

# Pandemic Influenza of 1918

## An Interview with Agnes Gatlin

### **Agnes Gatlin**

We didn't have any in our family, but we had it in the neighborhood and we knew – everybody thought it was terrible, you know, a disease. So we didn't travel much back then because we didn't have a way of travelling and we stayed at home. We knew how bad it affected some in the neighborhood. Some of our relatives had it. They were deathly sick and bedridden and they were all - seemed to be everybody thinking they'd eventually die from it. They live, the others, of course took a long time to get over it.

The fear was the main thing. Everybody was afraid of it. In our neighborhood there were a number of deaths. Of course, it was scattered. As I say, we didn't travel much back then.

The families and the neighbors that could, would come in and help them, but they didn't have any outside people much to do that. A lot of people didn't have a lot of stuff, but a lot of the old home remedies that you can still use is good. They used all of them back then because that's all they had to work with, mostly.

The schools went on. They didn't close.

### **Ann Brantley**

They did not?

### **Agnes Gatlin**

Of course, they were country schools and disease didn't spread back then very fast.

Most people back then raised nearly everything they ate and so if they ran out they just had to wait, you know. They didn't buy anything much because they had gardens and they took care of most everything except flour and sugar. Stuff like that. I put canned stuff, and of course, I always kept plenty of flour and sugar and coffee and stuff like that that you have to buy, mostly. We didn't have wheat, we had plenty of corn. We always had homemade meal and keep that on hand. Well, as far as food and stuff I did like we always did, using things that you have and keep them.

We have you know, deep freezes weren't in vogue then, but now you could buy all this stuff and have this stuff on hand and keep some of it. Just like we have here in the beauty shop, they keep plenty of water in case of emergencies, that we can have some water to drink. They could do that too in the country, keep a supply, a room prepared for it.

I think people in this day and time need to take more in consideration of - diseases are transferred that way and be informed about them. A lot of people know when they don't do, but they need to know enough to do.

**Special Thanks to Agnes Gatlin**