



Gaslight News

Like us on Facebook
December 2020

Historical Society of Riverton

rivertonhistory.com

vol. L, no. 4 (#185)

Founded 1970

Riverton, NJ 08077

Incorporated 1978

The morbidly familiar description at right is not about our current COVID-19 public health crisis; it is for a much earlier one: the so-called Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918.

The Society is pleased to present this uniquely local perspective on the 1918 outbreak.

We welcome any additional anecdotal information our readers may care to share.

GOODBYE, 2020!



In this issue

1918-1919 FLU PANDEMIC

- PATRICIA SMITH SOLIN & JOHN MCCORMICK 1

MEMBERS' GENEROSITY

- ROGER PRICHARD & JOHN MCCORMICK 1

TIME TO RENEW 2021 DUES

- JOHN MCCORMICK 5

The Influenza Pandemic of 1918 – 1919

Our Editor collaborates with Patricia Solin on a study of how the 1918 Spanish Flu affected this area

FOREWORD

Whether it was called grip, la grippe, sweating sickness, influenza, or flu, epidemics of such acute viral infections of the respiratory tract have plagued humanity for centuries. In 1918, another deadly global pandemic of foreign origin reached American shores.

Mrs. Pat Smith Solin, HSR member and frequent contributor of articles to the *Gaslight News*, brings a local and personal perspective to the following account of the origin and local effects of the 1918 flu pandemic. -JMc, Editor

INTRODUCTION

On September 28, 1918, Philadelphia held a [Liber-ty Loan Campaign Parade](#) in support of those from the United States who were fighting in the Great War in Europe. Despite warnings that "the Spanish

flu" was active, this display of patriotism drew about 200,000 local residents, all lining Broad Street; war support superseded public health concerns despite the disease spreading globally since March 1918.

Germany and Spain were blamed for the outbreak that infected American soldiers, which was untrue, but this propaganda was too appealing to dispel during wartime.

It did not take long for the infection in Philadelphia to spread, filling local hospitals within 72 hours. Case numbers grew to 5,561 in only two days.

Spain Affected by German Sick-ness and Other Countries Will Be, Says Hollander.

WORKMEN DIE AT TASKS

Whole Nation Described as Spiritless from Underfeeding and Curbed by Iron Rule.

Copyright, 1918, by The New York Times Company. Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES. THE HAGUE, June 20.—The mysterious sickness now prevalent in Spain comes from Germany and will doubtless soon reach other countries," said a Dutch tailor who recently returned from Germany. "Conditions among the civil population of Germany are terrible.

[NY Times, 6/21/1918](#)

See PANDEMIC on 2

The Society acknowledges members' support

Even with many worthy appeals elsewhere, our members astonish us with their generosity

Ok, we'll write 2020s most overused phrase.

"During these unprecedented times..." we all face many demands for our attention and we are humbled that the public can still remember to support the mission of the Historical Society. We gratefully acknowledge the following donations.

Nancy Geiss \$250

Alan Lilholt & Helene Lilholt \$50

Many thanks to Nancy and Gary Grimes for a great idea to brighten up Riverton. Nancy organized donations to purchase 80 natural wreaths with ribbons and greeting tags for many of our gaslights. On December 6 she fielded a small army of volunteers (with well-organized lists) who got them all hung in no



PHOTO: Roger Prichard

time. She donated \$500 in profits to the Society, for which we are very grateful. Special thanks to [The Barclay Group](#) for the kindness of an extra donation! - RP

Recently, Riverton resident Jerry Blaney donated to the Society a box containing his ten-year collection of historical collectibles.

The inventory includes a number of items that will serve to inspire a number of future website posts: a Souvenir Folder of postcards compliments of Wm. T. McAlister, several *Palmyrian* issues and PHS football programs from the 1940s, a 1909 and a 1966 *New Era* newspaper, a framed 1920 July Fourth Program, two vintage postcards, several photographs, and much more. -JMC



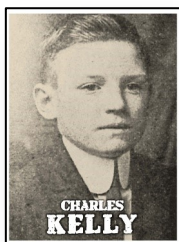
PANDEMIC from 1

TRANSMISSION CHALLENGES

ORDER CLOSES SCHOOLS, THEATRES AND MEETING PLACES IN GRIP FIGHT

Evening Public Ledger, 10/3/1918, p.1,2

However, that was just the beginning for our country. A [1920 NJ State Document, p837](#) observed, "No city, town, or hamlet escaped its ravages." The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has an excellent [timeline](#) of this deadly outbreak.



This pneumonia-like flu caused the deaths of two of the six Riverton Gold Star boys ([GN, Jan 2017](#)) who went to war, **Raymond Pratt** on October 1, 1918 and **Charles Kelly** on October 12, 1918, as well as many residents in the region.



A personal interest motivated researching this topic, too. On the Smith side of my family, **Lester Charles Pearce**, my great-uncle served overseas during World War I. Upon his return to the US, he died at age 29 on November 24, 1918 of "pneumonia, with a contributing factor being the flu." On the Solin side, my husband's grandmother passed during a subsequent influenza wave in [1926](#), leaving four small children, one of whom was husband Barry's father.

The 1918 influenza pandemic touched virtually every household.

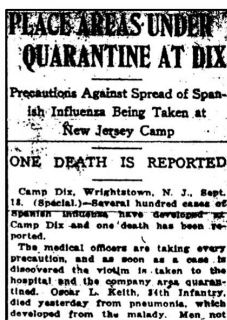
THE BEGINNING

This highly infectious disease began its sweep throughout the country as early as September of 1918. The disease also infected animals with what was called [Shipping Fever](#), killing 4,777 horses and mules that were to be used in fight the war Europe.

The first recorded death of Influenza A (H1N1) virus in New Jersey was documented at Fort Dix (then known as Camp Dix) in September 1918, although the flu quickly made its way throughout the state.

Influenza sickened more over a million men of the American Expeditionary Force, causing a staggering loss of 8,743,102 days of military engagement due to the illness, and killed almost 30,000 before they even got to France. The Navy recorded 5,027 deaths and more than 106,000 hospitalizations."

Of the [7,000 cases](#) treated in the Camp Dix base hospital during the epidemic, 863 died—a 12% fatality rate. Incidentally, Burlington County's COVID-19 fatality rate is currently at 3%. (More present-day information on the [Burlington County, NJ COVID-19 Community Impact Dashboard](#).)



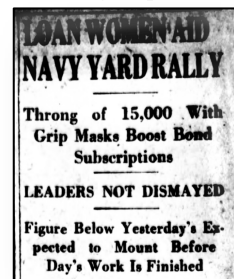
Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, 9/18/1918, p3

New Jersey health officials made "...vigorous efforts to check the disease in its incipency." In today's parlance, they tried to "flatten the curve" by mitigating the spread of the disease. Even then, they determined that masks served as the first line of defense.

The Red Cross in Philadelphia reported on [October 5](#) that they expected to furnish 51,000 gauze masks for nurses attending flu patients.

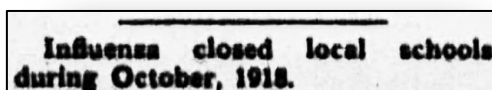
After Philadelphia's infamous Liberty Loan Parade super-spreader event in September, at a similar rally reported on October 12 at the Navy Yard, virtually the entire throng of 15,000 wore masks.

NJ health officials demanded a state lockdown of social gatherings and instructed people to avoid crowds (NJ State Doc. [p837](#)). All public gatherings were forbidden, schools, churches, theatres, moving picture shows, and [sa-loons](#) were ordered closed, but the infection still multiplied.



Evening Public Ledger, 10/12/1918

Restrictions included suspending schools, church services, and shutting down all sports, such as boxing and football.



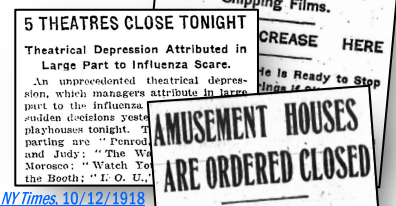
The New Era, Nov. 1939 Anniv. Issue

Riverton's own [Christ Episcopal Church closed](#) on three consecutive Sundays in October, a dreadful month which witnessed the death of eight of its communicants.

Broadway theaters went dark and movie moguls in New York City decided to discontinue all motion picture releases until the epidemic had abated. Camden ordered all amusement houses to close.

A combination of factors enabled the killer flu to spread rapidly. The NJ State Department of Health cited three challenges:

Disease transmission resulted when troops returned to military bases, bringing this infection with them on the ships returning from WWI. First hit -- primarily the east coast of the United States. Locally, the infection moved quickly to the whole of Philadelphia from its Navy Yard and to other civilian populations.



NY Times, 10/12/1918



Morning Post, 10/2/1918

With Camp Dix suffering our first fatality in the state, it, too became a super spreader hot spot. Given the history of Rivertonians engaging with Camp Dix and Philadelphia, as well as the proximity of the places to each other, transmission of the illness to the local citizenry was inevitable. A number of business persons owned homes in Philadelphia as well as in Riverton. Too, some Riverton residents commuted to the city possibly by auto-

*We relied heavily on an online publication for many statistics. Entitled, [Documents of the One Hundred and Forty-Third and One Hundred and Forty-Fourth Legislatures of the State of New Jersey and the Seventy-Fifth and Seventy-Sixth Under the New Constitution Vol. II Documents 15 to 28 Inclusive](#), we refer to it throughout this article as **NJ State Doc**.

mobile or railroad to Camden, then by ferry to the foot of Market Street in Philadelphia. These factors may have contributed to local transmission of disease.

One such prominent business owner was **Robert Biddle II** of 607 Bank Avenue. He had been elected president in 1917 of the Biddle Hardware Co. at 5th & Commerce Streets in Philadelphia, founded by his grandfather and great-uncle in 1837.



Robert Biddle II, *Who's Who in Philadelphia, Wartime Edition*

Active in community affairs, Robert served as chairman of a Red Cross drive in 1918. He died at age 39 of influenza on October 12, 1918, after attending a large funeral in Philadelphia on October 6.

Lack of medical care. Across the United States 30,000 physicians and nurses were already deployed to Europe to assist troops in World War I, leaving overtaxed local doctors and nurses straining to care for their patients.

In the region, the [American Red Cross](#), [student nurses](#), University of Pennsylvania fourth-year [medical students](#), Philadelphia [Girl Scouts](#), and [nuns](#) helped reinforce the exhausted medical staff of the city.

In early October 1918, as flu cases overwhelmed hospitals, emergency hospitals multiplied. Armories in Camden and Philadelphia became emergency hospitals. A home on Spruce Street in Philadelphia helped care for stricken [shipyard workers](#). BurlCo Freeholders authorized the use of the [County Hospital for the Insane](#) for the care of Camp Dix flu cases.

BURLINGTON APPEALS TO STATE FOR AID
Special to The Inquirer.
BURLINGTON, N. J., Oct. 15.—Old Saint Mary's Church has been turned over to the city, as an emergency hospital. The Board of Health has sent out calls for physicians and nurses to care for the sick and dying throughout the city. A thousand cases of influenza have been reported and the epidemic is increasing with great rapidity. There is but one doctor in this city who is not stricken. Ten deaths have been reported in the last twelve hours.

[Phila. Inquirer, 10/16/1918](#)

In Burlington, flu cases surged to 1,000. Old St. Mary's Church served as another temporary hospital offering its one doctor who was not stricken with the disease to care for the entire city.

The outbreak caused a major upheaval in the supply chains of many businesses resulting in a shortage of medical supplies and [delivery delays](#) of merchandise from mills and factories.

"Burial Problem Serious" announced *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on October 11, 1918, as 500 bodies awaited burial and prisoners were put to work digging graves.

Case volume. The previously cited, *Documents of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey, United States: n.p., 1920*, illustrates the heavy toll that the 1918 exacted upon New Jersey before it was over.

During the months of October through December 1918, the NJ State Dept. of Health received reports of 292,839 flu cases and 18,027 pneumonia cases (NJ State Doc. [p 865](#)). They accounted for 17,407 deaths in New

Jersey during the last four months of 1918. Burlington County lost 363 souls to the flu and 151 to pneumonia (NJ State Doc. [p1102](#)).

By **October 16, 1918**, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* announced, "Riverton and Palmyra have reported a thousand cases and many deaths."

Tallies for other area locations included: over 500 cases for [Florence](#), over 15,000 [Trenton](#) cases, nearly 1,000 cases in [Burlington](#), 1,500 for [Millville](#), [2000 cases/50 deaths](#) for Riverside, 2 deaths in [Delanco](#), and 300 cases/5 deaths in [Woodbury](#).

Nearby [Chester Twp.](#), which included Maple Shade and Moorestown, reported 1,070 cases of flu and pneumonia during a 10-day period, killing 30 people.

According to the [NJ State Doc. p1102](#), in Burlington County in 1918, there were 363 deaths from influenza and 151 deaths from pneumonia.

In short, deaths "...raged in practically every region of the state from September to December, when thousands of our citizens of all ages and in all walks of life were stricken," (NJ State Doc. [p837](#)).

With its rapid infection rate and its subsequent patient sudden-death rate, as previously noted, some sufferers were without any access to medical care. They died quickly, often recorded only by death certificates to the NJ State Health Department; many, many flu deaths went unrecorded by newspapers. But we know the names of a few.

DELANCO: Samuel Osmond, 5/10/1918, age?, Spanish influenza
Noloney Beakler, 5/10/1918, age?, influenza

RIVERTON: Carrie Dillon, age?, 10/8/1918, pneumonia
Nellie Marguerite Weigel, age?, 10/18/1918, influenza
Robert Biddle, age 39, 10/12/1918, influenza
Helen Ward, age?, 2/14/1919, pneumonia

PALMYRA: Aloysius Smith, age 26, 3/17/1919, pneumonia
Mrs. C. McMahon, age 22, 2/28/1919, grip/pneumonia

RIVERSIDE: Charles Heiss, age?, 11/11/1918 influenza

THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY & VOLUNTEERS

After the American entry into World War I in April 1917, the nation and this region saw a systematic mobilization of the country's entire population and economy to support the war effort. Both Riverton and Palmyra enthusiastically established home guard units, held drives to recruit members and donations for the Red Cross, and held their own versions of Liberty Loan campaigns.

Everyone tried to help. [Churches](#), the [Porch Club](#), [Riverton Yacht Club](#), [Riverton Gun Club](#), [Riverton Country Club](#), [River-](#)

5 DEATHS. 300 CASES REPORTED AT WOODBURY
1500 CASES REPORTED IN TOWN OF MILLVILLE
IN MOORESTOWN
Over a Thousand Cases of Influenza During Ten-Day
"FLU" GRIPS THOUSANDS IN BURLINGTON SECTION
EPIDEMIC CLAIMS 59 OF CAMDEN'S RESIDENTS

BATTERY ARMORY THROWN OPEN TO STAY INFLUENZA
Elks And Moose Also Take Suggestion Of Courier To Aid Victims
EVERY STEP TAKEN TO STAMP OUT MALADY
In a determined effort to arrest the further spread of influenza in this city, drastic steps were taken by the Board of Health yesterday afternoon by

[Courier-Post, 10/7/1918](#)

THOUSAND BODIES UNBURIED IN CITY
Coroner Calls for Volunteer Grave Diggers—Prisoners to Be Used
ASSAIL BAN ON LIQUOR
"Fool Order" Has Caused Deaths by Depriving Sufferers of Remedy, Says Knight
More than 1000 bodies of Philadelphia influenza victims are awaiting burial.

[Evening Public Ledger, 10/12/1918](#)

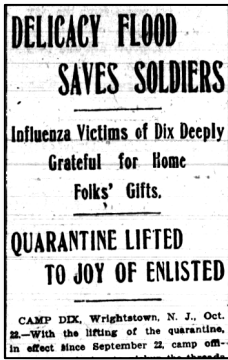
OBITUARY
Funeral Notice.
The body of Mrs. Carrie Dillon, who died on Saturday evening at Riverton, N. J., of pneumonia, will arrive here on the 8:30 train this morning and will be taken in charge by Funeral Director T. B. McFarland. The funeral cortege will proceed direct to the Presbyterian cemetery for interment.

[Altoona Tribune, 10/8/1918](#)

HOME GUARD RECRUITING
Riverton Enlisting Men From 18 to 21 for Military Training
Special to The Inquirer.
RIVERTON, N. J., Dec. 16.—Efforts are being made by the Riverton Home Guard to enlist in its ranks every young man in the city between the ages of 18 and 21 in order that such citizens may have become efficient in military training should the draft be extended to these ages. A recruiting committee has been

[Phila. Inquirer, 12/17/1917](#)

[ton Free Library](#)—they all participated—and some of their efforts involved contact with soldiers from Camp Dix.



Morning Post, 10/22/1918

local newspaper record is missing for much of the time of the outbreak, Riverton's citizenry and its various organizations presumably worked to contain the pandemic, just as they had vigorously supported the war effort as shown in the October 1917 news photo at right.

By mid-January 1919, Riverton's 977 dedicated members of the local [Red Cross](#) were working to finish their allotment of garments for refugees.

(See more about contributions of Rivertonians to World War I in "On the Home Front," in the [March 2017 Gaslight News](#).)

The Red Cross assisted in equipping at least [20 emergency hospitals](#) in New Jersey. Hospitals filled with sick patients, so much so that auxiliary buildings were turned into emergency hospitals and clinics.

[Dr. Alexander Marcy, Jr.](#) of 406 Main Street and [Dr. Charles S. Mills](#) of 106 Lippincott served on a committee to enroll and mobilize members throughout the state the central government. The extent to which Dr. Marcy or Dr. Mills treated local flu patients is unknown.

Two Palmyra nurses, [Mrs. James Weart](#) and [Mrs. Edward Keim](#), volunteered to serve with the Red Cross at Camp Dix. According to Betty Hahle's [February 1991 "Yesterday"](#), she wrote, "A few courageous women went about helping stricken families, ignoring their own safety, among them [Mrs. J. Weart](#), [Mrs. H. Sycklemoore](#), and [Mrs. C.C. Green](#)." Six young women from nearby Beverly also volunteered to nurse Camp Dix soldiers.

SYMPTOMS & TREATMENTS

Without an effective [vaccine](#), doctors prescribed bedrest and good nutrition, and cautioned folks to not spit, and avoid crowds and public gatherings. Some mitigation measures, such as suspending public assemblies and liquor sales, were met with [protests](#).

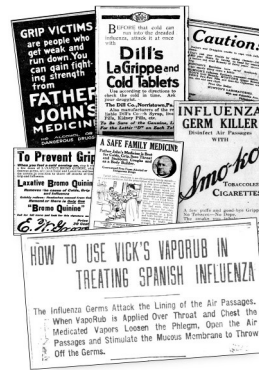
Newspapers warned their readers to watch for symptoms and advised how to treat the disease. A variety array of home remedies proliferated promising relief of symptoms, including [Vick's Vaporub](#), [Laxative Bromo Quinine](#), [Father John's Medicine](#), [Munyon's Grippe Remedy](#), and [Smo-ko Tobaccoless Cigarettes](#).

Camp Dix was under quarantine from September 22 – October 22, 1918. An appeal made through newspapers for flowers and fruit resulted in Riverton, along with dozens of South Jersey towns, sending a flood of fruit, jams, juice, and delicacies to help the troops convalesce. Camden's Campbell Soup Company sent hundreds of gallons of soups and broths.

Supporting the war effort meant fighting the influenza. Although the



Evening Public Ledger, 10/25/1917



One [Pittsburgh doctor](#) advised injecting a solution of iodine, creosote, and guaiacol! Alcohol, especially whiskey, was a known treatment endorsed by more than a few doctors, but since saloons were closed, the only way to receive "medicinal" liquor was by a doctor's prescription.

The New Era described a typical quarantine protocol (this version for small pox) as follows: Guards were placed outside a home on a 24-hour a day shift to ensure that any family that had an infection remained quarantined until cleared by a medical professional.

WHEN WAS IT OVER?

Having endured a lengthy shutdown from the end of September, people were ready to believe that the worst of the flu was over; pandemic fatigue set in.

The Philadelphia Inquirer of [October 5, 1918](#), entreated, "Talk of cheerful things instead of disease," and asked, "The authorities seem to be going daft. What are they trying to do, scare everybody to death?"

There was plenty with which to alarm the populace in the days ahead.

The *Inquirer* optimistically declared on October 6, "[Epidemic Believed to Be Under Control](#)," but that proved to be premature.

Finding specific reports of the effects of the epidemic on our own populace proved problematic since there are no local hometown periodicals available for that period.

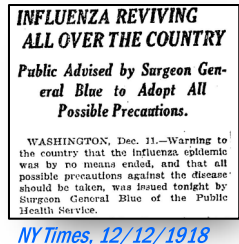
We had to look elsewhere for more insights that included New Jersey and Burlington County reports and compilations of vital statistics for 1918 and 1919.

In all, the [1920 NJ State Document, p844](#), recorded 7,512 deaths in New Jersey due to pneumonia in 1918 as compared with 3,685 in 1917 – an increase of over 50%. Burlington County registered [120 deaths](#) due to pneumonia in 1918.

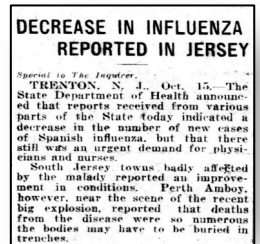
Lacking official mention about influenza's impact on our specific area, it is hard to discern the exact number of flu deaths other than that what was reported in newspapers.

When did "normal" return? An October 16, 1918 *Philadelphia Inquirer* headline hopefully asserted, "Decrease in Influenza Reported in New Jersey," but it was also too optimistic.

With flu restrictions closing saloons in Philadelphia, bar owners skirted the rules and started to fill doctors' prescriptions for medicinal alcohol, leading to violations of public drunkenness.



NY Times, 12/12/1918



Phila. Inquirer, 10/16/1918

NO SALOON SALES ON PRESCRIPTIONS

Latest Police Mandate Limits Medicinal Whisky Selling to Druggists

Results From Violation of Closing Order on Part of Liquor Men

Saloons and wholesale houses will no longer be permitted to sell liquor on doctors' prescriptions, according to orders issued late yesterday afternoon by the Department of Public Safety.

[Phila. Inquirer, 10/20/1918](#)

trolley from nearby New Jersey points to converge on Camden's 260 saloons in pursuit of alcoholic beverages that were unavailable in Philadelphia. No social distancing, here! Bedlam and threats followed as public health officials ordered Camden's establishments closed.

As a result, the City of Brotherly Love disallowed the practice on October 19 and determined liquor lovers had to seek another source for their refreshment. They found it in Camden.

On October 25, thousands of thirsty visitors arrived hourly by ferry from Philadelphia (no Delaware bridges to Philly then) and by

THIRSTY THOUSANDS CROSS TO CAMDEN BEFORE BARS CLOSE

Treendous Migration Causes Health Officials to Replace Lid

Gloom Falls on Multitude When Saloons Are Again Shut Up

[Phila. Inquirer, 10/26/1918](#)

HEAVY TOLL FROM CAMP DIX TROOPS

Death List of 36 from Influenza Including Two Lieutenants.

MALADY SUBSIDING SURGEONS DECLARE

CAMP DIX, Wrightstown, N. J., Sept. 25.—Thirty-six deaths from Spanish influenza and pneumonia was yesterday.

[Morning Post, 9/25/1918](#)

Parish House hosted a Community Hut that provided refreshment and recreation for soldiers. In none of the many articles about the "Hut" published through November 1919 was there any concern expressed about the flu.

The [January 17, 1919](#) issue of *The New Era* claimed, "the health of the American army both at home and overseas has been excellent."

A February 4 report by Riverton's [Visiting Nurse Society](#) expressed appreciation for community support and assured that although less critical illness made for heavy work, "...there has been, "fortunately no return of that frightful epidemic."

Perhaps an after effect of the flu, a sleeping sickness affliction called "[I'm-Thru-Enza](#)" struck Riverton's Red Cross workers in March 1919.

The previously cited, *Documents of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey. United States: n.p., 1920*, illustrates the heavy toll that the Spanish Flu exacted upon New Jersey before it was over. During the months of October through December 1918, the State Dept. of Health received reports of 292,839 flu cases and 18,027 pneumonia cases. They accounted for 17,407 deaths in New Jersey during the last four months of 1918. Burlington County lost 326 souls to the flu and 120 to pneumonia.

Camp Dix surgeons finally declared, "[Malady Subsidizing](#)," on October 25.

Subsidizing—maybe, but certainly still not gone.

On New Year's Day 1919, flu laid low [Mr. and Mrs. George Wiggins](#) of Palmyra, having already killed their daughter-in-law and grandchild.

Starting in December 1918, the Christ Church

RIVERTON TO HONOR SOLDIERS

Big Reception Tonight in Christ Church Parish House

Riverton appreciates what her sons did in the cause of democracy. A hearty welcome will be given those in the country's service tonight at Christ Church parish house. It will be used as a community hut, where the boys who have already returned and those who are on the way home may find rest and recreation.

[Evening Public Ledger, 12/10/1918](#)

In checking further issues in *The New Era* for 1919, there is little mention of influenza. By April 1919, the third wave of the Spanish Flu ended and normalcy returned. (For more about post-WWI Riverton, see "[A Grateful Community](#)" in the [May 2017 GN](#).)

With the coming of spring and summer, it appeared that our troops were apparently safe from disease, and so were those on the home front. Riverton resumed its full calendar of social, religious, civic, and athletic events, and it looked forward to celebrating another [Glorious Fourth](#).

The agenda included the Children's Flag Parade, a band concert, patriotic speeches, the Yacht Club's usual all-day program of boat and aquatic events, and fireworks at night to cap off a spectacular day undimmed by thoughts of influenza. One hundred eighty-one ex-servicemen marched in the parade that year.

"Don't shake every paw that is extended to you," advised Montclair NJ Health Officer [John Gaub](#). Perhaps it was advice better given late than never. Did they bump elbows instead?

PUTS BAN ON HANDSHAKES.

Montclair Health Officer Warns Against Spread of Disease.

MONTCLAIR, N. J., Sept. 21.—"Don't shake every paw that is extended to you," says Health Officer John Gaub in a bulletin which he has issued warning the people of this town of the danger that attends indiscriminate handshaking. Mr. Gaub said the intensive po-

[NY Times, 9/22/1919](#)

A November 1919 report cited only 19 flu deaths in all of New Jersey compared to 8,477 deaths in the prior October.

Influenza Deaths in Jersey. Special to The New York Times. TRENTON, N. J., Nov. 24.—Influenza caused nineteen deaths in this State in October, compared to 8,477 in October, 1918. The total deaths from all causes in October, as reported to the Bureau of Vital Statistics, was 2,704. There were 477 deaths among children under 1 year and 201 among children between 1 and 5 years.

[NY Times, 11/27/1919](#)

On [November 17, 1918](#), New York City's Health Commissioner [Dr. Royal S. Copeland](#) said, "the epidemic of Spanish influenza has been officially declared to be a thing of the past."

While New York City was getting their outbreak under control, the flu still raged across the United States, leaving in its wake people who grieved for those that died, orphans to be adopted, and lessons to learn about keeping the public safe from deadly infectious diseases.

We look forward to the day when COVID-19 is a thing of our past. Stay safe, Riverton.

- MRS. PATRICIA SMITH SOLIN & JOHN MCCORMICK



Please go to our [Contact & Membership Information](#) page and note our website link for a [membership form](#) if you wish to mail a check for your 2021 membership dues. To use PayPal, kindly click on the PayPal icon on the lower left side of our webpage. When prompted, enter the dollar amount. You will receive confirmation of your payment. Please use the contact form there to inform us of your membership payment or donation.

Gaslight News

is a publication of the Historical Society of Riverton and is published four times per year.



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RIVERTON

Post Office Box # 112

Riverton, NJ 08077



E-mail/Web: rivertonhistory@gmail.com
rivertonhistory.com/

