Bubonic Plague in Galveston: A Historical and Contemporary Narrative

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Bubonic Plague, Galveston, 1920

- **Historical Narrative**
  Wet pathological wet specimen
  Post mortem report
  Galveston Plague Laboratory
  Microscope slides
  Cemetery

- **Contemporary Narrative**
  Galveston National Laboratory
  Galveston History Project
Name: E. H.
Age: 17
Residence: 1601 Mechanic
Occupation: Collector
Davison’s Feed Store
E.H.’s family gravestone, Lakeview Cemetery, Galveston
Death of a youth aged 17, Galveston Daily News

[18 June, 1920]

WHAT MAY BE BUBONIC PLAGUE IS FOUND HERE

YOUTH WHO DIES AT HOSPITAL THOUGHT VICTIM OF TROPICAL DISEASE.

WAR ON RATS IS LAUNCHED

Federal, State, County and City Health Authorities Discuss Plans to Fight Malady.

What is probably bubonic plague has appeared in Galveston, according to the diagnosis of Dr. M. F. Boyd, M. D. Levy and Henry Hartman on the disease which resulted in the death at John Sealy Hospital Wednesday afternoon of a youth 17 years old, who had been ill a week, and who, previous to his illness, had been employed in an establishment near the water front.
[21 June-November, 1920]

Galveston Plague Laboratory

Dr. Mark F. Boyd
©Truman G. Blocker, Jr.
History of Medicine Collections, Moody Medical Library, UTMB
Location of E.H.’s former family home

1601 Mechanic St, Galveston, Texas, United States
Address is approximate.
[22 June, 1920]

One week after E.H.’s death, his former employer place an advertisement in the *Galveston Daily News*

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**DAVISON & CO.**

**TWENTY-NINTH AND STRAND**

**GRAIN, HAY, MILL FEEDS AND COAL**

PHONE 5000

WE WANT YOUR ORDERS AND

PROMISE SATISFACTORY SERVICE
Contemporary Narratives

Bioterrorism & Emerging Infectious Diseases Planning & Preparedness

Agent-specific Recommendations:

Plague

- Description of Agent / Syndrome
- Infection Control Practices for Patient Management
- Treatment
- Laboratory Support and Confirmation
- Post-exposure Management
- Patient, Visitor and Public Information

Galveston National Laboratory, UTMB
UTMB's Thomas Geisbert highlighted among Time Magazine's Person of the Year Ebola Fighters
Rat proofing, basement of former corner store, 705, 25th Street, Galveston
## TABLE I.

**Incidence of human plague in Galveston, 1920.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Date of onset</th>
<th>Duration of illness (Days)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Collector, feed store</td>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Bag sewer, feed store</td>
<td>June 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Longshoreman</td>
<td>July 2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30 (?)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mex</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mex</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Waiter on steamship</td>
<td>Aug. 3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Machinist's helper</td>
<td>Aug. 7</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Houseworker</td>
<td>Aug. 16</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Pathologist</td>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Longshoreman</td>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Houseworker</td>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>School girl</td>
<td>Sept. 22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>School girl</td>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Truck driver</td>
<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Night watchman</td>
<td>Oct. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>School boy</td>
<td>Nov. 10</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Died July 28.  2 Died July 29.
©Paula Summerly, Ph.D.
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