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## W. Beaumont [Ft. Niagara, NY] notes on a case history of an abdominal abscess and a case history of ascites. September 1825

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yellow<sup>ish</sup> thin flint  
Nov: 15<sup>th</sup> Punctured again at the umbilicus & drew off  
22 - Repeated apr of the month &

$3\frac{1}{2}$  Gals. — Nov 23 - Perforated at umbilicus  
drew off 3 gals. — Dec 1<sup>st</sup> Perforated at umbilicus  
I drew off  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Gals. — Left the cannula, <sup>dressed</sup> in the puncture &  
stopped it with a cork — ~~with more I at 6 o'clock~~ at 12 o'clock. Patient  
elsew the cork & let off  $1\frac{1}{2}$  Gals. & at 10 o'clock a red serum  
day,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Gal more. I withdrew the cannula.

day,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Glu more. sunk down in corner -  
Dec 9<sup>th</sup> - Punctured again at umbilicus took  
away  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Glus - Dec 15 - Punctured again at the  
umbilicus took out  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Glus -  
by this time had become very

away -  
amblyops took out 2 1/2 Gms -  
The patient ~~at~~ <sup>by</sup> this time had become very  
pepple, ~~emaciated~~ <sup>emaciated</sup>, & discouraged, having been  
for the last <sup>2 or 3</sup> ~~1/2~~ or ~~4~~ weeks, rapidly reduced by a colliqua-  
tive diarrhoea, ~~marked~~ loss of appetite, & ~~diarrhoea~~  
fever - On the 18<sup>th</sup>, in consequence of imprudence  
in eating to much & exposure to night air &c  
Lived & died in the 18<sup>th</sup>

Storm, he was <sup>suddenly & acutely</sup> attacked with severe pain in the left side, <sup>great dyspnea</sup> Palpitation of the heart, & Syncope, which, <sup>in many</sup> continued with unabated violence till the evening of the 18, he died. -

tel the evening of the 18, an arr  
The prejudicing & superintention of his relatives &  
associates. prevented ~~any~~ <sup>any</sup> post mortem examination  
The whole of the <sup>body</sup> taken away at 13. diff. punctures - was 34. &  
in this case 2 - 3 nos. -

in this case Case 2  
 Lt. S. C. Lee & Lefty - of naturally strong constitution  
 & sanguine temperament, was brought to Fort Niagara, N. Y.  
 on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 1825, labouring under a most distressing  
 ascitis. & general anasarca, with his abdomen enormously



distended. rigidly tense & very painful - extremely debilitated  
- apparently, in the last stage of life -

He had been frequently ill, for two or three years previous  
with common remittent fever, accompanied by <sup>symptoms of</sup> acute hepatitis, which  
had as often been relieved by the remedies in common use for  
these diseases - <sup>at Ft. Mackinac</sup> "On the 5<sup>th</sup> of July, 1824, after a pretty severe  
debauch on the previous evening, he was most violently seized  
with pleuritis, terminating in a low typhus, from which he but  
just escaped with life - He however regained his usual health  
in the course of 8 or 10 weeks - But from the continuance of intem-  
perate habits & the excessive use of ardent spirits, his health, became  
again <sup>impaired</sup> again in the Spring of 1825, while stationed at Ft  
Howard, Green Bay M.T. from whence, by the advice & consent of his  
Physician & friends, he started in June 1825, for Philadelphia, to  
consult Dr. Physic, on the nature & cure of his disease: -  
But continuing to get worse as he descended the Lakes, he arrived  
at Buffalo, in a very feeble condition & finding himself unable to proceed  
on his intended journey, changed his determination, directed his course  
to Fort Niagara, & put himself under my care & treatment -

On his arrival here, in the evening of June 9<sup>th</sup> after having been  
brought, on his bed in an open wagon, over rough roads, from  
Buffalo to this place, 28 or 30 miles, exposed to the scorching  
rays of an exceedingly hot sun, he was nearly exhausted,  
distended & on the very verge of death - his pulse almost extinct  
under the axilla, & quite imperceptible at the wrist - his extremities  
cold, & respiration, laboriously & difficult & painful -

After great exertions, <sup>warm</sup> friction, narisks, stimulating &  
~~attention~~ nursing for several hours, he seemed to suffer a very  
distressing & sleepless night. - On the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> he  
felt some easier, having partially recovered from the fatigue  
of the day before; but <sup>experiencing</sup> no essential relief from the pains of the  
abdominal distension & dyspnoea - continued thro the day in  
great <sup>impressing</sup> distress. - Believing <sup>an immediate</sup> relief an open to be the only  
effectual means of relief in this stage of the disease  
I performed upon him, at about 11 o'clock, on the 11<sup>th</sup> by punc-  
-turing with an abscess lancet, directly into the umbilical ring,  
into which I introduced the trocan & cannula, & drew off 4 or 5 lbs  
bloody serum, which gave instantaneous relief - ~~restored~~  
without any unpleasant symptoms ensuing. After the evacuation  
of the water, withdrew the cannula & dressed the wound with compressed  
& flannel roller - gave an opiate & put him to rest -



12 o'clock. - sleeping quietly - 1 o'clock. P.M. - awake, cheerful and  
quite free from pain or distress - 2 o'clock P.M. - I directed a laxative  
dose of East. magnesia & manna. [his bowels being  
inactive & inclined to costiveness] - which had the desired effect  
in a few hours. - with a view to effect a radical cure of  
the disease, & drawing my conclusions from the <sup>particular</sup> indica-  
tions of the disease. I adopted as a general plan of treatment,  
extensive <sup>at this time</sup> vesications, <sup>which I continued</sup> compounded mercurial frictions.  
thoroughly applied over the abdomen, & particularly to the  
right hypochondrium, & firm compression with flannel  
bandages & external applications - internally, as alterative  
I gave Tinct. Digitalis. & Solution of Sup. Tart. Potass. 15 grs  
of the last with 17 drops every 4 hrs. - <sup>10 or 12 grs Calomel</sup>  
per se. every 2 or 3<sup>d</sup> evening, with occasional <sup>repeated</sup>  
draughts, or enemata, which were found of afford great  
relief. by producing copious <sup>relieving</sup> discharges from  
the bowels - ~~after the desired effects of which were obtained~~ -  
administered gentle tonic, mild stimulants, at regular  
times during the day, such as infusions of Cof. aurant. Flors  
Chamon & Rad. Sipta, & port wine Sanguis, - and ultimately  
diet of easy digestion, as Tapioca, arrowroot, animal broth  
Birds. Soft eggs, toast &c. - under this treatment, he  
continued to improve <sup>daily</sup> day to day, with <sup>an</sup> occasional  
relapse of the more painful sensations of <sup>the</sup> ~~continued~~ <sup>relapsing</sup> disease  
which were soon relieved by some inconsiderable vari-  
-ation of regimen, till about the 10<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>. 1825?  
when he was perfectly restored to health. I left the  
Post in perfect health -  
From <sup>my</sup> ~~the first~~ <sup>symptoms</sup> of the disease  
of this case. I feel persuaded in believing, that without  
the op<sup>n</sup> the patient could not have survived. 10 days  
with it, without the subsequent treatment he  
would have relapsed into the same condition again  
in less than 20 or less. That to the effects of the  
continued discharge from the blisters, friction, & mercurial  
action upon the abdominal viscera, he may be attributed  
his speedy & perfect recovery - the rest of the remedial  
agents were mere adjuncts, the compression



& Bandage gave mechanical support & firmness - of <sup>the</sup> ~~upper~~  
~~cervical~~ <sup>absorptive</sup> vessels to the lax & debilitated muscles. ~~The~~ <sup>It</sup> promoted  
I promoted digestion - The Tincture of Sassafras, operative  
as a discutient & sedative, & prevented the <sup>L tonic</sup> accumulation  
of fluids ~~in the~~ by exciting the urinary & biliary  
secretions, promoting <sup>abundant</sup> evacuations, increasing absorptions  
& allaying nervous irritations - The ~~lower~~ <sup>Better</sup> infusion  
& stimulants, gave tone to the stomach & action  
to the extremities, thereby invigorating the <sup>gastric</sup> digestive  
functions - The prescribed diet furnished materials  
for easy digestion, <sup>Sanation</sup> ~~restoration~~ nutriment.

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