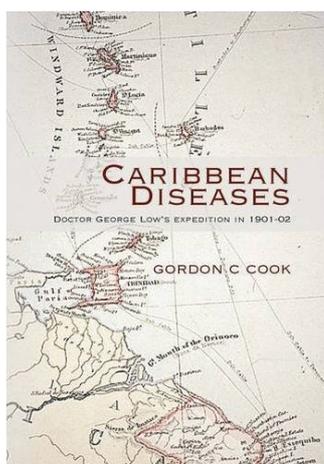




## Caribbean Diseases: Doctor George Low's Expedition in 1901-02

Gordon C Cook. Published by [Radcliffe Publishing](#), 2009. ISBN-13: 9781846193453. Contains 238 pages. Price £65

George Carmichael Low (1872–1952), following a distinguished undergraduate and early post-graduate career, joined Dr (later Sir) Patrick Manson in 1899, in the newly-founded London School of Tropical Medicine.



In 1901–02, at the height of his research powers, Low undertook a demanding tour of the Caribbean where he made important contributions to the understanding of the filariases and assisted in malaria eradication. He contributed significantly to disease prevention strategies, not then widely appreciated and often resisted.

Low kept Manson well-informed of his work in the Caribbean islands. In his book, *Caribbean Diseases*, Gordon C Cook gives a remarkably detailed analysis of 31 letters Low wrote to Manson that record Low's epidemiological observations and work sectioning mosquitoes to delineate life-cycles.

The letters paint a picture of a man, with unbridled energy, unravelling the mysteries of disease transmission. Letters 25–28 give his accounts of an outbreak of severe jaundice at Castries, St Lucia. Not yet 30 years old and inexperienced in disease prevention, Low showed remarkable maturity in the measures he introduced. Was it malignant malaria (*P. falciparum*) or yellow fever? Low's careful analysis showed clear evidence that this outbreak involved both malaria and yellow fever. These letters alone make reading the book well-worthwhile.

In addition to the letters, Cook summarises the considerable contributions Low made to scientific knowledge and disease prevention that resulted from his Caribbean experience.

Cook asks the question, 'Why so little is known about George Carmichael Low?' In his lifetime, Low was a towering figure in the field of tropical medicine. However, Cook asks the question: 'Why was Low underrated both then and now?' Living in the shadow of Manson was certainly not helpful. In his book, Cook has done much to right this.

This book will be of interest to historians, especially of tropical medicine, and those seeking inspiration in research.

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