THE ADVENT OF FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION

THE GREAT INFLUENZA PANDEMIC

- The Great Influeza Pandemic **caused more deaths globally than in World War I.**
- With no effective treatments beyond symptom management, the pandemic raged until 1919, **claiming an estimated 22 to 40 million lives worldwide,** including over 675,000 Americans.
- American troops are believed to have carried the initial, less virulent strain of influenza to Europe. **By the fall of 1918, a mutated, deadlier form, often complicated by pneumonia,** reappeared on the global stage.
- Navy Medicine tried to contain the disease using face masks, partial quarantine, and restricting liberty for personnel. During the peak of the infection in 1918, naval hospitals on both sides of the Atlantic were under immense strain in caring for more than **120,000 admissions with the influenza.**
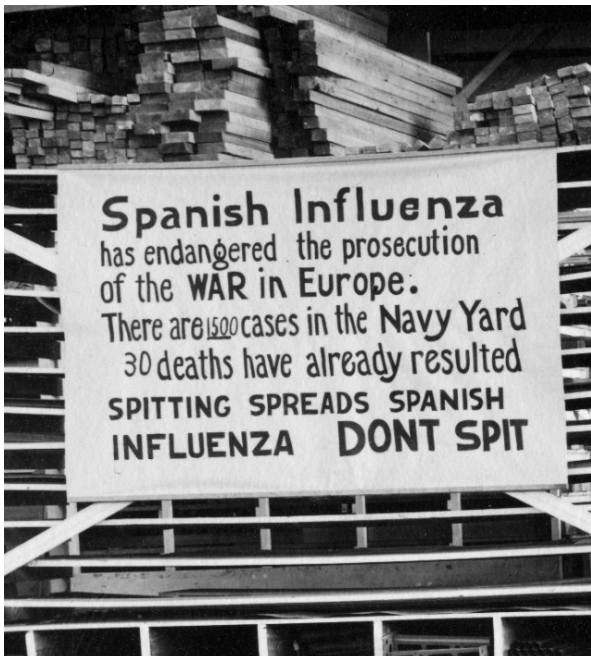
THE GREAT INFLUENZA ACCOUNTED FOR:

30%
of all Navy hospital admissions in 1918

44%
of all Navy and Marine Corps deaths in 1918

Spanish Influenza has endangered the prosecution of the WAR in Europe. There are 1500 cases in the Navy Yard 30 deaths have already resulted SPITTING SPREADS SPANISH INFLUENZA DONT SPIT

⚓ BUMED CIRCULAR NO. 1 ⚓

At the height of the pandemic, the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) Division of Sanitation released weekly bulletins to the fleet **warning of the dangers of overcrowding, sharing drinking cups, "promiscuous spitting" and advised personnel to wash hands frequently and "before every meal."** The prevention of the contagion was by far the best available medicine at the time and was the reason for the release of **BUMED Circular No. 1 on Sept. 26, 1918,** which included the following recommendations:
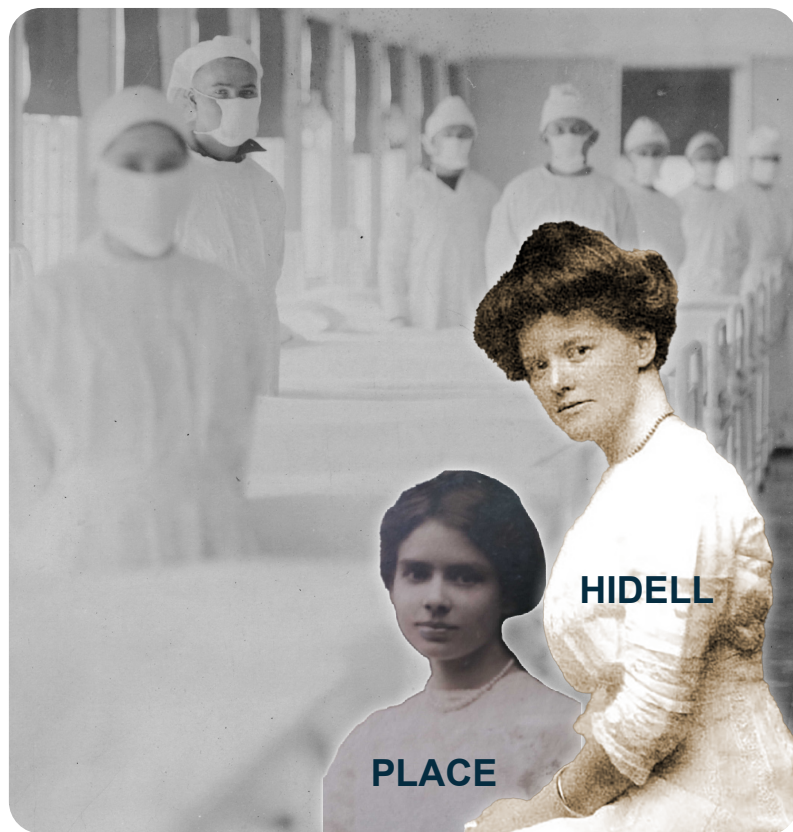
- "Reduce stress, get your sleep" and **"do not get hysterical over the epidemic"**
- "Beware of those who are **coughing and sneezing"**
- "Avoid crowds—**avoid crowded street cars, theaters, moving-picture shows** and other places of public assembly"
- "Avoid close, stuffy and **poorly ventilated rooms"**
- "Secure at least **seven hours of sleep"**
- "Do not **travel by railroad** unless absolutely necessary"

NAVY MEDICINE *FAST FACTS*

⚓ HEROES OF THE PANDEMIC ⚓

Throughout the pandemic, Navy physicians, nurses and hospital corpsmen served **in the hospital wards caring for patients day and night until sticken with the infection.** Several were later posthumously honored with Navy Crosses. They include:

- Nurse **Marie L. Hidell** (1880-1918) of Rome, Ga., who served at Naval Hospital Philadelphia.
- Nurse **Lillian M. Murphy** (1887-1918) of Ontario, Canada, who served at the Naval Hospital Hampton Roads, Va.
- Nurse **Edna Place** (1890-1918) of Philadelphia, Pa., who served at Naval Hospital Philadelphia.
- Hospital Apprentice 1st Class **Carey F. Miller** (1893-1918) of Bridgewater, Va., who served at Naval Hospital Hampton Roads.

HIDELL

PLACE

> "During the epidemic, . . .our Navy bought the whole city of Chicago out of sheets. There wasn't a sheet left in Chicago. All a boy got when he died was a winding sheet and a wooden box; we just couldn't get enough caskets. They died by the thousands. There were 173,000 men at Great Lakes at the time, and 6,000 were in the hospitals at the height of the epidemic. I suppose no one knows how many died. They just lost track of them."
>
> *~Navy nurse Josie Brown, Naval Hospital Great Lakes, 1918*

35%

of all Navy and Marine Corps influenza cases in 1918 occured from Sept. 14 to Nov. 2 (49 days)