

August 8, 1895 – CHESTER TIMES

MARCUS HOOK STATION – There Will Be No Objectionable Quarantine Features There – For Inspection Purpose Only – The Farson Property Will Be Occupied by the Quarantine Officers, but There Will Be no Hospitals for Contagious Diseases There

There will be no occasion for the people of Marcus Hook becoming alarmed over the prospects of a quarantine station in their midst, as the purpose is not to erect a fumigating plant or hospital on the Farson property, but simply to use the houses there as residences for the quarantine master and physicians. Instead of getting the rather objectionable hospital in their neighborhood, the Hook people will have some desirable neighbors in the shape of the quarantine officials and their families.

In speaking of the matter yesterday, Representative Ward R. Bliss said:

"There seems to be some misapprehension in the minds of Delaware county people concerning the terms of the new quarantine law. The article in the Times today correctly states that after October 1, next, the station to be maintained will not be a quarantine station, but merely an inspection station.

"By the provisions of the law passed at the last session of the Legislature all quarantine service must stop on the above date, but the governor is authorized to maintain, at his discretion, an inspection service in its stead. The powers of the officials are strictly limited by the law. They may board and examine vessels coming up the river, and if any contagious or infectious disease is found on board they may order the vessel back to the Federal quarantine station, at Reedy Island for disinfection. But they are positively forbidden to stop any vessel, or to bring any vessel to the wharf, or to disinfect or fumigate any vessel, cargo or baggage or other article of the kind from any vessel that they examine. Heavy penalties are imposed for any violation of these provisions. In other words, under the new law the quarantine physician merely boards the vessel while she is coming up the river, examines her papers to see that she has been properly treated at the Reedy Island station, and inquires whether any disease has developed since she left that station. If everything is right the vessel is permitted to go to her wharf; but if disease is found the vessel cannot be quarantined, disinfected or treated in any way, but must be sent back to Reedy Island, with all the persons and property on board.

"From such a station there can be no more danger of a spread of disease than there is when a physician visits a patient sick with smallpox, scarlet fever or any other contagious disease. There can be no hospital at the station and no sick person can be detained there.

"The law authorizes the governor to secure a wharf at which the quarantine boat can lie, and the necessary quarters for the employees. To take a tract of forty acres for this purpose looks like a needless squandering of money. All that is really necessary is a wharf for the physicians, and the employees on the boat who never board a vessel and do not come in contact with disease, can live in their own houses. They could rent a wharf in Chester at comparatively little cost and with no more danger to our people than exists from the presence of a Board of Health, with a health officer and physicians visiting places where contagious disease exists or is suspected."