

**TWENTY-SECOND REPORT OF
THE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH OF
THE STATE OF VERMONT FROM
JANUARY 1, 1918 TO DECEMBER
31, 1919**

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VERMONT STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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TWENTY-SECOND { TWELFTH BIENNIAL } REPORT

OF THE

STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

OF THE



STATE OF VERMONT

FROM

January 1, 1918 to December 31, 1919



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General Report State Board of Health

Office of the Secretary, Burlington, Vt., July 1, 1920.

To His Excellency, Percival W. Clement, Governor:

SIR:—I have the honor to submit the Twenty-second Report of the State Board of Health for the biennial period ending December 31, 1919.

Respectfully,

CHARLES F. DALTON, M. D.,
Secretary.

The State Board of Health is again called upon to record the death of one of its members. Dr. Charles S. Caverly of Rutland, president of the Board since 1891, died October 18, 1918, death being due to an attack of influenza followed by pneumonia. Dr. Caverly was one of the foremost workers in the country along the lines of public health, and to him must be credited a large share of the progressive spirit which characterized the Vermont Board throughout his long term of office during which time it became justly known as one of the most efficient health organizations in the United States. To fill the vacancy on the Board, Governor Graham appointed Dr. William T. Slayton of Morrisville, for many years health officer of that town and prominent in public health affairs in the state.

The Legislature of 1919 passed a law which entirely reorganized the public health work of the state, abolishing all local town health officers and substituting therefor ten whole-time district health officers, whose salary and expenses are paid by the state. Under the provisions of this act, the State Board of Health divided the state into ten sanitary districts as shown by the map and nine of the district health officers began their work July 1, 1919, the tenth, in District No. 7, commencing his service a month later. The law which has resulted in such a radical change of organization is as follows:

Act No. 175 of the Laws of 1919

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH TO APPOINT DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICERS IN PLACE OF TOWN HEALTH OFFICERS AND SPECIFYING THEIR DUTIES.

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Section 1. The state board of health is hereby authorized to divide the state into sanitary districts, not exceeding ten in number, and to

appoint and remove at its discretion for each such district, a health officer who shall be a reputable physician. Such district health officer shall hold office until his successor is appointed and qualified and shall, at all times, be subject to the orders of the state board of health, and during his term of office shall not engage in the private practice of medicine. There may also be appointed in each district in cases of emergency and when deemed necessary by the state board of health, one or more assistant district health officers, who shall devote such time as is necessary to duties assigned to them.

Each district health officer shall perform the following duties:

1. Keep himself informed as to the sanitary and health conditions existing within his district.
2. Provide for the prompt and efficient quarantine of all cases of communicable diseases within his district.
3. Aid the physicians of his district in making diagnoses of communicable diseases, and endeavor to enlist the co-operation of all such physicians in the improvement of the public health.
4. Study the causes of excessive morbidity and mortality from any disease in any portion of his district.
5. Promote efficient registration of births and deaths.
6. Furnish information to the general public in all matters pertaining to the public health.
7. Make regular inspections of the sanitary conditions of all school-houses within his district and supervise the execution of the orders of the state board of health relating thereto.
8. Serve as health supervisor of all public, private and parochial schools within his district, under the regulations of the state board of health, provided, however, that a minor shall not be compelled to submit to medical examination or treatment for or on account of any non-contagious disease if his parent or guardian objects thereto.
9. Inspect public buildings and cause such buildings to conform to the regulations of the state board of health.
10. Make inspections of sewer connections and plumbing and issue orders, in writing, for the performance of such work as is necessary to comply with the laws and regulations relating thereto.
11. Make general sanitary inspections within his district whenever and wherever he has reason to suspect that anything exists which may be detrimental to the public health.
12. Issue orders, in writing, for the destruction and removal, within a specified time, of nuisances, sources of filth and causes of sickness.
13. Inspect all slaughterhouses within his district and cause them to conform to the rules and regulations of the state board of health relating thereto.
14. Perform such other duties as shall, from time to time, be assigned to him by the state board of health.

Sec. 2. The salaries of the district health officer shall be determined by the state board of health subject to the approval of the board of control, and they shall be allowed necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties, such salaries and expenses to be paid by the auditor of accounts upon approval by the state board of health. When, in the opinion of the state board of health, it is necessary to call any district health officer for the purpose of attending meetings or con-

ferences, within or without the state, he shall be allowed his necessary expenses while away from home.

Sec. 3. A district health officer may exercise all the powers of local boards of health within his own districts, and his orders shall have the same force as the orders of the state or local boards of health. Failure to comply with the orders of the district health officer shall be construed as a failure to comply with the orders of the state board of health and shall be subject to the same penalties as prescribed by law therefor.

Sec. 4. Assistant district health officers shall be subject to call for such special services as are deemed necessary by the state board of health and for such services shall receive such fees as may be allowed by the board of control, and necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties, such fees and expenses to be paid by the auditor of accounts, upon approval by the state board of health, as provided in section two of this act.

Sec. 5. Cities and towns of five thousand population or more may secure the services of a local health officer for such city or town by providing for the payment of the salary and expenses of such officer. When such provision is made, the state board of health shall appoint a health officer for such city or town, who shall be subject to the same provisions and perform the same duties within his city or town as are specified for the district health officers.

Sec. 6. The town clerk of each town shall receive all certificates of deaths occurring within his own town, and shall issue burial permits and receive fees therefor as provided by sections 3801, 3808, 3811, 3812, 3813, 3814, 3818, 3819 and 3820 of the General Laws, provided that burial permits in cases of deaths from communicable diseases shall not be issued by a town clerk except in accordance with instructions to be issued by the district health officer or the state board of health and to be kept on file by the town clerk.

Sec. 7. For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act, all physicians of the state shall be furnished by the state board of health with suitable cards for quarantining houses where cases of communicable disease exist, and shall be required to quarantine such houses as soon as the diagnosis is made or suspected and shall immediately report the case by mail to the district health officer. If he considers it necessary, he may also make such report by telephone or telegraph. A physician failing to comply with the provisions of this section shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars nor less than twenty-five dollars.

Sec. 8. Wherever the words "health officer" or "local health officer" occur in the General Laws relating to the powers and duties of such officers, they shall be construed to mean or refer to the district health officer, except as provided in sections five and six of this act. The office of local health officer in the towns of any district shall not be vacated nor their fees invalidated until the district health officer of such district shall have been appointed and shall have qualified.

Sec. 9. The sum of thirty-five thousand dollars is hereby annually appropriated for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this act.

Sec. 10. Sections 6217 and 6234 of the General Laws are hereby repealed.

Sec. 11. This act shall take effect July first, nineteen hundred and nineteen.

Approved March 26, 1919.

The district health officers appointed under this law are:

- District No. 1, Dr. Warren J. Howard, St. Albans.
- District No. 2, Dr. William T. Slayton, Morrisville.
- District No. 3, Dr. Victor P. Genge, St. Johnsbury.
- District No. 4, Dr. Charles W. Many, Burlington.
- District No. 5, Dr. Clarence H. Burr, Montpelier.
- District No. 6, Dr. George F. Edmunds, Bristol.
- District No. 7, Dr. Bern D. Colby, Rutland.
- District No. 8, Dr. Charles W. Kidder, Woodstock.
- District No. 9, Dr. Henry W. Eliot, Manchester.
- District No. 10, Dr. Chester S. Leach, Brattleboro.

To adequately conduct the enlarging work of the Board, a further reorganization has been effected at the central office by the separation of the work into divisions each under the supervision of a director. The arrangement has greatly increased the Board's efficiency. The divisions and directors are:

- Laboratory of Hygiene, B. H. Stone, M. D.
- Venereal Diseases, H. L. Pache, M. D.
- Tuberculosis, H. W. Slocum.
- Polio after-care, Bertha E. Weisbrod, R. N.
- Polio Research, W. L. Aycock, M. D.

On June 1, 1919, the State Board of Health moved to new quarters at 2 Colchester Ave., Burlington, where a building owned by the University of Vermont had been entirely remodelled and fitted up for its use. This change brings the Board into close association with the University and especially with the College of Medicine, and assists materially in stimulating the interest of the future physicians in public health.

LABORATORY OF HYGIENE.

The report of the laboratory is given in detail in another place in this volume.

DIVISION OF VENEREAL DISEASES.

This division is organized in connection with the Inter-departmental Social Hygiene Board of Washington and the Venereal Division of the United States Public Health Service. The work consists in obtaining reports from physicians, druggists and others who come in contact with venereal cases; the active treatment of cases; and the following up of venereal patients to insure their proper treatment, and their return to society in a non-infective condition. The various phases of this work require co-operation with many charitable, social, legal and police agen-

cies and this has been effected to a remarkable degree. Clinics have been established at Burlington and Barre where free treatment is given to all who apply. The extent of this work is shown by the following figures for the calendar year 1919:

Total Treatments	851
Wasserman tests	
Positive	251
Negative	912
Arsphenamine treatments	206
Gonorrheal treatments	593
Hospital cases	30

In addition, a large amount of educational literature has been distributed, and many addresses have been given before audiences of men, women and high school boys. Although this work has been in progress only a comparatively short time, the results are already seen in the changed attitude of the public towards venereal diseases and the increased knowledge of the "Black Plague," which will inevitably lead to the protection, prosperity and happiness of future generations.

DIVISION OF TUBERCULOSIS.

The Tuberculosis Division and the Vermont Tuberculosis Association work together as one organization, the director of the Division being also executive secretary of the Association. This combined effort enables the two organizations to cover the field of anti-tuberculosis work in a manner which could not be accomplished by either one alone.

In the educational work, every town in the state has had one or more lectures with motion pictures and in many towns active committees are at work in the interest of tuberculosis control. The organization of Modern Health Crusaders has been carried on among school children, upwards of 23,000 having attempted to fulfill the conditions for membership, of whom more than 16,000 gained rank as Crusaders. Large amounts of literature have been sent out to patients as well as to the general public.

Actual work of treatment, prevention and relief is carried on to a large extent, this Division acting as an agent of the Governor in his capacity of commissioner in charge of indigent tuberculous persons. A preventorium for the care of pre-tuberculous children has been established at Essex, where sixteen children can be accommodated. The child remains in the institution from four to six months, during which time it receives the same care as is given patients at the sanatorium, meantime carrying on school work in an open air school.

Relief work is undertaken through the combined efforts of the Association and the Red Cross. Funds for all this work, aside from the educational measures, are obtained from the proceeds of the sale of Red Cross Seals and from private donations.

DIVISION OF POLIOMYELITIS.

The polio research laboratory and after-care treatment, established in 1914 by the generosity of an unknown donor, have been continued with increased activity. Through the research laboratory any physician in the state may receive expert consultation in any case which appears suspicious of poliomyelitis, and whenever applicable the patient may be given treatments of human immune serum. That this is appreciated is shown by the fact that practically every suspicious case in the state is now seen by the director of the laboratory, physicians everywhere availing themselves of this assistance. Moreover, since this service was established in Vermont a number of other states have instituted similar organizations. Actual research for the discovery of facts relating to the diagnosis and treatment of the disease is also constantly carried on.

The After-care Department has grown to such an extent that it now requires the entire time of two field workers and an office secretary. Dr. R. W. Lovett of Boston and his associate Dr. F. R. Ober, have conducted clinics annually in the larger centers of the state, examining and advising treatment for the crippled cases brought to them. The itinerary of these clinics occupies about ten days and nearly 200 patients are usually seen.

The field workers follow up the patients in their homes and search out those who fail to attend the clinics. Braces and other apparatus are furnished and the patients instructed in the muscle training exercises necessary for the recovery of the paralyzed parts. Hospital treatment is also furnished at local hospitals or in Boston or New York. In 1919, two complete wards were obtained at the Proctor Hospital and eleven children given surgical treatment covering a period of six months. The calls on this Department have been so great and urgent that plans for securing a special hospital for crippled children have been seriously considered.

The gratitude of the Board and the citizens of the state to the person who makes all this work possible cannot be too highly expressed.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES—INFLUENZA.

The outstanding feature of the biennial term was the great epidemic of influenza, which began in September, 1918, continu-