

Primary Source on the Flu Epidemic: Corless Funeral Ledger & GRAPH

The Corless funeral ledger records deaths for Fort George area c. 1916– c.1931 including local deaths caused by the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918-1919. See on-line resource to view digital pages of the funeral ledger: <https://library.unbc.ca/archives/digital-collections/documents/corless-funeral-ledger>

See graph of the number of deaths by month during the epidemic in Prince George (print out).
See transcriptions of the Corless funeral ledger (created by the Prince George Family History Society).
http://cangenealogy.com/pg/coreless_funeral_records.htm

QUESTIONS FOR WORKSHOP ACTIVITY:

What was the original function of the ledger?

What does the information recorded in the ledger tell about the cases of pneumonia that occurred in the Prince George area during that time period?

What age group were most of the deceased whose deaths are recorded by pneumonia?

What information is recorded for those deceased who were identified as First Nations?

How might the information recorded in the ledger be utilized by a researcher today?

What does the graph tell us about the cases of pneumonia during the pandemic?

Primary & Secondary Sources – Multiple Perspectives of the Flu Epidemic

Provide students with a variety of printed textual sources, both historical and contemporary, to consider multiple perspectives of the Influenza 1918-1919 event on Northern BC communities. See links to:

- **Prince George Citizen** “Assemblies Forbidden in City” Prince George Citizen Oct. 18, 1918, p. 1
<http://pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca/fedora/repository/pgc:1918-10-18/-/Prince%20George%20Citizen%20-%20October%2018,%201918>
- Spanish Influenza notices: PG Citizen November 1, 1918 p. 1
<http://pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca/fedora/repository/pgc:1918-11-01/-/Prince%20George%20Citizen%20-%20November%2001,%201918>
- “Many Indians Die of Spanish Influenza” PG Citizen November 15, 1918 p. 1
<http://pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca/fedora/repository/pgc:1918-11-15/-/Prince%20George%20Citizen%20-%20November%2015,%201918>
- “Eighteen Hundred Cases in Northern BC” Jan. 14, 1919 p. 5
<http://pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca/fedora/repository/pgc:1919-01-14-05>
- **Letters by Mary Butcher**; *The letters of Margaret Butcher: Missionary-Imperialism on the North Pacific Coast*, edited by Mary Ellen Kelm, University of Calgary Press, 2006. Butcher came from London England as the appointed Matron of the Women’s Missionary Society to serve as a missionary nurse and teacher at the Elizabeth Long Memorial Home, a residential school in Kitimaat, BC for the Haisla First Nation where she stayed for 3 years, 1916 to 1919. Her letters include her experience dealing with the Influenza epidemic and its impact on the students and community. (See sample letter, *The letters of Margaret Butcher*, pp. 182-pp.186). Kelm calculates that the flu epidemic claimed “22% of the infants’ lives, 25% of those under the age of 15 and a further 36% of those in the prime of life in the Haisla Community.” pp-xxviii-xxix.
- **Narrative by Mary John**; Stoney Creek Elder Mary John talks about her first memories as a child of five years of age –the flu epidemic of 1918 at her community at Sai’k’uz (Stoney Creek). Mary recalls how her young mother was ill with the flu. Mary recalls the impact of the epidemic on her village; the unpredictability of who would survive and who would die; the limited medical treatment available and of the mass burials of the deceased. See *Sai’k’uz Ts’eke – Stoney Creek Woman, the Story of Mary John*, by Bridget Moran, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2002, pp. 27-28 and pp. 32-33.
- **Narrative by Lizette Hall**, *The Carrier My People* (Cloverdale, BC: privately printed), 1992 pp.19-21 Provides the story of the impact of the flu on the Nak’azdli (Fort St. James); Hall talks about care of the deceased, and impact on the community.
- **Contemporary local history**; Betty O’Keefe and Ian MacDonald, *Dr. Fred and the Spanish Lady: Fighting the Killer Flu*, Heritage House Publishing, 2000. This book includes a timeline for the Spanish flu outbreak in BC and a brief section on the impact of the influenza epidemic on select communities in Northern BC including Prince George. See excerpts, pp. 20-21; pp. 165-pp.169.

QUESTIONS FOR WORKSHOP ACTIVITY:

What is significant about the accounts by Mary John and Lizette Hall of the flu epidemic?

What is significant about Margaret Butcher's account of the flu epidemic?

How are these accounts similar? How are they different?

How do Mary, Margaret and Lizette's accounts compare with local newspaper accounts written at the time?

How do these textual sources compare with the recent published history by O'Keefe and MacDonald of the flu epidemic? What is the perspective of those authors?

Do these sources provide evidence of settler /First Nations relations during respective time periods?

Try other searches in PG Citizen newspaper [i.e. 24 articles from 1919 using 'Influenza' as keyword
[http://pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca/islandora/solr/search/influenza/pubyear%3A%221919%22~
papername%3A%22Prince%20George%20Citizen%22/dismax](http://pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca/islandora/solr/search/influenza/pubyear%3A%221919%22~papername%3A%22Prince%20George%20Citizen%22/dismax)

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES – FLU EPIDEMIC

Primary Source on the Flu Epidemic: Corless Funeral Ledger

Corless funeral ledger – Richard “Dick” Corless operated funeral business [undertakers parlour was the colloquial language of the day] at the corner of Quebec & Fourth Ave in PG.

The Corless funeral ledger records deaths for Fort George area c. 1916– c.1931 including local deaths caused by the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918-1919.

See on-line resource to view digital pages of the funeral ledger:

<https://library.unbc.ca/archives/digital-collections/documents/corless-funeral-ledger>

Accession # 2007.23 Northern BC Archives

Of the deaths recorded in the Corless ledge from middle of October 1918 when first diagnosed in Prince George to approximately end of April 1919 (when no new cases emerged) **the register listed 55 cases of deaths by pneumonia.**

GRAPH – INFLUENZA DEATHS – PRINCE GEORGE - See graph of the number of deaths by month during the epidemic in Prince George. Note: it was not unusual that the most deaths from influenza occurred in October as this was the peak month for most cities and towns around the world to experience influenza deaths.

STUDENT ACTIVITY - Provide students with the link to the Corless funeral ledger found on-line (url above), the print out of the transcriptions of the Corless funeral ledger records (Excel) and the graph.

This funeral ledger records the following information:

- Place of death; cause of death; name; age; date of death; where born; occupation; residence; where buried; date of funeral; minister; physician;
- Type of funeral arrangements
- Accounts Payable Information

(The original ledger records who ordered the funeral, accounting expenses; and the payee’s address)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS ACTIVITY:

- What was the original function of the ledger?
- What does the information recorded in the ledger tell about the cases of pneumonia that occurred in the Prince George area during that time period?
- What age group were most of the deceased whose deaths are recorded by pneumonia?
- What information is recorded for those deceased who were identified as First Nations?
- How might the information recorded in the ledger be utilized by a researcher today?
- What does the graph tell us about the cases of pneumonia during the pandemic?

Primary & Secondary Sources – Multiple Perspectives of the Flu Epidemic

Provide students with a variety of printed textual sources, both historical and contemporary, to consider multiple perspectives of the Influenza 1918-1919 event on Northern BC communities. See links to:

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- What is significant about Margaret Butcher's account of the flu epidemic?
- How are these accounts similar? How are they different?
- How do Mary, Lizette and Margaret's accounts compare with local newspaper accounts written at the time?
- How do these textual sources compare with the more recent published history by O'Keefe and MacDonald of the flu epidemic? What is the perspective of those authors?
- Do these sources provide evidence of settler /First Nations relations during respective time periods?
- Try other searches in PG Citizen newspaper for 'Influenza" [i.e. 24 articles sourced from 1919]
<http://pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca/islandora/solr/search/influenza/pubyear%3A%221919%22~papername%3A%22Prince%20George%20Citizen%22/dismax>

Associated Local History Primary Sources on the Flu Epidemic available on-line:

Local buildings in Prince George utilized as hospitals during the 1918-1919 epidemic:

P981.35.43 Photograph Group of women at the Central School, Fort George – school was used as a hospital during the flu epidemic in 1918. http://appserve.noratek.com/pls/cats_web/cats_web.display_item?AIID=1395

P981.35.69 Photograph Connaught School, Queensway at 15th Ave. School used as a hospital until 1919 during the flu epidemic. http://appserve.noratek.com/pls/cats_web/cats_web.display_item?AIID=1422

P983.12.62 – Photograph of the Fort George Hospital, in Central Fort George in 1911 was staffed by Drs. Cecil Swinnerton, McSorley and Ewert. http://appserve.noratek.com/pls/cats_web/cats_web.display_item?AIID=3292

P986.5.128 – Photograph of the Grand Trunk Pacific Hospital at Foley's Cache, Prince George. The hospital was built in the winter of 1913 and officially opened April 1914.
http://appserve.noratek.com/pls/cats_web/cats_web.display_item?AIID=4590

Local 1918-1919 Flu Epidemic Victims

P2003.30.8 – Photograph of children George and Frank Jorgensen, of South Fort George, victims of the flu epidemic. http://appserve.noratek.com/pls/cats_web/cats_web.display_item?AIID=25741

George and Frank Jorgensen's deaths are recorded in the Corless funeral ledger.

Additional Secondary Sources re Flu Epidemic 1918-1919 impact on Northern BC

Mary Ellen Kelm, "Flu stories: engaging with disease, death and modernity in British Columbia, 1918-19" in "Epidemic encounters: influenza, society and culture in Canada, 1918-20", edited by Magda Fahrni and Esyllt W. Jones, Vancouver: UBC Press 2012 (UNBC Library: RC150.55 C2 E65 2012 in stacks)
http://www.ubcpress.ca/search/title_book.asp?BookID=299173570

Kelm analyzes "a series of what she calls 'flu stories' that were documented through various media in British Columbia during the epidemic and in subsequent decades. "The official accounts of fatalities recorded in death certificates, the dramatic and occasionally boosterist articles published in the daily press, the oral histories conducted with elderly residents of Vancouver's Strathcona neighbourhood during the 1970s, and finally, oral and written narrative produced by First Nations people to detail their experience with influenza – these various sources attest to the different ways in which the disease affected diverse groups of British Columbians."

"Modernity Kelm argues, was marshalled in 1918-19 to explain both the spread of the pandemic, through 'modern' lines of communication and 'modern' worksites, and the means taken to deal with it – science and medicine. Yet not all flu stories conformed to this narrative: in those told by First Nations people or by Strathcona residents, for instance, modernity was often absent altogether or incorporated into new hybrid forms. The universal influenza storyline was thus tempered by the peculiarities of local circumstance. Moreover, certain British Columbians – Aboriginals, people of Chinese, Japanese, or South Asian descent, religious minorities such as Mennonites and Doukhobors – were viewed by fellow citizens of Anglo-Saxon background as distinctly unmodern, and thus as potential 'reservoirs' of disease." P. 15 Introduction

Kelm notes that First Nations communities had death rates at seven times the provincial average during the 1918-1919 flu epidemic. ("Flu stories: engaging with disease, death and modernity in British Columbia, 1918-19" pp. 168)

Kelm notes that the local PG newspaper reported that the Dakelh village of Stoney Creek (Sai'k'uz) was experiencing nearly 100% morbidity. (PG Citizen November 1, 1918)

See also additional research by Kelm on the impact of the flu epidemic on settler and Indigenous relations in 20th century BC. See Mary Ellen Kelm, "British Columbia First Nations and Influenza pandemic of 1918-19" in *BC Studies* Vancouver Iss. 122 (summer 1999); 23

Robin Ridington and Jillian Ridington in collaboration with Elders of the Dane-zaa First Nation "Where happiness dwells: a history of the Dane-zaa First Nations", Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013. This publication includes a chapter on the 1918 flu epidemic and the impact on the Dane-zaa First Nation. UNBC Library: E99. T77 R547 2013

SOCIAL STUDIES 11– EXPLORATIONS - ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Topic: The impact of the Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1919 on British Columbia

OTHER QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR STUDENTS ACTIVITY:

- How did the media accounts of the flu epidemic influence the province's response?
- How did the media in BC in 1918-1919 portray the impact of the Spanish influenza epidemic on BC's communities?
- Assess the credibility and justifiability of the 1918-1919 media's representation of BC's First Nations communities in its response to the Spanish influenza epidemic.
- How does the response to other 20th century global health epidemics (i.e. TB epidemic, AIDS) Compare and contrasts from that of the response to the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919?
- What were the factors for changes in global health epidemic responses?
- What were the perspectives and experiences of BC's settlers to the Spanish influenza epidemic?
- What were the perspectives and responses of BC's First Nations communities to the Spanish influenza epidemic?
- How were they the same? How were they different?
- How did the authorities (i.e. government, religious groups, social reform organizations, medical professionals) responses to the Spanish influenza epidemic influence relationships between BC settlers and BC's First Nations communities?
- Review historic maps, photos and other textual sources to determine the impact of the Spanish influenza epidemic on a community in BC. What were the immediate impacts? What were the long-term impacts?

Other Educational Resources on 1918 Flu Epidemic – National

Canadian War Museum <https://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/history/life-at-home-during-the-war/wartime-tragedies/influenza-1918-1919/>

The Canadian Encyclopedia <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/influenza/>

Parks Canada – The Spanish Flu (1918-1920)

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/culture/clmhc-hsmhc/res/doc/information-background/espagnole-spanish>

Mysteries of Canada – History Channel <https://www.mysteriesofcanada.com/canada/spanish-flu-1918/>

CBC Radio – Michael Enright interview with Laura Spinney on her publication “Pale Rider, the Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World” March 11 (2018?) see link to article and audio

<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thesundayedition/the-sunday-edition-march-11-2018-1.4569339/lessons-for-today-from-the-spanish-flu-of-1918-1.4569355>

Hawkes, Nigel. "Eskimo clue to 1918 flu epidemic." *Times*, 16 Feb. 1999, p. 7. *The Times Digital Archive*, <http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/6PmR90>. Accessed 23 Apr. 2018.

Kirsty E. Duncan *Hunting the 1918 Flu: One Scientist's Search for a Killer Virus*, University of Toronto Press, 2003
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/unbc-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3268453>

Magda Fahrni and Esyllt W. Jones, editors, *Epidemic encounters: influenza, society, and culture in Canada, 1918-20*, Vancouver: UBC Press, c2012. **RC150.55.C2 E65 2012** (includes article by Mary Ellen Kelm on impact on BC) for an overview see: <https://www.ubcpress.ca/asset/9501/1/9780774822121.pdf>

“Spanish Flu killed missions but few remember” by Helen Branswell, *The Toronto Star*, Sept 19, 2008 - https://www.thestar.com/life/health_wellness/2008/09/19/spanish_flu_killed_millions_but_few_remember.html

TVO – TV Ontario; When the Spanish Flu came to Ontario February 2018
<https://tvo.org/article/current-affairs/when-the-spanish-flu-came-to-ontario>

Provincial

BC Archives oral histories flu epidemic 1918

<http://search-bcarchives.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/influenza-epidemic-1918-1919>

A series of interviews with BC Residents including personal memories of the 1918 flu epidemic – provides inventory of interviews – audio not available on-line

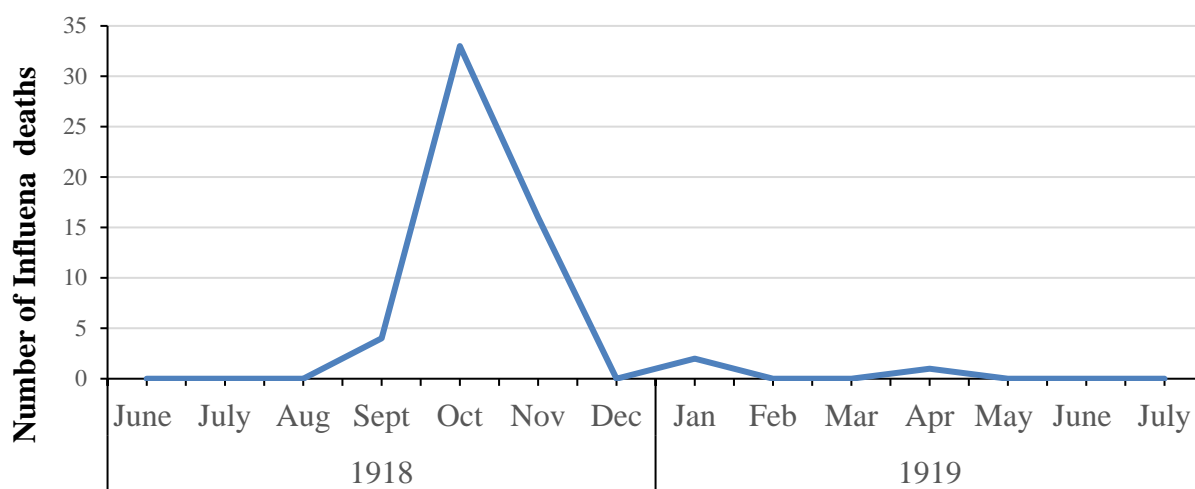
	FIRST NAME	SURNAME	DATE OF DEATH	PLACE OF DEATH	CAUSE OF DEATH	AGE	WHERE BORN	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE	WHERE BURIED
21			Oct /22/1918	HOSPITAL	PNEUMONIA					
21	CLAIR SILCOCK	SYMMS	Oct /25/1918	GISCOME	PNEUMONIA	45 YEARS	ENGLAND		GISCOME	WILLOW RIVER
22	FRANK DUNCAN	SEYMOUR	Oct /24/1918	MIWORTH	PNEUMONIA	4 YEARS				S. FT GEORGE
22	ROSE	QUAW	Oct/24/1918		PNEUMONIA	28 YEARS				FORT GEORGE
22	JOHN	PIERWAY	Oct/17/1918	MIWORTH	PNEUMONIA	3 YEARS				
23	EDWARD WILLIAM	HOAR	Oct/24/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	37 YEARS				EDMONTON
23	JOHN	LOCKYEAR	Oct/23/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	19 YEARS	IDAHO	FARMER	PRINCE GEORGE	FORT GEORGE
23	DORA	BIRD	Oct/22/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	8 MONTHS	B.C.			
24	KATHERINE	BIRD	Oct/24/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	25 YEARS	B.C.			FORT GEORGE
24	ALBERT	BESSETTE	Oct/27/1918	? HOSPITAL	PNEUMONIA		FRANCE	LUMBERING	ALIZA LAKE	FORT GEORGE
24	EVA	OSWALDA	Oct27/1918	CITY HOSPITAL	PNEUMONIA	23 YEARS	RUSSIA	HOUSEWIFE	PRINCE GEORGE	FORT GEORGE
25	THOMAS H. L.	ROPER	Oct/24/1918	FORT GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	43 YEARS	ENGLAND	MINING ENGINEER	NEW YORK	NEW YORK
25	JOHN PIERRIE ?	ROFTUS	Oct /27/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	40 YEARS 10 MONTHS	IRELAND	BRAKEMAN		
25	BEATRICE ANNIE	HUNTER	Oct /23/1918	PRINCE RUPERT	PNEUMONIA	25 YEARS				FORT GEORGE
26	CHOW YOUNG	QUONG	Oct /26/1918	3RD AVE PR. GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	25 YEARS	CHINA	COOK	PRINCE GEORGE	FORT GEORGE
26	GEORGE	CHURCHMAN		CONNAUGHT ROOMS	PNEUMONIA				HUTTON	
26	CLINTON SANDFACE	McKENZIE	Oct /28/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	19 YEARS	NOVA SCOTIA			
27	BIRDIE	MOCBUS	Oct /23/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	4 YEARS	WETASKAWIN		PRINCE GEORGE	FORT GEORGE
27	GEORGE	CHURCHMAN	Oct /22/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	35 YEARS	AUSTRIA			FORT GEORGE
27	TERRACE	NIEDERMAIER	Oct /27/1918	HANSARD	PNEUMONIA	29 YEARS	GERMANY		FORT GEORGE	
28	THOS. J.	WILLIAMS	Oct /27/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	30 YEARS	IRELAND	CONDUCTOR	PRINCE RUPERT	PRINCE RUPERT
28	J. V.	McCABE	Oct /29/1918	CITY HOSPITAL	PNEUMONIA	44 YEARS	STRATHROY	LUMBERING	PRINCE GEORGE	STRATHROY
28	CHOW YOUNG	QUONG	Oct /26/1918	3RD AVE PR. GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	25 YEARS	CHINA	COOK	PRINCE GEORGE	FORT GEORGE
29	PERCY HUNTER	HISCOCK	Oct 30/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	29 YEARS	LONDON, ENGLAND	LUMBER MILL	HUTTON	FORT GEORGE
29	PAULL	HESSE	Oct /30/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	25 YEARS	GERMANY	LUMBER MILL	HUTTON	FORT GEORGE
29	THOMAS H. L.	FISHER	Oct /31/1918	WINDSOR HOTEL	PNEUMONIA	20 YEARS 8 MONTHS 7 DAYS	BOLTON, ENGLAND	FARMER		FORT GEORGE
30	GARNETT	McMANUS	Oct /31/1918	MILLAR ADDITION	PNEUMONIA	37 YEARS	KINGS COUNTY,NEW BRUNS.	LUMBERING		
30	HILDA T.	FEVEU	Oct /31/1918	9TH AVENUE	INFLUENZA	27 YEARS 9 MONTHS	ONTARIO		PRINCE GEORGE	PORT ARTHUR
30	HAROLD C.	FEVEU	Nov 1/1918	9TH AVENUE	WHOOPING COUGH	1 YEAR 6 MONTH	PRINCE GEORGE			PORT ARTHUR
31	CHIEF	LOUIS	Nov /1/1918	S. FORT GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	90 YEARS	B.C.	INDIAN CHIEF	S. FT GEORGE	S. FT GEORGE
31	EVA COIL	NIEDERMAIER	Oct /29/1918	CACHE	PNEUMONIA	9 DAYS	HUTTON		HUTTON	FORT GEORGE
31	BILLY	SEYMOUR	Oct /28/1918	S. FORT GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	19 YEARS	B.C.			
32	EMMA	MOCBUS	Nov /2/1918							
32	ELIZABETH	DAVIDSON	Nov /2/1918	PRINCE GEORGE		50 YEARS 4 MONTHS	SCOTLAND		PRINCE GEORGE	FORT GEORGE
32	MARY	SEYMOUR	Nov /1/1918	MIWORTH	PNEUMONIA	35 YEARS	B.C.		MIWORTH	FORT GEORGE
33	KATHERINE	GAZIMIEL	Nov /1/1918	MIWORTH	PNEUMONIA	5 YEARS	B.C.			FORT GEORGE

33	ADELIE FRADIE	QUA	Oct /31/1918	MIWORTH	PNEUMONIA	26 YEARS	B.C.		MIWORTH	FORT GEORGE
33	LEE	ESTIES	Nov /4/1918	UNION ROOMS	PNEUMONIA					
34	ALDERIE	PELLETIER	Nov /2/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	36 YEARS	QUEBEC	LUMBERING	EDMONTON	FORT GEORGE
34	GEORGE L.	JORGENSEN	Nov /5/1918	3RD AVENUE	PNEUMONIA	2 YEAR 4 DAYS	PRINCE GEORGE			PRINCE GEORGE
34	FRANK DYER	JORGENSEN	Nov 6/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	PNEUMONIA	3 YEARS 5 MONTHS	PRINCE GEORGE			PRINCE GEORGE
35	ARONA	NORDQUIST	Nov /5/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	27 YEARS	SWEDEN	STEAM SHOVEL ENG	BERGLAND, ONT.	?
35	GEORGE	BOUTIZ	Nov 5/1918	MILLAR ADDITION	PNEUMONIA					
35	HATTIE MAY	GUSS	Oct /29/1918	MAUNDWELL HOSPITAL	PNEUMONIA	29 YEARS 3 MONTHS	U.S.A.		ROSE LAKE	PRINCE GEORGE
36	JOHNNIE PIERRE	ROY	Nov 3/1918			49 YEARS 10 MONTHS				FORT GEORGE
36	HENRY CHARLES	PARSONS	Nov /8/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	44 YEARS	BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND		KINSLEY, SASK.	
36	DANIEL	NELSON	Nov /5/1918	UNION ROOMS	PNEUMONIA	63 YEARS	SWEDEN		PRINCE GEORGE	PRINCE GEORGE
37	ANNIE	NIZOYGIT	Nov /5/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	4 YEARS	CALGARY			
37	GORDON	THOMPSON	Nov /8/1918	HUTTON MILLS	PNEUMONIA	30 YEARS	OTTAWA	GRADER	EDMONTON	FORT GEORGE
37	ANNIE	UNRAU	Nov /13/1918	MILLAR ADDITION	PNEUMONIA	33 YEARS 5 MONTH	WINNIPEG		PRINCE GEORGE	PRINCE GEORGE
38	JOHN	HIELDNSAN	Nov /13/1918	MILLAR ADDITION	PNEUMONIA					
38	OTTO	GROSS	Nov /14/1918	CONNAUGHT	PNEUMONIA	24 YEARS	ALBERTA	FARMER	CZAR, ALBERTA	
38	JENNIE LOUISA	WESTMAN	Nov /15/1918	HUTTON MILLS	GRAND MAL	33 YEARS 7 MONTHS 3 WEEKS	U.S.A.		HUTTON	FORT GEORGE
39	JOHNNIE			UNION ROOMS	PNEUMONIA					
39		JACKSON			STILL-BORN					PRINCE GEORGE
39	ISABELLA	JACKSON	Dec /19/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	ACUTE PNEUMONIA	23 YEARS 5 MONTHS 2 WEEKS	CANADA	HOUSEWIFE	PRINCE GEORGE	PRINCE GEORGE
40	MARY	LEIZINGER								
40	ROSARIUS	SIMONDSO	Dec /21/1918	PRINCE GEORGE	ACCIDENT	45 YEARS	SWEDEN	FARMER	SHELLEY	PRINCE GEORGE
40	JOHN	PEDEN	Dec /26/1918	S. FORT GEORGE	CHRONIC NEPHRITIS	75 YEARS	CANADA	FARMER	STONEWALL	
41	ALEX	DISHLEWAY	OCT 28 1918	UNION ROOMS	PNEUMONIA			FERRYMAN	MIWORTH	PRINCE GEORGE
41	ASBJORN	KJETSAA	JAN 5 1919	HUTTON MILLS	PNEUMONIA	25 YEARS	NORWAY	LUMBERMAN	HUTTON	PRINCE GEORGE
41	JOHN	ANDERSON STROME	JAN 7 1919	HUTTON MILLS	PNEUMONIA	30 YEARS	SWEDEN	LUMBERMAN	HUTTON	PRINCE GEORGE
42		IRELAND	JAN 12 1919	PRINCE GEORGE	STILLBORN					
42	M. JANE	HARPER	MAR 10 1919	PRINCE GEORGE	DROPSY	63 YEARS	IRELAND		PRINCE GEORGE	PRINCE GEORGE
42	MARY STURROCK	CAMPBELL	MAR 14 1919	FORT GEORGE		18 YEARS & 3 MONTHS	BC		FRASER LAKE	PRINCE GEORGE
43	WM. H.	HULL		MCBRIDE	PNEUMONIA	50 YEARS				WISCONSIN
43	JAMES	LARNER	APR 1 1919	CITY HOSPITAL	APPEN	23 YEARS	ENGLAND	MINER	FERNIE, BC	PRINCE GEORGE
44	(MRS.)	DAVIDSON	APR 8 1919							
44	CARL ROBERT	OTTO	APR 8 1919	ROYAL HOTEL	PNEUMONIA	73 YEARS	GERMANY	FARMER	PRINCE GEORGE	PRINCE GEORGE

Ordered by <u>Hel's Jorgensen</u>		Charge to _____		Residence _____	
Place of Death <u>3rd Avenue</u>	Casket,	Box,	Plate,	30 ⁰⁰	By Cash <u>Paid</u>
Cause of Death <u>Pneumonia</u>	Hearse,				
Name <u>Georged. Jorgensen</u>		Carriages,			
Age <u>2 years 4 days</u>	Crape,	Gloves,	Ribbon,		
Died <u>Nov 5th 1918</u>	Embalming,				
Where Born <u>Prince George</u>	Grave,	Digging,	Trimming,		
Occupation,	Printing,				
Residence,	Attendance,				
Where buried <u>Prince George</u>	Shroud,				
Date of funeral <u>Nov 7. 1918</u>	Chairs,				
Minister <u>Rev Graham</u>					
Physician <u>D. L. Lajie</u>					
Style,					

Ordered by <u>Hel's Jorgensen</u>		Charge to _____		Residence _____	
Place of Death <u>Prince George</u>	Casket,	Box,	Plate,	45 ⁰⁰	By Cash <u>Paid</u>
Cause of Death <u>Pneumonia</u>	Hearse,				
Name <u>Frank Lyes Jorgensen</u>		Carriages,			
Age <u>3 years 5 months</u>	Crape,	Gloves,	Ribbon,		
Died <u>6 Nov 1918</u>	Embalming,				
Where Born <u>Prince George</u>	Grave,	Digging,	Trimming,		
Occupation,	Printing,				
Residence,	Attendance,				
Where buried <u>Prince George</u>	Shroud,				
Date of funeral <u>Graham</u>	Chairs,				
Minister <u>Nov 7 1918</u>					
Physician <u>D. L. Lajie</u>					
Style,					

Influenza deaths* during the 1918/19 Influenza pandemic in Prince George, BC



(Source: Corless funeral records)

* includes: Influenza, pneumonia and bronchial pneumonia deaths

Assemblies Forbidden in City; Twenty-Two Cases of Influenza

Up to last evening twenty-two cases of Spanish influenza had been reported to the city health authorities. Several of these cases have come from outside points and all are receiving medical attention. The Connaught hotel has been turned into a temporary hospital and about fifteen patients are domiciled there. A nurse has been engaged by the city and an orderly to assist her went on duty today.

Schools Closed.

As a precautionary measure against the spread of Spanish influenza which has spread so rapidly throughout the United States and Canada during the past few weeks, the Prince George health authorities on Wednesday ordered the closing of the schools, theatres, poolrooms and public meeting places until such time as the danger is considered past. This action was taken at the request

of the local medical men and has since been legalized by an order-in-council at Victoria.

Lumber Camps Affected.

From the lumber camps and mills east of the city comes word of a number of supposed Spanish influenza cases.

Three Indians from the reserves west of here were brought in by Constable Manson yesterday for medical attention. They are suffering from the "flu" and the condition of one is said to be serious. No other really serious cases are reported.

Police Chief Dolan and Asst. Fire Chief Graham are among those afflicted. Mr. Alex. Nash, who was among the first to be stricken, is reported recovering.

A majority of the G.T.P. station staff are down with the "flu," including the agent, Mr. Feren. All are reported progressing favorably.



Spanish Influenza

Citizens and the public generally are urgently requested to take every precaution against the spreading of the above disease. All cases of residents of the city must be reported at once to the City Medical Health Officer, Dr. E. J. Lyons.

By Order of the Health Committee,

HARRY G. PERRY, Mayor.

Spanish Influenza

The Order-in-Council relative to the cessation of public assemblies in the City of Prince George applies equally to the surrounding district.

THOMAS W. S. PARSONS

Deputy Inspector Provincial Police

South Fort George, B.C.

MANY INDIANS DIE OF SPANISH INFLUENZA

Vanderhoof, Nov. 13.—Father Coccola now in town from his medical mission among the Indians at Stony Creek reserve, states that 42 deaths had occurred in the native village, and all the Indians were afflicted with the disease. He also stated that he had heard from his associate priests in other towns, and was told 45 deaths had occurred in Anvox, 67 in Prince Rupert, and 50 in Prince George.

January 14, 1919

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED CASES OF INFLUENZA IN NORTHERN B. C.

The Citizen is indebted to the provincial police for the following information relating to the late influenza epidemic as it was felt in this district:

The first manifestation of this epidemic was noticed in Prince George on October 15th, 1918. Prior to this its presence had been established at Lucerne, near the eastern provincial boundary. Thereafter outbreaks were reported from centres often widely apart, but invariably in proximity to railway depots, pointing to dissemination by transients and railway employees.

Acting on instructions from government agents the provincial police alleviated the sufferings of a great many in isolated sections. The officers were frequently called

upon to serve both as doctor and nurse, and were active day and night, in many instances contracting the disease they were called upon to fight.

On October 16th, under provincial auspices, the Connaught Hotel, Prince George, was converted into an emergency hospital. Accommodation thus provided being insufficient, further quarters were opened on October 23rd in the Union Rooms.

At their inception these hospitals were staffed by voluntary helpers, but the strain on this assistance becoming great, owing to illness in the homes of many of the volunteers, thereafter salaried workers were employed.

From information obtained from various sources there were approximately 1800 known cases in the district between Lucerne on the east and Kitselas on the west. Of these 220 succumbed to pneumonia complications. It is noteworthy that those suffering from pulmonary complications were usually men physically robust.

Mortality among Indians was exceedingly heavy and may be attributed to lack of care consequent upon their nomadic tendencies, coupled with a native stoicism when finally prostrated.

Prince George Hospitals.

About sixty beds were provided in the two provincial hospitals in Prince George. A fortunate government purchase of blankets was particularly opportune owing to a general local shortage. A dearth of essential drugs developed early, and the attorney-general's conditional assent to the seizure of liquor held by the Canadian Express Company was timely.

At both hospitals a superintendent was placed in complete charge with a necessary staff of nurses and orderlies. Mr. W. D. Smith, at the Connaught, and Mr. A. Wright, at the Union—subsequently taken ill and replaced by Mr. F. Tapley—rendered excellent service.

The entire management of the two hospitals was in the hands of Captain (Dr.) Lazier, who worked long hours in connection with the epidemic, besides caring for a large number of outside patients. Dr. Lazier was suffering severely from phlebitis during the whole of this period and was able to walk only with the greatest difficulty.

Stony Creek Indians.

The epidemic's course ran with exceptional severity on the Stony Reserve near Vanderhoof, and but for the splendid work of Rev. Father Cocco, many more would have died. Affectionately known throughout the north, Father Cocco has spent the greater part of a long life in this section of the province, and his success in this instance was due to the implicit trust placed in him by the Indians.

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Funeral Directors and
Embalmers
(Ambulance in connection)

Agents for
Monuments and Tomb Stones

Phone 97--2 rings

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Sai'k'uz Ts'eke

STONEY CREEK WOMAN

The Story of Mary John

**Tenth
Anniversary
Edition**
Includes a new preface



Moran, Bridget. Stoney Creek Woman : The Story of Mary John,
Arsenal Pulp Press, 2002. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
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by BRIDGET MORAN

CHAPTER ONE

MY VERY FIRST MEMORY is of the 1918 flu and of my young mother being very sick.

I was five years old. Like the other families on Stoney Creek Indian Reserve, we were living in a log cabin. I remember that people came in and out of our home, and that all of them talked about the 1918 flu that was sickening many Natives on the reserve, but what nineteen-eighteen meant or what kind of a terrible thing a flu might be, I did not know.

I remember that my eighteen-year-old mother, usually so busy with hides and fish, was very sick. To see her lying quietly on the homemade bed in the corner scared me.

One of the people who came to our home was the priest, Father Coccola. He talked to the mother of Agnes George, who was nursing my mother, and told her to make chicken soup.

My mother wouldn't touch the chicken soup. All she wanted was a cup of warm water. As if she was speaking now, I can hear her say, "Mary, put a cup of water on the stove. I am very thirsty."

That cup of water on the back of the stove and my mother asking for it—that is my first memory.

When a child is five years old, there is much that is confused and beyond understanding.

There was more than the 1918 flu which I did not understand. I didn't know why I had been called Mary Quaw for what seemed to me a long time, and then—I felt that it happened all of a sudden—I became Mary Paul, and I had a father called Johnny Paul and a sister called Bella.

I was much older before I could sort out all the happenings which brought me, a five-year-old, to a log cabin on Stoney Creek Indian Reserve, with sick people all around me.

I suppose the real beginning was my great-grandmother, Mary Quaw, a widow. This was not the name by which most people knew her. She was called Six-Mile Mary because, although she belonged to the Fort George Indian Band, she had a cabin at Six-Mile Lake. This was some miles east of Fort George, the reservation just at the spot where the Nechako and Fraser Rivers meet in Central British Columbia.

I do not know why my great-grandmother set up her camp on the edge of Six-Mile Lake. No one knows what year she decided to build a cabin there, but I know that by the time I was born white men were filing claims for the land all around her. Maybe she found the village of Fort George too crowded for her liking. It might be that she spent many years of her life on the edge of Six-Mile Lake because there she found it easier to provide for her family with fishing and trapping and hunting.

When I was a little girl, I remember hearing the elders talking about Six-Mile Mary. They used to say that she was 'hard.' To the elders, this meant not hard-hearted, but tough. She must have been hard, in their sense, and strong too. She brought up her sons and daughters through her own efforts.

CHAPTER TWO

I MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN what the 1918 flu was, but I knew that it made me very sick. Sick as I was, I was aware that many things, some good and some very sad, were happening on the reserve.

Agnes George's mother stayed in our cabin until my mother was over the worst of her sickness. My mother was expecting a baby, and one day, when I was still in bed, this elderly woman came to me and told me that I had a new baby brother and that his name was Mark. Soon after she said this, Agnes George's mother said, "Well, I'd better get back to my own home. Everyone is sick there too."

A few days later, we heard that she was dead. Oh, the number of people who died on the reserve in those months was awful.

Our mission bell rings when someone dies. It seemed to me that, day and night, as the flu sickened more and more people, the bell never stopped ringing. I remember wishing that the ringing and the sickness and the deaths would end.

There was a doctor in Vanderhoof, Doctor Stone, but during this bad time, he hardly came to the reserve at all. He had to make his rounds with a horse and buggy and he travelled for miles in all directions out of Vanderhoof during the epidemic. Father Coccola, who lived on the reserve at that time, knew quite a bit about medicine, and as long as the flu lasted, he moved from cabin to cabin in the village, helping to care for the sick and dying.

The people of the village said that it seemed to be a matter of luck whether you lived or died. Some of the weakest survived and some of the strongest found their way to the village cemetery.

That cemetery—one of the things which filled me with horror during this time was the mass burial. When the epidemic was at its worst, a number of people died within two or three days of each other, and those who were left were too sick to lay out the corpses and make coffins. A large hole was dug in the cemetery, and seven bodies were carefully wrapped and buried side by side.

Many years later, some of my children were working with me at the cemetery. There were old boards scattered around, crosses which had collapsed over the years. I told the young people to gather up the old wood and put it in a pile for burning outside the graveyard fence. Then I noticed that the place where the seven people had been buried so many years ago was now a big hole and that the ground around the spot was very uneven.

I said to my children, "We should get a backhoe and make the ground level." And I told them about the mass burial.

They looked at me and one of them said, "Oh, that's gross!"

Finally the epidemic was over. The bell stopped ringing, and once again my mother and my stepfather were busy with fish and hides and berries. Life was good again.

After being a single child in my grandmother's home,

The Carrier, My People

Lizette Hall

by Lizette Hall

about four years old. This potlatch, was to mark the termination of a year's mourning for a great nobleman. As children were not permitted in the potlatch place, he and other little boys played outside the lodge. As they watched the empty containers being piled outside the lodge, he and the other boys dipped their fingers in the residue of the food in the bottom of the container, and licked their fingers. He related this to me with much amusement.

During the feast for the termination of the mourning period, distribution of property, and the belongings of the deceased was done. If, certain bequests were left, these were honored. Of course, the relatives and fellow-clan members received the rest of the goods. All the clan members had contributed to the funeral expenses of the dead person. This was, an all out affair, as far as costs were concerned. After this, a widow or widower, could remarry.

Then there were other banquets for other purposes. If a man had a disagreement or a fight, with another man, the instigator gave a banquet. He presented the other man with a gift, and shook hands with him, during the ceremony. One never apologized without bearing a gift. If, the gift was a piece of clothing or a piece of hide, the giver placed it in his hand, during the handshake. If, the other party wished, he could give a gift in return. Figuratively speaking, the term used in describing the conciliatory act was, "He shook hand with So and So with a canoe" or anything else that was given at the apology.

Another potlatch was "Ashamed of one's self" Supposing a man had an undignified position of falling into the water, or got lost in the bush, through his own clumsiness or thoughtlessness. He put on a potlatch. People were informed of the coming potlatch so of course, preparations were made beforehand for these events. And the giver of this potlatch, told the people of the reason for the potlatch. Sometimes, a good laugh was had by the people at his expense.

EPIDEMICS

There were some epidemics that wiped out quite a few of the native people. One of which was the small-pox epidemic when the whites first came into the country. I will not go into details of how this happened. I am sure some people know the reason. It came as far as Tatuk Lake, which was the home of many natives of the Stoney Creek tribe. There is a big graveyard at Tatuk Lake of the people who died of the disease. The Stuart Lake Carriers escaped this dread disease, but they did not

escape the flu epidemic of 1918, which was world-wide. It took seventy-four lives at Fort St. James. These deaths included people from around the lake who were at the Fort for All Saints' Day. Some of the people who could not be taken into the local homes were camped outside at the Mission.

The first fatality of the flu was a young man from Nadleh (Fort Fraser) who had accompanied back to Nak'azdli (Fort St. James) Donald Tod, a Hudson Bay employee or servant, when the latter went to Fort Fraser with two pack-horses for supplies. As was the custom, the church bell tolled for the first few deaths, but the priest, Father Joseph Allard, stopped it when more and frequent deaths began to occur each passing day.

The late W. D. Fraser was then in charge of the H.B.C. Babine Lake Post, he told me that as soon as he heard of the epidemic, he stopped the people there from contacting people of other villages. There was not one case of flu there.

When the flu broke out in Prince George, Michel Sam, Gaspar Thomas and Jean Felix Antoine were working in a saw-mill at Aleza Lake.

When they came down with the flu they were transferred to the Prince George Hospital. After recovering somewhat, they were discharged. They took the train to Vanderhoof. After buying some food there, they started walking on the road to Fort St. James. They were still weak, in fact, Jean Felix was so weak he could not pack a pound weight on his back. The other two men packed all the bedding and food, they were picked up by Justin McIntyre, a Hudson's Bay clerk. "Mac" as he was called, was driving a team of horses and wagon on his way to the Fort carrying mail.

On their arrival home, they found nearly all the people sick with the flu. Later, when they felt better and strengthened they got to work making coffins and digging graves. Driving a team of horses and wagon, laden with coffins each day to the cemetery at the Mission.

In some cases four coffins were put in a common grave. In one case William and Angeline Prince were put in a common grave, one coffin on top of the other. Another person who helped was Pete Erickson who was a carpenter by trade. Felix also distributed soup among the Rancherie people. This soup was donated by the H.B. Co.. The new log house of Benoit and Helena A'Huile at the Mission had been turned into a morgue. This house was vacant because Benoit and his family were on their trapline near Beaver Lake. Upon leaving for the trapline in September, Helena left their housekey with my mother to keep for

them till their planned return at Christmas. But Helena her mother Sabina Julian and other members of her family died on their trapline and are buried at Beaver Lake. From the first of November till the latter half of the month flu and subsequent deaths continued.

Nobody knows why some people escaped this epidemic even though they were exposed. My mother was one of the people who did not get sick. She told me she did not even get a headache. She looked after her family of six at home. I lost one brother to this flu.

The Residential School at the Mission did not escape. Three thirteen year-old girls died. They were Sophie Prince, Josphine Antoine and Amelia Benoit. For some reason or another, the boys had shorter sick days. Father Joseph Allard looked after the sanitation for the girls. He also packed the water from the lake. To this day I don't know why we were not allowed to have drinking water. I was in the High Dormitory with five other girls and I remember how thirsty we all were, what with the high temperatures we had. When the water in the rubber hot water bottles cooled, we drank the water. I remember feeling around in the dark on the basin-and water bench one night, I found an ice-cold pailful of water, it had pieces of ice in it. I called to the other girls informing them of my find. they all got out of bed as fast as they possibly could. How good that water tasted as we gulped it down. Father Joseph must have brought up the water while we slept. A day after this, my cousin Nancy and I were told to get dressed and go to the sewing-room. After being in bed two weeks. I felt top-heavy. But we were quite happy to be allowed to get up.

On arriving in the sewing-room, we found Nancy's sister Vitaline (Victorine Sam) also there with Sister Superior.

The sun was shining brightly on that November morning and the fire crackled in the big barrel-turned stove. Sister left the room and when she returned she informed us that the Armistice was signed at eleven o'clock. From that day on, all the children improved. Towards the end of the month school started again.

I remember Christmas of 1918. During Midnight Mass I could feel the grief of the surviving relatives of the ones that were taken the previous month. I remember also Father Coccolla emerging from the Sacristy carrying a black robe to drape over the shoulders of Celestine AhTie, she had festive clothes on, she did not lose any family member during the recent epidemic.

In the spring of 1924 there was an outbreak of measles in the Fort. Because this was an unfamiliar sickness for the natives, some of the children died. They did not give the patients the proper treatments.

The Letters of Margaret Butcher

MISSIONARY-IMPERIALISM
on the NORTH PACIFIC COAST

Edited by
Mary-Ellen Kelm



under.' But I love you all just the same & perhaps think more fondly of Home & friends because I'm losing touch with them. Bless you my children.

Mag.

PLEASE RETURN TO
MISS BUTCHER
3 ST. CATHERINE'S TER[RACE]
HOVE, SUSSEX
November 14th 1918

Well dears, I do not think I have ever longed for the arrival of the Mail more than for the one that is now due! Oct. 10th, when the last came, seems so far away on account of the troublous times we have been through and as our folks have been so sick & have died at such a rate we cannot but fear for our personal friends and look anxiously for news of them.

I thought we had a hard time with the whooping cough but it was as nothing in comparison with what we have now come through. I was so proud of the spick-and-span cleanliness of the Home when we had finished disinfecting. It was so good to have all the children together once again – they all sat together at supper Oct. 14th the first time since June 22 when the first batch went for holidays. Even though there was still a [good] deal of coughing we knew infection was over & were anxious for a little quiet routine before the Christmas rush. We began routine but it did not last longer than a week. Rumours of the terrors of Spanish Influenza had reached us from time to time: Seattle, Vancouver, Ocean Falls, Prince Rupert – ever creeping nearer – would the Indians who were away, keep away & so save us the scourge? No, an Indian must die in his own place & on Wed Oct 23rd two launches came in, one bearing two corpses, the other [bringing in] several sick people from [Prince] Rupert. We did not know whether they were really suffering from Spanish Flu

or from some other ailment. School assembled on Thurs as usual and about 6:30 p.m. Chief Herbert McMillan came up & advised school be closed. I agreed at once & decided to keep my kiddies gated, so allowed no one "down" [to the Village] on Saturday, neither took them to Church on Sun. So we really were careful but without avail for Mon morn at 7 a.m. one girl said she was sick & nine went to bed that day, many more on Tues and by Wed, Miss Hortop & I with the help of one girl started nursing the 30 who were in bed. We shifted beds & bedding until they were all on one floor. They were too close for sickness or for health but we could not possibly nurse on the top floor [&] only two of us. Those children were very sick and what with vomiting, dysentery, nose-bleeding & senior girls' troubles, we had a horrible time. I never saw such nose-bleeding. We could not stop it & when it transpired that the only girl whose nose did not bleed, suffered hallucinations & was out of bed and trailing bedding or clothes crying she had killed herself or the house or her darling, or else asking me to cut her in pieces or she [was] hunting for her lungs or other parts of her body that had fallen out, I sure put up with the bleeding as a beneficent evil rather than have several crazy ones. After bleeding came congestion in varying degrees & horrible expectoration until it seemed impossible that children who a few days previously had been in good health could throw up such quantities of vile mucous. It was the first time Miss Heather had been sick away from Home & I was sorry for the scant attention she received but what could one do with so many? Food had to be cooked & fires kept burning & there were only the two of us. Mary King did splendidly but she was kept out of the Dormitories & she is only 14 yrs old and been in school 2 yrs.

I put mustard plasters on the children by turns for it was impossible to do them all & the many other necessities as well. Some days the poor things did not get their faces washed, other days their beds [were] not made & no one's hair was combed until she was able to do it herself or another was well enough

to do it for her. I told you about Arnott & how sick he had been – he was doing nicely when the Sickness took him. He ran up to 105.5° [fever] on Tues night & Wed morn, I was taking temperatures & turned round to him, he looked dead, but calling Miss Hortop, we dosed him with stimulant, got hot bottles & blankets & he revived. That was Oct 30th, from that time it was a constant struggle, he would fluctuate so much. Nov 11th, he was in one of his better times so we called his brother, made a hammock of blankets & sent him home. He would have been sent before but his Father died one day, his Mother gave birth to a child two days later & it was a sick household. We were glad they had him for the few hours before he died.¹⁴²

For nine or ten days I managed with what sleep I could snatch, sometimes getting as much as 2 hrs. At 5 or 6 a.m. I would undress & get into bed. Miss Hortop would get up & dress & keep watch. One night they seemed quiet so I undressed at 12 but it was no good, I only got cold & miserable. At length, I was so jumpy & nervous that I put Miss Heather in charge one night & went down to the Allans to sleep & that set me up for the worse that was to follow.

Miss Heather is a schoolteacher, save she has never had to do home duties so that this has been very hard on her. She was up out of bed just as soon as possible & fell right in line, never shirking a nasty task. Miss Alton was one of the first to go down with the sickness, she had it badly & living alone, had a hard time. Mr. Allan went down next – but Mrs. Allan just shouldered her burden & did what she could for Miss Alton as well. We could do nothing in that direction.

Meantime the people in the Village had begun to die two or three at a time so there were funerals to conduct. I cannot yet dwell on the pathetic scenes we took part in. You can imagine us keyed up by stress of work & lack of sleep & know how the scenes are imprinted on one's mind. Three or four lying sick in one room – the Father or Mother or child carried out by

others who were more or less sick – the trail to the graveyard – two white women to conduct the services. We always went in twos – Mrs. Allan & one of us or just two of us as was possible. Sometimes – several times – we gathered three coffins, once there were four, and read service over them. We shed no tears then but I shall now if I attempt to describe it. The Men were awfully good to us, naturally we shewed the strain in our walk as well as faces & the men would take our arm & help us up the hill or over steep places. I did not attempt to climb the hill unaided. It was heartbreaking to go out & bury the Father or Mother of some of the children & come back to tend them when they were too sick to be told of their loss.

The sickness ran a course of about 10 dys. On the ninth day the patient slept hour after hour & that indicated recovery. Some on the 8th or 9th day had congestion & strong pneumonic symptoms. Three children had slight hemorrhage, this was stopped but one of the three had a return of it & pneumonia set in. We did what was possible but on the 3rd day, Sunday Nov 10th, she died. [She was] one of the Bella Coola children. No chance of communicating with her parents. I sent for Abel Ross, a friend of her Father's, and he & his wife came and laid her out. Two of the Chiefs came to see about the funeral. The coffin was made in our Basement of lumber bought for the house. She was dressed in a complete set of clothes, even a winter coat. Gold bracelets, rings, brooches all put on. Her doll, her Bible & a few treasures were put in the Coffin. Such children as were well, went down to the Sewing Room where we held a simple service. Poor kiddies were all in tears but we managed a hymn. Two Chiefs followed so that we felt due respect was paid the dear girl. Miss Horton & I conducted the funeral. As we finished the Ritual & had turned after seeing the grave filled, they asked us to read for two others, a baby & a woman. As that was finished bearers brought the body of a white man, so we were at the fourth, altho' Mrs. Allan read that service. It was a sad, sad time.

We did not want a repetition with Arnott & his Mother had the right to his last moments.

Can you imagine the untidy unkempt state of the house this week? The children who had recovered went downstairs on Monday. Every department was in turmoil. The Dormitories & Halls very dirty, piles of dirty, unsanitary clothes in the Laundry etc. The children were weak, the Teachers were tired out but we have kept plugging away all week until at last we have a semblance of tidiness. Today Nov 15th, the sun shone, the air is crisp & cold after being cold & damp, so I took the children out-doors for half-an-hour. They were so excited. There are six still in bed, their lungs more or less involved. They may or may not really recover but are so much better that I did not get out of bed to them last night. Eh me! What it is to be Mother of 30! Why did I ever sing "I'll not get married, oh no not me to have six kids to squall & cry"! Through not getting married I have 30 & 29 of them sick at once. After Mary's death, the children were fearful for a few nights. Indians are strong believers in ghosts & spirits & the children would only move in batches. I left lights burning everywhere the first night, lessened the number the next night & sent them to bed with stories of angels keeping watch. The third night only the usual night lights were left and their fears were forgotten.

Mary Elliott was 13 yrs. She & her sisters came from Bella Coola just after I came here. They all went home for holidays this year & returning, caught whooping cough on the Venture. I don't think it would have seemed so tragic had she been near her parents.

Last night after supper, there was a noise of fooling & nonsense in the Sewing Room & I did not know it could sound so good. I'll have to detail little incidents at some other time; many have been comical, some tragic, some pathetic but through all we have been brought in safety but we do long for the days of health & routine & four Teachers for we are almost too tired to cope with every day life.

- work at the Home. Butcher replaced her until her resignation in 1919, at which time Ida Clarke resumed work as Matron. United Church Archives [ucc] Victoria College, University of Toronto, Minutes of the Sub-Executive of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church (Canada), 78.080C-004-1918-20.
- 136 Attributed to William Cowper from *Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk*.
- 137 Two addresses are printed here in the original, indicating that the letter was to be sent to a relative in New Zealand but returned to Butcher's sister in Hove. It is clear from this and other such notations that the letters were circulated amongst the family and the church community.
- 138 Butcher includes a drawing here of her room and its layout at the bottom left of the page.
- 139 Otherwise known as mercury chloride or calomel.
- 140 The Andersons left the Kitamaat valley in 1918, moved from their home by exhaustion and disappointment. Three years on southern Vancouver Island getting into debt rejuvenated the dream of the Kitamaat valley, and when, in 1921, the construction of a pulp mill was announced for Kitamaat, the family happily returned. The mill never materialized.
- 141 Here she misses the fact that First Nations always preserved their food for the winter through drying and smoking.
- 142 This tendency to discharge children just before death no doubt was due to such humanitarian and empathetic reasons as Butcher describes, but it also had its darker side. In some cases, schools discharged pupils before they died because a death in the school necessitated an investigation. The practice also had the added disadvantage that it tended to spread disease and was a factor in the dissemination of tuberculosis throughout the province.
- 143 The Spanish Influenza did, indeed, wreck havoc among the First Nations of British Columbia. The death rate for the flu among First Nations was over nine times higher than that for non-Natives across the province. At Kitamaat the morbidity rate for children under 6 was 224 per 1,000 population, 63 per 1,000 for the ages 6 to 15; 39 per 1000 population for the ages 16–21; 25 per 1,000 for the ages 21–65 and 125 per 1,000 for those over the age of 65. This pattern was different than that which occurred among non-Natives, where the disease most frequently took those in the prime of life. NAC, National Health and Welfare, RG 29, v853-096, 1 May 1919; British Columbia, Vital Statistics, 1919, British Columbia *Sessional Papers*, 1920.
- 144 More addresses have been deleted from the text. These are: Mrs McGavrau 357 Downey Ave. Irvington Indianapolis U.S.A. and Miss Butcher 6 Chelmsford Rd Leytonstone London England.
- 145 This is undoubtedly the consequence of the morbidity rate in the Home, which catered especially to girls.
- 146 During the previous whooping-cough epidemic.
- 147 Addresses have been deleted from text: Mrs Mc Gavrau Miss Butcher 3 St. Catherines Ter[race] Hove, Sussex England.

DR. FRED
AND THE
SPANISH LADY
FIGHTING THE KILLER FLU

BETTY O'KEEFE AND IAN MACDONALD



TIMELINE FOR SPANISH FLU

Mid-1917: Reports emerge of a mysterious killer, a flu-like illness originating in China and sweeping Asia and Eastern Europe.

Early 1918: Canadian and other troops fighting the First World War in France are ravaged by a new disease.

Doctors are confronted by a lethal flu strain never known before that strikes and spreads quickly.

March 1918: Canadian military and government representatives meet to plan facilities for expected soldier victims of what is now recognized as a pandemic.

Spring: Flu sweeps through congested U.S. army camps, leaving many dead. There are heavy civilian victims in Boston and other cities.

September: Infected returning soldiers land at Quebec City, bringing flu to Canada; first civilian cases are at a Victoriaville school.

Within days thousands are sick and dying in Montreal and other Quebec communities.

The disease spreads rapidly into the Maritime Provinces, Ontario, and the West, carried partly by infected soldiers on trains going home.

Early October: The disease arrives in B.C., with many victims in Kootenay mining towns. Officials close schools and entertainment centres in most towns and villages.

Victoria and Vancouver hospitals are swamped, the latter by many sick coming from nearby communities with no medical facilities. Gravediggers are in short supply.

October 18: Vancouver's medical health officer, Dr. Frederick Underhill, orders schools and entertainment centres closed, Victoria having done so earlier. In both cities commercial and industrial plants remain open.

Civic leaders make urgent pleas for volunteers to help nurse the sick and dying. Vancouver victims now number in the thousands.

October 27: Vancouver's worst day, 24 dead within 24 hours; flu ravaging coastal and interior communities.

November 11: People forget worries about the flu and flock into the streets to celebrate the end of World War One.

November 19: Dr. Underhill orders city reopened as flu begins to abate. Victoria follows suit.

Province's top medical man, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Henry Young, says records are incomplete and at times inaccurate, but estimates the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918–early 1919 took the lives of some 4,400 British Columbians.

outbreak was a thing of the past, and schools shut since mid-October would reopen in a few days. At this time there were only four new cases in the emergency hospital, the Chinese hospital was closed, and a separate Japanese hospital had only four patients.

Kelowna and Penticton escaped the heavy losses suffered in the Kootenays. By October 31 Penticton had only five cases, described as mild, although Medical Health Officer Dr. R.B. White acknowledged that there were several patients from other nearby communities, particularly Summerland and Naramata, who were being treated in hospital in Penticton. The caseload rose to 250, with two deaths. Dr. White had opened an emergency hospital, which he declared was functioning well, and he had received a good volunteer response. Most of the Okanagan escaped the second wave of the flu in December.

In the Cariboo country, accounts reaching Victoria told of a heavy death toll on the Chilcotin and Stoney Creek reserves. Within days the Stoney Creek band was decimated. A Catholic priest, Father Cuccolo, went to minister to them and was appalled at the number who died. Death also struck the Aboriginal people in Lillooet with a savagery not seen since they had become victims of the smallpox brought in by early settlers 50 years earlier. Figures were sketchy and unreliable, but it was estimated that at least eight people a day were dying.

One elderly couple at White Lake in the B.C. interior locked themselves in their small home and wouldn't let anyone in to visit unless the guest was willing to swallow their "warding-off" mixture made of strong tea laced with mustard. Neighbours who periodically checked on the couple were forced to gulp it down in order to gain entry to the house. They commented afterward that it tasted much worse than Ottawa's recommended "eggie drink," a concoction made of a pint of water, the whipped whites of two eggs, salt, and cinnamon.

Suffering in the north

Simultaneously with the Okanagan and Cariboo regions, B.C.'s northern centre in Prince George began its fight against the Spanish Lady. The only town in the region with a hospital, its facilities were almost immediately stretched to the limit. Patients began to arrive from villages in the surrounding area, all seeking the help of the



The grave of an Aboriginal flu victim; the influenza virus was particularly devastating for some of the country's First Nations.

only doctors and nurses available to them. By mid-October cases were being sent to the Connaught Hotel, which had been set up as an emergency isolation hospital. The town was closed down almost immediately as the first 22 cases were confirmed, and within four days there were 69.

The RCMP took on the job of trying to find missing trappers and checking on anyone living alone or in an isolated location. One officer commented that there were likely draft dodgers from the war hiding in the area, and he feared some of them might be sick or dead and no one would know. RCMP constables began to arrive with patients from isolated mining camps miles to the north and from Aboriginal families; the latter seemed to suffer much more acutely than others.

The Native population in the northern part of the province, as in the Cariboo, was very badly affected by the flu, and on November 1 the band chief in Fort George died in the first few days of the epidemic. Sub-Chief Joseph Qua was so afraid of the disease that he left the

village with his son and daughter to live alone until the danger had passed. He struck a camp several miles up the Fraser River. Some time later, a passerby found all three of them dead in their tent.

In Stewart Lake, 70 Aboriginal people were dead and another 25 were not expected to survive. The *Prince George Citizen* reported, "The epidemic is still raging and apparently has no mercy for the poor Indian." The Pacific Great Eastern Railway helped by shipping food to homes and settlements, many of them Native encampments, along its route. The total death toll among First Nations is difficult to confirm. The South West Indian Inspectorate, representing 21,567 Natives, reported 714 dead, but the numbers were incomplete, as word had not yet been received from 3,500. Another district agent reported 154 dead from a total of 1,400 in his area.

The *Prince George Citizen* lauded the town's two doctors, Drs. Lyon and Lazier, who had treated hundreds of men, women, and children from the region. When Dr. Lyon became too ill to continue, Lazier and his nursing staff laboured on, doing as much as they were able. Locally born Chew Wing was the first Chinese man to die in Prince George.

B.C.'s coast, with its ship traffic, was the only area to feel the brunt of the pandemic as badly as eastern B.C. during the first days of October. In fact, the community of Prince Rupert learned the flu was on the way when they read the *Prince Rupert News* on September 25. The constant arrival of ships from the U.S. brought the illness to B.C.'s major northern port early. In 1918, ships and trains were the major means of transportation, and passenger-ship traffic between San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Victoria, Vancouver, Prince Rupert, and Alaskan ports was brisk. It was served largely by two major companies, Canadian Pacific's B.C. Coastal Service and the Grand Trunk Pacific, as well as by several smaller lines that helped to handle heavy traffic between June and October. In 1918 their traffic included the *Spanish Lady*.

Short of beds, nurses, and general help, the St. John Ambulance Association in Prince Rupert went on the hunt for volunteers. The immigration department found 25 unused beds, and these were immediately put to use in the Borden Street School, which was turned into an isolation hospital. It was instantly filled, and Prince Rupert

DR. FRED AND THE SPANISH LADY

City Council asked Victoria for help. The city desperately needed five trained nurses and three orderlies, but the minister of health could find no one to send. In a quandary similar to Prince George's, the port city found itself flooded with patients from the hinterland and nearby smaller communities. Every day, fishermen, some near death, tied up at Prince Rupert's docks. One boat contained a whole family—mother, father, and nine children. Eight children survived, left behind as orphans.

Nearby Port Simpson was initially spared from the flu, and the medical missionary there, Dr. P.R. Large, offered his services to Prince Rupert, where he felt he could be of more use. He was welcomed and attended to patients in the regular hospital, as well as in the isolation unit on Borden Street. When the school facility was finally closed late in the year, the *News* lauded "the careful and efficient nursing which had saved several apparently hopeless cases."

Two prominent deaths in Prince Rupert included businessman and alderman R.J.D. Smith and Gus Wick, the popular operator of the local White Lunch restaurant. In another part of town, five Sikh friends worked in the pouring rain to cut five-foot lengths of yellow cedar for the funeral pyre of their fellow lumber worker, Harry Singh, who had died at the emergency hospital. They used coal oil to keep the fire alight in the steady downpour, a lonely group saying farewell to a friend on what seemed a very foreign shore.

Ships of the Consolidated Whaling Company did not return to Prince Rupert until mid-November, avoiding the worst of the pandemic. The fleet reported a catch in 1918 of just one short of 1,000 whales, but fishing that year was generally poor, as many fishermen were ill at the height of the season.

The coastal mining and smelting town of Anyox, 80 miles north of Prince Rupert near the Alaskan border, was a booming centre of activity in 1918, and the constant ship traffic brought the disease to this otherwise isolated community before it reached some interior towns. By October 23 the local doctor had reported 400 cases and 11 deaths. By November 1, the death toll had risen to 44, with 25 dying the preceding day.

News from smaller villages filtered out slowly. At Kitwanga, the Aboriginal "town of totems" on the Skeena River, 16 died during

November. Five people were reported dead in New Hazelton, one in Smithers, and five in Telkwa, "not including Indians."

On Vancouver Island

One of the more astute medical health officers, Dr. W.F. Drysdale, warned residents of Nanaimo on Vancouver Island early in October that flu was sweeping North America and was bound to arrive in their community soon. The precautions and treatment provided were better than in many other locations, but nonetheless Nanaimo was one of the most severely hit communities. Drysdale's prediction started to come true on October 16 when the first 20 cases were reported.

Drysdale supported the preventive measures recommended by Young and Underhill, and Nanaimo City Council decided to close schools and other public gathering places sooner rather than later. Despite the precautions, within two days there were 135 cases of the flu and the first death: Mrs. Philip Frenchie, a Snuneymuxw woman from the local reserve. As the number of victims climbed and the situation became more critical, council decided to convert the athletic club on Church Street into an emergency hospital. But Nanaimo was treating the area from Ladysmith to Parksville, and even the extra facilities were soon so overcrowded that the home for hospital nurses was set up as a second extra emergency ward. One doctor was also very ill. In only two days the number of cases jumped to 400, with seven deaths and three more doctors ill.

The *Nanaimo Free Press* said that some neighbours were afraid to visit homes where people were sick and suffering, and the hospital board made an appeal for local ladies to make sheets for the emergency hospital. It also requested volunteers for the hospital kitchen. "All that's needed is intelligent and capable hands," the report stressed, but "we must fight the flu with the same determination as the army in France." Doctors now recommended that the sick be treated at home whenever possible because there were no beds left in any of the hospitals.

With many stores and government facilities closed, another outlet was needed to provide liquor for treating Nanaimo's flu patients at home. One doctor said that if liquor was being given to patients in hospital, it should also be of help to patients at home. The provincial