

# After the Great War...

## HEALTH ISSUES

For the people of Bleasdale in the early 20th Century, Doctors' surgeries and hospitals were distant and most treatment cost money. Low income families looked to Friendly Societies, charities or even the Poor Law Guardians for support and from 1911 a limited National Insurance health scheme came into force. Some improvements in health care began, however, before 1914 and continued in the 1920s, as the School Log book and Parkinson Trust Minute Book reveal.

Before WWI, Bleasdale Parish shared the services of a NURSE from the Calder Vale Nursing Association, supported by the Parkinson Trust with small grants. In 1928 the Trustees advocated that:

*'...the question of providing a nurse for occasional sickness was considered & a very suitable woman being available it was decided to bear the cost for her attending Ambulance nursing classes possibly going round with the Garstang nurse for a week or two...'*

PARKINSON TRUST MINUTE BOOK 17th APRIL 1928

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(Photo from internet)



BLEASDALE SCHOOL AROUND WWI

**DENTAL HEALTH** among children was poor in Bleasdale, as it was throughout the country. Headteachers recorded the battle to get children to clean their teeth ...

*'Almost every child in the School has obtained a toothbrush,'* ...wrote Mr. Hunt in 1910 and in 1927 Mrs Parkinson noted...

*'The daily toothbrush drill undertaken at this school is an excellent idea and I am sure the children will reap the benefit in later life by preserving their teeth from premature decay.'*



(Photos from internet)



In 1907, Lancashire County Council introduced a **SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE**.

Doctors carried out annual medical inspections assisted by a School Nurse. Bleasdale's first inspection was in 1909.

The sketchy results of the inspections are only shown in the Logbook in the earliest days.

26th October 1910:  
Medical examination.  
Summary of Dr. Whitley's inspection:

Enlarged Tonsils	13
Adenoids	3
Defective Vision	4
Defective Teeth	13
(Number on roll: 42)	

In the early 20th Century less well-off parents could not afford **GLASSES** or specialist eye treatment. The Parkinson Trustees would help

financially (as they did with the cost of toothbrushes) but still sometimes met with problems. In 1929, Louise Metcalf needed glasses, but Rev. Haines reported regretfully... *'that he had not been able to provide her with spectacles owing to the objection of her parents and as she has now left the parish, the trustees can give no further help.'*

The nearest **GENERAL PRACTITIONERS** had their surgeries in Garstang and Longridge but in 1930 the Parkinson Trust brought the surgeries to the patients in the new Bleasdale Parish Hall.



*The Trustees decided to empower the Rev. W. C. Haines to make arrangements with Dr. Mercer to attend twice in each calendar month at the Parish Hall, Bleasdale, & also to arrange for the posting of medicine.*

PARKINSON TRUST MINUTE BOOK 6th November 1930

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