The Medical Roundup

by Walter Alvarez

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(Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1963)

Although psoriasis can often be kept under control with the help of some one of several types of treatment (according to Dr. Ashton L. Welsh of Cincinnati, Ohio,) it cannot be cured, in the sense that it will never return. What is unfortunate is that the cause of the disease has not yet been determined.

Alvarez

Many doctors do not approve of the use of x-rays; although they often help, such rays must be used in small dosage, and with care and skill. The so-called "Grenz ray" is effective, and much safer, but even it should be used only by an expert.

Although psoriasis seems often to be associated with an abnormal amount of fat in the blood, the results of trying to lower the blood cholesterol (fat-like substance) level have been disappointing; one can lower the cholesterol level, but the psoriasis can remain troublesome. Psoriasis cannot be cured with a diet.

In one form of treatment, the patient uses on the red spots an ointment made up of perhaps crude coal tar (2 per cent), pulverized zinc oxide (2 per cent) and cornstarch and white petrolatum as a base. The body is then exposed to ultra-violet light. This is a modification of the well - known Goeckerman treatment, devised long ago by Professor Goeckerman, formerly of the Mayo Clinic. Ointments containing tar are available in drug stores, sold under several names.

There is also popular lotion which appears to be helpful in many cases. A skin specialist reported that a little over half of 214 patients were helped by the lotion, reinforced with ultra-violet rays.

Another expert, Dr. Lionel A. Dick of New York University Postgraduate Medical School, says that there are four types of treatment: (1) lotions and ointments, (2) shallow injections of hormonal substances into the red patches, (3) the giving of the substances by injection or by mouth and (4) radiation.

He warns against the use of cortisone-like drugs. They can bring on serious troubles. Exposure to the summer sun can help. Diets and vitamins are useless, but tranquilizers are of doubtful value. Coal tar is still the good old standby.

Drugs During Pregnancy

The recent tragic experience with the drug thalidomide has called to the attention of all of us physicians, and most laymen, the fact that no woman should take any drug – especially any drug new to science and especially in the first six weeks of pregnancy – unless her physician insists that she must have it. If all women had known this fact a few years ago, and had followed the rule, today none would be struggling to bring up a deformed thalidomide child.

Actually, as many health officers have recently pointed out, there are thousands of lay people who, when they hear of some new "wonder-drug," insist on having it, even when the physician refuses to prescribe it because it can be very harmful.

Also, many people go on refilling a prescription for weeks or months after they no longer need it, and in this way some come to grief. Others run up the dose.

Increased Dosage

Recently I saw a woman whose physician had given her a drug to help her reduce weight. When it did not take off enough weight to suit her, she ran up the dose until her husband found she was taking 100 of the pills a day. Then she had to spend some time in a "hospital" in order to get "off the stuff."

There is another danger run by the woman who has just become pregnant, and this is the danger of getting German measles, or possibly some other viral infection. It is to be hoped that soon there will be a vaccine available with which we all can be protected, and especially the pregnant woman, from ever getting German measles. Such measles (not the common or severe type of measles), if they should attack a woman in the first six weeks of pregnancy, can result in the bearing of a child who is blind or deaf or otherwise maimed.

What causes ulcers? What symptoms are usually not due to an ulcer? Why do ulcers form in some persons and not in others? These questions and others are answered in Dr. Alvarez' booklet on "Ulcers of the Stomach and Duodenum'.' To obtain a copy, send 25 cents and a stamped, self-addressed envelop with your request to Dr. Walter C. Alvarez, Dept. MMT, Box 957, Des Moines 4, Iowa.

Winner of Speaking Contest Is Noted

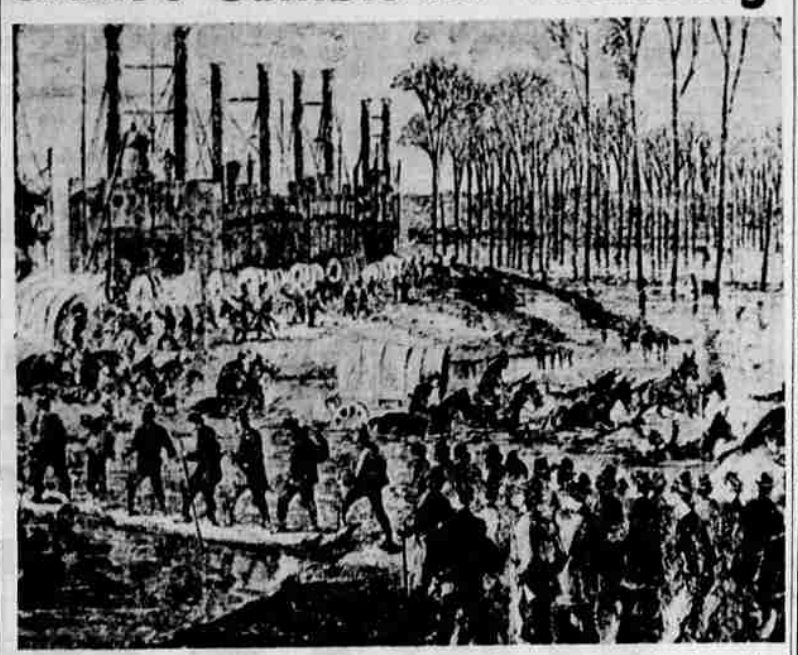
Yreka—Linda McAllister, 17, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack McAllister, Yreka, won the Lion's club regional speaking contest at Greenhorn Grange hall recently.

Susan Hoberg, Weed High school student, and Judy Johnson, Fall River High school, winners from two other zones, competed by using the same subject "Conformity, a Real Challenge to Me," a subject picked by the club for all entrants.

Miss McAllister will now compete with winners from three other regional contests in northern California. A scholarship award will be given at the contest's state level.

She is a high school senior, is an honor roll student and past president of the California Scholarship federation at Yreka High school. A college career at the University of California is planned for next year with a major in mathematics.

Grant's Gamble for Vicksburg



GRANT ORDERS MOVE—On the night of April 16-17, 1863, from his headquarters across the Mississippi river, Gen. U. S. Grant ordered a new try to capture the Confederate bastion of Vicksburg, Miss. He proposed to run empty transports past the city's batteries, march his army south along the opposite bank, then use the transports to ferry the troops across the river. The plan worked and Grant had won the first hand in the big game of poker for Vicksburg. This drawing, from the Library of Congress collection, shows the headquarters of Grant before the plan was put into effect. (UPI)

Maj. Gen. Olysses S. Grant gambled for Vicksburg on the night of April 16-17, 1863.

Twice the Union general had failed against the biggest Confederate bastion on the Mississippi River, once by land and once by water through the bayous north of the city.

This new try was for keeps. If it failed – and President Lincoln, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton and Army Chief Henry W. Halleck in Washington were watching every move – Grant's job as department commander was in jeopardy. If it succeeded – well, time enough for that.

The fortified city of Vicksburg, Miss., sat on the east bank of the river, 200 feet above a hairpin turn. Its strong batteries raked the river.

Now Grant proposed to run empty transports past the batteries, march his army south on the west bank of the river, use the ships to ferry his troops to the east bank and take Vicksburg from that side.

It was a good plan if it worked.

Arranged for Boats

Grant arranged with Rear Adm. David D. Porter, who commanded the fleet, for gunboats to run the batteries with the transports. Then he called a council of his generals and told them what he intended to do. Most of them objected, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman being one of the chief opponents. The army would be too far from its supply base, he contended. Grant listened and said:

"I have considered your arguments but continue in the same opinion. You will be ready to move at ten o'clock in the morning."

For this first venture three transports – the steamers Silver Wave, Forest Queen and Henry Clay – were shored up with captured cotton bales. The three towed a dozen barges loaded with coal.

Six gunboats preceded the transports, Porter on the Benton in the lead. Another followed.

Just before 10 p.m. the little fleet cast off and started down stream.

Grant with Mrs. Grant and two sons, Frederick and Jesse, stood on the hurricane deck of the headquarters ship and watched the start.

Maj. William E. Strong, of Grant's staff, described the scene.

"The night was well chosen," he wrote. "It was (as) black as the bottomless pit. The wind, which was blowing fresh at sunset, had died away and not a breath of air fanned one's cheek.

Lost in Gloom

"The signal was given and one by one, at intervals of ten minutes, the boats dropped by. Like grim specters they one by one loomed up on our starboard quarter, came close, swept on and were lost in the gloom and mist and darkness. Nothing could be seen but the dim shadowy outline of each transport as it drifted by with the current. There were no nights, no escape from steam pipes, no ringing of bells, no throbbing of piston rods, no clang of machinery, no voices above a whisper . . ."

When the last ship passed the headquarters boat, it followed.

"There was nothing in Grant's manner," Strong continued, "to indicate anything unusual was about to occur. Cool and collected, he stood there, anxious without doubt but apparently quite unconcerned.

"Five, ten or perhaps fifteen minutes passed, when suddenly from across the Big Bend came a single musket shot from the enemy's picket boat. This was followed by a rattling volley, and then a rocket of immense size shot out into the darkness, and then another, and still another. The reports from the guns were sharp, clear and very distinct; the flashes from guns and rockets lighted up for an instant the embattled heights of Vicksburg. We knew the critical moment was at hand.

Deafening Report

"Five minutes, possibly ten, passed, when a flash came from one of the 8-inch guns at the upper water battery, followed by a sharp, deafening report. One after another in quick succession the guns in this battery went into action. Those from the lower batteries joined rapidly in the cannonade on the approaching vessels, all of which now were rushing along at their utmost speed.

"From the batterie along the river to the crest of the Vicksburg hills all was a mass of living flame.

"As the fleet approached the city, and passed it, fire was opened from batteries which had hitherto to be unable to bring their guns to bear. Field batteries were hurried into position on the main streets near the river and on the sloping hillside, until it seemed as though every square foot of soil possessed a gun. Heavy bodies of infantry along the levee and wharf kept up a deadly fire upon the boats . . .

"Houses and barns on the shores were set on fire, and the bright glare, added to the incessant flashing of the guns, made the night as light as day . . . A storm of solid shot and shell . . . poured on the fleet.

Ball on Progress

"A grand ball was in progress in Vicksburg at the time . . . The ballroom was quickly deserted, the officers hastening to their respective commands, and the ladies in ball attire rushing into the street to witness the grand spectacle.

"The fleet was under fire for two and a half hours. But at length; the blazing bonfires burned low, flickered and went out. The heavy guns ceased firing, the silence once more reigned over the beleaguered city."

Grant's boat turned and went back up the river to headquarters at Milliken's Bend. Young Jesse, who had been sitting on the lap of Lt. Col. James H. Wilson, Grant's engineering officer, was terrified and his father sent him to bed. Young Fred never took his eyes off the scene.

The next morning at New Carthage, La., on the west bank below Vicksburg, Porter and Grant took stock. One transport, the Henry Clay, had been sunk. Most of the gunboats had been hit but none was damaged seriously. Not a man was lost. Fourteen were wounded.

"The enemy's shot was not well aimed;" Porter said, "owing to the rapid fire of shells, shrapnel, grape and canister from the gunboats."

He and Grant pronounced the expedition a success and planned to send six more transports through the gauntlet. It would take at least that many to ferry Grant's army across the river rapidly, and speed was of the essence.

By April 22 the transports were ready. Barges lashed to each side of the steamers carried 40 days of coal per ship. The steamers also carried 100,000 rations each for the army.

Jake Wilkin of the 130th Illinois Infantry was on Grant's headquarters boat that night when the transports began the run and he summoned up the drama of the situation like this:

"If those boats failed to reach the army below, it would be without provisions, without forage, and, still worse, without adequate means of crossing the river and gaining the necessary footing on the east side. If the boats were sent to the bottom . . . thirty thousand or more men would be helpless upon the west bank . . ."

The transports ran the batteries as successfully as the previous ones. One was lost, the Tigress. The crew was saved.

Grant watched this run, too.

"I don't remember hearing General Grant speak a word that night," Wilkin reported.

Grant had won the first hand in the big game of poker for Vicksburg and still had a buff or two up his sleeve.

Member Drive To Start Monday For Local YMCA

A U. S. Army Nike missile will be on display at the Medford Young Men's Christian association this week as part of the annual YMCA membership drive, according to Mrs. Paul Doe, drive chairman.

The missile will be set up in front of the YMCA building at 522 West Sixth st., Monday through Thursday. Membership activities get under way Monday.

"The missile is intended and constructed as a weapon of destruction of enemy aircraft and is one of our weapons in the arsenal of weapons that help insure peace for America," according to Capt. Donald Burrell, advisor to the U. S. Army Reserve.

Ties in With Mission

"This type of display also ties in nicely with the mission and purpose of the YMCA. The YMCA's purpose is to help build physically, mentally and spiritually strong citizens," he added.

The Medford YMCA will be open to the public between 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. this week to show facilities and the missile.

Drive goal is 400 new members. Captains of the 10 membership drive teams are Jack Crawford, Don Herried, Joyce Culbertson, Cathy Cook, Russ Brown, Dean Norman, Lanell Wilkes, Bob Grant, L. L. (Buzz) Sawyer and Jo Marshall.

Kenton School Sets Anniversary Event

The Kenton school in Portland will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the school's founding April 19 and invitations have been extended all persons who attended the school and all former teachers in the school.

The observance is sponsored by the Parent Teacher association of the school.

Mrs. Robert Grovom, 1627 North Terry st., Portland, has asked that all former students and former teachers consider the press announcement a personal invitation. The hours for the anniversary celebration at 7 to 10:30 p.m.

THIS WAS THE CIVIL WAR

Russians Work Free On Algerian Mission

Moscow – (UPI) – The Soviet Union has told Algeria there will be no charge for the work of Russian soldiers now on a mine-clearing mission in Algeria.

It had been known for some time that Soviet soldiers were in Algeria, purportedly to defuse land mines.

Moscow Radio said today that 20,000 mines have been destroyed and "the de-mining operations are being carried out free of charge."

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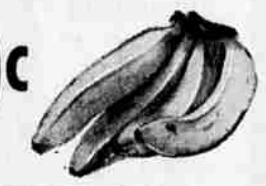
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