

# Here it comes again!

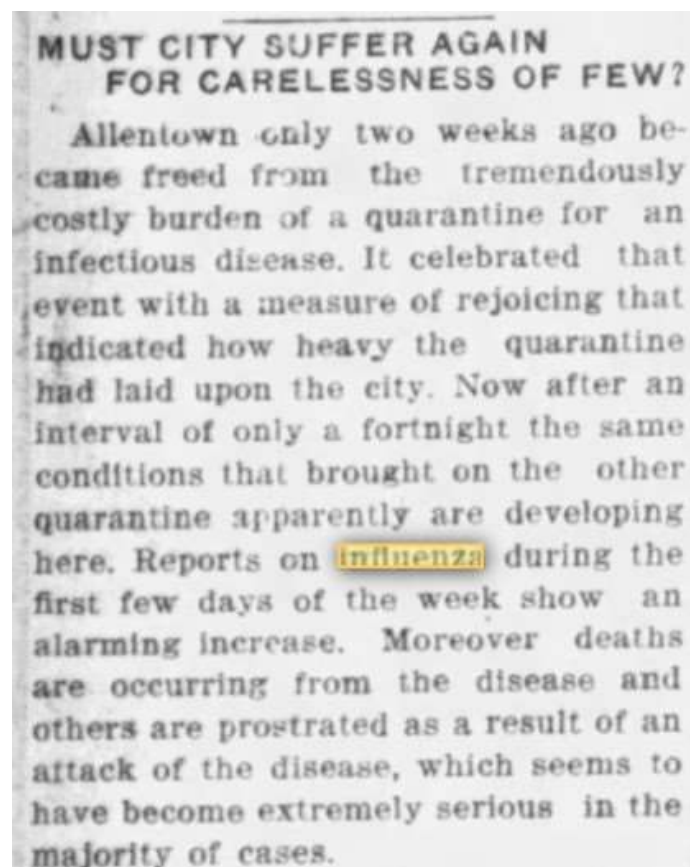
The Bethlehem Gadfly Spanish Flu May 29, 2020

🌀 Latest in a series of posts on the Spanish Flu 🌀

*For perspective on our current coronavirus situation, we are following the entrance of the 1918 Spanish Influenza, that paragon of pandemics, into the minds and bodies of Lehigh Valley residents who got their news through the Morning Call (the files of the Bethlehem Globe are closed to us at the moment).*

Allentown, November 20, 1918: “The city is on the verge of a recurrence of the influenza epidemic.”

Why? “The carelessness of a few.”



**MUST CITY SUFFER AGAIN  
FOR CARELESSNESS OF FEW?**

Allentown only two weeks ago became freed from the tremendously costly burden of a quarantine for an infectious disease. It celebrated that event with a measure of rejoicing that indicated how heavy the quarantine had laid upon the city. Now after an interval of only a fortnight the same conditions that brought on the other quarantine apparently are developing here. Reports on **influenza** during the first few days of the week show an alarming increase. Moreover deaths are occurring from the disease and others are prostrated as a result of an attack of the disease, which seems to have become extremely serious in the majority of cases.

What is the reason that we have this recurrence after the wave apparently had passed westward over us? Doctors who take especial interest in this subject are convinced that it has been due to carelessness with the cases that remained over after the quarantine was lifted. Under the present system in this city homes are neither placarded nor quarantined. People enter the homes of those sick with **influenza** without the slightest regard for consequences. Members of the families of the sick mingle in society. The person who has been slightly ill quickly visits the moving picture houses, the theatres or schools or goes to work even tho the **influenza** germs in him are still active and can be transmitted to other folks.

If we had one case of small pox in this community there would be a terrible to-do. Yet here we have a disease which since the first of October has cost the lives of over 40,000 persons in Pennsylvania and is killing them at the rate of 500 per day. We have already in this state lost more lives in one month from this one disease than the entire American army lost thru death in action and from wounds and accident in a year and a half of work in France.

The city quarantines chickenpox, mumps and whooping cough which are never fatal and only occasionally bring on after effects that cause death. Contact with persons in households where these diseases exists is forbidden. Yet in the case of this highly deadly malady, **influenza**, homes are not quarantined nor are unusual restrictions placed upon those sick with the disease.

Will the entire town have to be punished again with a quarantine simply because of the carelessness of a few and the laxity of regulations that prevail?

Allentown shut down for two weeks.

It has been open now for two weeks.

And the Flu is back in an “extremely serious” way.

Lack of social distancing. Lax quarantining.

The disease has not been respected seriously enough.

And now Allentown must consider shutting down again.

*Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it.*