

Lazaretto Stations * Student Handout 8

Station: FEVER!



THE "DUTCH" HOSPITAL AT THE LAZARETTO
(From a photograph by the author)

The "Dutch" Hospital at the Lazaretto. Its name, Dutch Hospital, came from the fact that many Germans immigrated to Philadelphia in the early years. During their voyage many would fall ill and end up at the quarantine hospital. The German word for "German" is "Deutch". Americans misspelled it and it became "Dutch." From *Under the yellow flag : an account of some experiences of Henry Leffmann as port physician of the port of Philadelphia ; to which have been added a few notes and comments on the history of the port of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia : G.F. Fell et Societas, 1896.

YELLOW FEVER AT THE LAZARETTO . - This dread disease is prevailing to some extent at the Lazaretto and among the inhabitants of Tinicum township. About three weeks ago a vessel loaded with logwood from the West Indies was stopped at quarantine, some of those on board being ill of yellow fever, two deaths having occurred en route. The sick were removed to the hospital on the island [see image above], where other deaths followed. Finally the disease was communicated to the inhabitants of the island,...

PASSAGE 1: "Yellow Fever at the Lazaretto," *Delaware County American*, August 10, 1870, Courtesy of Pennsylvania Newspaper Record

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To the Editor of The Evening Telegraph:

CHESTER, Pa., Aug. 10. 1870.

DEAR Sir: I wish to make to the public, through the columns of your paper, a statement respecting the yellow fever now existing at the Lazaretto. Mr. Jacob Pepper, a resident of Tinicum, living just outside the bounds of the Lazaretto, being sick, and the yellow fever having been brought to quarantine by a vessel from the West Indies, still lying in the river opposite his residence, his friends requested me to see him professionally, knowing that I had practiced several years in Louisiana, where that disease was of frequent occurrence.

I saw Mr. Pepper last Sunday morning half an hour before he died, and unhesitatingly pronounced his case one of yellow fever. In the same family his wife's sister was then, and still is sick of the same disease. I visited the Lazaretto twice a day since and have seen Dr. Thompson, the Lazaretto physician, and his wife and daughter, all of whom are dangerously sick of yellow fever. On Monday I found Mr. Robert Gartside, the Quarantine Master, in the first stage of yellow fever. Dr. Thompson's family has no nurse except a lady friend who volunteered her assistance before she knew it was yellow fever. His brother who is also a physician, has medical charge of the family. Mr. Gartside has no nurse except his wife and daughter, both of whom are, by their relations to the patient, and by their anxiety and alarm, unfitted to perform the highly important duties of nurse in yellow fever. The Board of Health has not furnished any nurse for these officials, who have been stricken down in the performance of their duty. nor have they even been supplied with ice in sufficient quantity and the many other things necessary in such cases.

Believing that the importance of these facts in their relations to the health and safety of the citizens of Philadelphia were not duly appreciated by those who were elected to the guardianship of the city's health, fully understanding the importance of proper nursing, under medical direction, in the first few days of this dangerous disease, I felt impelled to visit the Board of Health . . . I sought an interview with the Board, but failed to obtain it. . . .

WM. B. ULRICH, M.D.

PASSAGE 2: Excerpts from Ulrich, WM. B, M.D. "Letter to the Editor," *The Evening Telegraph*: Chester, Pa., Aug. 10. 1870. http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~dbarnes/1870_YF_3.html, Courtesy of *The Evening Telegraph*.

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...Dr. William S. Thompson, Physician at the *Lazaretto*, who had been sick for a week, died on Wednesday morning, and Mrs. Gartwell, a nurse, who had been in attendance at the hospital for thirteen years, died on the evening of the same day....

PASSAGE 3: "Yellow Fever At the Lazaretto And On Tinicum," *Delaware County Republican*, August 12, 1870, Courtesy of Pennsylvania Newspaper Record

A HEROINE AT THE LAZARETTO . - We take the following from the 'Woman Department' of the Phila. SUNDAY DISPATCH: 'It is eminently proper that women should record the doings and the sufferings of sister women in the cause of humanity. Therefore it with great pride and pleasure that we hold up to public honor and esteem the name of Mrs. Mary Riddle. This good woman (an elegant and accomplished lady) lost a friend with the yellow fever, which has been so fatal at the Lazaretto. Upon visiting that place to attend the funeral of her friend, she found the place to be in the greatest confusion. The resident physician was dead, the subordinates were all utterly demoralized and in a state of anarchy and rebellion against the improvised authorities. This lady (a widow) had an aged mother and little children; yet, ...she resolved to remain there, and, if possible, bring order out of chaos. This she did, taking the command of the corps of mercenaries hastily placed there by the Board of Health, most of the time herself cooking for over thirty persons, ordering, administering and rendering herself invaluable everywhere. She remained until she thought[t] the danger was over, and then returned to her home and her family, bearing with her the seeds of that most terrible disease. After a few days she was stricken down with it, and for a time her life was despaired of. Happily, however, she is now convalescent [or recovered]. All honor to Mrs. Riddle, and to others like her, who, in times of public danger and calamity, can put aside thoughts of peril to themselves and to those they love, and regard all suffering men and women as brothers and sisters, children of the same great Father, loving care is over all His works.'

PASSAGE 4: "A Heroine At the Lazaretto," *Delaware County American*, September 14, 1870, Courtesy of Pennsylvania Newspaper Record