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS OCCURRING ON VESSELS DURING THE VOYAGE BUT DISPOSED OF PRIOR TO ARRIVAL.

Disease	No. of cases during the year		Number <sup>o</sup> of vessels concerned
	Passengers	Crew	
Chicken-pox	-	3	3
Diphtheria	-	2	2
Dysentery	-	6	1
Enteric	-	8	3
Malaria	-	120	20
Suspected malaria	-	9	4
Recurrent malaria	-	2	2
Mumps	-	4	3
Pneumonia	-	3	3
Suspected pneumonia	-	1	1
Scarlet fever	-	1	1
Tuberculosis	-	1	1
Suspected tuberculosis	-	3	3

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

No major sickness was reported at this port, either on arrival or as having occurred during the voyage.

Notifiable infective diseases were few, of minor character and generally speaking of a mild type.

One fatal case of bacillary dysentery occurred on a vessel from Calcutta, and five other members of the crew had, during the voyage, typical symptoms. Appropriate measures in these cases had been taken at intermediate ports. On the same vessel, four cases of enteric of which one died, were also reported. Five months after the last case, the vessel arrived at Tyne. All members of crew were well.

Malaria again held pride of place in respect of the number of cases and ships affected. The West Coast of Africa was, in most cases, the source of infection.

Protective measures were on the whole adequate in character, and suitable preventative and curative treatment were generally satisfactorily administered.

Venereal disease is still prevalent, and in this respect, I would quote my last Report as saying

"Venereal disease continues to be prominent, and whilst theoretically, during the non infective period of treatment, patients can and should be employed coastwise, the Coastwise Pool in practice is so encumbered by partially unfit members, that the opportunity of so employing them is lacking. This means in essence, that until he has completed his treatment, he is rarely admitted to the Pool benefits or Pool employment".

RATS DESTROYED DURING THE YEAR.TABLE E.(1) On vessels.

(a) Destroyed	<u>2,306</u>	(b) Examined	<u>2,306</u>
(c) Found to be infected with plague			<u>Nil</u>

All rats were examined for gland enlargements.

Number of Bacteriological Examination of rats during the year totalled eight. No plague bacilli were detected.

TABLE F.(2) On shore.

The docks, quays, wharves and warehouses at the Tyne Ports come under the jurisdiction of the shore authorities and no reports are available.

TABLE G.

NOT APPLICABLE.



TABLE H.

DERATISATION CERTIFICATES AND DERATISATION EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES  
ISSUED DURING THE YEAR.

No. of ships	No. of Deratisation Certificates issued				TOTAL	Number of Deratisation Exemption Certificates issued	Total number of Certificates issued
	After fumigation with			After trapping, poisoning etc.			
	H.C.N.	Sulphur	and sulphur				
186	102	10	Nil	Nil	112	74	186

Certificate examination revealed a percentage increase in the number of ships requiring fumigation against exemption.

Evidence of increased rat population of coastal vessels including colliers is strong, and it would appear that periodic inspection and the extension of the Deratisation Certificate system to all vessels, whether engaged on home or foreign trade would be advisable. Primarily, the issue of Deratisation and Exemption Certificates was intended as a means of controlling the introduction of plague infection, but under existing conditions, the destruction of all rats is eminently desirable, and far outshadows the original conception that only foreign going vessels need be so controlled. Rat population on shore is also much on the increase, and the presence of derelict wharves and bombed areas along the river banks, together with damaged sewers etc., provide ideal harbourage. Black-out conditions also play their part.

FUMIGATION OF SHIPS.

Fumigation practised in the first instance almost solely for the purposes of rat destruction in anticipation of the issue of the International Deratisation Certificate, is becoming more and more utilised for the elimination of vermin other than rodents, and pests deleterious to foodstuffs.

This latter aspect has been brought greatly to the fore by the Ministry of Food working in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, and utilising the supervising control of Port Health Officers.

Whereas rodent destruction can be generally effected by a concentration of H.C.N. of 2 ounces per 1,000 cubic feet of space to be fumigated, during a contact period of 2 hours, such pests as bugs, cockroaches etc. require a much greater concentration, and a prolonged contact period. Indeed, as heavy as 18 ounces of H.C.N. and 12 hours exposure have been advocated in certain instances.

As clearance of gas from premises, depends on a combination of the factors of atmospherical conditions, heat, humidity, wind velocity and adequate ventilation arrangements in the various compartments, it follows that the time of clearance is very variable.



This interferes quite markedly with arrangements of ship repairing yards etc., in so far as it is impossible to promise that a ship will be available for the admission of workmen at any given time.

In some cases, clearance may be given within 12 hours, and in others not for 48 hours after opening up. The issue of clearance certificates depends, or should depend, on the negative results of delicate chemical tests intelligently and expertly performed, and no pressure for early release of a vessel, should be allowed to interfere, so as to result in the issue of a premature certificate.

Casualties have occurred in the past, which must in part at least, be attributed to this coercion by repairing yards, shipping superintendents etc., who do not hesitate to declare, that if they cannot get a vessel released by such and such a definite time, they will employ a fumigating firm who will undertake the risk.

Furthermore, the nature and quality of the chemical tests used in the quantitative detection of H. C. N. are so delicate as to require their performance by operatives "Chemically Conscious", so that they are not apt to become careless in their technique through long familiarity. I feel that only by the employment of qualified analytical chemists for this part of the work of fumigation, could you get a reliable certificate of clearance.

Standardisation of practice in all ports so eminently desirable, is at present absent, and despite various memoranda of recommendations by various interested bodies and associations, obsolete methods and wide variations of technique still continue to be used by fumigating companies.

Such recommendations as have been made, may have been accepted in spirit and principle by government departments, but are largely lacking in force when not backed by regulations, which while long promised have been so long withheld.

#### HYGIENE OF CREWS' SPACES.

TABLE J.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF NUISANCES.

Nationality of vessel	Defects of original construction	Structural defects through wear and tear	Dirt, vermin and other conditions preudicial to health
British	5	111	208
Other Nations	1	32	52

Close co-operation has been maintained throughout the year with the Ministry of War Transport, and the Port Health Authorities of other ports, with a view to ensuring that defects detected are adequately followed up and rectified either here or elsewhere at the earliest opportunity. Information of action taken, is also transmitted to the port primarily responsible for the detection of the defects under consideration.



SOURCE OF WATER SUPPLY.

The arrangements for the supply of water to shipping remains substantially the same as previously, in so far as the sources of supply are concerned.

Where water is supplied by means of waterboats, a system of partial chlorination has been enforced with very satisfactory results.

The water supply, both drinking and boiler water in this port is, to a large extent, controlled by some half dozen waterboat owners, who ply in the various reaches of the river, serving the vessels lying at the various buoys and wharves.

The waterboats themselves however, are in the main old, are in constant use, and the owners have not got the financial background to view replacements with equanimity. In addition, the boats are of very low free-board and are liable to river pollution. Only continual inspection and insistence on chlorination, have kept the quality of water supplied at a reasonable high level.

Consideration of these foregoing factors, make it imperative under existing circumstances, that only one quality of water was supplied for all purposes, and that this quality should be that of drinking water.

Rough estimates of the amount of water supplied by waterboats to ships during the past year, show a gross amount of 169,142 tons of drinking water supplied, of which 28,577 was required for drinking and cooking purposes, and 140,565 tons for boiler and engineering and other non-culinary needs. The proportion is roughly 1 in 6.

While the supply of water in any area remains virtually constant, the growing demand of extended housing, manufacturing and trading estates, and the taking in of areas not at present supplied by water undertakings, is imposing strains on their resources not previously anticipated, which may interfere dangerously with reserves.

Under these conditions, economies in the use of supply of water are important.

Saving by the supply of boiler water to the extent of 150,000 tons yearly from some source of casual water not of drinking quality, would not be unconsiderable, and might be worth the attention of at least one supplying company.

Some time ago, I suggested that the supplying of water to shipping should be bought out of the hands of the present waterboat owners, and taken over by the Tyne Improvement Commission, who have the resources to replace obsolete craft, and who could establish a water service more in keeping with the dignity of the port than the present system.

Under their control, separate vessels for the supply of drinking water could be kept solely for this purpose, and other vessels could be utilised for the supply of boiler water. This would obviate much of the risk of contamination at present existing, and remove a potential danger to the health of shipping supplied in the port.



The present system of supply has been in operation for many years, has been in suspicion for a long period, and cannot in the years to come, be expected to do anything but deteriorate at a more rapid rate.

#### PORT SANITARY REGULATIONS, 1933.

No legal proceedings were undertaken by the Authority under the Provisions of this Article.

#### PSITTACOSIS.

3 vessels arrived at Tyne Ports with 2 parrots and one budgerigar on board. These birds all appeared to be in a healthy condition. One parrot was destroyed in the presence of Inspector.

No case of Psittacosis (Parrot Disease) occurred during the year.

#### FOOD INSPECTION.

(1) No legal actions were taken under the Public Health {Imported Food} Regulations, 1925; the Public Health {Imported Food} Regulations, 1937; the Public Health {Preservatives etc. in Food} Regulations, 1925 to 1939; the Public Health (Imported Milk) Regulations, 1926, and the Public Health (Shellfish) Regulations, 1934.

(2) There are no Shellfish beds within the jurisdiction of the Tyne Port Health Authority.

#### CO-OPERATION WITH OUTSIDE AUTHORITIES.

Wartime conditions have imposed on all authorities dealing with shipping, the necessity of working in the closest co-operation with each other, in order to obviate loss of time in turn round and dislocation of large scale shipping movements.

I am pleased to say that throughout the year, not only were the usual harmonious relations maintained with the various corporations and councils of the Riparian Authorities, the Tyne Improvement Commission, H.M. Collector of Customs, H.M. Inspector of Immigration, the Principal Officer of the Ministry of War Transport, but an additional and very welcome spirit of voluntary co-operation with less insistence of red tape was in evidence.

Our thanks are due to these bodies, their officers and staffs, for much of the effectiveness of the work of your Officers.

Finally, I would like to record once more, my gratitude to my own Staff, for the cheerful and efficient work accomplished, and the loyal spirit in which they have worked. Through their efforts are due whatever degree of success this Authority has achieved.

T. L. J. Coxon, M.D., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Mill Dam,  
SOUTH SHIELDS.  
MARCH 1945.

