

[Report 1898] / Medical Officer of Health, Chorley Borough.

Contributors

Chorley (England). Borough Council.

Publication/Creation

1898

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/j62se5kn>

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



BOROUGH OF CHORLEY.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S
REPORT.

1898.

S. FOWLER, GUARDIAN OFFICE, CHORLEY.



CHORLEY, MARCH 4TH, 1899.

TO THE CHORLEY TOWN COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the pleasure, in presenting you with my Annual Report for 1898, to be able to draw your attention to the improvement in the Vital Statistics as evidenced by a slightly higher Birth-rate and a considerably lower Death-rate than I could give you in my Report for 1897.

Estimating the population of Chorley in the middle of 1898 at 26,300, from seven hundred and ninety-nine (799) Births registered during the year, I calculate the Birth-rate at 30·38 per thousand per annum. In the preceding year I estimated a rate of 29·96, seven hundred and seventy-nine (779) Births having occurred in 1897. Though the Birth-rate of 1898 is more satisfactory than that of 1897 it is still below the rates that used to obtain in the Borough as you will see from the following Table.

TABLE A.

Year.	Population.	No. of Births.	Birth-rate.
1898	26,300	799	30·38
1897	26,000	779	29·96
1896	25,700	829	32·26
1895	25,200	882	35·00
1894	24,700	847	34·33
1893	24,100	859	35·64
1892	23,600	836	35·00
1891	23,160	800	34·54

The Birth-rate in Chorley was nearly one per thousand more than the rate obtaining throughout England and Wales in 1898, viz, 29·4 per thousand, this being the lowest on record. Of the Births four

hundred and seven (407) were males, and three hundred and ninety-two (392) were females. Whilst the Birth-rate thus shows a slight increase in 1898 the Death-rate exhibits a still more satisfactory decrease in 1898 as compared with 1897.

Four hundred and eighty-six (486) Deaths [two hundred and sixty-five (265) being males, and two hundred and twenty-one (221) females] were registered in 1898, yielding upon the estimated population of 26,300 a Death-rate of 18·48 per thousand per annum. In 1897, the number of Deaths registered was five hundred and forty-five (545), and the rate was estimated at 20·96. The decrease in the Death-rate in 1898 thus amounted to 2·48 per thousand, and from the following Table you will see that the rate is markedly lower than I have had to record.

TABLE B.

Year.	Estimated Population.	Number of Deaths.	Death-rate
1898	26,300	486	18·48
1897	26,000	545	20·96
1896	25,700	582	22·64
1895	25,200	600	23·81
1894	24,700	504	20·40
1893	24,100	561	23·27
1892	23,600	501	21·23
1891	23,160	489	21·28

This decrease appears more satisfactory when we consider that the Death-rate obtaining throughout England and Wales in 1898 was higher than that of 1897 or 1896 ; the rates being 17·6, 17·4, and 17·1 respectively, showing a slight increase each year—whereas the rates in Chorley during the same years have showed a marked decrease. However, we ought to aim at obtaining a still lower Death-rate, as it is above the average of Urban Districts, with the exception of the thirty largest towns, and is considerably more than the average rate in Sanitary Districts with a population of under 30,000. This you will see from Table C.

TABLE C.

The Death-rate in Chorley in 1898 was	...	...	18.48
The Average Death-rate in 33 of the largest towns in England and Wales was	...	...	19.0
The Average Death-rate in 67 other towns in England and Wales was	...	...	17.2
The Death-rate of England and Wales, excluding Urban Sanitary Districts with a population over 30,000, was	...	...	16.7

Table D shows you that in every quarter of the year, except the third, or summer quarter, when there was an increase in the number of deaths, the mortality of 1898 was below that of 1897, and that this decrease was most marked in the first quarter of the year. The increased mortality of the third quarter may be in some measure attributed to the very hot weather, and the consequent increase in the number of deaths due to Diarrhoea and Gastro-enteric disorders.

TABLE D.

Year.	First Quarter. No. of Deaths.	Second Quarter. No. of Deaths.	Third Quarter. No. of Deaths.	Fourth Quarter. No. of Deaths.	Total.
1898	119	129	121	117	486
1897	180	143	89	133	545
1896	162	120	103	197	582
1895	160	166	111	163	600
1894	125	128	109	142	504
1893	109	98	175	179	561
1892	178	112	97	114	501
1891	135	124	114	120	493

In table E I have arranged the Deaths under the Wards in which they occurred and you will notice that all the Wards yielded a diminished mortality, especially East Ward, but that there was a somewhat increased number of deaths in the Workhouse.

TABLE E.

Divisions.	1898. No. of Deaths.	1897. No. of Deaths.	1896. No. of Deaths.	1895. No. of Deaths.	1894. No. of Deaths.	1893. No. of Deaths.	1892. No. of Deaths.	1891. No. of Deaths.
North Ward ...	90	94	89	127	102	105	97	110
South Ward ...	108	113	148	137	96	121	120	110
East Ward.....	113	161	134	136	126	162	128	119
West Ward ...	136	143	183	159	134	134	110	102
Workhouse ...	39	34	28	41	46	39	46	52
Total ...	486	545	582	600	504	561	501	493

Another satisfactory feature in this report is the decrease in the Infantile Mortality during the year. The proportion of Deaths under one year of age to the whole number of Births registered was in 1898 at the rate of one hundred and sixty-eight (168) per thousand, which is only slightly in excess of the proportion obtaining throughout England and Wales, viz., one hundred and sixty-one (161) per thousand. In 1897 on the other hand I had to record an Infantile Mortality of two hundred and seventeen (217) per thousand as compared with one hundred and fifty-six (156) throughout England and Wales. That is to say whilst five (5) more Deaths in Infants under one year of age have occurred to every thousand Births throughout England and Wales—in Chorley there has been a decrease of forty-nine (49) Deaths per thousand Births. Again in 1897, of the whole number of Deaths, thirty-one (31) per cent. occurred in infants under one year of age, and forty-four (44) per cent. in children under five; the per centages in 1898 were only twenty-six (26) and thirty-six (36) respectively. I hope that this marked improvement may continue in the present and succeeding years.

In Table F I have arranged the number of Deaths in each Ward and the Workhouse under the various ages, and compared them with the total number of Deaths at each age, with similar totals recorded in preceding years.

TABLE F.

Sub-Divisions.	Mortality at subjoined Ages.				Total.
	Under 1 Year.	1 and under 5	5 and under 25	25 and upwards.	
North Ward ...	24	7	5	54	90
South Ward ...	33	15	10	50	108
East Ward ...	32	13	12	56	113
West Ward ...	42	9	12	73	136
Workhouse ...	—	—	1	38	39
Totals in 1898 ...	131	44	40	271	486
Totals in 1897 ...	169	75	46	255	545
Totals in 1896 ...	180	93	57	252	582
Totals in 1895 ...	174	99	46	281	600
Totals in 1894 ...	119	86	48	251	504
Totals in 1893 ...	182	66	48	265	561
Totals in 1892 ...	144	53	35	269	501
Totals in 1891 ...	134	57	37	265	493

You will notice that the diminished Death-rate in 1898 was due to the decrease in the number of deaths in infancy, childhood, and adolescence ; whilst the mortality in adults and old people was slightly increased.

I now classify the Deaths under their respective causes, and compare them with the number of Deaths due to the same causes in the preceeding years.

TABLE G.

Sub-Divisions.	Mortality from Subjoined Causes.															Totals.			
	Smallpox.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Enteric Fever.	Other continued Fevers.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Rheumatic Fever.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia & Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.		Influenza.	Injuries.	All other Diseases.
North Ward ...	—	1	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	4	8	6	2	2	59	90
South Ward ...	—	2	—	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	5	10	6	4	7	64	108
East Ward.....	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	3	1	10	12	8	3	3	69	113
West Ward ...	—	—	—	—	4	—	1	—	—	—	5	1	5	16	11	4	6	83	136
Workhouse ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	12	2	—	—	22	39
Deaths in 1898	—	3	1	4	11	—	1	—	—	—	18	2	27	58	33	13	18	297	486
Deaths in 1897	—	9	2	7	15	—	—	—	13	17	3	3	25	108	38	15	17	273	545
Deaths in 1896	—	6	2	13	12	—	4	3	19	12	10	2	28	116	39	11	17	288	582
Deaths in 1895	—	6	2	6	15	—	1	1	3	35	17	2	39	113	34	12	15	299	600
Deaths in 1894	—	10	4	16	8	1	3	—	5	4	13	1	30	103	36	9	19	242	504
Deaths in 1893	—	5	—	8	7	—	2	3	22	3	42	1	40	99	28	—	13	288	561
Deaths in 1892	1	1	2	6	9	—	4	6	—	22	15	1	37	97	37	—	14	249	501
Deaths in 1891	—	5	—	4	6	—	1	1	1	3	11	1	33	109	31	—	12	275	493

The first fact you will notice is the very marked decrease in Deaths due to Bronchitis and Pneumonia, attributable in a great measure to the mild winter.

Zymotic Diseases, with the exception of Diarrhœa, also have yielded a considerably smaller mortality in 1898 than in 1897. The Zymotic Death-rate of 1898 was only 1·29 per thousand as compared with a rate of 2·27 in 1897. This rate is much below that which obtained throughout England and Wales during 1898, viz., 2·22. Measles and Whooping Cough were unusually infrequent during the year, and not a single death was registered from either disease. More than half of the Zymotic Deaths were due to Diarrhœa, which, as I have said before, may in great part be attributed to the very hot summer of 1898. When the temperature of the ground four feet below the surface reaches 54° Fahr. Diarrhœa begins to be prevalent, and an increase in the number of cases occurs with each degree of heat recorded, whilst the cases occur less frequently when the ground temperature decreases. Where this high ground temperature is accompanied by insanitary surroundings, such as slop water on the surface, leakage from drains, filthy yards, &c., Diarrhœa is sure to prevail. It is very necessary therefore that in the hot periods of the year especially every attention should be paid by each householder to the condition of his premises, and that cleanliness should be strictly enforced.

Two hundred and seven (207) cases of Infectious Diseases were reported to me during the year. In the preceding year, 1897, one hundred and seventy-four (174) cases were notified, and in 1896, one one hundred and sixty-three (163)—both less than in 1898. The increase was chiefly due to the much larger number of cases of Typhoid Fever in 1898, as you will see from Table H, where the notifications are classed under each disease and the several Wards specified in which the diseases occurred, and compared with a similar classification for the four preceding years.

TABLE H.

Sub-Divisions.	Scarlet Fever.					Diphtheria.				Membranous Croup.					Erysipelas.					Typhoid and other continued Fevers.					Puerperal Fever.					Totals.								
	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.								
North Ward...	7	8	10	20	13	1	...	...	2	2	1	1	...	...	...	4	3	6	8	7	11	2	8	13	21	...	...	...	...	1	24	14	24	41	44
South Ward...	44	25	11	33	39	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	...	6	1	7	5	10	29	13	9	7	5	...	...	...	1	1	81	41	33	49	56
East Ward ...	23	17	13	44	46	1	2	1	...	...	2	3	1	1	4	7	9	13	13	6	13	11	21	10	13	...	...	...	1	...	46	42	50	68	69
West Ward ...	38	54	26	57	54	1	2	1	2	3	...	1	4	...	2	6	7	9	9	5	10	13	15	10	11	1	...	...	1	56	77	56	78	76		
Totals in 1898	112	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	23	...	...	...	...	63	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	207	...	...	...	...	...
Totals in 1897	...	104	5	6	20	39	174		
Totals in 1896	60	4	8	35	53	3	163	
Totals in 1895	154	4	2	35	40	1	236
Totals in 1894	152	7	6	28	50	245

Scarlet Fever cases were notified every month throughout the year; the greatest number occurring in March, June, August, and September. Very few cases occurred in North Ward, but the Fever was more prevalent in the West and South Wards. The disease was of a very mild type, only three (3) Deaths having been registered therefrom, or 2·8 per cent. of those attacked. Your Council has passed a regulation that the rooms, &c., inhabited by persons suffering from this fever are not to be disinfected until all reasonable chance of re-infection is over—that is until five weeks after the onset of the disease. When the Infectious Hospital is ready for the reception of patients, the great inconvenience and risk of the prolonged retention of infected premises will be obviated in the case of those houses from which the patients are removed to the Hospital, as then disinfection will be carried out immediately after such removal. Disinfectants were supplied during the course of the disease, and at the termination the infected houses were fumigated, and clothes and bedding passed through the Steam Disinfectors.

Typhoid Fever has been more prevalent in 1898 than in previous years. Sixty-three (63) cases were notified to me. This disease was present throughout the year; but nearly half the cases were reported during the last quarter. Though the number of cases in 1898 was larger than in 1897, the mortality was less, only eleven (11) or seventeen (17) per cent. being fatal in 1898; as compared with fifteen (15) or thirty-eight (38) per cent. in 1897. Cases occurred in all the Wards; but South Ward yielded nearly half the total number.

I hope that when the water carriage system is fully established throughout the town the disease will become less prevalent. Dr. Niven, the Manchester Medical Officer of Health, has shown that the districts in that city where the water carriage system is in operation do not yield nearly so many cases of Typhoid Fever as do other parts of the town. It is quite evident that there is less risk of infection from this disease when the excreta of Typhoid patients thoroughly disinfected are carried off from the premises by well-flushed sewers than when they are placed in a pail in the yards of the houses, and left there for a week for

collection by the scavengers. Your officers have endeavoured to prevent the spread of this disease by supplying a separate pail for the reception of Typhoid excreta.

Four (4) cases of Diphtheria were reported, with one (1) death; and four (4) cases of Membranous Croup, all of which proved fatal. Twenty-three (23) notifications of Erysipelas were made to me; but no death occurred from this disease.

One hundred and thirty-seven (137) houses were fumigated during the year, and eighteen hundred and fifty-one (1851) articles of clothing, bedding, &c., passed through the Disinfector. The erection of the Infectious Hospital is proceeding rapidly: all the wards are built, and the administrative blocks will soon be completed. The Joint Hospital Board have held monthly meetings during the year, and are using every endeavour to press on the work; so we may reasonably expect to have the Hospital furnished and in full working order during the year. Your Council agreed to lay gas pipes from Chorley to the Hospital boundary upon payment by the Joint Board of the sum of fifty pounds (£50). I trust that the new Water Supply to Heath Charnock and Anderton will be carried out without delay, and thus provide the Hospital with a plentiful supply of good water.

The Sewage Purification Works at Common Bank are doing their work satisfactorily, and are discharging a good effluent into the river. An experiment is being tried with three filter beds, filled with magnetite, and several other improvements have been made during the year.

In accordance with the provisional order, six hundred and fifty-seven (657) closets have been converted from the pail to the water carriage system. These alterations have been carried out chiefly in West Ward, and to a less extent in North Ward. I may here draw your attention to the fact that West Ward, which is the most populous district in the town, yielded the fewest cases of Typhoid Fever in 1898, and North Ward the next. As I have already stated, it has been found that Typhoid Fever is less prevalent in districts provided with a water carriage system than in one with middens or pails. I expect that when

the conversions have been completed throughout the town you will not only have obtained a marked saving in the cost of dealing with the excreta ; but also have reduced the liability to Typhoid Fever, and removed the intolerable nuisance of the passage of the drags and tanks through the streets of the Borough.

The tanks at Botany have been reconstructed during the year, the filtering material and iron screens have been taken out, the lagoons have been concreted, open channels formed, and provided with ferrozone baskets for the precipitation of the Sewage. I consider this to be a marked improvement.

Nothing has been done as yet as regards the sewerage of the district of Cowling. Sewers have been laid in various parts of the town during the year ; Fifteen (15) inch pipes in Rawcliffe-road, Twelve (12) inch pipes in Westminster-road, Weldbank-lane, Carrington-road, Clifton-road, &c. ; Nine (9) inch pipes in Harper's-lane, Geoffrey-street, Jackson-street, &c., &c., and several streets have been paved and flagged, viz : Railway-road, Westminster-road, Crown-street, Bagganley-lane, &c.

You have appointed Deputations to visit various Destructors in the country and they have made reports to your Council. You have applied for estimates from different firms and four of these have been laid before you. Your Surveyor has been instructed to prepare plans and estimates for the erection of a Destructor-House and Chimney. I confidently hope that this very necessary work will be undertaken during the ensuing year.

I have frequently visited the Slaughter Houses, and have examined seventy-nine (79) carcasses, and found it necessary to condemn as unfit for food, eight (8) cows, twenty-six (26) pigs, three (3) sheep, one (1) calf and one (1) goat. The weight of the carcasses ordered to be destroyed was seven thousand and one hundred (7100) pounds. The Inspector examines every carcase brought into the Slaughter-house before allowing it to be offered for sale. We have had also to condemn fish as unfit for food in two instances.

Legal proceedings have been taken in the following cases, with the annexed results :—

Insanitary Manure Receptacles—Ordered to comply with notice.

Stoppage of Drains—To carry out Order, and costs.

Filthy House and Yards, two (2) cases—To carry out Order, and costs.

Breach of Common Lodging-house Bye-Laws—Fined seven and sixpence (7s. 6d.), and costs.

Chimney Firing, thirty-two (32) cases—Thirty-one (31) convicted and fined, and costs ; one (1) dismissed.

Moving Pigs without license, two (2) cases—Fined ten and sixpence (10s. 6d.), and costs.

Removing a person whilst suffering from Scarlet Fever—Fined five (5) shillings, and costs.

I beg to draw your attention particularly to the last of the above cases in which summary proceedings were taken. The Sanitary Officials at Preston communicated with your officers upon finding a case of Scarlet Fever brought into Preston whilst in a markedly infectious stage of the disease. We considered it very necessary that proceedings should be taken in this instance, and your Council directed that a summons should be issued. I trust that the publicity given to this case will assist in preventing ignorant or careless people from subjecting the public to the liability of infection by exposure of persons suffering from Zymotic Diseases.

Forty-three (43) samples of Food and Drugs have been obtained by the Police Officers during the year, and subjected to analysis by the County Analyst, viz, milk, 28 ; butter, 6 ; lard, 1 ; drugs, 3 ; and spirits, 5. Prosecutions have followed in four cases, with the following results :—

New Milk, two (2) cases—Fined ten shillings (10s. od.), and costs.

New Milk, one (1) case—Fined five shillings (5s.), and costs.

Whisky, containing 7 per cent. excess of water—Fined forty shillings (40s.), and costs.

That your Nuisance Inspector and his Assistant have performed their duties with untiring zeal and energy will be gathered from the following Table, in which are given the various nuisances abated, sanitary defects remedied, and other sanitary alterations made.

TABLE I.

Nuisance Abated and Sanitary Defects Remedied.	Totals.
Defective Drainage of Houses, &c., remedied	153
Slopstones disconnected from Sewers	37
Filthy Houses whitewashed... ..	56
Houses infected with Fever fumigated	137
Ashpits altered to Water Closets	11
Pail Closets altered to Water Closets	657
Filthy Yards, Passages and Closets cleaned	100
Defective and insufficient Closets and Urinals remedied ...	45
Stables, Shippons, &c., defective as to ventilation, drainage, and water supply remedied	10
Pigs, Pigeons, Poultry, kept so as to be a nuisance removed	21
Other Nuisances attended to	165
Total	1392

The Ambulance presented to the Corporation by Superintendent Norris and the other members of the Police Force, has proved a great benefit. It has been used for conveying people suffering from accidents, &c., on thirty-three occasions during the year.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES A. HARRIS, M.D. (Lond.),

Medical Officer of Health.

