Ill in the 'Ville

The Events and Culture during the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Kirksville, Missouri as viewed through Kirksville's Newspapers

Robert Overmann Truman State University English Senior Seminar Conference December 1, 2014

Thesis and Significance

Kirksville's newspapers during the pandemic in 1918 — including the Kirksville Daily Express, Kirksville Normal School Index, and Kirksville Journal — served as public fora that reflected the pandemic's impact on Kirksville's culture. They were the primary disseminators of public information about the pandemic in Kirksville, and reflected the diverse interests of Kirksville's public and various institutions in the disease, including commercializing, trivializing, magnifying, and proselytizing about the disease's causes, effects, and impacts — sometimes all on a single page.

- Dates of outbreaks:
 - First Outbreak: October 2 27, 1918
 - Brief Lull: October 28 November 4, 1918
 - Second Outbreak: November 5 December 6, 1918
 - Resolution: December 7, 1918 January 7, 1919
- First mention in Kirksville periodicals:
 - October1 by Missouri State Board of Health
- First closing order issued:
 - October 9, physicians were asked to report all cases

- Institutions that were ordered closed:
 - Kirksville's Board of Health ordered the Kirksville State Normal School, all public schools, the Big Creek Coal Mine, the International Shoe Factory, churches, theatres, and places of business were affected by closing orders.
 - · First and second outbreaks.
- First illness mentioned:
 - Harry E. Allen, October 10 in *Daily Express*
- First death mentioned:
 - Allen; who died October 11
 - Only death reported by all three newspapers

- MVPs: Emergency Hospital staff/donors
 - Sacrifices by American School of Osteopathy,
 Theta Psi, Dr. Tom Ashlock, Red Cross chapter
- Worst Team Player: Dr. John R. Kirk, President of Kirksville State Normal School
- Least Affected Institution: KSNS

Point of greatest virulence: About November 19: 3,000 to 4,000 sickened at once.

Total deaths:

- 84 to 157 died in Adair County.
 - 0.39 0.73 percent of Adair County's residents approximately 21,404 residents (1920 Census).

Last mention:

- A.S.O. janitor Shade Epperson's death
 - January 7, 1919.

- ▶ Age Group Most Affected: 0-9
 - 47 deaths, or 35.3% of liberal estimate deaths.
- In Relation to Total Adair Deaths in 1918–1919:
 - 85–157 of 688 deaths.
 - 12.2% to 22.8% of deaths.
- Demographics of Average Victim:
 - White male child, living in Adair County outside of Kirksville.



Kirksville Daily Express

Vol. XVII, No. 288. Published November 13, 1918 in Kirksville, Missouri.

Pickler Memorial Library Archives. Microfilm.

Kirksville



Journal.

at MILLS & GARGES CLOTHING CO.

and take advantage of the Big Reduction Sale on Ladies' Coats, Suits and Dresses

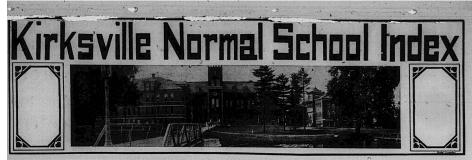
20 to 331% Off

Ladies' Department

Kirksville Journal

Vol. LIV, No. 5. Published December 5, 1918 in Kirksville, Missouri.

Pickler Memorial Library Archives. Microfilm.



Volume X

KIRKSVILLE, MISSOURI, OCTOBER, .9 1918.

NUMBER 23

Allegiance

Students Army Training Corps Officially Inaugurated Here Today

saegs from Hon. Benedict Crowell, Bandmaster. acting secretary of war; General Peyton C. March, chief of staff, and President Wilson

for the training will not be allowed the beauty of the music, because to take it because they had register- Mr. Goetze's orchestra never plays course at Brashear Saturday. The Co. ed for service before September 1.— for us any sort of music except the subject taught is Tennyson and Place Daily Express.

160 Students Take the Oath of Division of Sousa's Band Plays Good Prospects for Football at at Kirksville

Friday night, the 8th Detachment

Orchestra in Chanel

The orchestra played for us in selection was an "Italian Waltz movement. About 25 men who had enrolled Song." We were not surprised at most beautiful and the best.

K. S. N. S.

Regardless of misfortunes, the band, Div. A, a part of Sousa's 1,600 K. S. N. S. intends to make a showpiece Naval Band played at Kirks- ing in football this year that will out the city, my curiosity was greatville in the interest of the Liberty lival the 1916 record. The boys ly aroused. It was several days be-Loan. Their concert, which con-are greatly handicapped by lack of lore I found any one who could even The official formation of the Students Training Army Corps was cellected a tert before and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and after talks made by the Normal School at 11 street and the Normal School at 11 s ebrated at the Normal School at 11 liberty loan boosters and some war only two balls and a few pair of the government? No. Hed Comorbitated at the Normal School at 11 of the Carbon and Some war only two balls and a few pair of the government? No. Had Conpriate exercises under the direction were twenty-nine instruments, conmandant. The bleachers were well stilling to the commandant. The bleachers were well filled by spectators who witnessed the taking of the oath of alleriance. The support of the oath of alleriance is a regular practice each day, at the support of the box have regular foot. Then came to see the support of the oath of alleriance. The came to see the support of the cath of the oath of alleriance. The came the surprising revelaging the support of the cath of the cath of the oath of the cath of th the taking of the oath of allegiance by the 160 boys enrolled for the by the 160 boys enrolled for the base drum and cymbals. The boys ward pass in a baseball suit, or other father's heart. In a moment of raining.

who played were: J. C. Murdock, in the bleachers and at the hour of R. W. Perry, P. M. Johnson, Jas. the boys are new, so far as Kirks
the bleachers and at the hour of Datally A. I. C. W. W. Perry, P. M. Johnson, Jas. the boys are new, so far as Kirks
the boys are new, so far as Kirks
fine played were: J. C. Murdock, in proportion of the played were in the of the bleachers and at the hour of Petrik, A. J. Croft, H. E. Shateuck, ville is concerned, there being only Queisser, of the Fifth Ohio Machine of the bleachers and at the nour of 11 the band played "Star Spangled Banner" and the colors on the Normal School tower were raised. It had been intended to hoist the colors on the pole on the field but it would not work.

Petrik, A. J. Croft, H. E. Shateuck, ville is concerned, there being only Jones and Hunt from last year's Groth, L. N. Sturm, J. G. Bone, in the colors on the pole on the field but it would not work.

Ville is concerned, there being only Jones and Hunt from last year's Groth, L. N. Sturm, J. G. Bone, in the color of the being only Jones and Hunt from last year's between the poles of the size of the pole of the size of the pole would not work.

Lieutenant Johnson read the pledge of allegiance which was taken by the boys. He also read the orby the boys. He also read the or- C. C. Benn, F. J. Waltz, C. W. inexperienced, can become splendid and which would be to their mother ders for the day, together with mesDodge, L. A. Merer, E. Kinne, players. On the whole, the prospects are rather good.

The band played another selection Assembly Friday morning of last rector of inter High School debathim upon his 58th birthday on the and the company marched around week. They gave two beautiful ing in Northeast Missouri, and 13th of Sept. and he acknowledged the field and formed in front of the selections with the skill and perfect Superintendent of Schools in Montit as follows: "Express my warmspeakers' stand where a picture assurance that each member of the gomery City, asks us to urge that est regards and sincere thanks to all orchestra possesses. The first num- all schools keep up their debat- my old Laclede friends for their Similar exercises were conducted ber, "Sounds from the Alps," was ing work. There are many other message"—Pershing. at the same hour at more than 500 very unusual because of the horn things to take up the time but decolleges and universities in the Unit- and flute which sounded out from bating is still important. It deed States. The class here registers somewhere in the hall to help carry velops the power of address and

Miss Emery started an extension Name

Origin of the Service Flag

When I returned from the mountains last fall and saw so many of

were making."-Rev. Edwin Keigwin, in Christian Herald.

Mr. M. B. Vaughn, who is di-General Pershing congratulating

Are you getting the Index? If about 160 men, all that the school out the imitation of an echo. It self control in the presence of large you are and wish it to be continhas accommodations for at present, was a success, because it seemed to numbers. We are glad to aid Pro- ued, please return this slip with but other barracks are to be pro- us to be very realistic. The second fessor Vaughn in promoting this your present address to circulation manager, The Index, Kirksville.

Kirksville State Normal School Index

Vol. X. No. 23. Published October 9, 1918 in Kirksville. Missouri.

Pickler Memorial Library Archives, Microfilm.

1 PLACE OF DEATH	MISSOURI STATE BOARD OF HEALTH BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
County County	31430
Township Registration District	ct No
Village Primary Registrati	on District No. 300/ Registered No
City/Linksville (NO	St.; Ward) [If death occurred in a hospital or institution,
2FULL NAME Toren Tu	give its NAME instead of street and number.
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS	2 MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
Male Wizite Married Williams Of Diversity	16 DATE OF DEATH OF THE MONTH (Month) (Day) 1915 (Year)
6 DATE OF BIRTH (Month) (Day) 1 8 9 1 (Month) (Day)	17 PHEREBY CERTIFY, that I attended deceased from
7 AGE 2 7 5 mes 2 ds or min.?	and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 1915
8 OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession, or Selling all Stock particular kind of work	The cause of DEATH+ was as tollows:
(b) General nature of industry business, or establishment in which employed (or employer)	11A
9 BIRTHPLACE (City or town, State or foreign country) audian mo.	(Duretton) yrs mos & de.
10 NAME OF J. M. Junnage	CONTRIBUTORY (Secondary) (Seco
11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (City or fown, State or foreign country) 12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER	(Bigned) (Bigned) (Bissoulli Mu
S 12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Commit Rolling.	*State the Disease Causing Death, or, in deaths from Violent Causes, state (1) Means of Injury; and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal or Homicidal.
13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (City or town, State or foreign country)	18 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents)
14 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE	of deathyrsmosds. Stateyrsmosds. Where was disease contracted
(Informant) July	Former or
(Address) Nellovile Mo,	19 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL DATE OF BURIAL
15 /2 22 (1/1) Q	amution q mo, Date of Burial 1918
Filed/0 22, 1918. WVarnoh	20 UNDERTAKER ADDRESS OF TO
Registrar	Tur yest summens would' Turksoille MO

Adair County Death Certificates

Certificate of Death for Kirksville resident Loren Lee Turnage.

Missouri State Board of Health Bureau of Vital Statistics.
October 21, 1918.

Missouri Secretary of State's Office Archives. Online.

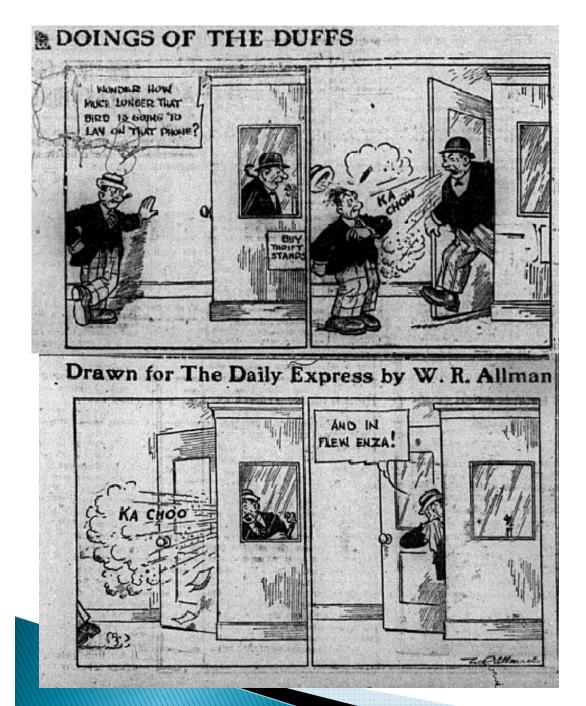


Editorial Cartoons

"Hello, True, I'm going to sit down and eat my lunch at this table with you." / "Why, Hello, Smith. How are you?" / "Oh, I've been miserable all forenoon (snuffle)." "I caught a beastly cold (snuffle)." / "Don't hang around me with that cold unless you want it broken up!!!"

"Outbursts of Everett True — By Condo," *Kirksville Daily Express*, October 12, 1918, 2. Pickler Memorial Library Archives.

Microfilm

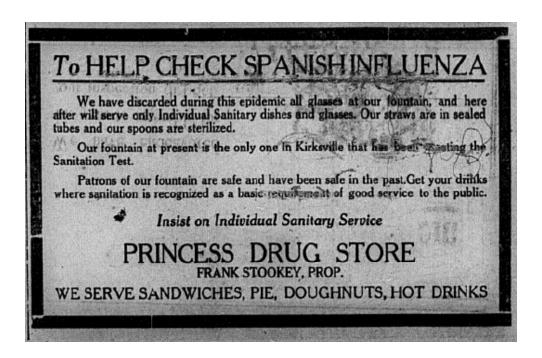


Editorial Cartoons

"I wonder how much longer that bird is going to lay on that phone?" / "Ka Chow" / "KaChoo" / "And In Flew Enza!"

Allman, W. R, "Doings of the Duffs," *Kirksville Daily Express*, October 28, 1918, 3. Pickler Memorial Library Archives. Microfilm.

Advertisements



Advertisement, *Kirksville Daily Express*, October 22, 1918, 4. Pickler Memorial Library Archives. Microfilm.

"To HELP CHECK SPANISH INFLUENZA

We have discarded during this epidemic all glasses at our fountain, and here after will serve only Individual Sanitary dishes and glasses. Our straws are sealed in tubes and our spoons are sterilized.

Our fountain at present is the only one in Kirksville that has been [unreadable] the Sanitation Test.

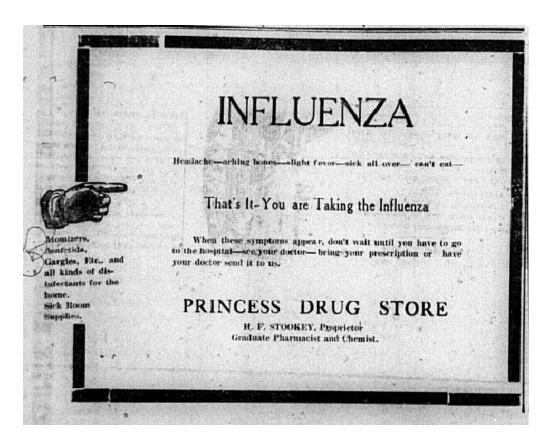
Patrons of our fountain are safe and have been safe in the past. Get your drinks where sanitation is recognized as a basic requirement of good service to the public.

Insist on Individual Sanitary Service.

PRINCESS DRUG STORE. Frank Stookey, Prop.

WE SERVE SANDWICHES, PIE, DOUGHNUTS, HOT DRINKS"

Advertisements



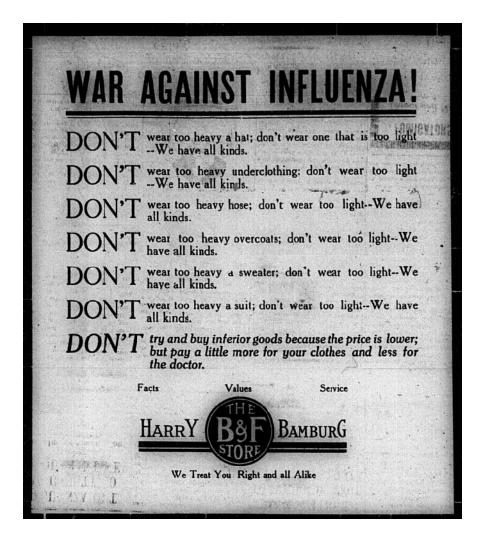
Advertisement, *Kirksville Daily Express*, October 10, 1918, 6. Pickler Memorial Library Archives. Microfilm.

"INFLUENZA Headache – aching bones – slight fever – sick all over – can't eat –

That's it—You are Taking the Influenza

When these symptoms appear, don't wait until you have to go to the hospital – see your doctor – bring your prescription or have your doctor send it to us.

PRINCESS DRUG STORE. H. F. Stookey, Proprietor Graduate Pharmacist and Chemist"



Advertisement, *Kirksville Daily Express*, October 11, 1918, 6. Pickler Memorial Library Archives. Microfilm.

Advertisements

"WAR AGAINST INFLUENZA!

DON'T wear too heavy a hat; don't wear one that is too light -- we have all kinds.

DON'T wear too heavy clothing; don't wear too light — we have all kinds.

DON'T wear too heavy hose; don't wear too light - We have all kinds.

DON'T wear too heavy overcoats; don't wear too light - We have all kinds.

DON'T wear too heavy a sweater; don't wear too light - We have all kinds.

DON'T wear too heavy a suit; don't wear too light - We have all kinds.

DON'T Try and buy inferior goods because the price is lower; but pay a little more for your clothes and less for the doctor.

Facts Value Service Harry Bamburg/ The B & F Store / We Treat You Right and all Alike"

I'VE GOT THE 'FLU'

AND CAN'T GET OUT TO SEE ALL YOU FOLKS TOMORROW

The Doctor Says it Won't do for

Me To Go Up Salt River Now!

So be kind when you are fixing up your ballot tomorrow

I'll promise you I will make a good County Clerk if you'll elect me to the office; and you won't regret it.

Willard E. Evans

Advertisement, *Kirksville Daily Express*, November 4,
1918, 4. Pickler Memorial
Library Archives. Microfilm.

Advertisements

"I'VE GOT THE 'FLU'

AND CAN'T GET OUT TO SEE ALL YOU FOLKS TOMORROW

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Conclusion

- Newspapers/Kirksville institutions as unreliable narrators
- Self Interest: What's in it for me to close down when my business/institution is relatively unaffected?
- Newspapers: Public fora that reflected diverse interests.
 - Wealthiest/most influential voices overrepresented