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The Plague of Athens and Typhoid Fever

Typhoid Fever has ripped through history, touching nearly all parts of the globe and leaving in its wake swaths of dead or dying victims. Up until the development of the first vaccines in the late 19th century, the infectious disease killed without mercy, showing up in some of the most influential moments in the world’s history. It decimated the populations of several New World colonies throughout the 17th century, including Jamestown. It popped up during the Civil War alongside dysentery, killing off more soldiers than were killed through fighting. It hid itself inside who some consider the most famous carrier of the disease, Mary Mallon, who unknowingly passed it on to several individuals without her knowledge due to her being the first known “healthy carrier” of the disease. And yet, though all of these events are etched deep in the annals of history, few hold as much gravity as the Plague of Athens in 430 BC.

To understand this effective killer, one must have a grasp of the epidemiology of the disease itself. Typhoid Fever, caused by the bacteria *Salmonella Typhi,* is an infectious disease spread through a fecal-oral transmission path.

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