

# UNHEALTHY CHIPPING?

In 1873

The Clitheroe Board of Guardians committee had the welfare of the poor as their major concern. Their area of supervision included Chipping. Increasingly they attended to public health matters such as smallpox vaccination programmes. Medical care at that time was very haphazard as this account of a meeting shows:- from the Preston Guardian. Wed 1st Oct 1873

## CHIPPING VACCINATION RETURNS 1873

In reply to the Chairman of the Board of Guardians (Mr T.G.Parker) the Clerk said he had, as yet, received no report of the vaccination cases in the Chipping district.

**The Chairman.** How is that?

**The Clerk.** Mr Patchett resides at Chipping, and his brother, who is nominally the doctor, lives at Blackburn. He is the best man we can get, although not legally qualified, and to get out of the difficulty, he vaccinates, and I believe, successfully, and his brother signs the certificate.

**Mr Ingham.** And is it satisfactory to the people in the district?

**The Clerk.** But not to the authorities.

**Mr Trappes.** Is he not an innkeeper?

**The Clerk.** He gave it up, I am told, some three years ago.

**The Chairman.** So there is no surgeon at all in the Chipping district; the whole of it is left without any medical adviser. I think there ought to be notice to dismiss him.

**The Clerk.** We can dismiss him, but we cannot get anybody else; we have tried all we can. We are quite fast. ... No qualified gentleman would undertake it.

Mr Patchett is very popular there, and any other doctor, I am afraid, would not have the slightest chance among the people, although he is an unqualified man.

**Mr Dewhurst.** As far as vaccination is concerned then, it seems we cannot mend ourselves. How long has this continued?

**The Clerk.** For several years; we cannot alter it. A doctor cannot get a living there.

**The Chairman.** And what is the real effect of it? Chipping is never free from fever.

**The Clerk.** That is the effect of the bad sanitary arrangements.

**Mr Ingham.** I do not think it is on account of the medical officer there, however.

**The Chairman.** (turning to address another committee member)

Mr Proctor how about your doctor in Chipping? Mr Patchett does not come and vaccinate himself.

**Mr Proctor.** Who doesn't?

**The Chairman.** Mr Patchett.

**Mr Proctor.** Why he has a deputy under him as satisfies -- has he not?

**The Chairman.** No.

**Mr Proctor.** Oh well.

**Mr Dewhurst.** Does he satisfy the people?

**Mr Proctor.** Well I hear no complaints.

**The Chairman.** You have a deal of fever about Chipping, have you not?

**Mr Proctor.** Well not recently. I think there are places worse infected than Chipping.

**The Chairman.** Are you satisfied with the health of your locality?

**Mr Proctor.** Well I am satisfied.

**Mr Rawcliffe.** But it has been represented as an unhealthy place. (Laughter)

**Mr Proctor.** I think there is more sickness in other parts ... than there is at Chipping.

**Mr Dewhurst.** Has Mr Patchett his name up at the public-house as a surgeon?

**Mr Proctor.** I cannot say.

**Mr Ingham.** But people know where he lives? (Laughter)

**Mr Proctor.** They do; particularly when they want a child bringing into the world.

**Mr Bleakley.** It will be an encouragement to them to take their children if they can get a glass at the same time.

The subject dropped.

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The Mr Proctor, the Chipping representative on the Guardians committee, was probably James Procter, 1809-1875, who farmed Goose Lane Farm, later called Dairy Farm. He was grandfather of Dick Procter, born 1871, later of the Sun Inn.