

Kurt A. Sanftleben, ABAA and ASDA

Paper Americana and Postal History

Catalog 24-2 – February 2024

Suppression of contagious disease in the United States through quarantine, disinfection, and fumigation



13. [CRIME – ARSON] [DISEASE – YELLOW FEVER] [PROTEST – VIOLENT] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

1858 – A wood engraving, *Attack on the Quarantine Establishment, on September 1, 1858*, from the 11 September 1858 edition of *Harper's Weekly* illustrating the attack on New York's main quarantine facility by the Staten Island public.

Diaries, Journals, Correspondence, Photographs and Ephemera

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Regards, Kurt and Gail

Kurt and Gail Sanftleben
Virginia Beach, VA 23454
Email and PayPal address: kurt@sanftleben.com Cell phone and Zelle transfers: 571-409-0144
Website: read-em-again.com



The Manuscript Society

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Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

1. [DISEASE – YELLOW FEVER] [PHILATELY] [TRANSPORTATION – STAGECOACH]

1805 – Letter describing the effects of the last Yellow Fever epidemic to strike New York City

This two-page stampless folded letter measures 15½” x 9¾” unfolded. It was sent by Caleb Hopkins in New York City to Jeremiah A Pierson in Ramapoworks, New York. It bears no postal markings other than an annotation that reads, “per Goshen Mail”. Docketing reads, “Letter 8 Septer / 1805 / The fever / Recd”. In nice shape.

Caleb was the New York City business agent for the Pierson Iron Works located in the Ramapo Mountains about 40 miles north of the city. As other residents flee, Caleb reports that

“The alarm on account of the Fever seems to increase a considerable population of the People in Pearl, Water, Front, & South Streets. . . Ships have removed . . . and many intend to remove to morrow. . . The removal will not be general until the Banks remove which is expected to be decided on Tuesday. One death, five new cases and two doubtful cases occurred yesterday – six Deaths of Fever occurred as I am informed this morning. . . There is no person sick with Fever . . . one or two cases are stated to have occurred in Moore St. and have been Sent to the Hospital. . . The Sloops have generally left. . .

“I have seen Mr. Colt & his wife who had just crossed the River and are going to Haerlam this evening. I shall . . . make such arrangements to morrow as a temporary absence may require. . .”

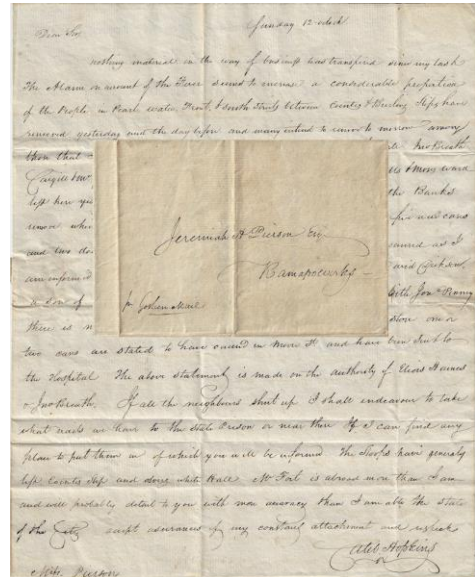
Yellow Fever first appeared in New York City via Philadelphia from an epidemic following the arrival of people fleeing the disease in the Caribbean. As it killed one-tenth of all Philadelphians, many fled to New York bringing the disease with them. In the summer of 1795 over 730 people died. It resurged three years later, and 2,000 of New York City's 35,000 residents perished. The city's press suppressed news of both epidemics in fear it would create panic and harm commerce. The fever returned in 1803, and after a brief respite raised its head once more in 1805 when it claimed another 270 victims. The reduction of deaths in 1805 is attributed to the newly formed New York City Board of Health which spent \$25,000 to quickly quarantine patients at the Marine Hospital on Staten Island, relocated residents from affected areas into temporary facilities, and guarded the evacuees abandoned homes to prevent crime.

The “Goshen Mail” was a stagecoach line that began in 1797 at Hoboken, New Jersey and eventually was extended to Albany. Ramapo was the site of important iron ore deposits first developed by Josiah G. Pierson in 1795. The Piersons also operated a cotton and screw factories, flour mill, and farm.

(For more information, see Levine's “The 18th-century Yellow Fever pandemic that led to NYC's first Health Department”, Heaton's “Yellow Fever in New York City,” Druckman's “The Yellow Fever Epidemics that Plagued New York City”, the “Isaac G. Pierson and Brothers records” at the Harvard Business School, Roth's *Stage Operations and the Mails in New Jersey*, and Hopkins's *Steven Hopkins of the Mayflower and Some of his Descendants*, all available online.)

Scarce. At the time of listing, no similar original first-hand accounts are for sale in the trade. The Rare Book Hub shows that two have been sold at auction. OCLC shows several personal papers collections that may include similar accounts.

\$500 #10193



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2. [DISEASE – PLAGUE] [FOOD & DRINK – SALT BEEF & WINE] [MARITIME] [PUBLIC HEALTH – BILL OF HEALTH]

1813 – An early Bill of Health issued by the District of Boston and Charleston and certified by the Spanish Vice-Consul for the Spanish Ship *Liebre (Hare)* bound for Madeira certifying that “no plague, or other contagious or dangerous disease at present exists in this port or its vicinity.”

This District of Boston and Charlestown partially-printed official bill of health measures approximately 8” x 12½” and is dated 9 October 1813 with an official embossed handstamp and two signatures, the port’s Collector and its assigned Naval Officer.

It reads in part:

“To all to whom these Presents shall come: We, the Collector and Naval Officer of the Port of Boston and Charlestown, do, by the tenor of these presents Certify and make known that the Captain, Officers, Seamen, and Passengers of the Ship call *Liebre* laden with Beef [and] Lumber and of which Juan Benito de Llosa is Captain; consisting of Fourteen Officers and Seamen, and One Passengers, now ready to proceed on a voyage to Madeira and elsewhere beyond sea, are all In good health.

“And we do further certify, That no plague, or other contagious of dangerous disease at present exists in this port or its vicinity.”

The document from Spanish Consul, “Don Juan Stroughton, Consul de S.M. C. para los Estados de New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode-Island, y Vermont” measures approximately 7¾” x 9¼” and bears an official, but indistinct, read wax seal. Translated into English, it reads,

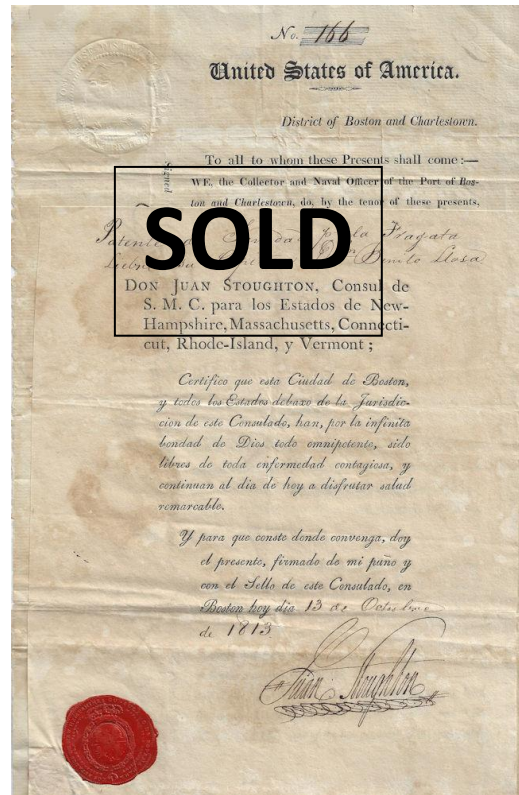
“I certify that this City of Boston, and all States under the Jurisdiction of this Consulate, have, by the infinite goodness of Almighty God, been free from all contagious disease, and continue to this day to enjoy remarkable health..”

Docketing on the reverse indicates the schooner arrived at Madeira on December 22, 1813.

‘Bills of Health’ were normally printed locally at the request of port officials and vary in wording, size, and form. Although the term ‘Bill of Health’ often did not appear on the document, the name of the customs district was often prominently displayed. Regardless of format, all these bills included the name of the vessel, its master, number of crew and passengers, and destination. They were always signed by the port’s customs and naval officer at the time of departure. Often, as in this case, the document identified the ship’s cargo (salt beef and lumber, which was used to build wine barrels) as well. No doubt the *Liebre* departed with a full cargo of Madeira’s famous Port wine which was the most popular beverage in Europe.

An early Bill of Health. At time of listing, neither OCLC or the Rare Book Hub show any records for Bills of Health dated before 1822.

SOLD #10195



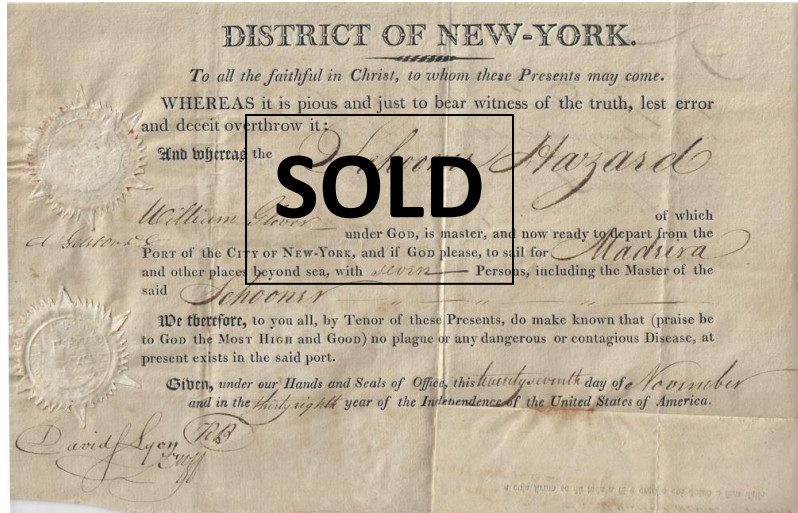
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3. [DISEASE – PLAGUE] [FOOD & DRINK – WINE] [MARITIME] [PUBLIC HEALTH – BILL OF HEALTH]

1813 – An early Bill of Health issued by the District of New York and certified by the Portuguese Vice-Consul for the Schooner *Hazard* bound for Madeira certifying that “no plague or contagious Disease at present exists in this port.”

This District of New-York partially-printed official bill of health measures approximately 12¾” x 8½” and is dated “this twenty seventh day of November and in the thirty eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America” and bears two signatures and paper seals of the ports customs officer and assigned naval officer; both are indistinct.

This certificate demonstrates that as far as New York District Customs Officer was concerned, the United States was a Christian nation. It reads in part:



“To all the faithful in Christ, to whom these Presents may come / Whereas it is pious and just to bear witness of the truth, lest error and deceit overthrow it: And whereas the Schooner Hazard of which William Glover under God, is master, and now ready to depart from the Port of the City of New-York, and if God please, to sail for Madeira and other places beyond the sea, with seven Persons, including the Master of said Schooner.

“We therefore, to you all, by Tenor of these Presents, do make known (praise be to God the Most High and Good) no plague or any dangerous of contagious Disease, at present exists in the said port.”

The certificate from Portuguese Vice-Consul measures approximately 8” x 10” and reads (translated into English) reads in part:

“Joaquim Jose Vasques Junr. authorized by the Consul General of S.A.R.O. Prince Regent of Portugal in the United States of America. I certify that the signature on the attached Document is from the offices of Customs House of this City, to whose firm all faith and credit are given in Court to its strength.”

Docketing on the reverse indicates the schooner arrived at Madeira on January 8, 1814.

‘Bills of Health’ were normally printed locally at the request of port officials and vary in wording, size, and form. Although the term ‘Bill of Health’ often did not appear on the document, the name of the customs district was often prominently displayed. Regardless of format, all of these bills included the name of the vessel, its master, number of crew and passengers, and destination. They were always signed by the port’s customs and naval officer at the time of departure. No doubt the *Hazard* returned with a full cargo of Madeira’s famous Port wine, which at the time was the most important American beverage. In exchange, it probably carried flour, cereals, or more likely salt meat, salt cod or lumber, which was needed to build wine barrels.

An early Bill of Health. At time of listing, neither OCLC or the Rare Book Hub show any records for Bills of Health dated before 1822.

SOLD #10194

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4. [DISEASE – CHOLERA] [MARITIME] [PHILATELY]

1833 – Family letter from New Orleans to Scotland describing the Cholera epidemic that ravaged the city.

This three-page stampless cross-hatched letter measures 15½" x 10" unfolded. It was sent by J N McLauren, Jr. on 15 June 1833 from New Orleans to the Dalmuir Paper Warehouse near Glasgow, Scotland. It bears a circular New Orleans postmark, crossed-out address, and "50" rate mark indicating that it was sent to New York City where a forwarding agent (MacGregor & Darling) ensured it was carried privately to England where it received a "Liverpool / Ship Letter" transit stamp, rectangular ½d Scottish road tax handstamp and Glasgow receiving mark. In nice shape.

In this letter, McLauren describes the horrific New Orleans Cholera epidemic of 1832-1833.

"That scourge of the human race, accursed Cholera, visited us two days after said interview and on the third or fourth day of its appearance it seized upon my poor friend Archibald Granton. . . From the moment it seized him I never left his bedside, nor even sat down a minute for the 56 hours, at the expiry of which term he died. . . He was unnaturally weakly in constitution, and the disease is so virulent and fatal this time that I do not know of a single recovery of any that have been seized. . . My landlady came to my bedside and informed me that my dear little favourite, (Miss Mary Prendergast, her daughter), had all the symptoms of Cholera and that she would not allow anyone to come near her but myself. . . When I went to her room I could see at once that there was no time to be lost. I sent downstairs for a Physician . . . but he could do nothing, [so] I sent for two other Physicians. They gave me all praise for what I had done and could not recommend anything but what I was using. . . Our Doctor got sick after . . . 2 Hours and died within 7 minutes of Mary. Mary's brother was seized too and is still alive, but no hopes are entertained of his recovery. Two of the Black servants were also taken the same night. . . There have been more than 15,000 people left the city in the last two weeks, and now the cholera abates for want of victims. . ."

Cholera is an acute diarrheal illness caused by the *Vibrio cholerae* bacteria. People get sick when they swallow contaminated food or water. In 1829, cholera first spread across the world from the Ganges delta in India. Six subsequent pandemics have killed millions throughout the world. Today, cholera is treated by rehydration and antibiotics and is seldom fatal. In the 19th century, it was a death sentence.

The epidemic reached New Orleans in 1832 and continued well into 1833. It returned in 1848–1855, 1866, and 1873 causing tens of thousands of deaths throughout Louisiana with more than 17,000 deaths in New Orleans alone.

(For more information, see Niedenbach's "Cholera in Louisiana" at the 64 Parishes website, "Cholera – *Vibrio cholerae* infection" at the CDC website, and "Cholera" at the World Health Organization website.)

Very scarce. At the time of listing, no first-hand descriptions of the 1832-1833 New Orleans cholera epidemic are for sale in the trade. The Rare Book Hub shows none have ever been sold at auction. OCLC reports that four are held by institutions.

\$750 [#10196](#)



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5. [DISEASE – CHOLERA] [PHILATELY]

1834 – Letter discussing the effect of the Cholera epidemic that had raged in New York City for over a year

This stampless folded family letter measures 15½” x 12½”. It was sent by Edward P Hill from New York City to Miss Rebecca H. Hill in Mason, New Hampshire. It was written in two parts, the first on August 26, 1834, and the second a few days later on September 4, the same day the letter was postmarked.

It begins with a brief description of a trip from Mason to New York City that included travel by stagecoach and steamboat and then continues with a discussion of the epidemic. On August 26, Hill reported

“At present the City is quite sickly the Cholera appears rather on the increase but we hope it will soon subside the greatest number of deaths of Cholera in a day yet is 26. I saw Mr Wilran to day and he says that as soon as the Cholera subsides they are agoing to start for Mason. Mrs Wilson will not go & leave while the Cholera rages. . . .”

And, nine days later on September 4, he continued

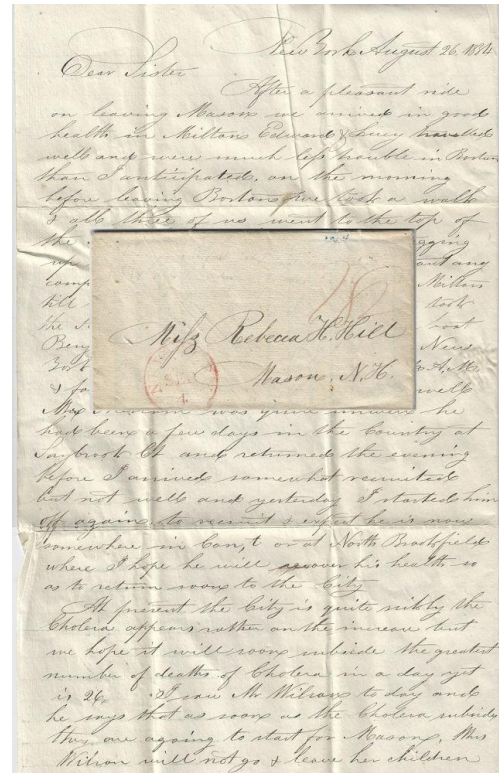
“The Cholera has somewhat abated. The inhabitants generally don't appear to mind it so much. It is principally confined to the filthy parts of the City. It has had a good effect on business. . . .”

After beginning in Asia, a devastating Cholera epidemic reached England in 1831 and by the summer of 1831 had passed through Canada and begun to afflict Manhattan. As there had been adequate information regarding its progress, many wealthy New Yorkers had already relocated to the countryside to avoid infection. The poor, who were concentrated in lower Manhattan below 14th Street, had no choice but to await its onslaught. Approximately 3,500 of them died over the next three years.

(For more information, see “Disasters: New York City (NYC) Cholera Epidemic of 1832” at the NYCdata website and Ferris's “A treatise on epidemic cholera: as observed in the Duane-street Cholera Hospital. . .” at the National Library of Medicine website.)

Fairly scarce. At the time of listing, there are no similar letters for sale in the trade. The Rare Book Hub shows original source letters and diaries related to the 1830s outbreak periodically appear at auction, and OCLC shows several institutions hold similar material.

\$250 [#10197](#)



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6. [DISEASE – CHOLERA] [MEDICINE – RURAL] [PHILATELY]

1836 & 1849 – Two stampless folded letters relating to a Louisiana physician who practiced in the aftermath of the state's first cholera epidemic and died after treating victims of the second.

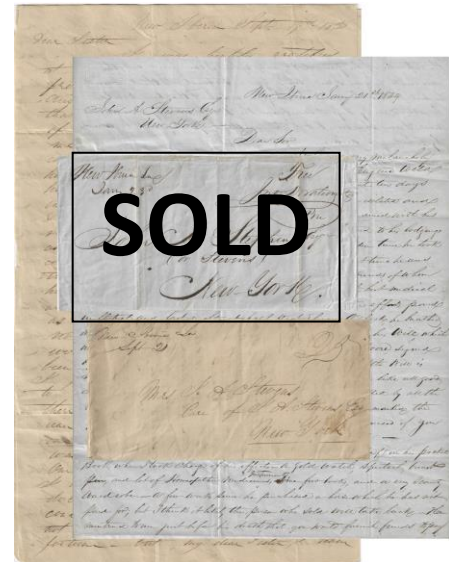
The first letter was written in 1836, shortly after the first great cholera epidemic had abated, by Dr. Eugene Weld, a circuit-riding physician who treated patients in the New Iberia area. The second was written in 1849, by an associate of Ward's relating how Ward died treating victims of the second cholera epidemic to strike the region.

Ward wrote the first four-page letter to his sister and her husband, Abby and John Austin Stevens, in New York City on 19 September 1836. Although, it once measured 15" x 25", the paper later split down its center fold resulting in two leaves each measuring 7½" x 12½". It bears a scarce manuscript "New Iberia La Sept 21" postmark with a manuscript "25" rate annotation. New Iberia is located about 130 miles west of New Orleans and 20 miles southeast of Lafayette. The letter reads in part,

"I [have] spent a considerable in travelling through Mississippi & La & I [do] not wish to return with pockets quite as empty as I left. . . . There was only one physician here when I first stopt, but there are now five including myself, so as it is divided, the practice is not worth much – I have been here booked between \$700 & \$800 I prefer this part of the country to any I have seen at the South – there are many very agreeable American families, & some very wealthy. Our whole Sugar crop last year was worth fifty thousand dollars One is well paid for services here I do not ride under one & two dollars a mile – & provided a person could ride all the time would not take many years to make a fortune – but . . . I have abandoned all ideas of making a fortune – it is out of the question I have toiled hard year after year wasting the very spring time of my life & am now just as poor as when I commenced; I can make a comfortable subsistence but at the end of the year after paying off all my debts – losses from bad debts – horses dying – not to say any thing of being cheated every now & then I do not find that I gain much ahead. . . . I find great advantage from the French, which in former times I studied under your auspices — I frequently write prescriptions in French & parlez vous as well as I can. . . . Since commencing this letter I have had a very disagreeable ride across the prairie, which is full of water from the great rains Visit however is worth ten dollars. . . ."

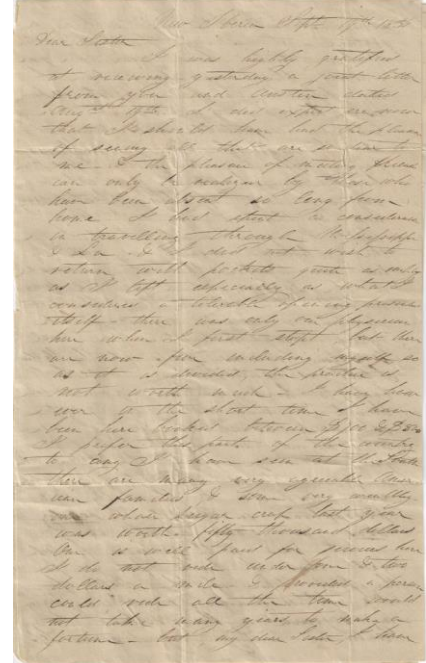
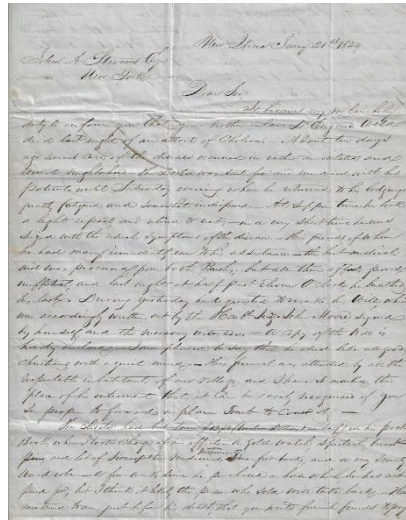
The second two-page stampless folded letter was written to Ward's brother-in-law by the New Iberia postmaster, John DeValcourt, on 21 January 1849. It measures 16 ½" x 21" unfolded. It bears a manuscript "New Iberia La Jany 23^d" postmark and manuscript annotation, "Free Jno DeValcourt P.M." This letter reads in part,

"It becomes my melancholy duty to inform you that your brother-in-law D^r. Eugene Weld died last night of an attack of Cholera. — About ten days ago several cases of the disease occurred in rather an isolated and remote neighborhood – The Doctor was sent for and remained with his patients until Saturday evening, when he returned to his lodgings greatly fatigued and somewhat indisposed.— At supper time he took a light repast, and retired to rest; —in a very short time he was seized with the usual symptoms of the disease. — His friends of whom he had many, immediately ran to his assistance — the best medical aid was procured, from both Parishes; but all their efforts proved ineffectual, and



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last night at half past Eleven O'clock, he breathed his last. During yesterday he requested to make his Will which was accordingly written out by the Hon^{ble} Judge John Moore, signed by himself, and the necessary witnesses. — A copy of the will is hereby enclosed.— I am pleased to say that he died like all good Christians with a quiet mind.— His funeral was attended by all the reputable inhabitants of our village; and I have so marked the place of his internment that it can be easily recognized if you see proper to forward a plain Tomb to cover it.



Cholera is an acute diarrheal illness caused by infection of the intestine with *Vibrio cholerae* bacteria. People can get sick when they swallow food or water contaminated with cholera bacteria. In 1829, cholera first spread across the world from the Ganges delta in India. Six subsequent pandemics have killed millions of people throughout the world. Although today, cholera is treated by rehydration therapy and antibiotics and is seldom fatal. In the 19th century, it was a death sentence.

The epidemic reached New Orleans in 1832 and continued well into 1833. It returned again in 1848–1855, 1866, and 1873 causing tens of thousands of deaths throughout Louisiana with more than 17,000 deaths in New Orleans alone.

When Cholera struck rural farms and villages in early America, the disease was even more terrifying than in the big cities. Often victims faced the disease alone without friends, ministers, or physicians, knowing that all family members were likely to die. Of with its first occurrence in the area the entire population fled, spreading the disease wherever they went. If doctors were available, they traveled, sometimes very many miles, to patients' homes. Where they conducted examinations and treatments. This of course limited the number of instruments and drugs they could carry along to what could fit in a doctor's case or saddlebags.

(For more information, see Niedenbach's "Cholera in Louisiana" at the 64 Parishes website, "Cholera – *Vibrio cholerae* infection" at the CDC website, "Cholera" at the World Health Organization website, Beardslee's "19th Century Responses to *Cholerae Vibrio*" at the Varsity Tutors website, and Nespor's "19th century doctors in the U.S." at the Melnick Medical Museum blog, and)

Very scarce. At the time of listing, no first-hand descriptions of rural medical care and the death of physicians in Louisiana from the second cholera epidemic are for sale in the trade. The Rare Book Hub shows none have ever been sold at auction. OCLC reports that four are held by institutions.

SOLD #10198

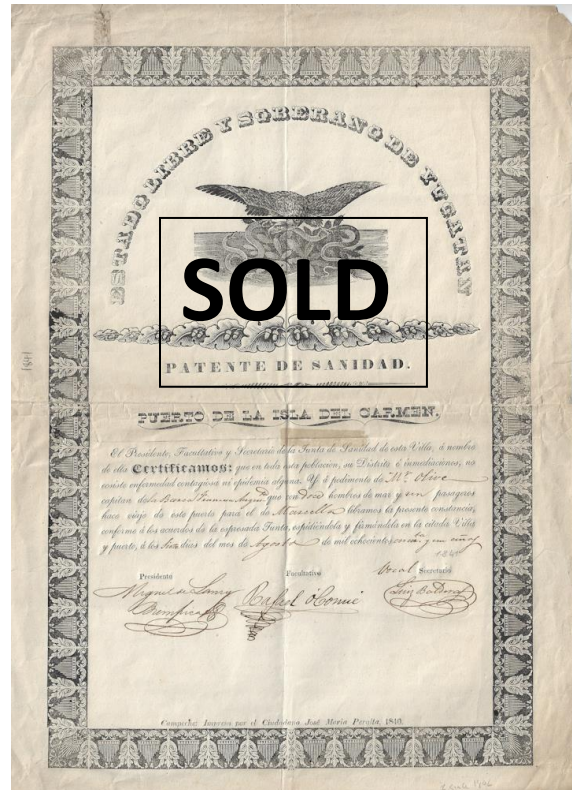
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7. [MARITIME] [PUBLIC HEALTH – BILL OF HEALTH] [WAR – YUCATAN REVOLUTION]

1841 – A ship's Bill of Health issued by the Republic of Yucatan shortly after it declared independence from Mexico.

In 1841, political conflict ran rife in Mexico with conflicts between Centralists (those desiring a strong government who ruled the county) and Federalists (those who wanted more state autonomy). Federalism was strongly preferred in Yucatan, which broke off relations with the Centralist government in February of 1840 and formerly declared its independence from Mexico October 1, 1841. In return, the Mexican government sent a naval squadron to Carmen Island in August 1842. Simultaneously, it launched a land invasion. The naval squadron captured the island. However, the Yucatan army reinforced with 11,000 indigenous Mayans, forced the Mexicans to retreat and Yucatan remained independent until 1848, after the United States Senate rejected its offer to become a U.S. territory.

This impressive partially-printed Bill of Health was issued at Carmen Island after Yucatan seceded from Mexico, but before officially declaring its independence. It measures 11" x 15¼" is titled (translated into English) "Free and Sovereign State of Yucatan / Bill of Health / Port of Carmen Island" and dated "the seventh day of the month of August, one thousand eight hundred and forty-one years." A printer's imprint at the bottom of the page notes the blank form was printed the year before, suggesting the populace was more than ready to declare independence before October. In nice shape with some old tape repairs on the reverse.



The document declares:

"The President, Physician and Secretary of the Health Board of this Village, on behalf of her, certify: that in this entire population, its District and surrounding areas, there is no contagious disease or epidemic of any kind. And at the request of Mr. Olive, captain of the French ship Argento, who with twelve seamen and without passengers makes the trip from this position to that of Marcella, we issue this document, in accordance with the agreements of the aforementioned Board, issuing it and signing it in the aforementioned town and port. . ."

(For more information, see "Yucatan: the day it declared its Independence from Mexico" in the March 6 edition of *The Yucatan Times*,

This document is probably now unique as few official documents from the Yucatan Republic have survived. In fact, at the time of listing, the Rare Book Hub shows only two official Yucatan Republic documents of any kind have ever appeared at auction. OCLC identifies no Yucatan Republic documents as being held by institutions.

SOLD #10199

Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

8. [DISEASE – PLAGUE & SMALLPOX] [IMMIGRATION] [MARITIME] [PUBLIC HEALTH – BILL OF HEALTH, FUMIGATION, & IMMUNIZATION]

1844-1925 – Ten public health documents related to immigration and the international maritime shipping trade

This group consists of ten public health documents and the international maritime shipping trade. All in nice shape with light toning and minor edgewear; other faults as noted.

1844 – Port of Baltimore certificate (7½" x 3") stating the Schooner *Armida* had obeyed the port's "Quarantine Regulation".

1892 – Port of Philadelphia U.S. Bill of Health (8" x 10¼") for the British Steam Ship *Onskan* (?) which was leaving port bound for London.

1892 – Port of Philadelphia U.S. Clearance of Vessel to a Foreign Port (8½" x 14") for the British Steam Ship *Onskan* (?) which was leaving port bound for London.

1894 – Cardenas, Cuba Bill of Health (12¾" x 21½") issued by the United States Commercial Agency for the Spanish Steamship *Palentino* that was bound for Liverpool. Old tape repair.

1909 – St. Johns, New Brunswick medical Inspection Card for an immigrant from Scotland traveling aboard the Canadian Pacific Steamship Line's *Empress of Britain* which had departed from Liverpool. These cards were issued to certify the absence of infectious disease and small. An injunction to keep the card for three years is printed on the back in 12 languages including Hebrew, Ruthenian, Polish, Russian, and Bohemian (Czech).

1913 – Quebec, Canada medical Inspection Card for an immigrant from England traveling aboard the Alan Line's S.S. *Corinthian* which had departed from London. These cards were issued to certify the absence of infectious disease and small. An injunction to keep the card for three years is printed on the back in 12 languages including Hebrew, Ruthenian, Polish, Russian, and Bohemian (Czech).

1914 – Front of a postally used envelope used by the American Consulate at "Tripoli, Africa" to send a "Sanitary Report" to "The Secretary of the Treasure (For the United States Public Health and Marine Hospital Bureau" in Washington, D.C.

1922 – Cunard Steam Ship Company Memorandum to Captains regarding the Fumigation of Vessels.

1923 – Cunard Steam Ship Company Memorandum to Captains describing the Quarantine Arrangement at St. Lawrence for 1923.

1925 – Port of Hamburg Bill of Health from the U.S. Consul in that city for the Czechoslovakian Ship *Legie* which had visited "Hamburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk, Bremerhaven, Hamburg" during the previous four months. The ship was bound for Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Norfolk.



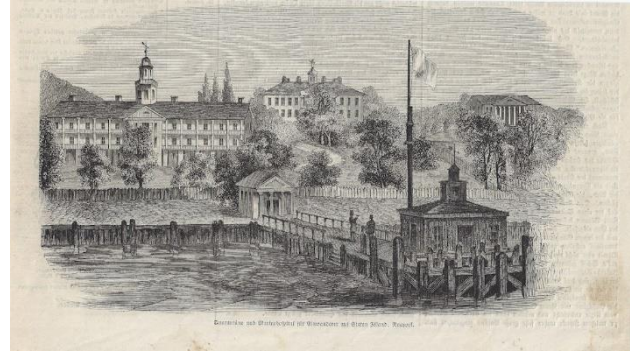
SOLD #10200

Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

9. [DISEASE – SMALLPOX & YELLOW FEVER] [MARITIME] [MEDICINE - HOSPITALS] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

Circa 1845 – Wood engraving of the Quarantine Station and Marine Hospital for emigrants at Staten Island, New York

This wood engraving clipped from an unidentified edition of the *Illustrirte Zeitung* (*Illustrated Newspaper*), known colloquially as the '*Leipziger*,' is undated, but information on the reverse indicates that it was published by J. J. Weber of Leipzig, Germany. It is titled, *Quarantine und Marinehospital fur Einwanderer auf Staten Island, Newyorf* (Quarantine Station and Marine Hospital for Immigrants at Staten Island, New York). It is in nice shape with some light toning.



It can be dated as locations of the buildings and dock exactly as shown almost identically match those shown on a map of the grounds, "*Marine Hospital Ground, Staten Island . . . made by John Ewein. Dated March 1845 . . . City Surveyor.*" The large building in the foreground is "[St. Nicholas] Hospital." The center building on the hill is the "Yellow Fever Hospital." The building to the far right is the "Small Pox Hospital." The small buildings on the "Wharf" and "Pier" are a "Shed" and "Store House."

Between 1795 and 1798, Yellow Fever killed thousands in New York City, spurring passage of a quarantine law that funded the construction of the New York Marine Hospital on this site. At its peak, the hospital could house 1,500 patients and was treating more than 8,000 per year. Before landing at New York, all vessels were boarded by inspectors, and if they found any trace of disease, everyone was unloaded at the Quarantine. First-class passengers spent their quarantine at the St. Nicholas while lower-class passengers were held in shanties not visible in the wood engraving.

There was considerable local opposition to the hospital, both from land developers who wished to use the grounds for projects and locals who blamed outbreaks of disease on the passengers under quarantine. The tension escalated and in 1856, a local health board prohibited anyone, including staff, from exiting the building by land. On the first of September 1858, the same board passed a resolution declaring the facility to be "a pest and a nuisance of the most odious character, bringing death and desolation to the very doors of the people [who must abate] this abominable nuisance without delay." That night a giant mob attacked the hospital, and after evacuating patients and staff from the buildings, burned most of the complex to the ground. The following night, they burned the rest. When later brought to trial, the mob leaders were acquitted, the jury deciding that they had acted in self-defense.

In his semi-autobiographical novel, *Redbun: His First Voyage*, Herman Melville, recounts a typical chaotic scene as ships were searched and inspected by health officials and later expresses relief when upon returning to New York harbor as his ship passed the Staten Island complex, apparently unnoticed by port officials, and escaped inspection.

(For more information, see Stephenson's "'The Quarantine War: the Burning of the New York Marine Hospital in 1858" in the Jan-Feb 2004 issue of *Public Health Reports*, available online.)

Uncommon. Wood engravings of the Staten Island hospital from illustrated magazines and auctions occasionally appear at auction. The majority are post-attack illustrations showing the ruins or replacement buildings.

\$150 [#10201](#)

Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

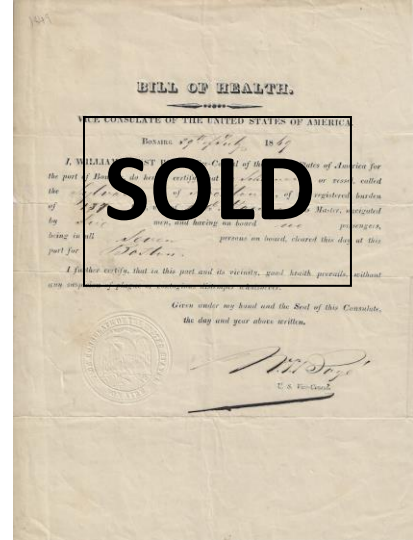
10. [DISEASE – DISTEMPER] [CALIFORNIANA] [MARITIME] [PUBLIC HEALTH – BILL OF HEALTH] [MINING – GOLD] [SLAVERY]

1849 – “Bill of Health” certificate for a California schooner built to transport gold hunters that had picked up cargo destined for Boston at the Dutch Slave Island of Bonaire located in Caribbean.

This partially printed certificate measures approximately 8” x 11”. It is titled, “Bill of Health / Vice Consulate of the United States of America. / Bonaire 29th of July 1849”. In nice shape with splits starting along its storage folds.

The certificate reads in part:

“I, William Ernst Boye, Vice- Consul of the United States of America for the port of Bonaire, do hereby certify, that the Schooner . . . called the *Sylvan* of Stockton, of the registered burden of 137 tons, whereof B. E. Young is Master, . . . being in all Seven persons on board, cleared this day at port for Boston. I further certify, that in this port and its vicinity, good health prevails, without any suspicion of plague or contagious distemper whatso ever. . .”



In an effort to stop the spread of serious diseases, ship Bills of Health were issued by government officials to certify ships, cargo, passengers, and crew were likely free of contagious disease;. This was especially important when ships stopped at ports of call known for health problems or during times of epidemics. Despite possessing a Bill of Health, ships would likely be inspected by health or customs officers before being allowed to dock at their destinations. If any trace of disease was found onboard, the ships, cargo, passengers, and crew would be quarantined for periods of time before being allowed to land.

Salt was the only export from Bonaire, an official Dutch government Caribbean slave plantation. In 1633, it along with the islands of Curacao and Aruba were seized by the Dutch navy from Spain. Curacao became the center of the North American slave trade, and Bonaire was established as an official slave plantation. Rather than use African slaves for agriculture, these *Katibu di Rey* (Slaves of the King) were forced to harvest salt. Their work was unbearably grueling and painful (to exposed bare feet and hands) in the hot and blinding tropical sun. Bonaire salt formed in basins, known as pans, and the enslaved workers chopped away chunks, which they transported by head baskets or, if fortunate, by wheel barrows to small boats that then carried the cargo to seagoing vessels anchored off shore.

The *Sylvan* was built in 1849 to bring gold hunters to California by the German sea captain and founder of Stockton, Charles Weber, who had previously received a grant of 50,000 acres from the Spanish government.

(From the annotated collection of quarantine mail assembled by Dennis Vandervelde. For more information, see “Slave Huts” at the Beautiful Bonaire website and “Slave Huts - The Dark Past of Bonaire's Salt Industry” at the Blue Oceans website.)

An exceptionally scarce document linking public health, the California Gold Rush, the African Slave Trade, and a draconian Dutch slave plantation, while testifying to abolitionist New England’s hypocritical willingness to turn a blind eye to slave-produced goods. Apparently the only surviving example. No others are for sale in the trade. None have appeared for auction per the Rare Book Hub, and none held in institutional collections per OCLC.

SOLD #10202

Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

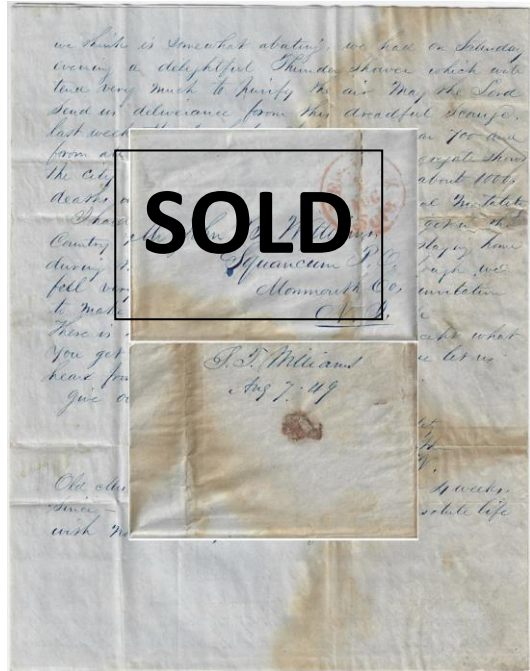
11. [DISEASE – CHOLERA] [PHILATELY] [PUBLIC HEALTH – DISINFECTION]

1849 – A disinfected letter from a resident of New York describing the ongoing cholera epidemic and showing stains received from its disinfection by vinegar.

This two-page stampless folded letter measures 15" x 8¾" unfolded. It was sent by "S. J. W." of New York City to John B. Williams in Squancom, New Jersey. It bears a circular red New York "5 cts" postmark. It also has a light brown stain that is the result of disinfection by vinegar.

In this letter, S. J. W. reports

"We are all in the enjoyment of a good degree of health through the Mercy of God for it is only through his Mercy we are preserved. The Cholera we think is somewhat abating, we had on Saturday evening a delightful Thunder Shower which will tend very much to purify the air May the Lord Send us deliverance from this dreadful scourge. Last week the Deaths by Cholera was near 700 and from all disease over 1300, which aggregate shows the city to be very sickly, as this is about 100 deaths in one week more than the usual. . . . Rebecca prefers staying home during the prevalence of Sickness, although, we felt very much obliged for your kind invitation to make our home with you for a while. . . . Old Mrs Furman Died of cholera about 4 weeks since – and Wallers is left to his dissolute live with non to pity or care for him. . . ."



In addition to fumigation by sulphur dioxide or formalin, vinegar was also used as a disinfecting agent. Letters would either be soaked in it and then removed to dry, or they were dipped in or splashed with it, placed on a wire grate. In this case, it appears the letter was dipped in the vinegar but not heated as it has no visible scorch marks.

The first cholera epidemic struck New York City in 1832, and in 1849 it became obvious that another round of the disease was about to occur. Health concerns were substantial as the city's population had doubled and had reached about one-half million residents. Most of them were poor and lived in crowded tenements and boarding houses. Although the amount of daily human waste had doubled, there had been no improvements to city's sanitation system. The outbreak first occurred somewhere in Europe and was brought to the United States by Irish immigrants in December of 1848. Although their ship had been quarantined at the Staten Island Marine Hospital, several passengers escaped to Manhattan, and shortly thereafter, cases of cholera emerged that spring from the infamous Five Points slum. By the end of the year approximately 5,000 people had died from the disease.

(For more information, see "Disasters: New York City (NYC) Cholera Outbreak of 1849" at the NYCdata website, "Cholera in 1849" at the Virtual New York City website, and Wiszniewski's "A History of Cholera in New York City.")

Scarce. At the time of listing, no other original first-hand accounts of this epidemic are for sale in the trade. The Rare Book Hub shows no auction records for similar items. OCLC shows two institutions hold diaries that include entries about the 1849 epidemic.

SOLD #10204

Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

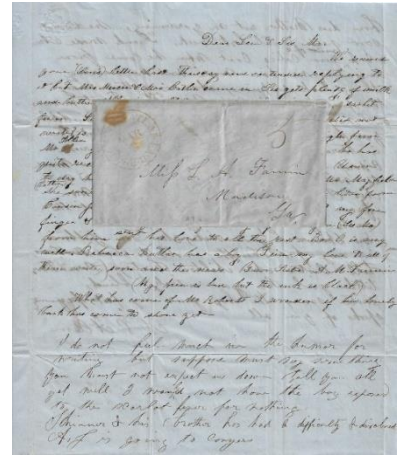
12. [DISEASE – SCARLET FEVER] [MEDICINE – PATENT MEDICINE] [PHILATELY] [TRANSPORTATION – RAILROADS] [SLAVERY]

Circa 1851– Letter regarding an outbreak of Scarlet Fever amongst enslaved workers in Georgia

This stampless letter measures 15½” x 9¾”. It was sent by A. M. Fannin and M P Allen to their relatives, care of “Miss L. A. Fannin / Madison / Ga.” It bears a faint circular red “Augusta & Atlanta R.R.” station agent postmark and a manuscript “5” rate mark.

In this letter Fannin and Allen express their concerns about a Scarlet Fever epidemic that has struck their family and its enslaved workers.

“All said all the negroes have had the Scarlet fever Sis was so uneasy was the reason why we did not write is it so All had a very sore throat and high fever Ms Allen gave him Dr. Simmon’s fever medicine he has quite recovered. . . . you must not expect us down till you all get well I would not have the boy exposed to the scarlot fever. . . . Mrs Chercher is quite sick, Mrs Tom Gibbs is in very poor health unable to leave the house. [the] little girl has gone entirely blind. . . .”



Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, Scarlet Fever was a mostly benign childhood disease. That changed abruptly around 1820, when a pandemic of particularly severe strains began to periodically erupt around the world. Although many outbreaks remained mild, often they resulted in a considerable number of fatalities. An especially lethal outbreak occurred at Augusta, Georgia in 1832-3. No doubt that was bearing heavily on the Fannin family’s minds when this letter was written in the 1850s.

“Dr. Simmons’ Vegetable Liver Medicine” was an all-purpose concoction that purportedly cured dyspepsia, sick headache, sour stomach, lost appetite, low spirits, colic, costiveness, heartburn, indigestion, fever and ague, dysentery and all diseases arising from torpidity of the liver.

Although the letter is undated, we know that it was sent between 1851 and 1857 because of the rare Augusta & Atlanta R.R.” station agent postmark. Although most of the word, “Augusta” is very faint, probably due to an off-center strike, enough is visible that it can be identified as the #455-A-4 postmark in Towle’s U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks; this postmark was only used during those years.

Little information about the Augusta & Atlanta Railroad is available. It was originally chartered in 1833. Several years later that charter was amended to include banking operations and the company’s name was apparently changed to the Georgia Railroad & Banking Company. Although the banking side of the business was extremely successful, railroad operations remained small. By 1850 it operated only 213 miles of track. As a result, the quantity of mail processed by the company (which was also referred to as the Georgia Railroad) was small.

(For more information see Martin’s Atlanta and its builders : a comprehensive history of the Gate city of the South, Katz & Moren’s “Severe Streptococcal Infections in Historical Perspective” in Clinical Infectious Diseases Vol. 14 and Storey’s “Georgia Railroad” in Georgia’s Railroad History and Heritage accessible via the Internet Archive Way Back Machine.)

At the time of listing, no other examples of mail processed by Augusta and Atlanta are for sale in the trade. None have appeared at auction per the Rare Book Hub, and none are held by institutions per OCLC. The Stamp Auction Network shows one example that has appeared in a philatelic auction (Lot 1032 in the Schulyer Rumsey Auction Sale 45, 24-27 January 2012 which realized \$850).

\$600 [#9998](#)

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13. [CRIME – ARSON] [DISEASE – YELLOW FEVER] [MEDICINE – HOSPITALS] [PROTEST – VIOLENT] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

1858 – A wood engraving from the 11 September 1858 edition of *Harper's Weekly* illustrating the attack on New York's main quarantine facility by the Staten Island public.

This illustration, titled "Attack on the Quarantine Establishment, on September 1, 1858" was cut from 11 September 1858 *Harper's Weekly* magazine. It measures approximately 10" x 7.5".

Staten Island residents, fearful that disease might spread throughout the island, were strongly opposed to the quarantine facility from its first proposal in the late 1700s, and that resentment finally turned to violence in 1858. The facility opened in 1800 with a capacity to hold 1,500 patients, and at its peak thirty years later, it treated over 8,000 patients



each year. Every arriving ship was boarded and all passengers inspected. If any was found to be infected, all passengers from the vessel underwent quarantine. First-class passengers spent their quarantine at the St. Nicholas Hotel; other passengers were housed in the facility's eight shanty cabins. There were separate hospitals for small pox patients and women with gynecological problems.

When New York health officials attempted to build an additional facility, locals burned it to the ground before construction was finished. After Yellow Fever cases appeared among the residents in August 1858, the local board of health urged citizens to take "action" against the facility. In response the New York Health Department issued an injunction against the local board, and the board responded on 1 September passing a resolution declaring the Quarantine to be "a pest and a nuisance of the most odious character, bringing death and desolation to the very doors of the people" and recommended "the citizens of this county to protect themselves by abating this abominable nuisance without delay."

That evening, a large mob broke through the facility's gate and scaled its fence. Once inside, it removed patients to safety and used mattresses and hay to burn every building except the female hospital. Only two people died, one a patient who succumbed to Yellow Fever, the other an employee killed by a co-worker. A second mob burned the Female Hospital the following night. Several ringleaders were brought to trial and pleaded self-defense. They were found not-guilty by the presiding judge, a Staten Islander who owned property within a mile of the site.

(For more information, see Krajicek's "How arsonists burned down Staten Island's hated Quarantine hospital in the 19th century with little resistance" at the *New York Daily News* website and Stephenson's "The Quarantine War: the Burning of the New York Marine Hospital in 1858" in the Jan-Feb 2004 issue of *Public Health Reports*.)

SOLD #10203

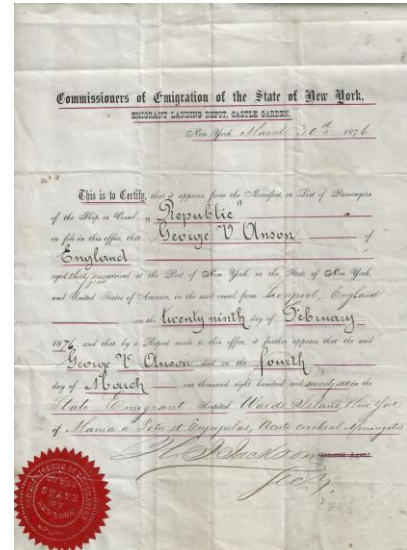
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14. [DISEASE – MENINGITIS] [IMMIGRATION] [MARITIME] [MEDICINE – HOSPITALS] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

1876 – A Death Certificate for an immigrant who died at New York's Ward Island Quarantine Hospital from *Mania a Potu*, *Erysipulas*, and Acute Cerebral Meningitis

This certificate measures 7¾" x 8¾" and is titled and datelined "Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York, / Emigrant Landing Depot, Castle Garden / New York, March 30th 1876." It bears a red embossed seal that reads "Commissions of Emigration of the State of New York". In nice shape. The document reads in part:

"This is to Certify, that it appears from the Manifest, or List of Passengers of the Ship or Vessel "Republic" on file in this office that George V. Anson of England aged thirty several years arrived at the Port of New York in the State of New York, and United States of America, in the said vessel from Liverpool, England on the twenty ninth day of February 1876, and that by a Report made to this office, it further appears that the said George V. Anson died on the fourth day of March one thousand eight hundred and seventy six in the State Emigrant Hospital Wards Island, New York, of Mana a Potu et Erysipelas, Acute cerebral Meningitis."



Mania a Portu is Delirium Tremens or Alcohol Madness. Erysipelas is a streptococcal skin infection usually of the face or legs, and cerebral meningitis is an infectious inflammation of brain and/or spinal cord membranes.

The Emigrant Landing Depot, Castle Garden was located at the southern tip of Manhattan, adjacent to The Battery. Originally a defensive fort, it was modified to serve as an emigrant reception center, the first in the United States, in 1854. It continued operating until replaced by Ellis Island in 1890. During that time it processed over 8 million emigrants (two out of every three) into the United States.

Ward's Island, the site of Castle Garden's associated Verplanck State Emigrant Hospital, lies up the East River about 8 miles north of the Emigrant Landing Depot. The hospital opened in 1847, and in time the complex expanded to include a dispensary, chapel, lunatic asylum, fever and surgical wards, men's and women's barracks, a nursery for children, and a dining hall that could seat 1,200 people.

The practice of using quarantines to protect port cities from devastating epidemics began at Venice in the 14th century. When the United States first began such protection, it fell under local and state jurisdiction and there were a variety of quarantine regulations for arriving vessels. The first federal quarantine legislation was passed in 1878 after a series of yellow outbreaks overwhelmed local facilities. After cholera epidemics were brought into the United State by emigration passenger ships, the federal system was expanded in 1892, and by 1921 the quarantine system was fully nationalized.

(For more information, see "Ward's Island Medical Center for Castle Garden Immigrants" at the GG, at the Gjenvick-Gjønvik Archives website, "Quarantine Stations: History of the 'Plague houses' in the harbour of New York" at the Ellis Island website.), and "History of Quarantine (Port Health)" at the Center for Disease Control website.)

Apparently, a very scarce document. At the time of listing, neither OCLC nor the Rare Book Hub show any entries for emigrant death certificates from any of the U. S. Marine Quarantine Hospitals.

\$350 [#10205](#)

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15. [DISEASE – SMALLPOX] [MEDICINE – HOSPITALS] [MARITIME] [PHILATELY] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

1879 – Letter from a health officer at Boston's Deer Island Quarantine Station, written on official stationery.

This six-page letter was sent by "Charley" a health officer at Boston's Deer Island Quarantine Station on official stationery. It is datelined "Boston, 13 Oct. 1879." A matching envelope from a different letter is included. The letter is franked with a green 2-cent Washington stamp (Scott #213) that is postmarked with a circular Boston postmark dated "Sep / 3" and canceled with a fancy negative "4" cork handstamp. All in nice shape.

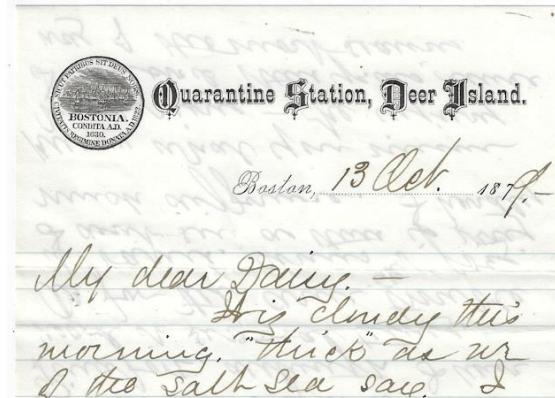
Charley's letter, which describes his daily inspection routine, reads in part:

"I presume I shall have work to do, as the wind is right to blow in the shipping and three steamers are due. . . . About half past six I boarded a Brig & then we waited for a Bark. A Cunard steamer put in an appearance down the harbour and came up near where we were waiting. Then Dr. Berry and I made the visit together as we usually do Sunday morning. I forgot to say that we went to the city for the mail after boarding the steamer. . . . About three, we went to Galloupes Island – there waited outside for two more steamers. I went to the hospital about half past six. After that I had two more patients to visit. . . . We are lying at Galloupes Island for a time . . . many vessels in the roadstead. I find that the mails are quite irregular about getting under way from the city. After they leave Deer Island they are at the mercy of the hands on the boat."

The Boston quarantine station moved from Rainsford Island to Deer Island after a serious smallpox outbreak in 1847. It remained there until 1880, not long after this letter was written.

Letters from Deer Island occasionally appear at auction but few are written on official stationery. Most discuss family issues, and seldom do they describe the daily routine of inspecting vessels and treating patients.

\$150 [#10206](#)



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16. [DISEASE – YELLOW FEVER] [MARITIME] [MILITARY – NAVY] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

1880 – Illustrated newspaper article describing the quarantine of the USS *Marion* off the coast of Uruguay after Yellow Fever spread through the crew following a stop at Rio de Janeiro.

This one-page illustrated article, titled "An Island Lazaretto," from the 15 May edition of *Harper's Weekly* measures 10¾" x 15". It includes six wood engravings. In nice shape with horizontal storage fold.

The USS *Marion*, an antebellum sloop-of-war, was dispatched to join the U.S. Navy's Pacific Squadron in December 1879 after an extensive rebuilding. The ship stopped in Rio de Janeiro to refuel and resupply, and despite the captain's best efforts to minimize contacts with the local workmen and porters, a few members of the crew became sick after the ship resumed its voyage. As the disease spread, it became obvious that Yellow Fever had been brought aboard, and by the time it reached Montevideo, Uruguay, twenty members of the crew, including the *Marion's* doctor, were incapacitated. The captain, received permission to land at the lazaretto on Flores Island about fifteen miles off shore. The crew erected tents to quarantine away from the island's facility and waited for the epidemic to pass. Although

the virulence of the disease became somewhat milder, new cases arose daily throughout the month, and at one point there were barely enough healthy sailors left to stand regular watches. Fresh vegetables for the stricken were received from shore and by mid-March much of the remaining crew had recovered. On the 20th the captain ordered the ship's hatches sealed and the vessel was fumigated with sulfur. It would have been able to sail by the end of the month, but the captain chose to remain in port for another six weeks to rest and train until resuming normal duties.

This articles describes the ship's quarantine in detail.

(For more information see Stein's *Washington Irving Chambers: Innovation, Professionalization, and the New Navy 1872-1919*, available online.)

SOLD #10207



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17. [DISEASE – YELLOW FEVER] [[FLORIDIANA] [PHILATELY] [PUBLIC HEALTH – FUMIGATION] [TRANSPORTATION – RAILROADS]

1888 – Mailing envelope sent from Orlando, Florida to Savannah, Georgia that was fumigated in route at Jacksonville.

This postally used 3-cent green postal envelope (Scott Type U71) was sent from the First National Bank of Orlando to Chas. Kolshom & Brother at Savannah. It bears an Orlando duplex postmark dated 24 September 1888. A distinctive pattern of two parallel lines of evenly spaced vertical nail holes and a yellowing of the paper indicate that it was fumigated at La Villa Junction, Florida.



Mail leaving Florida between 20 August and 24 October of 1888 was routed to La Villa Junction at Jacksonville, Flomaton Alabama, or Waycross Georgia, for fumigation. As noted in the *Florida Times Union* newspaper of 20 August 1888,

“The L. & N. [Louisville & Nashville Railroad] car No. 4075 has been secured for the purpose and a partition made across the center. In one end, a number of wire-netting shelves have been made, while the other is used for opening the mails. A little mallet, the end of which is fill with sharp spikes, is used to perforate the mail matter so as to admit the purifying fumes. A large tin boiler is filled with sulfur . . . lighted, and the door tightly closed. . . The letters remain in the fumes for about six hours.”

Yellow fever was one of the most dangerous and dreaded diseases prevalent in Florida during the 1800s. The disease is spread primarily by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, but this was not known at the time. Without this understanding, Floridians often blamed the infection on contact with a yellow fever patient or the presence of miasmas. As rail transportation became more common, epidemics became larger and deadlier. In 1887-1888m outbreaks erupted across the state infecting thousands and destroying local economies. Key West, Tampa, and Jacksonville were the hardest hit, and people fled the cities in droves. Orlando, the origin of this mail, was spared the worst of the disease because of its relatively dry inland location, however it still needed to be fumigated before it was allowed to leave the state.

(For more information, see Briggs’s “La Villa Junction Fumigation Handstamp” in the January 2001 *Florida Postal History Journal*, “Yellow Jack and Hysteria Gripped Florida in 1888” at the *Orlando Sentinel* website, and “The Dreaded Yellow Jack” at the Florida Memory website.)

A scarce testament to the fumigation effort to prevent yellow fever from escaping from Florida during the devastating epidemic of 1887-1888. Only occasionally does mail that processed through Jacksonville’s La Villa Junction fumigation station appear at auction.

SOLD #10208

Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

18. [DISEASE - CHOLERA] [IMMIGRATION] [PUBLIC HEALTH – INSPECTION & QUARANTINE]

1892 – A report by the port physician in Philadelphia describing the Cholera danger posed by steerage passengers from Europe arriving at that city.

Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury in response to a resolution of the Senate of the 12th instant, transmitting a communication of the port physician of Philadelphia relative to the danger from the introduction of cholera through immigration. 52nd Congress, 2nd Session, U.S. Senate Executive Document #13. Washington, DC: 1892. Complete and in nice shape

In this 10-page pamphlet which has been removed from a bound volume, E. O. Shakespeare, the Philadelphia Port Physician described the Cholera risk posed by steerage passengers arriving from Europe and argues against removing immigration restrictions. He specifically noted:

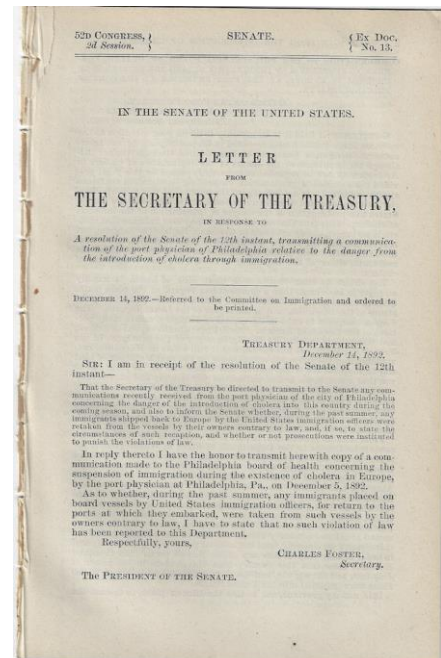
“It is true that official declarations now indicate that cholera is no longer widely epidemic in Germany, Holland, or Belgium . . . the disease still lingers in those countries, and I wish to warn you that such official declarations rarely. . . represent the real truth. . . Cholera exists to-day in southwestern Russia [and] continues to exist in the capital of Hungary, and [throughout] Austria. It still lingers in . . . France. . . In short. . . a great portion of the emigration from . . . southeastern Europe, as well as from . . . Russia, Poland, and Germany, to this country embarks at Hamburg, Antwerp, and Havre [or] have gone to England in order to take ship to America. [Although] it is not my province, nor is this the time or place, to discuss [this] most objectionable class of immigrants. I feel it to be my duty [to identify] the danger to the public health with which this class of people have threatened this country. . .

“Many of these recent immigrants “have recently been, infected with cholera, [and] are liable to carry [it] in their filthy clothing or personal effects often as far as their ultimate destination . . . and let loose the active germs of the disease. . . In their enormous numbers (500,000 to 750,000 a year), their poverty and squalor, and in their frequent transportation of all sorts of infections and contagions, these immigrants can be likened best to Oriental pilgrims, in whose track pestilence has so frequently followed. The closure of our ports against them during the period [is necessary.] I wish to warn your board that . . . the public health of the United States is not safe against an outbreak of cholera unless constant care be taken to guard against the probability that the germs of the disease may be transported in the clothing and personal effects of those classes of transatlantic travelers who usually come to this country in the steerage.”

Shakespeare then continued, describing his recommendations to provide health security for the country, especially the suspension of immigration from Europe, or at least severe restrictions placed on the International Navigation Company, then the largest transporter of immigrants to the United States.

A scarce document. At the time of listing, no other examples are for sale in the trade. No examples have appeared at auction per the Rare Book Hub. While digital and microform examples can be found, OCLC shows only Harvard holds a physical printing of this import document addressing the intersection of immigration and public health.

\$200 #10209



Most of these items are from the collection of Denis Vandervelde, one of the world's foremost experts on history of immigration quarantine and the disinfection of correspondence, which was sold by Cavendish Auctions on 8 March 2023

19. [IMMIGRATION] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

Circa 1900 – Three postcards showing quarantine and immigration facilities at New York City, the point of arrival for most European emigrants.

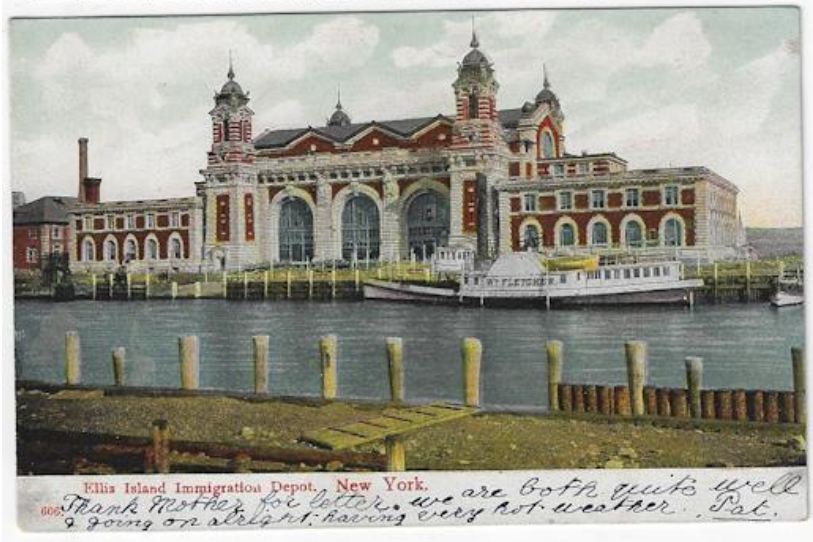
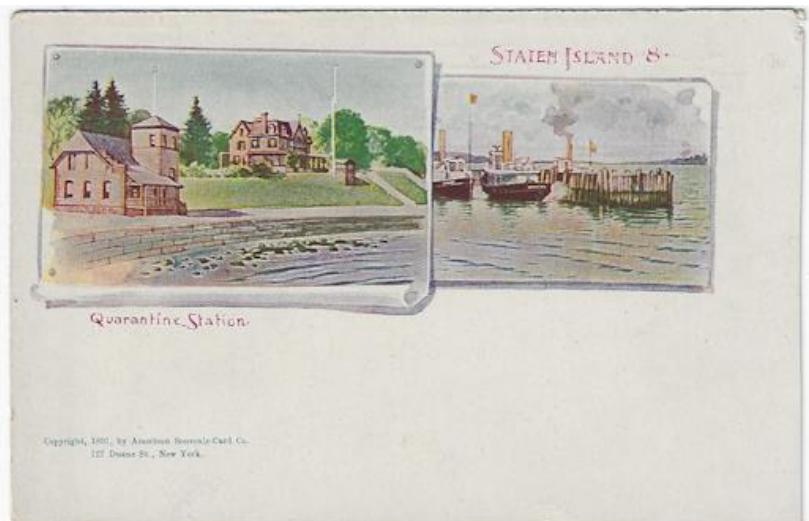
These three unposted postcards show quarantine and immigration facilities at New York City. In nice shape. All are unposted; one contains a message.

“Staten Island . . . Quarantine Station.” New York: American Souvenir-Card Co.: 1897

“Extreme Point of Manhattan, showing Emigrant Landing and Whitehall Building, New York.” New York: McGown-Silsbee Litho. Co.: no date

“Ellis Island Immigration Depot. New York.” New York: Photo & Art Postal Card Co.: no date

\$50 for the lot [#10210](#)



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20. [CALIFORNIANA] [IMMIGRATION] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

Circa 1900 - Three postcards showing quarantine and immigration facilities at Angel Island near San Francisco, the arrival point for most immigrants from Asia, especially China.

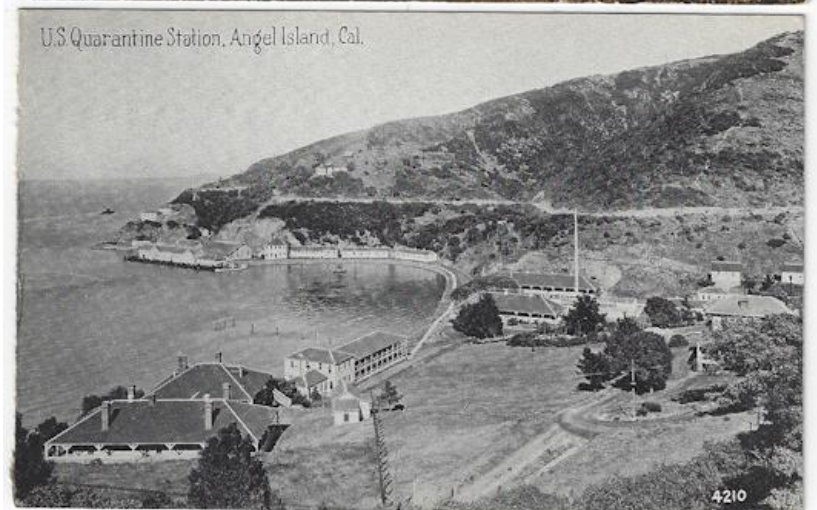
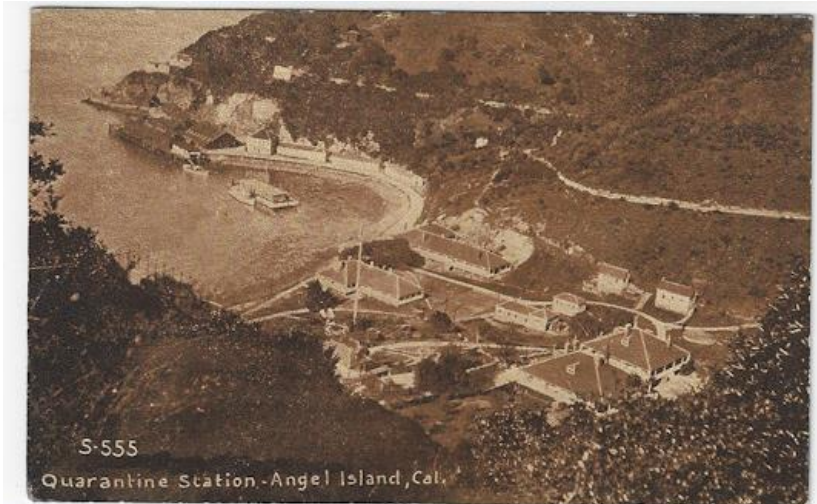
These three unused postcards show quarantine and immigration facilities at Angel Island near San Francisco. In nice shape. All are unused.

“Quarantine Station, Angel Island, Calif.” San Francisco: Stanley A Piltz Company, undated

“Quarantine Station – Angel Island, Cal.” San Francisco: Souvenir Publishing Company, undated

“U.S. Quarantine Station. Angel Island. Cal.” San Francisco: Pacific Novelty Co. undated

\$75 for the lot [#10211](#)



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21. [DISEASE – TUBERCULOSIS] [MEDICINE - SANITARIUMS] [PHILATELY] [PUBLIC HEALTH – DISINFECTION & QUARANTINE]

1910 & 1913 – Disinfected postcards sent by patients residing in two different tuberculosis sanitoriums

Both postcards were sent by patients at Pennsylvania tuberculosis sanitoriums. Both are in nice shape with minor wear.

Mont Alto Tuberculosis Sanitorium at Mont Alto, Pennsylvania. Postmarked from Mont Alto on April 4, 1910. Bears a partial impression of a red “Disinfected” handstamp (Sandrik type Mont Alto 1A. Used between 27 September 1909 and 2 December 1912. Only 13 other extant examples are known.) A Real Photo Postcard (RPPC) with an image of the Dining Hall annotated, “275 people seated in 15 min.” The message reads in part, “Received your packages. . . . When setting in eats put them in the bottom and cover them with newspapers. The nurse did not see that box. . . . Have enough stamps to last awhile. Am getting along fine & have gained 5 lbs will stay . . . probably 3 weeks. . . .”

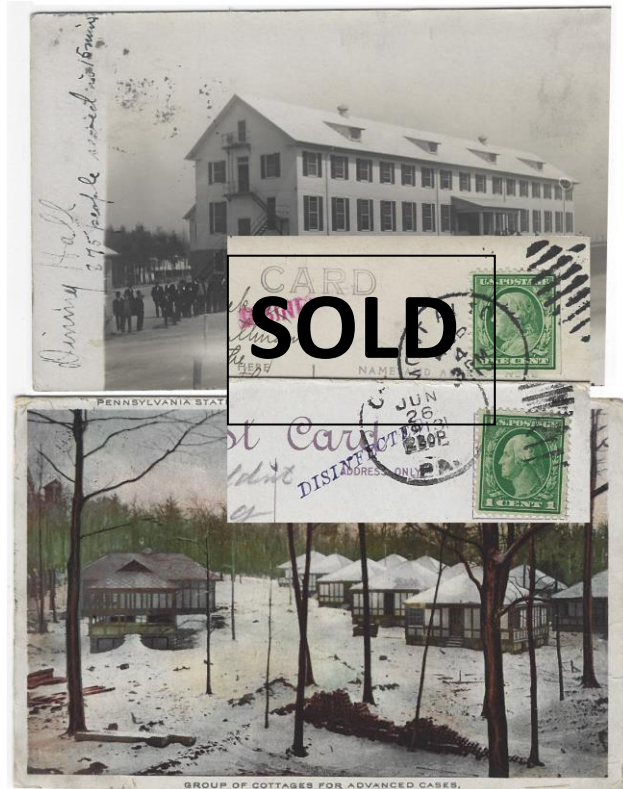
State Sanitorium for Tuberculosis at Cresson, Pennsylvania. Postmarked from Cresson on June 26, 1913. Bears a black “Disinfected” handstamp (Sandrick State Sanitorium Type 1A. Used between 22 March 1913 and 26 June 1914. Only 11 other extant examples are known.) The image shows a “Group of Cottages for Advanced Cases.” The message reads in part, “I wouldn’t mind having one [drink] now but I am on the cart [wagon] just at present. . . .”

The sanitorium movement began in Europe, and the first was established in the United States at Asheville, North Carolina in 1875. The movement exploded in the 1880s when Dr. Edward Livingstone Trudeau of the Adirondack Cottage Sanatorium at Saranac Lake realized that patients’ symptoms improved (or at least did not worsen) with exposure to fresh air, and the number of sanitation beds in the United States grew from 4,500 in 1900 to over 675,00 in 1925. Treatment consisted of bed rest, exposure to fresh air, walking exercises, and occupational therapy like weaving, basketry, and leather work. The movement ended in the 1950s when streptomycin, isoniazid, and pyrazinamide became readily available to treat the disease. The words sanatorium and sanitarium and be used interchangeably; they were derived from two different Latin roots, sanitas, which means health and sanitorius, which means health-giving.

(For more information see, “Sanatorium - from the first to the last” at TBFacts.org and “History of World TB Day” at the Center for Disease Control website.)

Unused postcards picturing sanitoriums are readily available. Those with messages from patients,

SOLD #10212



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22. [DISEASE – DIPHTHERIA] [MEDICINE – HOSPITALS] [PHILATELY] [PUBLIC HEALTH – DISINFECTION & FUMIGATION]

1924 – A disinfected letter from a doctor at the Pittsburgh Municipal Hospital who contracted diphtheria while treating patients with infectious diseases.

This four-page letter is from Dr. D. R. Jacobs at the Pittsburgh Municipal Hospital to Nancy Throckmorton at Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. It is datelined “Municipal Hospital / Sept – 16 – 1924”. It is enclosed in its original mailing envelope which was franked with a red 2-cent Washington stamp (Scott #634) and canceled with a Pittsburgh machine postmark. There is a bold “DISINFECTED” handstamp (Sandrick Pittsburgh Type 2) of which there is only one other known extant example.

Dr. Jacobs letter reads, in part, as follows:

“Have been here for nine days with diphtheria, a nice thing for a doctor to get. I expect to be here a few days yet. . . . I only worked here for one week before getting sick, during which time I saw several cases of smallpox, chicken pox, scarlet fever, Dephtheria and mumps.”

When fumigating mail, from one to all four corners were clipped from a mailing envelope. Then the envelope was enclosed in an airtight container which in turn was pumped full of the disinfecting agent, usually either sulfur dioxide or formalin. Mail was normally kept in the container before it was removed, identified as having been disinfected, and placed in the postal system. Although fumigation did not likely have any real effect, the idea of sanitizing mail exposed to contagions was not a ridiculous idea. There are known cases where postal employs contracted smallpox from handling mail. During the anthrax terrorism scare of 2001, 22 people became infected by handling the mail and five died.

(For more information, see Sandrick’s “Disinfection Markings from Pennsylvania” in the May 1992 issue of *La Posta*, Milgram’s “American Fumigation” at the American Philatelic Society website, and Ellis’s “Disinfecting the Mail: Disease, Panic, and the Post Office Department in Nineteenth-Century America” in *Information & Culture* Vol 52 No 4.)

A scarce surviving example of an early 20th century attempt to prevent disease transmission by fumigating mail known to have been handled by people infected with a contagious disease. Fumigated envelopes occasionally appear at philatelic auctions, but seldom with their enclosed letters. This example from a doctor who became infected while treating contagious patients may likely be unique. Only four ‘disinfected’ envelopes from Pittsburgh are known to exist, this example and three others. Of those other three, one handstamp is identical to this, and the other two are smaller.

\$500 #10213



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23. [DISEASE – YELLOW FEVER & PLAGUE] [PANAMA CANAL] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

Circa 1925 – Three postcards showing quarantine stations that protected transit through the Panama Canal

These three unused postcards show quarantine stations that protected transit through the Panama Canal. In nice shape.

“Quarantine Station, Culebra Island, Panama.” Leipzig, Berline, & New York: Americchrome, no date. Message on reverse; some soiling

“Quarantine station La Boca, Panama.” No publication data.

“Quarantine Station, Naos Island, Panama.” No publication data. Message on reverse.

Ships transiting the canal were required to undergo a health inspection. Although by the mid-1920s, most concerns had been eliminated, the major concern with regard to ships transiting the canal came from Bucaramanga and the interior of Columbia (Yellow Fever) and Plague from the west coast of South America. When necessary, ships were fumigated with cyanogen chloride gas.

(For more information, see the *Report of the Health Department of the Panama Canal for the Calendar Year 1923*, available online.)

\$50 for the lot [#10214](#)



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24. [MUSEUMS – THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO] [NATURE PRESERVES – WYCHWOOD] [PHILATELY] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

1935 – An airmail cover sent to Francis Kinsley Hutchinson, who was in quarantine aboard the ship, S.S. *Manhattan* at Staten Island, from her famous woodland estate, Wychwood,

This postal cover was sent by airmail from Wychwood, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin to the S.S. *Manhattan* at New York's Staten Island quarantine station. It is franked with two stamps, a 1-cent green Franklin stamp (Scott Type A155) and a 5-cent Beacon airmail stamp (Scott #C11) both tied to the envelope by a Lake Geneva postmark dated 17 March 1935. A "Sent To Ship / At Quarantine" handstamp dated 21 March 1935 is on the reverse. There are several "Airmail" hand stamps on the front along with an erroneous typed annotation "First Flight from SS Manhattan." No airmail flights were ever conducted from the ship; this "First Flight" annotation was probably added later by a philatelist either in ignorance or a misguided attempt to increase the cover's value.



Quarantine practices continued in the 1930s as a general safety precaution, although there were no epidemic diseases posing an immediate threat to the United States. That said, lingering concerns remained about recent epidemics of influenza, typhus, and encephalitis as well as an increasing number of Polio cases. So, even one of the most luxurious ocean liners in the world, the SS *Manhattan*, was subject to quarantine.

Mrs. Hutchinson was the widow of the famous Chicago philanthropist, Charles L. Hutchinson who founded *The Art Institute of Chicago*. The couple were charmed by an available 73-acre piece of woodland they encountered while vacationing in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. They purchased the property to establish a summertime country estate, and in 1901, built a mansion, named Wychwood for the abundance of surrounding witch hazel. The property became the focal point of Mrs. Hutchinson's life and she expended great energy in transforming it into a thriving nature preserve and woodland sanctuary. Upon her death in 1936, its ownership was transferred to the University of Chicago which used it for botanical studies until 1956 when it sold the property in parcels to three wealthy businessmen.

(For more information, see Hutchinson's *Our Country Home: How We Transformed a Wisconsin Woodland* and Morrissy's "Wychwood: Nature's Haven" in the 25 November 2015 of *At the Lake* magazine, available online.)

\$75 [#10215](#)

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25. [DISEASE – TUBERCULOSIS] [HOSPITALS – SANATORIUMS] [PUBLIC HEALTH – QUARANTINE]

Circa 1945 – Five real photograph postcards showing the facilities of the Pennsylvania State Sanatorium at South Mountain

The sanatorium movement began in Europe, and the first was established in the United States at Asheville, North Carolina in 1875. The movement exploded in the 1880s when Dr. Edward Livingstone Trudeau of the Adirondack Cottage Sanatorium at Saranac Lake realized that patients symptoms improved (or at least did not worsen) with exposure to fresh air, and the number of sanitation beds in the United states grew from 4,500 in 1900 to over 675,00 in 1925. Treatment consisted of bed rest, exposure to fresh air, walking exercises, and occupational therapy like weaving, basketry, and leather work. The movement ended in the 1950s



when streptomycin, isoniazid, and pyrazinamide became readily available to treat the disease. The words sanatorium and sanitarium can be used interchangeably; they were derived from two different Latin roots, *sanitas*, which means health and *sanitorius*, which means health-giving.

This five cards show the facility's doctors' residence, nurses, residence, women's dormitory, men's dormitory Unit 8, and men's dormitory Unit 15.

(For more information see, "Sanatorium - from the first to the last" at TBFacts.org and "History of World TB Day" at the Center for Disease Control website.)

\$50 [#10216](#)

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6 April 2024 – New York Rare Book Fair – New York City, New York

15-18 August 2024 – The Great American Stamp Show – Hartford, Connecticut