[**Capt. Sterling**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2648-capt-sterling/)

* Sticky Fingers Sterling Needs a New Hat
* 
* 
* Member
* 10,302 posts
* Gender:Pyrate Hunter
* Location:here
* Interests:Killing pirates, haven't met one yet worth keeping alive....

[Posted October 22, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=371554) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=371554)

Thought Mission might find these of interest...

2 July 1726 A few days ago, a man was cut for the stone, the old way, in preinæo, by Mr. Dobyns at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital; from whom were taken six stones, one as big as a turkey’s egg, two as a pigeon’s, the others as a nutmeg, and is likely to recover. [Weekly Journal, or The British Gazetteer]

13 May 1727 On Monday last John Egerton of Oulton in the County of Chester, Esq; was couch’d for a cataract by Dr. Cheselden, with good success. [british Journal]

17 August 1728 A few days ago Dr. Richard Smith cut a large cancer from the lip of Thomas Welling (upon his stage in the Broadway of Westminster) formerly a soldier in General Sabine’s Regiment, but now a Pensioner of Chelsea College; and last Friday the man appear’d upon the stage perfectly well cured, altho’ he was cut once before by a very noted surgeon. (Weekly Journal; or, British Gazetteer)

ADVERTISEMENT

2-5 January 1702

Mr. Nedham surgeon, who is daily successful in curing the venereal disease speedily, takes away all the sores, scabs and pains after a particular manner beyond any thing yet generally known or usually practised, and where all common methods of practice shall fail.

His Antivenereal Antidote, a pleasant, gentle medicine, which, without the least sickness or hindrance of business, soon cures a clap or running of the reins [discharges from the kidneys], speedily takes away all the heat and pain, in making water. Price 3 shillings the pot, with printed directions, Sold at his house in Great Southampton-street in High Holborn, near Bloomsbury-Square; at the Blue Balcony Rayls with a Golden Head thereon, being over the door; where he is constantly to be spoken with all the morning. [English Post]

ADVERTISEMENT

7-9 January 1702

Our old physitian Dr. Case, who hath so publickly made the world sensible of his speedy and wonderful method of curing the Grand P[ox], his knowledge extends much further by his spagyrick [alchemical] art to cure the dropsie, and no money before the cure is perfected; and also rheumatisms, agues, fevers, gripes or convulsions; your leprosies or scurvy spots shall be extirpated, your children cured of bursten bellies, and worms destroyed; the Deaf shall have their hearing and the blind the sight; the grand Enemy to Nature shall be destroyed if you come in time, I mean the consumptions, with all its attendances, as coughs, hoarseness, pthisick, spittings, weakness, want of appetite, by my medicines and directions, tho’ the afflicted lives miles distance. From my home at the Lilly’s Head over against Ludgate-Church, within Black FriersGate. [English Post]

ADVERTISEMENT

10 June 1708

THIS DAY IS PUBLISH'D,

The Charitable Surgeon: Or, The best Remedies for the worst Maldies, reveal'd. Being a new and true way of curing (without Mercury) the several degrees of the venereal distemper in both sexes, whereby all persons, even the meanest capacities, may, for an inconsiderable charge, without confinement or knowledge of the nearest relation, cure themselves easily, speedily, and safely, by the methods prescrib'd, without the help of any physician, surgeon, or apothecary, or beingt expos'd to the hazardous attempts of quacks and pretenders. With a new discovery of the true seat of claps in men and women, different from the commonly receiv'd opinion of authors. And a peculiar method of curing their gleets and weaknesses, whther venereal, seminal, or otherwise: With some pertinent observations relating thereto, never before taken notice of. Likewise the certain easy way to escape infection, tho' never so often accompanying with the most polluted companion. By T. C. Surgeon. Printed for E. Curll at the Peacock without Temple-bar, price 1s. sticht, 1s. 6d. bound. (The Daily Courant)

ADVERTISEMENT

30 December 1708-1 January 1709

Marten’s Appendix to the Sixth Edition of his Book of the Venereal Disease, lately publish’d; being a new system of all the secret infirmities and diseases, natural, accidental, and venereal, in men and Women, that defile and ruin the healths of themselves and their posterity; obstruct conjugal delectancy and pregnancy; with their various methods of cure. To which is added, something particular concerning generation and conception; and of miscarriages in women from vener[e]al causes, the like never done before. Useful for physicians, surgeons, apothecaries and midwives, as well as for those that have, or are in danger of falling under any such impure or defective indispositions. With a farther warning against quacks, and of some late notorious abuses committed by them, who they are, that people may avoid them. By John Marten chirurgeon. Printed with the same letter, on the same paper, as is his Book of the Disease aforesaid, that those who please may bind it up with that. Sold by S. Crouch, in Cornhill, N. Crouch, in the Pultry, J. Knapton and M. Atkins, in St. Paul’s Churchyard; P. Varenne, near Somerset-House; and C. King, in Westminster-Hall, and John Isted, at the Golden-Ball against St. Dunstan’s Church, Fleet-street. Price stitch’d 1s. 6d.

ADVERTISEMENT

25 August 1716

I JANE SMITH, living at Mr. Rowbery’s in Temple-Street in White-Fryars, (where I have dwelt these ten years) had the secret disease [venereal disease, specifically syphillis] in such a deplorable Condition for a year and a half, that I was all broke out from head to foot, and become such a sad spectacle, that I was even frightful to look at; and not only weary of my life, never expecting any cure, but even thought of nothing but perishing and rotting by it: I was advised by a friend to take of the specifick remedy recommended by Dr. Chamberlaine, and mentioned in the Practical Scheme of the Secret Disease and Broken Constitutions; and by taking only a few times of it, I am now perfectly cured, not only to my own, but also the great astonishment of all who knows me; and I am ready (either my self, or my mother with whom I live) fully to satisfie any person about it. Witness my hand this 28th of June, 1716.

Jane Smith.

The scheme is given gratis in English and French at Mrs. Garway’s at the Royal-Exchange-Gate; at Mr. Cooper’s a toyshop near Hungerford-Market; and up one pair of stairs at the Sugar-Loaf a confectioner’s shop, over against Old Round-Court, near the New Exchange in the Strand. Note, at this last place is also given gratis, The Essay on external Appended Remedies, dedicated to Dr. Chamberlaine and the Royal Society, occasioned by the great Increase of late years in the Bills of Mortality, of children that die of their teeth. [Weekly Journal, or The British Gazetteer]

ADVERTISEMENT

29 May 1725

Against the VENEREAL DISEASE.

THE famous Italian BOLUS [large round pill], has so great success in the cure of the venereal disease, that not one of the great numbers that daily take it miss of a perfect Cure; and though so very cheap as 2s. 6d. each, yet four polusses [large pills] never fail to root out and carry off the most malignant, virulent, and obstinate kind of the venereal disease, without confinement, or making your case known to any; which, if it fails to do, the money is returned. This great medicine likewise destroys mercury and carries it out of the body, and thereby relieves those unfortunate persons who have fallen into bad hands in former cures. Is to be had only at the Flaming Sword the corner of Russel-Street, over against Will’s Coffee House, Covent-Garden; and if sold at any other place is counterfeit. [Mist’s Weekly Journal]

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31 July 1725

W. Rayner, Surgeon, living at the Blue Posts in Preston’s-Yard, the lower end of the Minories, the name Rayner and golden Ball hanging over the gate, near Little Tower Hill.

Hath a speedy and safe cure for the pox or clap [veneral disease], with all its various symptoms, by his famous chymical drink, being pleasant in taste, yet effectual in curing that dangerous disease, which has been the ruin of hundreds by falling into unskilful hands. I cure (under God) the most inveterate pox, in 3 weeks at farthest, as ulcers in the throat, lost palate, sinking in the nose, phymosis, paraphymosis, shankers [veneral ulcers], pocky warts, buboes [swellings in armpit or groin], or swelling in any part. If your body be full of ulcers and scabs, in a few days I remove all those heterogeneous particles, taking away all pains in the head, shoulders and shin bones, so that this salubrious liquor restores the body to perfect health. They that have made tryal of it wonder at the cures it performs. Those who have newly got a clap, may entirely depend on a cure, by taking two or three doses of my venereal pills or bolusses, without hindrance of business, or it being known to the nearest relation or bedfellow. I shall not use many invitations, but rather leave you to make experience, which is beyond all argument. In a word, let your condition be never so bad, distrust not, for I promise very fair, no cure no money. I do any thing in surgery. My pills and bolusses are useful for sea or land, which I have always ready by me. Note, There’s a light at my door in an evening. [Mist’s Weekly Journal]

ADVERTISEMENT

11 September 1725

WRIGHT’s Diuretick, or cleansing Tincture.

Which urinally discharges all the fæces or putrid relicks of the Lues Alamode [syphillis], or venereal infection, and causes its concomitants, the wretched train of that complicated distemper, as a mucous, filthy, sanious matter [puss] lodg’d in the reins [kidneys], or spermatick parts, which either cause a sharpness in the urine, or too frequently provokes it. This relick is discoverable, partly by the subsequent symptoms, viz. by a debility or weakness of the back, a fætid nauseous, and averting smell of the urine, with a purulent matter, or seculent sordes [foul scum], residing at the bottom, or flying in it, with variety of figures. Farther, this tincture especially carries off all relicks of the venereal disease, after ill managed cures, not only cleansing the urinary passages of all sand, gravel, films, or membraneous pellicles, &c. but after a singular efficacy, invigorating the reins, restoring them, and all their genital parts, to their original tone and use, though the misfortune and decay be of the longest date, with an equal success in each sex. To be had for 10s. per bottle, with directions for its use, only at his house, the Golden Head, and Two Lamps in Bell-Savage Yard on Ludgate Hill. [Weekly Journal, or The British Gazetteer]

ADVERTISEMENT

5 March 1726

All that are distressed to the last degree with the French disease, or any symptoms of it, and try’d salivation, the specifick, and arcanum, and all the diet drinks, with all the other mercurial slipslops, and tired with taking medicines to no purpose, may have a fair, speedy, cheap, and safe cure: A clap or running of the reins [kidneys; i.e. discharge] is cured in a few days, without hindrance of business; and so private, that the most intimate cannot take notice of it. Note, Those that live in the country may send and be furnish’d with six doses for five shillings, that cure all symptoms of the French disease, rheumatism, or scurvy and will do you more service in all the aforesaid distempers, than any 12 doses sold in England.

To be spoke with at the Golden Ball in Three Faulcon Court in Fleet-street, almost over against Water-Lane. Advice in all distempers gratis. [Weekly Journal, or The British Gazetteer]

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted October 22, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=371562) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=371562)

Great scott! What *are* you reading? *18th c. Period Pox, the Gathered Literature*? 

Interesting that someone called syphilis 'Lues Alamode.' I've never come across that term before. (I believe this would mean "syphilis in the current fashion" or "fashionable syphilis.")

[**Capt. Sterling**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2648-capt-sterling/)

* Sticky Fingers Sterling Needs a New Hat
* 
* 
* Member
* 10,302 posts
* Gender:Pyrate Hunter
* Location:here
* Interests:Killing pirates, haven't met one yet worth keeping alive....

[Posted October 22, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=371564) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=371564)

Aye tis all the rage... .ahem.. so I have been told...\*\*cough\*\*

and actually they are from newspaper accounts

**Edited October 22, 2009 by Capt. Sterling**

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
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* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
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[Posted October 22, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=371571) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=371571)

That's interesting in and of itself. It tells you a lot about medical trends in the area and epidemics during that 20-30 year span, doesn't it just?

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted October 25, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=371754) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=371754)

Some advice from Hippocrates:

"And all other mechanical contrivances should either be properly done, or not be had recourse to at all, for it is a disgraceful and awkward thing to use mechanical means in an unmechanical way."

I love that! I may print it out and tape it up on my desk!

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* Goat Specialist
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* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
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[Posted December 27, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=376149) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=376149)

This is from Stephen Bradwell's *Helps for Suddain Accidents*:

"I was in place about seaven yeares since, when some Gentlemen were taking Tobacco; and as one had knocked out the snuffe or coale of it on the Table; another in jest blew it toward him, he also blew it at him againe. This began to be pursued from one to the other, till a little Girle looking on (whose height was little above the Table) received the evill of their jesting; for some of the burning coale of Tobacco was blown into her eye. It tormented her extreamely (as nothing burneth more terribly) I ran into the garden, where I found some ground Ivie, whereof I gathered some,

\_\_

which I stamped, and strayned, and putting a little fine powdred Sugar to the Juice, I dropped some of it into her eye; upon which she received sudden ease, and had it not applyed above twice more, before she was perfectly well: But in the meane time, her eye was muffled up from the outward ayre.

Here observe that the eye must never be dressed with any Oyle or Oyntment [the common treatment for burning was egg white with oil - I have often seen recipes call for "salatting [salad] oyle"]; because oyly and greasie things diminish the sight." (Bradwell, p. 122-3)

[**Sjöröveren**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1062-sj%C3%B6r%C3%B6veren/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 457 posts
* Location:Minnesota, Land of 10,000 Lakes and 1 mini-ocean
* Interests:Re-enactment, gradually working my way back from the 19th Century. I figure I'm in about 1700 right now. I specialize in the history of medicine. I like maps, and the general history of geography and geodesy. <br />And in case you're wondering, "Sjöröveren" is Swedish for "the sea rover." And it's supposed to be spelled "Sjörövaren" but I guess it's too late for that!

[Posted December 28, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=376197) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=376197)

 On 10/22/2009 at 11:21 AM, Capt. Sterling said:

Thought Mission might find these of interest...

2 July 1726 A few days ago, a man was cut for the stone, the old way, in preinæo, by Mr. Dobyns at St. Bartholomew's Hospital; from whom were taken six stones, one as big as a turkey's egg, two as a pigeon's, the others as a nutmeg, and is likely to recover. [Weekly Journal, or The British Gazetteer]

Speaking as someone who has suffered from numerous kidney stones, and was in fact recently "cut for the stone", albeit using 21st Century techniques, I can say that this would **hurt like hell!**

The reference to "the old way" probably refers to making an incision between the fundament and family jewels, and just a bit off the center line, giving relatively easy access to the bladder. Later, the suprapubic method was used, in which the incision was made just above the pubic bone of the pelvis. This method was less likely to render male patients impotent in those dark days before Viagra and Cialis.

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted December 28, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=376206) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=376206)

Cutting for the stone is treated in the period literature I've read with a fair amount of reverence and awe as well as an enormous amount of concern for the comfort and well-being of the patient. Somewhere, I read that this was never to even be attempted on a ship, so I actually don't have a lot of notes on the procedure.

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
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* Admin
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[Posted January 10, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=377077) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=377077)

Captain Sterling had asked me about drowning a few years ago and I just entered this curious bit of healing ledgermain on the topic from Stephen Bradwell's *Helps for Suddain Accidents* (1630). It sounds like it might be mighty fine to have been a victim of near drowning based on his diet suggestions.

“And now to return to the point: although by the accidents aforesaid, as also by violent stormes, & the darkness of night, too too many following their assayers have beene woefully washed to the shore of suddain death: yet some have bin taken up for dead that with carefull and skilfull asage [assuage?] have recovered both Life the true love of nature,& Health the happinesse of Life. Therefore

\_\_

when any one is so found, the first thing to be done is to turne his feete upward, his head and mouth downward, & so to hold or hang him up by the heels, that the water may come out of him againe. If this alone cause him not to cast out the water, and the partie be without sense or motion; then also let some one of the standers by, that is of good discretion, put his finger into the parties throat, or take a feather dipped in *Linseed oyle*, & thrust it into the throat, turning it round therein, to make him vomit. And in the meanetime, let others help forth the water by stroaking, crushing, and driving his belly and stomacke reasonable hard, from the bottom of his belly toward his throat. If it be cold weather, let all this be done in a warme

\_\_

roome before a good fire. After the water is come away, it is good to old strong sweet smelling things to his nose (as *Muske, Lignum Aloës*, or such like) to warme the Braine, and comfort the Spirits. Also if he remaine senselesse or fainting, his Spirits. Also if he remaine senselesse or fainting, his Spirits are to be recalled and awaked with *Ros solis, Aqua Cælestis*, or some such comfortable water; and he is to be handled in all points as those use to be that fall in a Swound [swoon].

If by these meanes he recover life, sense, and speech; let him (some two houres after) eat some meat of a hen or chick (if he be able) or els suck the juice of them; and let them be roasted or broiled, rather than any other way dressed (for so doth *Alexander Benedictus counsel, li.* 7. *cap.* 3. *De Curandis morbis.*) And with his

\_\_

meat, let him eate *Pepper* and *Sugar*, or *Pepper* and *Honey*, as he liketh best. He may also eate a roasted egge with *pepper* in it. But let him not drink at all in 24. houres at the least, & then let it be middle-Beere and white wine mixed together; of which let him him drink but 2. small draughts at a meale, and betwixt meales not at all. This Diet let him observe for a weeke together, keeping himselfe warme and moderately stirring his body immediately before, & an houre after his meate.

Also, if the Phyisition see it requisite, other meanes may be used to prevent the coming of a Feavor, or to mitigate, and take it away if it be already come; as also to prevent a Dropsie, which is a likely effect of such a watery cause. The resore by good advice.

\_\_

Bloud-letting in the Liver-veyn, Glysters, and other Medicines may be administred.

Lastly, if any water e gotten into his Eares; *Take Goose grease, and the juice of an Onion, mixe them well together, and drop a little of it bloud-warme into his Eares.*” (Bradwell, p.97-101)

[**Red Sea Trade**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3073-red-sea-trade/)

* Ship's Master
* 
* 
* Member
* 157 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Melbourne, Florida
* Interests:16th and 17th century Colonial America, especially Florida (my current location). All aspects of material culture, especially foodways and music.

25 years of American Revolution reenacting.

[Posted January 10, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=377087) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=377087)

Samuel Pepys had a large bladder stone removed and, so grateful was he for the relief, that he hosted a gala dinner party each year on the anniversary. Such style!

[**PoD**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10743-pod/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 696 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Warrington UK
* Interests:Pirates, graphic novels, computer art, Listening to music, Going to gigs, Beer and Wine drinking, historical research, Period weaponry and Leatherwork

[Posted January 13, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=377244) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=377244)

I just came across these examples of Medicine Jars recovered from the wreck of the Dutch vessel Avondster which sank in 1659.

**Medicine jars** were found in the stern. One contained mercury, used in the seventeenth century for treating a whole range of ailments. The contents of another jars are being analysed.

[http://cf.hum.uva.nl/galle/avondster/finds.html">http://cf.hum.uva.nl/galle/avondster/finds.html](http://cf.hum.uva.nl/galle/avondster/finds.html)

**Edited January 13, 2010 by PoD**

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted February 24, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=380344) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=380344)

Oho!

"I examined [a patient] accordingly, and he told me, he had the running of the Reins, a quarter of a Year before, which was stop'd by a Woman Doctress, and that about a

\_\_

Month afterward these Ailments came upon him." (Moyle, John, *Chyrurgic Memiors: Being an Account Of many Extraordinary Cures...*, p. 91-2)

A woman doctress! I doubt she was 'official' as I have read of other female practitioners who were not part of the surgeon's or physician's guilds. Still, I thought it was interesting that he called her a doctress - although, again, not a physician or surgeon.

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
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* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted August 7, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388312) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388312)

Oh, this is almost too charming for words. (It reminds me of the picture in the old D&D Monster manual.) Enjoy!

“CHAPTER NINETY-TWO. On incision for the worm arising beneath the skin, called ‘the cattle disease.’ [Editor’s note: Round-worm infection seems to answer to the clinically characteristic description of the complaint. Classical authors pass it over.]

This complaint is called by us in some regions ‘the cattle disease’ since it frequently happens to cattle. It is in fact a small solitary worm generated between the skin and the flesh, that creeps all over the body, both up and down; it can be felt as it creeps from one part to another until it breaks out at a place where it can break through the skin, and out it comes.

It arises from the putrefaction of certain humours as do worms, round-worms and gourd-worms in the abdomen. Part of the harm that may be expected of it is that when it creeps about the body and goes up to the head and reaches the eye it may make an opening in the eye and come out and destroy the eye; this frequently happens.

If you wish to treat this and extract it, it must be done while it is creeping about and can be felt. You must tie a tight tourniquet above and below it, then cut down upon it and extract it. But if it burrows into the tissues and you cannot locate it, then apply the actual cautery to the place until you have burnt the worm.

The greatest damage to be feared from it is damage to the eye, as we have said. So if you see that it has entered the head and is near the eye, then bind a strong bandage over the forehead beneath it, then cut down upon it and draw it out. It is important also for the patient to take care to cleanse his body with laxative medicines from all corrupt and evil humours. He should also avoid all foods giving rise to putrefaction.” (Spink & Lewis, Albucasis, p. 604)

[**jendobyns**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11262-jendobyns/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 562 posts
* Gender:Female
* Location:Baltimore
* Interests:too numerous to mention, really. Period foodways, baroque dance, material culture, etc., etc.

[Posted August 7, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388316) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388316)

 On 8/7/2010 at 10:38 AM, Mission said:

Oh, this is almost too charming for words. (It reminds me of the picture in the old D&D Monster manual.) Enjoy!

"CHAPTER NINETY-TWO. On incision for the worm arising beneath the skin, called 'the cattle disease.' [Editor's note: Round-worm infection seems to answer to the clinically characteristic description of the complaint. Classical authors pass it over.]

This complaint is called by us in some regions 'the cattle disease' since it frequently happens to cattle. It is in fact a small solitary worm generated between the skin and the flesh, that creeps all over the body, both up and down; it can be felt as it creeps from one part to another until it breaks out at a place where it can break through the skin, and out it comes.

It arises from the putrefaction of certain humours as do worms, round-worms and gourd-worms in the abdomen. Part of the harm that may be expected of it is that when it creeps about the body and goes up to the head and reaches the eye it may make an opening in the eye and come out and destroy the eye; this frequently happens.

If you wish to treat this and extract it, it must be done while it is creeping about and can be felt. You must tie a tight tourniquet above and below it, then cut down upon it and extract it. But if it burrows into the tissues and you cannot locate it, then apply the actual cautery to the place until you have burnt the worm.

The greatest damage to be feared from it is damage to the eye, as we have said. So if you see that it has entered the head and is near the eye, then bind a strong bandage over the forehead beneath it, then cut down upon it and draw it out. It is important also for the patient to take care to cleanse his body with laxative medicines from all corrupt and evil humours. He should also avoid all foods giving rise to putrefaction." (Spink & Lewis, Albucasis, p. 604)

Well \_that\_ was interesting! And it has inspired me to find my copy of A Midwife's Tale, where she tended to treat people for worms a lot, to see what her methods were.

[**jendobyns**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11262-jendobyns/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 562 posts
* Gender:Female
* Location:Baltimore
* Interests:too numerous to mention, really. Period foodways, baroque dance, material culture, etc., etc.

[Posted August 7, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388317) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388317)

 On 1/10/2010 at 0:29 PM, Red Sea Trade said:

Samuel Pepys had a large bladder stone removed and, so grateful was he for the relief, that he hosted a gala dinner party each year on the anniversary. Such style!

I'm still catching up to this thread, and it has been interesting. If you watch the Supersizers Go/Eat series on YouTube, there's one for the Restoration Period, where they go into a fair amount of detail about the procedure for Pepys surgery, showing the type of chair he would have been sitting in (it has a big hole in the bottom) and some of the tools. This is how they set you up for the part about their recreated Stone Feast, where all sorts of interesting antics occur. Worth watching.

[**Iron Jon**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/5756-iron-jon/)

* Plunderer
* 
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* Member
* 472 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Palm Bay, FL
* Interests:anything that keeps me busy for a while...

[Posted August 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388569) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388569)

Here's an advertisement for a physician who had a long-running ad printed on the back page of the Athenian Mercury in London, England from 1692-3. I guess maybe he changed his wording a little after a "common cheat" starting stealing some of his business. Take heed whom you Truft in Phyfick indeed!





[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted August 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388572) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388572)

Indeed!

[**captscurvy\_nc**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10634-captscurvy_nc/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 488 posts

[Posted August 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388581) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388581)

Reading all this makes me feel like in my present condition, if I had been on a ship during the GAOP I would opt to just be shot instead of treatment....(Hip replacement, Back Fusion and Lumbar displacement surgies would not have been fun.)

[**captscurvy\_nc**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10634-captscurvy_nc/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 488 posts

[Posted August 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388583) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388583)

I know there were a alot of what you would call "snake oil" remedies advertised during this time period as well and I wonder what type of chemicals besides mercury were used for a lot of so called "treatments of veneral diesese that would have been more deadly than the infliction itself

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
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* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted August 19, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388638) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388638)

Most of the ingredients were herbs, spices and derivatives of metals from what I've seen. Understanding the medicine is rather tricky because a lot of the recipes are in misspelled and abbreviated Latin. I used to try and decipher them when I posted them here in Twill and even then I could only figure out about 1/2 of the ingredients and terms.

They used all sorts of caustics for plasters, which were used to try and draw "laudable pus." (The formation of pus in a wound was thought to be a good thing - they figured it was the bad humors being removed from the body.) A list of the crazy stuff they used (mustard, sulfuric acid and such) would be an amusing addition to the medicine portion of the book I am allegedly working on. Hmm...

For the nonce, if you want to do some digging, [this](http://books.google.com/books?id=3QYSAAAAYAAJ&printsec=titlepage&source=gbs_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) is wonderful on-line resource I have used to try and figure out what the heck I'm looking at. (The rest of that exercise is left to the reader.) You'll find some other such links on the [Pirate Surgeon's Links page](http://www.markck.com/images/Piracy/PSJ/Pirate_Surgeons_Journal%20Links.htm).

[**Red\_Dawn**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11384-red_dawn/)

* Ship's Master
* 
* 
* Member
* 120 posts
* Gender:Polly Wanna Cracker
* Location:Southern AZ
* Interests:A bit varied.

[Posted August 20, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388705) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388705)

Looks like my first questions on the forum are going to be pretty grim.

What was the treatment for smallpox back then? One of my pirates has memories of his mother nursing him back to health from it. The CDC has some, erm, interesting pictures of smallpox victims on their site, but not much info on old treatments.

Some years after, his mother died, and I've narrowed down multiple disease suggestion to death by tuberculosis or diabetes. Any info on how those were diagnosed, treated, etc. back then?

Thanks!

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
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* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
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[Posted August 20, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388714) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388714)

**Smallpox**

In *Viruses, Plagues and History* by Michael Oldstone, he has a whole chapter on the subject which you might enjoy if this subject interests you.

“By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, smallpox was the most devastating disease in the world, in Europe alone killing an estimated 400,000 people each year. One-third of all cases of blindness resulted from smallpox.” (Oldstone, p. 33)

Interestingly, smallpox was one of the few diseases for which they had a sort of vaccination in the 18th century England (although it would probably have not been used on common sailors).

"“The Royal Society of London was the first informed of the practice of variolation around 1700 and began collecting data on the procedure during the first decade of the eighteenth century, primarily from one of its members, the physician Emanuel Timoni. Dr. Timoni had received his medical degree from the University of Padua and from Oxford. He later served as the physician to the British Ambassador’s family in Constantinople. There he observed variolation and documented the procedure for the Royal society. His reports detailed withdrawal of the fluid from a pustule of a patient with uncomplicated smallpox on day twelve or thirteen of illness, then pressing the fluid into a clean glass container and transferring this material into fresh cuts made by a needle through the fleshy part of a recipients’ arm. Lady Mary Montagu, wife of the British Ambassador to Turkey, observed this procedure done in 1718.

As a great beauty, Lady Montagu had a horrifying experience with smallpox when, at the age of twenty-six, she became infected. Although she recovered, her face was permanently disfigured. Her brother was not as lucky; he died of the disease. Fearing a smallpox attack on her six-year-old son, she had him variolated during her husband’s absence from Constantinople, presumably because he objected to the procedure. But Lord Montagu was not alone in his reluctance toward variolation. The British Embassy Chaplain raged that variolation was un-Christian and could succeed only in infidels. However, the variolation done in spite of his fierce and sustained opposition was supervised by Dr. Timoni and performed by Dr. Maitland, the Scottish Embassy surgeon. The procedure was a success and Lady Montagu’s son resisted smallpox infection.

Lady Montagu later informed her friend, Carolene of Anspach, the Princess of Wales and later the Queen of England during George II’s reign, of the variolation procedure. Lady Montagu described vividly its effectiveness in the many cases that she had seen, particularly her son. In 1721, during an outbreak of smallpox in London, the Princess of Wales asked Dr. Maitland to variolate her three-year-old daughter. Shortly thereafter, the Prince and Princess of Wales, along with members of the Royal Society, had Dr. Maitland variolate six condemned prisoners at Newgate. The prisoners’ reward for undergoing variolation was freedom if they survived the procedure and resisted and active exposure to smallpox. Witnessed by over twenty-five members of the Royal Society and reported publicly by newspapers, variolation showed a dramatic protective effect.” (Oldstone, p. 36)

None of the period sources I have read so far have anything to say about curing smallpox, so I imagine they used bleeding and purging (which were useless in this case). This may be why the diseases was so feared.

**Tuberculoses**

Tuberculosis was usually called consumption (because it consumed people as they wasted away from the disease. They diagnosed it by the symptoms - fever, bloody cough, pale appearance and the wasting away of the patient. John Woodall notes in *The surgions journal* (1617 edition):

"Moreover, if the patient his disease be in the forme of a consumption, the body being dried up as it were, or with shrinking of the sinewes: then if you intend to purge the party, give him pills called Pilulæ Russi for the first remedie, but if he complaine much of paines in his joynts, then a dose of Pulnis Arthreticus will do best, or purge him with Aquila Laxatina, it is also a general good purge at al times, and almost in all cases, though best in the French Pox [syphilis] and Dropsie [Edema]."

Of course, Dr. Thomas Dover suggested Mercury as the cure. (Which he thought of as the cure for almost everything. This is why he was called Dr. Quicksilver behind his back.)

John Moyle noted in his book:

"The reason why I insert so many Recipes in this place, is, because Consumptions of the Lungs do often come by the long continuance of a Catarrh, which is from the Brain upon the Lungs, and fretting their tender Tunicles [covering membrane]; (besides a Patient Nauseates to take the same thing over often.)

Now by over much straining and coughing, sometimes the Body, (and specially the Head) becomes hot and Burning, in so much that what Theume descends, causeth a heat or small Fever to attend the Patient; and in this case there are no better Medicines than these following:

*Rx. Syr de Meconio Comp., or Lohoc de Papav. Either of these things are excellent, held in the mouth to dissolve down leisurely of themselves.* Or this:

\_\_

Rx. Balsam. Natrual. {ounce half} Mel. Angl. {pound half} misce. Let the Patient take the quantity of Nutmet Mornings and Evenings, and it will help him.” (Moyle, p. 259-62)

In his fascinating book *The Age of Agony*, Guy Williams says,

“During the whole of the eighteenth century, tuberculosis of the lungs- often called, for convenience, ‘consumption’- was one of the most prevalent and most dreaded diseases on the American continent.” (Williams, p. 192-3)

There's more, but that's enough about that.

**Diabetes**

Diabetes was diagnosed by tasting the patient's urine to see if it was sweet. (Because there is no (or not enough) insulin to handle sugar, some of it is removed from the body via the urine - thus making it sweet to the taste.) There was nothing they could do for it, however, until Fredrick Banting discovered insulin in 1921 (for which I will forever be grateful to him.)

Of course, Dover claimed to have cured someone of it in 1703 using...guess what.

[**Iron Jon**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/5756-iron-jon/)

* Plunderer
* 
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* Member
* 472 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Palm Bay, FL
* Interests:anything that keeps me busy for a while...

[Posted August 20, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388716) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388716)

 On 8/20/2010 at 4:17 PM, Mission said:

“By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, smallpox was the most devastating disease in the world, in Europe alone killing an estimated 400,000 people each year. One-third of all cases of blindness resulted from smallpox.” (Oldstone, p. 33)

Interestingly, smallpox was one of the few diseases for which they had a sort of vaccination in the 18th century England (although it would probably have not been used on common sailors).

Although after out time period, there was a good depiction of this type of inoculation or variolation for smallpox in the HBO series John Adams. In the movie, Abigail decided to get smallpox *inoculations* for herself and her children during an outbreak when Adams was overseas. As described in one review of the series - "Back then it was a gruesome and crude process that required smearing puss from an infected sore onto a thin blade and cutting it into the patient’s flesh — and one child contracts the disease anyway."

[**Red\_Dawn**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11384-red_dawn/)

* Ship's Master
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* Member
* 120 posts
* Gender:Polly Wanna Cracker
* Location:Southern AZ
* Interests:A bit varied.

[Posted August 21, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388745) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388745)

Thanks, Mission!

 On 8/20/2010 at 4:17 PM, Mission said:

None of the period sources I have read so far have anything to say about curing smallpox, so I imagine they used bleeding and purging (which were useless in this case). This may be why the diseases was so feared.

Would it be safe to assume then that her part in nursing him back to health would involve bringing him food and water, changing the bedclothes, burning his clothing (if economically feasable), or things of that nature?

 Quote

Diabetes was diagnosed by tasting the patient's urine to see if it was sweet. (Because there is no (or not enough) insulin to handle sugar, some of it is removed from the body via the urine - thus making it sweet to the taste.)

Poor surgeons. Now I'm wondering what other diseases they diagnosed by taste, and I *know* I'll regret asking!

[**captscurvy\_nc**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10634-captscurvy_nc/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 488 posts

[Posted August 22, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388774) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388774)

I know the feces of a paitent would be examined for distinct odors to help with diagnosis depending on the systems presenting

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted August 23, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388783) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388783)

 On 8/21/2010 at 3:26 PM, Red\_Dawn said:

Would it be safe to assume then that her part in nursing him back to health would involve bringing him food and water, changing the bedclothes, burning his clothing (if economically feasable), or things of that nature?

Her who? If you're talking about a wife or someone, I suppose so. My notes are concerned with what the surgeon did, not the patient's family, so I couldn't say with any certainty.

 On 8/21/2010 at 3:26 PM, Red\_Dawn said:

Poor surgeons. Now I'm wondering what other diseases they diagnosed by taste, and I *know* I'll regret asking!

I don't know if they diagnosed any other diseases by tasting urine, but the study of urine is a whole separate medical art. It was something usually done by the physicians, not the surgeons. (The physicians were much higher on the medical totem pole than the surgeons.) I did find a sort of quick and dirty summary of examining urine in one surgical manual, but since it probably wouldn't have been something done on a ship unless the surgeon had some previous experience with that art, I didn't read it. None of the sea surgeon manuals talk about it in the treatment descriptions and that one I mention is the only land surgeon manual where I've noticed it. I have lots of books that I want to read, so I tend to skim or skip things that don't seem germane to my research.

[**Red\_Dawn**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11384-red_dawn/)

* Ship's Master
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* 120 posts
* Gender:Polly Wanna Cracker
* Location:Southern AZ
* Interests:A bit varied.

[Posted August 24, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=findComment&comment=388858) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16034-medicine-in-general/&do=reportComment&comment=388858)

 On 8/23/2010 at 8:45 AM, Mission said:

 On 8/21/2010 at 3:26 PM, Red\_Dawn said:

Would it be safe to assume then that her part in nursing him back to health would involve bringing him food and water, changing the bedclothes, burning his clothing (if economically feasable), or things of that nature?

Her who? If you're talking about a wife or someone, I suppose so.

Sorry I wasn't clearer. "Her" would be my character's mother.

 Quote

My notes are concerned with what the surgeon did, not the patient's family, so I couldn't say with any certainty.

Ahh. So basically your notes say what to pour down the patient's throat, but not what the surgeon advised the family to do after he left (except maybe "give him this purge 3 times a day, and if he gets worse, I'll come back and bleed him").

 Quote

I don't know if they diagnosed any other diseases by tasting urine, but the study of urine is a whole separate medical art. It was something usually done by the physicians, not the surgeons. (The physicians were much higher on the medical totem pole than the surgeons.)

And considering the family's socio-economic level, they probably couldn't afford a physcian even if there was one in their village. Better stick with his mother dying of TB then; might easer for the surgeon to detect. Thanks!

 captscurvy\_nc said:

I know the feces of a paitent would be examined for distinct odors to help with diagnosis depending on the systems presenting

Thanks! Good to know.

**Edited August 24, 2010 by Red\_Dawn**