

# Marking Time During War: Sun Editorial Paints 1918 Year of Shortages, Disease

**By Johnson Foy, publisher, Nutley Sun**

## **1918 Nutley Sun Editorial**

(The following article was first published as an editorial in The Nutley Sun on December 28, 1918. The publisher of the newspaper at that time was Johnson Foy. Although the editorial was unsigned, it's assumed Foy was responsible for writing it. The article is a capsulated report of the events of Nutley in 1918, which according to the publisher were "little of significance and nothing constructive.")

Little of significance and nothing constructive occurred in Nutley during 1918. In common with the rest of the country the town marked time while the war went on and also in common we were troubled almost constantly with shortage of necessities and epidemics of disease.

The early days of January found the town in the grip of the coal shortage while at the same time the weather was the most severe in many years. During the first week in the year literally hundreds of houses were without water because of bursted pipes and plumbers were working night and day to restore normal conditions.

January 10 or thereabouts an epidemic of measles was beginning to attract attention, and on January 19 the country experienced its first heatless Monday, accompanied by an increasingly stringent coal shortage. The practice of selling coal in bags at Town Hall was inaugurated.

About this lime the Patriotic Fund was gelling into full swing to care for the town's war activities. The month ended with the water supply very low and a famine threatened. The supply was turned off in all the schools.

February started with the coal situation even worse and to add to the generally blue aspect the gas supply failed, an unprecedented thing, and the town was without gas for several days. This condition was remedied when a large main between Nutley und Passaic was thawed out.

Little happened until April 6 when Yountakah Country Club bought the large tract of land along the river for its new golf course. An unexpected real estate boom set in a few days after this sale, several score of houses suddenly changing hands right in the midst of a very dull season. No explanation for the sudden flurry could be found. Other places experienced nothing like it.

April 20 saw us taking sides in the argument over discontinuing the study of German in the public schools. The Board of Education had taken such action, been requested to reverse itself and had refused.



The death of the first Nutley boy killed in action in France — Albert Trazewski of Entwistle Avenue — was reported May 23. Two days later the week's carnival for the benefit of the Patriotic Fund started. The week culminated in the Memorial Day celebration graced by the presence of Governor Edge.

The fight to bar Hearst newspapers which furnished a basis for much argument broke out a few days later and on June 3 the news dealers by united action, threw all his publications out of town. None have been sold here since except by out-of-town persons and then only sporadically.

In midsummer — July 25 the wrangle over whether to go ahead with the building of street sewers had its inception. Indignation raged in East Nutley for several weeks over the Mayor's announced intention of going ahead, but the matter was finally dropped when it was found the Commissioners had no intention of proceeding rapidly.

September 1 brought the announcement of gasless Sundays and the influenza epidemic which killed about a score of Nutley persons and is not yet entirely over. By the middle of October the epidemic was at its height and has been on the wane since. It was estimated that there were 300 cases here at one time.

The end of the year finds the town rid of most of the smaller troubles of the last twelve months but mourning a casualty list of sixteen of her sons killed by the war and making preparation to welcome the other 400 who are already coming home.

*Adapted from The Nutley Sun, 80th Anniversary issue, July 3, 1974*

*Nutley population 1920: 9,421*

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