

**Boyd Reilly (to accompany bill H.R. no. 534) February 7, 1838 : Mr. Duncan, from the Select Committee appointed on the subject, made the following report.**

### **Contributors**

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## BOYD REILLY.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 534]

FEBRUARY 7, 1838.

Mr. DUNCAN, from the Select Committee appointed on the subject, made the following

**REPORT:**

*The Committee of the House to whom was referred the memorial of Boyd Reilly, praying that Congress would grant him the relief therein asked for, by purchasing the perpetual right to use his improved apparatus for the application of pungent and irrespirable gases and vapor to the surface of the human body, in the army, navy, and hospitals of the United States, report:*

That they have carefully examined the apparatus invented by said Reilly, and consider it as admirably adapted to accomplish all that could be desired in the application of the pungent and irrespirable gases to the surface of the body. The machine is portable, simple in its structure, easy of application, does not subject a weak and feeble person to fatigue during its use, and the patients and attendants are not exposed to the inconvenience or danger of breathing any vapor that may be applied, either while the patient is subject to its action, or while removing him from the bath.

The application of vapor and pungent gases to the surface of the body is not a new remedy, but has long engaged the attention and commanded the confidence of medical men. But the imperfection of all the apparatus heretofore employed for this purpose has greatly limited the use of the remedy. Your committee believe that no apparatus has hitherto been invented by which irrespirable gases could be applied to the body in a recumbent posture, and with sufficient security to the patient and attendants against the introduction of the vapor or gas into the lungs—both matters of vast importance.

Your committee confidently believe that the use of the pungent gases, applied by means of this improved apparatus, will be admirably adapted to the treatment of a great portion of the diseases to which persons in the military and naval service of the United States are liable, and they think will, in the end, prove the most speedy, economical, safe, and pleasant mode of treatment in all cutaneous diseases, which are numerous and frequently obstinate of cure in those exposed to the duties, hardships, and privations of the camp and the navy, as well as diseases of a rheumatic character, and those of a congestive form, common to the soldier and the sailor.



In corroboration of their opinion of the importance and utility of this invention of the memorialist, the committee refer to the annexed testimonials of distinguished medical gentlemen in the military and naval service of the United States, as well as the testimony of other eminent physicians.

The committee, considering the length of time Mr. Reilly has been employed in the invention and improvement of his apparatus, the time he has spent in introducing his invention to the notice and patronage of the Government, the great skill and ingenuity evinced in the arrangement and the completeness of the apparatus for the purposes intended, and the great advantages which, in their opinion, will be derived from the speedy and general employment of the apparatus in the service of the United States, and in general and common use throughout the country, have reported a bill to purchase the right to use the memorialist's vapor-bath in the naval and military service, in the hospitals, and in the penitentiary of the United States; and also to compensate him in some degree for his time and trouble in introducing his invention to the notice of the Government; and for these purposes, it is their opinion that the sum of ten thousand dollars would be no more than a moderate and reasonable compensation. They have, therefore, named that sum in the bill.

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*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled :*

The memorial of the undersigned, a citizen of the United States, resident in the State of Ohio, respectfully represents :

That your memorialist has been engaged, through the last fifteen years, in the use and construction of apparatus, both fixed and portable, in which the pungent irrespirable gases or vapor of any description can be applied to the surface of the human system with perfect ease and safety.

That the apparatus thus constructed has been fully tested by eminent surgeons of the army and navy, instructed by each Department to make the investigation; in the course of which, your memorialist has applied both the portable forms of his baths to patients in the presence of the surgeons, at five different hospitals of the army and navy, in the United States penitentiary, and on board of the flag-ship of the surveying and exploring squadron, at New York, to the entire satisfaction of all the surgeons, as expressed in their official reports and requisitions attached to his documents; and in consequence of which, the invention has been introduced into all the services above mentioned. Your memorialist has also provided new fixed and portable apparatus for the inspection of the committees and members of Congress, with which he has attended at the Capitol through four sessions. For the time employed as above stated, which commenced in the year eighteen hundred and thirty-two; for all the apparatus made use of, (except in the exploring squadron;) for travelling expenses, subsistence, &c., he has never received any remuneration whatever.

That bills have been unanimously reported by highly respectable committees of the United States Senate, in which were included all the medical



gentlemen of that body; said bills being passed through the three last regular sessions, and reported in the House of Representatives, without amendment, by the Committee on Naval Affairs of the twenty-third Congress, and a select committee of the twenty-fourth, principally composed of physicians; but coming late to the House, they were included among the unfinished business of each session. The object of these bills was, to compensate your memorialist, "in some degree," (as the report states,) for his time, labor, and expenses, while employed as above stated; for the right of using the apparatus already introduced into the different services, or that may be hereafter introduced, whether made at the distant posts of the army, (some provided for this service having been lost on one of the Western rivers,) or on long voyages in remote seas, as is contemplated to be done in the exploring squadron, a sufficient number for that service not being at present attainable; or manufactured at the workshops of the navy yards, where they can at all times be in readiness, and any part of them repaired or replaced at the shortest notice.

Your memorialist trusts it will appear that higher motives than mere mercenary ones prompt his application to Congress; as, should the sum appropriated by the Senate be granted, it is his intention (in accordance with the wishes of many members of Congress, and other gentlemen, who have used his baths with great advantage) to establish them in a suitable manner in this place, where various causes operate to render such an establishment highly salutary, particularly to strangers, and from whence a knowledge of it can be so well diffused to all parts of the Union; to aid which general knowledge, it is also his intention (and he hereby engages) to relinquish to the hospitals of the different State penitentiaries, and all other (State) charitable institutions, the free right of using the different forms of his baths. As a criterion by which to judge of the value of this gift, he would refer to the report of the secretary of the board of managers of the United States penitentiary, given after several years' use of his apparatus in that institution; which report will be found among his documents.

Your memorialist begs leave further to observe, that, inasmuch as the adoption of his invention by the General Government would have a tendency to promote public confidence in it, so its appearing on the published journals that no final action has been had on it must have an opposite tendency, and in that view has caused your memorialist much loss and disappointment. He therefore invokes the twenty-fifth Congress for such relief in the premises as, in its wisdom and justice, he may be considered to merit; and he, as in duty bound, will continue his efforts in the cause of science and humanity.

BOYD REILLY.

WASHINGTON CITY, *December 5, 1837.*

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In selecting the following testimonials for Congress, many similar ones from a distance have been omitted, as well as several from persons in this city and neighborhood.

BOYD REILLY.



*Certificate from Joseph Lovell, M. D., Surgeon General of the United States army.*

WASHINGTON, *March 17, 1834.*

SIR : Agreeably to the request contained in your letter of the 12th instant, I have to state that your vapor-bath has been furnished to the larger military posts, on the report and recommendation of the surgeon to whom it was sent for trial ; and that I have found it a convenient, speedy, and effectual remedy, in the several cases in which it has been used in this place by my direction, both as a simple vapor-bath and for the application of sulphur in obstinate cutaneous affections.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOS. LOVELL.

BOYD REILLY, Esq., *Washington.*

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SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE, *May 16, 1834.*

SIR : In compliance with your instructions of the 15th instant, I have to report that twelve to fifteen of Mr. Boyd Reilly's baths would probably be required for the army as at present distributed ; and it is, in my opinion, desirable that they should be furnished to the principal posts and stations. The price paid for those purchased was fifty-five dollars ; but I am not informed what portion of this was in consideration of the patent. The letter and memorial are herewith enclosed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOS. LOVELL,  
*Surgeon General.*

Hon. LEWIS CASS,  
*Secretary of War.*

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*Copy of an official report addressed by Dr. Archer, surgeon of the United States army, stationed at Fortress Monroe, to Dr. Lovell, Surgeon General of the United States army, referred to in the preceding certificate.*

SIR : Agreeably to your instructions, I have minutely examined and tested the apparatus patented by Mr. Boyd Reilly for administering the vapor-bath, and believe it to be the only one ever invented that fully answers the purpose intended. It possesses great simplicity of construction, is very portable, durable, and easily repaired. No art, and very little attention, is necessary to put it in operation, and the patient experiences no inconvenience whatever from its use. He reclines perfectly at ease on an elastic couch, which, from its construction, adapts itself to the inequalities of the body—an important desideratum in the treatment of rheumatic, gouty, or other diseases, attended with much pain from an uneasy position. The sulphur gas, with which I tested the apparatus, was completely excluded from the chamber, and produced not the least inconvenience,



either to the patient or to any one present. I think it a very important auxiliary to our remedial means, and would strongly recommend its adoption in the medical department of the army.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ROB. ARCHER.

To Dr. Jos. Lovell, *Surgeon General*.

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WASHINGTON, *April 12, 1836.*

SIR : Having, on several occasions, advised the use of your vapor-bath, and witnessed its beneficial effects, I take great pleasure in recommending it as the most speedy and effectual remedy in many cutaneous affections and in rheumatism. The convenience and ease with which it is used, either as a simple vapor-bath or for the application of sulphur, gives it a decided preference over any invention of the kind that I have ever known.

Very respectfully, I am your obedient servant,

BENJAMIN KING, M. D.

*Assistant Surgeon, U. S. army, and acting Surgeon General.*

BOYD REILLY, *Washington city, D. C.*

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*Copy of an official report from Thomas J. Boyd, M. D., surgeon of the United States navy hospital, Washington, to the Navy Commissioners.*

In compliance with your orders to examine Mr. B. Reilly's apparatus, and report my opinion of its use, I have the honor to submit the following :

Vapor-baths are held in high regard by the medical profession. They are justly considered efficient remedies in obstinate affections of the skin, and in various chronic diseases, where the perspiratory function is obstructed. The relation between the skin and the internal organs is so intimate, that the absence of perspiration is one of the earliest symptoms of disease, and many of the milder forms of ill health are only known from an interruption to this important process. There are no means so efficacious in restoring its energy and breaking up morbid associations as the direct application of heat and moisture.

Inconvenience attending the employment of vapor-baths has operated against their introduction into general practice. Every physician who has encountered cases of obstinate chronic rheumatism has had occasion to regret the want of a simple and efficient apparatus to apply aqueous vapor without risk or discomfort to his patient. It is only in large establishments that the advantages of this remedy can be obtained; and under the most favorable circumstances it is considered hazardous and fatiguing. In foreign hospitals, where these baths are much more employed than in our country, the vapor is conveyed to the patient while in bed, or, if the case permits, he is taken into a small chamber filled with it. Both these methods answer the purpose of exciting profuse perspiration, but are inconvenient, and often impracticable. No other than aqueous vapor can



be applied in this manner. Various contrivances have been adopted where it is necessary to employ more active agents, such as sulphur and the mercurial preparations. These vapors are irrespirable, and cannot be safely used without securing the patient and attendants from their effects. So far as my knowledge extends, no apparatus suitable to the wants of ordinary practice has overcome this difficulty. It is likewise necessary that the vapor should be removed without allowing it to escape, or the patient has to be carried into another chamber, at much inconvenience, and some risk of taking cold. Impressed with these views, I examined the machine of Mr. B. Reilly, to which my attention was called by your orders. I caused it to be applied to a patient laboring under severe rheumatism. The place of trial was a common-sized chamber. The machine consisted of a frame, separable into parts to render it portable, of sufficient length and breadth to accommodate the largest-sized person. A lacing of strong girding forms an elastic couch to recline on. The patient, after being stripped, had an oil-cloth bag, open at both ends, secured by several turns of bandage round his neck, and was then placed on the frame. A covering of prepared muslin, supported by hoops, was stretched over him, and secured by a drawing-string into a groove running round the frame.

The oil-cloth attached to the patient's neck was adjusted to the upper end of the cover, and he was now completely enclosed in the apparatus from the neck down, and as comfortable as if on a bed. A small tin vessel with sulphur was placed over a spirit-lamp, and a tube leading from it to the lower end of the frame opened into the body of the apparatus. The patient soon became sensible of the action of the vapor, and was thrown into a profuse perspiration, which was continued for more than an hour without discomfort or fatigue. In order to throw off the vapor, the frame has a false bottom, and a small tube leads from this to the chimney-place, and the vapor is driven over as fast as generated. The heated air expels it completely before the patient is removed. There was no escape of gas from the machine, and the patient suffered no inconvenience.

I was satisfied, from the experiments, that the apparatus fulfilled the object of fumigation with the irrespirable gases, without annoying the patient or attendants. The principles of its construction are simple, and its application to all cases, where simple or medicated fumigation desirable, is attended with little trouble and no exposure.

Subsequent trials have confirmed me in my opinion. For hospitals, it would be a great addition to our curative means, in many obstinate diseases to which seamen are subject.

On board of ships it may be used for simple vapors in less time, and with greater effect, than a warm-bath.

I feel no hesitation in recommending it as a very efficient contrivance, and should be pleased to see it adopted in the navy.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, yours, &c.,

THOMAS J. BOYD.

I certify the foregoing to be a true copy from the original.

J. GREEN, *Clerk.*



PHILADELPHIA, June 20, 1832.

SIR: In compliance with your request, I have great pleasure in stating to you my opinion of the utility of your bathing apparatus.

The value of vapor-baths is fully acknowledged, and they have been long used as a remedial agent by medical practitioners. It has been a desideratum, however, to possess the means of applying it without subjecting feeble patients to the inconvenience and fatigue of sitting or standing while taking the bath. Mr. Reilly's apparatus possesses this advantage in an eminent degree: the patient, while taking it, may repose as comfortably as in his ordinary bed. I would, therefore, particularly recommend this apparatus as worthy of patronage. It may be found useful not only in hospitals, but on board of our national vessels, where, on an emergency, a vapor-bath may be provided for patients in a few minutes.

I am, very respectfully,

THO. HARRIS, M. D.,  
Surgeon, U. S. N.

BOYD REILLY, Esq.

*Note.*—This communication, furnished by desire of the Secretary of War, is the third letter of Dr. Harris on this subject placed before Government.

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*From Doctor Washington, of the United States Navy.*

WASHINGTON, October 22, 1835.

DEAR SIR: I have looked over the pamphlet you left me respecting the use of sulphurous fumigations in paralysis and other chronic affections. The evidence of the utility of these fumigations is very satisfactory; and I am induced to think they might prove serviceable to Commodore Rodgers, provided they were applied cautiously in the commencement.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

B. WASHINGTON.

Mr. BOYD REILLY.

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UNITED STATES SHIP MACEDONIAN,

New York, November 11, 1837.

I do hereby certify that I have recently become acquainted with Doctor Boyd Reilly's apparatus for vapor-bath, and am so well pleased with the simplicity of its structure, its easy management, and its adaptation to all cases in which the warm-bath is advisable, that I have procured it for the South Sea surveying and exploring expedition; and do unhesitatingly recommend it to the favorable notice of all naval surgeons, both at hospitals and on shipboard. This apparatus possesses two material advantages over any others, so far as I know, that have been in use: one is, that the patient is in the recumbent position in the bath; and the other is, that irrespirable vapors may be used without the least danger of their being inhaled.

B. TICKNOR,  
Surgeon U. S. Navy.



U. S. HOSPITAL, H. Q. MARINE CORPS,

*January 8, 1838.*

DEAR SIR: In reply to your letter, I cheerfully bestow my testimony to the advantages our profession will gain in the employment of your "portable vapor-bath." I have witnessed several modifications of it elsewhere; yet, I must confess (*for our service particularly*) yours combines all the best arrangements for the best results.

I have seen it in operation in this institution, and am fully convinced of its appropriate construction to all the purposes of hospital practice.

I need hardly add, that its adaptation to the treatment of cutaneous affections is its greatest recommendation.

Very respectfully and truly yours,

JNO. A. KEARNEY, *Surgeon.*

Dr. BOYD REILLY.

WILMINGTON, (DELAWARE,) *February 24, 1834.*

DEAR SIR: In reply to your communication of the 22d instant, requesting my opinion of your apparatus for the application of vapor or gas to the surface of the body, I feel great pleasure in stating that it is the only means which have, as yet, been offered to the profession, so completely obviating all the difficulties heretofore attendant upon the use of the irrespirable gases; such an apparatus has long been a desideratum, and I am happy to say that you have completely supplied it. Independent of this, the facility with which uniform warmth can be applied and kept up in cases requiring the immediate use of it, renders it of incalculable utility. So far as my name will be of service to you in bringing the apparatus into general use, you are at perfect liberty to use it.

Yours, respectfully,

JOHN R. PECKWORTH,  
*Assistant Surgeon U. S. Navy.*

Mr. BOYD REILLY.

WASHINGTON NAVY YARD, *April 25, 1833.*

I have used Mr. Boyd Reilly's machine for applying medicated vapor in a case of acute rheumatism, and it was followed by great benefit to the patient. The apparatus appears to fulfil all the objects required for the safe and comfortable application of the pungent gases, such as that of sulphur, &c., in a very complete manner; and I consider it a valuable agent in a great variety of obstinate diseases, such as chronic rheumatism, cutaneous affections, &c.

THOMAS J. BOYD,  
*Surgeon United States navy.*



*Requisition of the Fleet Surgeon of the squadron fitting out for the Pacific ocean.*

NAVY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE, *January 3, 1837.*

SIR: You will receive herewith a copy of the requisition from Dr. Swift, for two of your medicated vapor-baths for the United States ship of the line the North Carolina, as requested in your letter of the 2d instant.

I am, very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RODGERS.

Dr. BOYD REILLY, *Washington.*

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U. S. SHIP N. CAROLINA, OFF NAVY HOSPITAL,  
*Gosport, November 22, 1836.*

Required for the use of this ship, two of Dr. Reilly's patent vapor-baths.

As these baths are represented to be highly convenient, and their use very conducive to health; and as this ship is bound on a long and distant cruise, it is very desirable that she should be furnished with two of them—one for the use of the officers, and one for the men.

Very respectfully, &c.,

WILLIAM SWIFT, *M. D., Surgeon.*

Approved:

JOHN GALLAGHER, *Captain.*

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NAVY YARD, NEW YORK, *November 11, 1837.*

SIR: I will be obliged if you will place one of your vapor-baths on board the Hudson receiving-ship, one in the naval hospital at this station, and one on board of the sloop-of-war John Adams.

I am sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

CHAS. G. RIDGELY.

Doctor BOYD REILLY, *New York.*

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WASHINGTON, *October 20, 1837.*

DEAR SIR: I am in the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant. The steam apparatus furnished by you, at cost, for the United States penitentiary at this place, has been in use about five or six years, and it is still in good order. We have found it to be very efficacious in cutaneous diseases, and particularly the itch. Some of the worst cases I ever saw have been entirely cured by a few applications of the steam-bath. I have heard the late Doctors Thomas and Scott, physicians to the penitentiary,



speak in high commendation of this machine, and declare that no public institution should be without it. The simplicity, safety, and convenience of the apparatus, are among its leading and most valuable qualities.

I am, dear sir, yours, most respectfully,

THOS. CARBERY,

*Secretary to the Board of Inspectors.*

Doctor BOYD REILLY, *Washington.*

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WASHINGTON CITY, *June 8, 1833.*

SIR: Your request that I would give you my opinion of the portable vapor-baths should have been attended to sooner but for many urgent engagements since its receipt.

It would be needless for me to descant on the medical properties of the vapor-bath, or upon the great advantages to be derived from the application of vapor as a remedial agent. It is a remedy that has enjoyed too long and deserved a reputation to require this at the present enlightened period: and though it has met with the sanction of medical men in nearly every age, yet the great inconvenience experienced in its application, both to the patient and physician, has tended to deprive them, in a great measure, of its beneficial effects in the cure and alleviation of many diseases.

The vapor-baths which you offer to the public have but few of the inconveniences usually experienced by the profession in the application of this remedy, (vapor,) and are yet calculated to afford all the advantages which can be derived from the application of vapor, whether simple or medicated. Its portability is not its most striking recommendation; though certainly, from this circumstance, it deserves the highest approbation of the profession. With this it possesses simplicity, and ease of application of the vapor to the whole or only a part of the body, without the patient undergoing the least fatigue from either exertion or position, or inconvenience from heat or the disagreeable effect produced by the inhalation of the vapor from the most offensive and deleterious articles which may be used.

It gives me pleasure, sir, then, to say that I approve, in the highest manner, of your portable vapor-bath; and this opinion of it has not been derived from mere examination of the apparatus, but also from having seen it afford, in violent and protracted cases of diseases of the joints, the most unequivocal and decided relief.

Yours, very respectfully,

T. MILLER, *M. D.*

Mr. REILLY.

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WASHINGTON CITY, *June 24, 1833.*

SIR: It affords me pleasure to testify to the valuable character of your portable vapor apparatus. Objections hitherto made to apparatus for this purpose are entirely obviated; and the escape of sulphur gas, so obnoxious



to the patient, is entirely prevented. The efficacy of sulphur vapor cannot now be questioned in cutaneous and chronic rheumatismal affections. Gentlemen of medical pre-eminence in Europe and North America, have been compelled to sanction and advise its use, from a strong conviction of its sanative power, as displayed in the various public receptacles of diseased humanity. The only reason which can be assigned why it has not been more generally employed in our country, has been owing to the simple fact—the offensiveness of the vapor escaping from the defective construction of the apparatus, which is entirely remedied by your ingenious improvement. Diseases incident to a change of climate would be relieved and checked, and its introduction into the naval and military departments of this country would be signally beneficial.

Yours, very respectfully,

B. J. MILLER, *M. D.*

To BOYD REILLY, Esq.

BROWN'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON CITY,

*April 25, 1833.*

Having had occasion, some short time since, to use Mr. Boyd Reilly's apparatus for applying medicated vapor in a most violent case of acute rheumatism, (after applying every other means without the slightest degree of success for the relief of the patient,) I take great pleasure in saying the application of it exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and that the patient received immediate relief after the application of the machine.

I consider it one of the most valuable agents in a great variety of obstinate diseases, such as chronic rheumatisms and cutaneous affections.

HENRY HAW, *M. D.*

To B. REILLY, Esq.

WASHINGTON, *March 1, 1834.*

DEAR SIR: Having fully tested the value of your sulphur vapor-bath in rheumatic diseases in their most violent forms, I cannot do less, in justice to yourself and the public, than to recommend it to their favor; as, in my opinion, it is the only certain remedy for this hitherto formidable and distressing disease. It is my decided opinion that our army and navy should adopt it immediately.

Yours, truly,

ALEX. McWILLIAMS, *M. D.*

BOYD REILLY, Esq.

WASHINGTON CITY, *April 5, 1834.*

SIR: I have made application of your sulphur-bath recently in a case of rheumatism, complicated with hepatic and gastric derangement. It gives me pleasure to state that my patient experienced great relief from the



rheumatic disease, and a decided improvement in her general health, by the removal of the affections of the liver and stomach.

The value of a uniform cutaneous application of many remedies, particularly sulphur, and the difficulty heretofore of applying this latter agent with safety, for want of mechanical means, is so well known to the medical profession, that your apparatus must become very valuable to them on account of its efficiency, particularly to those employed in hospitals and on shipboard.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

NOBLE YOUNG, *M. D.*

B. REILLY, Esq.

*Washington City.*

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WASHINGTON CITY, *April 12, 1834.*

DEAR SIR: Dr. Joseph Hammons, late a representative in Congress from New Hampshire, and Judge Haywood, of the Land Office, while under my medical treatment, seemed to have been much relieved by the application of your vapor-bath. Dr. Hammons had been suffering a long time from chronic rheumatism, and Judge Haywood from excessive debility and inaction of the lower extremities after a protracted fever. I have no doubt of its efficacy when judiciously administered.

Your obedient servant,

NATHANIEL P. CAUSIN.

BOYD REILLY, Esq.

*Washington, D. C.*

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WASHINGTON, *May 29, 1833.*

SIR: Having become somewhat acquainted with an apparatus invented by Mr. Boyd Reilly, for the application of the fumes of sulphur and other gases to the surface of the body in the cure of diseases, the pungency of which has hitherto made their use very difficult, on account of the unpleasant effects upon patients and their attendants when breathed into the lungs; and having understood he is desirous to have the usefulness of his invention extended to the United States navy; permit me to remark that I believe his apparatus is as well adapted to the purposes for which it is intended as possibly can be invented, not only on account of its entire ease and convenience to the patient, and the impossibility of the escape of the substances used in a gaseous form, by which the patient or attendants can receive the least injury, but also on account of its convenience in being easily removed and set up in cases where patients cannot be removed to a fixed apparatus. It is not my desire to trouble you with an account of the utility of the fumes of sulphur and other pungent gases in the cure of rheumatism, gout, and many diseases of the skin, as their efficacy has been well tested, and universally acknowledged throughout Europe, and in many parts of the United States, by gentlemen of medical science. It may not, however, be improper to submit a few remarks for your consideration touching my own case, and the efficacy of the fumes of sulphur as applied by Mr. Reilly, inasmuch as the severity of my suffering has been partially known to you. From the 11th of December last, till the



1st of April, I was confined to my room, and for ten weeks to my bed, by inflammatory rheumatism. During my illness I had some of the best medical advice in the United States; but the best medical treatment, and the strictest adherence to the antiphlogistic regimen, produced no sensible mitigation of my distress. At the commencement of my illness, the disease pervaded every joint of all my limbs; at the end of two weeks, the disease had abated in all of the joints except the right knee and ankle, and in these it had increased with great violence. The 1st of April, I thought myself somewhat better, and could walk a little by the use of my left leg and the aid of crutches. On the 12th April, I had a renewed attack of rheumatism in my left hip, knee, and ankle; my right knee becoming more inflamed and swollen at the same time. I was confined to my bed two weeks in great distress, and could see no reason to expect I could escape the loss of the use of my left limb, as had already taken place with my right. At this time I heard the gentleman before mentioned was in the city with a portable apparatus for applying the fumes of sulphur to diseased limbs. He was called, and I had the fumes of sulphur applied to my lower limbs six times by the use of his small apparatus, and had them applied to the whole body three times by the use of his large apparatus. The operation was entirely easy to me; no sulphurous gas escaped into the room, and I have received decided benefit by its application. My left limb is entirely restored, and the muscles of my right limb appear to perform their proper functions, but with greatly diminished energy. I have no doubt my right knee joint would have been restored to its former mobility by the use of the sulphurous fumigations, had it not been for the intervention of a bony substance, produced within the joint by the violence of the disease the preceding winter. This being the case, there is no reason to believe any application or remedy will ever enable me to straighten the limb. You may feel assured the foregoing representation has been made under a full conviction that it has afforded me very decided and permanent relief in one of the most violent cases of rheumatism I have ever witnessed, and from a desire that its usefulness may be co-extensive with the diseases in the cure of which I believe it is so well adapted.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
JOSEPH HAMMONS.

To the Hon. LEVI WOODBURY,  
*Secretary of the Navy.*

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APRIL 23, 1834.

The preceding is a correct copy of an original letter on file in the Navy Department.

JOHN BOYLE.

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WASHINGTON, *October 12, 1833.*

DEAR SIR: Understanding that Mr. Boyd Reilly, late of Philadelphia, is about introducing his apparatus for vapor-bathing to the notice and use of the medical branch of the Navy Department, I deem it an act of justice to him, and also to the public service, to advise you of the effect which the recent use of this bath has had on my own person.



In my last severe attack of bilious fever, it became necessary to make use of a considerable quantity of mercury, so that, when the fever subsided, it left me with a painful weakness in my knee and ankle joints; so much so, that I was unable to walk, and much less were my legs able to support my emaciated body without assistance. I attributed this excessive weakness of the limbs to the effect of mercury upon my system, (having been salivated;) but this was denied by my physician, (and I have great faith in his judgment,) who prescribed a salt-water hot-bath, with a quantity of mustard in it, for my legs, and rubbing the same with coarse woollens until the friction should produce an action on the surface. This was faithfully applied for three successive days, without any perceptible benefit.

He then directed the application of Mr. Reilly's sulphur vapor-bath upon the limbs, which was administered two days in succession. Such was the effect of this remedy, that, in twenty-four hours, my limbs were so strengthened as to enable me to walk about my room alone. I then waited three days, in which time I found my limbs slowly gaining strength, when I had the bath applied to my whole body, except the head and neck, which had the effect greatly to invigorate my whole system, and in a very few days enable me to get out, and attend to the duties of my office again.

I cannot be mistaken in the effect which this bath had upon me in immediately restoring strength to my limbs, and in fact to my whole system, when other remedies had failed.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

ELIJAH HAYWARD.

To the SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

APRIL 23, 1834.

The preceding is a correct transcript of the original, now on file in the Navy Department.

JOHN BOYLE.

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WASHINGTON, *April 23, 1834.*

SIR: You are aware that I have had very few opportunities of testing the efficacy of your sulphur bath; but, having witnessed its favorable operation in the case of General Houston, I cannot hesitate to recommend the use of it to the public.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM JONES, *M. D.*

Mr. BOYD REILLY.

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*From General Houston, President of Texas.*

CITY OF WASHINGTON, *April 6, 1834.*

This is to certify that, having been severely attacked by fever last August, I had but partially recovered when I was seized with cholera, in Louisiana: when I arrived at this place, I was in low health, and placed myself under the care of Doctor William Jones, who, upon the amendment of my health, recommended the use of Mr. Boyd Reilly's vapor-bath. I had recourse to the use of the bath, and believe that I derived signal benefit from it. The gas made use of in my case was sulphur gas, in which I



was several times enveloped in my bed-chamber, with perfect convenience and comfort to myself.

I take pleasure in recommending Mr. Reilly's bath to the notice of the public, and to the use of invalids.

SAMUEL HOUSTON.

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CITY OF WASHINGTON, *April 24, 1834.*

SIR: Having examined your machine for applying the sulphur-bath, and witnessed its application to one of my patients, I cheerfully unite in recommending it as an invention worthy the consideration of the medical profession and of the public.

To Mr. REILLY.

THOMAS SEWALL, M. D.

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WASHINGTON CITY, *May 12, 1834.*

SIR: It affords me great pleasure to be able to state, in reply to your inquiry, that I find my health very much better since the second application of the sulphur vapor-bath, by means of your apparatus, which was some eight or ten days ago. In truth, I am now more free from cough than for any time for two years past; and all pain of the chest, as well as of the joints and limbs, is removed for the present entirely. The expectoration from the affected lung, which was very great, and had become purulent in its character before the use of the bath, has now almost entirely ceased, and what remains is simple mucus.

From the effect already produced, I have great confidence in the belief that, with a few more applications of the bath, properly directed, and under a prudent course of diet, &c., I will be restored to health again.

I can also state that, although my lungs were in a highly irritable state, and my cough constantly teasing, I did not experience the slightest inconvenience from the sulphur vapor; but, on the contrary, a pleasant sensation, with greater freedom of respiration, and a relief from the cough, all ensued while in the bath.

Very respectfully,

BOYD REILLY, Esq.

J. D. WOOLVERTON, M. D.

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WASHINGTON CITY, *February 13, 1836.*

SIR: Enclosed you will receive letters of introduction to Doctors Fowler and Schenck, of the New Jersey delegation in Congress. I have briefly stated to them the opinion I entertain of your valuable invention, under the hope that they may be induced to give it a favorable consideration.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

BOYD REILLY, Esq.

JNO. B. BLAKE, M. D.

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WASHINGTON CITY, *April 8, 1836.*

SIR: I consider it due to you to state that, in a severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism, I derived great benefit from the use of your sulphur-bath. I used it in my chamber, without experiencing the slightest inconvenience from the escape of the gas.

Respectfully, yours,

THO. S. JESUP, Q. M. G., U. S. A.

Mr. REILLY.



WASHINGTON CITY, May 10, 1834.

This is to certify that my son, now in his twentieth year, has been affected with ill health from his childhood, which continued to increase upon him, notwithstanding the constant efforts of able physicians, until it appeared that death alone could end his sufferings : his body emaciated, his limbs cramped and contracted so as to be entirely useless, a distressing cough from a very early period, and in constant pain, it appeared impossible that he could exist many days, and his friends could hardly desire it. In February last I heard of the vapor-apparatus of Mr. Boyd Reilly, and had it applied (by the advice of my physician) immediately to my son. Notwithstanding his weakness and pain, he used the application of sulphur gas in his bed-chamber without the least inconvenience or suffering. The relief was immediate : after the second application, he was enabled to walk across his chamber ; his appetite improved ; and in four applications he was completely relieved from cough and pain, and is now in perfect health and attending to active business. I feel called upon to give my testimony in favor of this important invention, hoping that its benefits may be extended to all mankind.

AND. FORREST.

WASHINGTON CITY, May 10, 1834.

We the subscribers, neighbors of Mr. Andrew Forrest, being long acquainted with the distressed situation of his son, and having witnessed his restoration to health and usefulness, with pleasure bear testimony to the admirable effects of Mr. Reilly's vapor-bath.

WM. E. CLARK, M. D.  
THOMAS LYNDALL,  
EDWARD W. CLARK.

WASHINGTON CITY, February 1, 1838.

HON. ALEXANDER DUNCAN,

*Chairman of the Select Committee of the House of Representatives to whom was referred the memorial of Dr. Reilly.*

SIR : Observing the reference above noticed in the proceedings of Congress, I deem it a duty to add my testimony to the advantages of this valuable invention. I have used Dr. Reilly's steam sulphur-bath, for rheumatic affections, with which I have been occasionally troubled during many years ; and, in so doing, have been much benefited. The last application, under circumstances highly unfavorable as to weather, gave great relief. I have used the sulphur gas in a small room, without any unpleasant effect ; and have never caught cold, or experienced any inconvenience from *this* process of bathing ; and believe no injury need be apprehended by any patient. One of our most eminent physicians, while attending on me, advised its use, believing it, in many cases, a valuable remedy. I have found it so, and trust that thousands may do the same.

E. W. REINHART,  
*Northeast corner of F and Twelfth streets.*



*Report of a committee composed of some of the most eminent physicians of the city of Paris, appointed by the French Government to ascertain the effects of the application of sulphur gas in diseases of the skin ; which application has subsequently proved to be a powerful remedy in diseases more deeply seated.*

1. That sulphurous fumigations cure perfectly every kind of scabies, even the most inveterate.

2. That the number of fumigations requisite to cure scabies varies from four to twenty, according to the age and sex of the patients, and to the intensity of the species, and the complication of the disease.

3. That females and infants (*cæteris paribus*) require a smaller number of fumigations than adult males, and particularly old men.

4. That old, inveterate cases of scabies are cured, proportionably, more quick than recent ones.

5. That the length of time required for each fumigation is, ordinarily, about half an hour.

6. That patients may take even four fumigations daily, according to their temperament, their leisure, or their anxiety to obtain a more or less rapid cure.

7. That the treatment of scabies, by sulphurous fumigations, does not require any auxiliary treatment, either internal or external ; nor any sort of particular regimen.

8. That, compared with all known modes of treatment, even with those that are regarded the most rational and the most efficacious, such as sulphur ointments, mercurial ointments, mercurial lotions, arsenical frictions, lotions of tobacco, baths of sulphuret of potash, &c., the treatment by sulphurous vapor appears to excel very much in simplicity, brevity, innocence, and efficacy.

9. That it is also much less expensive than any of the others.

10. That various other cutaneous diseases, such as pedicular affections, prurigo, tinea, darts, even inveterate and regarded as incurable, are susceptible of yielding to sulphurous fumigations.

11. That, in general, other chronic eruptive diseases require a greater number of fumigations than scabies, but that this means should always be regarded as at least auxiliary in the treatment of these diseases.

12. That it is of the greatest importance to make known the advantages of these fumigations ; to propagate them ; to establish them in hospitals, on board of vessels, in camps, in barracks, in prisons, &c.

PINEL,  
A. DUBOIS,  
A. E. TARTRA,  
ESPARON,  
BOUILLON LA GRANGE.

Seen and approved :

MORGUE.



WASHINGTON CITY, *December 22, 1836.*

*To each member of the House of Representatives:*

SIR: Some doubts having arisen at the close of last session as to the originality of the invention of apparatus for medicated vapor bathing which have been submitted by the subscriber to Government, the following testimonials, from citizens of Cincinnati, the credibility of whom is attested by the honorable Bellamy Storer, Representative in Congress from that district, will, it is hoped, remove such doubts.

Very respectfully, yours, &c.

BOYD REILLY.

CINCINNATI, *November 29, 1836.*

We, the undersigned, citizens of Cincinnati, being requested to state our recollections respecting Mr. Boyd Reilly's improvements on the vapor-bath, hesitate not to say that these improvements were made subsequent to Dr. Godman's departure from Cincinnati, in 1822; and, moreover, that we entertain not the slightest doubt that Mr. Reilly is fully entitled to the possession and rights of said improvements, he being, as we confidently believe, the inventor of them.

Signed by

REV. WILLIAM BURKE, *P. M. Cin.*

REV. ROBERT PUNSHON.

C. S. RAMSAY, *M. D.*

GRIFFIN YEATMAN, *Notary Public.*

J. DORFEUILLE,

*Proprietor of Western Museum.*

JAMES M. MASON, *M. D.*

JEDEDIAH COBB, *M. D., Prof. of  
Anatomy, Med. Col. Ohio.*

This is to certify that I have a distinct recollection of the very imperfect machine in which the late Dr. Godman attempted, in 1822, to administer the sulphur vapor-bath in Cincinnati. I have also a personal knowledge of the labors of Mr. Boyd Reilly in making an entire change in the principle of the application, and producing the different forms of apparatus which he has now in Washington city.

HIRAM POWERS, *Sculptor.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, *December 21, 1836.*

I am personally acquainted with all the gentlemen whose names are appended to this certificate; they are all highly respectable, and their statements are entitled to implicit credit. I deem it proper also to remark, that I have known Boyd Reilly for more than seventeen years, and during the whole period of his residence in Cincinnati, and was aware, as early as 1823 or 1824, that he was making experiments to improve the vapor-bath. I believe him fully entitled to the benefit of the improvement.

B. STORER.



CINCINNATI, *December 2, 1836.*

DEAR SIR: When I saw, through the public journals, near the close of the last session of Congress, that the very great merits of your *medicable vapor-bath*, as now perfected by you, was eliciting the notice and approbation of the National Legislature, it afforded me great pleasure. I well recollect that, when the talented and lamented Dr. Godman introduced the vapor-bath into this city, in 1822, the great difficulties that then often existed in its application appeared to operate very unfavorably for its general reputation. I recollect, too, that, in the frequent interviews I then, and the subsequent two or three years, had with you on the subject, you were constantly making suggestions for improvements, and as constantly incurring very considerable expense in your efforts at final success. My opinion of the great utility of the bath in many diseases remains unchanged. I think it should be had in every hospital, and on board of every public armed ship belonging to the United States. Its great utility I believe no medical gentleman, acquainted with its operation, will attempt to doubt; and I am confident that, as fast as the profession shall become acquainted with its usefulness, its members will endeavor to bring to their aid this great curative agent. For one, I can assure you that nothing but absolute inability to purchase has hitherto kept me from owning one for my own practice.

I am now about to remove to New Orleans, for the purpose of establishing a *resanatory*, or mansion for the restoration of health, in that city, and shall feel as though the vapor-bath, as improved by you, will be essential to my success. You will, therefore, please write me in New Orleans, as soon as practicable, (as I expect to leave here in ten or twelve days,) and let me know the price of a good bath, with its necessary appendages; and please inform me, at the same time, how soon it can be forwarded to me. In great haste,

Very respectfully, yours, &amp;c.,

WM. BARNES, *M. D.*

BOYD REILLY, Esq.

CINCINNATI, *November 17, 1836.*

SIR: Having been asked by you for an expression of opinion as to the efficacy of fumigation by your sulphur-bath in cases of rheumatism, I do not hesitate to state that I had been troubled much with rheumatic pains in both my arms for many, perhaps twenty years, so as (even at times when the pains were not constant) to render it difficult for me to raise my hands above the level of my shoulders, or even so high, and also having had a complaint of weakness and swelling in one of my ankles, I was advised by you to try the effects of your sulphur bath, which, if I recollect right, was not repeated more than twice. I found material benefit immediately to my ankle, and the rheumatism was entirely removed from my arms; so that, for the last ten years, I have found no return of the complaint in either case. This testimony in favor of fumigation with



sulphur I think justly due, as well as my conviction of the improved plan in which you administer it, which I witnessed in 1833, in Washington.

I am, sir, yours sincerely,

MOSES DAWSON.

To Mr. B. REILLY.

NEW YORK, *November 4, 1837.*

DEAR SIR: I take great pleasure in stating that I have witnessed your experiments for many years (as far back as 1822) with the medicated vapor bath. My father, as one of your patients, derived great service from it, and frequently expressed himself in such terms to me.

With ardent hopes for your success, I have the honor to be your friend and obedient servant,

ROBERT T. LYTLE.

BOYD REILLY, Esq.

CINCINNATI, *December 28, 1837.*

SIR: In reply to your inquiry, whether I recollect your having a sulphur-bath in this city, I say that I do; and that I think it was as far back as the close of the year 1822, or perhaps not until 1823. The physicians, at that time, were accustomed to direct certain of their patients to you, to be fumigated with the vapor of sulphur—an application which I understood to be often attended with beneficial effects.

Your very obedient servant,

DANIEL DRAKE.

Mr. BOYD REILLY.

CINCINNATI, *April 4, 1823.*

Mr. Joseph Chambers, of Frankfort, Kentucky, afflicted for a long time with a severe rheumatic affection of the left hip and knee, so that, for several years, he has been unable to follow his business of a tailor; (the debility so great that he thought his hip dislocated,) told me when he came, that he would give the world, if he possessed it, to be able to place his left knee across his right one; which he could do with ease after three fumigations. There was also a considerable part of the surface of the thigh so tender that he could not bear the pressure of his finger; which became immediately as sound as it ever was.

The above-named Mr. Chambers was at my house for several weeks; and, to my knowledge, the above statements are correct.

WILLIAM BURKE, *P. M. Cincinnati.*



The following are the names of the gentlemen composing the different committees to whom this subject has been referred; an inquiry having been made respecting them by several members.

In the Senate, on three select committees, who were unanimously in favor of the bill, (as was also the Senate itself :)

DR. NAUDAIN,  
LINN,  
KENT,  
MR. GRUNDY,  
ROBINSON,  
ROBBINS,  
PRENTISS.

In the House of Representatives, the Committee on Naval Affairs of the 23d Congress :

MR. WHITE, N. Y.,  
MILLIGAN,  
WATMOUGH,  
PATTON,  
LANSING,  
REED,  
GRAYSON,  
PARKER,  
SMITH.

Select committee of last session :

MR. REED,  
DR. THOMPSON,  
SCHENCK,  
MASON, *Me.*  
LEE, N. Y.,  
MR. TALIAFERRO,  
WILLIAMS.



