

the 21st. Ross was victorious in 29 minutes and was awarded the laurels.

Smallpox Epidemic, 1883

March-June: About the middle of March, a negro sailor from New Orleans came ashore and stopped at a tenement house at Cedar and Forsyth Streets. He was sick at the time with smallpox, but before a diagnosis was made several colored people visited the place and contracted the disease. It spread and became a serious epidemic.

The first bulletin of the Board of Health appeared in the newspapers of April 7th; it stated that smallpox existed in this city, and that up to that time there had been 25 cases, all among colored people. The disease continued to spread and the Board of Health ordered compulsory vaccination April 11th, when hundreds of people were vaccinated. Within a few weeks there had been 45 cases (only three of whom were white) and 24 deaths, which represented a mortality of 53 per cent. During the first few weeks the disease was confined almost entirely to the colored people, but then it got a foothold among the white people. Rumors, some true, some partly so, but the majority false, were circulated about the conditions existing in Jacksonville, alarming the surrounding towns to such an extent that they quarantined rigidly against this city. Criticisms of the methods of the Board of Health and suggestions on the part of laymen complicated the situation.

The epidemic abated somewhat in the early part of May, but a cool spell about the 23d was followed by a fresh outbreak, and it was not until the first week in June that the epidemic was considered at an end. During the latter part of the epidemic the mortality was not as great as it was at first. In all, 180 cases were treated, with a mortality rate of over 30 per cent.

1883

July 19: At noon, the telegraph operators in this city walked out on strike. The entire force of six operators and one clerk went out, leaving only the manager. They were striking for more pay and shorter hours. It lasted several weeks and the operators derived but little benefit from it.