

# John Snow and the Case of the Broad Street Pump

By Liza Schlachtovszky



### CHOLERA PREVENTIVE COSTUME.

*He who would defend himself from the contagious Cholera, must be dressed in the following Manner.*

*The Bust to be entirely covered with India rubber, on which apply a large Pitch Plaster, and cover the whole with a Flannel six Yards long. Put a Copper Plate on the Top of the Stomach and on the Breast a Bag of warm sand. Around the neck place a double band, filled with Pepper & Juniper Berries. Fill the Ears with Cotton impregnated with Camphire. Suspend to the Nose a large vial of concentrated vinegar, and adjust a Branch of acacia before the mouth. Over the band which surrounds the Body wear a Shirt saturated with chloruret of Lime, a cotton waistcoat, & a Jacket impregnated also with chloruret of Lime. Flannel trousers, thread Stockings dipped in vinegar, over which another pair of woollen, rubbed with camphire. Hollow brass soles, constantly filled with warm water, and strong shoes. Behind the calves should be suspended two tubs, filled with water. He must wear besides a great coat, a woollen gown, and cover the whole with a large cloak of oil cloth, a hat of the same stuff, and the face to be covered with a paste mask. In the right great coat pocket a pound of perfumed tea, and half a pound of fetuwer root. In the left pocket a pound of carianter root, and half a pound of sage leaf. In the jacket pocket a vial of essence of camomile, and in the fob a vial of camphire. In the crown of the hat a basin of soup, in the right hand a bush of juniper tree, and in the left an acacia tree. He must drag after him a cart containing fifteen yards of flannel, the necessary apparatus for vapour baths, ten friction brushes, two furred robes & a close stool. By exactly following these directions you may be certain that the Cholera ..... will attack you the first.*

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A representation of the cholera epidemic of the nineteenth century

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS,  
1842.

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(TWELVE VOLUMES.)

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*Note.—The FIGURE placed at the END OF THE LINE refers to the Paging of the Volume  
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VOL. XXVI.

*The Report from the Poor Law Commissioners on an  
Inquiry into the Sanitary Conditions of the Laboring Population of Great Britain*





A COURT FOR KING CHOLERA.

ON THE  
MODE OF COMMUNICATION  
OF  
CHOLERA.

BY  
JOHN SNOW, M.D.

LONDON:  
JOHN CHURCHILL, PRINCES STREET, SOHO.

MDCCCLXIX.





cholera registered during the week ending September 2, in the sub-districts of Golden-square, Berwick-street, and St. Ann's, Soho. Eighty-nine deaths from cholera were registered during the week, in the three sub-districts. Of these, only six occurred in the four first days of the week, four occurred on Thursday, the 31st ult., and the remaining seventy-nine on Friday and Saturday. I considered, therefore, that the outbreak commenced on the Thursday; and I made an inquiry, in detail, respecting the eighty-three deaths registered as having taken place during the last three days of the week. On proceeding to the spot, I found that nearly all the deaths had taken place within a short distance of the pump. There were only ten deaths in houses situated decidedly nearer to another street pump. In five of these cases the families of the deceased persons informed me that they always sent to the pump in Broad-street, as they preferred the water to that of the pumps which were nearer. In three other cases the deceased were children who went to school near the pump in Broad-street. Two of them were known to drink the water, and the parents of the third think it probable that it did so. The other two deaths, beyond the district which this pump supplies, represent only the amount of mortality from cholera that was occurring before the eruption took place. With regard to the deaths occurring in the locality belonging to the pump, there were 61 instances in which I was informed that the deceased persons used to drink the pump water from Broad-street, either constantly or occasionally. In 6 instances I could get no information, owing to the death or departure of every one connected with the deceased individuals; and in 6 cases I was informed that the deceased persons did not drink the pump water before their illness.

The result of this inquiry, then, is, that there has been no particular outbreak or prevalence of cholera in this part of London except among the persons who were in the habit of drinking the water of the above-mentioned pump-well.

I had an interview with the Board of Guardians of St. James's

place there, being confined to two streets, called New French's Fields. I found that this outbreak of cholera was caused by an accidental contamination of the drinking water occurring in an unusual manner. The people in the streets, in which about ninety deaths from cholera occurred a few days, have the water of the Kent Water-works; but for four weeks before my inquiry, they told me that when it first came in, had generally smelt highly offensive and frothed like soap-suds. They had been in the habit of drawing away a few pailsful of what first came in, and retaining it until the water which came afterwards, and was pretty clear. On inquiring of all the surrounding streets, viz., Wellington Street, Wellington Street, and Hughes' Fields, I found that there had been no alteration in the water. I conclude, therefore, that some contamination had taken place into the pipes supplying these two streets during the intervals when the water was not turned on. The pipes in the sewers in these streets, and the refuse of all kinds, constantly saturates the ground in which the pipes are laid. The few cases of cholera in and near New Street just before the outbreak.

I have very nearly concluded the inquiry respecting the comparative influence of the water of the Lambeth Water-works and that of the Southwark and Vauxhall Company, of which I have some account in the Number of the *Medical Times and Gazette* of the 2nd inst. The result, which I shall communicate when completed, will show that among the population having the water of the Thames, from Battersea Fields, the mortality from cholera has been ten times as great as among the population having the improved water from Thames Ditton.

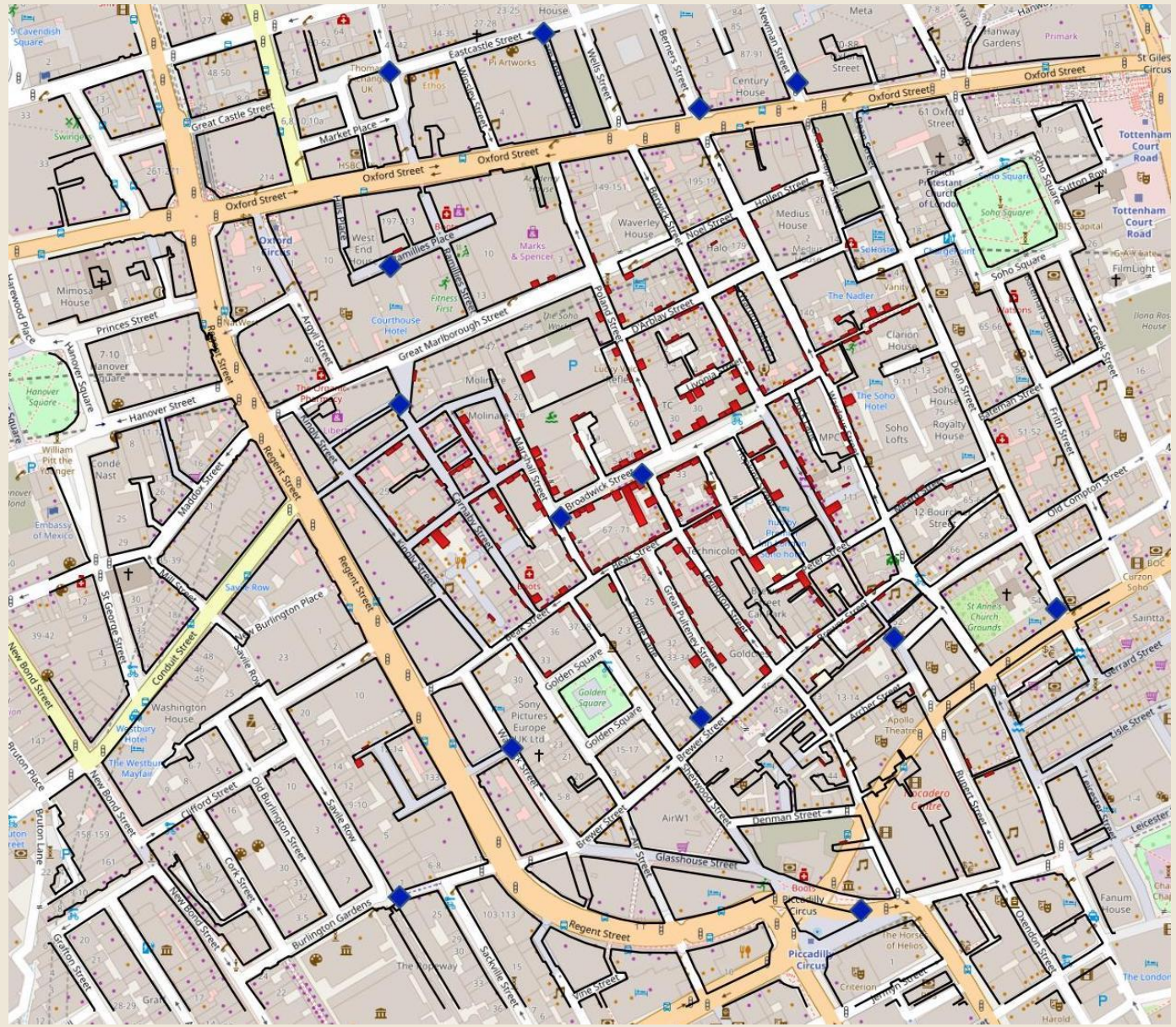
I am, Sir, &c.

JOHN SNOW

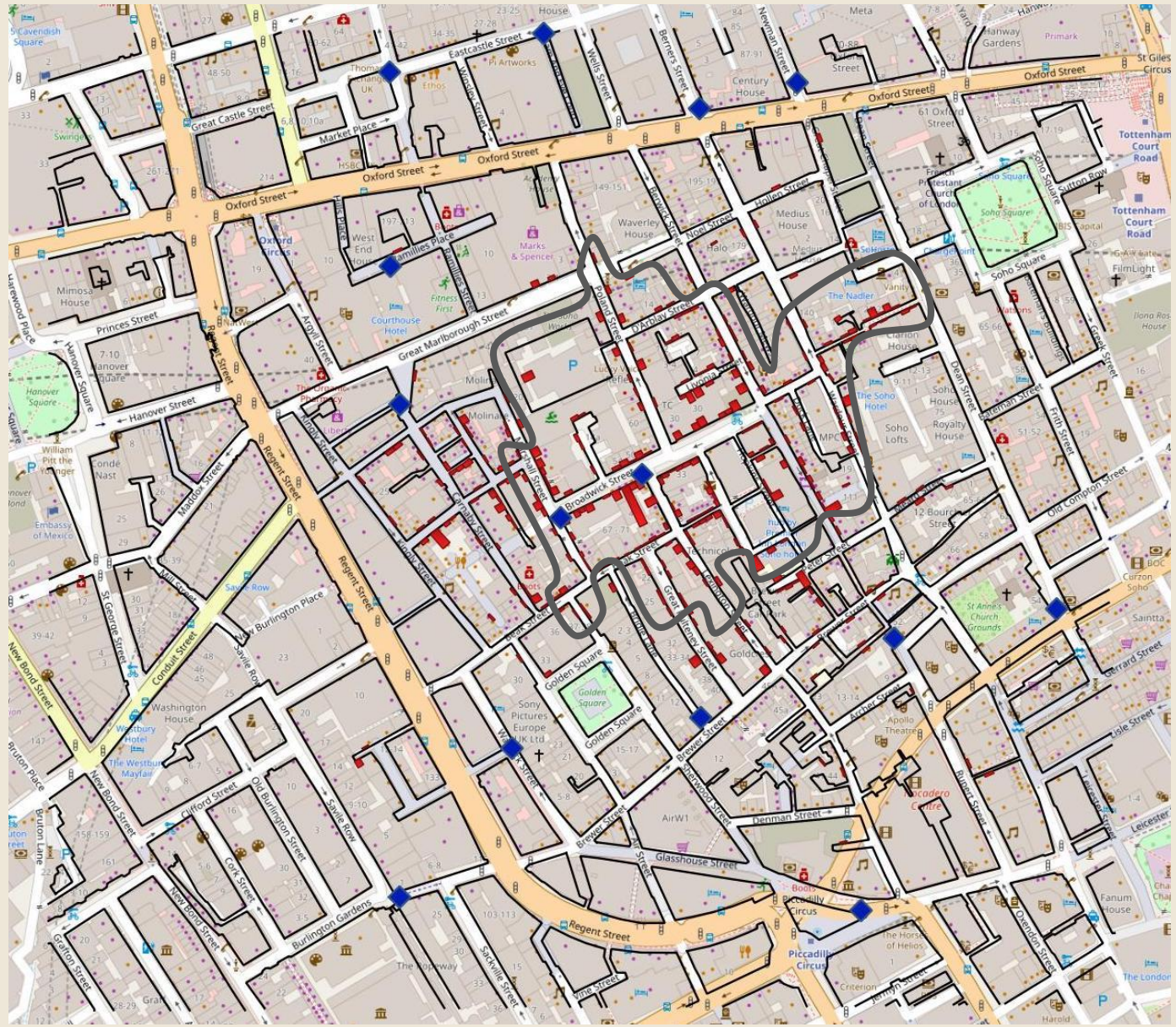
18, Sackville Street, September, 1854.

THE TREATMENT OF CHOLERA.















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