

How Location and Response Influenced the Spread and Containment of Spanish Influenza in
Wisconsin:

Comparing Milwaukee and Eau Claire

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of Spanish Influenza on the cities of Milwaukee and Eau Claire, WI in 1918. The main argument is that Eau Claire fared better than Milwaukee in the epidemic not because of its demographic make-up and geographical location but rather because of the procedures Eau Claire took in order to contain the disease and to prevent the further spread of it. Records from the Eau Claire Department of Health as well as articles within the local newspapers, such as the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* and the Eau Claire *Leader Telegram*, are used to document and gauge the effectiveness of health policies enacted to help curb the spread of the pandemic by both cities during its second wave from September through December 1918.

INTRODUCTION

Influenza is one of the oldest and most deadly diseases in the world. Although often times it is seen as only a mild cold, easily dealt with and recoverable, it can also take the form of an unstoppable killer. The first wave of Spanish influenza emerged in the spring and dissipated by summer of 1918. The first wave was mild in terms of mortality, but it did have a high infection rate and was easily transmitted. It was the second wave in the fall of 1918 that caused the most devastation. Soon after its onset it turned into a killing machine, striking down its victims within 12 to 24 hours. Such an epidemic had not been seen on the face of the earth since the Bubonic Plague of the 14th Century.

Once influenza is contracted the only thing that the patient can do is rest and wait it out. During the outbreak of Spanish Influenza in the fall of 1918 the most commonly prescribed antidotes included fresh air, rest and cold compresses as well as Vicks vapor rub as a remedy for the ailments of those suffering.¹ There were no anti-viral drugs or antibiotics to deal with secondary bacterial infections. Spanish Influenza often began as a cold, an unannounced cumbersome affliction that targeted the young and hearty rather than the stereotypical victims of influenza, being the very young and the very old. The death curve for the pandemic appeared as a w-shape, where the spike were evident for those under 5, then again for those between 20-40 years old and finally spiking again for those between the ages of 70-74.² The highest death rates by age were suffered by those between 25 -34 years.³

¹ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "How to Use Vick's Vaporub in Treating Spanish Influenza," Oct. 18th, 1918.

² Kolata, Gina. *FLU*. New York City: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999. Pg. 5

³ Lyons, Bill, dir. *Secrets of the Dead: Killer Flu*. DVD. N.p.: PBS, 2004.

The impact the flu had on a population has often been attributed to a place being either rural or urban. It has often been viewed that urban areas suffer more than rural areas at times of pandemics and epidemics as they carry higher populations which live in closer confines as compared to the rural areas where the populations are smaller and there is more space for living. It is thought that these conditions often determine the impact of a disease on an area. The impact of the Spanish Influenza pandemic on the United States in 1918 varied regionally. The larger numbers of infected were often located near the origins of the outbreak, in the east, or on the military bases where men were regularly shipped in and out from all over the states. The effects of the pandemic in the midwest were much milder as these areas had more time to prepare for the pandemic which had originated on the east coast.

Transmission within rural areas was often furthered by large crowds in the public sectors, attendance at clubs and lodges as well as direct contact with those already infected. One of the biggest concerns in rural areas was the risk of transmission due to travel – either the traveling of locals to outside areas or the presence of visitors in the area from other places. In contrast, urban transmission of disease was facilitated by overcrowding, living within close vicinities of other people, public transportation systems and shopping centers. Both rural and urban areas experienced an easier transmission of disease in the manufacturing sectors.

The question remains however: Is geography the primary factor explaining the transmission and severity of an epidemic in a given region? In analyzing the impact of the pandemic on Eau Claire and Milwaukee, Eau Claire fared better than Milwaukee in the epidemic not because of its demographic make-up but rather because of the procedures Eau Claire took in order to contain the disease and prevent the further spread of it not only amongst its citizens but also the citizens of other cities and localities.

The earliest published secondary sources on the 1918 pandemic vary in their approach to the crisis. There were medical journals that published articles that mentioned or devoted a chapter to the epidemic of 1918. These articles usually included vital statistics and went over the general medical knowledge of the time and the ways they were implemented in treating the disease. The earliest published report on the subject matter was published in January of 1919, just a month after the decline of the rate of infection. There was a very interesting secondary source entitled, "Causes of Geographical Variations in the Influenza Epidemic of 1918 in the Cities of the United States: Report of the Committee on the Atmosphere and Man."⁴ This source provides information about the climate and compares this information with the rate of infection. It is helpful in that it offers a different way to examine the spread of the pandemic.

The sources that contribute most to our understanding of the pandemic include *The Great Influenza* by John M. Barry.⁵ This book explores the impact of the flu on the United States, from its spread to its impact on localities. Barry also looks at the effect the flu had on human life, particularly the distress of the people. It's useful as it gives a critical perspective on America's response and handling of the epidemic as compared to the rest of the world.

Another source entitled *FLU* by Gina Kolata⁶ delves into a world view of the 1918 epidemic by exploring its impact on other countries and by denoting the speed at which it spread there. The book also explores the origins of the virus itself and onset on the military men of WWI. The book provides important information for my topic as it provides a broad perspective to contrast the national and local ones. This book adds to the information and perspective

⁴ National Research Council (U.S.), et al. "Causes of Geographical Variations in the Influenza Epidemic of 1918 in the Cities of the United States: Report of the Committee on the Atmosphere and Man." [Google Book Search](#). 1923. National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences. 26 Nov. 2008 <<http://books.google.com/books?id=ZZkNGQAACA AJ&dq=influenza+1918&lr=>>.

⁵ Barry, John M. *The Great Influenza*. New York City: The Penguin Group, 2004.

⁶ Kolata, Gina. *FLU*. New York City: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999.

provided by Barry's book. Together they provide a well rounded analysis of the epidemics impact around the world.

America's Forgotten Pandemic by Alfred W. Crosby⁷ addresses the seeming loss of American social memory of the epidemic and also looks at the impact the flu had on American society. He also outlines the spread of the epidemic and the reactions of the government in accord to containing it and identifying its transmission to further prevention efforts. This book also outlines the historical impact of the pandemic and its repercussions on society due to the nature of the infection rate and its victims.

Crosby later revisited the subject matter and wrote a second book on the epidemic, *Epidemic and Peace, 1918*⁸. In this book he explores the rate of infection within different ethnic groups. Crosby explores the effect of the pandemic on the 'native' peoples of America as well as the immigrant populations. Crosby includes varying charts and graphs which display the mortality rates in America from the pandemic. Crosby's books differ from those by Kolata and Barry by focusing specifically on the onset of the epidemic in America as well as the reaction of the U.S. Military. Crosby's books also explore the intrinsic features of the disease that made it distinct from prior pandemics. He provides insight into why the medical field and public reacted the way they did to its unfathomable destruction.

Published in the Wisconsin Historical Society Magazine; Steven Burg's 2000 article entitled "Wisconsin and the great Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918"⁹ depicts the epidemic specifically within the state of Wisconsin. Berg outlines the actions taken by local governments

⁷ Crosby, Alfred W., Jr. *Epidemic And Peace, 1918*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976.

⁸ Crosby, Alfred W. *America's Forgotten Pandemic*. 1976. 2nd ed. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

⁹ Burg, Steven. "Wisconsin and the Great Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918 ." *America: History and Life 2000*: 36-56. *Wisconsin Historical Society*. 10 Oct. 2008 <<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/wmh&CISOPTR=43636&CISOSHOW=43605&REC=1>>.

and state officials to prevent the spread of the flu. The article also provides direct facts about the response time of large cities within the state as well as the actions taken by non-profit organizations. Also found in the article are descriptions by survivors in reference to the impact the flu had on them and their families.

A second regional source is Judith Walzer Leavitt's *The Healthiest City* (1996). It is the most useful secondary source on the impact of the epidemic on the city of Milwaukee. The book focuses on the emergence of public health and policy within Milwaukee. The section on Milwaukee and influenza provides an accurate timeline of local events during the period, and the book provides an excellent analysis of the protocols carried out by the city in response to the epidemic.¹⁰

Finally, an article published by Daniel M. Fox entitled "The Politics of Physicians' Responsibility in Epidemics: A Note on History¹¹," takes a different angle than most historical sources as it approaches the epidemic from a sociological perspective. The article takes a historical look at the evolution of the treatment of epidemics. The author begins back in Italy in 1348 where the beginnings of health policy emerged. The article goes on to discuss the Black Death and other epidemics like Cholera and Yellow Fever. The actions of physicians are also documented. Fox discusses the fleeing of not only aristocrats and the bourgeoisie from areas of outbreaks but also that of the physicians as well. This article delineates the emergence of practices in treating, containing and preventing epidemics.

In summation, the amount of media available on the topic varies and is widely available. The topic of comparing urban and rural responses, however, is limited. The research and

¹⁰ Leavitt, Judith Walzer. "Chapter Seven: The Healthiest City." In *The Healthiest City*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982.

¹¹ Fox, Daniel M. "The Politics of Physicians' Responsibility in Epidemics: A Note on History ." *The Hastings Center Report* Vol. 18.No. 2 (1988): 5-10 .
 JSTOR. UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library. 10 Oct. 2008
 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3562420> >.

information made available within this paper provide an angle less explored in regards to the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918. The authors and media cited above provided essential background information as well as different means to analyze and understand the topic. The primary research for the argument focuses on the newspapers in print at the time within each city. The Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* (between the months of September – December 1918) was chosen for use in analyzing Milwaukee's response to the 1918 Spanish Influenza Pandemic as it was the largest newsprint in the area. The Eau Claire *Leader Telegram* was chosen to analyze Eau Claire's response as it was also the largest media outlet in that area.

The main focus of information on Milwaukee was found within the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* as the Health Board records for Milwaukee lacked sufficient information on the topic. The Eau Claire *Leader Telegram* acted as a supplementary source to the Health Board records of the city as they were full of detailed information about the response of the city to the pandemic of 1918.

The State Board of Health Bulletin was also utilized as a primary source document. Two issues were examined and analyzed to gain a better understanding of the state wide response to the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918. These bulletins included statistics and figures with regards to infection rates between the months of July-September 1918 and October-December 1918. These reports also included the number of reported cases of other infectious disease at the time which aided in gaining a better perspective on the impact this pandemic was having on the state. Other important facts were also found within these reports on the state mandates in effect to curb infection rates in regards to public sanitation. The reports also dispelled the use of 'magic' compounds to ward off the pandemic.

Research for this paper was conducted through the utilization of the archives at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire where the primary source documents for the Health Board of Eau Claire are housed. Microfilm of the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* as well as the Eau Claire *Leader Telegram* between the months of September-December 1918 were also examined and analyzed for content. The highlights archives of the online database of the Wisconsin Historical Society were also utilized. The highlights section had a segment dedicated to the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918 in Wisconsin. The archive offered online access to primary source materials such as the State Board of Health Bulletin.

Each of these avenues and the information contained within them allotted me the necessary materials to conduct a proper comparison of the actions taken by Eau Claire and Milwaukee in regards to the 1918 Spanish Influenza Pandemic. The materials offered vital insights into understanding the differences between a rural response to a pandemic and that of an urban response. The methodologies as well as the cooperation of the public and press were attained through the utilization of these materials.

National Overview

The world in the year 1918 was consumed with World War I. Patriotism seemed to have enveloped the lives of the American citizens. Nothing was more important to them at this time than winning the war and bringing their men back home safely. Everywhere in America one could find front page headlines about the war fronts and about local efforts being conducted by the Red Cross and other volunteer organizations to aid in the war effort. Liberty Loan parades and balls were being put on regularly and the interaction of peoples from all over the nation was inevitable. Not only in America was this occurring but also all around the world. According to Crosby, during the last 6 month period of the war a total of 1.5 million Americans were transported across the oceans to the war fronts in Europe. This set of circumstances created the perfect breeding grounds for the pandemic that would kill more than 25 million people in the world. This pandemic would kill more people within a year's time than there had been in a century of the Bubonic Plague of the 14th C.¹² This pandemic became known as the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918. The origins of the name were a product of the war. Spain had become neutral at the very onset of World War I and so their press was not being censored which allowed them to make the first reports of the pandemic which had afflicted the people of their nation, including their king.

With the war waging in Europe there was little that could be done when the first wave of this flu virus surfaced in Europe. The first wave in Europe, which came at the end of 1917, had a very low mortality rate but the rate of infection was high. It appeared to be similar to that of the normal flu virus. Its effects on those infected were mild and only caused mild suffering to those who contracted it. This first wave [which had eventually spread to America] lasted until the late

¹² Barry, John M. The Great Influenza. New York City: The Penguin Group, 2004. Pg. 5-prologue

end of the summer of 1918. It would not resurface again until mid-September wherein it had taken a new form and had become much more lethal than before.

The first recorded people to have contracted this second wave of the 1918 Spanish Influenza, in America, were 2-3 sailors on Aug. 27th at the Commonwealth Port in Boston, Mass. The rate at which infection spread from these men is astonishing. On the 28th of August there were 8 sick followed by 58 cases on the 29th. There were 81 sick on the 30th and then 106 by the 31st of August. According to Crosby, by the end of the 1st week there were a total of 2000 men listed as being sick from the influenza within the First Naval District in Mass.¹³ This rate of infection shows just how virulent this new version had become. In order for a virus to pose a threat it has to be easily transmitted to another host. This transferability along with its tendencies to attack those in the prime years of their youth and kill them made this virus more lethal than anything seen since the bubonic plague of the 14th Century.

Another major component that made this second wave more dangerous was that the end stage of the infection resulted in death. At first the medical communities were perplexed as to what was killing these young people who had been so healthy prior to the onset of the Spanish Flu. Upon conducting post-mortem examinations the medical community began attributing death to pneumonia. It was purported that Spanish Influenza had made its victims susceptible to secondary infection and that it was pneumonia, rather than Spanish Influenza, that was killing these people. Others within the medical community, especially within the military, did not immediately accept this explanation. Instead they continued to study the bodies of the victims and came upon the discovery that the lungs were sodden with fluid which was unnatural to

¹³ Crosby, Alfred W. *America's Forgotten Pandemic*. 1976. 2nd ed. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 2003

pneumonia victims. The lung tissue of a victim of pneumonia was supposed to appear consolidated.¹⁴ This disease was unlike anything ever encountered before and yet pneumonia continued to be attributed by many as the cause of death rather than Spanish Influenza.

World War I proved to be the facilitator for infection as troop movement continued even though men were infected on the bases. Upwards of 200,000 troops had been afflicted by Spanish Influenza by October 1918 and the option of quarantine had been brought up. The idea of quarantining the military bases, however, was dismissed as the notion of slowing the transport of troops to Europe was unthinkable in a time of war.¹⁵ On Sept. 11th, Washington officials announced to the press that Spanish Influenza was in America and the following day they called for the registration of 13 million men [the majority of whom were at the most susceptible ages for the disease] for the draft. This meant that men would be lining up in large crowds and cramming into small buildings to register their names all over the nation. Crosby listed that that in Boston alone, 96,000 men signed up!¹⁶ These are just a couple of examples that provide insights into how this pandemic was spread not just all over the nation but all over the world as well. Allowing men who had had contact with the ill, but had not become symptomatic themselves, to be transported and moved across the country certainly did not help in containing the pandemic either.

This mass movement of men was a major contributing factor attributed to the beginnings of Spanish Influenza appearing on bases in Louisiana, San Francisco Bay, Puget Sound and

¹⁴ Ibid, 40.

¹⁵ Lyons, Bill, dir. *Secrets of the Dead: Killer Flu*. DVD. N.p.: PBS, 2004.

¹⁶ Ibid, 46.

Camp Lewis in Washington State as well as bases in Georgia all the way to Massachusetts.¹⁷

This military network served to infect the entire nation in a short period of time.

Death rates in America provide an understanding of how significant the mutations to the virus had become between the first wave and second wave of Spanish Influenza of 1918. In the month of August 1918, there were about 2,800 deaths and in September there were about 12,000 deaths. (These statistics do not represent information from areas with over 22 percent of the nation's population.¹⁸). The rise in the number of deaths can be attributed with the transition of America from the first to the second wave of the epidemic. According to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, the national death rate increased from 2 to 7 percent per the U.S. Census Bureau.¹⁹

The American government and medical community did finally stop and take notice of the increasing vulnerability of the nation to the spread of this pandemic, especially after the disease began afflicting Washingtonians themselves. On Sept. 26th 1918, the U.S. Government appropriated 1 million dollars to fund a fight against this new and deadly disease. To better conceptualize what this money meant to the cause we must note that the United States Public Health System's total budget per year was only 3 million dollars at that time.²⁰ These new funds would be directed for use in educating citizens all over America, especially in rural areas where the physicians knew very little about this new pandemic or how dangerous it was. It was noted within many articles of both the *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*²¹ and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* [WI-newspapers] that many physicians felt this flu was nothing special.²²

¹⁷ Ibid, 48.

¹⁸ Ibid, 47-48.

¹⁹ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "FLU has raised death rate to 7 percent," Oct. 18th, 1918.

²⁰ Crosby, Alfred W. *America's Forgotten Pandemic*. 1976. 2nd ed. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 52.

²¹ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, "Same Old Grippe is in our Midst, but no Epidemic," Oct. 3rd, 1918.

²² *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Dies of Pneumonia," September 21st, 1918.



Figure 1 Example of disregard of Spanish Influenza by physicians per the Eau Claire Leader Telegram

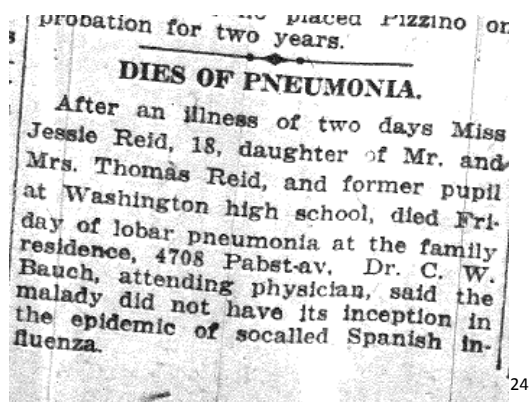


Figure 2 Example of disregard of Spanish Influenza by physicians per the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The government appointed some of their specially allocated fund towards organizing large campaigns with posters and pamphlets printed to disseminate information to the masses in hopes of educating them about the Pandemic and the means to fight it. The U.S. Government also began implementing federal standards of reactionary steps for states to take in response to the pandemic in order to help contain and treat the disease. These federal regulations were sent to the state capitals and were to then to be forcefully implemented in all counties of each state. This task did prove arduous in some cases as some states had little to no organized system of health.²⁵

²³ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, "Same Old Grippe is in our Midst, but no Epidemic," Oct. 3rd, 1918.

²⁴ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Dies of Pneumonia," September 21st, 1918.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 49-50.

Wisconsin and Influenza

The second wave of the 1918 Spanish Influenza Pandemic hit Wisconsin in September and began to disappear by the end of December 1918. Over the span of these three months Wisconsin had over 103,000 cases of Spanish Influenza reported. Of those infected, 8,459 were reported to have died of it.^{26 27} The Wisconsin State Board of Health was so taken aback by the death rate of this disease as well as the harm it caused the people of the state, that it noted the pandemic as being the most “disastrous calamity that has ever been visited upon the people of Wisconsin.” The pandemic of Influenza was worse than any other outbreak of disease in the state, including cholera.²⁸

The first cases of Spanish Influenza were reported in the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* on September 16th 1918 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The pandemic had been brought into Wisconsin by a Great Lakes freight boat sailor and a ‘Jack’ from the Great Lakes Naval Station. The ‘Jack’ was in town up from the base (located just outside of Chicago) visiting family when he became ill. By the end of the following week there would be about 100 reported cases in the city as well as the first reported deaths.²⁹

The next major city to suffer from the pandemic was Madison, Wisconsin. Initially reports of Spanish Influenza had been downplayed by the politicians and the University. It was

²⁶ http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/highlights/archives/2006/01/the_worst_flu_s.asp "The Worst Flu Season in Wisconsin History." *Wisconsin Historical Society Highlights Archives*. 30 Jan. 2006. 14 Oct. 2008 <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/highlights/archives/2006/01/the_worst_flu_s.asp>

²⁷ It is important to note that a lot of physicians, especially in rural areas, did not understand the ‘Spanish Influenza’ nor did they accept that their patients had it. Many times deaths were attributed to pneumonia

²⁸ Wisconsin . State Board of Health . "Influenza Facts." *State Board of Health Bulletin*. Vol. 3. Madison: Office of the State Board of Health , 1918. 4-8. *Wisconsin Historical Society Digital Collections*. 3 Mar. 2009 <<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/tp&CISOPTR=15555&REC=1>>.

²⁹ “Influenza Wave Reaches Here” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Sept. 25th

not until the first death occurred on the military base within Madison that it was finally acknowledged that the pandemic had begun.³⁰ From here the Pandemic spread inland, along highways and waterways. Soon there were cases reported in Green Bay and Eau Claire. For those in the northern areas of the state, there was nothing that could be done but watch and wait.³¹

Wisconsin, like the rest of the northern Midwestern states fared better overall than most of the U.S. Yet Wisconsin still suffered more than its neighboring states such as Minnesota and Michigan. Wisconsin was still able, however, to manage the epidemic better than most states due to the organization of its State Board of Health and the promptness of its instigation of preemptive measures in reaction to the impending pandemic. The state formed a solid response to the epidemic which was to be followed by each county. This response included mandating the closure of schools, theatres, and other public places. The response also mandated prohibiting meetings of clubs and other organizations that would require people massing together.³² The only exemption to this specific mandate was for the war work meetings held by the Red Cross.³³

³⁰ Burg, Steven. "WISCONSIN AND THE GREAT SPANISH FLU EPIDEMIC OF 1918. ." 8. *America: History and Life*. 2000: 36-56. *Wisconsin Historical Society*. 10 Oct. 2008 <<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/wmh&CISOPTR=43636&CISOSHOW=43605&REC=1>>.

³¹ *ibid*

³² *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, "15 Influenza Cases; Schools and Theaters Close Today...", Oct. 11th, 1918.

³³ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, "Ban on Meetings Doesn't Prevent Red Cross Work," Oct. 11th, 1918.

Milwaukee and Influenza

The Health Department of Milwaukee lacked organizational structure and manpower to deal with the catastrophic effects that the great Spanish Flu pandemic would bring. The internal administration of the Health Department, for example, did not have a reactionary plan to counter the extreme effects the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918. The majority of the containment and education work fell upon outside organizations and volunteers which included the Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis Association, the Red Cross, the Great Lakes bases as well as the teachers and other volunteers from the city.³⁴

The first sign that the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918 had reached the area surrounding Milwaukee came when the first two cases of the disease manifested within the city on September 16th 1918. The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* ran a headline stating, “New Disease in Milwaukee.” The article reported that two men were taken ill within the city and were sent to receive care at the hospital. The first of these was a Great Lakes freight boat sailor, D. Henderson, aged 27yrs. The other was a ‘Jack’ from the Great Lakes Naval Station, Vernon Stacy, aged 26 yrs. The ‘jack’ was in town up from the base (located just outside of Chicago) visiting family when he became ill.³⁵

The onset of the disease within the city of Milwaukee in September of 1918 led Health Commissioner George C. Ruhland to begin taking measures to halt its spread. This proved to be a hard task for Ruhland to begin tackling as Influenza was not classified as a reportable disease

³⁴ Leavitt, Judith Walzer. “Chapter Seven: The Healthiest City.” In *The Healthiest City*, 234 Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982.

³⁵ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “New Disease in Milwaukee,” Sept. 16th, 1918.

by law. This made it extremely difficult for Ruhland to gain an accurate understanding of how many people were infected and to what extent the disease had spread across the city during the beginning stages of the pandemic.³⁶

Ruhland's first action towards containment and prevention policy came in the form of a request on September 18th 1918. Ruhland sent word to the commanding officers of the Great Lakes Army and Naval bases requesting they maintain the already in effect quarantine as well as prohibit any visits to the city of 'jacks.' The base responded to the commissioner stating that although they did have the pandemic under control, that in all likelihood they would abide by Ruhland's request.³⁷

The military stations on the Great Lakes (located outside of Chicago) at this time were dealing with 1,400 ill men along with 200 reported deaths resulting from the Spanish Influenza pandemic. The very first reported death within the city of Milwaukee was that of Elmer M. J alas. J alas was 'Jack' from the Great Lakes base that took ill during a visit to the city and died shortly after. The initial reaction of Ruhland was to contain the disease and prevent the 'jacks' from bringing it further into the city and spreading it as the origins of the pandemic within Milwaukee were implicitly linked to the Great Lakes stations.³⁸

Ruhland also sought to find a way of maintaining a record of those ill with the pandemic within Milwaukee in order to gain an understanding as to what extent the city was being affected by the Spanish Influenza Pandemic. On Sept. 26th, Ruhland made a request to the local attending physicians to report any cases of Spanish Influenza as well as Pneumonia that they encounter. In the hopes of making this request more feasible, Ruhland provided postcards to the physicians made specifically for reporting cases of Spanish Influenza and Pneumonia. In a statement to the

³⁶ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Reported Dead of Influenza," Sept. 17th, 1918.

³⁷ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Spanish Influenza May Stop "Shore Leave""", Sept. 18th, 1918. MJS pg. 1

³⁸ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Influenza Wave Reaches Here," Sept. 25th, 1918.

press (*Journal Sentinel*) Ruhland stated that the “situation is not at all alarming at present and the steps we are now taking are simply to prevent its becoming so.” Ruhland also requested of the public to use handkerchiefs in the event of sneezing or coughing as well as to avoid ‘expectorating’ on the sidewalks and other public buildings in order to curb the spread of the disease to others.³⁹

The next step taken by Ruhland was to call for a conference of city physicians and himself on September 28th in order to discuss added precautionary measure to be taken by the city in defense of Spanish Influenza and Pneumonia.⁴⁰ This panel of physicians, along with Ruhland, determined that Spanish Influenza and the old familiar grip were the same thing.⁴¹ This decision was accurate to some extent as Spanish Influenza was a form of the general gripe except that it had mutated and had now become much more lethal. What was not understood was that it was not the same old pneumonia that was killing these people; rather it was Spanish Influenza itself.⁴²

Another step taken by Ruhland was in the dissemination of posters to the local businesses by request, which provided information about preventative measures to take against Spanish Influenza as well as procedures for proper treatment of the disease.⁴³ Around the same time as the poster campaign the pandemic had progressed into affecting larger numbers of the population of Milwaukee. Ruhland attributed this difficulty in curbing the spread of the pandemic as contributable to the lack of proper medications and the shortage in the number of needed

³⁹ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Report Cases of Influenza,” Sept. 26th, 1918.

⁴⁰ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “To Confer on Spanish Influenza Fight,” Sept. 28th, 1918.

⁴¹ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “‘Flu’ Is The Grip,” Oct. 1st, 1918.

⁴² Devitt, Terry. “Scientists isolate genes that made 1918 flu lethal.” *UW - Madison News* 29 Dec. 2008. 2 Mar. 2009 <<http://www.news.wisc.edu/16103>>.

⁴³ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Posters To Tell How To Dodge The ‘Flu’”, Oct. 3rd, 1918.

physicians and nurses. This shortage was due to the war effort. The home front was now competing with the war front for medical personnel.⁴⁴

The response of the local businesses in Milwaukee to the Spanish Influenza varied. There was a request in the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* that called for the healthy to take extra shifts or to work longer hours to help make up for the loss of production due to those taken ill. This measure was most likely to help make up production for the war effort. This type of request, made during a pandemic is hard to imagine as they were asking people to work longer, more strenuous hours where they were made vulnerable to exposure to the Spanish Influenza pandemic germs as they were out in the public sector for extended periods of time.⁴⁵

Another measure taken in hopes of preventing the spread of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic within the schools was suggested by Dr. M.A. Bussewitz. This measure entailed the taking of the temperatures of all students whom attended the Normal Schools of Milwaukee every day. If a student was found to have a fever they were to be sent home and their families notified.⁴⁶

On the night of Wednesday, October 10th, the quarantine of the Great Lakes Naval Base, near Chicago, was lifted allowing the ‘jacks’ to make their way into the city of Milwaukee once again. On this same night there are 5 deaths reported in the city from the Spanish Influenza and by the end of this night there would be a total of 2,000 reported cases in the city.⁴⁷ The commander of the Great Lakes station, Captain Moffett, also offered up the services of the of the hospital corps men to the nearby cities which were in need of extra nurses.⁴⁸ What makes this snippet from the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* important is that the quarantine of the base was

⁴⁴ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Defeating the Grippe,” Oct. 10th, 1918.

⁴⁵ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “City Closed to Fight ‘Flu,’” Oct. 10th, 1918.

⁴⁶ *ibid*

⁴⁷ *ibid*

⁴⁸ *ibid*

lifted while it was still suffering from Spanish influenza. By allowing the ‘jacks’ back into the city, they were only aiding in the spread of the disease to greater amounts of people. One could hypothesize that this lifting of the quarantine was a compromise because extra medical staff were needed to help serve in the surrounding areas, which the commander could allot for.⁴⁹

The next of the major orders to combat the pandemic from Commissioner Ruhland came the day following the lift of the Great Lakes quarantine, Thursday Oct. 12th. The Commissioner of Health, Ruhland, called for the closure of theaters, lodges, churches and all other ‘places of amusement,’ while schools, public museums and the public library were allowed to remain open. At the same time it was noted there were to be no public funerals to be allowed as it was too dangerous at the present. This order also included the closings of motion picture houses, dance halls, billiards and pool rooms and bowling alleys.⁵⁰

An advisory order was issued on October 11th by Governor Phillip of Wisconsin, in which he called for the closure of schools. However, Health commissioner Ruhland of Milwaukee did not heed the advice of the governor and instead chose to allow the schools to remain open for session on Friday October 11th. Ruhland and the director of hygiene within the public schools, Dr. George P. Barth, both agreed that a closure would not be wise as they felt that the danger of infection was greater when the children were not being supervised over by the schools.⁵¹ According to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Dr. Ruhland says the danger of infection is not so great when children are in school as when they have their freedom and declares the United States health department takes the same view.”⁵² The day following this statement, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported that Health Commissioner Ruhland had decided that in light of the pandemic within Milwaukee the closure of the schools was to be

⁴⁹ *ibid*

⁵⁰ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “No More Public Funerals” Oct. 11th, 1918.

⁵¹ *Ibid*

⁵² *Ibid*

enacted as of Monday October 14th, 1918. This order did not include the higher level education schools which included the Milwaukee Normal schools as well as Marquette University, the Milwaukee School of Engineering and Downer College.⁵³

Milwaukee also took to finding other ways to help curb the spread of the disease. The Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis association along with instructors from the health department began providing speakers whom canvassed the manufacturing facilities delivering four-minute speeches to aid in educating the workforce about Spanish Influenza, including the process of transmission and how to prevent it as well as how it is was to be cared for. The speakers also provided the attendees with information about the proper use of gauze masks.⁵⁴ Pamphlets printed in multiple languages were also provided to these facilities in hopes of reaching all sections of the diverse population of Milwaukee.⁵⁵ The Anti-Tuberculosis Association also organized a new class,

The class is composed of former teachers, college and normal school graduates who are fitting themselves for public health work in a special course, the first of its kind to be held in the United States...⁵⁶

⁵³ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "New Flu Decree Closes Schools," Oct. 12th, 1918.

⁵⁴ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Talks help fight on "Flu""", Oct. 17th, 1918.

⁵⁵ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "No More Public Funerals," Oct. 11th, 1918.

⁵⁶ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Talks Help Fight on "Flu""", Oct.18th, 1918.



Figure 1 The Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis Association

These women aided in disseminating vital information throughout the city of Milwaukee to those in most need of it, the industrial working class. The article also reported that there were more than 300 requests received asking for speakers to come.⁵⁸

Another group that aided Milwaukee in their efforts against Spanish Influenza were the Motor Corps. The Motor Corps were made up primarily of society women, who volunteered their time to drive ambulances around the city to pick up those suffering from Spanish Influenza to the isolation hospitals. It was reported by the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* that the Motor Corps had answered 85 calls in a week and often worked from 8:30 a.m. till somewhere in-

⁵⁷ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Talks Help Fight on "Flu,"" October 18, 1918

⁵⁸ *ibid*

between midnight and 2 a.m. The *Sentinel* also noted that their services were considered one of the most valuable assets to the city of Milwaukee.⁵⁹

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1918

GIRL MOTORISTS AID FIGHT ON "FLU"

Little did Milwaukee society women think, when they signed their name to the motor corps register of the National League of Women's Service nearly a year ago, that they were starting a movement which was to become one of the most valuable assets of the city and of war organizations and which was to mean the saving of many thousands of dollars.



REMOVING PATIENT ON A LITTER

This motor corps, which was taken over by the Red Cross several months ago, has played an indispensable part in the present influenza epidemic. With two ambulances of its own, and an additional one loaned by the health department, members of the corps have answered more than eighty-five calls from the health department in less than a week.

The girls have been on duty from 8:30 a. m. to midnight and many times until 2 a. m. Their work starts in the home and sickroom, where they go muffled in gauze masks to lift the patient out of bed and onto their litters. Where the space is too narrow to permit of a litter, the patient is rolled onto a blanket litter and carried out. In many cases, the girls have had to dress their patients before taking them out of bed. Because of the handling of patients, only those familiar with first aid and home nursing, together with the litter drill, are eligible as ambulance drivers.

The slogan of the Red Cross ambulance corps is: "Get there as quickly and comfortably as possible." The girls have received no complaints because of rough driving.

It is a rule that there be two drivers of the corps and a member of the sanitary troop of the Seventh regiment of the Wisconsin State guard on the ambulance when on an influenza call, and two men and two women on pneumonia calls. Drivers must wear masks while a patient is in the ambulance.

All sick calls answered by the corps are O. K.'d by the health department. The girls answer them as quickly as they come in and no meals are taken until every call has been attended to, so that many times it is late in the afternoon or evening before many of these volunteers get their luncheons.

The uniform of members of the corps is khaki, but will be changed to gray color in the near future.



DRIVERS MUST WEAR MASKS

60

Figure 2 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, "Girl Motorists Aid Fight on "Flu,"" October 22, 1918.

The closing of all department stores by 5 p.m. on Saturdays were ordered by Health Commissioner Ruhland until the pandemic subsided. This order did not include drug stores nor

⁵⁹ Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, "Girl Motorists Aid Fight on "Flu,"" October 22, 1918.

⁶⁰ Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, "Girl Motorists Aid Fight on "Flu,"" October 22, 1918.

stores that sold food.⁶¹ Measures were also taken by Ruhland to better organize the structures of the isolation hospitals being used to help care for those suffering from Spanish influenza.

Ruhland appointed Dr. Ford from the tuberculosis division of the Milwaukee Department of Health as the head of the isolation hospitals set up in the auditorium.⁶²

Health Commissioner Ruhland also sought out cooperation from the Great Lakes Stations in helping contain the pandemic. Ruhland wrote to the commander, Moffet, of the Great Lakes Training Station asking him to prohibit the ‘jacks’ from leaving the base to come into the city unless they were coming to visit their families or relatives.⁶³ The current state of the pandemic within the city Milwaukee as of October 15th was hypothesized to be at about 20,000 infected.⁶⁴ Ruhland reported to the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* that for every cases of Spanish Influenza reported to the health department there were presumed to be about five more cases which were not reported as they were viewed as too mild to report. The number of cases actually reported to the city since September 1st, 1918 were 3,868. Recovery rate from the illness was around 500 of those reported, which left the actual number of reported ‘active’ cases at 3,379. Also noted by the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* was that there had been, as of October 15th, 88 deaths attributed to Spanish Influenza since September 1st.⁶⁵

One step not taken by Milwaukee was the closure of the city’s public libraries. The Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* noted that the public libraries had been allowed to remain open in the midst of the pandemic but only for the circulation of books. The library was not allowing people to loiter nor congregate in masses within its facility.⁶⁶

⁶¹ ibid

⁶² ibid

⁶³ ibid

⁶⁴ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Fail to Report Flu Cases,” Oct. 15th, 1918

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ ibid

On the 16th of October 1918, the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* reported that there were over 700 teachers (of the 1,000+ available) that had volunteered to aid the city in their fight against the Spanish Influenza Pandemic. The teachers aided by canvassing the city looking for cases of the pandemic to report. Commissioner Ruhland had asked that the teachers aid in the canvassing as to allow the school nurses the care of the patients in the isolation hospitals. Ruhland reported to the press that the physicians and nurses were being inoculated with the new ‘anti-influenza’ serum to help protect them from contracting Spanish Influenza. The success of the serum was still undecided and Ruhland had been in contact with the city of Rochester, New York to converse on the effectiveness of the serum which had been reported there.⁶⁷

By the end of October, it appeared that the pandemic was subsiding. The numbers of those infected were dropping down significantly. By Saturday, November 2nd 1918, Health Commissioner Ruhland announced that the Flu bans were to be lifted on Monday, allowing places of amusement to re-open as well as the schools. Ruhland, along with the rest of Milwaukee praised their success in defeating the pandemic.⁶⁸ The celebrations seemed to be short-lived. By the time the end of November had reached Milwaukee, Spanish Influenza had returned. According to Leavitt:

Ruhland banned all public meetings and dancing, then closed schools and libraries, and imposed a half-capacity rule on theaters, churches and stores... The health commissioner threatened a complete ban-closing even retail stores-if people violated the partial ban.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Many Offering to Fight “Flu””, Oct. 16th, 1918.

⁶⁸ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Flu Ban Lifted Monday,” November 2nd, 1918.

⁶⁹ Leavitt, Judith Walzer. “Chapter Seven: The Healthiest City.” In *The Healthiest City*, 234 Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982.

Ruhland faced difficulties in enforcing the partial ban with the public and local businesses. As it slowly got closer to the holiday season stores began to hold sales and specials which caused crowding. On December 7th, Ruhland had to issue a threat by means of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, wherein he stated that unless everyone abided by the mandated rules to safeguard against the spread of Spanish Influenza, that he then would have close the lid on the city even tighter than before.⁷⁰

Ruhland's threats seemed to have resonated amongst the people of Milwaukee, as he never had to enforce the full ban. By the time the end of December arrived, Milwaukee seemed to have risen out of the depths from the pandemic. In comparing larger cities, Milwaukee fared as one of the best in the nation in comparison to other larger cities.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Leavitt, Judith Walzer. "Chapter Seven: The Healthiest City." In *The Healthiest City*, 235. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982.

⁷¹ *ibid*, 236-237

Eau Claire and Influenza

There is no record of the first death in EC from Influenza within the Board of Health Records from the city. The initial mention of the epidemic arises in a report issued on September 25, 1918 stating that Spanish Influenza should be seen as a threat and that it should be classified as one of the reportable diseases within the county as well as be quarantinable. This requirement meant that all physicians were to notify the Eau Claire Board of Health on any cases of Spanish Influenza they treated. Eau Claire's ability to keep records and contain epidemics had been noted previously with the impact of Scarlet fever in 1916. The requirement of physicians to report all cases had been mandatory since at least 1916 – as well as the requirement of all teachers to report any child ill from school so as an investigation could be done to see what ailment the child was suffering from and whether or not that ailment was communicable.⁷² This type of containment procedure has a very high success rate in keeping the spread of an epidemic down as it highlights and acknowledges the prospect of a problem and goes about addressing it before it gets the chance to grow into a larger issue.

With the onset of Spanish Influenza within Eau Claire, the County Health Board began to postpone travel engagements of groups within the city to external areas within the state. This measure was taken in hopes of not only containing the disease within the area but also as to not bring back more of the disease from other locals. One such postponement noted by the Health Board of Eau Claire was that of the State wide convention of Women's Clubs that was to be held in the city on October 9th, 1918. The request was sent October 6th to the President of the local

⁷² Office of the Board of Health. Memo. 10 Oct. 1918. Eau Claire Board of Health Records 1918. University Wisconsin Eau Claire McIntyr Lib.

chapter, Mrs. D.R. Stevens by the President of the Health Board of Eau Claire. The reasoning for the cancellation, as noted in the request states was:

as a matter of prevention to those attending and to this community. We have no epidemic in the city as this time but influenza is epidemic in many localities throughout the State. The highly contagious nature, virulence and high mortality rate in this disease at this time, prompts this board to offer the above advice.⁷³

This request highlights the willingness of the local health board to admit that the Spanish Influenza Pandemic was dangerous. This request also demonstrates that the board of health was actively taking precautionary measures in hopes of avoiding the onset of a pandemic.

Eau Claire Board of Health also did its best to make it known to the public at large the dangers of the disease at a meeting held on October 6th. Some of the items covered here were that of transmission as well as measures of prevention. A list of preventative measures was produced at this meeting by the Board of Health and was distributed to the Eau Claire *Leader Telegram* to be printed in the newspaper. At this meeting the Eau Claire Board of Health also decided to close all moving picture places.⁷⁴

More requests were soon to come as well from the Eau Claire Board of Health. On October 9th, 1918, the board sent out a letter to a Prof. BuDahn asking for the postponement of the teacher's convention due to be held October 18th and 19th until the pandemic of Spanish influenza subsided. The letter stated that the request was due to the "wide spread epidemic of Influenza throughout the State."⁷⁵ On this same day, the Board of Health sent a letter to Sacred Heart Hospital, Luther Midlefort Hospital and to the Mt. Washington Sanatorium, E.C. County Asylum and the School Nurse which advised them to restrict visitation of the hospitals. The letter

⁷³ Office of the Board of Health. Memo. 10 Oct. 1918. Eau Claire Board of Health Records 1918. University Wisconsin Eau Claire McIntyr Lib.

⁷⁴ *ibid*

⁷⁵ *ibid*

also advised them to not admit patients suffering from Spanish Influenza or pneumonia unless they were to be cared for by a ‘special’ nurse and put into isolation. This order was put into effect and made advisable due to the outbreaks of Spanish Influenza among the staff and other patients at hospitals in Green Bay – wherein 30 sisters contracted the disease and died and 20 nurses in training were infected, of which two were expected to die. The death of Dr. DeBooth, who had been in attendance of patients at the Great Lakes Naval Station, also influenced the decision of the Eau Claire Board of Health.⁷⁶

Public outcry is important to note as it sheds light on public sentiment at the times when the city was closing down not only the churches but also the public schools (Oct. 11th) and putting restrictions on businesses and saloons as to the number of customers they were allowed to admit to their facilities. On October 10th, a letter was received by the Board of Health from the clerk of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, protesting the closure of the churches. The clerk made a plea to the city for worship to be allowed as without prayer how was the city expecting to be saved from the epidemic.⁷⁷

On October 11th Eau Claire adopted the State wide advisory measures which called for the closure of schools, Sunday schools, theaters, moving picture houses, as well as other places of public amusement. The measures also ordered the prohibition of public gatherings and meetings. These new measures came in response to a telegram Eau Claire had received from the State Health.⁷⁸ Eau Claire not only implemented the measures advised by the State Board of Health but also added some of their own measures which included: the closing of the library,

⁷⁶ *ibid*

⁷⁷ *ibid*

⁷⁸ Telegram advising closures due to epidemic of Influenza in Wisconsin. October 10, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

orders to sterilize all utensils after use (hotels, restaurants, ice-cream parlors, saloons, etc.) with boiling water, to keep children at home and watched closely and the prohibition of loitering and congregating of people at places of businesses, etc.⁷⁹

The first reported death in Eau Claire resulting from ‘pneumonia’ which developed from Spanish Influenza was that of a 26 year old woman named Olga Bertha Scharlau on Sunday, October 20th 1918. The first death being that of a healthy young woman served as a means to confirm that this Flu was not like previous flu’s, the destruction it wreaked was unfathomable. At the same time the City of Eau Claire was handling a reported 61 cases of the pandemic. An officer of the Eau Claire Board of Health reported that of the eight patients being cared for at the isolation hospital, three were suffering from ‘pneumonia.’⁸⁰

On Nov. 16th, as those afflicted with the Influenza began to grow in numbers, the restrictions became tighter and the orders of closings grew.⁸¹ The Eau Claire Board of Health sent out a mandate that as of November 17th, 1918 the closures of all Saloons, ice cream parlors and soda fountains be implemented. The city also ordered the closure of the YMCA and all other clubs, with the exception that they may remain in operation only to provide lodging and meals. The YMCA had, previous to these new mandates, been allowed to operate with restrictions which were placed upon the facility on October 23rd. At that time the number of men allowed in the gyms had been 10-12 at a time (as long as they were not ill) with the prohibition of onlookers.⁸²

⁷⁹ Orders mandated in response to the local epidemic of Spanish Influenza. October 10, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records . Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

⁸⁰ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, “First Death From Influenza Here,” October 22nd, 1918.

⁸¹ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, “Board of Health Nails Flu Lid Tighter; Shuts Saloons, Orders Masks,” November 17th, 1918.

⁸² Additional Restrictions . November 16, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records . Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

On November 24th, the Eau Claire Board of Health partially lifted the lid on the closure bans. These partial lifts included the opening of schools and churches as well as saloons (only for the sale of packages – no alcohol was to be consumed on the premises). The Board of Health ordered that the closure ban of theatres remain as well as the ban on special sales and they advised all clerks to wear masks to prevent transmission of Spanish Influenza (the masks were not compulsory). A member of the Eau Claire Board of Health stated that, “The partial ban was implemented as a trial measure...eventual lifting of the ban will depend upon conditions that follow.”⁸³ The caution exhibited by the Eau Claire Board of Health towards the idea of lifting the full bans was seen as futile by some members of the city while many of the doctors supported the decisions of the Board of Health entirely.⁸⁴

On November 28th the steps taken by the Eau Claire Board of Health were recognized as being effective in their fight against the Spanish Influenza Pandemic by a railroad man whom had stopped in the city to receive an inoculation against Influenza. He had noted to the health officer whom was inoculating him of the ‘extreme prevalence’ of the pandemic within Eau Claire but when he was informed by the health officer of the actual number of cases and deaths within the city he was reported as stating that, “there were three times the number of deaths from influenza in his own Wisconsin town of 1,000 inhabitants.”⁸⁵ The fact that this town was suffering more deaths from the pandemic than the city of Eau Claire demonstrates the effectiveness of the closures and mandates taken by the city to help curb the infection rate of Spanish Influenza. This man’s comment also reinforces the fact that size (population-density) did

⁸³ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram* “Board of Health Lifts Lid to Let Out Schools, Churches, and Bottles,” Nov. 24th, 1918.

⁸⁴ See Appendix 5

⁸⁵ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, “12 New Flu Cases Here Yesterday,” Nov. 28th, 1918.

not dictate the death rate alone; the response of the health boards towards the flu were also vital in curbing the infection and mortality rates.

On December 10th, the Eau Claire Board of Health announced that full closures were to be implemented again due to the rise in Spanish Influenza Cases. In the previous week there had been an increase of 124 new cases including three deaths over the weekend.⁸⁶ With the reinstatement of the closure mandates, Eau Claire was able to finally curb the pandemic enough to fully lift the closure bans on December 12th, 1918.

The Eau Claire Board of Health put together an overall report on the pandemic which noted that the death rate from the disease had been just over 1% at 43 deaths for the city. In comparing these results to other larger cities, the report noted that Eau Claire, with a population of around 20,000, had suffered 2 deaths per 1,000 while these other large cities had suffered 158 deaths per 1,000.⁸⁷ These statistics again reinforce the fact that response played a pivotal role in curbing the effects of Spanish Influenza on an area.

On February 1st, 1919, Dr. J.F. Farr (a member of the Eau Claire Board of Health) received a letter from the State Board of Health in regards to the efforts taken in Eau Claire to fight the pandemic. In the letter there is reference made to the completion of a vital statistics report by the state of which interesting information was attained in regards to Eau Claire. The letter states,

As you know Eau Claire and Eau Claire County realized that they were going to have an epidemic and admitted that they had it and took every precaution of which they were advised to protect the people, while some other cities that we

⁸⁶ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, "Public Schools and Model School at Normal Close Because of Flu," Dec. 10, 1918.

⁸⁷ A General Report on the "Flu" Epidemic In Eau Claire, Wis. Oct., Nov., Dec. 1918. February 18, 1919. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records 1913-1941. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

might mention claimed they did not have Influenza, that there was no danger and did not take due precautions and cast reflections on other cities.⁸⁸

This letter demonstrates that due to the precautionary measures and mandates enacted by Eau Claire many lives were saved. The State Board of Health commends Eau Claire for acting so promptly to prevent catastrophe.

⁸⁸ State Board of Health letter to DR. J. F. Farr. February 1, 1919. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

Comparing Responses

In examining and comparing the methods of response taken by the cities of Milwaukee and Eau Claire Wisconsin to the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918, it should be noted that this comparison will be addressing the responses of a rural area to that of an urban area. This comparison acknowledges the fact that demographically, Milwaukee was the most populated area in the state and for that reason there were more total deaths than in the city of Eau Claire. Eau Claire's death rate also reflects its smaller population size. In fact, the death rate *per capita* was not significantly different in Eau Claire and Milwaukee. It is the contention of this paper, however, that a similar per capita death rate does not mean that each city responded identically to the pandemic and that their varied responses did not have an impact on the rate of infection and mortality.

The initial acknowledgment and understanding of the threat of a pandemic was pivotal in the fight against the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918. This breed of Flu was different. According to the State Board of Health report, "The case mortality was highest among the strongest and most vigorous—between the ages of 20 to 40."⁸⁹ No longer was the Flu only killing the very young and old. What also made Spanish Influenza unique was the blue tinge it left on the faces of the dead. This blue tinge, also known as heliotrope cyanosis (form of hypoxia), was caused by the buildup of fluid within the lungs of the victim which caused them to slowly suffocate wherein the body draws oxygen away from the capillaries in the face in a desperate attempt to survive, leaving the blue tinge in death.⁹⁰ The condition of cyanosis is

⁸⁹ Wisconsin . State Board of Health . "Influenza Facts." State Board of Health Bulletin. Vol. 3. Madison: Office of the State Board of Health , 1918. 5.

⁹⁰ Lyons, Bill, dir. *Secrets of the Dead: Killer Flu*. DVD. N.p.: PBS, 2004.

mentioned in the initial report made by the Eau Claire Board of Health on September 25th, 1918, as an aspect of the “usual mode of death.”⁹¹ It is also in this report that the city Board of Health recognizes Spanish Influenza as a reportable and quarantinable disease. Much of the information from this report was made available to the public through publications made within the Eau Claire *Leader Telegram* per the Board of Health’s request.

In comparison, Milwaukee’s acknowledgment that Spanish Influenza was a dangerous disease was made known on September 26th in an article published by the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel*. The article addresses the number of cases in the city as being roughly 110 and that the Health Commissioner, Ruhland, was asking for the cooperation of physicians in reporting cases of Spanish Influenza to the Milwaukee Board of Health. The only mention of quarantine in the article was made in reference to the quarantining of the Great Lakes Naval Training station wherein ‘jacks’ were not allowed to leave the base for recreational visits. The article also mentions preventative measures given by Milwaukee Health Commissioner Ruhland, which was to “...prevent its spread by care in using handkerchiefs when sneezing or coughing and by not expectorating on sidewalks or on floors in public buildings.”⁹²

The transmission of the disease was also a vital factor in comparing the effects of Spanish Influenza on Eau Claire and Milwaukee in 1918. In exploring transmission, the differences between rural and urban transmission of the disease amongst the population differs for many different reasons. In 1918 the science and medical communities were finally beginning to understand disease transmission. It was widely publicized that the Spanish Influenza Pandemic

⁹¹ Initial meeting of the Board of Health in regards to Spanish Influenza. September 25, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records, 1913-1941. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

⁹² *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “Report Cases of Influenza,” September 26, 1918.

was transmittable through the air by coughing, spitting and sneezing. It was also acknowledged that transmission could also occur by touching objects laced with infection. In a report made by a Wisconsin State health official in regards to influenza he states,

Evidence seems conclusive that the infective organism of influenza is given off from the nose and mouth of infected persons, and it is equally conclusive that it is contracted through the same way. ..Flu is a contact disease, like measles. Flu travels faster than man travels.⁹³

Through this report one can ascertain the level of knowledge available at the time of the pandemic. It was vital that transmission was understood and that steps were effectively implemented to prevent infection. The report by the State Board of Health goes on to explain the measures taken by officials to contain Spanish Influenza:

Quarantine for the patient is necessary. Coughing and sneezing are so universally recognized as the principal cause for spreading infection, that laws have been enacted by which such violators are liable to arrest and punishment. One point that is universally agreed upon is that every person who becomes sick with influenza should go to bed at once and stay there until the danger is over. This will not only give the patient the best chance for recovery but will also prevent him from scattering the disease—providing no visitors are allowed and he is properly isolated.⁹⁴

Eau Claire held a special meeting on October 6th to discuss preventative measures to take in order to avert the pandemic. These measures, very similar to those previously mentioned, were ordered by the local health board to be published in the Eau Claire *Leader Telegram*.⁹⁵ Similarly on October 10th, the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* published an article addressing the measures

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<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/tp&CISOPTR=15555&REC=1>^{Ibid,}
4-5.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 5

⁹⁵ Precautionary measures advised by the Board of Health for the prevention of Influenza. October 6, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records, 1913-1941. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

that were to be taken in order to defeat the Spanish Influenza which included many of the same aforementioned suggestions for transmission prevention.⁹⁶

On October 10th, the Eau Claire Board of Health held a meeting at which they mandated a new order of regulations.⁹⁷ These new mandates came in response to a telegram they received from the State Health Officer, C.A. Harper, advising the city to close down places of public amusement and gatherings.⁹⁸ The orders mandated at the meeting included the prohibition of public gatherings and the closure of schools, colleges, theaters, moving picture shows and the library. Also included in the mandate were orders to sterilize all utensils after use (hotels, restaurants, ice-cream parlors, saloons, etc.) with boiling water, to keep children at home and watched closely and the loitering and congregating of people at businesses is to be prohibited. This mandate includes many other orders. This mandate was mimeographed and distributed to every place of business in Eau Claire along with 'Fight the Flu' cards by order of the Board of Health. According to the mandate all the orders listed were to go into effect as of midnight on Thursday, October 10th 1918.⁹⁹

The same telegram received by Eau Claire was also received by Milwaukee on Oct. 10th. Health Commissioner Ruhland responded to the advisory orders by mandating the prohibition of public gatherings and by closing down the theaters, motion picture houses, churches, dance halls

⁹⁶ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "Defeating the Grippe," October 10, 1918.

⁹⁷ Orders mandated in response to the local epidemic of Spanish Influenza. October 10, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records . Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

⁹⁸ Telegram advising closures due to epidemic of Influenza in Wisconsin. October 10, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

⁹⁹ Orders mandated in response to the local epidemic of Spanish Influenza. October 10, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records . Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

and saloons as well as other public venues. The issue of school closures had been left for further examination as it would prove extremely difficult to notify everyone of the closures before the next day. Closures would be implemented if it became necessary.¹⁰⁰ On October 11th Health Commissioner Ruhland, along with Dr. George P. Barth (director of hygiene for schools), announced that the schools in Milwaukee would remain open. This decision was made as per their belief that the children would be safer at school where they could be watched over by the teachers. Ruhland stated that the children would be in more danger if given their freedom from school.¹⁰¹

The Milwaukee Health Commissioner may have decided to allow the schools to remain open due to the size of Milwaukee's industrial working class. Had there been no school, many of the children would have been left at home alone or with other sick family members. By allowing the schools to remain open the children were ensured supervision as well as care if they became ill. The mandate to allow schools to remain open was rescinded by Health Commissioner Ruhland on Saturday October 12th as the spread of the pandemic increased across the city. Colleges and trade schools were, however, allowed to remain open.¹⁰²

The effects of the pandemic on Milwaukee can be effectively seen as the numbers of those infected with Spanish Influenza increase exponentially. On October 14th the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* reported there to be a total of 3,084 cases of Spanish influenza in Milwaukee since September 1st, 1918. The *Sentinel* also mentioned the strain the pandemic had been putting on the medical community, "The epidemic has caused physicians to be greatly overworked..."¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "City Closed to Fight Flu," October 10, 1918.

¹⁰¹ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "No More Public Funerals," October 11, 1918.

¹⁰² *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "New Flu Decree Closes Schools," October 12, 1918

¹⁰³ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "More Than 3,000 "Flu" Cases," October 14, 1918

Another measure taken by both Eau Claire and Milwaukee was in the creation of isolation hospitals. Eau Claire leased the Montgomery Hospital (244 Oxford Avenue) building as its isolation hospital in order to effectively care for those suffering from Spanish Influenza.¹⁰⁴ Eau Claire had recommended that the hospitals not admit patients suffering from the disease unless provided with a special nurse and put into isolation as to prevent others from becoming ill; Eau Claire needed another hospital to care specifically for those suffering from the pandemic.¹⁰⁵ Milwaukee acquired the use of four facilities for its isolation hospitals; Nunnemacher home (Seventeenth St. and Grand Ave) along with Engelmann , Juneau and Killbourn halls (in the Auditorium). The *Sentinel* reported that each of the hospitals in the auditorium could “accommodate 50 patients.”¹⁰⁶ The *Sentinel* also reported that the Nunnemacher hospital was going to be reserved to care for children only after all the other halls were opened and available.¹⁰⁷

Another important element for both cities was the support of the public. In order for either city to conduct a successful campaign against the Spanish Influenza Pandemic, the support of the public in regards to the closure mandates was essential. Milwaukee’s Health Commissioner Ruhland praised the public for all their cooperation,

I believe that the co-operation of the public and the willingness of doctors and nurses to work with the department, are largely responsible for the low mortality

¹⁰⁴ *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, “7 New “Flu” Cases Reported Here,” October 16th, 1918.

¹⁰⁵ Letter sent to area hospitals requesting they not admit patients suffering from Spanish Influenza. October 9, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

¹⁰⁶ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, “More Than 3,000 “Flu” Cases,” October 14, 1918

¹⁰⁷ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Fail to Report “Flu” Cases,” October 15, 1918

rate of Milwaukee. It was team work with the public, newspapers, Red Cross and other workers that helped us through two serious epidemics.¹⁰⁸

Milwaukee, overall, cooperated with the closures and mandates fairly well for the size of the city. Although there were a few instances, close to the holiday season, when the public waived in their commitments to abiding to the regulations.

Public Support in Eau Claire was also evident. One man was referenced by the *Leader Telegram* as offering a reward of a ‘flock of cigars’ to the first policeman to arrest someone for spitting on the walks.¹⁰⁹



Figure 3 Eau Claire Leader Telegram – Reward Offered for First Arrest of Spitter.

The State Board of Health also commended Eau Claire for the support given by the citizens in the fight against the pandemic,

¹⁰⁸ Leavitt, Judith Walzer. "Chapter Seven: The Healthiest City." In *The Healthiest City*, 237. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982.

¹⁰⁹ Eau Claire Leader Telegram, "Here's Reward for Cop Getting First Spitter," October 11th, 1918.

¹¹⁰ *ibid*

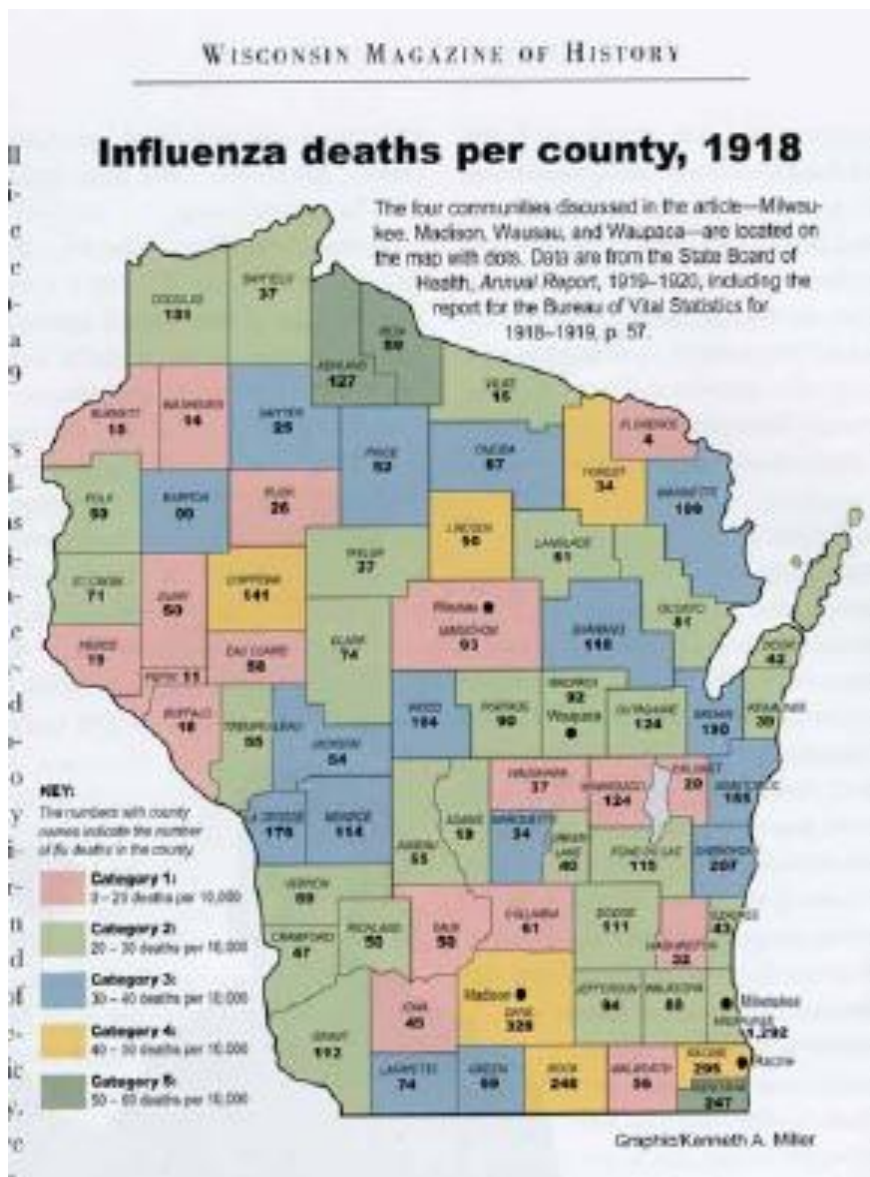
It is certainly gratifying to see the full cooperation of your citizens endeavoring to check as far as possible this dreaded malady that has confronted us, and the efforts put forth certainly show results. We congratulate you on the low death rate, as well as the unity of your citizens in furnishing food, nursing, housing and medical care to those afflicted. It conclusively shows what all public health men emphatically maintain that strict attention to health rules and regulations on the part of all the citizens of a community, especially during a pandemic, is the means of lessening very materially the amount of sickness markedly reducing the death rate.¹¹¹

The State Board of Health commended Eau Claire not only for the amount of cooperation they received from the public in the fight against the pandemic, but also for their stringent following of the health mandates. It was cooperation of the public, not the size of the city, that the State Board of Health points to as being one of the most influential factors in curbing infection rates during the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918.¹¹²

The effects of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic on urban areas took their toll on the medical communities. Already strained by WWI, they mainly relied on volunteers and nurses (when available) to aid in the efforts to contain the pandemic. Milwaukee, fortunately, had help from the Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis Association, for implementing effective means for curbing transmission rates. Rural areas, like Eau Claire, did suffer a toll from the Spanish Influenza Pandemic as well. Although the numbers of those infected and those whom died did not compare to those of Milwaukee, it must be understood that a comparative analysis had to be conducted to gain a proper perspective rather than just factoring in demography. The map of deaths per county in Wisconsin from Spanish Influenza revealed that

¹¹¹ State Health Officer. State Board of Health Letter - recognizing the efforts taken by Eau Claire to curb the pandemic . 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records 1913-1941. Eau Claire Area Research Center , UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library .

¹¹² *ibid*



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Figure 4 Eau Claire: Category 1 (Pink) =58 deaths [death rate of 0-20 per 10,000]

Figure 5 Milwaukee: Category 2 (Light Green) = 1,292 deaths [death rate 20-30 per 10,000]

demography was not always the reason for a higher mortality rate. Eau Claire ranked into category 1 while Milwaukee was only a category 2. Milwaukee was the largest city in Wisconsin at this time, so if the number of deaths were to only be based on demographics then Milwaukee should have been at

¹¹³ United States National Library of Medicine - National Institutes of Health. "Influenza Deaths Per County." National Library of Medicine. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/> (accessed May 14, 2009).

Image copyright of NIH - attained from Wisconsin Historical Society [Burg, Steven].

least a category 4-5. Instead counties like Ashland Iron suffered more deaths per 10,000 people. Even Madison suffered worse than Milwaukee, at a category 4.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴Burg, Steven. "WISCONSIN AND THE GREAT SPANISH FLU EPIDEMIC OF 1918. ." *America: History and Life*. 2000: 36-56. Wisconsin Historical Society. 10 Oct. 2008 <<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/wmh&CISOPTR=43636&CISOSHOW=43605&REC=1>>.

The Role of the Press

To gain an accurate measurement of the public sentiment in regards to the issue of the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic, it became clear that the best way to do so would be through analyzing the biggest newspapers within each city. For Eau Claire the obvious choice was the *Leader Telegram* as it was the only mass produced media in the area in 1918. The choice for Milwaukee was the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* as it was the largest newspaper in print within the city. It must be mentioned that it must be taken into account that the *Leader Telegram*, and to some extent the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, was utilized as a means to distribute national news and so often times the major articles collected on the front pages were taken from other media outlets across the country. This borrowing of media was essential for smaller presses, and at times more effective for larger presses, as they did not have the financial means or staff to produce enough content for each newspaper printed.

The role of the press can very clearly be associated with the means to which the public was disseminated information. There were no televisions at this time and the capabilities of radio were limited. Radio in 1918 consisted of telegrams and Morse Code. It had yet to advance to the stages of mass communication of news and media to the public spectrum. The newspapers at this time were also covered in advertisements, a necessary means for financial support. What is interesting to note about these advertisements is their content. Often times they related their product to a concern of the public and some were constructed to appear as other articles in the paper rather than advertisements. Some of the advertisements did prove educational and their numerousness heightened awareness about the Spanish Influenza of 1918 to the readers.

The presses were an essential outlet for both urban and rural localities in 1918. Each area benefited from their newspapers as they provided insight and information about the world around

them, both locally and nationally. It was the newspapers that reported the news of the outbreaks of Spanish Influenza to the public. It was the newspapers whom disseminated the information given to them by the local Health Boards and Health Commissioners on what to do about the pandemic and what measures were being taken to abate it. The *Leader Telegram* not only reported information given to them by the Eau Claire Health Board but also conducted their own interviews with members of the Health Boards to gain their own insight as well as provide information to the public. The Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* conducted interviews with people and organizations such as the Anti-Tuberculosis Association in order to alert the public to the efforts being made by all sides in the fight against the 1918 Spanish Influenza Pandemic.

The coverage of the 1918 Spanish Influenza Pandemic often was subject to the reports on the war effort. America was still involved in WWI at this time and so the main media outlets were covered with information about the war and about the work being conducted at the homefront for the war effort. Politics of the war also received prime attention and ample space was provided by the newspapers for this. It thus proved important to look throughout the entire sections of the newspapers to collect information about the pandemic as it was often pushed further inside the paper depending on the news of the war for that day.

CONCLUSION

The death rates from the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918 in Milwaukee and Eau Claire were both quite small. Eau Claire ranked into category 1 while Milwaukee was only a category 2. Milwaukee was the largest city in Wisconsin at this time, so if the number of deaths were to only be based on demographics then Milwaukee should have been at least a category 4-5. Instead counties like Ashland and Iron suffered more deaths per 10,000 people. Even Madison suffered worse than Milwaukee, at a category 4.¹¹⁵ The similarity in the death rate does not mean that their response to the pandemic was identical. The fact that one city is rural and one is an industrial capital also did not dictate the death rate nor the response taken by either against the flu. The value of this study is in that it looks beyond simple measures such as geography and per capita death to understand how responses to the pandemic affected transmission and its local severity. Only in this way can we learn from the 1918 pandemic and hopefully be better prepared for the inevitable ones to follow.

¹¹⁵ United States National Library of Medicine - National Institutes of Health. "Influenza Deaths Per County." National Library of Medicine. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/> (accessed May 14, 2009).

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Image copyright of NIH - attained from Wisconsin Historical Society

Appendix 1

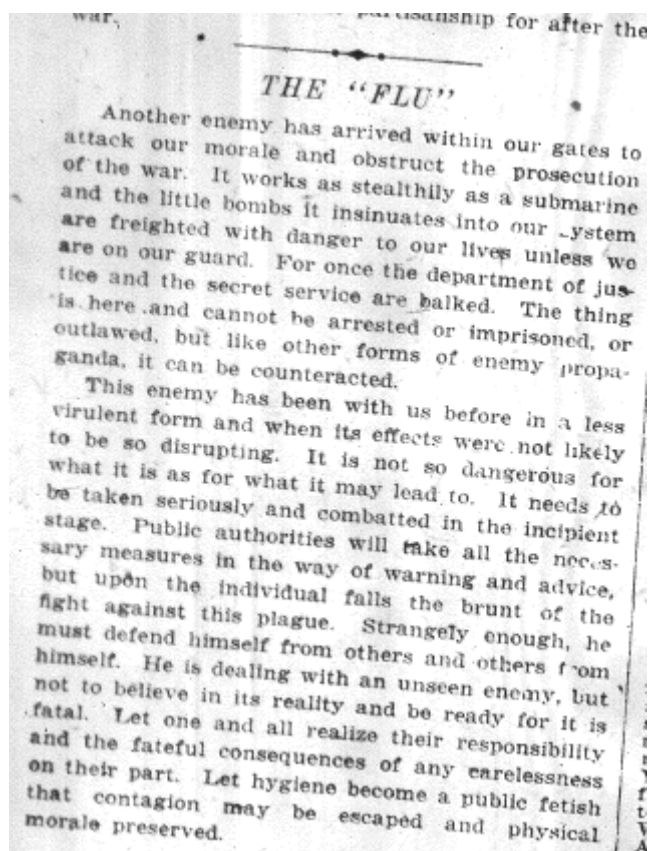


Figure 6 *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, September 24th, 1918 - Information about Spanish Influenza

¹¹⁶ *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "The "Flu,"" Sept. 24th, 1918.

Appendix 3

THE MILWAUKEE

THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR SUNDAY—City and County, 5c Outside, 10c
DAILY—City and County, 10c Outside, 15c THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1918

STATE SUGGESTS ALL ASSEMBLAGES

CITY CLOSED TO FIGHT FLU

CHURCHES, SCHOOLS AND THEATERS AGREE TO CLOSE DOORS

Beginning Friday all public gatherings in Milwaukee will be called off, and all theaters, churches, saloons, motion picture houses, billiard halls, bowling alleys and dance halls will be closed as a means for combating the spread of Spanish influenza.

This announcement was made by the health commissioner, following a conference in his office Thursday morning with persons directly affected.

An advisory order of the Wisconsin state board of health, to this effect was issued by State Health Officer C. A. Harper. The edict is of state-wide application and was recommended by Surgeon General Blue, United States public health service.

The Star Order.

The following order was issued Thursday by State Health Officer C. A. Harper:

"Owing to the prevalence of influenza throughout the state and in conformity with the request of the surgeon general and the United States public health service, the Wisconsin state board of health has issued an advisory order to all health officers, local health boards and city councils to immediately close all schools, churches, Sunday schools, theaters, moving picture houses, other places of amusement and all public gatherings for an indefinite period of time.

"Local boards of health should hold meetings immediately, incorporating the suggestions herein outlined, record their order in the minutes of the meeting, publish it in a local newspaper, or print it and post it in five or more conspicuous places and at

Due to an error in transmission of the first dispatch from Madison, telling of the state health board's influenza edict, the word "advisory" was omitted. The noon edition of The Journal carried the original dispatch as sent. The error was corrected in the later edition. Advice from Madison state, however, that the order is virtually compulsory in parts of the state, Milwaukee included, where the epidemic is sufficiently serious, and that it is left to the judgment of the local authorities.

overcame the benefit to be derived from such educational methods.

Theaters Run Thursday Night.

"The theaters will have their regular performances Thursday," said George Fischer, manager of the Alhambra theater and secretary of the Milwaukee Theater Managers' association. "It was said at the conference that the theaters probably would be closed for eight to ten days. This will represent a great loss. It is likely, however, that the theaters will not have to bear all of it. In view of the cause of the closing, it would seem to be more just for all of those connected with theatrical performances to bear a share. This would include the owners of the buildings, who might be expected to make concessions in regard to rent, actors under contract for salaries, and moving picture concerns under contracts for films."

Big Loss to Theaters.

"Business as usual" will be the slogan for Thursday," said William C. Schnell, manager of the Davidson theater and president of the Milwaukee Theater Managers' association. "At the conference with the mayor we were instructed to 'carry on' Thursday and to await official instructions. Doubtless this will mean that we will be closed Friday. The Country Cousin company, playing at the Davidson, is scheduled to leave for St. Paul Saturday."

WILSON REPLY IS "JUST RIGHT"

COMMENT OF CHARLES M. SCHWAB ON PEACE OFFENSIVE

Steel King Who Is in City Talks "Ships" in Torrent of Language and Enthusiasm—Says Program Is "Bounding Ahead."

"Masterful, diplomatic, just the right thing to say at the right time," was the comment of Charles M. Schwab, shipbuilder for the United States in the war, in discussing the reply of President Wilson to the peace proposal of the central powers.

Mr. Schwab spoke with great enthusiasm and "pop," indicating that he was heartily in accord with the president's method of meeting the peace offensive of the enemy. He is in Milwaukee to make a speech Thursday night at the convention of the American Foundrymen's association in session at the Auditorium.

Mr. Schwab was attended by Mrs. Schwab who saluted the newspapermen with "good day" and "good by," all in the same breath. She displayed the same genial smile and affable bearing as her husband, the steel king. Mr. and Mrs. Schwab were entertained at the Milwaukee club for luncheon by Mr. and Mrs. Clement C. Smith. Mr. Schwab spoke briefly at the Athletic club shortly after noon. He visited the foundrymen's exposition at the Auditorium and took an auto ride in the afternoon. He and Mrs. Schwab remained outside of the

NOTE IN MASTER AN WIFE GUESTS OF CITY



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Figure 8 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Oct. 10th 1918 - Report on City Closures

Appendix 4

THE EAU CLAIRE LEADER.

SPANISH INFLUENZA---WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT SHOULD BE TREATED

Nothing New—Simply The Old Grip, or la Grippe That Was Epidemic in 1889-90, Only Then It Came From Russia By Way of France and This Time By Way of Spain.

Go To Bed and Stay Quiet—Take A Laxative—Eat Plenty of Nourishing Food—Keep Up Your Strength—Nature Is the "Cure".

ALWAYS CALL A DOCTOR.

NO OCCASION FOR PANIC. Spanish influenza, which appeared in Spain in May, has all the appearance of grip or la grippe, which has swept over the world in numerous epidemics as far back as history runs. Hippocrates refers to an epidemic in 412 B. C. which is regarded by many to have been influenza. Every century has had its attacks. Beginning with 1831, this country has had five epidemics, the last in 1889-90.

There is no occasion for panic—influenza itself has a very low percentage of fatalities—not over one death out of every four hundred cases, according to the N. C. Board of Health. The chief danger lies in complications arising, attacking principally patients in a run down condition—those who don't go to bed soon enough or those who get up too early.

THE SYMPTOMS

Grippe, or influenza as it is now called, usually begins with a chill followed by aching, feverishness and sometimes nausea and dizziness, and a general feeling of weakness and depression. The temperature is from 100 to 104, and the fever usually lasts from three to five days. The germs attack the mucous membrane, or lining of the air passages—nose, throat and bronchial tubes—there is usually a hard cough, especially bad at night, often times a sore throat or tonsillitis, and frequently all the appearances of a severe head cold.

THE TREATMENT

HOW TO AVOID THE DISEASE.

Evidence seems to prove that this is a germ disease, spread principally by human contact, chiefly through coughing, sneezing or spitting. So avoid persons having colds—which means avoiding crowds—common drinking cups, roller towels, etc. Keep up your bodily strength by plenty of exercise in the open air, and good food. Above all, keep free from colds, as colds irritate the lining of the air passages and render them much better breeding places for the germs.

Use Vick's VapoRub at the very first sign of a cold. For a head cold, melt a little VapoRub in a spoon and in-

grippe germs, to aid in loosening the phlegm and keeping the air passages open, thus making the breathing easier. Vick's VapoRub will be found effective. Hot, wet towels should be applied over the throat, chest and back between the shoulder blades to open the pores. Then VapoRub should be rubbed in over the parts until the skin is red, spread on thickly and cover with two thicknesses of hot flannel cloths. Leave the clothing loose around the neck as the heat of the body liberates the ingredients in the form of vapors. These vapors, inhaled with each breath, carry the medication directly to the parts affected. At the same time, VapoRub is absorbed thru and stimulates the skin, attracting the blood to the surface, and thus aids in relieving the congestion within.

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Figure 9 Eau Claire Leader Telegram Oct. 11th 1918 - Advertisement for Vicks

¹¹⁹ Eau Claire Leader Telegram, "Spanish Influenza --- What it is and How it Should Be Treated," Oct. 11th, 1918.

Appendix 4 Continued

<p style="text-align: center;">THE TREATMENT</p> <p>Go to bed at the first symptoms, not only for your own sake but to avoid spreading the disease to others—take a purgative, eat plenty of nourishing food, remain perfectly quiet, and don't worry. Quinine, aspirin or Dover's Powder, etc., may be administered by the physician's directions to relieve the aching. But there is no cure or specific for influenza—the disease must run its course, but Nature will throw off the attack if only you keep up your strength. The chief danger lies in the complications which may arise. Influenza so weakens the bodily resistance that there is danger of pneumonia or bronchitis developing, and sometimes inflammation of the middle ear, or heart affections. For these reasons, it is very important that the patient remain in bed until his strength returns—stay in bed at least two days or more after the fever has left you, or if you are over 50 or not strong, stay in bed four days or more, according to the severity of the attack.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EXTERNAL APPLICATIONS.</p> <p>In order to stimulate the lining of the air passages to throw off the</p>	<p>sign of a cold. For a head cold, melt a little VapoRub in a spoon and inhale the vapors, or better still, use VapoRub in a benzoin steam kettle. If this is not available, use an ordinary tea-kettle. Fill half-full of boiling water, put in half a teaspoon of VapoRub from time to time—keep the kettle just slowly boiling and inhale the steam arising.</p> <p>NOTE.—Vick's VapoRub is the discovery of a North Carolina druggist, who found how to combine, in salve form, Menthol and Camphor with such volatile oils as Eucalyptus, Thyme, Cubebs, etc., so that when the salve is applied to the body heat, these ingredients are liberated in the form of vapors.</p> <p>VapoRub is comparatively new in New York state and New England and a few Western states where it is just now being introduced, but in the other sections of the country it is the standard home remedy in over a million homes for all forms of cold troubles. Over six million jars were sold last year. It is particularly recommended for children's croup or colds, since it is externally applied and therefore can be used as freely as desired without the slightest harmful effects. VapoRub can be had in three sizes at all druggists. Advertisement.</p>
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Figure 10 Eau Claire Leader Telegram Oct. 11th 1918 - Advertisement for Vicks cont.

Appendix 5

BOARD OF HEALTH LIFTS LID TO LET OUT SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, AND BOTTLES

**THEATRES REMAIN CLOSED AND
RULE FORBIDDING SPECIAL
SALES BY STORES IS
UNCHANGED.**

The flu lid was pried up a trifle by the board of health last night, but the nails left in preliminary to lifting it off or hammering it down at the end of another week.

Here are the changes in the rules:

- 1.—Churches may open for one service daily, beginning today. Sunday schools may meet and Thanksgiving services may be held in separate churches, but not the usual Thanksgiving union service in the Grand Opera house.
- 2.—All schools may open Tuesday, carefully supervised by nurses, who will send home any pupil appearing ill.
- 3.—Saloons may re-open Monday, but may sell packages only. No liquor may be consumed on the premises. Sale of beer on draft is not allowed. The restrictions as to loitering in saloons are not changed.
- 4.—It is earnestly requested that the clerks in business places wear masks, but it will not be compulsory.

All former orders of the board of health remain unrevoked, it was announced. These include the following inhibitions:

- Stores are not permitted to hold or advertise special sales.
- Theatres must remain closed.
- Dances are forbidden.
- Clubs and the Y. M. C. A. are closed except for the accommodation of roomers and persons to whom meals are served. The Y. M. C. A. may have handball games with not to exceed four people playing.
- Pool and billiards are forbidden.
- The public library must remain closed.
- Lodge and club meetings are forbidden.
- Soda fountains and ice cream parlors must remain closed.

"The limited opening is a trial measure," a member of the board said to a newspaper representative at the close of the meeting. "Eventual

question is just how infection spreads. Pastors have been making calls. They go into houses where influenza exists, exposing themselves and their families. Could we not isolate more by better quarantine of families? As far as churches are concerned, the majority of ministers desire to abide by the decisions of the board of health. If it is a matter of saving life and health, we desire to put up with the lack of services. It is a question if some test could not be made, as limiting the matter of opening churches to one service on Sunday or one prayer meeting. Trying this for a season would be satisfactory to the ministerial association."

Schools Believed Safe.

PRES. H. A. SCHOFIELD of the state normal school.—"The normal is struggling under the misfortune of starting in war time with competition for students. Of the other normal schools in the state Milwaukee was not closed though the town was, Whitewater closed for a week, Platteville not at all, Oshkosh not till the other day. Superior, Stevens Point, River Falls and Eau Claire are closed. We wish to do all we can to help. I would like to open Dec. 2 without the model school, with masks, doctors and nurses and send home any student who seems ill."

Public Schools.

W. A. CLARK, superintendent of public schools.—"Teachers and parents of pupils are anxious to get to work. I don't pretend to be able to tell the board of health what to do. The school buildings are well ventilated. Many believe the pupils would be better off at school. The school nurse makes each school every day. We might be able to get another nurse or two. I have heard it said influenza is not a 'kid disease.' We are anxious to get back, but not at the price of safety. I believe the schools can be run as safely as any business. I think children are safer in schools than in many other places."

ALBERT NELSON, president of school board.—"Schools are necessary and ought, in my opinion, to be the first to open. The taxpayers are under a heavy expense for idle schools."

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Figure 11 Eau Claire Leader Telegram - Personal Accounts from community members in regards to the Pandemic and the closures

¹²⁰ Eau Claire Leader Telegram, "Board of Health Lifts Lid to let out Schools, Churches, and Bottles," Nov. 24th,

Appendix 5 Continued

lifting of the ban will depend upon conditions that follow. It is incumbent on every citizen to observe all precautions to prevent further spread of the disease. The board especially urges that when one in a family falls ill of influenza he or she go to the city isolation hospital as a protection against infection of the rest of the household. All the members of the board unite in an expression of appreciation for the cordial and conscientious co-operation of the public hitherto."

Eighty Cases Last Week.

Eighty cases of influenza were recorded during the week just closed, with one death. The numbers of cases recorded since the week ending Oct. 5 are, by weeks, 36, 65, 82, 77, 83, 77, and 80, making a total of 500, of which seven, including one yesterday, have resulted in deaths.

Meeting of Those Affected.

The meeting of the health board at which the restrictions on gatherings were revised followed a joint meeting of the board of health, city council, and representatives of various interests affected by the lid held at the council chamber yesterday afternoon. No indication of what changes in the regulations, if any, were to be made was given during this meeting. Twenty-nine were present. Mayor Barron opened the meeting with a brief address declaring the desire of the board of health and council to hear opinions on what procedure should be taken. Councilman W. H. Barnes, president of the board of health, then took charge of the meeting.

Consideration for the welfare of the city as a whole was the keynote of all speakers.

Statistics of the progress of influenza here during the past six weeks and the status of health conditions in neighboring towns were briefly reviewed by Miss Pearl Elkerton of the office of the board of health. She stated that emergency calls had been received from several small towns in the neighborhood. The flu record for Eau Claire was read.

DR. I. F. THOMPSON, from his experience as an officer of the state board of health, cited various instances of Wisconsin towns which had closed, opened and reclosed.

"The problem of opening or closing must be determined by each city for itself," he concluded. "If the disease can be stretched over a long period there will be few deaths. Closing has spread out the number of cases so that few have been severe."

Others spoke in substance as follows:

Theaters Hard Hit.

B. J. BOSTWICK, theatre manager.—"We are hit harder than the majority. We don't wish to stay closed longer than necessary. If it will stamp out the flu we wish to stay closed, but think we are entitled to public co-operation. We have watched the surrounding territory and only one city over 10,000 except Superior is now closed in the state. Many towns with more cases are open. If all restrictions were used and houses quarantined and all worked together we could open up. We will be glad to use our men to placard houses or do anything to stamp out flu."

WILLIAM RYDELL, representing the liquor interests, said he believed quarantine of houses was the only way to stamp out the flu and do justice to others.

G. J. NASH, Eau Claire Book and Stationary Co.—"Eau Claire closed and Chippewa Falls open and going back and forth does not help check disease. This month and next are the big months of our retail trade.

Mr. Schofield questioned the recommendation of the state board of health that Eau Claire should wait till four cases a day was reached before opening when Madison, with many more, had opened at the time of the message.

MRS. A. H. SHOEMAKER, representing the woman's club, commended the action of the board of health. She said that all the Woman's Club had asked was that no business be privileged.

LEONARD LOKEN, telegraph school, spoke of his business losses, of the excellent ventilation and comparatively small classes in his institution.

MISS LAURA OLSON, librarian of the public library, stated that as far as she could learn no infection had ever been traced to library books.

Poor Aid Poorer.

MISS ELLEN F. MARSH spoke of the suffering and loss caused among the families aided by the Associated Charities since the epidemic of influenza. The visiting nurse had been so far able to care for the sick with the help of workers from the list of the Associated Charities. Miss Marsh said, "Our help has come in every case from our own poor. Old women have cared for babies, done washings, and tended the sick when no one else dared or could."

SEVERN MELBY urged the early opening of the Y. M. C. A.

DR. J. F. FARR said a man could be hit in two spots, in the pocket-book and by a death in his family.

Figure 12 Eau Claire Leader Telegram - Personal Accounts from community members in regards to the Pandemic and the closures cont.

Appendix 5 Continued

DR. E. S. HAYES.—“There should be no personal element in the discussion. The idea is to get the facts and determine the best thing. In the matter of assenting without complaints to the closing order Eau Claire has done herself proud. The problem is when to open. The epidemic is serious. If it were cholera there would be a panic. We are fortunate in having few pneumonias and few deaths. As to opening, we cannot foretell conditions. If we can save life or make sickness less severe I am sure all of us are glad to shut down, regardless of hurts. The board of health has no personal interest.”

A Merchant's View.

AUGUST GESKE, of Wm. Samuelson Dry Goods Co.—Congestion? They are not congested at Fall Creek or Altoona, but they have the flu, and lots of it. They don't lay it to stores. It hurts business to close, especially at this season. We want to help, but would it be worse if we opened? Eau Claire people go to Chippewa Falls to attend the movies. We have 32 girls and no cases in our store. My idea is to quarantine families, not to allow them to run around and spread the disease. The opposition outside is that Eau Claire is entirely closed.”

Clergy Suggests One Service.

REV. E. E. HORTH, representing the Ministerial Association.—“The

He discussed the difficulties of quarantine, saying that neither the time of incubation, duration, nor contagion of influenza was accurately known. The hardship wrought by shutting up the households, he said, would exceed the losses of all local business for ten months. The families would have to be cared for. He agreed the measures taken by the health board were not expected to stop the disease, but to render it so gradual in its development that it could be handled. The city isolation hospital, he said, had saved the community many cases by placing members of households where their infection would not be communicated and where it was possible to secure nurses' care.

The meeting adjourned at 6 o'clock. It had convened at 4:20.

Figure 13 Eau Claire Leader Telegram - Personal Accounts from community members in regards to the Pandemic and the closures cont.

Appendix 6

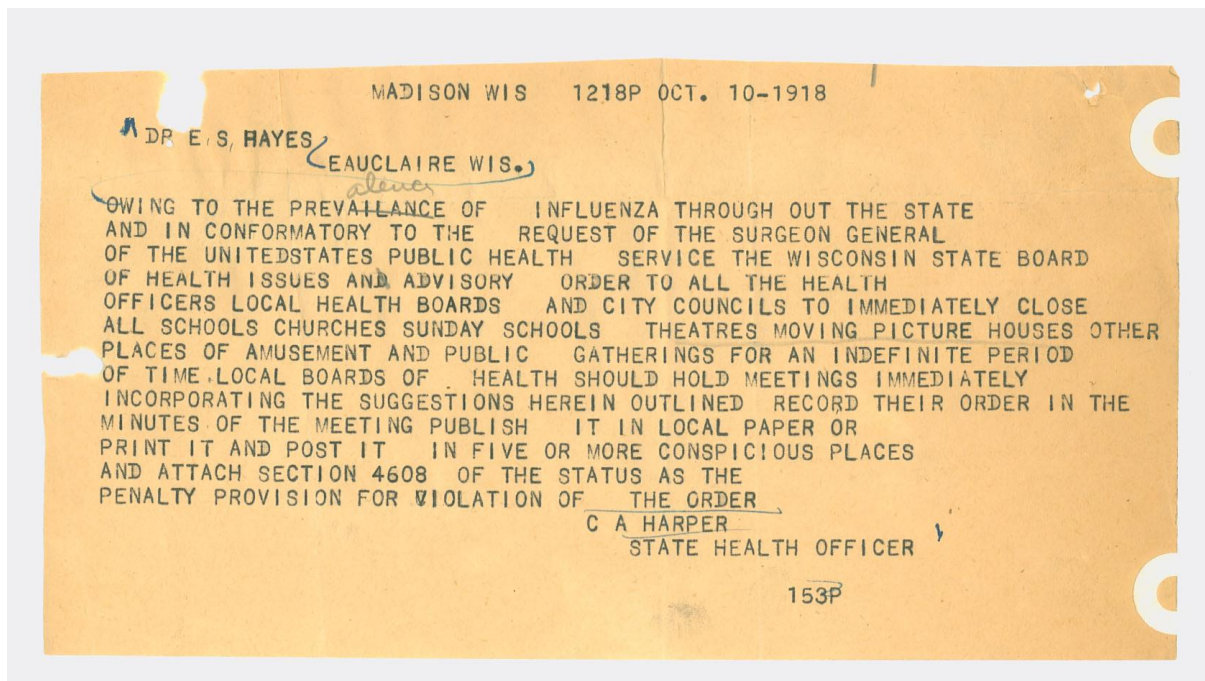


Figure 14 Telegram from State Board of Health to the Eau Claire Board of Health advising closures

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Appendix 7

¹²¹ Telegram advising closures due to epidemic of Influenza in Wisconsin. October 10, 1918. EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.

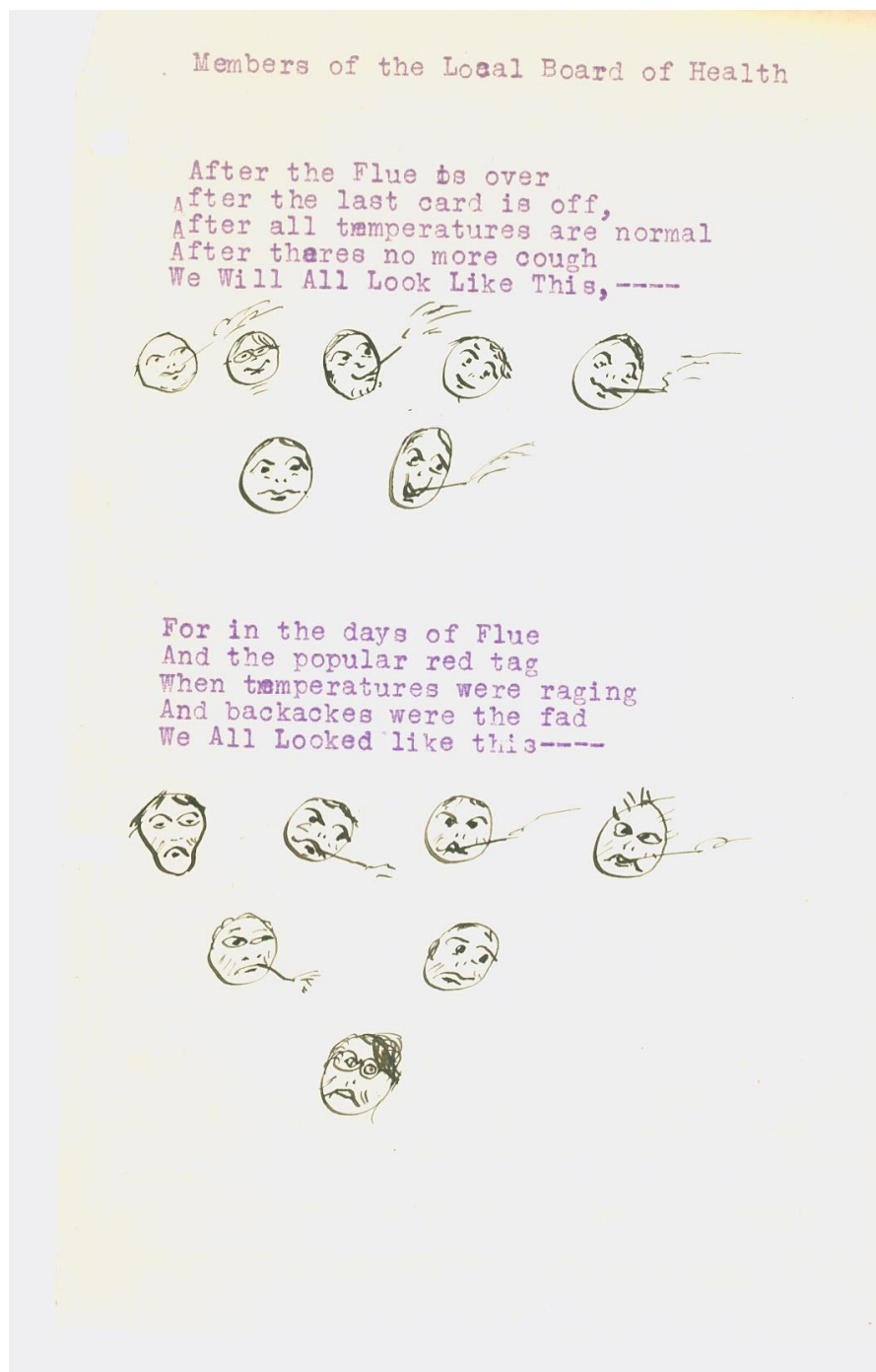


Figure 15 Characters and Poem from Eau Claire Board of Health Records

¹²² EC Series 124, Box 1. Eau Claire Board of Health Records 1913-1941. Eau Claire Area Research Center, UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library.