

ON THE FOREFRONT: The Junior No. 1 Stories

The 1916 Polio Epidemic
and the Building of
Trenton's Municipal
Colony



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April 1

Closing talk summing
up the findings and
recommendations

FREE

The Trenton Almshouse



- Purpose was to assure that the poor, elderly or disabled, or those unable to shift for themselves, will have the basic needs.
- Commonly known as the Poorhouse, they were originally dumping places for elderly, incompetent, abandoned and every kind of disadvantaged persons unable to care for themselves.
- Built in 1871 on the former Bower Farm on Princeton Avenue



Almshouse (Trenton Sunday Times-Advertiser, 10/15/1993)

- It featured attractive architecture, without considering the comfort and care of its residents.
- By 1913 there were 76 men and 17 women housed there.



*Enlarged Almshouse Ward
(Trenton Evening Times, 2/11/1913)*

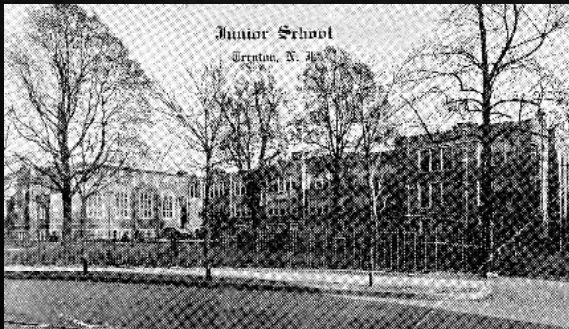


*C.M. Worth, Almshouse Superintendent
(Trenton Evening Times, 2/11/1913)*

- People were crowded into tiny rooms barely larger than a prison cell.
- The superintendent and his family were housed in spacious quarters.
- Usually there was no attempt to separate them as to age, race, sex or ailment. However, the Trenton Almshouse did not care for children or insane people but did separate men and women.
- There was a movement to change “Almshouse” to a name that would not denigrate the residents even though it was earlier changed from “Poorhouse” for that same reason.
- At the Trenton’s Municipal Colony it would be known as the “Home for Aged and Infirm.”

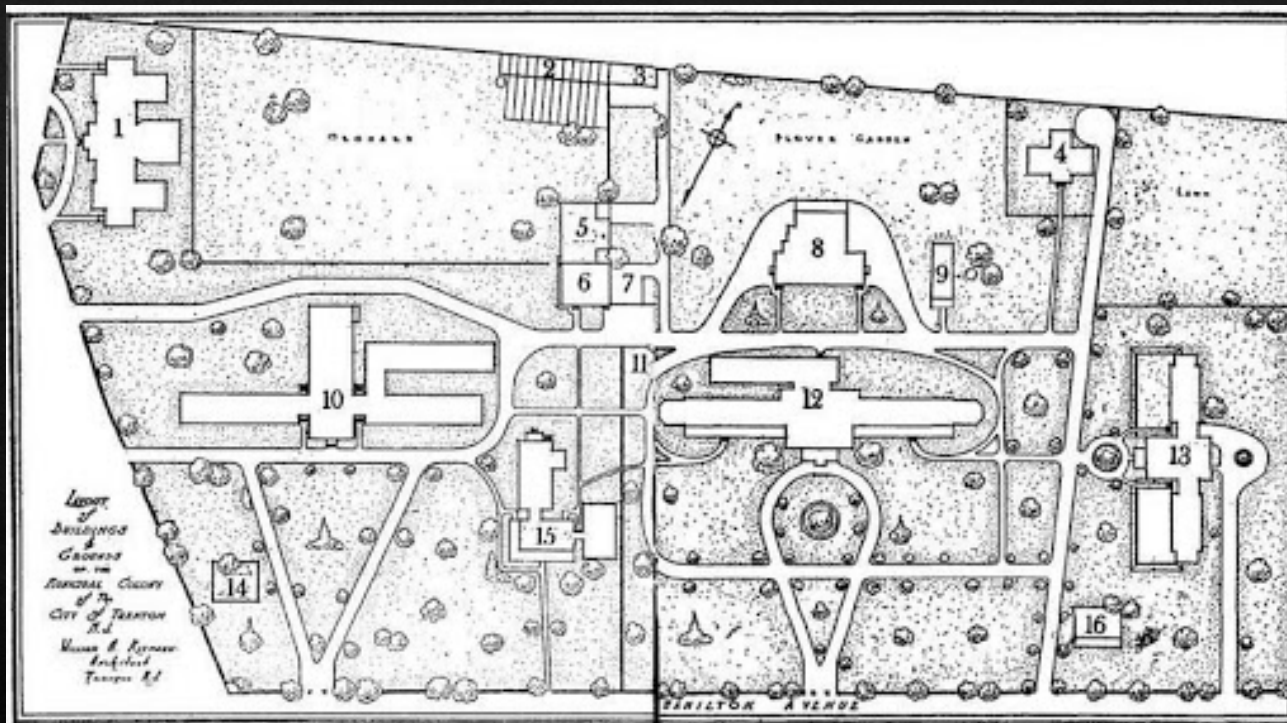


*Mayor Frederick W. Donnelly
1866-1935
Trenton Mayor 1911-1932*



Junior High School No. 1

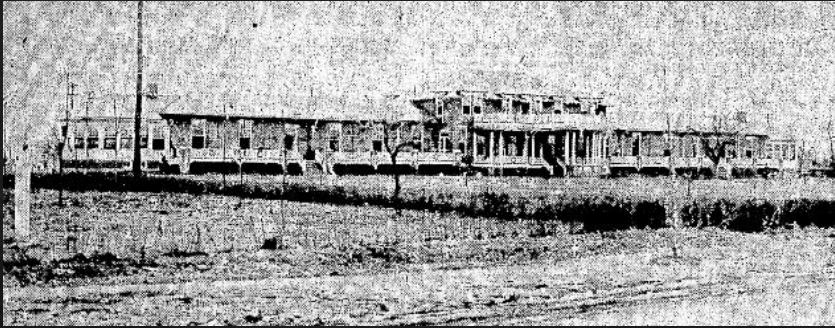
- In 1911. Trenton's board of commissioners ratified the general plan for the creation of the Municipal Colony as formulated by Mayor Donnelly.
 - A group of hospitals and homes were established at Hamilton Avenue and Klockner Road
 - The Colony became recognized for its attainments as a medical, humanitarian, sociological and civic achievement.
- Mayor Donnelly wanted the Trenton School Board to buy the Almshouse property from the city so he could use the money to build a new one.
- 1914 the school board decides to purchase the Almshouse property for \$21,000.
- 1916 Junior High School No. 1 opens, the first junior high school in the East



LAYOUT OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OF THE MUNICIPAL COLONY OF THE CITY OF TRENTON

Key to buildings shown above: 1 - Hospital for Venereal Diseases; 2 - Poultry House; 3 - Garages; 4 - Isolation Building 5 - Storehouse;
6 - Administration Building; 7 - Garages; 8 - Boiler House and Laundry; 9 - Occupational Building; 10 - Home for Aged and Infirm;
11 - Pump House; 12 - Tuberculosis Hospital; 13 - Hospital for Contagious Diseases; 14 - Medical Superintendent's Cottage; 15 - Nurses' Home;
16 - Non-Professional Building.

- In 1915 the Municipal Colony opens on 25 acres in Hamilton Township: Tuberculosis Hospital, Home for the Aged and Infirm (formerly known as the Almshouse), Nurses Home and the Children's Hospital (still under construction.)
- All the buildings were newly constructed, except for the Tuberculosis Hospital, which was erected several years before, but never used for that purpose.



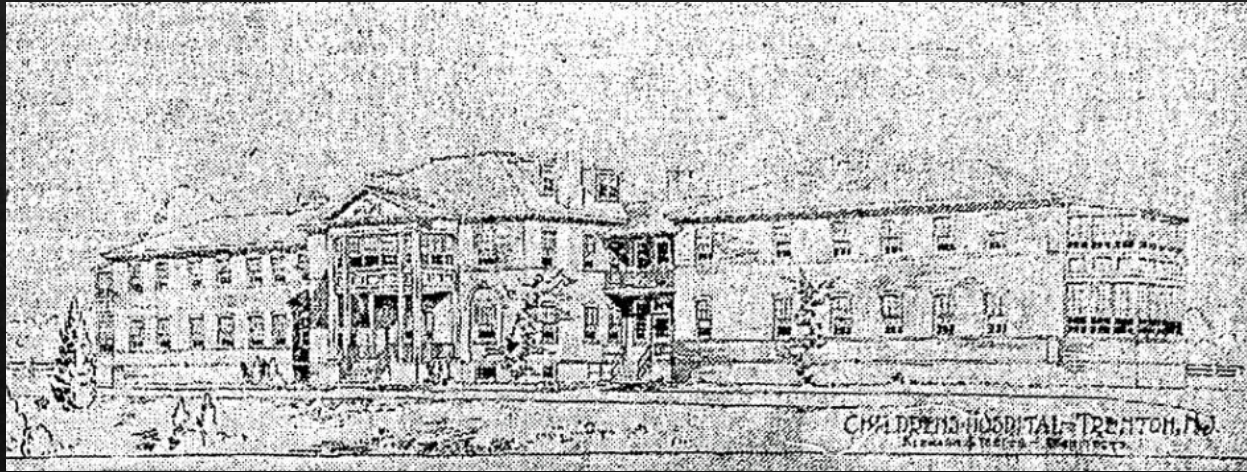
The Tuberculosis Hospital

- The Tuberculosis Hospital was enlarged and improved to accommodate 80 patients.



The Home for the Aged and Infirm

- The Home for the Aged and Infirm could accommodate 20 women and 60 men, with hospital accommodations for 40 women and 90 men.
- There were four wards, each ward having its own bath and toilet accommodations, sitting room and outside porch.
- Accommodation was also provided for the superintendent.



- The Children's Hospital would accommodate 100 patients, in addition there were quarters for the nurses and private rooms for paying patients. It was used in 1916 for infantile paralysis patients.



- The Home for the Nurses would accommodate eight nurses.
- The Isolation Hospital was reserved for smallpox and chronic diseases.

- Other buildings included:
 - A garage for two automobiles, two horses, six cows and necessary feed spade
 - A chicken house
- On the grounds was the Municipal Cemetery, consisting of twelve acres. A modest but lasting headstone was erected over every body interred in the burying ground.



- In 1916, “Mike,” Mayor Donnelly’s wire-haired terrier was a resident of the Municipal Colony.
- He was committed there because he was getting on in years and he had a habit of losing his dog tag and while roaming being picked up by the dog catcher.
- In 1938 Trenton’s city council renames the Municipal Colony to “The Frederick W. Donnelly Memorial Hospital,” in memory of Mayor Donnelly who died in 1935.



*Mayor Donnelly's dog Mike,
a resident of the Colony*

- In 1965 Trenton could no longer afford to commit the capital funds needed if the hospital was to keep pace with the necessary medical and hospital advances. The city accepted a county offer to take over the Donnelly Memorial Hospital for \$778,000.



On the left, formerly the Medical Superintendent's Cottage

- Trenton uses some of the money to replace bleachers at Trenton High.



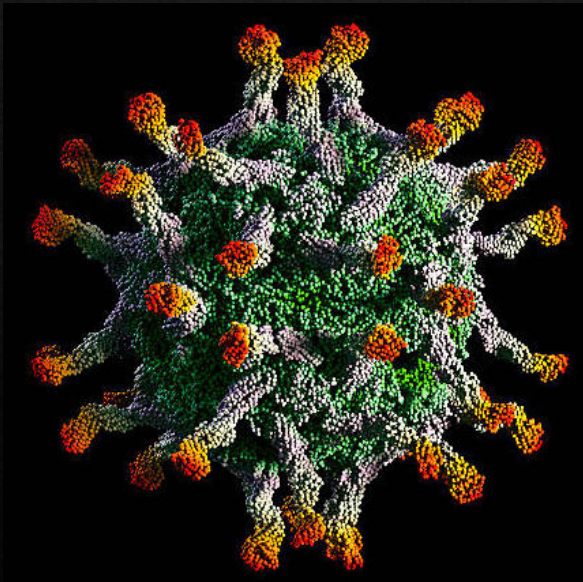
- In 1985 Mercer County demolishes the hospital to make way for a new senior citizen's center. Some buildings still remain



Questions?

Infantile Paralysis/Poliomyelitis

Poliomyelitis has existed for thousands of years, with depictions of the disease in ancient arts.

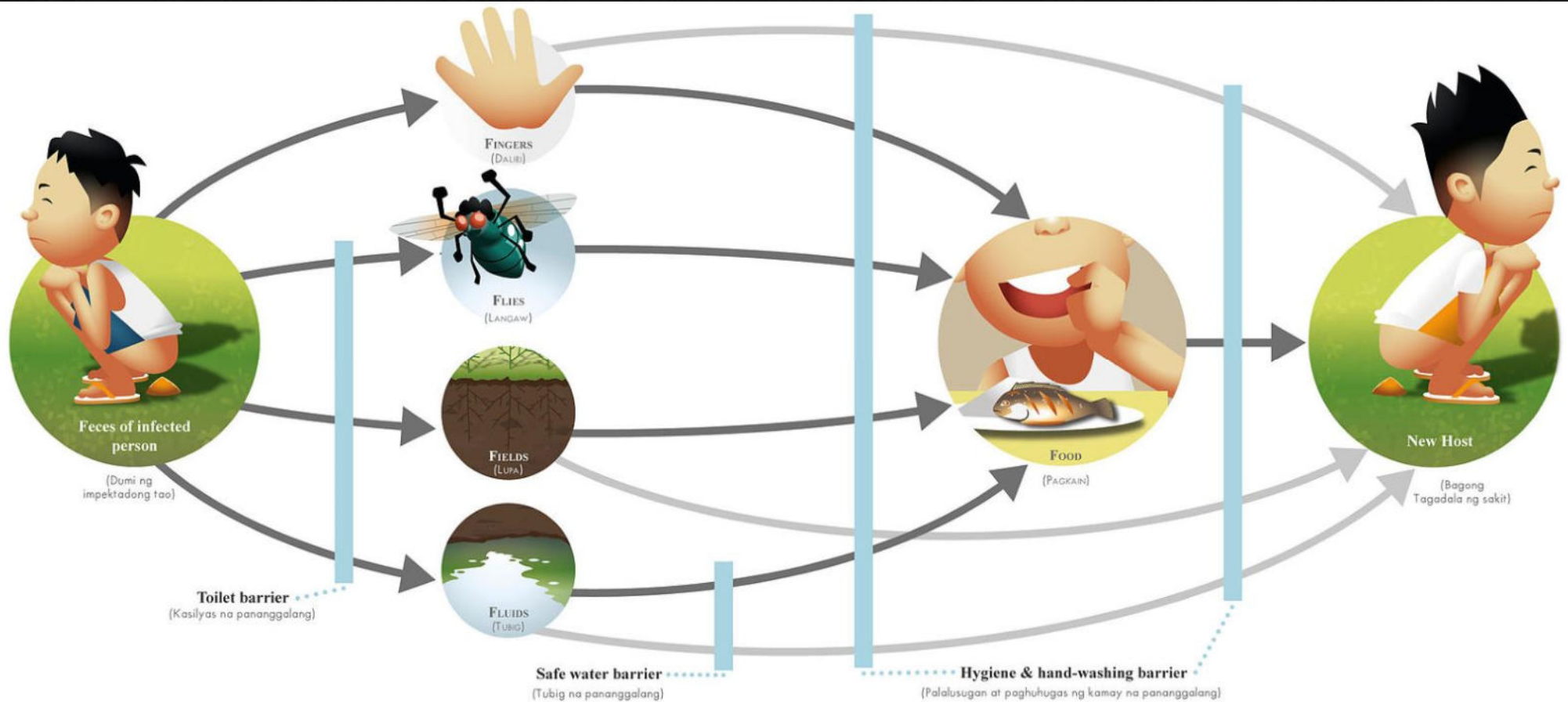


- The disease was first recognized as a distinct condition by the English physician Michael Underwood in 1789.
- The virus that causes it was first identified in 1909 by the Austrian immunologist Karl Landsteiner.
- Major outbreaks started to occur in the late 19th century in Europe and the United States.
 - Effected mainly babies/young people.
 - The disease was more fatal in older persons.
 - Infection usually surfaced in the summer months.

What is infantile Paralysis?

- A viral infection that moves from the gut to affect the central nervous system and there is muscle weakness resulting in a flaccid paralysis. The weakness most often involves the legs, but may less commonly involve the muscles of the head, neck and diaphragm.
- The disease may be diagnosed by finding the virus in the feces or detecting antibodies against it in the blood.
- The disease occurs naturally only in humans.
- Symptoms: include headache, muscle weakness, lethargy (in children the unwillingness to play), fever, neck stiffness, sore throat, impaired appetite and/or vomiting.

The "F-diagram" (feces, fingers, flies, fields, fluids, food), showing pathways of fecal–oral disease transmission.



The 1916 epidemic, the most devastating epidemic in the history of infantile paralysis/poliomyelitis.



Shaded areas show localities particularly involved with the infantile paralysis epidemic of 1916 from Public Health Reports, November 24, 1916

- New York and New Jersey were the first to experience the outbreaks that took the lives of 6,000 people, leaving thousands paralyzed.
- Trenton in proportion to the population was the most seriously affected in the United States.

Trenton Prepares for Victims of Baby Paralysis



Published in the Arkansas Gazette 7-13-1916

- Mayor Donnelly announced that Trenton was prepared to take care of 25 -30 cases at the Municipal Colony, formerly the Children's Hospital.
- It was thought that bacteria-infected milk was most likely the cause of the epidemic at that time.
- It was also thought that the fly was a germ source for the disease.
- Trenton's Health Officer Dr. Fell engaged the services of Ms. Margaret Buchanan to provide care for patients in the clinic (at City Hall) and homecare.

INFANTILE PARALYSIS IS DANGEROUS!



CLEAN UP AND KEEP CLEAN!

KEEP your children clean. Bathe them frequently. See that they keep their hands particularly clean. Be sure that each child has its own clean handkerchief.

Keep your house unusually clean. Don't allow a fly in it. Keep your garbage bucket clean and tightly covered.

Have a general house-cleaning. Throw away all useless knick-knacks and rubbish. Use soap and water generously, and let nature kill the germs with sunshine and fresh air.

FLY-SWATTER IN ACTION



*HEALTH BOARD DECREES
DEATH OF THE PESKY FLY*

Army Of Boys And Girls Begin Swatting Contest
Throughout The City



BUREAU of HEALTH Trenton, N. J.

This is the week of the **ANNUAL CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN.**
Let's do it together.

BE THOROUGH NOW AND KEEP IT UP ALL YEAR.
It will last for a week but should be kept up all the year.

THE CITY AUTHORITIES WILL DO THEIR PART.
WILL YOU DO YOURS?

The city will clean all the vacant lots and public alleys.
Get everything together now and put it out for the collectors.
Get at it now.

**CIVIC CLEANLINESS DEPENDS PRIMARILY
ON THE INDIVIDUAL.**

Let every householder and housewife do his or her part and
then get her neighbors interested in the good work.

INFANTILE PARALYSIS MAY COME AGAIN.

Do your part in keeping it away from the city this summer
by cleaning everything up.

WHAT TO DO.

Clean all storerooms of old, useless, wornout things.
Clean all cellars and arcaways of rubbish and dirt.
Clean all the back yards of the winter's refuse.
Clean all the rear alleys. They always need it.
Clean out everything you don't want or can't use again.

THEN USE LIME.

It's cheap, easy to mix and use. One of the best things
for people to use in cellars, arcaways and similar places. It
not only sweetens, but **BRIGHTENS THE CORNERS.**

**GIVE YOUR ENTIRE PREMISES A THOROUGH
CLEANING.**

You cannot be properly patriotic amid dirty surroundings.
Don't Be a "Slacker" Either in Patriotism or Cleanliness.

Do It for Trenton, and Do It NOW.

A. S. FELL, M. D.,
Health Officer.

Trenton Evening Times, Sunday, May 8, 1917

The Quarantine enforced due to the increasing statistics of Infantile Paralysis




- City Commission met in Mayor Donnelly's office. Dr Alton Fell recommended the drastic measure to quarantine the city.
- No child under the age of 16 years old would be allowed to enter or leave the city. Patrolman were stationed at every ingress and egress to carry out the order of the Commission.
- Health Officers were to maintain the Railway stations, Delaware River bridges and boat terminals.
- The city quarantine had been exceedingly rigid, in fact drastic.
- The quarantine lasted about a month and was not affective.

Delaying the Opening of Schools

**Number of cases of poliomyelitis reported
by Trenton to the US Public Health Service
in 1916**

Week Ending	Cases Reported
August 26	11
September 2	7
September 9	11
September 16	14
September 23	23
September 30	34
October 7	20
October 14	8
October 21	12
October 28	4
November 4	1
November 11	1
November 18	0
TOTAL	146

- The death rate in infantile paralysis in Trenton had been 33 percent.
- The City Commission along with State Board of Education at first decided that the schools should not reopen before October 2nd.
- Delayed school openings were also prevalent in Princeton and vicinity due to the increased cases of infantile paralysis.
- Schools finally reopened October 30th. Attendance showed a decline in the number of students, especially in the outlying districts.



INFANTILE PARALYSIS
 cripples can be relieved and oftentimes cured by
 properly fitted Braces made to order by
PETER J. MAY
 230 East State St.
 who also specializes in Trusses, Bandages, Abdominal
 Supporters, etc.
 Lady in Attendance.

Trenton Evening Times, Sunday, June 24, 1917

Plan to care for the Helpless children in various stages of infantile paralysis

- The children that were housed at the Municipal Colony were from homes of poor residents and would be crippled for life.
- The general paralysis was of the hips and legs.
- Care needs included supply of appliances, braces and special electrical massage.
- Care was provided by the Overseer of the Poor Department.
- Mayor Donnelly and the City Commission suggested that an effort should be to ask the public for contribution to create a fund to take care of the crippled children.



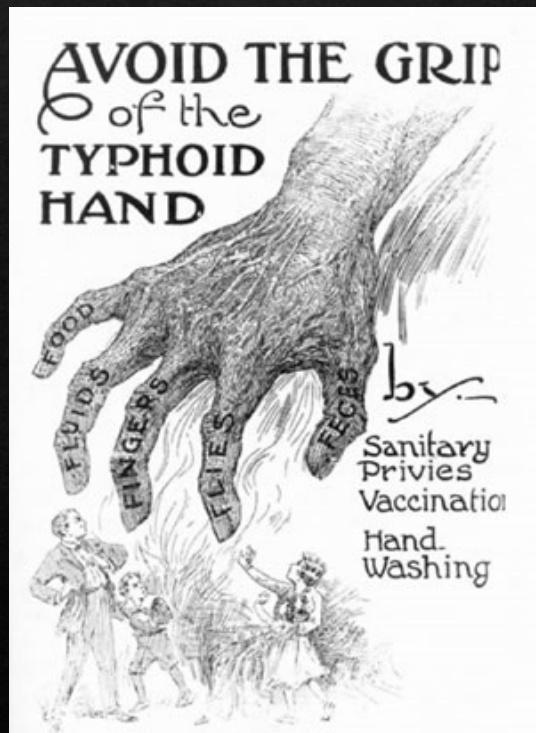


Exercising a paralyzed leg



Therapeutic exercise before a mirror

- Experts to test paralysis cases were called back to Trenton at the Mayor's request to determine what course of treatment should be followed.
- The doctors summoned were Dr. James K. Young, orthopedic surgeon in Philadelphia and Dr. William G. Elmer, both former Trentonians.
- In 1920 Dr Richard B. Ernest from the New York Orthopedic Hospital came to Trenton to hold clinics for the those affected in small rooms on Allen Street. The number of patients rapidly increased and the need for larger facilities were needed.
- The first-floor apartment at 165 East State Street was secured and later the second floor, as a hospital. It was incorporated April 1920.



- The NJ State Department of Health stated that the infantile paralysis situation should not cause undue alarm. Attention should also be given to other diseases that are of far greater importance in the list of death causes.
- Among those diseases were typhoid fever, measles, whooping cough, tuberculosis, and summer diarrhea of infants. Tuberculosis was the greatest single cause of death in NJ.
- It was essential that efforts for prevention be directed with reference to the importance of these various diseases.



Two rivals develop a vaccine for polio



Jonas Salk 1914-1995

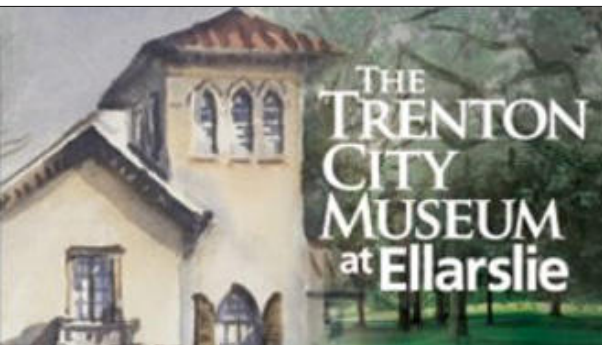
The Salk killed vaccine (produced by killing the virus completely) was given by injection and is the approved vaccine in the US because of its greater safety.



Albert Sabin 1906-1993

The Sabin oral, attenuated (live version of the virus with reduced virulence) vaccine is given in many parts of the world because of its ease in administration.

Questions?



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Highlights from the
complete series with Pat
Allen, David Bosted, Karl
Flesch and Carol Hill



1916

2021

