

The Royal Society of Medicine



Edward Jenner: A life in letters

Free admission

The Library, Royal Society of Medicine,
1 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 0AE

Nineteen letters from Edward Jenner to Alexander Marcet

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Introduction

Edward Jenner: A life in letters showcases a remarkable collection of unpublished letters recently re-discovered in the RSM library and transcribed by staff. The letters reveal a developing correspondence between vaccine pioneer Edward Jenner and one of the RSMs founders, Alexander Marcet, as well as a fascinating insight into some of the issues that afflicted his research during the development of the first vaccine.

...And then page 4 starts from 'In the following letter.'

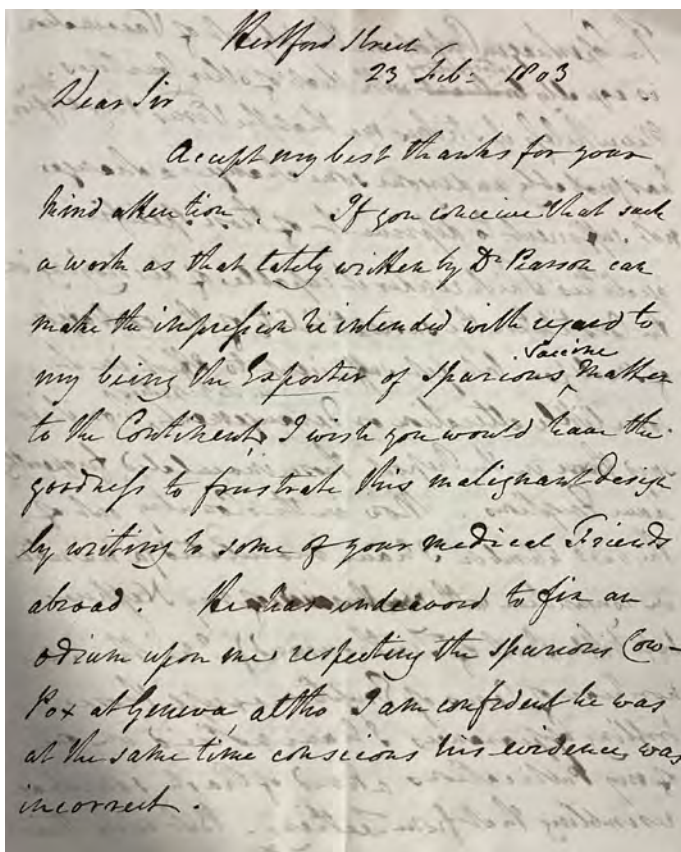
Letter 2

23rd February 1803

The Royal Society of Medicine's collection of Edward Jenner letters provides a fascinating insight into some of the issues that afflicted his research during the development of the first vaccine.

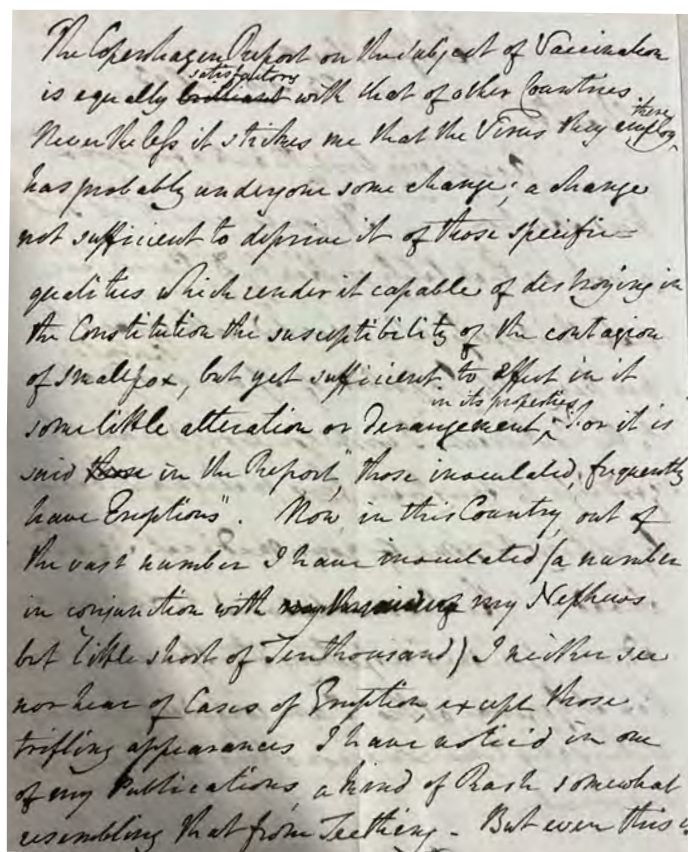
In the following letter, written by Jenner on the 23rd of February 1803, accusations of exporting 'spurious' vaccine matter across Europe proves one such concern. To dispel these allegations, Jenner asks Alexander Marcet to 'frustrate this malignant design by writing to some of [his] medical friends abroad.'

Jenner also makes mention of a very rare reaction to the vaccine, in which a rash or 'eruption' (resembling that of teething) is rendered. He goes on to theorise that this reaction may result from a 'deviation' in the vaccine fluid, whereby the fluid taken from a pustule turns from 'purulent' to 'spurious'.

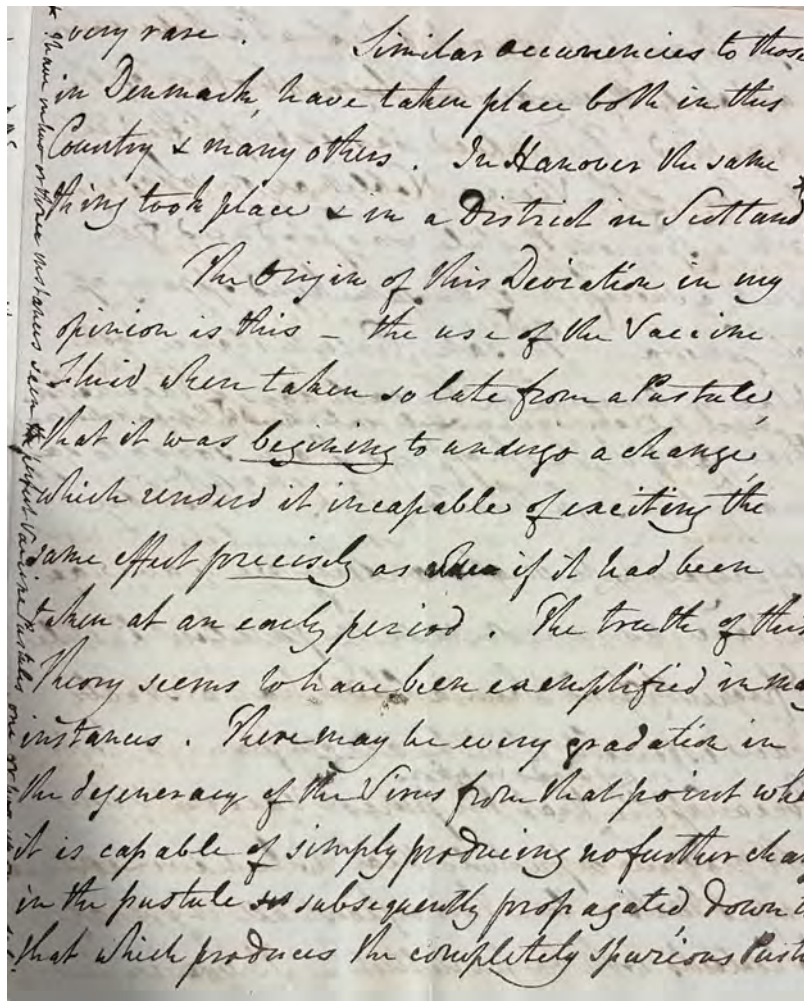


Dear Sir
Kewford Street
23 Feb: 1803

Accept my best thanks for your kind attention. If you conceive that such a work as that lately written by Dr. Pallas can make the impression intended with regard to my being the Exporter of Spurious ^{Vaccine} Matter to the Continent, I wish you would bear the goodness to frustrate this malignant design by writing to some of your Medical Friends abroad. He has endeavored to fix an odium upon me respecting the Spurious Cow-Pox at Geneva at the same time conscious his evidence was incorrect.



The Copenhagen Report on the subject of Vaccination is equally ^{intelligible} ~~correct~~ with that of other Countries. ^{From} Nevertheless it strikes me that the Virus they employ has probably undergone some change; a change not sufficient to deprive it of those specific qualities which render it capable of destroying in the Constitution the susceptibility of the contagion of Smallpox, but yet sufficient to effect in it some little alteration or ^{in its properties} derangement; nor it is said ~~these~~ in the Report, those inoculated frequently have Eruptions". Now in this Country, out of the vast number I have inoculated (a number in comparison with ~~any~~ ^{any} my Nephews but little short of Ten thousand) I neither see nor hear of Cases of Eruption, except those trifling appearances I have noticed in one of my Publications a kind of Rash somewhat resembling that from Teething. But even this



very rare. Similar occurrences to those in Denmark, have taken place both in this Country & many others. In Hanover the same thing took place & in a District in Scotland.

The Origin of this Deviation in my opinion is this - the use of the Vaccine fluid when taken so late from a Pustule, that it was beginning to undergo a change, which rendered it incapable of exciting the same effect precisely as if it had been taken at an early period. The truth of this theory seems to have been exemplified in many instances. There may be every gradation in the degeneracy of the Virus from that point where it is capable of simply producing no further change in the pustule ~~as~~ subsequently propagated down to that which produces the completely Spurious Pustule.

Vertical text in left margin:
The origin of this deviation in my opinion is this - the use of the vaccine fluid when taken so late from a pustule, that it was beginning to undergo a change, which rendered it incapable of exciting the same effect precisely as if it had been taken at an early period.

The Copenhagen Report on the subject of vaccination is equally brilliant satisfactory with that of other countries. Nevertheless it strikes me that the virus they employ there has probably undergone some change; a change not sufficient to deprive it of those specific qualities which render it capable of destroying ** the Constitution the susceptibility of the contagion of smallpox, but yet sufficient to effect in it some little alteration or derangement in its properties.

[...]

The origin of this Deviation in my opinion is this - the use of the vaccine fluid when taken so late from a Pustule that it was beginning to undergo a change which rendered it incapable of exciting the same effect precisely as if it had been taken at an early period.

Letter 2

23rd February 1803

I frequently find when a Child has a scabby face, especially if it be accompanied with tinea capitis or papillous eruptions that the purest vaccine virus will produce a pustule that will never contract limpid(?) matter(?), but throughout all its stages its Contents will be purulent - if I inoculate from this source, almost to a certainty I produce a similar Pustule.

for it must be remarked that a Pustule in a state of degeneracy will ^{produce} another of the same kind. This indeed was exemplified in the case of the Vicar's Nobleman on whose arm a spurious Pustule was produced from which a succession of the same kind sprang up at Geneva. The same Circumstance took place in America in the early days of Vaccination ^{before its Phenomena were well understood by Messrs Waterhouse there} and it has happened, I am sorry to say many times in this Country. That one degeneracy will create another we have an instance not uncommon in ^{the} purulent Pustule. I frequently find when a Child has a scabby face, especially if it be accompanied with tinea capitis ^{or papillous eruptions} that the purest vaccine virus will produce a pustule that will never contract limpid matter but throughout all its stages its Contents will be purulent - If you inoculate

from this source, almost to a certainty, I produce a similar Pustule. *

I shall hope for the pleasure of meeting you to morrow evening at the Theatre at Lug's, where we can discuss this subject further.

I remain
dear Sir
most sincerely
Yours
 Jenner

* The scab which succeeds is not hard & dark coloured like the common Vaccine scab, but soft & of an amber Colour like that of the Smallpox, and the whole progress of the disease is accelerated.

To
Dr Marcell
51
St. Mary Axe

Letter 3

April 1803

‘What substance can be so good as glass for the conveyance of a virus, so peculiarly delicate and liable to decomposition, to distant parts?’

In April of 1803, Edward Jenner wrote to Alexander Marcet thanking him for a set of glasses used to contain and preserve virus matter. Jenner acknowledged the efficacy of glass in containing the virus, having preserved it ‘in this way for seventeen weeks’.

My dear Sir

I would with the greatest pleasure accept your obliging invitation, would the present state of my health permit me, but since I saw you, the abominable Influenza has been sticking its sharp claws deeper & deeper into my chest. I fear it will not be in my power to attend the meeting tomorrow evening in Salisbury Square, however I shall make an effort, as it would afford me great pleasure to meet



Dr. Frank here.

I am obliged to you for the Glasses you sent me for the preservation of Vaccine Matter - They are better constructed for the purpose than any I have yet seen. What substance can be so good as Glass for the conveyance of a virus, so peculiarly delicate & liable to decomposition, to distant parts? I have known the vaccine Virus ^{in full & perfect} preserved in this way seventeen weeks. But it must be observed that whatever substance be made use of, the quantity of fluid collected should not be small. At the expiration of three months, I used ~~with~~ some Vaccine Virus which I had accumulated on a Lute & suspended in a half ounce Vial was used with complete success. By the way, from this ^{young} the first ~~successful~~ Patient ever inoculated in the Metropolis with the Vaccine Disease. It was used at my request by Mr. Cline.

I remain
with great respect, Dear Sir
Yours faithfully
E. Jenner

With respect to the Med. & Physical Journal I shall be obliged to you to suspend what I have written until you & I have had a conference

LETTER FROM EDWARD JENNER TO DR.MARCET, APRIL, 1803.

My dear Sir,

I would with the greatest pleasure accept your obliging invitation would the present state of my health permit me, but since I saw you the abominable Influenza has been sticking its Harpy claws deeper and deeper into my Chest. I fear it will not be in my power to attend the meeting tomorrow evening in Salisbury Square; however I shall make an effort as it would afford me great pleasure to meet Dr. Frank there.

I am obliged to you for the glasses you sent me for the preservation of vaccine matter. They are better constructed for the purpose than any I have yet seen. What substance can be so good as glass for the conveyance of a virus, so peculiarly delicate and liable to decomposition, to distant parts? I have known the vaccine virus in full possession of all its specific properties when preserved in this way seventeen weeks. But it must be observed that whatever substance be made use of, the quantity of Fluid collected should not be small. At the expiration of three months some vaccine virus which I had accumulated on a Quill and suspended in a half ounce vial was used with complete success. By the way, from this virus the first patient ever inoculated in the Metropolis rec^d the Vaccine disease. It was used at my request by Mr.Cline.

I remain
With great respect, Dear Sir,
Yrs. very faithfully,

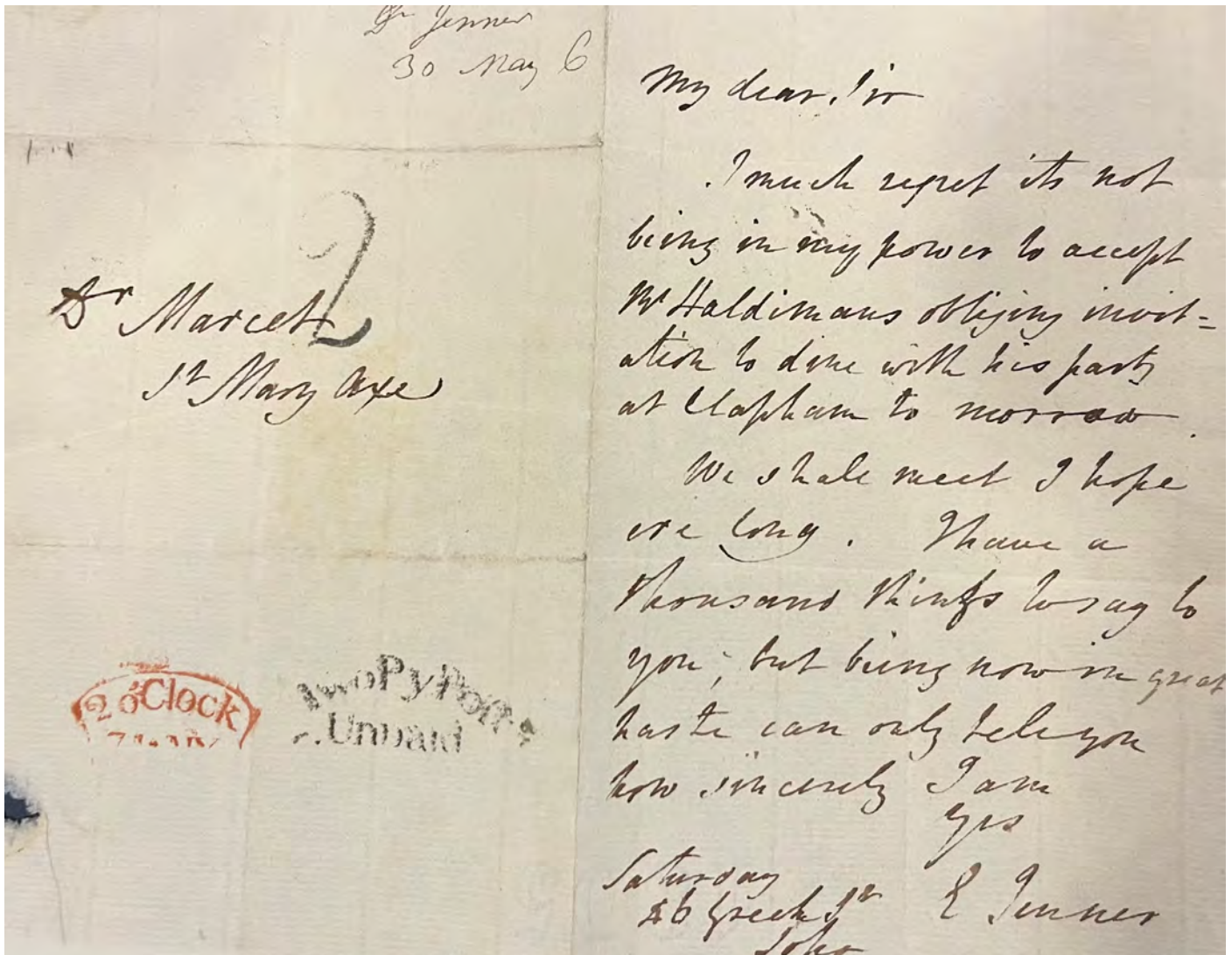
E.JENNER.

With respect to the Med. & Physical Journal I shd. be obliged to you to suspend what I have written until you and I have had a conference.

Letter 5

30th May 1806

Edward Jenner informs Alexander Marcet that he cannot make an event in Clapham.

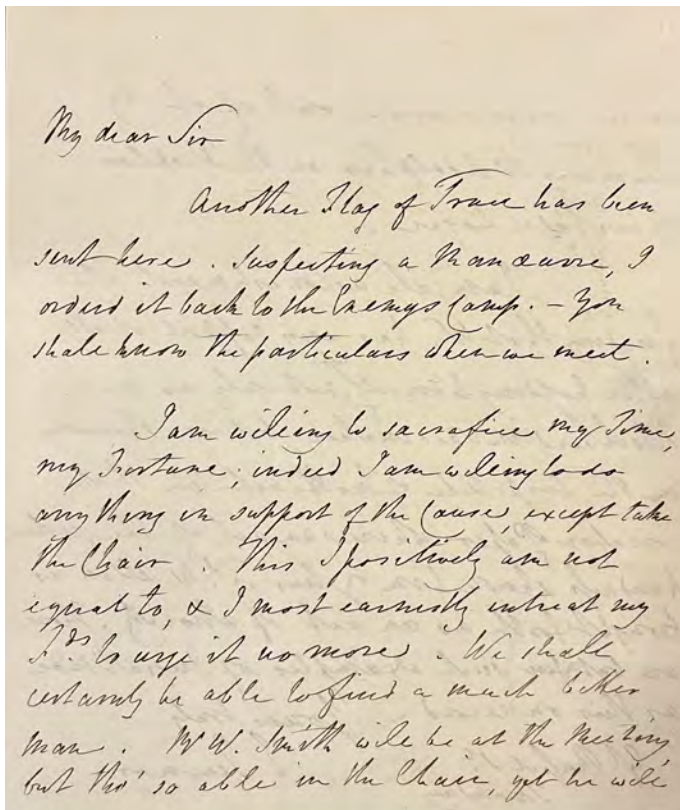


My dear Sir,
I much regret its not being in my power to accept Mr Haldimans obliging invitation to dine with his party at Clapham tomorrow. We shall meet I hope ere long. I have a thousand things to say to you but being now in great haste can only tell you how sincerely I am
yours
E Jenner
Saturday
46 Greek St
Soho
Dr Jenner
30 May 6

Letter 6

5th August 1806

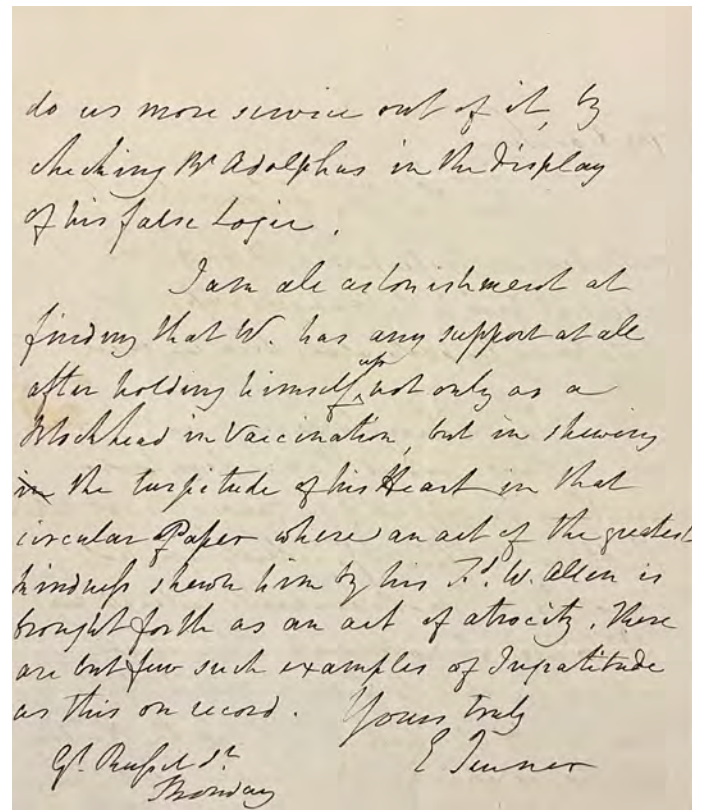
Edward Jenner shares his upset over the 'atrocit[ies]' and 'ingratitude' expressed by his colleague (W. Allen). He also fervently states that he will 'not take chair' - of what, is unclear.



My dear Sir

Another Flag of Truce has been sent here. Suspecting a Manœuvre, I ordered it back to the Enemy's Camp. - You shall know the particulars when we meet.

I am willing to sacrifice my time, my Fortune; indeed I am willing to do anything in support of the Cause, except take the Chair. This I positively am not equal to, & I most earnestly entreat my xxx to urge it no more. We shall certainly be able to find a much better man. M. W. Smith will be at the Meeting, but tho' so able in the Chair, yet he will



do us more service out of it, by checking Mr Adolphus in the Display of his false Logic.

I am all astonishment at finding that W. has any support at all after holding himself ^{up} not only as a Masthead in Vaccination, but in showing in the turpitude of his Heart in that circular Paper where an act of the greatest kindness shown him by his F. W. Allen is brought forth as an act of atrocity. These are but few such examples of Ingratitude as this on record.

Yours truly
Ed. Jenner
Ed. Jenner
Thursday

I am willing to sacrifice my time, my fortune, indeed I am willing to do anything in support of the cause, except take the chair. This I positively am not equal to, & I most earnestly entreat my xxx to urge it no more. We shall certainly be able to find a much better man. M. W. Smith will be at the meeting but tho' so able in the chair, yet he will do us more service out of it, by (thinking) Mr Adolphus in the display of his false logic.

I am all astonishment at finding that W. has any support at all after holding himself up not only as a masthead(?) in vaccination, but in (showing) in the (turpitude) of his heart in that circular paper where an act of the greatest (kindness) shown him by his xxxxx W. Allen is brought forth as an act of atrocity. These are but few such examples of (ingratitude) as this on record.

Letter 7

30th January 1807

Jenner recalls Dr Pearson's attempts at ruining his reputation. He also makes mention of the College of Surgeons' circular letter regarding vaccination, as well as the report of the College of Physicians (which to Parliament will 'forever set the question at rest with regard to the safety and efficacy of Vaccine inoculation.')

Berkeley-Glouce.,
Jan: 30 1807.
Dr Jenner

My dear Sir,

I hope within this fortnight to shake you by the hand in Town.

From a recent occurrence, I am more than ever sollicitous to obtain a sight of Dr Trank's Pamphlet. What I allude to, as an event worthy of my attention, is the Paper of Dr Pearson in the last number of the Med: & Chirurg: Review. It is well known among many of my medical friends, that I long ago ventured a prediction that Pearson, finding himself foiled in his attempts to ruin my reputation by the schemes and stratagems he had hitherto play'd off,

My dear Sir,
I hope within this fortnight to shake you by the hand in Town.

[...]

The College of Surgeons, I find, have sent forth a circular letter for information on the progress(?) of Vaccination, and the result(?) of the practice. The general Report returned by this learned body, will not prove very agreeable to one of the Fellows, the illustrious Mr Birch(?); who, I understand was one of the Committee. I trust the Report of the Coll: of Phys: to Parliament and the decree which will take place in consequence, will forever set the set the question at rest with regard to the safety & efficacy of Vaccine inoculation.

would at length make the desperate effort of declaring Vaccination not worthy the confidence that had been placed in it. This, as you must have seen in the luminous pages of his (and not Dr. Cattermole's) was actually come to pass. Now would be the time, if a controversy should start up from such a flimsy cause as this, to show the Town in what light he was view'd by that illustrious Foreign Physician, Dr Trank. The copy intended for me, never reach'd my hands; but you have one I believe within your reach. If you wd. have the kindness to favor me with a sight of it here, I wd. certainly bring it back with me.

The College of Surgeons, I find, have sent forth a circular letter for information on the progress of Vaccination, and the result of the practice. The general Report returned by this learned body, will not prove very agreeable to one of the Fellows, the illustrious Mr Birch; who, I understand is one of the Committee. I trust the Report of the Coll: of Phys: to Parliament, and the decree which will take place in consequence, will forever set the question at rest with regard to the safety & efficacy of Vaccine inoculation.

Alas poor Swann! - You have doubtless seen Dr Bourne's statement of the appearances after death.

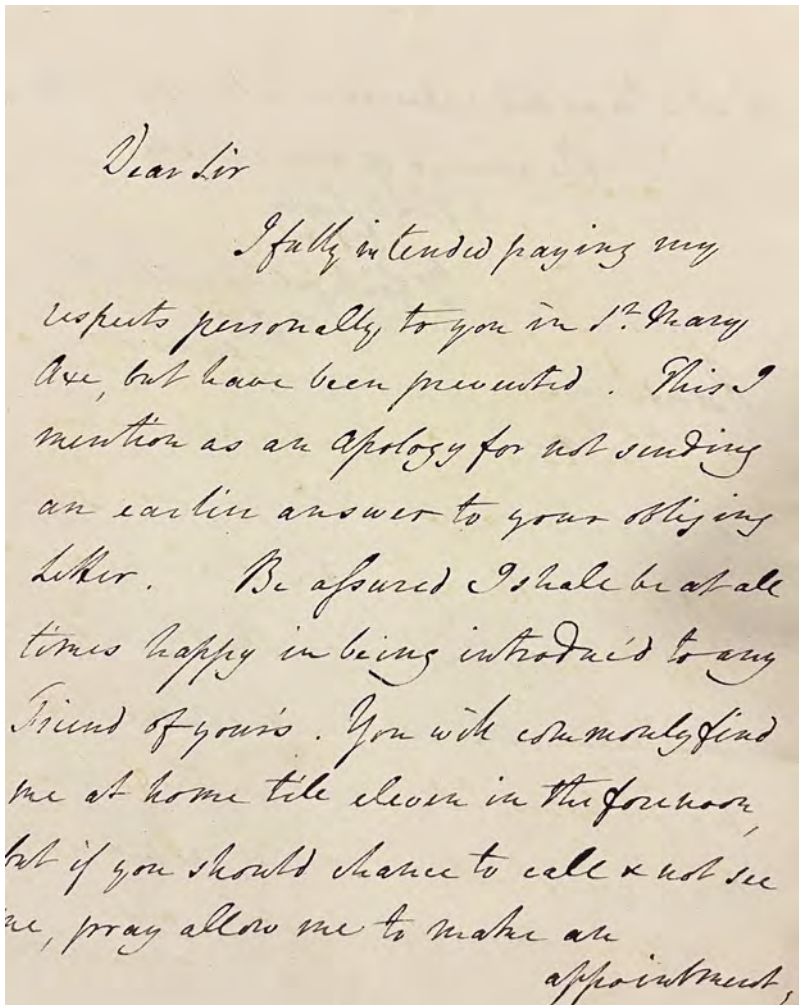
Believe me, my dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
Edw: Jenner.

Did your Hospital make their Report to the Coll: of Phys: in a body, or separately?
I should like to know Dr Simon's present opinion of Vaccination - I dare say it is not exactly the

Letter 1

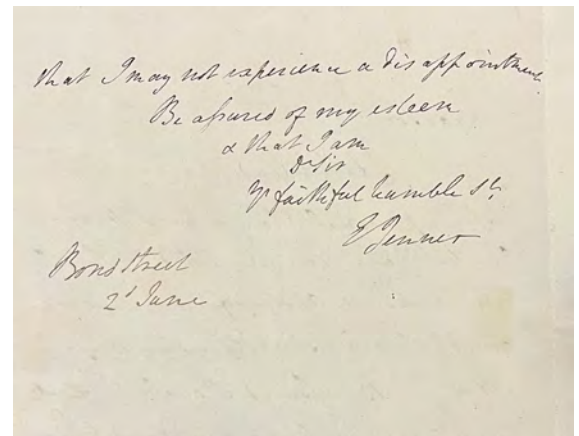
6th June 1807

Edward Jenner apologises to Alexander Marcet for his delayed response to his previous letter, and reassures him that if he is not home when Dr Marcet next pays a visit, he will book an appointment with him.



Dear Sir

I fully intended paying my respects personally to you in St. Marys Axe, but have been prevented. This I mention as an apology for not sending an earlier answer to your obliging letter. Be assured I shall be at all times happy in being introduced to any friend of yours. You will commonly find me at home till eleven in the forenoon, but if you should chance to call & not see me, pray allow me to make an appointment,



that I may not experience a disappointment
Be assured of my esteem
& that I am
Yr faithful humble S^r
Jenner
Bond street
2^d June

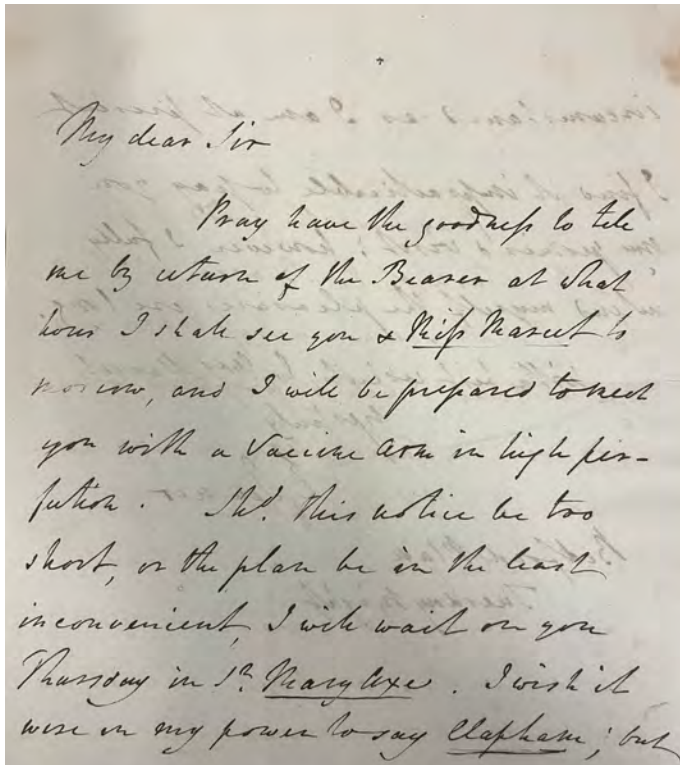
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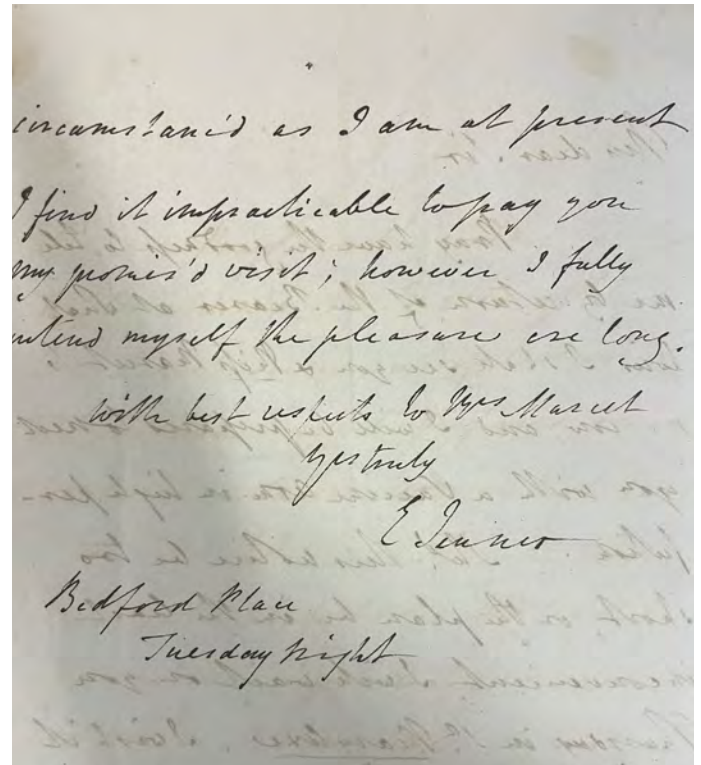
Letter 9

9th June 1807

Jenner tells Dr Marcet that he will have a vaccine ready to show him, and details on when and where they will meet.



My dear Sir
Pray have the goodness to take me by return of the Bearer at what hour I shall see you and Mrs Marcet to *****; and now I will be prepared to **** you with a Vaccine arm(?) in high **** *****. Sh'd this notice be too short, or the plan be in the least(?) inconvenient, I will wait on you Thursday in St. Mary Axe. I wish it were in my power to say Clapham; but



incumbrances as I am at present
I find it impracticable to pay you my promis'd visit; however I fully intend myself the pleasure ere long.
With best respects to Mrs Marcet
Yrs truly
E Jenner
Bedford Place
Tuesday night

My dear Sir,

Pray have the goodness to take me by return(?) of the Bearer at what hour I shall see you and Mrs Marcet to *****; and now I will be prepared to **** you with a Vaccine arm(?) in high **** *****. Sh'd this notice be too short, or the plan be in the least(?) inconvenient, I will wait on you Thursday in St. Mary Axe. I wish it were in my power to say Clapham; but ***** as I am at present.

I find it impracticable to pay you my promis'd visit; however I fully intend myself the pleasure ere long.

With best regards to Mrs Marcet

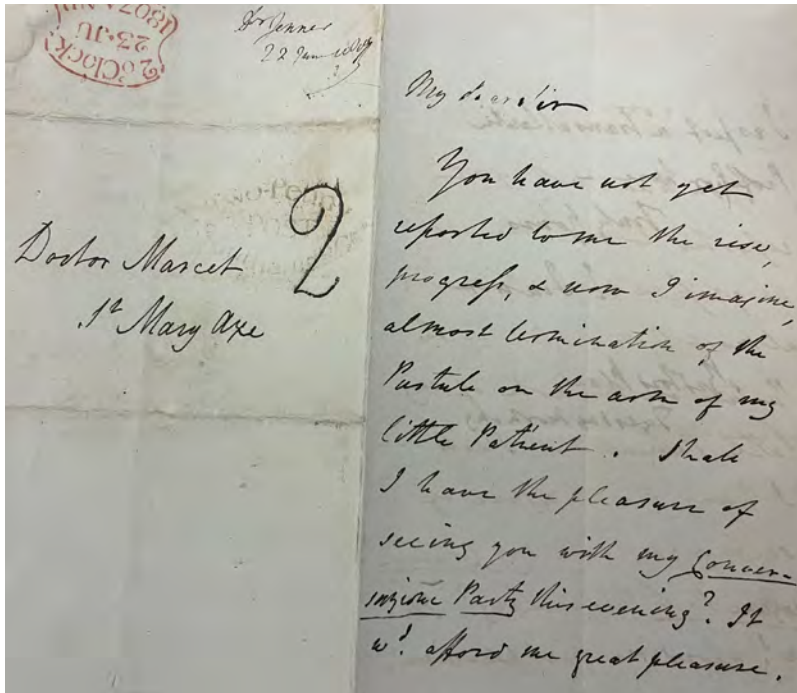
Yrs truly

E Jenner

Letter 10

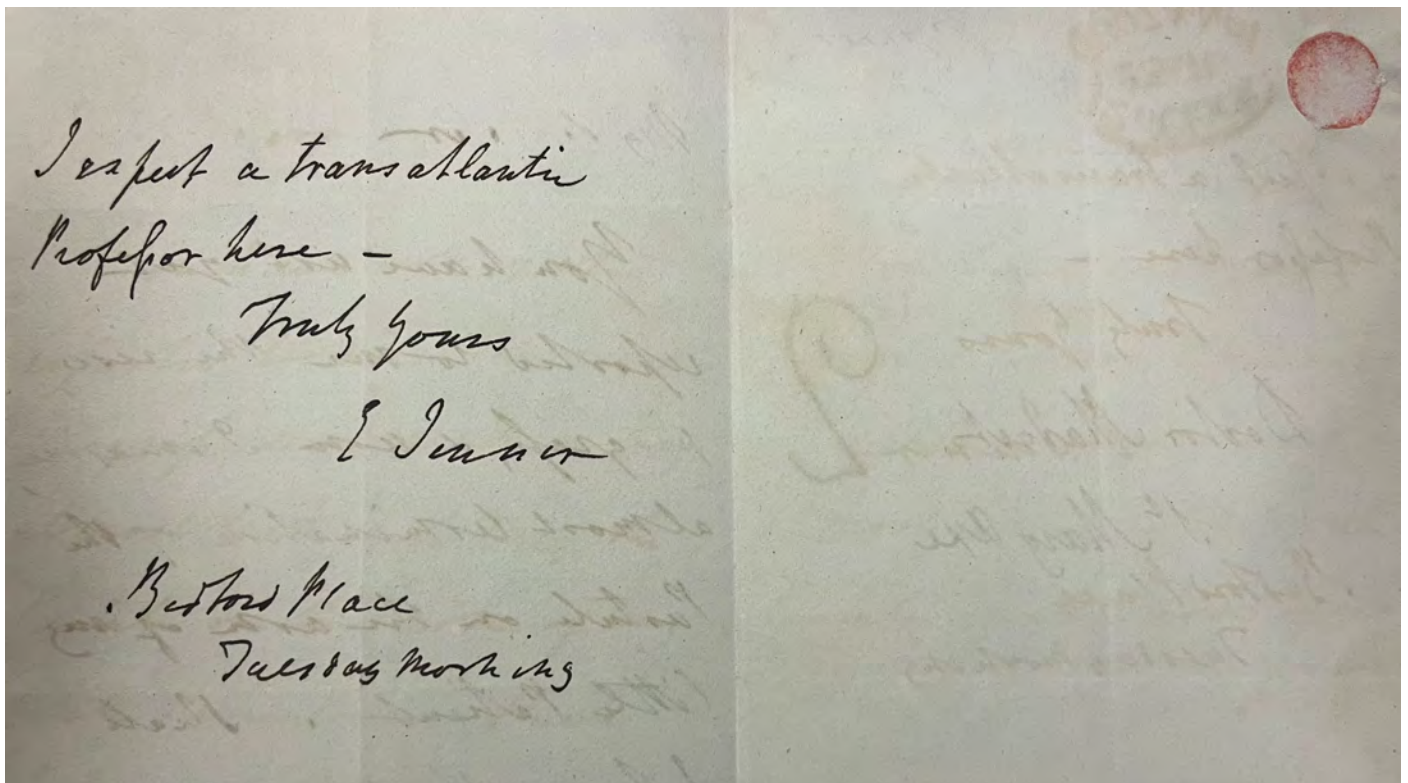
22nd June 1807

Edward Jenner refers to the pustule on the arm of one his 'little patients'. A defining symptom of smallpox, these pustules took on the form of a raised, fluid-filled bump with a characteristic dimple at the centre.



My dear Sir,
You have not yet reported to me the **** monograph(?), & now I imagine, almost termination(?) of the Pustule on the arm of my little patient. ***** I have the pleasure of seeing you with my ***** Parts this evening? It w'd afford me great pleasure. I expect a transatlantic(?)

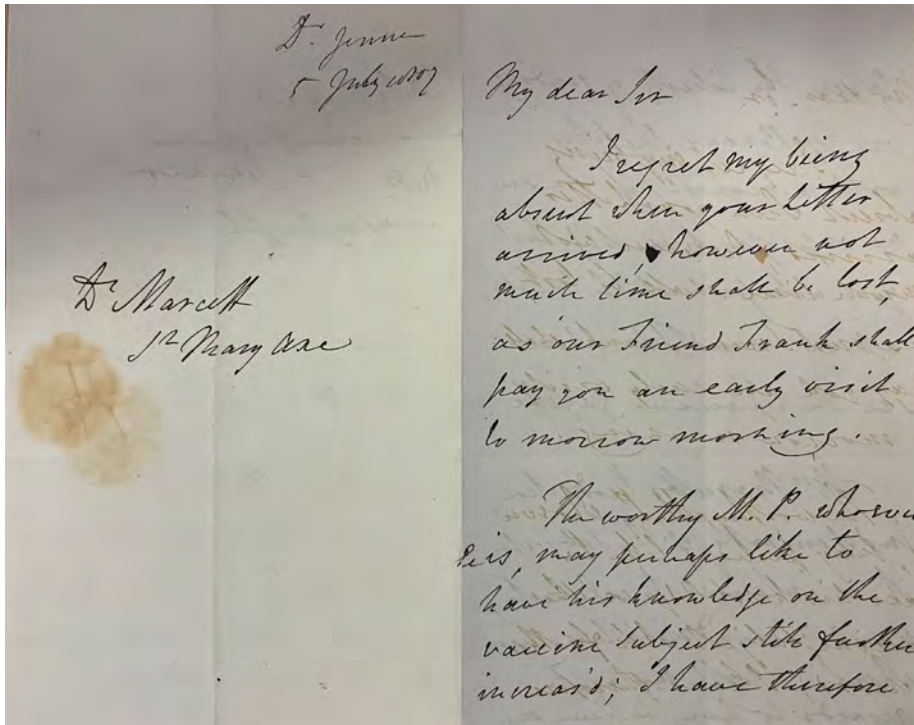
Professor here -
Truly Yours
E Jenner



Letter 12

5th July 1807

Jenner discusses a certain MP ('whoever he is') and suggests that he might like to have more knowledge on the vaccine subject.

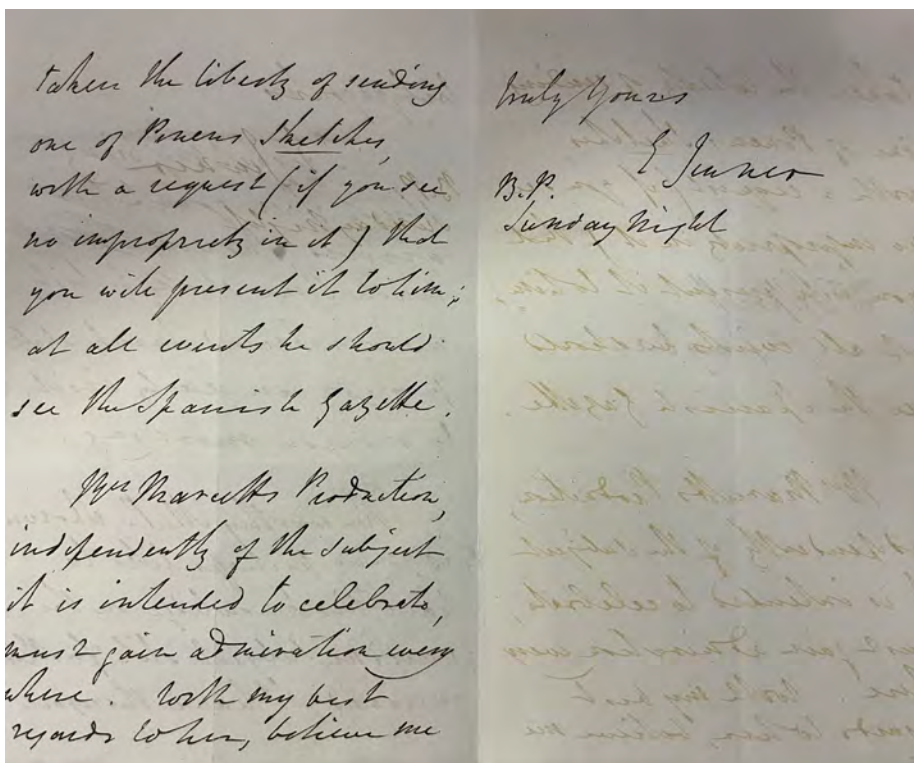


My dear Sir,
I regret(?) my being absent when your letter arrived, however not much time shall be lost, as our Friend Frank(?) shall pay you an early visit tomorrow morning.

The worth M.P., whoever he is(?), may perhaps like to have his knowledge on the vaccine subject still further increas'd; I have therefore taken the liberty of sending one of ***** with a request (if you see no improperness(?) with it) that you will present it to him; at all events(?) he should see the Spanish Gazette.

Mrs Marcett's ***** independently of the subject it is intended to celebrate, must gain admiration every where. With my best regards to her, believe me.

Truly Yours
E. Jenner

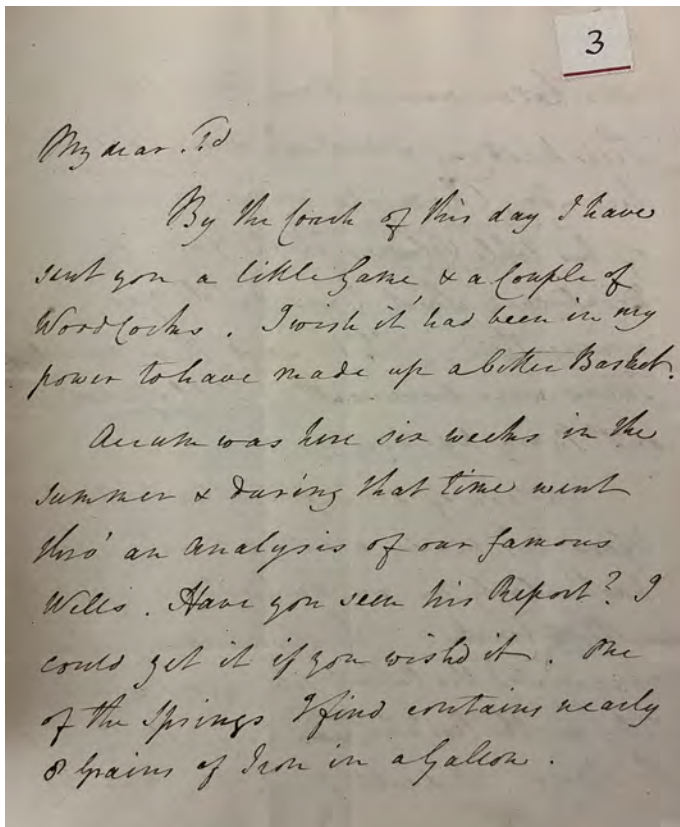


Letter 13

8th December 1807

In the following letter, Edward Jenner notes how a case of smallpox after cowpox 'has made noise lately in town'.

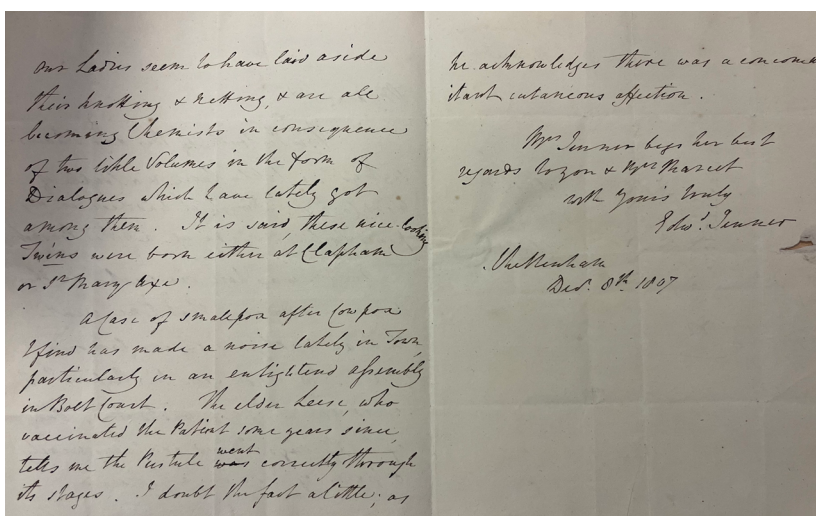
The connection between smallpox and cowpox was key to Jenner's inquiry into vaccination; by observing milkmaids who had contracted cowpox, he was able to witness their immunity from smallpox. As the less fatal disease, Jenner concluded that cowpox could be used to protect against smallpox via vaccination.



Our Ladies(?) seem to have lain aside their knotting & netting, & are all becoming Chemists in consequence of two little(?) volumes in the form of Dialogues which have lately got among them. It is said, these nice looking Twins were born at either Clapham or St Mary Axe.

*A Case of Smallpox after Cowpox I find has made a noise lately in Town particularly in an enlightened assembly in Boet(?) Court. The elder *****, who vaccinated the Patient some years since tells me the Pustule went ***** through its stages. I doubt the fact a little; as he acknowledges there was a ***** it **** cutaneous affection.*

*Mrs Jenner begs her best regards to you & Mrs Marcet
with Yours truly
Edw'd. Jenner*



Letter 14

2nd September 1808

Jenner recalls his daughter's fever. Catherine Jenner (1794 – 1833) was the youngest of Edward Jenner's three children, alongside Edward Robert (1789 – 1810) and Robert Fitzharding (1792 – 1854).

In this letter, Jenner also refers to an article published in the Medical Observer in September of 1808, a copy of which is held in the RSM's collection. The article, titled 'A.Z. on Vaccine Eruptions', poses speculation against the safety of the smallpox vaccine and accuses Jenner of being 'totally ignorant of that which he pretended to teach.'

The print that Jenner mentions in his letter, 'exhibiting four heart's diseas'd by vaccination', is not included in the RSM's edition of the article. What is included, however, is the following 'Note by the Editor': 'It was intended that this communication should be accompanied by a Plate; but in deference to the opinion of friends, the Plate was not inserted.'

My dear Sir

I have suffered a day to slip by unintentionally, without thanking you for your obliging Note.

Thank Heaven my Daughter is better. She has had a Fever which has now pretty well gone through its course. The onset was formidable; & during the three or four first days of the disease, my anxiety was extreme. You are very kind in offering me accommodations at Mr Halidmans, and sh'd circumstances require a closer attendance than at present seems requisite,

I shall gladly accept of them. I sh'd be much gratified with you seeing her, but am fearful w'd I were with you, that it might agitate her.

Present my best regards to Mrs Mansel & to her worthy Father, and believe me dear Sir

Yrs most truly

Edw Jenner

Have you seen that infamous Publication the Medical Observer for the present Month? Mr Birch has decorated it with a Print exhibiting four hearts diseas'd by Vaccination. How easily he might have added a fifth, by giving his own.

When you write, I know he will tell you that I have not been unmindful of my promise respecting the Paper. It has been kept back from no other cause than the tardiness of a person in supplying me with the particulars four of the Cases I intend detailing.

Yr Obedt Servt
Edw Jenner
Sept: 2 1808

Thank Heaven my Daughter is better. She has had a fever which has now pretty well gone through its course. The onset was formidable, & nursing the three or four first days of the disease, my anxiety was extreme. You are very kind in offering me accommodations at Mr Halidmans, and sh'd circumstances require a closer attendance than at present seems requisite, I shall gladly accept of them.

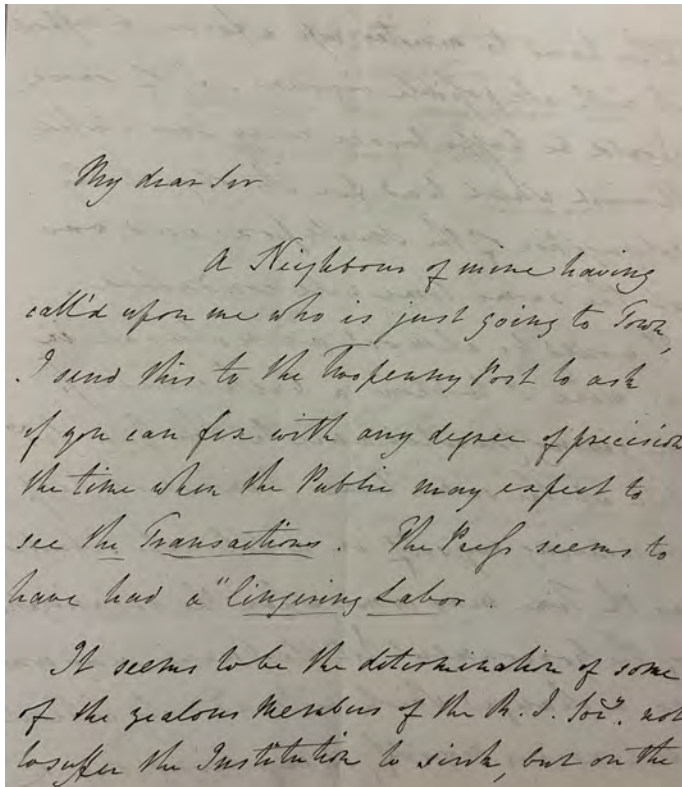
[...]

Have you seen that infamous publication the Medical Observer for the present month? Mr Birch has decorated it with a print exhibiting four heart's diseas'd by vaccination. How easily he might have added a fifth, by giving his own.

Letter 11

12th June 1809

Jenner describes his dissonance with a medical society – and how certain members of this society are 'jealous'.

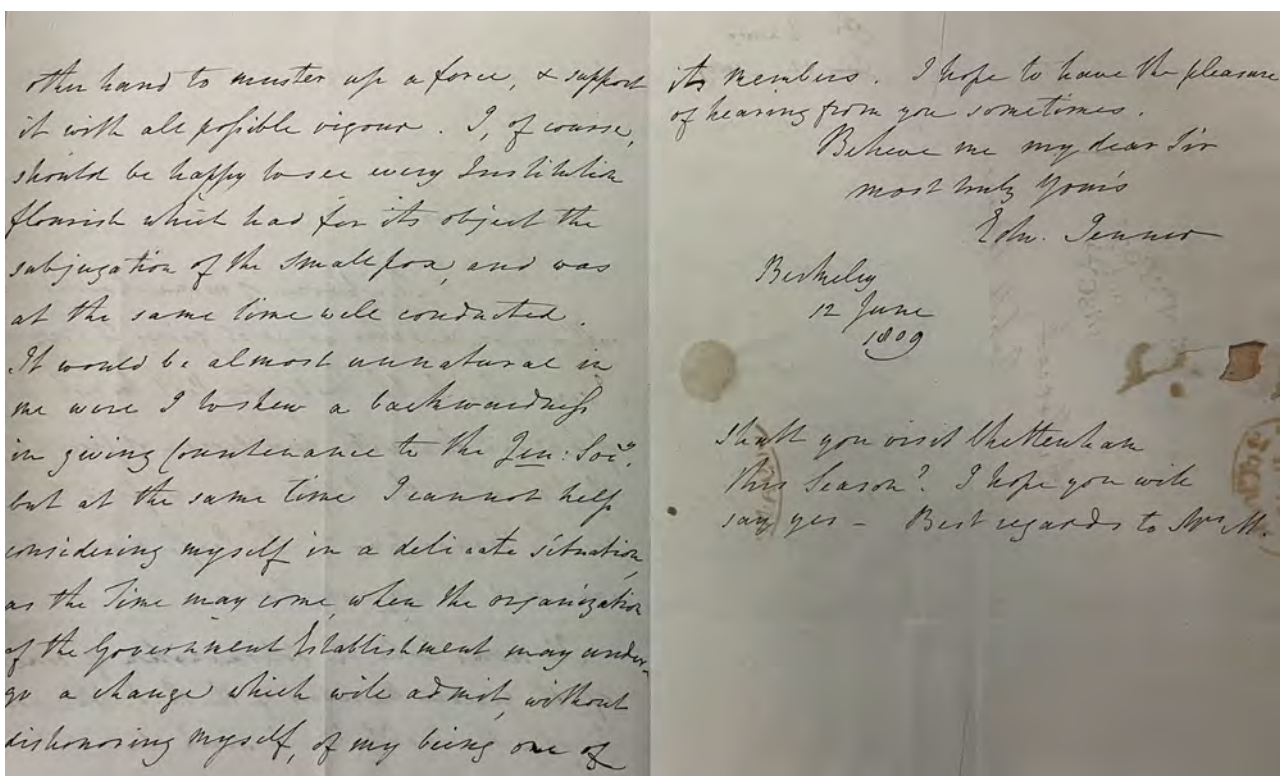


My dear Sir

A Neighbor of mine having call'd upon me who is just going to Town, I send this to the Post by way of asking if you can fix with any degree of precision the time when the Public may expect to see the Transactions. The Prof. seems to have had a "lingering Labor".

It seems to be the determination of some of the jealous members of the A.S. Socy, not to suffer the Institution to sink, but on the

It seems to be the determination of some of the jealous members of the ***** (R. *** Soc.y), not to suffer the Institution to sink, but on the / Other hand to master up a force, & support it with all possible vigour. I, of course should be happy to see every ***** (Institution?) flourish which had for its object the subjugation of the Smallpox, and was at the same time well conducted. It would be almost unnatural in me were I to shew a backwardness in giving Countenance to the *** Soc.y, but at the same time I cannot help considering myself in a delicate situation as the time may come when the organization of the Government Establishment may under go a change which will admit, without dishonouring myself, of my being one of its members. I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you sometimes.



Other hand to master up a force, & support it with all possible vigour. I, of course, should be happy to see every Institution flourish which had for its object the subjugation of the Smallpox, and was at the same time well conducted. It would be almost unnatural in me were I to shew a backwardness in giving Countenance to the Jen: Socy, but at the same time I cannot help considering myself in a delicate situation as the time may come when the organization of the Government Establishment may under go a change which will admit, without dishonouring myself, of my being one of its members. I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you sometimes.

Believe me my dear Sir
most truly Yrs
J. Jenner

Bath
12 June
1809

Should you visit the theatre in this season? I hope you will say yes - Best regards to Mrs M.

Letter 16

25th July 1813

Jenner has been elected an honorary member of the Geological Society, and recalls to Dr Marcet his experiences with mineralogy. He also says that he was going to inquire into the origin of tumors in the liver, but could not, due to his ill health.

Brookley July 25
1813

My dear Sir

I have long been wishing to convince the Geological Society of the estimation in which I hold the honor they confer upon me in electing me an honorary member, not by words merely, but by sending some of the mineral productions of my own Neighbourhood. There certainly is a great variety; but so scanty is my knowledge of mineralogy, that I know not how to describe them to you; and shall therefore only mention at present one of the most conspicuous. There is a Rock about three miles south of this place which for time immemorial has been worked principally for the purpose of repairing the Roads. For many years past, it

has attracted my attention, and I imagine from its contents that it is what has been called under the term "Amygdaloid". It is not stratified; but breaks into vast irregular masses, the general character of which is dark & compact but frequently spotted with white. It is here & there cellular & I find masses of green stone interspersed for the most part soft & disposed to crumble. Embedded in the hardest parts of the Rock are pebbles of various kinds, (some like the Scotch) Jasper, Cornelian, Amethyst & Agates of various kinds. Some of the round lumps contain a white substance, which is soft to the touch & compressible - without any regularity of form - not much unlike touch wood but whiter. - Not far from this spot are limestone Rocks communicating with those which run thro' the town of ^{Worcester} Somerset & of a similar quality to those of Monmouth & Herefordshire from which they appear to have been separated by the formation of the River Severn. The Minerals
& 2u: Asbestos?

My dear Sir

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Letter 16

25th July 1813

differs exceedingly in size, shape & quality. With regard to size, there is every gradation from that of a grain of sand to two feet or more in diameter.

A few miles further to the south, there are irregular Rocks composed of parts cemented together, in every respect similar (as far as I have been capable of making the comparison) to the Rocks of Gibraltar, except that I have not yet found bone to be a component part.

To the east & westward of these, the Rocks appear to be made up of the same materials as those fragments brought from France, & used for the purpose of grinding in our Mills. I shall postpone for the present saying anything of the organic remains which are scattered over this part of the County. Some specimens & an account of the stratum of black bones I suspect had already been presented to the Society.

I hoped to have seen you in Town long before this time, & to have shewn you the result of my

Inquiries into the origin of Tumors & scirrhosities of the Liver, but have been prevented by a variety of causes the chief of which I am sorry to tell you has been ill health. My Medical Friends tell me my indisposition arises from Dyspepsia. It may be so, but my symptoms frequently lead me

Edw Jenner
July 25th 1813

DUREEY
Penny Post

to Marcet
M. D.
Chapel Lane
London

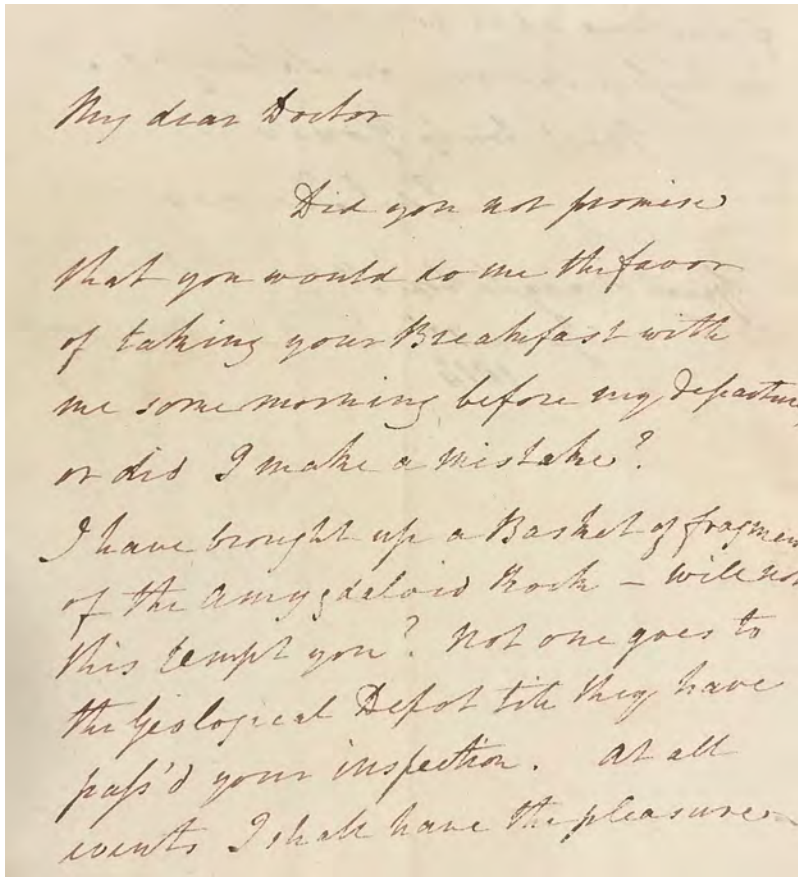
to doubt the accuracy of their decision. If you think any of the minerals I have mentioned worth sending to Town, pray tell me whether it would be proper for me to pay the Carriage & how I must proceed. Make my best Comps. to Mrs Marcet & believe me with greatest regard very truly yours
Edw Jenner

I hoped to have seen you in Town long before this time, & to have shewn you the result of my Inquiries into the origin of Tumors & ***** of the Liver, but have been prevented by a variety of causes, the chief of which I am sorry to tell you has been ill health. My Medical Friends tell me my indisposition arises from Dyspepsia(?). It may be so, but my symptoms frequently lead me to doubt the accuracy of their decision. If you think any of the mineral I have mentioned worth sending to Town, pray tell me whether it would be proper for me to pay the Carriage & how I must proceed. Make my best comps. to Mrs Marcet & believe me with greatest regard very truly yours Edw. Jenner
Dr Marcet

Letter 17

1st June 1814

An invite from Jenner to Dr Marcet requesting breakfast together - as well as an offer of an amygdaloid rock (to be put in the Geological Depot following Dr Marcet's inspection).



My dear Doctor,

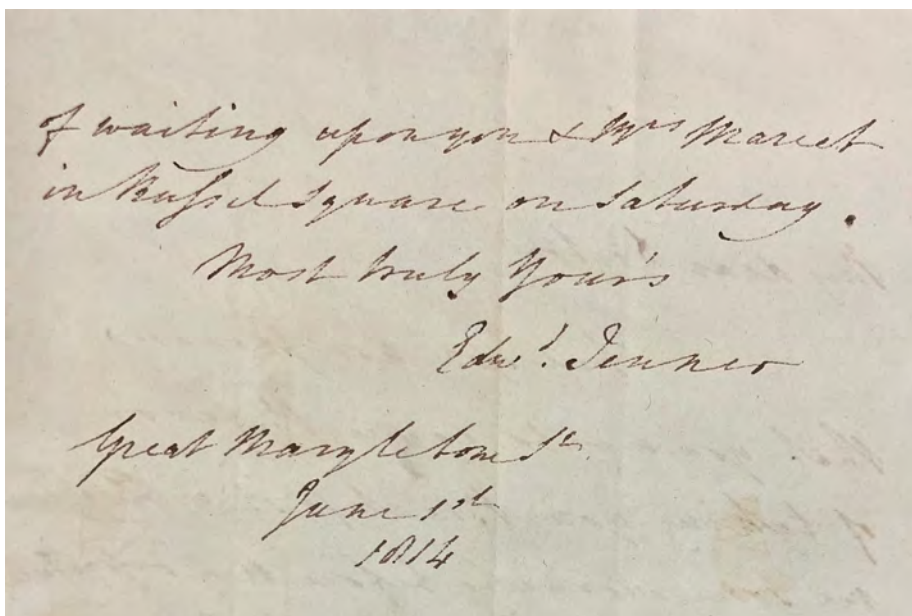
Did you not promise that you would do me the favor of taking your Breakfast with me some morning before my departure, or did I make a mistake?

I have brought up a Basket of fragments of the Amygdaloid Rock - will not this tempt you? Not one goes to the Geological Depot till they have pass'd your inspection.

At all events I shall have the pleasure of waiting upon you & Mrs Marcet in Russell Square on Saturday.

Most truly yours

Edw Jenner.



Letter 18

June 1814

An update on Edward Jenner's geological 'fragments' as detailed in letter #17. Jenner also postpones his visit, and makes mention of 'that flaming diamond, Mr Worlaston'.

in reply
One word, my dear Doctor, to
your kind note. I cannot go to
the Geological Soc.y tomorrow owing
to an engagement at Lord Egremont's
but shall certainly bring my fragments
to your House on Saturday, where
I shall be proud to meet that flaming
Diamond, Mr Worlaston. I sh'd like
to meet you at the concert & have taken
a ticket but am fearful I cannot get
away in time & shall therefore transfer
it to a F.d? - Have you made out
the phosphoric business? We must not

One word, my dear Doctor in reply to your kind note. I cannot go to the Geological Soc.y tomorrow owing to an engagement at Lord Egremont's but shall certainly bring my fragments to your House on Saturday, where I shall be proud to meet that flaming Diamond, Mr Worlaston. I sh'd like to meet you at the Concert & have taken a ticket but am fearful I cannot get away in time & shall therefore transfer it to a F.d(? - Friend?). Have you made out the ***** business? We must not forget to shew the **** to Dr W.

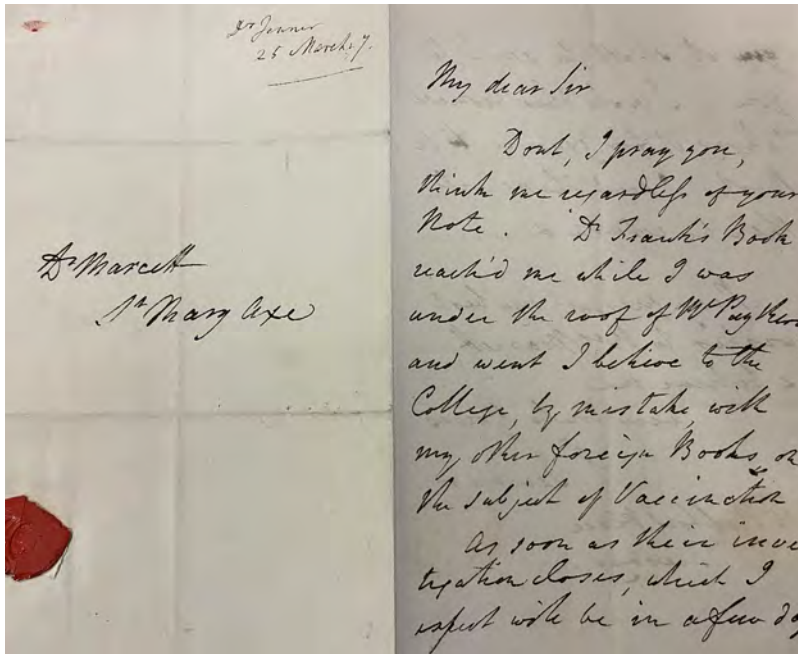
With kindest Comps(?) to Mrs Marcet.
Most truly Yrs
Edw.d Jenner

forget to shew the fact to Dr W.
With kindest Comps to Mrs Marcet,
most truly Yrs
Edw. Jenner
Thursday
night
There is a loud cry for an engraving
of Mrs Marcet's ingenious compliment.
How shall we bring this about?

Letter 8

25th March 1817

Edward Jenner reassures Alexander Marcet that he will send a series of books to him (belonging to Dr Frank).

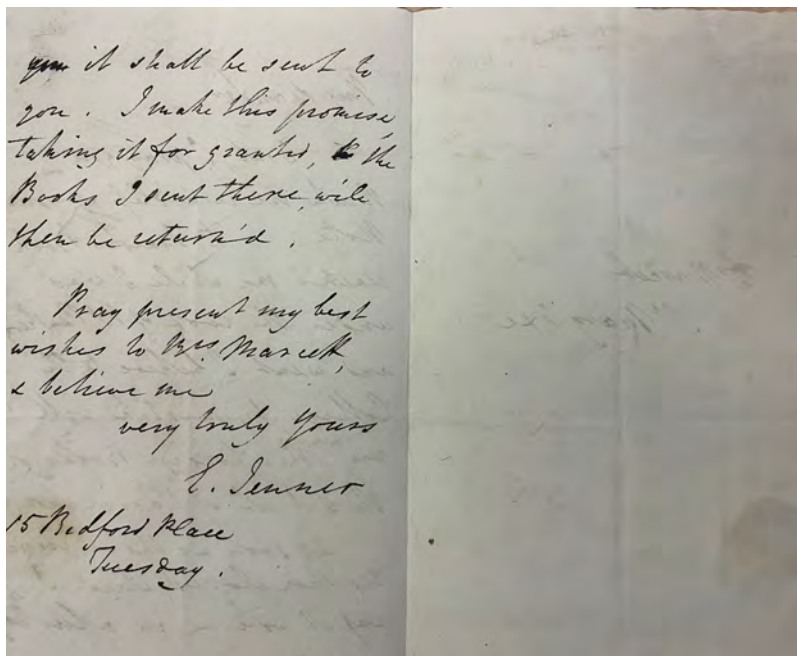


Mr dear Sir,
Don't, I pray you, think me un****(regardless?) of your note. Dr ****(Frank's?) Book ****(reach'd?) me while I was under the roof of Mr **** ***** (Paytherus?), and went I believe to the College, by mistake with my other foreign books on the subject of vaccination.

As soon as their ****(?) ****(together?) closes, which I expect will be in a few days it shall be ****(sent?) to you.

I make this promise taking it for ****(granted?), the Books I sent there will then be return'd.

Pray present my best wishes to Mrs Marcet, & believe me
Very truly yours
E. Jenner



you it shall be sent to you. I make this promise taking it for granted, & the Books I sent there will then be return'd.

Pray present my best wishes to Mrs Marcet, & believe me
very truly Yours
E. Jenner
15 Bedford Place
Tuesday.

Letter 4 Unknown ('Sunday noon')

Edward Jenner reports to Alexander Marcet that he has never had a failure in his vaccine investigations. He also queries into the state of vaccination in Germany, Italy and elsewhere.

S^r Mary Ape - Sunday noon

My dear Sir

I came here this morning to reply to you in Person, & am sorry that finding you at home.

I am not conscious of ever having had a failure among my vaccine inoculations and therefore requested my S^r Mr Paytherus to say so to the Committee Friday evening. If it was the case of a child of Mr Bodington that could have been alluded to, that was satisfactorily explained to Dr Croft some years ago. It seems, an Apothecary in the Country inoculated this child with variolous matter, after I had inoculated

I am not conscious of ever having had a failure among my vaccine inoculations and therefore requested my xx Mr Paytherus(?) to say so to the Committee Friday evening. If it was the case of a child of Mr Bodington that could have been alluded to, that was satisfactorily explained to Dr Croft some years ago. It seems an apothecary in the Country inoculated this child with variolous matter, after I had inoculated it in xxx with the vaccine, & having produced variolous matter from his puncture(?) foolishly supposed he had given it the smallpox. Two pimples were likewise xxxxxx perceived on the inoculated arm or Breast, xxxxxxxx.

it in Town with the Vaccine, & having produced variolous matter from his puncture foolishly supposed he had given it the smallpox. Two Pimples were likewise perceived on the inoculated arm or Breast, & forget that.

As this, on investigation from your age, by Dr Croft, turned out a false alarm, I submit it to you incidentally whether it may be worth while to revise it.

Knowing how extensively you correspond with the scientific on various parts of the Continent, will you allow me to request of you to obtain Reports of the present state of Vaccination, different parts of Germany, Italy, &c &c.

Believe me, dear Sir,
Yours very truly
E Jenner

Would be happy to see you or hear from you. I shall leave Town Wed. or Thursday -

Exhibition Curators

Siubhan Brew

Polly Clint

Siobhan Levesley

Frances Paine

Lilian Ryan

Contact us

library@rsm.ac.uk

020 7290 2940

Exhibition hours

Monday - Thursday: 9:30am - 6:00pm

Friday: 9:30am - 5:30pm

Saturday - Sunday: Closed

