

## **Observations on medical transactions at St. Vincent for the quarters ending 31 Dec 1841 and 31 March 1843**

### **Publication/Creation**

c.1841-1843

### **Persistent URL**

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Observations on the Medical transactions  
at St. Vincent for the quarter ending  
31 December 1841

The month of October was ushered  
in by strong sea breezes from the N.E., and heavy  
falls of rain, which continued until about the  
middle of the month, when the sea breeze  
became more moderate, and there were only  
occasional light showers until the end.

The fall of rain at the beginning  
of the month was very great as will be seen when  
I mention that from 11<sup>h</sup> AM on the 6<sup>th</sup>, to 11<sup>h</sup> AM on  
the 7<sup>th</sup> it amounted to 5.59 Inches

The month of November commenced  
with moderate sea breezes, and generally  
dry weather which continued until the middle  
of the month, when the sea breeze became  
strong, and more or less rain fell every day  
until the end of the month.

December commenced with strong  
sea breezes, and showery weather which continued  
until the 12<sup>th</sup> when very light S.W. winds prevailed

during

during the 13. 14. 15, & 16, with chilly land winds at night. On the night of the 16<sup>th</sup> it was stormy and rained heavily nearly all night. On the 17<sup>th</sup> the usual sea breeze blew with considerable force, and in the evening there was a heavy fall of rain again. On the 18<sup>th</sup> the weather was close and wet all day, and at night it became squally and wet.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> to the end of the month the sea breeze was strong and boisterous and there were frequent heavy showers of rain.

The admissions into Hospital during the quarter have been 123, or 42.75 per cent of the White Troops; and 13 per cent of the Blacks which may be clasped under the following heads.

	White	Blacks	Total
Fevers -----	73	0	73
Head affections ---	1	0	1
Chest affections ---	8	1	9
Stomach & Bowel D <sup>o</sup> ..	14	0	14
Asputic Affections --	2	0	2
Rheumatic affections ---	3	3	6
Wounds & accidents ---	7	2	9
Other Disorders --	4	5	9
Total	<u>112</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>123</u>



Fever which holds so conspicuous a place in the list of admissions this quarter, as compared with the two preceding ones, may be classed in the following manner

Common Continued - - -	10
Remittent - - - - -	7
Yellow - - - - -	56

to which add two that remained at the close of last quarter making a total of 75 cases of Fever that have been under medical treatment during the period embraced by the accompanying return. This large number of admissions, which took place principally within the space of ten days in the month of December, amounts to 65.2 per cent of the whole admissions into Hospital, and 28 per cent of the strength of the garrison. 8 cases have had a fatal termination being in the ratio of 10.66 per cent of the number treated.

Some cases of Remittent Fever appeared amongst the married people quartered at Johnston's point early in October, but by clearing away the grass, brushwood, and fill from around the building, and having the same precautions taken with the men's Barracks

at

at the Citadel the disease disappeared. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of October a man of the Artillery, and one of the 92<sup>d</sup>, were admitted from the goal of Kingstown laboring under Remittent fever - The case in the man of the 92<sup>d</sup> was mild; but that of the man of the Artillery, who was a drunkard, and had served many years in hot climates, was attended with delirium, and proved fatal on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November -

During the early part of the month of November yellow fever broke out amongst the men of the 33<sup>d</sup> Regt, and those of the R<sup>g</sup> Artillery at Barbados, and a detachment of three men of the Artillery was sent down to St Vincent on the 26<sup>th</sup> to give more space in the B<sup>ns</sup> at Barbados - One of these men, of the name of Dunt, had been quartered in the lower room of the Artillery Barracks at Barbados, and perhaps some fatal cases of yellow fever, both in the 33<sup>d</sup> & R<sup>g</sup> Artillery, had been admitted into Hospital.

Dunt, on his arrival complained of fatigue and said he felt unwell, but as he had come off guard the day he embarked at Barbados, and had obtained no sleep on board the Steamer



Steamer his sensations were attributed to  
 physical exhaustion, and he was ordered to  
 proceed by water with the other two men to  
 Fort Duvernulle. The next day he felt rather  
 better, but at daybreak the following morning  
 a signal was made that he was very ill  
 and I proceeded immediately to the Fort, and  
 had him conveyed to the Hospital at old woman's  
 point where he was put into a ward by himself  
 in the old Hospital, and every precaution taken  
 to keep him from communicating with either the  
 rest of the sick, or the men in garrison. On  
 the same day that Dunt was admitted from  
 Fort Duvernulle (the 26<sup>th</sup>) a man of the 92<sup>d</sup>  
 of the name of Fraser, belonging to the Band,  
 was admitted from Fort Charlotte. Fraser's case  
 proved one of extreme severity, and he narrowly  
 escaped with his life having been in the  
 advanced stage of the disease of a lined yellow  
 color, and had oozing of blood from the tongue,  
 and the lining membrane of his mouth - from  
 his nose, and from the parts where he had  
 been blistered. Fraser's case was followed  
 in a few days by two others which were  
 severe and attended with yellow suffusion,  
 and, as I was informed by Dr Melville a civil  
 practitioner in the town that some cases of  
 Fraser

Fever in newly arrived Europeans  
had proved fatal and terminated in Black  
burnet I recommended to the Officer Com:  
manding the Garrison the propriety granting  
the indulgence of papers to go into town  
to those who had business there.

Things remained in this state, and  
our cases of fever, tho' severe, were recovering,  
until the night of the 11<sup>th</sup> of December, when  
three men were suddenly seized with Fever  
of an aggravated form in Barracks: the  
following day three more were attacked;  
and on the 14<sup>th</sup> finding that the admissions  
continued numerous, and the disease  
began to assume all the characteristics  
of yellow Fever I addressed a letter to the  
Officer in Command of the Troops recom:  
mending that the Camp Equipage in Store  
should be examined and put into a state  
of efficiency, as it might be necessary to place  
the garrison under canvas. And on the  
16<sup>th</sup> 18 fresh cases having been admitted  
from the date of my former letter of the 14<sup>th</sup>,  
and one death, from Spasmodic Cholera,  
having



having taken place I suggested the propriety  
of removing the men with as little delay as  
possible from the crowded, ill ventilated  
Barracks in the Citadel, and Encamping  
them on a dry Knob about a mile to the  
S. E. of the Fort where the 70<sup>th</sup> were en-  
camped two years ago with so much ad-  
vantage during the prevalence of similar  
Epidemic in that Corps. The measure  
was immediately carried into Effect by  
Lieut. W. Winchester of the 92<sup>d</sup>, and, altho  
the weather became wet and stormy,  
it has been attended with the happiest  
result as the disease was immediately  
arrested amongst the men in Camp,  
altho' it continued to attack every individual  
that remained in Barracks, and ran thro' all  
the families. The quarter Master Sergeant's  
wife, and two children were <sup>taken ill</sup> - The Drum  
Major was attacked with fever and went  
to hospital before the men were Encamped -  
his wife, who was attending on the quarter  
Master Sergeant's wife, felt unwell for a day  
or two, but did not keep her bed, but her  
little boy was attacked with Fever.

The



The Schoolmaster Sergeant, who was removed into the servants' room of the Commandant's house to look after it during Col. Winchester's absence at a Cottage near the Camp, was attacked with fever and went to hospital, and his three children, two girls and a boy, were seized with the same complaint - The boy had black vomit, and livid blotches on his body, but recovered. When the Artillery were ordered out to Fort Dumont on the 24<sup>th</sup> one man, in charge of the Engineer yard, & his wife were left behind - the man escaped, but the wife was attacked with fever

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of Jan<sup>y</sup> 1832 this woman, Bunker, was admitted into the 33<sup>rd</sup> Hospital with yellow fever and died the next day.

Within the first week after the disease made its appearance fifty men were admitted into hospital, and had the Garrison continued to occupy their quarters I am convinced it would have run thro' the whole of them in less than a month.

The disease generally came on with a sense of chilliness, but in some instances this was wanting, and the first symptom complained of

was



was a feeling of faintness. The cold stage was speedily followed by heat of skin - headache - pain across the loins, and in the lower extremities, particularly about the knees, and in the calves of the legs - nausea, and vomiting of bilious matter - The pulse varied, in all the cases that were admitted at the commencement of the Epidemic, when the sea breeze was light and from the S.W., it was small, soft, and rapid, but as the weather changed and became a little cooler the vascular action was more vigorous and developed. The tongue was always moist, and for the most part only slightly coated in the centre with a red border at each side - The bowels were variable in some there was constipation, and in others griping & purging, and in one instance of the latter kind it ran into Spasmodic blue cholera, and proved fatal in a few hours - Thirst in the generality of cases was not much complained of - The eyes were injected, watery, and, in the severer cases, of a pink color, and when pressed they felt tender - The countenance was flushed of a dusky red, and bore, in most cases an expression of anxiety, and alarm -

The paroxysm, for the fever was one of a single paroxysm, continued from 36 to 72 hours, and then terminated in perfect remission, or the second stage of the disease

Set in



Set in. In a great number of those who had a favorable termination *Scorpa Labialis* made its appearance which was always critical, and in about one half, I should think, of those who were admitted into Hospital there was yellow suffusion to a greater, or less extent.

Of the nine cases which had Black vomit seven died, and two recovered. The schoolmaster's little boy recovered also from <sup>the</sup> Black vomit stage which makes three recoveries out of ten cases - In no case did the purg terminate in Intermittent nor was there a single case of relapse amongst the men; But Lieut Pether, who went down to a Tavern in town without consulting either Mr Palmer or myself on the subject, and who imprudently exerted himself beyond his strength, had a relapse on the evening of the 31<sup>st</sup> inst, and is now very ill, having, as yet, had no remission of fever. This morning (2<sup>d</sup> January), however, there is a slight eruptive eruption on his upper lip which I trust will prove as favorable an omen to him as it has been to others.

In summer 1771

In

In those cases which did not terminate at the end of the first paroxysm, a new set of symptoms made their appearance - the patient became restless and complained, altho' the temperature of the body was not greater than natural and the pulse did not exceed 75- or 80, much of his limbs and legs - his skin, and eyes became yellow, and as the disease advanced this assumed a livid appearance - his ideas began to wander which terminated in Delirium - a sense of weight was felt at the stomach which rejected ~~the~~ what was taken, and in a few hours he began to gulp up mouthfuls of thin fluid with dark fleecy floating in it which adhered to the side of the vessel - at this stage the secretion of urine was suppressed in several - the vomiting became more frequent, abundant, & decided in character - the Delirium <sup>increased</sup> and in four of the fatal cases convulsions closed the tragic scene - In the three cases which survived the Black vomit stage the subjects lay feeble, and delirious with



with blood oozing from the tongue, and mucous surfaces for two or three days -

This oozing of blood seemed critical as all the cases that reached it recovered, and it was noticed that a slight hemorrhage from the nose in the advanced stage of the disease proved critical in several cases where no Black vomit had been seen -

Treatment - As soon as the formidable nature of the disease we had to contend with was discovered Mr Palmer, Surgeon 92<sup>d</sup> Highlanders, and myself - from our previous experience of the ill success of the mercurial plan of treatment, decided on giving the saline purge recommended by Dr Stevens a fair trial - Our success may not appear very great, but judging from our former experience we are quite satisfied with the result, and I question very much, had we adopted the old method, whether we would have been able to exhibit three cases of recovery out of ten of Black vomit. and on reference to the records of the Epidemic which prevailed here in the 70<sup>th</sup> Regt in 1839 find that our proportion of mortality

is



is just one half what it was in that case, which is an encouragement to give the plan a further trial.

The following maybe given as a resume of our practice. On admission all patients were put into a Warm Bath to cleanse the skin and open the pores - after the Bath, if there was nausea, and vomiting of Bile, which were present in the greater proportion of the cases, five or six grains of Spearmint were given to clear the Stomach of any crude ingesta, or noxious secretions that might be lodged there. After the operation of the Emetic an Effervescent Draught, or two were given to quiet the Stomach, and then 5 or 6 grains of dry Calomel were placed on the tongue which were followed by a solution of Salts given at short intervals until the bowels were well opened. If this did not relieve the patient, and there was determination to any particular organ blood was taken from the Arm, or from the part by Cupping. During the whole of the febrile paroxysm sponging with cold water was constantly employed, and after the general excitement had been abated by bleeding, and purging a Saline

Signature





Removal of the men to Camp arrested the disease at once, and not a single case worthy of notice was admitted after they had been 3 or 4 days under Canvas; and the few that came in at first took the seeds of the disease along with them from Barracks.

Head affections

One case of Delirium Tremens, brought on by a protracted debauch in town was admitted. The symptoms were not aggravated and the disease gave way under the use of Purgatives - Dover's Powder, and small quantities of Spirit.

Two cases of Pneumonia, one of Phthisis and five of Catarrh were admitted during the quarter -

Chest affections

The Catarrhal affections and the case of Pneumonia presented nothing worthy of notice; but the case of Phthisis proved fatal.

The subject of it was mentioned in the June quarterly report under the head of Diabetes. After his discharge from Hospital on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June he remained Convalescent until his re-admission into Hospital on the 24 of October under the head of Phthisis. He had only had cough, he said, <sup>some</sup> short; but the disease, as is usual when it is the sequela of Diabetes ran on rapidly

to



to a fatal termination; and on examining his body after death the Lungs were found extensively disorganized. The kidneys were enlarged and the Cortical portion more infested than natural. Chest affections

One severe case of Hepatitis, in a man of the name of Thompson was admitted - He contracted Fever at Johnston's point when a Convalescent there, and is now under treatment for the disease and recovering. Hepatic Diseases

There have not been numerous Rheumatic affections and the cases that have come under treatment have been of little importance -

Diseases of the Stomach & Bowels have been few but a case of Cholera which came into Hospital with symptoms of Fever proved fatal. He was seized with Cramps, and rice water purging a few hours after his admission which were followed by the blue stage, and he died in less than 24 hours after the attack. Diseases of the Stomach & Bowels

The case of Pain in the Elbow joint which remained under treatment at the end of last quarter did well, and no case of interest has been admitted during the present period

St Vincent  
2 January 1842

John Hall  
Staff Surgeon



Some Remarks concerning the most severe and fatal cases treated during the quarter.

Wood - admitted 14 December 1841 - Was  
Cupped: had remission of fever on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day:  
Black vomit on the 4<sup>th</sup>; & died on the 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Furor - delirium - Suppression of Urine;  
and Convulsions -

Was a man of intemperate habits and  
had been drinking freely previous to his attack.  
When taken ill he took leave of his Company  
passions in Barracks, and gave himself up.

Reid - Cupped to 2<sup>oz</sup> which produced faintness,  
admitted  
12 Dec<sup>r</sup> 1841  
Had remission of fever on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day,  
Black vomit on the 5<sup>th</sup> - Recovered -  
Particular symptoms - Suppression of  
urine - delirium - Yellow suffusion  
of the iris - oozing of blood from  
the tongue and mucous surfaces  
A man of intemperate habits  
employed at the Sergeant's mess  
as Cook & Waiter -

Rehau - Cupped - Remission of Fever  
admitted  
17 Dec<sup>r</sup> -  
4<sup>th</sup> day - Black vomit 4<sup>th</sup> Day  
Died 8<sup>th</sup> day - Was delirious:  
when admitted into Hospital -  
and died in Convulsions -

A boy belonging to the Band and  
taken ill when playing at a Charity  
Bazaar on Kings Cross to which  
the men were marched down at  
mid-day on the 16 Dec<sup>r</sup>.



Keir

admitted

17 Dec<sup>r</sup> 1841Cupped to 6<sup>oz</sup>

no remission of  
fever - Black vomit  
on the 7<sup>th</sup> day  
died on the 7<sup>th</sup> day -  
Had delirium, &  
suppurative furuncle  
a Band's man &  
taken ill at the  
same time as  
Keir -

Lee

admitted

19<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> 1841Bled to 14<sup>oz</sup>Cupped to 4<sup>oz</sup>50 - to 6<sup>oz</sup>

Remission of  
Fever 4<sup>th</sup> day.  
died Black vomit  
5<sup>th</sup> day -  
Died 5<sup>th</sup> day -  
Convulsions -  
A Band's man &  
Employed at the  
Charity Bazaar  
on the 16<sup>th</sup>

Raps

admitted

19<sup>th</sup> December  
1841Bled to 8<sup>oz</sup>Cupped to 6<sup>oz</sup>

Remission of  
Fever 4<sup>th</sup> day -  
Black vomit 5<sup>th</sup> day -  
Died 6<sup>th</sup> day  
Convulsions  
A Band's man  
and employed  
at the Charity  
Bazaar on the 16<sup>th</sup>

Palmer

admitted 21<sup>st</sup>Dec<sup>r</sup> 1841Bled to 6<sup>oz</sup>Cupped to 4<sup>oz</sup>

no remission  
Black vomit 2<sup>nd</sup>  
day. died on  
the 5<sup>th</sup> - Convulsions with screaming  
A drummer boy marched  
to camp with his  
company on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
admitted the same  
night -



Cummings  
admitted  
23 Dec  
1841

Cupped to 6<sup>oz</sup> no remission of fever  
30 to 4<sup>oz</sup> Black vomit on the 5<sup>th</sup> day.  
Died on the 8<sup>th</sup> in Convulsions

Was the orderly Room Clerk  
and had been ill three days  
before his admission. He =  
prudently walked from camp  
to the hospital with the fever  
on him.

King  
admitted 20 Dec  
1841 -

Cupped to 6<sup>oz</sup> Had Black vomit  
on the 5<sup>th</sup> day  
Delirium &  
cozing of blood  
from the mouth  
done -  
Recovered

8 of the cases admitted with yellow fever  
were bled from the arm, of these three  
died - The greater proportion of  
the others were cupped to a greater  
or less extent according to air cur =  
stances.

State

Of 34 cases of which account was kept  
27 were admitted from the lower rooms: &  
7 from the upper rooms.  
4 Hospital orderlies were attacked  
2 Patients in hospital laboring under Dysentery - 5  
9 men were admitted from camp  
30  
2 Fatal cases were admitted from Johnston's point, on a  
case of relapse  
1 case of relapse from the Recovered  
1 Fatal case from the surgeons found added in last



Length of Quantities of  
Articles of the Garrison  
at Fort Charlotte S. W. Mass  
to December 1841

9925-

Quarterly Report of Medical Transactions  
at St. Vincent for the period Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March  
1843

The average strength of the garrison  
of St. Vincent during the past quarter has been  
227 Whites, and 84 Blacks

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January the Head  
Quarters, and two Companies of the 33<sup>d</sup> Regiment  
were relieved by the Head quarters, and two  
Companies of the 46<sup>th</sup> from Barbados; and by  
the same opportunity the Detachment of the  
Royal Artillery was replaced by one composed  
of men just arrived from England. On the 27<sup>th</sup> March  
57 Recruits joined the 46<sup>th</sup> Regt from England.  
95 Whites, and 18 Blacks have been  
admitted into Hospital being in the ratio of  
41.85 and 21.43 per cent of their respective strength

-Which amplifies the  
changes that have taken  
place in the Garrison  
during the present quarter

Two cases of Fever amongst the  
Whites have had a fatal termination; but as  
both of them were landed ill from Barbados, &  
one of them, <sup>the youngest of the party,</sup> had Black vomit, and Suppression  
of urine when he was admitted into Hospital  
their complaints cannot with justice be ascribed  
to the climate of this Island.

Fetile  
Disorders

The other cases of Fever were of  
little import, but it may be right to observe  
that two of them were admitted from St. Vincent Jail.



Some smart cases of Simple Cholera-  
Diarrhœa, and acute Dysentery were  
admitted, but none of them were of  
sufficient consequence to deserve comment

Diseases of the  
Stomach, and  
Bowel

A case of Fracture of the Condyles  
of the Humerus within the capsular ligament,  
in a man of the 13<sup>th</sup> N. India Regiment, was  
admitted in January - ~~had been taken  
care of, & the arm was well bandaged~~

~~The case was treated in the first instance~~  
It was, under the care of  
Surgeon Drysdale of the 33<sup>rd</sup> <sup>with first intention</sup> Regiment, who  
placed the arm in Splints in a nearly straight  
position, and applied the Splints over the inner  
and outer Condyles by which means the inner  
Condyle was allowed to slip forward, and the  
Pleuran of the Wound to be drawn upwards, &  
point considerably backwards - This deformity  
has been remedied, and the joint bent as much  
as possible, but still, I fear, the cure will not  
be a <sup>satisfactory</sup> good one -

Wounds  
and  
Accidents

A case of Fracture of the Ribs from  
a fall was treated with success in the usual  
way. Venesection, and Tartar Emetic were  
had recourse to to relieve the inflammatory  
Symptoms that ensued.

A case of Dislocation of the Humerus  
forward under the Clavicle was admitted, and  
easily reduced by extension after it had been  
displaced 18 hours -

A. Cass

Wounds  
and  
Accidents

A case of severe Contused Wound  
of the Head, and general confusion of the  
Body was admitted, and threatened the serious.  
The subject of it, a Drum boy of the name of  
Gunn, was, with some other men, hunting  
rats at that part of the Citadel wall where  
the dirt is thrown over, when he lost his  
footing, and fell ten or twelve feet down  
the wall, and rolled nearly 200 feet down  
the Citadel Hill - His head was deeply cut  
and lacerated over the centre of the Parietal  
Bones, and his whole body was bruised, and  
scratched. His pulse for some days was 140  
and very weak, and I was apprehensive he  
had sustained some serious internal  
injury; but this frequency of pulse gradually  
subsided - the pain in his Head, and Sins  
ceased, and he is now quite well and at his  
duty -

Diseases  
of the  
Eyes

Ophthalmia forms a prominent item  
in the admissions this quarter, as it did  
during the three preceding years, but I have found  
the disease very manageable under mild treatment.

The strong Solutions of Nitrate of Silver  
complicate the Disease very much, and unless  
judgment be used in their application they do  
great mischief. Ten grain solution in the  
morning, the same, or Vinum Opii, in the  
Evening is enough to create a disease of no  
easy management of itself -

I have



St Vincent  
Observations to 31 March  
1843

I have found the Sulfur Emulsion Saliva tritura  
and warm water subdue the inflammation, Staff  
very readily, and after that Goulard, or acetate  
of Zinc wash with Opium answered very well  
for the second stage. When the disease  
became a little more chronic 2 1/2 grain solution  
of Nitrate of Silver was found useful, but the  
great secret, toward the close of the disease,  
appeared to be to avoid doing too much -

The origin of the Disease in  
the 46<sup>th</sup>, I think, may be traced to the heat, and  
impure air of the Barrack Rooms. When the  
Regiment arrived here they completed certain  
barracks to their full complement of men leaving  
others empty for the accommodation of 70 Recruits  
exported out from England. The consequence  
was that Ophthalmia made its appearance amongst  
the men, and most of the worst cases were  
admitted at the end of January, and during  
the early part of February. At my recommen-  
dation the men were distributed thro' the whole  
Barrack and since then there have been  
very few admissions, and those very slight cases  
and attributable in most instances to cold taken  
on guard. Vision has not been the least  
impaired in anyone case that has come under  
my own care, and all the cases now under  
treatment are Convalescent -

St Vincent }  
31 March 1843 }  
John Hall  
Staff Surgeon

By bringing the absence of the Surgeon, and the sickness of the  
Assistant Surgeon of the 46<sup>th</sup> Regt. the hospital was under  
my care from the 17<sup>th</sup> January to the end of the quarter -  
I have succeeded, in establishing Good Order  
in the Garrison, and have distributed the signal  
salutarily amongst the Civil practitioners of the Island  
G