

FIGHT ON, FIGHT ON FOR OLE JAX STATE

Houston Cole Library's Historical Collections Highlight
JSU's Resiliency During Its First Pandemic



In the uncertainty of the COVID-19 world, those with a pragmatic perspective look for precedent – has anything like this ever happened before and, if so, how did we deal with it? How can the past inform our current situation? The Houston Cole Library's historical collections offer insight into that most important of questions for an institution of higher education: what did we *learn*?

The current pandemic is far from unprecedented. There were major pandemics in 1957-58 and 1968-69. But perhaps the most well-known began in the spring of 1918, when military personnel returning home from World War I brought an H1N1 virus, known as the Spanish Flu, with them. During its worldwide spread in 1918-1919, death estimates put the toll anywhere from 20-50 million people, up to 675,000 in the United States alone. The first cases appeared in Alabama in September 1918, and by the last two weeks of October, 37,000 cases were reported statewide.

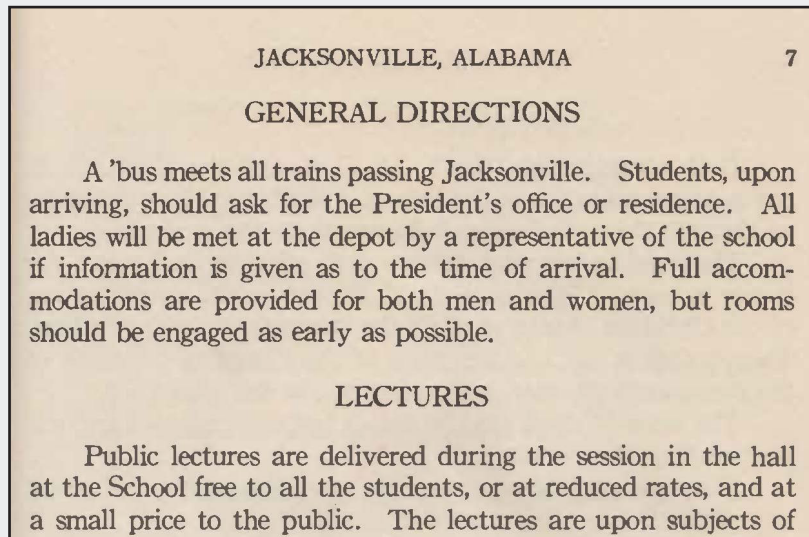


Illustration 1: Travel instructions, 1918. *Bulletin of the State Normal School at Jacksonville, Ala.*

School bulletins from 1918-1919 give detailed instructions for students trying to make their way to JSNS.

With the establishment of a Student Army Training Corps (SATC), JSNS was also converted into a training camp for young men needing vocational instruction before heading off to war. When the US Army officer assigned to Jacksonville's SATC unit came down with the flu and his relief officer also caught the virus, JSNS President C.W. Daugette took it upon himself to find a solution. He applied to Camp McClellan (itself under a quarantine for a short period of time) for aid, and one of the McClellan officers was detailed to the school to drill the SATC each afternoon. JSNS

In attempts to mitigate spread, public health officers in Alabama recommended that public venues be closed. Many primary schools chose to suspend class for up to two weeks, as did some colleges, notably those such as Howard College (now Samford University) located in or near urban areas. Jacksonville State Normal School (now JSU), tucked in the foothills of the Appalachians, did not close its doors.

In addition to a world war and a pandemic, JSNS faced other hardships. Unreliable trains and poor roads made travel to and from the school problematic.



Illustration 2: Student Army Training Corps (SATC) Barracks, circa 1920. *Houston Cole Library Historical Image Collection*

**THE TOTAL ENROLLMENT OF THE S. A. T. C. AND
THOSE SEEKING INDUCTION AT THE TIME
OF THE ARMISTICE**

<i>Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>County</i>
Allen, Hubert S.....	Clay	Coleman, John W.....	Calhoun
Allison, Mack E.....	St. Clair	Cooper, Oliver M.....	Etowah
Alexander, Floyd P.....	Calhoun	Cox, Clarence D.....	Jefferson
Allsup, Autre B.....	Calhoun	Currier, Elmer Ross.....	Calhoun
Armstrong, Edd O.....	Dekalb	Dank, Solomon.....	Jefferson
Anders, James M.....	Talladega	Davis, Walter J.....	Jefferson
Baker, James M.....	Talladega	Daves, Everett H.....	Montgomery
Banister, Gladis L.....	Cherokee	Daniel, Joseph E.....	Chilton
Barron, William F.....	Blount	Dennis, Johnny L.....	Georgia
Battle, Sumter A.....	Covington	Dennis, Tennyson.....	Elmore
Bell, A. D.....	Talladega	Donaldson, Ruel A.....	Jefferson
Benham, Vernon W.....	Jefferson	Donelson, John L.....	Jefferson
Berlin, Abraham.....	Bibb	Dorough, William A.....	Shelby
Bice, Arthur C.....	Talladega	Douglas, Cecil B.....	Walker
Binner, Carl F.....	Jefferson	Downes, Sumter A.....	Dekalb
Bishop, Isaiah W.....	Tallapoosa	Drake, Jeff B.....	Tallapoosa
Bradford, Kelley E.....	Jefferson	Dunlap, Albert L.....	St. Clair
Britton, Howard N.....	Jefferson	Dunston, Rupert M.....	Jefferson
Brock, Robert A.....	Calhoun	Edwards, Jesse O.....	Talladega
Brockman, Dave.....	Montgomery	Edwards, Pruet.....	Jefferson
Brown, Clifton H.....	Cullman	Ellis, Clinton B.....	Jefferson
Brummel, Cecil W.....	Calhoun	Emery, Walter B.....	Jefferson
Burnett, Edward L.....	Cherokee	Ewton, Walter P.....	Tennessee
Burton, Cozelle T.....	Talladega	Faucett, William B.....	Bibb
Camp, Howard H.....	Talladega	Fennell, John A.....	Talladega
Carpenter, Forrest W.....	Calhoun	French, Floyd P.....	Tuscaloosa
Chamblee, Frank L.....	Jefferson	Gassaway, Owen H.....	Jefferson
Cherry, Harry E.....	Talladega	Gipson, Curtis A.....	Marshall
Clark, Sampson R.....	Clay	Glass, Lewis A.....	Jefferson
Clements Sidney D.....	Tuscaloosa	Goswick, Moses M.....	Etowah
Clifton, Burnie T.....	Cherokee	Goldstein, Gus.....	Jefferson
Cockrell, Erskin W.....	Jefferson	Gramling, Frederick D.....	Etowah
Cogdell, Colon.....	Bullock	Graves, James M.....	Tennessee

Illustration 3: SATC Induction List, 1918. *Bulletin of the State Normal School at Jacksonville, Ala.*

already offered medical services to its regular students; it extended those services to the influx of SATC students at the behest of the Surgeon General of the Army.

At its core, the Jacksonville State story during the 1918-1919 pandemic is one of perseverance, compassion, and resiliency. Students were eager for education and college life, and the school, led by President C.W. Daugette, was dedicated to overcoming all obstacles to provide that education. Enrollment was volatile: 1917-1918 saw an 18% dip – from 272 to 224 students – with young men heading off to war, and fear of influenza possibly a factor as well. The following year brought a 54% surge, to 492 students, as male students joined the newly-formed SATC, and soldiers returned to resume their education.

JSNS managed all this – with exactly 13 faculty and 4 support staff. On top of everything else, the school experienced financial hardship: state appropriations were often late, leading President Daugette to take out loans to tide the school over until the state money arrived.

While stressing perseverance (the attendance policy was abundantly clear: “It is expected, therefore, that every student will allow nothing to interfere with his regular attendance”), JSNS strove to reassure worried parents and also show compassion for those affected by the pandemic, despite the school’s own precarious finances. Cash-strapped families applied to President Daugette to see what could be done.

Daugette’s correspondence demonstrates that, though the State Normal School Board of Trustee rules stated that no fees should be returned to students, he would regularly refund their unused board or offer to roll it over as credit in the hopes that the student would be able to return to school. “I hope to have her back,” he wrote to one parent of a recently recovered student, “Wishing you and Miss Adams and all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.” To another student recovering from influenza, Daugette wrote to reassure the worried young man that the school was open and a place would be held for him: “Come as soon as you are able.”

Della
Dec 20 1918
Dr. C. W. D
Kind Sir;
was unable
school, after
was over, at
rest of the
was sick a
week. I am
all of this
asking you
part of tuition
she failed to
as we feel it
as to you, and
hoping I have
anything more
weight, and
merry Christmas

Good water Ala
Nov 11, 1918
Mr C. W. Dauge
I received your letter the
other day saying for me to
come that the school was open
will you keep room for
me as I am just getting up
from a spell of influenza
I think I will be able in
a few more days to be with
you all. There will be three
boys from down here. There
wed. I will close hoping to
be with you all soon
Leon H Machen. Good water Ala. Ar

Illustration 4: Letter from Benton L. Adams to C.W. Dauge, December 20, 1918. Clarence William Dauge Papers, Houston Cole Library, Alabama Gallery Special Collections

Illustration 5: Letter from Leon H. Machen to C.W. Dauge, November 11, 1918. Clarence William Dauge Papers, Houston Cole Library, Alabama Gallery Special Collections



augette and the faculty of JSNS also wanted to make sure that students had the best college experience that could be provided, despite the challenges occasioned by the Spanish Flu. As soon as quarantine was lifted from Camp McClellan in November, the camp football team took on JSNS, which had roundly thrashed Presbyterian College the week before: “A hot game is promised.” President Daugette was also a keynote speaker at a massive torchlight parade later that month to mark the end of the war, the dissipation of the “flu-scare,” and better times ahead: “The faculty and students at the State Normal college, the student army training corps and the citizens of the surrounding country all came together in a great rally in celebration, and never before in the history of Jacksonville has such a celebration bee[n] put on.”

These highlights from the Library’s historical collections help to answer the question of what can be learned from Jacksonville State’s first pandemic: greater hardships have been faced in the past, but perseverance, courage, compassion, and a focus on what brings us together will see the Jacksonville State family through.

**CAMP TEAM PLAYS
NORMAL SCHOOL**

The football bug hit Camp McClellan immediately after the influenza quarantine was raised and there are big doings in this line. The camp team is on the jump and last Saturday journeyed to Chattanooga where they played the Camp Greenleaf team and were defeated for the first time this season.

Next Saturday they are scheduled to play in Anniston against the strong State Normal team, which so decisively defeated the Presbyterian college team last Saturday.

Lieutenant D'Eliscu has been working the men daily and is rapidly rounding them into shape. No excuses were offered for the defeat of the team last week. They were up against a strong team and were beaten. Saturday they hope to prove they can play football and the whole camp is awake and promise to be on the job and cheer for their favorites.

The game will be played at the Anniston ball park and the crack band of the 157th depot brigade will accompany the team to town and provide music. A hot game is promised and the officials will announce the lineup for the two eleveners here.

Illustration 6: *Anniston Star*, November 13, 1918



Illustration 7: JSNS female students on the steps of Hames Hall, circa 1919.
Houston Cole Library Historical Image Collection



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