



# Quarantined: Life and Death at William Head Station, 1872-1959

*Peter Johnson*

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Vancouver Island in the late nineteenth century was a major port of entry for people from all walks of life. But for many, the sense of hope that had sustained them through rough sea voyages came to an abrupt halt as soon as they reached land. *Quarantined* is the heart-wrenching true story of the thousands of forgotten people who arrived on our shores only to be felled by disease, in an era when medical care was unsophisticated at best and attitudes toward the poor and the sick were often narrow minded. It is about the struggle to establish a federally funded quarantine station, which, when it was finally established, became as significant and as longstanding as Grosse Ile in Quebec, Lawlor's Island in Halifax, and Ellis Island in New York.

At its core *Quarantined* is a cautionary tale about the exploitation of the sick and the results of government neglect and lack of commitment to pressing national health-care issues affecting the poor and disenfranchised. It is a story that has as much relevance today as it did more than a hundred years ago.

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