**William Bradford on Sickness Among the Natives (1633)**

I am not to relate some strange and remarkable passages. There was a company of people [who] lived in the country, up above in the river of Congtecut [Connecticut], a great way from their trading house there, and were enemies to those Indians which lived about them, and of whom they stood in some fear of being a stout people. About a thousand of them had enclosed themselves in a fort, which they had strongly palisaded about. 3 or 4. Dutch men went up in the beginning of winter to live with them, to get their trade, and prevent them for bringing it to the English, or to fall into amity with them; but at spring to bring all down to their place. But their enterprise failed, for it pleased God to visit these Indians with a great sickness, and such a mortality that of a 1000. above 900. and a half of them died, and many of them did rot above ground for want of burial, and the Dutch men almost starved before they could get away because of the ice and snow. But about Feb: they got with much difficulty to their trading house; whom they kindly relieved, being almost spent with hunger and cold. Being thus refreshed by them diverse days, they got their own place, and the Dutch were very thankful for this kindness.

This spring, also those Indians that lived about their trading house there fell sick of the small pox and died most miserably; for a sorer disease cannot befall them; they fear it more then the plague; for usually they that have this disease have them in abundance, and for want of bedding and lining and other helps, they fall into lamentable condition, as they lie on their hard mats, the pox breaking and mattering, and running one into another, their skin cleaving (by reason thereof) to the mats they lie on; when they turn them, a whole side will flee at once, (as it were) and they will be all of a gore blood, most fearful to behold; and then being very sore, what with cold and other distempers, they die like rotten sheep. The condition of this people was so lamentable, and they fell down so generally of this disease, as they were (in the end) not able to help one another; no, not to make a fire, not to fetch a little water to drink, now any to bury the dear; but would strive as long as they could, and when they could procure no other means to make fire, they would burn the wooden trays and dishes they are their meat in, and their very bows and arrows; and some would crawl out on all four to get a little water, and some times die by the way, and not be able to get in again. But those of the English house, (though at first they first they were afraid of the infection,) yet seeing their woeful and sad condition, and hearing their pitiful cries and lamentations, they had compassion of them, and daily fetched them wood and water, and made them fires, got them victuals whilst they lived, and buried them when they died. For very few of them escaped, notwithstanding they did what they could for them, to the hazard of them selves. The chief Sachem him self now died, and almost all his friends and kindred. But by the marvelous goodness and providence of God not one of the English was so much as sick, or in the least measure tainted with this disease, thought they daily did these offices for them for many weeks together. And this mercy which they showed them was kindly taken, and thankfully acknowledged of all the Indians that knew or heard of the same; and their mrs. here did much commend and reward them for the same.