

## YELLOW FEVER EPIDEMIC, 1888†

In the early spring of 1888, a peculiar fever, the nature of which baffled the physicians somewhat, was prevalent in Jacksonville and several persons died of it. Early in the summer some of the cases had well pronounced symptoms,†† but it was not officially proclaimed yellow fever until some time later. The case that brought out the announcement was that of a man named McCormick, who had come here only a few days before from Tampa, and who was first reported sick on July 28. On August 8, the populace was thrown into frantic excitement by the announcement that four new cases had been found, and two days later the Board of Health issued a proclamation that the yellow fever was tending to assume an epidemic form. Many persons had already left the city, and this proclamation intensified the alarm to such an extent that all outgoing trains and boats were crowded to their full capacity, while the public roads were congested with terrified people, fleeing in every conceivable conveyance and on foot, scores of them having no destination in particular and uncertain as to where they were going. Many of those who were unable to pay for transportation to the few places which generously opened their gates to them, suffered great hardships, as a rigid quarantine was immediately declared against Jacksonville by nearly every community south of the Mason and Dixon line, and these unfortunate people were driven from town to town in their search for shelter. The intense excitement that prevailed throughout the surrounding country is indicated by the act of the citizens of Waycross, Ga., in threatening to tear up the railroad tracks if refugees were permitted to pass out of Jacksonville by way of Waycross, even in locked cars and passing that town at a high rate of speed. As a protective measure, the authorities at St. Augustine turned back all mail matter from Jacksonville, although it had undergone thorough fumigation; and other places in the State refused to allow merchandise of any description to come into their respective communities from the infected district, while some local Boards of Health went so far as to exclude such things as machinery, wagon wheels, railroad iron, ice, and even silver dollars. To enforce these regulations armed guards surrounded nearly every hamlet

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†From the reports of the Jacksonville Auxillary Sanitary Association, 1889.

††So stated by many residents.