

John Pitcairn

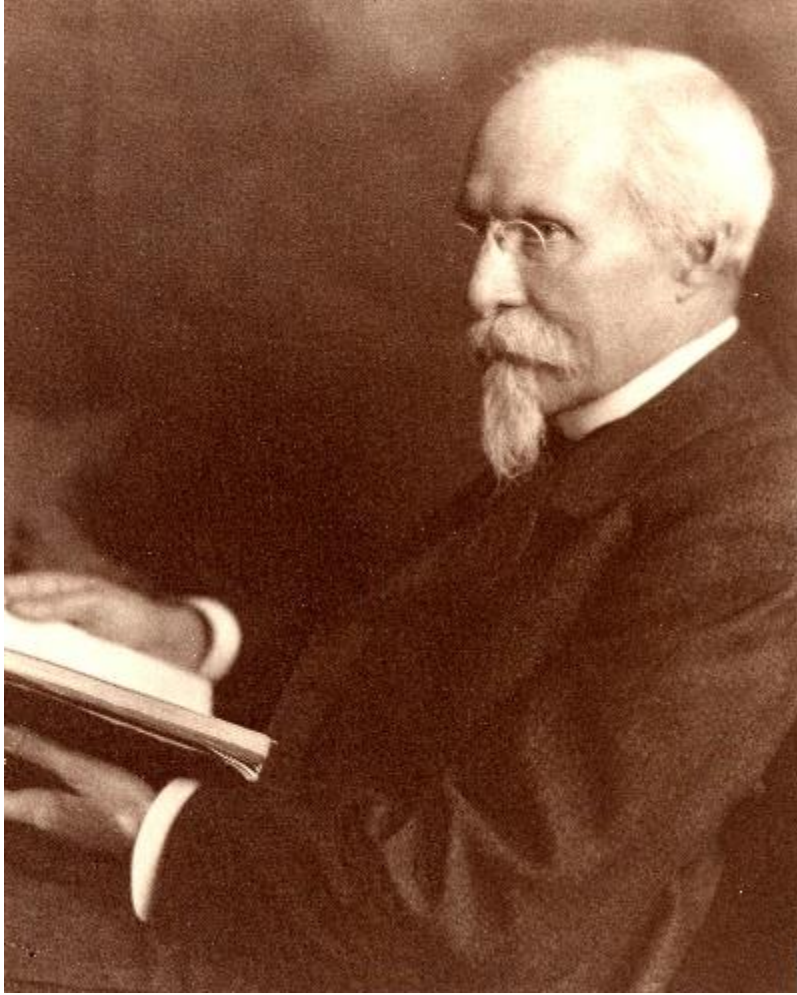
[\[back\] Smallpox Vaccine critics](#)

[Born in Scotland, January 10, 1841. Died at Bryn, Athyn, Pennsylvania, July 22, 1916. President of [The Anti-Vaccination League of America](#) when it was organized in Philadelphia, on October 21, 1908. During the last ten years of his life, Mr. Pitcairn was to a great extent the guiding spirit of the anti-vaccination movement in America. It would be impossible to chronicle his activities in its behalf without writing a voluminous history. In 1908 Mr. Pitcairn made possible by his liberality a National Anti-Vaccination Conference, which held its sessions in Griffith Hall, Philadelphia, on October 19, 20 and 21 of that year, and which led to the organization of The Anti-Vaccination League of America. To The Ladies Home Journal for May, 1910, he contributed an article on '[The Fallacy of Vaccination](#)' which has reached several million readers. On December 1, 1911, he was appointed by Governor Tener a member of the Pennsylvania State Vaccination Commission, and in this capacity on March 12, 1913, he rendered his report, which is a clear, scholarly and readable contribution to the literature of anti-vaccination. [ref](#)]

[LIFE SKETCH OF JOHN PITCAIRN](#)

Article/booklet:

[\[1911\] The Fallacy Of Vaccination By John Pitcairn](#)





"First came what was called "arm-to-arm vaccination." This consisted of inoculation with pus from the sore of a vaccinated person. Then it was arm-to-arm vaccination that became "one of the best established of medical facts" and "highly salutary to the human race." But, alas, for this improvement! Its continued practice brought the discovery that scrofula, tuberculosis, and even worse diseases latent in the constitution of the subject from whom the vaccine virus was taken, were being sown among the people.²² The growing doubt and agitation in the public mind finally led in England to the appointment of a Royal Commission -- to investigate the subject. This Commission, of which Lord Herschell was chairman, was in session for seven years -- from 1889 to 1896 -- and received the testimony of experts from all parts of the civilized world. Its report is comprised in fourteen folio volumes and constitutes the most exhaustive collection of medical evidence ever taken.²³ Though out of the sixteen members of the Commission only three were anti-vaccinists yet the result of its investigation was the passage by Parliament of the "Conscience Clause" of the Vaccination Acts. This clause, passed in 1898, exempted from vaccination the children of parents who declared a conscientious objection to the practice. England, the birthplace of vaccination, after a century of experience of its disastrous effects, thus freed her people from its enforcement.²⁴ The testimony taken before the

Commission not only caused the enactment of the Conscience Clause, it proved also the death blow of arm-to-arm vaccination."---- [John Pitcairn](#)

"The cow, infected with horse-grease, was in its turn to give this horse-grease cowpox to a human being."---- [John Pitcairn](#)

