

*CHARLES HENRY CHAPMAN*  
*(1844-1903)*  
*BY ANONYMOUS*

Charles Henry Chapman was born in West Drayton on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 1844 to Robert Chapman (1800-1872) and his wife Elizabeth Terry Abbot (1806-1862). Robert was employed as a police sergeant with the Great Western Railway and it was most probably Robert's posting to Exeter which moved the whole family to the West Country.

Charles married his wife Mary Sarah Davis on 13<sup>th</sup> December 1873 St Sidwell's parish church in Exeter and she was with him when he died. They had nine children – four girls and five boys. Four of the children predeceased Charles. Their eldest son, Charles Ernest Chapman (1875-1945), followed his father into the postal service, working as a railway telegraphist (in a way, following his grandfather too, by working with the railway company).

The 1871 census shows Charles as a telegraph clerk. I think his appointment was confirmed the following year as there is an entry in the British Postal Service Appointments Book<sup>1</sup> for C H Chapman. He was appointed as a 1<sup>st</sup> class Clerk. 1881 shows him as working in the civil service telegraph department and in 1891 he had advanced to be a government telegraphist. His illness would have started about 1897 and I presume when it got too bad, he had to retire in 1901 whilst working as a postal clerk.

Charles died on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1903 of Bright's disease, which he'd had for six years, and dropsy which he'd had for ten months. It is possible the dropsy developed from the earlier disease. As he had it for six years, this means he had it for four years whilst working with the post office. Unhappily for him, he only had two years of retirement before he died and I imagine they must have been very painful years for him.

I wonder how long it would have been before he sought medical help. There was no national health service then, so any treatment would have to be paid for by the patient, unless he was able to get help at a workhouse Infirmary. The doctor who signed Charles' death certificate was J. S. Steele-Perkins M.R.C.S., a member of a well-respected family of medical practitioners in Exeter whose descendants are still working in the medical profession today.

### **Bright's Disease**

The symptoms were first described in 1827 by an English physician called Richard Bright and these included haemorrhages, apoplexy, convulsions, blindness and coma. Many cases were found to have albumin (a variety of protein)<sup>2</sup> in the urine with striking morbid changes in the kidney found when an autopsy was performed. Bright's disease is now only used to refer to

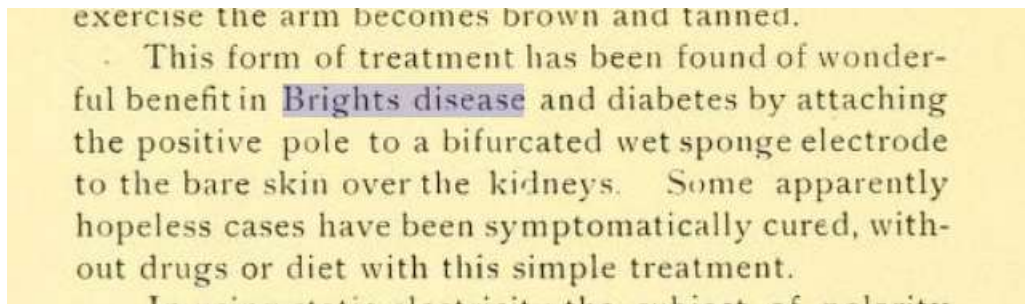
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<sup>1</sup> Ancestry.co.uk - British Postal Service Appointment Books, 1737-1969

<sup>2</sup> George Gould, *A pocket medical dictionary : giving the pronunciation and definition of the principal words used in medicine and the collateral sciences* (Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, 1900): 73

historic applications of kidney disease; it would now be called acute or chronic nephritis. The disease was frequently diagnosed in patients with diabetes.

Historically, Bright's disease *could* have been treated with warm baths, blood-letting, squill (a plant, which can be used as a poison or for medicinal purposes)<sup>3</sup>, digitalis, mercuric compounds, opium, diuretics, laxatives and dietary therapy; this latter included abstinence from alcoholic drinks, cheese and red meat. Then there was the use of electric treatment.



exercise the arm becomes brown and tanned.  
This form of treatment has been found of wonderful benefit in **Bright's disease** and diabetes by attaching the positive pole to a bifurcated wet sponge electrode to the bare skin over the kidneys. Some apparently hopeless cases have been symptomatically cured, without drugs or diet with this simple treatment.

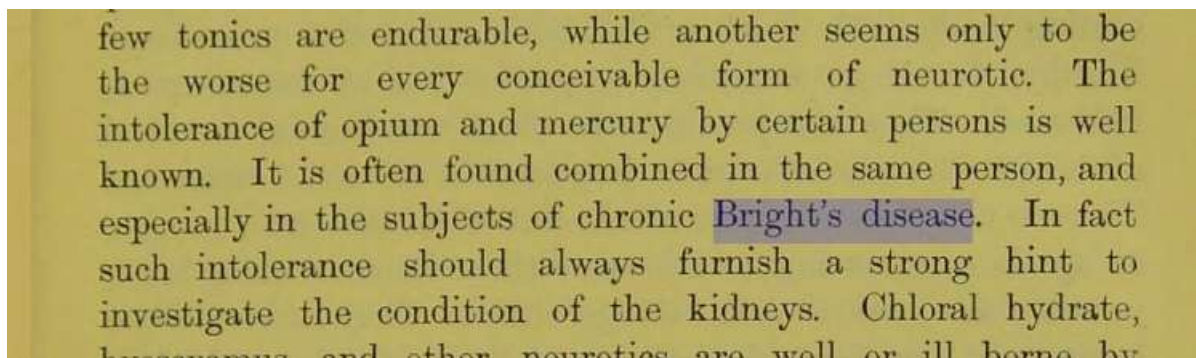
From Homer-Clark's An Electrotherapeutic Guide<sup>4</sup>

It sounds a rather terrifying treatment!

## Dropsy

Dropsy often develops when kidney disease is evident. The symptoms may include skin which feels tight, with joints that may be hard to move, swollen legs and ankles due to kidney failure. Other symptoms depend on the underlying cause.

The treatment involved resolving the underlying cause of the dropsy. Many cases of kidney disease are treated with diuretics, as this extract from an 1897 medical text shows.<sup>5</sup>



few tonics are endurable, while another seems only to be the worse for every conceivable form of neurotic. The intolerance of opium and mercury by certain persons is well known. It is often found combined in the same person, and especially in the subjects of chronic **Bright's disease**. In fact such intolerance should always furnish a strong hint to investigate the condition of the kidneys. Chloral hydrate, bromocresol and other neurotics are well or ill borne by

Charles was in good company with his illness. Famous names that also had the disease were the engineers Isambard Kingdom Brunel, who died on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1859 and Robert Stevenson, who died on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1859. Robert Stroud, the famed 'birdman of Alcatraz' was diagnosed with this disease shortly after beginning a sentence in Leavenworth Prison.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [Drimia maritima - Wikipedia](#)

<sup>4</sup> Howe, William F. & Bennett, Homer Clark. *Electro-Therapeutic Guide* (Lima: National College of Electro Therapeutics, 1907): 220.

<sup>5</sup> Fothergill, J. Milner *The practitioner's handbook of treatment, or, the principles of therapeutics* (London: Macmillan, 1897): 13

<sup>6</sup> [Bright's disease - Wikipedia](#)

Pensioner Details
<i>Pensioner name:</i> Charles Henry Chapman
<i>Person ID:</i> DV1004
<i>Your name:</i> Anonymous
<i>U3A group:</i> N/A
Part One: Birth and Family
1: When and where was your pensioner born?
Charles was born on the 8th February 1844 and baptised 10 <sup>th</sup> March 1844, West Drayton.
2: Who were your pensioners' parents? Record any details you can find out about them here (e.g. occupation, religious affiliation, whether they could read or write)
<p>Charles' father was <b>Robert Douthwaite Chapman</b>, born Sutton, Middlesex 1800. He was born to William and Jane Chapman and baptised on 25th May 1800, St Leonard, Heston, Hounslow.</p> <p>He died in 1872 and was buried on 19th September 1872 at St Mary, Hanwell, Ealing.</p> <p>1841: Cowley, Hillingdon, Middlesex; Robert was a policeman  1851: Money Lane, West Drayton, Uxbridge, Middlesex; Sergeant Railway Police  1861: Omega Place, Uxbridge Road, Ealing<sup>1</sup>; Great Western Police  1871: 5 Omega Cottage, Ealing; Robert is a widower and pensioner. His housekeeper is a niece Mary Broome age 48.</p> <p>Charles' mother was <b>Elizabeth Terry Abbott</b>, born in Hanwell, Middlesex to James &amp; Jane Abbott and baptised on 13th August 1806 at St Mary, Hanwell, Ealing.</p> <p>She died in 1862 and was buried on 19th March 1862 at St Mary, Hanwell, Ealing.</p> <p>Robert and Elizabeth married on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1835 at St George, Hanover Square, Westminster. Both signed their names, which would indicate they were literate.</p>
3: Did your pensioner have any siblings? What were their names, and how old were they in relation to your pensioner? Use this space to record anything else you have found out about them (e.g. occupation)
<p><b>William Douthwaite Chapman</b> (1838-1894). He was born in the Brentford district on 31st January 1838 and died in the Cardiff area. On 20th January 1863 he married Martha Heath (a cook) in Cardiff. William worked as a station master, starting work as a supernumery in 1855 at 15/-. By the time he died, he was a station inspector, earning 30/- (I presume a week). He resigned in December 1893.</p> <p><b>Ann Elizabeth Chapman</b> (1840-1881). She was born on 18th June 1839 and baptised on 27 September 1839, West Drayton, Middlesex. She married Alfred Frederick Ewin (a coachman) on 14 May 1860, Westminster, St Marylebone. She died at 6 Brewer Street, Chelsea and was buried in the Brompton Cemetery on 6 July 1861, aged 42 years.</p>

**James Robert Chapman** (1841). He was born on the 31 October 1841 and baptised on the 5 December 1841 at West Drayton. I cannot accurately trace a marriage or death.

**Thomas Abbott Chapman** (1849-1928?). He was baptised on 3 June 1849 in West Drayton. I cannot accurately trace a marriage or death

### Part Two: Marriage and children

1: Did your pensioner marry? What was their spouse's name, and when and where did they marry them? Use this space to record any extra details you can find out about their spouse (e.g. when/where they were born, their occupation)

Marriage of Charles Henry Chapman and Mary Sarah Davis, 13th December 1873, Exeter St Sidwell's.

Mary Sarah Davis was born in 1855 in Islington [Q2] to Charles Davis (b.1828 in Clerkenwell) and Harriett Radford (b.1824 in Exeter). Mary died in 1929 aged 74 and I think she was buried in the Higher Cemetery, Exeter on 5th March 1929.

2: Did your pensioner have any children? What were their names, and when they were born? Use this space to record any extra details you can find out about them (e.g. occupation, where they lived later in life)

Children of Charles and Mary (all born in Exeter):-

Rose Marie (Mary) Chapman was born in 1874 and baptised on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 1874 Exeter, St. James. She died aged 13 months and was buried on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1875, Exeter St James.

Charles Ernest Chapman was born on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1875 and baptised 31<sup>st</sup> May 1875 Exeter, St James. He married Emily Louisa Sidney (1874-1968) in 1899 in Exeter. He worked for the postal service and as a railway telegraphist. He died in 1945.

William Henry Chapman was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1876 and baptised 30<sup>th</sup> October 1876 in Exeter St James. He married Bertha Mear(s) in 1898, Exeter. He worked as a merchant's clerk in Exeter. He died in 1950.

Albert Frederick Chapman was born in 1879. He married either Alice Florence Southard or Annie Wiggins in 1904, Exeter. He died in 1952.

Alfred Edwin Chapman was born in 1880. He died at home in Summerland Street, Exeter and was buried on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1882, Exeter St James.

Beatrice Annie Chapman was born in 1882. She died at 16 Jubilee Road, Exeter and was buried on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1896.

Florence Ethel Chapman was born in 1884. She married George Abbott in Exeter 1906. She died on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1964 at 18 North Street, Exeter.

Arthur Harold Chapman was born in 1887. He died and was buried on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1897, Heavitree, Exeter.

Elsie Mabel Chapman was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1898, christened 29<sup>th</sup> June 1898<sup>ii</sup>. She married William James Moore on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1920 at Mount Pleasant Methodist Church, Exeter. In 1939, William was the station master at South Molton. Elsie died in 1974 in Taunton.

### Part Three: Work

1: What occupation was your pensioner recorded as doing in census years? Please make sure to state clearly which year you are referring to

1851: Scholar  
1861: Porter  
1871: Telegraph Clerk  
1881: Civil Servant Telegraph Dept  
1891: Government telegraphist  
1901: Postal Clerk

2: What occupations were people living with your pensioner (e.g. spouse, children, boarders) doing in the census years? Please make sure to state clearly which year you are referring to

1911: Mary Sarah Chapman, 52 Polsloe Road, Heavitree, widow, a domestic nurse (the only time an occupation is mentioned in the censuses). Also in the household were Edith Susan Quick (b1873) boarding house keeper; Harriett Ellen Quick, sister to Edith (b1870) assisting in the business and Harriett Burnett, a widowed aunt (b1834), no occupation

### Part Four: Anything Else

Please use this space to record anything else you have found out about your pensioner

Nothing more found about his life after retirement.

Charles died on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1903 at home of Brights disease (6 years) and Dropsy (10 months). His widow Mary registered the death on September 4<sup>th</sup> 1903. [Copy of death certificate attached]

Probate record: Charles Henry Chapman of 27 Herschell Road Exeter retired post office clerk died 2 September 1903. Administration [with will] Exeter 10 October to Mary Sarah Chapman widow Effects £159 15s 5d

## Part Five: Your Sources

Please use this space to record the sources you have used

### Charles Henry Chapman

**Baptism** = London Metropolitan Archives; London, England; Reference

Number: *DRO/001/A/01/005*

**1851 census return** = Class: *HO107*; Piece: *1697*; Folio: *26*; Page: *13*; GSU roll: *193605*

**1861 census return** = Class: *RG 9*; Piece: *777*; Folio: *76*; Page: *29*; GSU roll: *542699*

**1871 census return** = Class: *RG10*; Piece: *2065*; Folio: *78*; Page: *7*; GSU roll: *831774*

**1881 census return** = Class: *RG11*; Piece: *2151*; Folio: *31*; Page: *3*; GSU roll: *1341518*

**1891 census return** = Class: *RG12*; Piece: *1688*; Folio: *111*; Page: *2*; GSU roll: *6096798*

**1901 census return** = Class: *RG13*; Piece: *2041*; Folio: *133*; Page: *8*

**Marriage** = Marriage register accessed from Devon Family History website; Exeter St Sidwell parish register 1871-1879 (marriages) p77

**Death** = FreeBMD. *England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915*

**Probate** = *England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995*

### Mary Sarah Chapman [nee Davis]

**Birth** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Births 1837-2006 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**1871 census** = Class: *RG10*; Piece: *2061*; Folio: *6*; Page: *6*;

**1911 census** = Class: *RG14*; Piece: *12609*; Schedule Number: *79*

**Death** = *England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916-2007*

**Burial** = Exeter City Council cemetery records (available as pdf)

### Elizabeth Terry Chapman [nee Abbott]

**Birth** - [Record Transcription: Middlesex Baptisms | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Burial** - [Record Transcription: Greater London Burial Index | findmypast.co.uk](#)

### Robert Douthwaite Chapman

**Baptism** - [Record Transcription: Westminster Baptisms | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Marriage** - [Record Transcription: Westminster Marriages | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Burial** - [London, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813-2003 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

**1841 census return** = [1841 England Census - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

**1851 census return** = [1851 England Census - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

**1861 census return** = [1861 England Census - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

**1871 census return** = [Record Transcription: 1871 England, Wales & Scotland Census | findmypast.co.uk](#)

### William Douthwaite Chapman

**Birth** - [England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)  
**Marriage** - [Ancestry.co.uk - Glamorganshire, Wales, Anglican Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1570-1994](#)  
**Employment** - [UK, Railway Employment Records, 1833-1956 - Ancestry.co.uk](#); [UK, Railway Employment Records, 1833-1956 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)  
**1871 census** - [Record Transcription: 1871 England, Wales & Scotland Census | findmypast.co.uk](#)  
**1881 census** - [Record Transcription: 1881 England, Wales & Scotland Census | findmypast.co.uk](#)  
**1891 census** - [Record Transcription: 1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census | findmypast.co.uk](#)  
**Death** - [England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

#### Ann Elizabeth Chapman

**Birth** - [London, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1917 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)  
**Marriage** - [London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1932 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)  
**Death** - [Brompton, London, England, Cemetery Registers, 1840-2012 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

#### James Robert Chapman

**Birth** - [London, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1917 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

#### Thomas Abbott Chapman

**Birth** - [London, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1917 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

#### Rose Marie (Mary) Chapman

**Baptism** - [Record Transcription: Devon Baptisms | findmypast.co.uk](#)  
**Burial** - [Record Transcription: Devon Burials | findmypast.co.uk](#)

#### Charles Ernest Chapman

**Baptism** - [Devon Baptisms Image | findmypast.co.uk](#)  
**Marriage** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Marriages 1837-2005 | findmypast.co.uk](#)  
**Employment** - [Ancestry.co.uk - British Postal Service Appointment Books, 1737-1969](#)  
**1939 census** - [Record Transcription: 1939 Register | findmypast.co.uk](#)  
**Death** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

#### William Henry Chapman



**Baptism** - [Record Transcription: Devon Baptisms | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Marriage** – [Record Transcription: England & Wales Marriages 1837-2005 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Death** – [Record Transcription: England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

### **Albert Frederick Chapman**

**Birth** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Births 1837-2006 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Marriage** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Marriages 1837-2005 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Death** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

### **Alfred Edwin Chapman**

**Birth** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Births 1837-2006 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Death** – [South West Heritage Trust – Devon Burials –4316A/PR/1/10](#)

### **Beatrice Annie Chapman**

**Birth** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Births 1837-2006 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Death** - [South West Heritage Trust – Devon Burials – 3004A/PR/1/34](#)

### **Florence Ethel Chapman**

**Birth** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Births 1837-2006 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Marriage** - [England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

**Death** - [England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916-2007 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)

### **Arthur Harold Chapman**

**Birth** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Births 1837-2006 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Burial** - [Record Transcription: Devon Burials | findmypast.co.uk](#)

### **Elsie Mabel Chapman**

**Baptism** - [Record Transcription: Devon Baptisms | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Marriage** - [Record Transcription: Devon Marriages And Banns | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**1939 census** - [Record Transcription: 1939 Register | findmypast.co.uk](#)

**Death** - [Record Transcription: England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

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