

Victims of the Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1919 Sheridan County, Wyoming

Researched by Cynde Georgen

Dying as he did on October 10th, 1918, Benjamin L. Dotta, a 45-year-old railworker from Sheridan, is believed to be the first confirmed influenza fatality in Sheridan County. He would certainly not be the last. In the final three weeks of October alone, the deaths of seventy-eight men, women and children were reported in pages of the *Sheridan Enterprise* and the *Sheridan Post*. They ranged from ranchers, coal miners and railroad engineers to housewives, stenographers and schoolchildren. By the time the last death was reported on May 19th, 1919 (33-year-old coal miner Mate Gudsty), the Spanish Influenza would claim 217 victims in the Sheridan area – about two percent of the population.

October 1918 was the most virulent month for the flu, with 78 people dying between the 10th and the 31st. In November, sixty people died. Between December and the end of May, another 79 perished. The deadliest single day was October 17th, on which eleven people died. The average age of the Sheridan area flu victim was 25.6 years. Fifty-seven percent were men. Of these, thirty-two worked in agriculture as either a farmer or rancher, 28 worked in the Tongue River valley coal mines, and twelve worked for the railroad. Other occupations represented included sales, bookkeeping, electrical engineering, the ministry and undertaking. Bartenders, nurses, attorneys, stonemasons, druggists, stenographers, wagon-makers, dry cleaners, and carpenters died as well.

AGE	DEAD
0 to 5	36
6 to 10	5
11 to 20	19
21 to 30	54
31 to 40	57
41 to 50	11
51 to 60	5
61 to 70	2
71 to 80	6
No Age	22

The disease impacted different parts of the county at different times with varying degrees of virility. Nearly all of the sixty fatalities in the coal camps of Acme, Carneyville, Dietz, Kooi Monarch and Monarch, for example, occurred early in the epidemic, between October and December. On the other hand, most of Clearmont's thirteen deaths occurred in April 1919, in the waning days of the epidemic. Outside of Sheridan and the coal camps, the impact of the epidemic on the western half of the county was considerably less than in the eastern half. Even though the population in the eastern part of the county was rather low, there were still over two dozen deaths reported. In addition to Clearmont's thirteen fatalities, ten more died in Arvada (almost all women), with two each in Ucross and Ulm. In contrast, Banner, Big Horn, Dayton, Parkman and Ranchester combined reported only twelve deaths.

Since most Sheridan County residents in 1918-1919 were Caucasian, it is no surprise that most of the dead were Caucasian as well. But the minority populations were not spared from the ravages of the disease. Eight Japanese railroad workers and their families were among the dead – including four members of the Okazaki family – as were four Mexican-born laborers and three African-Americans. Most of the dead in the mining camps were men and women of Eastern European descent – Poles, Czechs, Montenegrans, Austrians, Hungarians and Slavs – once again in keeping with the general population of the communities. Interestingly, although there were a sizable number of them living in the mining camps, only one Italian was numbered among the epidemic victims; a coal miner's daughter from Carneyville.

After the first dozen or so deaths, printed obituaries grew shorter and shorter. Sometimes, the dead were lucky to get a sentence to themselves. The following are excerpts from the obituaries listed during the height of the epidemic in late October 1918.

- Two-month-old Charles Everett died of a complication of diseases, primarily influenza.
- John Pienkvocki, a miner at the Sheridan Coal company, died at Dietz due to influenza with complications. His wife died earlier.

- Julius Pavik, a Hungarian miner at the Acme Coal company, died as a result of influenza.
- Dan Crist of Carneyville was numbered among the victims of the dread epidemic.
- Mrs. Flake died at Carneyville.
- U. Okazaki, died at the emergency hospital. His wife and father also died of influenza.
- Elija Murdock died at the home of his brother on Soldier Creek.
- Robert Currie, a young businessman of Birney, Montana, died at that place as the result of an attack of influenza followed by pneumonia.
- Two-year-old Donald Harrison was reported dead from influenza.
- Another victim of the influenza was Mary Catherine Marecks, who died at Acme.
- Carroll Jefferies, Jr. died after an illness extending over a period of only a few days.
- Andrea Albynish, an Austrian miner, died at Acme of pneumonia following influenza.
- Christ Pederson, a well known young rancher from Decker, Montana, died in Sheridan where he was taken ill during a business trip.
- Robert T. Williams, one of the best known ranchers of the Tongue River country, passed away of the prevalent disease.
- Ernest Blain Robbins, ticket agent at the Burlington depot, died of pneumonia following an attack of the prevalent disease.
- Mrs. Thomas Byrom, another victim of the plague, died at her home.
- Miss Esther Langdon died as a result of an attack of influenza complicated with pneumonia.
- A young Japanese woman, Mrs. Akimoto, was another victim of influenza.
- Frank Brockett, a well known resident of Sheridan, died of the prevalent malady.
- Mrs. Wellen Carter died at Carneyville. She was the mother of three children, all ill with influenza at the time of the mother's death.
- Alfred F. Sharpnack died at his home after an illness extending over a period of nearly a week.
- Miss Enid Markle died at her home of pneumonia which appeared as a secondary complication with influenza.
- Samuel Tillman, chief engineer at the central power plant in Acme, died due to pneumonia following influenza.
- Rev. Arthur W. H. Wolters, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran church of Sheridan, died after an illness extending over a week.
- Mrs. Olga Bacon died at home of pneumonia, a secondary complication of influenza. She was the sister of Miss Enid Markle, who died earlier.
- Another victim of the plague was Robert Zeigler, a miner employed at Acme.
- Harry Beasley, a young man employed in the construction department of the Burlington railroad, died at the emergency hospital.
- Mildred Ethel Frazier died at the nurses' home in Sheridan, of pneumonia following influenza.
- After an illness lasting less than thirty-six hours, Jesse R. Cooley died at his apartment.
- Mrs. E. C. Fiske died at her home in Carneyville of the complications of influenza.
- William Scott Stuby, round house foreman for the Burlington, died of pneumonia following influenza.

The following is a detailed list of known Sheridan area influenza/pneumonia victims. While most resided in the county, others were from nearby communities in southern Montana, economically and socially connected to Sheridan.

NAME	DEATH	AGE	COD	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE
?, ? (Female)	1918-10/17		IP	Housewife	
ACHENBACH, Bessie Stueve	1918-11/20	26	I	Housewife	Lodge Grass
ADAMS, Christine May	1918-10/31	17		Housewife	Arvada
ADDISON, Jessie	1919-01/17	22	I	Housewife	Kirby

NAME	DEATH	AGE	COD	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE
AKAGAKI, S	1918-11/02		IP	Railroad Worker	
AKIMOTO, S (Mrs)	1918-10/17		IP		Dietz
ALBYNISH, Andrea	1918-10/17	36	P	Coal Miner	Acme
ALLEN, George Jack	1919-03/25	1	P		Ranchester
ALLENDER, Samuel Roy	1918-11/17	33	P	Rancher	Arvada
ANDERSON, Carl J	1918-10/23	52	IP	Railroad Worker	Sheridan
ARNOLD, Ramson Willard	1918-11/25	37	IP	Rancher	Dayton
ASHTON, Steve	1918-12/18				Arvada
BABIONE, Cora Mae	1918-11/01	38	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
BACHLETT, Barbara	1918-11/05	33	I	Housewife	Monarch
BACON, Olga Markle	1918-10/24	35	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
BALDWIN, Adelia Anna	1919-04/16	50	P	Housewife	Sheridan
BALDWIN, Sam	1918-11/				Lodge Grass
BALL, Myrtle Gertrude	1918-11/03	31	I	Housewife	Big Horn
BAONK, Paul	1918-11/06	46	I	Coal Miner	Monarch
BARBER, Maggie May (BARKER)	1919-01/12	22	I	Housewife	Birney
BARKEY, Elizabeth Church	1919-03/03	Inf	IP		Buffalo
BARNHARDT, George D	1919-01/29	33	I	Rancher	Moorhead
BARYLAK, George	1919-01/05	4	I		Clearmont
BAXTER, Gene	1919-02/13	1			Kooi
BAXTER, Mary	1918-11/20	20	P	Housewife	Kooi
BEASLEY, Harry	1918-10/24	30	I	Railroad Worker	Sheridan
BELT, Minnie	1919-04/15	31	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
BENEGALIA, John	1918-10/21	37	IP	Coal Miner	Acme
BERKMAN, D D	1918-10/30	31	P	Railroad Worker	Sheridan
BEZOLD, ?	1919-01/20	Inf	I		Sheridan
BIRCHBY, Anna	1918-11/19	32	I	Housewife	Sheridan
BIXBY, William	1918-10/17	74	IP	Pioneer	Kirby
BOUDIN, Robert	1918-11/30	18	IP	Laborer	Dietz
BOYLES, Irma Mabel	1918-11/26	31	I	Housewife	Dietz
BROCKETT, Frank	1918-10/18	19	IP	Cowboy	Sheridan
BROWNIE, Clay M	1918-11/25	46	I	Bartender	Sheridan
BUCHANAN, Ruth Elizabeth	1919-02/04	28	I	Housewife	Arvada
BURLSON, Robert	1919-03/13	30	P	Rancher	Sheridan
BURTON, Clarence	1918-11/10	35	I		Sheridan
BURY, John	1918-11/02	32	P	Coal Miner	Monarch
BUSH, Robert	1918-11/25	66	P	Farmer	Decker
BYROM, ? (Mrs Thomas)	1918-10/17	24	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
CARROLL, Fred	1918-10/31	31	P	Rancher	Birney
CARTER, Ellen	1918-10/16	37	IP	Housewife	Carneyville
CATTERALL, Peter	1918-10/28	11	I	Student	Monarch
CHABO, Ella	1919-04/08	16	I	Student	Sheridan
CONNOR, Wakeman	1919-02/27	Inf	P		Sheridan
COOK, Effie	1919-02/08	33	IP	Housewife	Arvada
COOLEY, Jesse R	1918-10/14	41	IP	Salesman	Sheridan
COOPER, Catherine	1918-11/02	76	I	Housewife	Sheridan
COPPS, Roma M (CAPPS)	1919-02/11	15	P	Student	Sheridan
CRIST, Dan	1918-10/21	30	P	Coal Miner	Carneyville
CULVER, ? (Mr)	1918-10/				Decker
CURRIE, Robert	1918-10/21	24	IP	Bookkeeper	Birney
DALY, John	1918-11/15		I	Salesman	Ulm
DARCY, Frank (DORSEY)	1918-11/14	39	**	Laborer	Sheridan
DeMORMOR, Constantina	1918-10/29	27	IP	Coal Miner	Monarch
DICKERSON, Sarah	1918-12/19	60	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
DIDELOT, Verna C	1918-10/23	21	IP		Parkman

NAME	DEATH	AGE	COD	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE
DOTTO, Benjamin L	1918-10/10	45	IP	Railroad Worker	Sheridan
DUARTE, Kelos	1919-04/21		I		Sheridan
EACRET, Clara	1919-05/01	50		Housewife	Sheridan
EQUEKI, ? (Mrs) (EQUCHI)	1918-10/25		IP	Housewife	
FARRIS, Stanley (FERRIS)	1918-11/08	31	I	Rancher	Lower Prairie Dog
FISKE, Gus L	1918-12/21	55		Undertaker	Sheridan
FISKE, Odessa	1918-10/22	25	IP	Housewife	Carneyville
FLOCKHART, Agnes	1918-10/16	1	P		Dietz
FORRES, M	1918-11/23	28	P		
FRAZIER, Mildred Ethel	1918-10/23	20	IP	Student Nurse	Sheridan
FRENCH, William Edward	1919-01/20	22	I	Farmer	Kirby
FULLER, Samuel Morton	1918-11/15	32	IP	Rancher	Home Ranch
GARCEZ, Joseph	1918-12/23	25	IP	Laborer	Sheridan
GARDNER, Willa May	1919-03/09	Inf	P		Sheridan
GARRETSON, ?	1918-12/18	Inf	I		Clearmont
GARRETSON, Lloyd Jennings	1918-12/25	3	IP		Clearmont
GARRETSON, Mary	1918-12/18	35	I	Housewife	Clearmont
GASSION, Emma	1919-01/19	24	I	Housewife	Arvada
GERMAINE, Valentine	1918-10/15	30	IP	Coal Miner	Acme
GOURD, Dorothy	1919-01/17	54	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
GRACE, Hettie Schroeder	1918-11/07	21	I	Housewife	Sheridan
GRAVERSON, John Lewis	1919-05/04	36	P	County Attorney	Sheridan
GRAVES, Elphia A	1918-12/	40	IP	Housewife	Clearmont
GRONG, Susia Millie	1918-10/31	5	I		Monarch
GROSS, Harry R	1918-12/30	30	I	Rancher	Slater Creek
GUDESTY, Mate	1919-05/19	33	IP	Coal Miner	Sheridan
GURYUAC, Stevan	1918-10/31	Inf	I		Monarch
HAMMOND, Norman	1918-11/04	48	I	Farmer	Decker
HARATYK, John	1919-02/19	Inf	P		Kooi
HARRINGTON, Jennie L M	1918-12/21	26	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
HARRIS, Richard Dale	1919-01/21	Inf	I		Ranchester
HARRISON, Donald	1918-10/21	2	IP		Sheridan
HARTMAN, Olaf Andrew	1919-04/19	45	IP	Stonemason	Birney
HEBERT, Nellie Roberta	1919-05/06		P	Housewife	Arvada
HEINIE, George	1918-11/02	32	P	Farmer	Sheridan
JACK, Margaret	1918-10/30	29	P		Acme
JEFFERIS, Isaac Carroll	1918-10/17	27	I	Druggist	Sheridan
JIROSZK, Paul (Yurrosek)	1918-10/27	26	P	Coal Miner	Carneyville
JUGO, Rudi	1918-11/09	30	IP	Coal Miner	Carneyville
KABIELUSZ, John	1918-11/05	Inf	I		Dutch Creek
KAHLER, ?	1919-01/21	Inf			Sheridan
KAWOLOK, John	1918-11/17	26	IP	Coal Miner	Monarch
KELLEY, Allie L	1918-11/29	32	I	Housewife	Sheridan
KELSAY, Iris	1918-10/30	20	P	Housewife	Sheridan
KETCHUM, Neal	1918-11/02		IP		Ranchester
KING, Clyde	1918-12/24	29	IP	Rancher	Carroll
KROUT, Clarence	1918-11/28	33	IP	Farmer	Sheridan
KUHOT, Mike	1918-10/30	34	IP	Coal Miner	Kooi
KUKUZHKA, Paul	1918-11/04		P	Coal Miner	Carneyville
KUKUZKA, Annie	1918-11/15	Inf	IP		Kooi
KUZMA, Tony	1918-10/22	26	I	Miner	Acme
LALENSKI, Lewis	1918-10/18			Miner	Kooi
LAMOUREUX, Edward	1919-04/20	35	I	Farmer	Clearmont
LANGDON, Esther	1918-10/17	26	IP		Sheridan
LANIER, Charles	1918-12/23	31	IP	Rancher	Dayton

NAME	DEATH	AGE	COD	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE
LEHTO, Lyyti	1918-10/31	3	I		Carneyville
LEWIS, Garrett	1918-10/27	Inf	IP		Sheridan
LEWIS, Geraldine (Genevieve)	1919-01/23	8	IP		Little Goose
LEWIS, Josephine	1919-01/31	2	I		Little Goose
LIJCKI, John	1918-11/22	2	P		Kooi
LINDSAY, ? (Mrs Earl)	1918-11/		I	Housewife	
LITTLER, Joseph	1918-10/30	37	I	Salesman	Monarch
LONG, Alvin H	1919-04/05	32	IP	Rancher	Clearmont
LONG, Bessie	1919-04/14	22	I	Housewife	Clearmont
LONG, J Frank	1919-04/26	17	I	Student	Clearmont
MAHALIK, ?	1918-10/27	Inf	IP		Acme
MANDIC, Peter (MANDICOF)	1918-10/11	33	P	Coal Miner	Dietz
MARCKS, Mary Catherine	1918-10/21	36	I	Housewife	Acme
MARKLE, Enid	1918-10/21	27	IP	Stenographer	Sheridan
MARTYNEK, Paul	1918-11/07	38	P	Coal Miner	Carneyville
MARVIN, Earl Roger	1918-12/18	28	I	Rancher	Kirby
MAXWELL, Clara	1919-02/05	30	P	Housewife	Kirby
MAYDA, Katharine	1919-03/03				Carneyville
McCLAIN, Elmer C	1918-11/15	27	IP	Coal Miner	Model
McCONNELL, Bessie	1918-10/27	27	P	Housewife	Sheridan
McGREGOR, Eva	1919-02/04	33	I	Stenographer	Sheridan
MENENDEZ, Ramon	1918-10/17		P	Railroad Worker	Sheridan
MERRILL, Ed	1919-02/25	Inf	P		Sheridan
MERRILL, Harley	1918-12/02	46	IP	Rancher	Tongue River
MERRITT, Agnes Elizabeth	1919-02/18	7	P		Sheridan
MILLS, Pluma E (MILES)	1918-10/22	29	IP	Housewife	Arvada
MIRICH, Ely	1918-11/10	25	IP	Railroad Worker	Sheridan
MONTEGNA, Josephine	1918-11/05	15	IP		Carneyville
MOORE, Gwendolyn	1919-04/29	Inf	P		Sheridan
MURDOCK, Elijah	1918-10/21	27	P	Farmer	Soldier Creek
MURPHY, Benjamin	1918-11/12	26	I	Laborer	Sheridan
MURPHY, Florence Welcome	1918-11/02	17	P	Housewife	Ucross
NAGELMAN, Clitus	1918-12/13	Inf			Carneyville
NELSON, Delpha Mae	1919-01/27	1	I		Kirby
NEWINGER, Edna May	1918-11/21	35	IP	Housewife	Banner
NEWTON, Clayton Lawrence	1918-11/13	32	IP	Businessman	Ucross
O'DELL, Elmer	1919-01/18	23	I	Farmer	Kirby
OKAZAKI, R (Mr)	1918-10/19		IP		
OKAZAKI, U	1918-10/12	24	IP	Railroad Worker	Sheridan
OKAZAKI, W	1918-10/16		IP	Housewife	Sheridan
OKUBO, S	1919-02/06	26	IP	Housewife	Alger
OKUBO, Tatsuko	1919-03/17	2	I		Monarch
OTONI, S	1918-10/22		IP		
OTT, Herman F	1918-11/06	39	I	Wagonmaker	Sheridan
OWEN, Ira	1919-04/30	20	IP	Rancher	Parkman
OWENS, Charles Everett	1918-10/19	Inf	I		Acme
PARAT, George Leonard	1919-01/18	Inf	P		Dietz
PATE, Elizabeth	1918-11/05	35	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
PAULUS, John	1919-03/08	7	P		Ranchester
PAVIK, Julius	1918-10/20	42	I	Coal Miner	Acme
PEDERSON, Christ	1918-10/17	20	IP	Rancher	Sheridan
PIENKCEWKI, John	1918-10/20		I	Coal Miner	Dietz
PLUMB, Henry Lee	1918-12/24	37	IP	Cowboy	Ulm
POLLARD, Edna Louise	1918-11/16	31	IP	Housewife	Monarch
POPE, John	1919-02/20	55	I	Rancher	Sheridan

NAME	DEATH	AGE	COD	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE
POTTS, Raymond R	1918-10/26	27	IP		Sheridan
PRETATOO, Edward	1918-11/21	33	IP	Coal Miner	Acme
QUINN, Thomas H	1918-10/26	29	IP	Farmer	Home Ranch
RALSTON, Adam	1918-12/20	28	IP	Coal Miner	Dietz
ROBBINS, Ernest Blaine	1918-10/17	34	IP	Railroad Ticket Agent	Sheridan
ROBINSON, Ida Grace	1919-02/09	20	IP	Housewife	Arvada
RUCKER, Clyde Orville	1918-10/13	32	P	Dry Cleaner	Sheridan
RUCKI, Joe Frank	1918-10/20	30	I	Coal Miner	Monarch
RYBYZA, Joe	1918-10/24	28	IP	Coal Miner	Acme
SABO, Rosa	1918-11/05	37	IP	Housewife	Monarch
SANDBURGH, Helen Mary	1919-02/16	Inf			Sheridan
SANDERSON, John Otto	1918-10/15	38	P	Railroad Engineer	Sheridan
SANDERSON, W	1919-02/12	Inf	I		Clearmont
SAUNNERS, Lee John	1918-12/18	37	IP	Coal Miner	Acme
SCHULTZ, Louis	1918-11/04	71	IP	Farmer	Clearmont
SHARPNACK, Alfred F	1918-10/15	71	I	Carpenter	Sheridan
SHASSETZ, Regina	1918-11/13	17	IP	Housewife	Monarch
SHAW, Mabel	1918-10/24	21	P	Housewife	Sheridan
SMITH, Betty Jane	1919-01/23				
SMITH, Catherine E	1918-11/	76	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
SMITH, Leon	1919-02/22	6	IP		Clearmont
STOUT, ? (Miss)	1918-11/11	Inf	P		Upper Prairie Dog
STUBY, William Scott	1918-10/15	32	P	Railroad Foreman	Sheridan
STUEVE, Gladys	1919-02/28	Inf			Parkman
STULTZ, Louis	1918-11/03	80	I		Clearmont
SUTHERLAND, Lawrence	1918-10/19	30	I		Sheridan
SWINYER, Hazel	1919-01/25	10	I		Sheridan
TAYLOR, James	1918-10/25	35	P	Cowboy	Arvada
THOMAS, Charles	1919-04/21	40	IP		Sheridan
TILLMAN, Samuel	1918-10/19	30	P	Electrical Engineer	Acme
VESTAL, Mabel	1919-01/16	18	IP	Housewife	Sheridan
WANTULOCK, Mike	1918-10/29	25	**	Coal Miner	Monarch
WARDLOW, Louis	1918-11/06	Inf	I		Model
WATSON, Nela	1919-04/14	35	I	Housewife	Sheridan
WELCH, Patrick	1918-11/28	43	IP	Railroad Worker	Ranchester
WELLER, William T	1918-12/02	40	I	Rancher	Home Ranch
WILEY, Ida Mae	1918-12/11	38	P	Housewife	Sheridan
WILLIAMS, Robert T	1918-10/17	66	I	Rancher	Sheridan
WILSON, Abner	1918-10/30	17	IP		Sheridan
WINTERS, Marvin	1918-10/23		P	Rancher	Decker
WINTULOK, Helen	1918-10/30	2	IP		Monarch
WOLTERS, Arthur W H	1918-10/24	25	IP	Minister	Sheridan
WOODARD, Harold Damon	1918-10/30	34	IP	Electrical Engineer	Acme
YOUNG, Gertrude Irene	1918-11/03	30	IP	Saleslady	Sheridan
ZECOUICH, Milika	1918-11/05	33	IP	Coal Miner	Acme
ZEIGLER, Robert	1918-10/23	32	IP	Coal Miner	Acme
ZEIGLER, Stella Gildroy	1918-11/17	27	IP	Housewife	Acme
ZORNER, Pearl Nettie	1918-11/10	25	I	Housewife	Sheridan