

Yellow Fever: The Outbreak of Fever in Baldwin County

Yellow fever made its appearance in Pensacola, Florida, in August of last year. Pensacola is only forty-four miles from the town of Whiting, otherwise known as Pensacola Junction, in the State of Alabama. There was imminent danger, therefore, of the introduction of the pestilence into this State; and the Junction being the gateway through which it was most likely to make its entrance was the point that needed to be carefully guarded. The State Health Officer was accordingly ordered to make that point his headquarters during the continuance of the epidemic, and to take such measures as to him might seem advisable, within the limits of the powers and means of the State Board, for the protection of the State. A full account of his operations there will be found in his special report on yellow fever and quarantine, which will be found in its proper place...

During the month of September, several fatal cases of fever, with several deaths in rapid succession, occurred in Baldwin county, and very naturally occasioned a good deal of excitement.

Three cases presumably of the same character, since they seemed to have had the same origin, were treated in Mobile county—two in the city of Mobile and one in Citronelle.

I herewith submit an account of the Baldwin county cases, prepared by Dr. J. Grey Thomas for the Mobile Medical Society; together with an account of the other three cases, extracted from letters received at the time from Dr. E. H. Fournier, the Health Officer of Mobile.

To my mind, the details of these cases are extremely suggestive of yellow fever; and I think there would be no doubt left in the mind of any competent judge, if the question of the importation of the infection could be cleared up. Continuous fevers of three- or four-days duration, black vomit, albuminous urine, and a phenomenal death rate, make up altogether a set of facts not easily to be explained on any other theory.

It is also to be noted that isolation and disinfection were practiced in the Mobile cases, although the diagnosis was that they did not have yellow fever.

BIPOBT OF SOME OF THE CASES OF FEVEB AT AND NEAR HOWARD'S WHABF, BALDWIN COUNTY, ALABAMA, SEPTEMBEB, 1882. REPORTED TO THE MOBILE MEDICAL SOCIETY AS YELLOW FEVER BY J. OBEY THOMAS, M. D.

Colonel J. C. Rupert, an imbecile, was in the habit of wandering about the woods. September 8th, he visited the house of a friend suffering with high fever, stating that ho had been in camp for several days with strangers said to be from Pensacola, an infected city. Ho was sent to his (Rupert's) home, and died without treatment, September 14th.

Dr. Warren Williams, Rupert's brother-in-law, was visiting Rupert at the time of his death, and assisted in preparing his body for the grave. Four or five days afterwards, he was taken sick with fever, which was continuous, and lasted about five days, resulting in death. He was very yellow when I saw him, which was about two hours before his death. He was comatose when I saw him. He had no regular treatment.

Mr. E. S. Taylor also assisted in preparing the body of Colonel Rupert for burial, and was taken sick with a chill, followed by high fever, which lasted for several days. He received prompt medical aid in Mobile and recovered. He was very yellow during his sickness.

Mr. D. A. Moniac prepared the body of Dr. Williams for burial and was taken sick about a week after the death of Williams. He had a high continuous fever for five days before his death. I saw him on the day of his death, in a state of delirium, too late to render any assistance. He had no medical treatment.

Mrs. Marone Dolive visited Mrs. Rupert (at the house where Rupert and Williams died) September 24th, and was taken with fever September 29th, which was continuous for five or six days. She had no regular treatment. Recovered.

Miss Agnes Dolive visited Mrs. Marone Dolivo October 8th, was taken with fever October 13th, and died October 18th, throwing up black vomit, and was very yellow. She received no regular treatment.

Mr. Alexander Dolive, father of Miss Agnes Dolive, visited his sick daughter at the house of Mr. Marono Dolivo, was taken sick with fever October 23d, and died October 28th. He had continuous fever. Received but little medical treatment.

Mrs. Nancy Dolive, wife of Mr. Alexander Dolive, had high fever for several days after the death of her husband, but recovered. She had no medical treatment.

Miss Bradley lived near Rupert's house, but did not visit it. Moniac was sick at the hotel, where Miss Bradley lived. Her brother visited Moniac often, and was also with Rupert and Williams, and lived in the same house with his sister. She was taken sick about eight or ten days after the death of Moniac; had a chill, followed by high fever and great nausea, and was sick about five days. I saw her the day previous to her death. She had been treated by a homeopathic physician. She was in a state of collapse when I saw her. Before her death, she threw up black vomit, and was very yellow.

Mr. Connell (Colonel Rupert's son-in-law), who lived at West Point, Mississippi, visited Mrs. Rupert, where her husband died, remained two or three days, returned to West Point and died of fever, which it was believed he contracted at Howard's.

Since this report was made, a letter has been received from the wife of Mr. Connell, giving some of the particulars of his death. She states that Mr. Connell was taken sick

the sixth day after reaching home; had a dumb chill, followed by exceedingly high fever. Her family physician was immediately summoned and pronounced it "the most stubborn case of fever he had ever dealt with." He died on the 4th day of his sickness and was very yellow before his death.

Where the fever came from may ever remain a mystery, but I hope future developments may give us some light in regard to it.

THE MOBILE CASES AS RELATED BY DR. E. H. FOURNIER.

From Letter of October 7th. There has been some excitement on account of a case of fever which Dr. Gaines has had under his charge. It seems that a Mr. Taylor, living in Mobile, but engaged in the turpentine business in Baldwin county, had seen or been with Mr. Rupert during his last illness. About the time of Mr. Moniac's death, Mr. Taylor was taken sick, probably in Baldwin, at Tensas or Stockton, but took to his bed in Mobile—his room is over Savage's drug store. This was on last Friday, 29th of September. The fever continued about seventy-two hours. There was high temperature in the beginning—say 104 degrees, and pulse of 96—pulse and temperature pursuing a parallelism. The fever went off on the third day. The patient had treatment for remittent fever, and at the subsidence of the fever was given twenty grains of quinine. Some depression and nausea followed, and albumen at this juncture was found in the urine.

The patient is now recovering, and his wife, who came from Baldwin after her husband, sickened the day following her arrival of an intermittent which ran into a remittent type of fever. She is also recovering.

from Letter of October 14th. (This patient was a niece, I believe, of Mr. or of Mrs. Taylor, and was sent to Citronelle to keep her away from the two cases just described.) The case of fever at Citronelle is malarial, aggravated by a dose of Tutt's pill-. , which the patient took on the first day of the fever, and which was producing still on the third day greenish watery discharges. No quinine had been given. The fever ranged very high for two days, 104 morning and evening; pulse and temperature parallel; urine free ; had not had injected countenance ; no nausea ; vomited on the first day—bile, it is supposed.

When I saw her, temperature 101 3-5; pulse 96; *morale* bad, since the general impression that her case was one of yellow fever had not been concealed from her. Tho temperature rose that day—the 11th—to 103 in the afternoon. Quinine was given that night; and the morning after—the 12th—the temperature was 100 3-5, pulse 98—tho irritation of the bowels continuing. Report this morning—temperature 100 1-2 pulse 100 ; secretions not properly established.

(Dr. Fournior's letters aid me no further in tho history of this case. I am able to state, however, that she recovered, and that she was badly jaunticed.)

Source: Transactions of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama, by Medical Association of the State of Alabama, Medical Association of the Southwest, Published by The Association, 1883