

Saint Joseph County, Influenza Related News, 1918

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The year 1918 was a time of great fear and uncertainty. For Americans, and for those around the world, the Great War had set the world ablaze. Millions died. As the devastating conflict entered its final year, another threat loomed in the form of a frightening disease, running rampant worldwide.

Influenza, a strain of the flu virus, was first seen in the United States during spring 1918. It spread to one of the largest military training camps in the country, and then, through the constant movement of troops, it was carried first back home and then abroad. By fall 1918 a variant strain of influenza had emerged, which proved particularly devastating to the younger generations. In total, worldwide an estimated fifty million people died of influenza. It was later reported that more soldiers died from it than from war-related injuries.¹

Below are extracts of influenza-related news that appeared in the October 12–14, 1918, issues of the *South Bend News–Times*. Personal mentions of sicknesses, hospitalizations, and deaths are listed here. Public service announcements, health guidelines, and other bulletins canceling events, from university football games to church services, are not included.² These notices also include mentions of pneumonia since it was commonly a result of influenza, and sometimes even a misdiagnosis for it. Individuals simply described as “ill,” or those stricken with other diseases without specific mention of influenza or pneumonia, are not listed. Researchers should follow up with a person’s death certificate to verify cause of death.

Notes

1. “World War I and Its Aftermath,” American Yawp, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/21-world-war-i/>, accessed June 21, 2021; “1918 Pandemic (H1N1 virus),” Center for Disease Control, <https://www.cdc.gov/az/i.html>, accessed June 21, 2021.
2. *South Bend News–Times* (South Bend, IN), October 12, 13, 14, 1918, accessible via Hoosier State Chronicles, <https://newspapers.library.in.gov>.

South Bend News–Times, October 12, 1918

Page 3

William McMahon, 224 N. St. Peter st., formerly a member of the South Bend police department, now in the army and stationed at Camp Zachary Taylor, is very ill with Spanish Influenza, according to a report received here. Pvt. McMahon left for Camp Taylor July 23. He was a member of the police department for five years.

W. A. Rutherford has returned ill to South Bend from an extended trip to the southern and western states. It is probable that he will be confined to his bed for some weeks at his home, 1412 Van Buren st.

Page 5

James A. Trail, 114 E. Jefferson blvd., has returned from Chicago, where he was summoned by the serious illness of his son, William Trail who is now recovering from a severe attack of Spanish influenza.

Mrs. Martha Paege, 32 years old, died Friday afternoon at 4:50 o'clock at St. Joseph's hospital after a five days' illness of pneumonia. She is survived by her husband, Heronini; three children, Mary, Helen and Joseph, and her mother, Mrs. Michalena Andrzejewska. She is also survived by two sisters, Mrs. Rose Kolska and Veronica Rozplochowska, and one brother, Lieut. John Andrzejewska of Rock Island, Ill.

Mrs. Paege, whose maiden name was Martha Andrzejewska, was born in South Bend March 4, 1886, and has lived in the vicinity all her life. She was a member of Polish National Alliance of America, branch 864. On Oct. 12, 1907, she was married to Heronini Paege in South Bend. The body was brought from the hospital Friday evening to her residence, 721 S. Arnold st., where it may be viewed. The funeral will be held from St. Casimir's church Monday morning at 9 o'clock and burial will be in St. Joseph's cemetery.

Funeral services for Pvt. William Miltenberger, who died at Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, O., of pneumonia, were held at the grave at 9:30 o'clock Saturday morning. Rev. P. J. Carroll, C.S.C., officiated. Burial was in Highland cemetery.

Page 6

Mrs. Ray Heeter, 25 years old, died at her home, 209 Middlebury st., North Side, of pneumonia, after an illness of about one week. Her fatal ailment was the first serious sickness with which Mrs. Heeter was ever seized. Surviving her are her husband, a barber employed at the L. G. Grady shop; one son, six years old; seven-months-old daughter, whose condition is serious; her mother, Mrs. Agnes Spacey of North Manchester; and two brothers, Clifford Spacey of Warsaw and Emmett Spacey of North Manchester. The deceased was born in North Manchester July 11, 1893, and came here with her husband a year ago last June. Strictly private funeral services will be held at the home at 8 o'clock a.m. Sunday, and the body will be taken to North Manchester.

Morris M. Black, 35 years old, died of pneumonia at the home of his brother, Rollin Black, Noble county. He was ill but a few days.

The death of Miss Ethel Amanda Eby, from Spanish influenza, complicated with pneumonia, at the General hospital at 1:50 o'clock Friday morning marks the fourth fatality from the epidemic in this city withing [*sic*] the last 10 days. Miss Eby was a nurse. Mrs. Emily Wise died Oct. 3 and George Hardy and Robert Selden Freed on Oct. 5.

Miss Eby was born in Nappanee Jan. 3, 1893, the daughter of Henry F. and Mary E. Eby. She attended the public schools of that town and graduated from the high school. She entered the general hospital training school for nurses here in September, 1917. Besides her parents, Miss Eby is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Eunice Kinney of Milford, and Miss Lula Eby, at home.

South Bend News–Times, October 13, 1918

Page 2

Von Frazier is very ill with pneumonia at his home on Birdsell st.

Page 3

Pvt. August Vanderhagen, son of Mr and Mrs. Peter Vanderhagen, R.R., No. 1, died Friday afternoon at Camp Custer, Mich., of pneumonia. Pvt. Vanderhagen is 25 years old. He entered the service on Aug. 28 of this year and went directly to Camp Custer, where he was made a member of the 255th sanitary train. He was formerly employed at the Oliver factory. Besides his parents, Pvt. Vanderhagen is survived by three brothers, Frank, Charles and Edward, and six sisters, Mrs. Christina Janowski, Mrs. Eldie Vandersample, and the Misses Martha and Genevieve Vanderhagen, all of South Bend, and Mrs. Mary Dietch of Chicago, and Miss Sadie Vanderhagen of Indianapolis.

Three women, Mrs. Frank Reed, Miss Elsie Rupel and Mrs. Frank Hostetter, died of Spanish influenza at Walkerton, St. Joseph county, Saturday. None of the women were ill more than a week. Miss Rupel was a teacher in Walkerton grammar school. She is survived by her parents and one brother and sister. Mrs. Reed is survived by her husband and two daughters and Mrs. Hostetter, who is a widow, is survived by four sons.

Page 7

Harry Schurr is ill at home, 1216 S. Carroll st., with an attack of Spanish influenza.

Mrs. W. W. Kleckner, 209 S. Taylor st., has just received word of the death of her nephew, Arnaldo Henry Fletcher and of his wife. Mr. Fletcher had served in the navy for 22 years and held a high position in the service at the time of his death, which occurred Friday at the navy hospital at New London, Conn., after a short illness of influenza and pneumonia. Mrs. Fletcher, who was at her husband's bedside, succumbed to the disease three days prior to the death of her

husband, and it is supposed that the shock of her death proved fatal to him. The couple is survived by two daughters, aged four and six years.

Mrs. W. R. Roderick entertained at dinner yesterday Rev. and Mrs. Cotton of Sheridan, Ind., who have been conducting a series of revivals at the Church of God mission on E. Mishawaka av. The meetings have closed here on account of the influenza epidemic. Rev. and Mrs. Cotton have left for Decatur, Mich., where they expect to assist with revival meetings.

Alice, little daughter of Mr. And Mrs. Jacob Zerbe, N. Eighth st., who has been critically ill with influenza is reported better today.

Mrs. Emma Purkey, N. Eighth st. Received word Saturday morning morning [sic] from the Great Lakes naval training station stating her son, Russell Purkey, was in the hospital where he had submitted to an operation for catarrh. Mr. Purkey had just recovered from an attack of Spanish influenza and abscess of the ear, result of the influenza.

Page 11

Prof. L. E. Steinbach is able to be on the street again after a severe attack of influenza.

Word was received from Bramshott, England, that Harold North was seriously ill there with influenza.

Word of the death after a brief illness of pneumonia of Mrs. Maria Couchman on Tuesday evening at the home of her sister, Mrs. Ura Miller of South Bend, was received here. Mrs. Couchman had been a resident of New Carlisle for the past 30 years. Funeral services were held Friday afternoon at 1 o'clock at the Christian church. Burial in the New Carlisle cemetery. Besides her sister, Mrs. Couchman is survived by four brothers and two step-daughters, Mrs. Cora Sweeney of Buchanan and Mrs. Bertha Trowbridge of Albert Lea, Minn.

Otis O. Witmer, 21 years old, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Witmer of this city died of Spanish influenza at Camp Taylor today. He was inducted into the army in the recent draft call.

The South Bend News–Times, October 14, 1918

Page 3

Fredrick Linsenmayer, 1015 W. Thomas st., is confined to his bed since last Saturday with influenza.

Mrs. Laretto Marie Daurer, 26 years old, died at Epworth hospital at 1:30 o'clock Sunday afternoon, following an illness of two weeks of pneumonia. She was born in South Bend Sept. 23, 1892, and had lived here all her life. Mrs. Daurer is survived by her husband, Joseph Daurer, who lives at their home in Portage township, four miles west of the city; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob A. McWilliams; two children, Joseph S. and Lucile M. Daurer, and the following brothers and sisters: Mrs. C. Archambeau, Argos, Ind.; Mrs. J. Milner, Gallen, Mich.; Mrs. Ira Boyer, Mrs. Lawrence McDoniel and Mrs. John Hunt of this city, and William McWilliams of Bridgeman, Mich. Funeral services will be held at the Orvis chapel Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Burial will be in Cedar Grove cemetery.

The one day old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Aframo Digiacomi of Three Rivers, Mich., died at Epworth hospital Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Funeral services will be held at the Kreighbaum chapel Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock and burial will be in Riverview cemetery. Both parents of the infant are seriously ill of pneumonia at the hospital.

Word has been received here that Miss Ada Brown, formerly employed as bookkeeper by the Kuehn Jordon Co. in this city, died at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Brown, Sturgis, Mich., following an illness of Spanish influenza. Burial took place Sunday morning at 10 o'clock.

The body of Pvt. Frank Wallasch, who died of pneumonia at Camp Funston, arrived here at 10 o'clock Saturday night and was taken to the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Wallasch, 306 N. Walnut st. Private funeral services were held at the German Catholic church at 9 o'clock Monday morning, Rev. J. F. Scherer officiating. Burial was in Cedar Grove cemetery.

Page 5

The condition of Dr. C. A. Rennoe, W. Washington av., who has been ill for the past week with an attack of influenza, is reported today as being slightly improved.

Felix, son of Mr. and Mrs. Adalbert Wiatrowski, 807 W. Thomas st., who has been seriously ill with grip, shows improvement.

Mary, the little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lewandowski, W. Jefferson blvd., who has been ill with influenza is reported better today.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Decker and two children of Mishawaka av. and Eleventh st., who are ill with influenza, are reported better today. Miss Cora Carter and Miss Marian Beck, who room at the Decker home, are now ill with the disease also Miss Beck's mother, Mrs. A. Beck of Bronson, Mich., who was called here to nurse her daughter, making seven influenza patients in one home.

Mrs. Milo Smith, S. Seventh st., is reported ill with influenza today. Mrs. Smith returned last Thursday from Chicago, where she was called to attend the funeral of her daughter-in-law, who died with Spanish influenza.

Mrs. Clyde Roderick, Tenth st., who has been seriously ill with influenza and pneumonia, is improving.

Miss Gene Gammack, who is attending the teachers training school at Terre Haute, Ind., has returned to her home to remain during the influenza epidemic. Dr. Gammack, her father, who is ill with the disease, is improving.

The order closing all churches of the city did not affect the semi-religious ceremonies performed by Justice Joseph V. Wypiszynski on Sunday. The justice was called from his beauty nap about 9 o'clock Sunday morning by two local people, Arley R. Hilligas and Yressa Schuster of this city, who besought him to tie the marriage knot. Inasmuch as none of the pastors of the city was working that day, the justice performed the ceremony with as much solemnity as possible. Wypiszynski stated Monday that the influenza continues to keep the houses of worship closed on Sundays[.] he intends to maintain certain hours "at home" to meet the occasion.

Herman H. Grab and Bulu Miller were married at their home, [---]04 Lincoln way W., Sunday afternoon by the justice.

Page 8

Charles Ovchampaugh, 512 W. Grove st. And Marchel McCoy, Charlotte st., have received word of the death from pneumonia of their nephew, Frank Waugh, of Rockwell City, Ia., in a military training camp. He was 21 years old.

Miss Josephine Goeller of the Mishawaka Trust & Savings Co., is confined to her home, 204 W. Grove st., with an attack of influenza.

Mr. and Mrs. Ben Erwin, 201 Indiana av., and Mrs. G. A. Mayor, 212 Indiana av., have gone to Centralia, Ill., to attend the funeral of Miss Maxine James, a relative. Miss James resided in Mishawaka during the past summer and was employed at the National Veneer Co. She has many friends here. During her stay she resided at the Mayor home. She was 20 years old. Death was due to pneumonia.

Word has been received here that the condition of Cpl. Alphonse Van Holsbeke of the 40th infantry, stationed at Camp Custer, Mich., who is ill with pneumonia is slightly improved. Cpl. Van Holsbeke had influenza which later developed into pneumonia. He is the son of August Van Holsbeke, 1310 S. Spring st., who during the past week has received three telegrams from the camp, stating that his son's condition was critical.

Rev. Dr. B. E. Parker, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, is at the beside of his father who is seriously ill with influenza and has symptoms of pneumonia, at his home in Decatur, Ill. Dr. Parker will remain a few days and wait developments before returning to Mishawaka but expects to be able to return by Tuesday.

The little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Russel Fredericks, who has been ill with pneumonia for the past week, is slightly improved.

Ernest Beebe, Lincoln way E., is confined to his home suffering from influenza.

Pvt. Otis Witmer, 21 years old, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Witmer, residing one and a half miles north of Goshen, and who was in military training at Camp Zachary Taylor, Louisville, Ky., died there Friday night after a short illness of pneumonia. His condition had been critical for several days.

Culp & Son are without further information regarding the sending of the body of Pvt. Orvie G. Fansch from Fort Niagara, N. Y., where he died of pneumonia, to Goshen for burial. The undertakers here had been advised by the fort authorities that the body would be sent from Fort Niagara as soon as possible. On account of shortage of embalmers many delays have been encountered at army camps.

Cpl. Ralph D. Harrison, 24 years old, son of W. C. B. Harrison, editor and publisher of the *Ligonier Banner*, who died of pneumonia at Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, O., after an illness of nine days, was born in Goshen, March 21, 1892.

Funeral services for Pvt. John W. Davidhizer, who died of pneumonia at Camp Knox, Ky., were held at [---] o'clock Saturday afternoon at the home of Jacob Davidhizer, father of the deceased, three and one-half miles southwest of Elkhart. Revs. F. J. Funk and David Yoder officiated and burial was made in Olive cemetery.