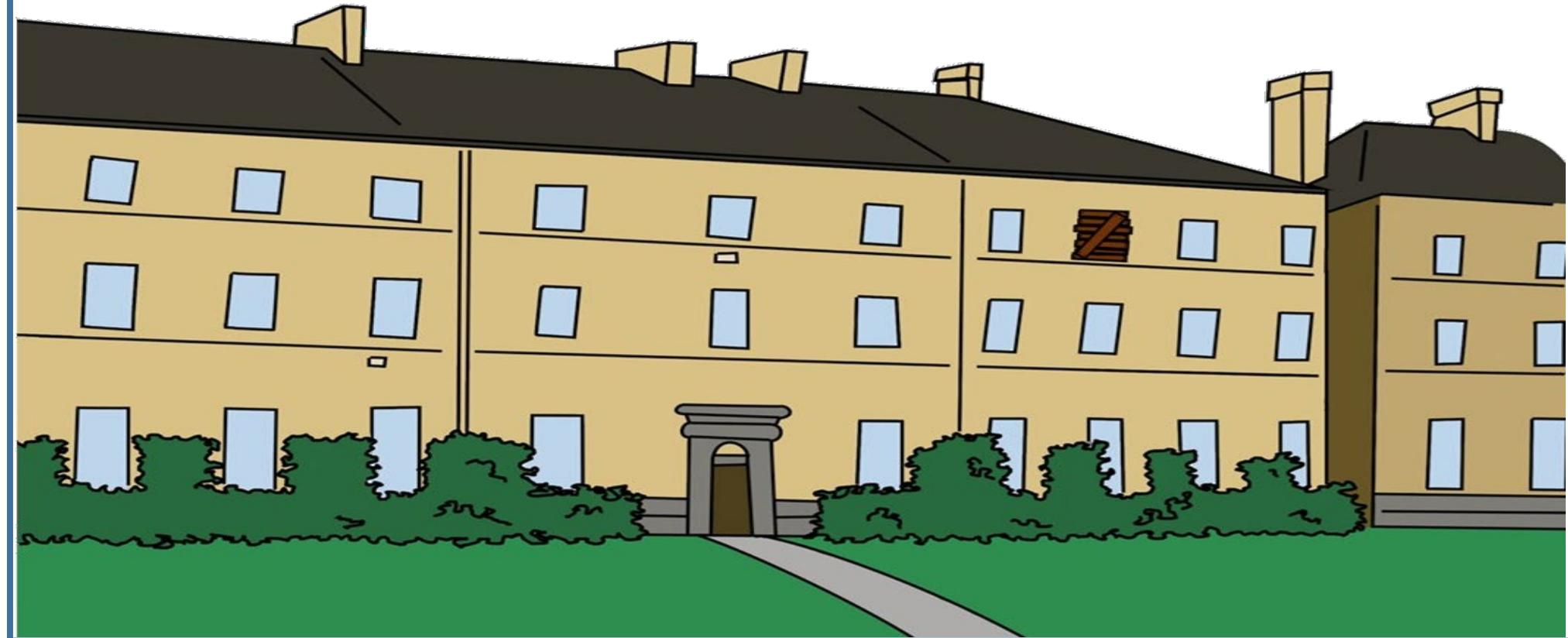


Baker Street Elementary

Presents
"The Life and Times in Victorian London"



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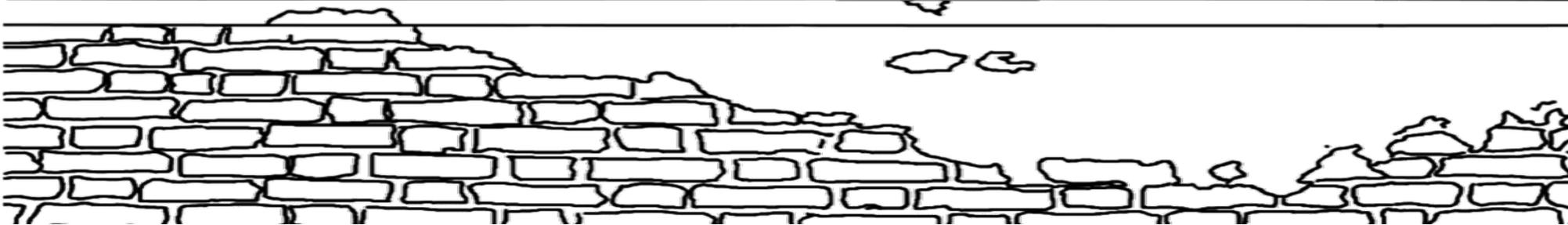
109 -- A Deadly Import -- Yellow Fever - 09/08/2020



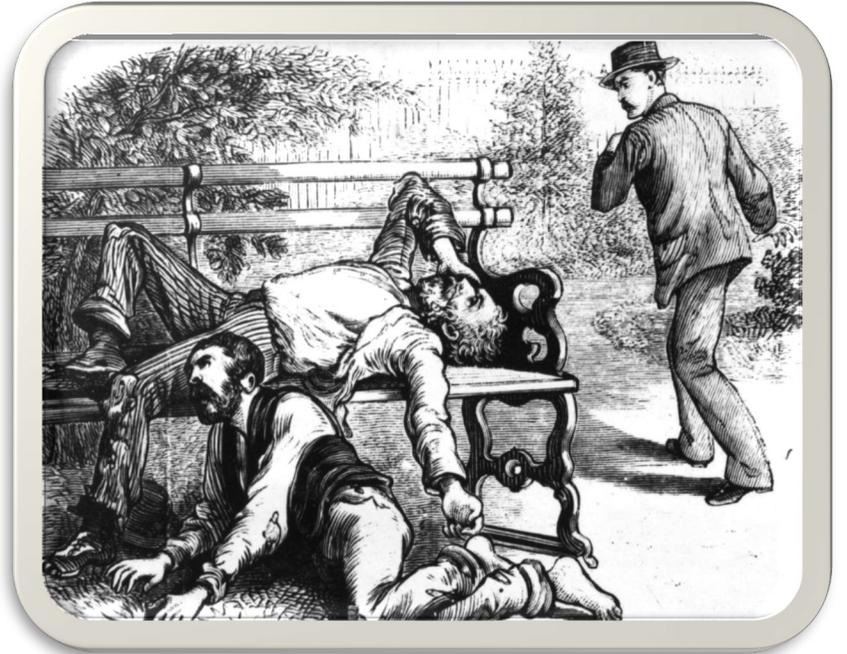
Welcome to topic number 109... today we will be looking at the disease "yellow fever" during the Victorian period.



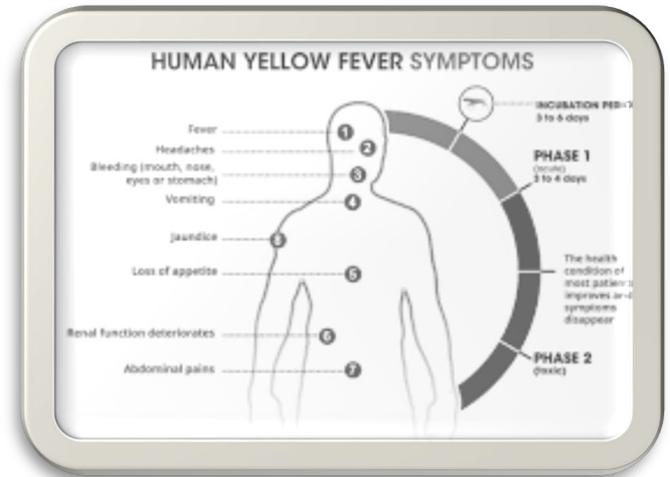
Yellow fever will cause the death of Rodger Baskerville in Central America in The Hound of the Baskervilles and Effie Hebron's husband in Atlanta in "The Adventure of the Yellow Face."



Primarily a tropical disease — as in Rodger Baskerville's case — outbreaks prior to and during the Victorian era were documented in cooler climates, such as Atlanta and England, as well.



The symptoms initially appear similar to the flu with headaches, body aches, and chills and fever.



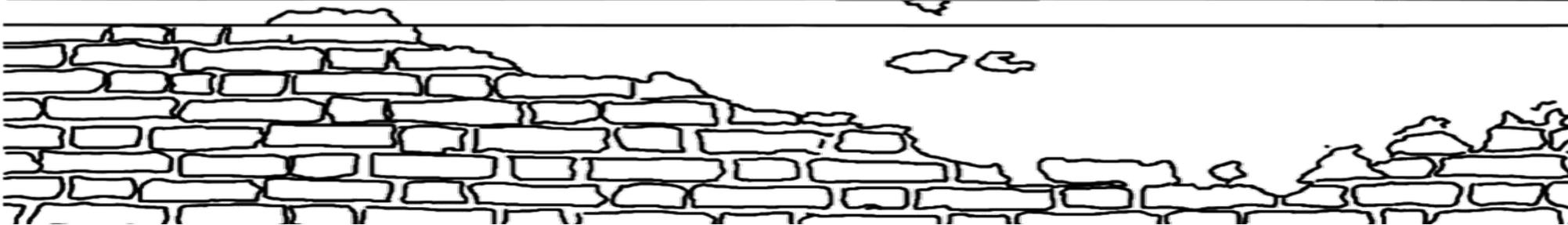
The acute phase (lasting three to four days) is marked, in addition to those that first appeared, by a loss of appetite, shivers, and backaches.



Following this period, most recover, but about 15% progress to the toxic phase, exhibiting decreased urination, jaundice (hence, the name "yellow fever"), vomiting, seizures, and delirium. About 50% of those experiencing these advanced symptoms die.



*While it is known in the 21st century to be carried by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito (associated recently with the Zika virus outbreak), during our time, two competing theories exist related to its transmission.*



The "contagionists" believe yellow fever could be passed from person to person through close association with an infected person.

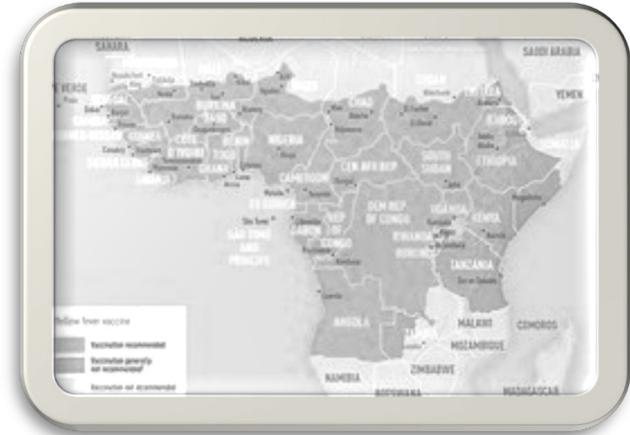
The "infectionists" insist miasma, air pollution created by putrefying plant and animal waste, sicken those who breathe it.



Both these theories rely, in part, on the idea that such diseases are "filth diseases," primarily carried by African slaves transported to different countries.



Several well-known outbreaks were associated with ships traveling from Africa or Central America. Such episodes originated in the summer in port cities where infections passed from those on the ship...



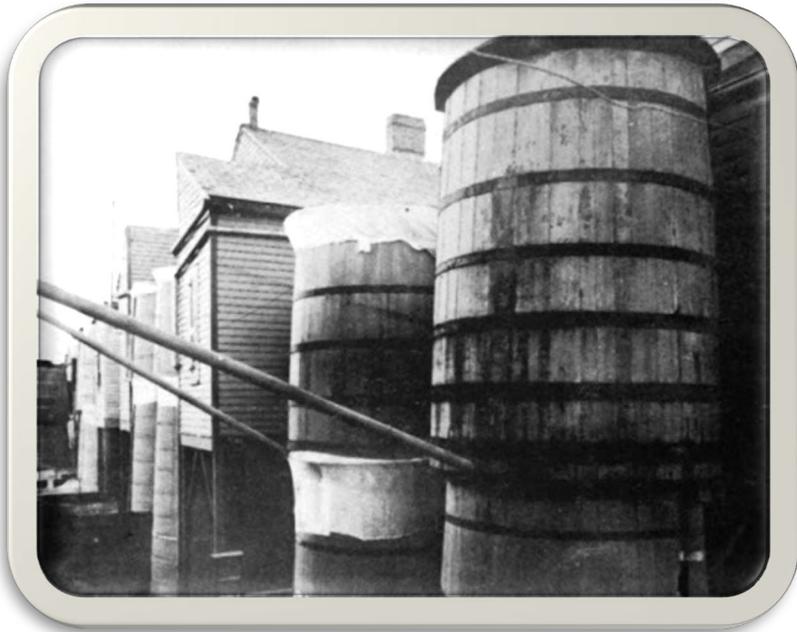
... such as those importing sugar from Cuba (1802) or Brazil (1820) – to the port city's population.



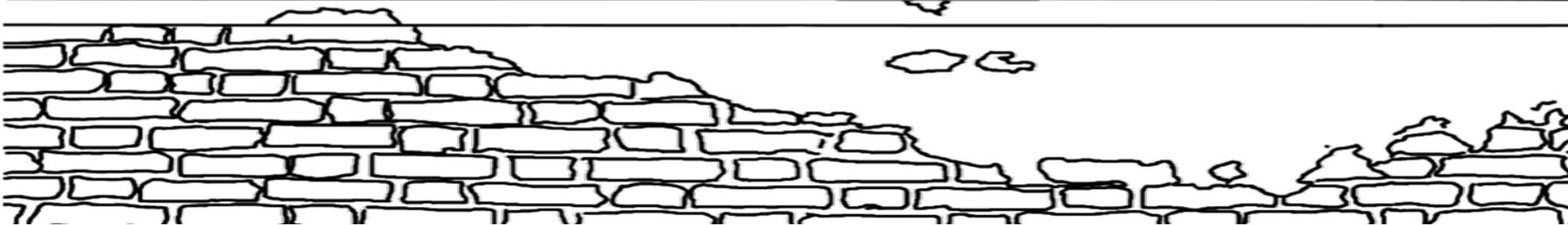
Given the mosquito's lifespan and the duration of transatlantic journeys, theories identified water barrels as the most likely means for transporting the disease from port to port.



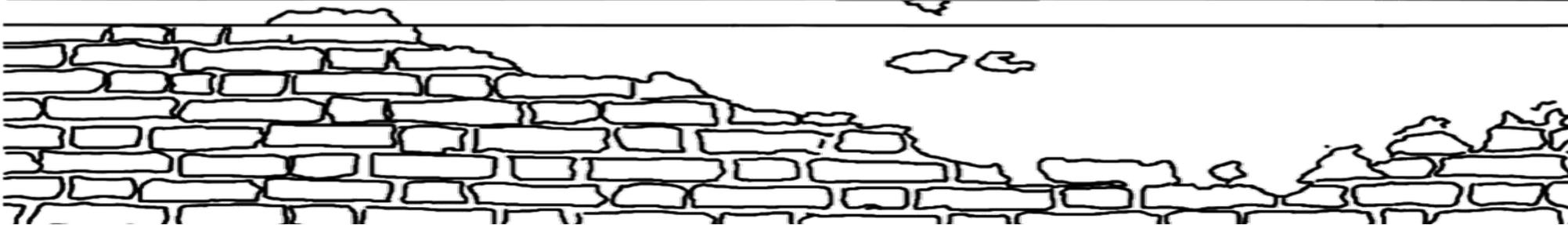
Once onboard, female mosquitos laid their eggs in the barrels, allowing generations to live and breed until their arrival in a new port where they could infect the local population.



One of the deadliest outbreaks affected a number of ports in 1793. The Hankey picked up the survivors of an ill-fated colony on the island of Bolama off the west coast of Africa.



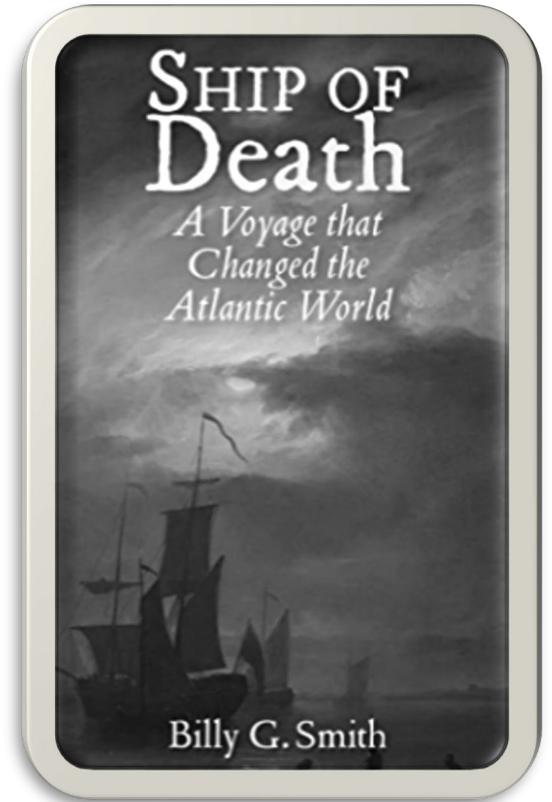
Many had already succumbed to yellow fever, and as the ship stopped in Barbados, Grenada, Saint Dominique, and Philadelphia, the disease would break out within days of the ship's arrival.



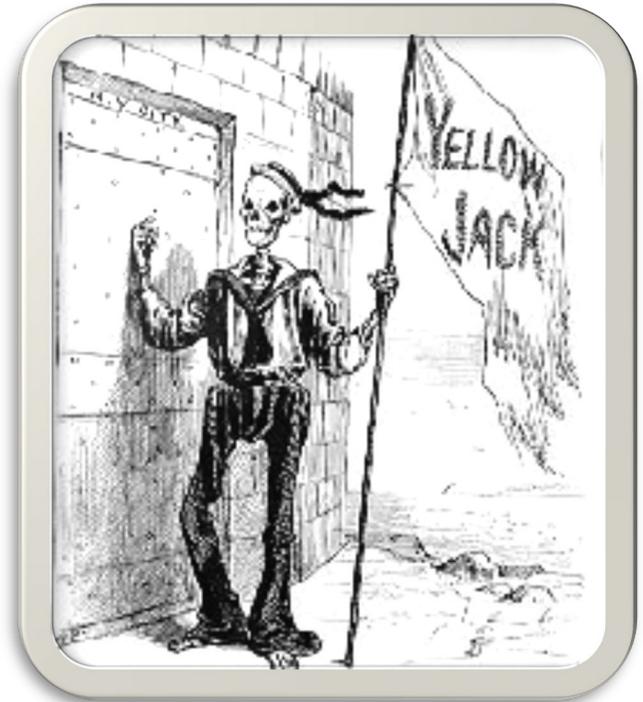
The epidemic was so bad, George Washington fled Philadelphia to Mt. Vernon to avoid contracting the disease. In all a tenth (5,000) of the city's population died.



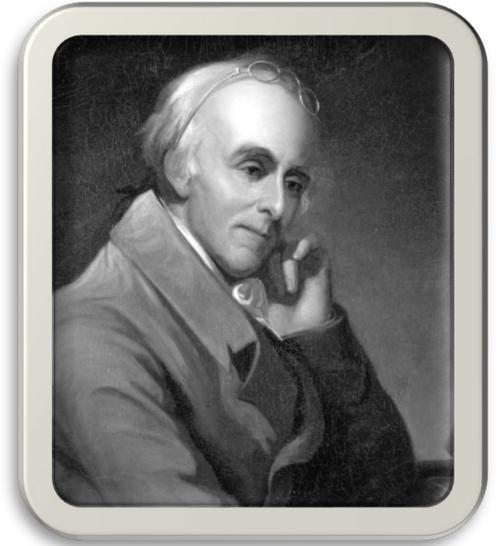
The ship then returned to England, but word of its destructive path reached the country and after the passengers and crew disembarked, they burned the ship to the waterline and sank it to the bottom of the Thames.



Despite many of those on the ship succumbing to the disease, the captain never flew "the yellow Jack," a flag warning others of an infection onboard. If he had, everyone would have been quarantined and the pandemic averted.



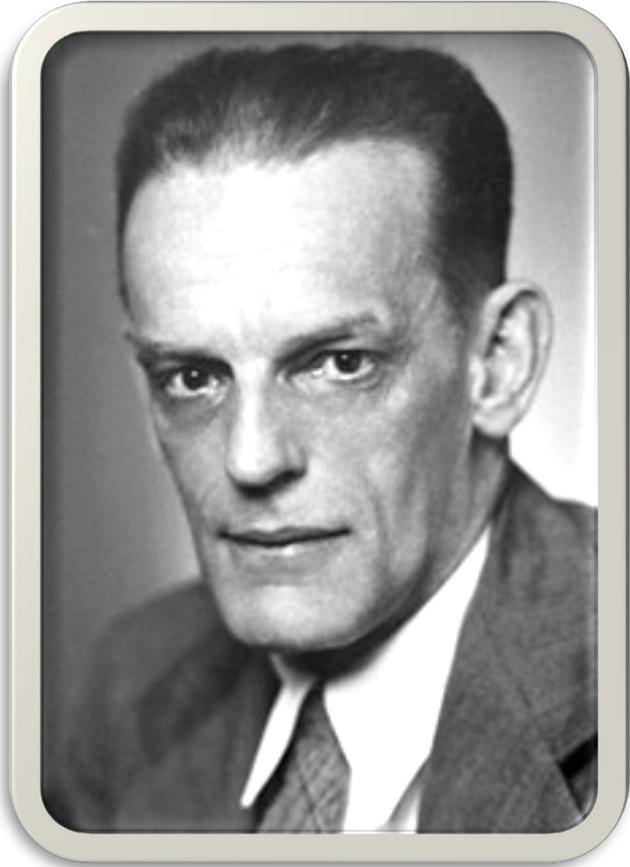
Even during the Philadelphia outbreak, mosquitos were never considered a carrier although Dr. Benjamin Rush (a local physician) observed in his meticulous notes a greater than usual number of mosquitos that summer.



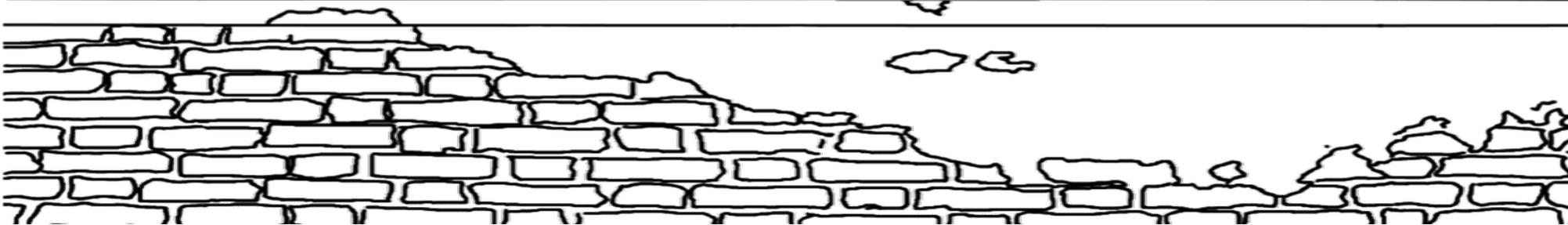
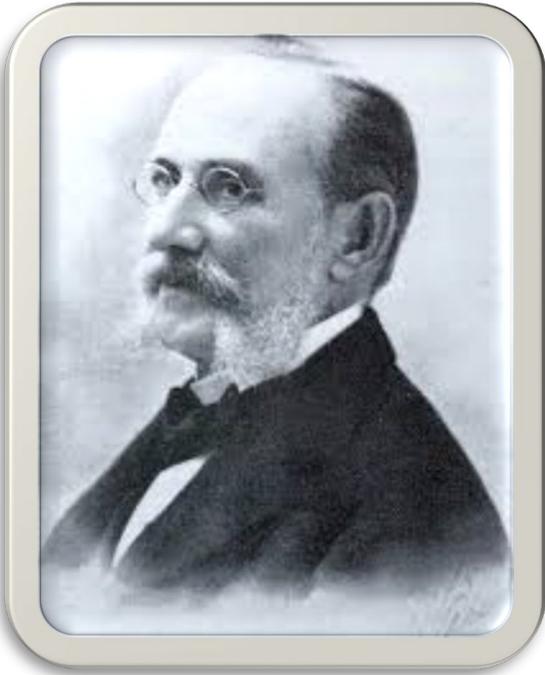
In 1886, Dr. Carlos Finlay will propose mosquitos transmitted the disease, but he will be ignored for twenty years, until Walter Reed and other researchers will visit him in Cuba to study the infection.



They will confirm his assertion, and the team ultimately will eradicate the disease from Panama and Cuba. A vaccine, however, will take more than thirty years before Max Theiler and his team develop it in 1937.



Had the findings of Dr. Finlay been given more attention, efforts to eliminate the disease might have progressed much sooner.



Unfortunately, such information will have come too late to save Roger Baskerville or Effie's husband. Many others, however, would have been spared a disease that will still claim about 30,000 a year by 2020.



**YELLOW
FEVER**

NEED A YELLOW VACCINE?
WE GOT YOU COVERED
HERE AT SUNMED

*So we have completed
topic 109 in our series...*

*Yes, but we'll be
back with another
topic soon...*



References for this topic:

- 1) <https://www.healthline.com/health/yellow-fever#prevention>
- 2) <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/zika-virus>
- 3) https://www.jstor.org/stable/158263?seq=3#page_scan_tab_contents
- 4) <https://www.britannica.com/science/yellow-fever>
- 5) <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6070/427464c1cd26aeb71c8c8d01b8661aaaa079.pdf>
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- 7) <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Carlos-J-Finlay>
- 8) <https://www.historyofvaccines.org/timeline/yellow-fever>



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"The Life and Times in Victorian London"

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