

Smallpox

1787

Dixon

Portlock's reference to smallpox about 1775

Aug 12, 1787, Portlock's Hbr (58 N, no Cross Id)

Observed marks of smallpox on man and a girl of about 14, but not on any children under 10 or 12. Old man had himself lost 10 children

"... as the Spaniards were on this part of the coast in 1775, it is very probable that from them these poor wretches caught this fatal infection" p 271
Natives from eastward were marked. Those from West had no traces of it.

Scovely (pers comm. Apr 29 '55) None of Spanish accounts mention smallpox among Spanish crews 1774-79. He thinks they would have mentioned it.

1795

Bishop (Ruby log)

July 1795 at Kargani

"They are very numerous and were much more so before the small pox which raged here a few years since, and by Koew's account swept off two thirds of the people, scarcely any that were affected survived." p 105-6

Aug 1795 Port Teast (Shakes)

"It seems the Small Pox is raging among them and altho Shakes is quite recovered yet his Family are much affected by it and he has buried one of his Wives lately his Eldest and favourite son is now ill of this terrible disease." p 116

1829

Kreen

port
Kargani

p 39

"Some thirty or forty years since, the small-pox made great ravages among them. This disease they call Tom Dyer, as some suppose from a sailor of this name who introduced it, though it is probable it came across the continent. Many of these old men recollect, and they say, that it almost desolated their country. I can not learn that any general sickness has been prevalent since that time, but their vices are fast hastening them to ruin." ^{was} intemperance infanticide

1838

Douglas (James) Letter in Rich p. 244 18 Oct. 38

[1837] "was marked by the frightful progress of the Small Pox among the Native Tribes..."

Letter, p. 270. re Ft Simpson

"Early in October 1836 the small Pox advancing with fearful rapidity from the Northern Coast, where it had greatly thinned the Native Tribes, made its first devastating appearance among the Indians of the Fort. (Business depressed all winter & spring)

p 271 "The small Pox disappeared in the month of August: the effects of this visitation will not soon wear out of remembrance with the Natives of Fort Simpson and their northern neighbours, among whom the mortality is computed at one third of the whole population. The Tribes living to the south of Fort Simpson escaped this calamity, which singularly enough appears to have been arrested, in its progress at that place."

1841 Simpson. at Ft Simpson,

p 207 "I observed among the people traces of the smallpox, eight of them having lost an eye each. That destructive pestilence had got thus far south, but no further, carrying off about one third of the population" p 207 (Wolves since scarce from eating bodies)

1845 Swin Ft Simpson. "They are very much afraid of the small-pox, which, in 1835, had made dreadful ravages amongst them - more against the families of the chiefs, than among the inferior classes"... p 410.

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