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Quarantine Stations: Controlling Contagion in 19th Century America



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Quarantine Stations: Controlling Contagion in 19th Century America

Infectious diseases have been a part of the American experience since our beginning. Initially, colonial settlers trusted that the local climate and air protected them from significant outbreaks. However, during the closing decades of the 18th century, outbreaks began to occur more frequently with an epidemic of yellow fever in 1793 taking the lives of nearly 4,000 citizens in Philadelphia. The following year, ***The Pennsylvania Gazette*** ran an article that had appeared two days earlier in the *Delaware Advertiser* about the local arrival in port of what were suspected to be potentially infected goods brought from New Orleans, known to be dealing with an outbreak of yellow fever. In part, that piece read:

"...In consequence of the late unhappy visitation at Philadelphia, ought not every precaution that human wisdom could devise, be adopted, and enforced, to prevent the like calamitous event?"

Are not the crew very sickly; and have not two of them died of the Yellow Fever, and been buried, since their arrival to this port?" [***The Pennsylvania Gazette***, August 6, 1794.]

Five years later, Congress would create the Marine Hospital Service as a means of monitoring the health of primarily sailors, although this would subsequently be broadened to encompass an expanding number of immigrants arriving on



merchant vessels. Official presidential references to epidemics began with Andrew Jackson in a Congressional address alluding to a pestilence that was then impacting the economy of the United States, an outbreak of cholera in 1831-1832. Cholera, yellow fever, smallpox, and other transmissible diseases, not fully understood until the twentieth century, posed a significant and terrifying threat.

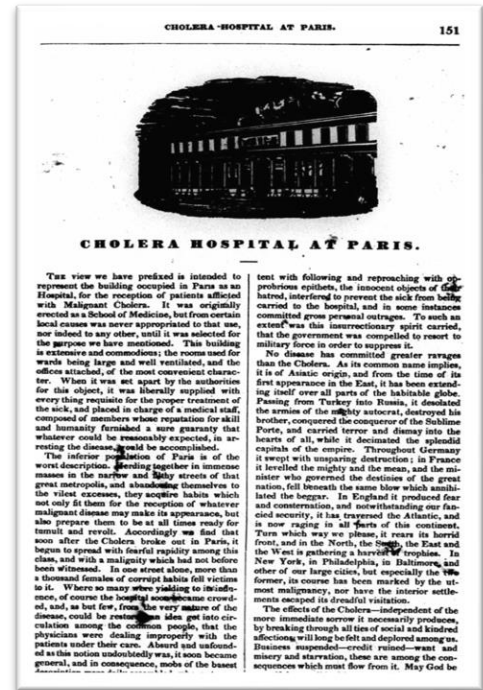
While isolated cases of cholera did arise occasionally in the United States, historians have noted that the disease was not widely encountered in this country until the epidemic of the early 1830s. There were on-going debates between medical practitioners as to whether quarantine of those suffering from cholera was justified. Out of an abundance of caution, the New York Board of Health imposed quarantine restrictions in the winter months of 1831-32 as a defense against infected visitors arriving from Canada and Europe. Unaware of the bacterial element of the disease that contributed to the spread of the disease, those in authority assumed that the disease was largely due to intemperate and immoral behavior, primarily associated with the lower classes. William Lloyd Garrison's paper, ***The Liberator***, in reporting the news to Bostonians in July of 1832 quoted from the *New York Courier* as follows:

"The gradual increase of the cholera appears to create a gradual increase of intemperance, folly and dissipation, among certain classes of society. In the evening, the little grog shops and taverns about town appear to be filled with revelry and mirth. Among the young men in the lower, middling, and even higher stations of life, there is little cessation from the habits of dissipation. This fool-hardiness must, of itself, increase the number of victims to the pestilence." [***The Liberator***, July 28, 1832.]

The Liberator had been tracking the emergence of cholera in Europe during the first half of 1832. In one extraction from the *Leipsic Gazette*, the paper passed along the conclusion by Viennese doctors that "...the cholera is entirely telluric and created by mephitic vapours which are found in the earth, and first communicated to the water." [***The Liberator***, March 3, 1832.]

Situated in Philadelphia where the outbreak was somewhat controlled that year, **Godey's Lady's Book** reported on the spread of cholera in the major metropolitan cities of Europe:

"Passing from Turkey into Russia, it desolated the armies of the mighty autocrat, destroyed his brother, conquered the conqueror of the Sublime Porte, and carried terror and dismay into the hearts of all, while it decimated the splendid capitals of the empire. Throughout Germany it swept with unsparing destruction; in France it levelled the mighty and the mean, and the minister who governed the destinies of the great nation, fell beneath the same blow which annihilated the beggar. In England it produced fear and consternation, and notwithstanding our fancied security, it has traversed the Atlantic, and is now raging in all parts of this continent."



Godey's article piously concluded with the following *"The effects of the Cholera - independent of the more immediate sorrow it necessarily produces, by breaking through all ties of social and kindred affections, will long be felt and deplored among us. Business suspended - credit ruined - want and misery and starvation, these are among the consequences which must flow from it. May God be merciful to us all in this season of heavy calamity."* [**Godey's Lady's Book**, September 1832.]

What made cholera so terrifying was that the symptoms -- diarrhea, spasmodic vomiting, and cramping -- came on quickly and the subsequent rapid dehydration could overcome even the healthiest victim in the space of 24 hours. Advice on how best to decontaminate and protect one's household against the disease was questionable. One practical chemist recommended fumigating a house through the gaseous vapor created by mixing together common salt, oxide of manganese mixed with water, and oil of vitrol. The bacterium that is the actual cause of the disease would not be identified until

the 1880s and the ways in which it was passed to others was imperfectly understood in 1832.

In Philadelphia, the College of Physicians had attributed outbreaks in the city to three specific factors -- place, habitation, and person. They recognized that water supply had some role in the spread of the disease but attributed their success in keeping the outbreak under control to an emphasis on sanitation in cleaning city streets and drawing water from the Fairmont Reservoir. The number of cases in Philadelphia during this outbreak was markedly lower than that seen in New York City and this was attributed to the water system that the city had built. Those populations that had drinking water drawn from that Reservoir were less hard hit by the disease. Populations south of the city however were not on that system; thus, black, and Irish populations were harder hit, because their water supply was more frequently contaminated. (Jon Snow, a London physician mapping the data during an outbreak in 1854, would finally pinpoint this as the key source of contagion, although his findings would not be embraced by the medical profession for another 30 years.)

Because of the uncertainty surrounding cholera, a disease not known outside of Asia before 1817, major port cities along the eastern seaboard of the United States -- Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charleston -- instigated quarantine protections.

Building Quarantine Stations

A History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania by Henry Graham Ashmead in ***American County Histories, Series I: Pennsylvania***, notes that earlier a quarantine station had been established in the relatively remote town of Tinicum, a borough that incorporated several smaller islands in the Delaware River. With the intent of screening those arriving in the city through merchant shipping and immigration:

"In the last decade of the eighteenth century the city of Philadelphia was scourged with yellow fever, and so great was the alarm at the proximity of the Lazaretto, then located just back of Fort Mifflin, on Providence Island, that it was determined to change the site of that station, hence on Aug. 7, 1799, the Board of Health of Philadelphia purchased from Morris Smith and Reuben Smith ten acres of land on the island of Tinicum, and immediately began the erection of the buildings there which were completed in 1800, and quarantine was established there for the first time

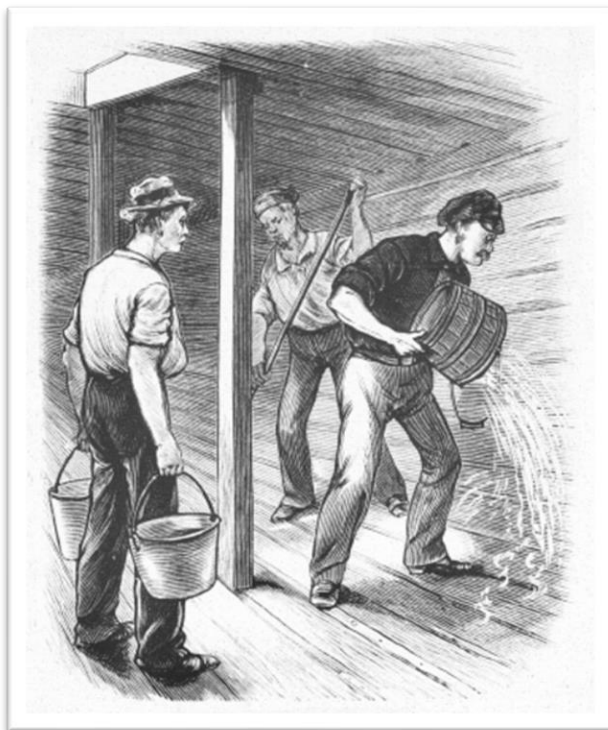
in 1801.” [Henry Graham Ashmead, *A History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania*, 1884, L. H. Everts, page 283, **American County Histories, Series I: Pennsylvania.**]

A few paragraphs later, Ashmead notes a swift and virulent outbreak of yellow fever in 1870 and its impact on citizens of Tinicum:

“On Tuesday, July 26th, Mrs. Eva Kugler, wife of the steward of the quarantine, was taken ill, and died on Saturday. Dr. Cardeza, who was in attendance of Mr. Pepper's family, declared the fever was "a stranger" in this locality, and suggested that unusual care should be taken to prevent contagion. The inference was plain, and when Dr. William B. Ulrich unhesitatingly pronounced it yellow fever the public in the neighborhood, in Chester, and even in Philadelphia, became greatly alarmed lest it might spread. Dr. William S. Thompson, the Lazaretto physician, and Mrs. Gartsell, a nurse who had been attached to the station for fifteen years, were attacked with the disorder. Dr. John F.M. Forwood, of Chester, who twice before had the fever in the Southern States, was summoned to act at the Lazaretto, being appointed temporary physician there. Dr. Thompson and Mrs. Gartsell died on the 11th of August, and on the 13th, Robert Gartside, the quarantine master, fell a victim to the disease. Notwithstanding the fact that Dr. Forwood had had the disease before, he was stricken with the fever, and Dr. Ulrich was called to attend on all the cases there. By the 18th of August, the fever had subsided, no new cases having appeared for several days, and all who were then sick of the disorder recovered. About twenty cases of yellow fever occurred. Of these Jacob Pepper, Ann Eliza Enos, Ann Sharp, Dr. Thompson, Robert Gartside, Eva Kugler, Mrs. Gartsell, William H. Dillmore, and the woman and her son on the canal-boat died.” [Henry Graham Ashmead, *A History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania*, 1884, L. H. Everts, page 283, **American County Histories, Series I: Pennsylvania.**]

This quarantine station, or the Lazaretto as it was more commonly known, was a critical stopping point for merchant ships entering the major port of Philadelphia as they carried both passengers and cargo. Situated just at the point where ships would enter the Delaware River, it sits about five miles south of the city of Philadelphia. Coverage in the **Delaware County Republican** in October of 1858 provided statistics on the number and type of vessels that were required to check into the station:

"The Quarantine season at the Lazaretto in this county, closed yesterday. We learn from the proper source, that from the first of June until the present time, there arrived at quarantine 39 ships, 85 barques, 96 brigs and 162 schooners, making in all three hundred and eighty one vessels, which were in the immediate charge of the physician at the station - Dr. L.S. FILBERT. The cargoes of twenty two of these vessels were discharged at the Lazaretto. Of the forty four patients admitted into the hospital, twenty seven had yellow fever, only four of whom died from that disease. The regulations of the station were carried out most rigidly, by the physician, and to this cause may be attributed the gratifying success which attended the labors of Dr. F., in his treatment of the sick. At no period within our recollection was the number of vessels half so great, and consequently at no time were the duties of the officers so arduous. We congratulate the Doctor upon the success which has attended his labors during the past four months, a success of which he and his friends have just cause to feel proud." [**Delaware County Republican**, October 15, 1858.]



*"Scrubbing The Ship's Hold", **Frank Leslie's Weekly**, September 21, 1878*

The **Delaware County American** newspaper drew additional attention to the contribution to public welfare that those working in the Lazaretto provided:

"CAPT. B.F. MILLER, Custom House officer at the Lazaretto, was on the brig 'Home' almost every day while at quarantine, and aided in cleansing, unloading, etc. He is familiar with yellow fever, and while not fearing it, took all precautions known to himself and to those accustomed to dealing with it. He was first satisfied that he was perfectly well, and when on the boat was careful not to inhale any of its odors. To avoid this, he constantly smoked either a cigar or pipe, and

when in the cabin or more confined part would not suffer himself to breathe only when at a window. After all his duties were performed he

took a course of medicine and is apparently free from all traces of the disease. This is the plan usually pursued, and it is said to be almost sure preventive.” [Delaware County American, August 24, 1870.]

One could not always count on protective measures, immunity, or recovery. Quarantine Master at the Lazaretto, Robert Gartside, referenced earlier, died in 1870 of yellow fever, despite having survived a previous bout. An obituary appearing in the **Delaware County American** with the headline read:

“DEATH OF ROBERT GARTSIDE

It is with deep and heartfelt pain that we record the decease of this gentleman, Quarantine Master at the Lazaretto, on Friday morning last of the prevalent contagion, yellow fever. We were aware of his having been attacked by the insidious disease but had no idea that his sickness was unto death but were led to believe that the attack was comparatively light, and one from which he would, in all probability, recover.” [Delaware County American, August 17, 1870.]

The Lazaretto was the first quarantine station created in the United States and continued in that role until it was closed in 1895. Now a museum, since that time, the facility’s land and buildings have served a variety of purposes including as a private athletic club and a flight school.

Those who caught yellow fever might unknowingly or even willfully mistake their own symptoms for something less severe until their condition passed to a critical stage. Professional physicians brought in at that point frequently had nothing to offer beyond predictions as to the likely survival or death of the patient.

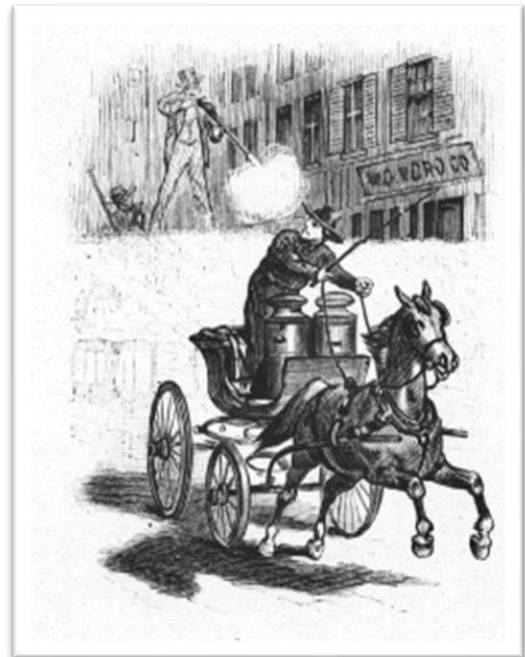
Wrote the Reverend Theodore Clapp in a memoir of his twenty years in New Orleans:

“In a certain epidemic, a young man of my acquaintance had the yellow fever in the severest form. As he was near me, and an intimate friend, I became one of his nurses. He had not the slightest idea of dying, and often said, “Don't be alarmed; Yellow Jack cannot kill me.” He indulged in facetious remarks, to keep up our spirits, for he saw that we were anxious and alarmed. On the third day, about noon, he was seized with the black vomit. The doctor came in, looked at him a moment, and then taking me one side, observed, “It is all over with him; he will die before sundown; I shall give no further prescriptions; do with him now whatever you please.”

Clapp's narrative continues, telling of a French nurse familiar with Creole treatment of yellow fever who took over care of the patient and, through her efforts as well as his own, successfully brought the patient through the night.

"In the morning, the doctor stopped at the door in his gig, to ask what hour the patient had died. To his great astonishment, he learned the favorable results of our experiment. In a few days after, the man entered his store, well. He is still living and enjoys good health." [Theodore Clapp, *Autobiographical Sketches and Recollections, During a Thirty-Five Years' Residence in New Orleans*, 2nd Edition, Phillips, Sampson, Company, 1858, pp. 255-264, **American County Histories, Series III: Louisiana.**]

Given the horror of such illnesses escaping into populated areas, it is not surprising that newspapers reported on the use of "shotgun quarantine", armed citizens guarding against those either trying to enter a healthy town or escape from an infected one. In a desire to keep shipping open and commerce alive, quarantine stations were viewed as an acceptable means of controlling poorly understood means of infection. However, as the populations in port cities grew wealthier during industrial expansion and immigrants flocked to take advantage of new opportunities, the manner in which disease was confined was increasingly scrutinized. Suspicions of risky behaviors by those working for the Marine Hospital Service at these quarantine stations grew in the minds of those living in the small towns nearby. In the case of the Quarantine Station established on Staten Island as a means of protecting the port of New York, the anxiety over exposure erupted in 1858.



"Milkman Attempting to Pass a Barricade", **Frank Leslie's Weekly**, September 21, 1878

The Quarantine Wars

In 2004, Kathryn Stephenson reported in detail the size and importance of the Quarantine Station that was built near the small towns of Tompkinsville and Castleton on Staten Island.

“...the Quarantine sometimes housed more than 1,500 passengers and sailors at one time, often treating more than 8,000 patients over the course of a year. Housed in that facility were doctors, nurses, orderlies, boatmen and stevedores. She writes of the theories of how shipping vessels were viewed as carrying and contributing to the spread of disease. “In the 1850's, the bowels of ships at sea were considered breeding spots for infectious disease, particularly in the case of yellow fever. The prevailing theory among the quarantine staff at the time was that disease thrived in the humid, dark recesses of the cargo holds of ships coming from tropical regions where particular diseases were prevalent and that diseases were essentially atmospheric....One version of this theory was that this pestilential miasma was carried into the holds of ships as their cargoes were packed in tropical climates, while another version held that chemical reactions in the holds -- similar to the fermentation of alcohol -- generated diseases while ships were at sea.” [Kathryn Stephenson, “The Quarantine War: The Burning of the New York Marine Hospital,” *Public Health Reports / January-February 2004 / Volume 119*, pp 79-92;]



“Fumigating the Ship's Hold”, **Frank Leslie's Weekly**, September 21, 1878.

Due to this belief, ships were regularly fumigated and washed down upon arrival, in some instances by flooding the hold of the ship with salt water and subsequently pumping the water back out.

Because stevedores, employed by the Marine Hospital Service, served as the manual laborers charged with removing cargo from the ship's hold, their behaviors were regulated and monitored for compliance with those regulations. Whether due to possibly contagious workers visiting the dram shops in

Tompkinsville on their nights off or a rising number of infected ships converging at the medical facility, outbreaks of cholera, typhus, and yellow fever were occurring more frequently, and local residents increasingly felt threatened.

Inhabitants of Staten Island tried to pursue legislative means to remove the Quarantine Station to New Jersey, but without success. During the years between 1855 and 1858, friction arose between those who worked in the Quarantine Station and the local property owners. Matters came to a head in the final weeks of August 1858 when, as quoted by Kathryn Stephenson, a meeting of the Castleton Board of Health advocated that local citizens "...protect themselves by abating this abominable nuisance without delay."

Situated in Manhattan, the young publication, *Frank Leslie's Weekly*, in its September 9, 1858 issue, covered the protests and arson that took place across the three days of September 1-3.



"Burning of Quarantine Buildings, New York." *Frank Lesley's Weekly*, September 9, 1858.

"BURNING OF QUARANTINE BUILDINGS, NEW YORK.

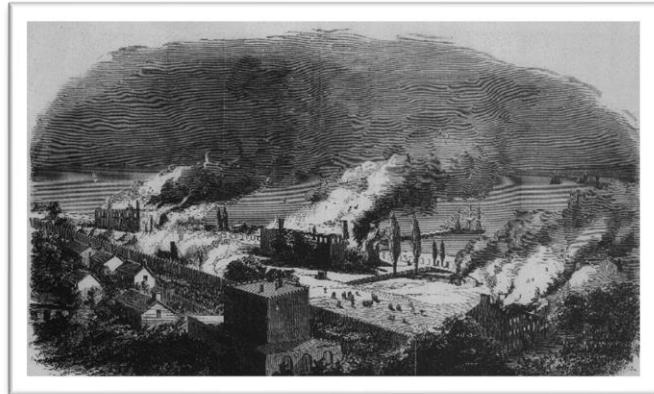
The people of Staten Island destroyed the quarantine buildings last week, Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

The first that was known of the intention to destroy the buildings was the appearance of about five hundred persons at the upper gate, on the line of the west wall. Dr. Thompson was instantly made aware of the fact when he ordered the stevedores to be aroused. He had no sooner given the above order, than the old small-pox hospital (unoccupied) on the upper end of the grounds, was

discovered to be on fire. Everyone within the grounds was soon awake; but it was found that the mob was too strong for them to attempt to drive them away.

Dr. Bissell, as soon as he saw the fire, took his gun, and ran up to the small-pox hospital, where he found a large number of straw beds piled under the piazzas, and burning at a tremendous rate. He remonstrated with the mob, but to no purpose, as they instantly drove him from the place. They then proceeded to the shanties extending along the west wall - ten in number - and fired each of them, first however, removing the sick, among them some of the small-pox patients, about fifteen in number. The mob appeared, while destroying the shanties, in a great state of excitement. They would run into the three shanties not fired and secure a straw bed, and then take it to where the fire was, setting the beds on fire; after which, they would return with the burning beds, and throw them into the shanties. In this manner, they destroyed everyone. When Dr. Bissell first went out to remonstrate against their conduct, he was knocked down, and compelled to fly for his life.

After the shanties had been fired, they proceeded to the burnhouse, several small out-houses, all of which they fired, and which were totally destroyed. They even took the dead cart, and another wagon that was on the ground, and ran them into the fire. The coal yard, containing about 600 tons, was next visited by the mob, and all the coal destroyed. In several of the shanties were about twenty to fifty tons of coal, which was also consumed. The baggage-house, containing a large amount of baggage, was totally destroyed, together with the engine and 250 feet of hose, thus cutting off any chance for using the same to arrest the progress of the flames.



"Destruction of the Quarantine Buildings by the Inhabitants of Tompkinsville...September 1, 1858."

The mob, at twelve o'clock, then proceeded to the residence of Dr. Thompson. Here they ordered every person out of the house. Mrs. Thompson, who was confined to her bed, had to be conveyed from the house in a chair, and was taken to the residence of a Mr. Fountain, on the outside of the wall. Dr. Thompson succeeded in getting out a portion of his library before the flames

drove him from the dwelling. Some of his furniture was also saved. The building was, however, totally destroyed.

During the attempt made by the stevedores to extinguish the flames, one of them, named Frank Mathews, was shot in the neck with buck-shot. His recovery is considered doubtful. Five others were wounded, and it is reported that a corpse was consumed in the flames. The mob remained in and about the quarantine grounds until near daylight when they all left. Among them were many well-known citizens of the island, none of whom were disguised.

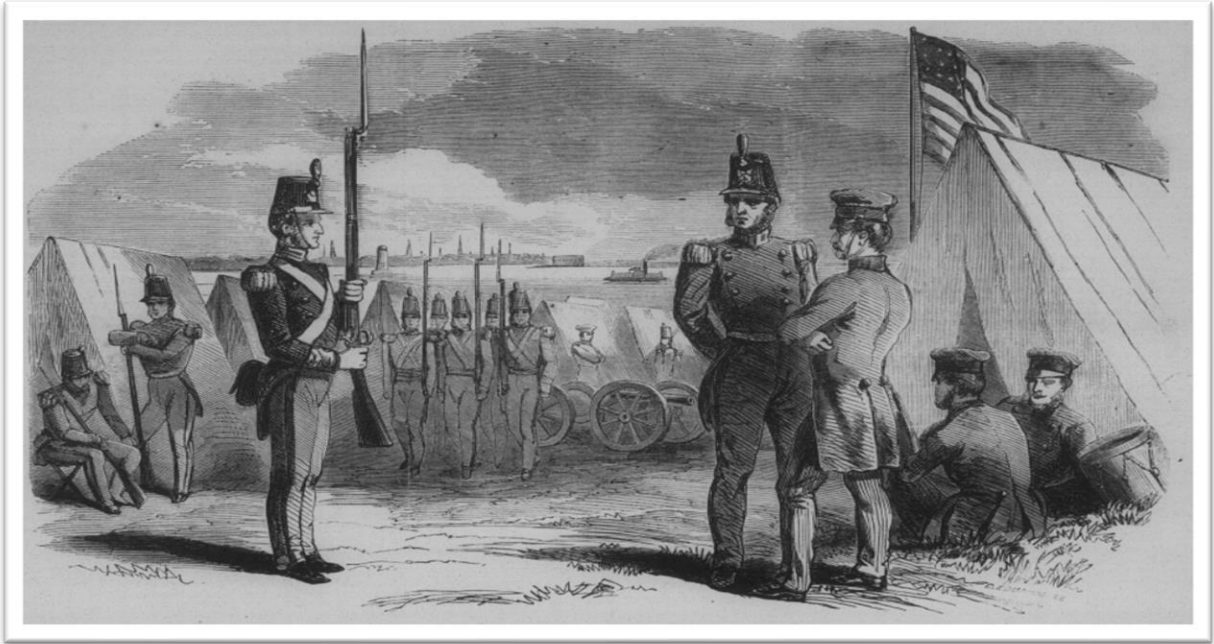
The sick that were removed from the shanties, about sixty in number, were placed by the mob about two hundred yards from the fire. In the morning, however, many were yet lying about on the grass. A woman lay up by the side of the stone wall, with the smallpox in its worst stages; a piece of canvas was erected over her, to keep the sun off. She appeared to be suffering very intensely, but no attempt was made to remove her. On the grass plat near the St. Nicholas were two men with yellow fever, one of whom was said to be dying.

The dwelling of Dr. Thompson, the health officer, was burned, not a timber of it remaining; in short, all the hospitals, excepting the one at the entrance gate, which was used principally for ship fever and general disorders, are destroyed, and into this one are now crowded the patients from all the hospitals combined. Some sixty passengers from the steamer Empire City were landed in the afternoon previous, to remain five days, who made their escape in the confusion attending the burning. There have been destroyed in all two brick hospitals, five shanties, the dead house, and Dr. Thompson's dwelling, stables, and out-houses: and also, all the Doctor's private papers.

Dr. Thompson's residence presents really a melancholy sight. Of this once beautiful house nothing now remains but the shattered walls. About the gardens are strewn books, pamphlets, medical works, classical authors, and private memoranda, tossed by the giddy winds about. Dr. T. was insured for \$6,000. The loss on the other property is estimated at \$100,000, and no insurance.

The only building saved was the large stone hospital, used for the female portion of the inmates, called the St. Nicholas. This building was used for fever cases, and it is here all the patients are now huddled together. An attempt was made to burn it but failed.

New York, Sept. 3. - The remainder of the quarantine buildings was burnt last night by incendiaries. There was no excitement. A guard of marines was present to protect the Government property. Among the buildings burnt were six cottages, occupied by boatmen belonging to the station, and the large mansion of Dr. Waller, deputy health officer, and the fine brick dwelling-house of Dr. Bissell." [**Frank Lesley's Weekly**, September 9, 1858]



The Quarantine War—Encampment Of The Eighth Regiment On Staten Island—Changing Guard. **Frank Leslie's Weekly**, September 25, 1858.

Of course, the Metropolitan Police of New York City were called out to put down what one paper referred to as a "rebellion." The State Militia were also called upon to provide a presence over the next few months.

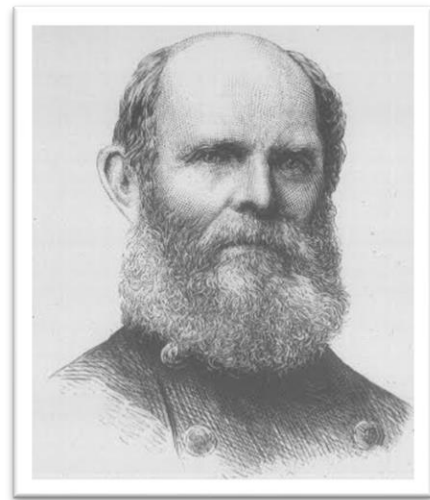
Those arsonists who could be identified were promptly arrested, although Cornelius Vanderbilt, born on Staten Island, just as promptly posted bail for the greater number of those jailed.

In 1857, Metropolitan Police Captain George W. Walling was detailed to protect the Quarantine grounds at Staten Island and Seguin's Point, during the yellow-fever war. He had scarcely been relieved, when the people mobbed the place and set the buildings on fire. This led to his being returned, and also to the

encampment of the State militia, for several weeks, upon the island. [**Frank Leslie's Weekly**, June 5, 1875.]

To properly put the horror in perspective, **Frank Leslie's Weekly** followed up in a September 13 issue with fulsome descriptions of the Quarantine Station prior to its destruction:

"The cut which adorns our last page presents an accurate view of the Hospital and Quarantine grounds, with the pier in the foreground, on the end of which the yellow flag of the Health officer is kept flying, and from which landing he takes his boat to visit steamers and vessels entering this port, which are all compelled to stop abreast of this pier until they receive his permit to come up to the city. A little to the right is the pier where emigrants are obliged to cleanse themselves and wash their clothing, when required to do so by the Health officer. On the summit of the hill is seen the pavilion where the denizens of New York, especially the Germans, are in the habit of resorting in great numbers on Sunday to partake of refreshments, imbibe lager bier, and stroll through its pleasant grounds. The view from this spot is one of rare beauty..."



*"The Face of Law and Order: George W. Walling." **Frank Leslie's Weekly**, June 5, 1875.*

*The land belonging to the Quarantine establishment of the State of New York is situated on a beautiful eminence, on the northeasterly point of Staten Island, and contains about thirty acres of land. The grounds slope gradually towards the water, which forms its eastern boundary. On the other three sides it is surrounded by a high massive stone wall. The establishment is distant five miles and thirty-five hundredths south-west of the most southern point of the city of New York, the Battery...The main building of the Health Officer's family residence—in the middle of the grounds—is thirty-eight by thirty feet, two and a half stories high, with a wing a story and a half high, thirty-five feet by twenty. The beauty of this location is unsurpassed by anything in the state." [**Frank Leslie's Weekly**, September 18, 1858.]*

An opinion piece appearing at the same time **in Frank Leslie's Weekly** came down firmly on the side of the Staten Island property owners, reiterating that the facility should be moved to New Jersey.

“...the wonder then will be universal that this community should so long have submitted to the existence of a Lazaretto, or pest-house, in the very midst of a dense population. The reasons for this removal, at any expense and with any conceivable sacrifices in the shortest possible time, are so numerous and obvious that it is unnecessary to recapitulate them all, or even a majority of them. The chief reason, of course, is that it furnishes a potent and probable cause of sickness. Its accessibility is such that, in spite of all precautions and prohibitions, the Quarantine may be broken, and infected persons find their way into the city. This is frequently done, and has been done within the last few weeks, so that were Yellow Fever communicable from one to another, as the contagionists would have us believe, the fears of the panic-makers would have been more than justified. There have been sporadic cases, and a few have died in the city, but from them the disease has not been extended. Although this case and a cumulation of other cases convince us that Yellow Fever is not contagious, or, in plainer words, not taken by contact, still, on account of the nearness of the Quarantine, it may be conveyed by infection from place to place. Every breeze that blows from that direction, may waft its seeds to the neighboring shores. In the holds of vessels, in trunks, chests, clothes, this fell sickness may lurk and be communicated to those who breathe their fetid atmosphere. But there are epidemics which spread by contact as well as by infection, and the danger from these is vastly increased by the proximity of the Quarantine...

It is gratifying to note that the Health Officer, Dr. Thompson, has given in his adhesion to this important cause, and publicly avowed his views of the necessity of a speedy removal. “In my judgment,” he remarks, “the citizens of the port and its vicinity could be far better protected against the importation of contagious and infectious diseases, and therefore mutually benefited by a proper and speedy change in the locality of the Marine Hospital; and I fully believe that, while such a change would vastly increase our Quarantine securities, it could be effected without imposing any additional burdens upon the commerce of the port.

It now remains for the Legislature of this State to act promptly and energetically with regard to this matter—which may truly be called a matter of vital importance.” [**Frank Leslie’s Weekly**, September 18, 1858.]

Other newspapers joined in that sentiment but the *New York Times*, read by an elite population, fiercely contradicted that opinion. Legal proceedings

extended through the early weeks of November with the presiding judge, himself a homeowner on Staten Island, finally ruling that the Quarantine represented a danger to Staten Island. In 1859, that Quarantine Station was relocated to a floating hospital ship, christened the *Florence Nightingale*.

Believing in the Science

Outbreaks of yellow fever, cholera, and ultimately the Spanish Flu, would continue to fuel awareness of the importance of pursuing investigations into their cause and best practices for prevention and eradication for the public good. While during the early half of the twentieth century, the United States supported more than 50 quarantine stations at ports of entry and land-border crossings, by century's end that number had been reduced to 20. As scientific researchers have traced the conditions under which so many communicable diseases thrive and as vaccines have been developed against those diseases, protective measures in the 21st century have minimized unnecessary fear. In the midst of the 2020 pandemic, we can trust those same researchers to discover the causes and establish sensible practices for living with contagion.

Print Work Consulted:

"The Quarantine War: The Burning of the New York Marine Hospital," Kathryn Stephenson, **Public Health Reports**, January-February 2004, Volume 119, pp 79-92. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1502261/pdf/15147652.pdf>

Accessible Archives Collections Used in Preparing

This White Paper

Accessible Archives provides diverse primary source materials reflecting broad views across American history and culture have been assembled into comprehensive databases. The following collections were utilized in composing this white paper.

American County Histories

Over a million pages of content encompassing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Research possibilities in local history, women and African American experiences, government, the medical and legal professions, churches, industry,

commerce, education, geology, geography, weather, transportation, wars, noted celebrations, health, vital statistics, and others.

Frank Leslie's Weekly, 1855-1922

Full run of issues and includes articles on: slavery and abolition; politics, elections, and political parties; the Civil War; industrialization and technology development; business, commerce, and commodities; society and culture; women's rights and suffrage; African American society and economics; immigration; the world in conflict; labor and radicalism; religion; and featured columns on music, the stage, fashion, fine arts, sports, and literature.

Godey's Lady's Book, 1830-1898

Comprised of articles on fashion, entertainment, health and hygiene, recipes, and remedies, morality, gems and jewelry, handcrafts, marriage, education, suffrage, "hearth and home," dating and marriage, African American and immigrant women, the role of women in foreign countries, brief biographies of leading personalities, literature, and more. Includes the full color plates as they originally appeared.

The Liberator, 1831-1865

This collection comprises the complete collection of the weekly abolitionist newspaper printed and published in Boston by William Lloyd Garrison and Isaac Knapp. Religious rather than political, it appealed to the moral conscience of its readers, urging them to demand immediate freeing of the slaves. It also promoted women's rights, an issue that split the American abolitionist movement. Despite its modest circulation of 3,000, it had prominent and influential readers, including Frederick Douglass and Beriah Green. It frequently printed or reprinted letters, reports, sermons, and news stories relating to American slavery, becoming a sort of community bulletin board for the new abolitionist movement that he, more than anyone else, created.

The Pennsylvania Gazette, 1728-1800

Subdivided into four parts: "Benjamin Franklin's Newspaper" (1728–1750), "The French & Indian War" (1751–1765), "The American Revolution" (1766–1783), and "The New Republic" (1784–1800). Includes articles, editorials, letters, news items, travel stories, classified ads, employment notices, lost and found goods and advertisements, covering the Western Hemisphere, from the Canadian Maritime Provinces through the West Indies and North and South America.

The Pennsylvania Newspaper Record: Delaware County

Comprises *Chester County Republican*, *Delaware County American*, *Delaware County Democrat*, *Delaware County Republican*, *Media Advertiser*, *The Post Boy*, *The Upland Union*, and *The Weekly Visitor* and contains full-text transcriptions of articles, advertisements and vital statistics, providing insight into technology, business activity and material culture in a down-river milling and manufacturing community at the height of the Industrial Revolution.

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