

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## Influenza

Influenza

In nineteen hundred and twenty-nine, men an' women sure was dyin',  
From de disease what de doctors called de flu.  
People was dyin' ev'ywhere; death was creepin' th'ough de air,  
For de groans of de sick sure was sad.

Cho: It was God's almighty hand; he was judgin' this old land;

North an' South; East an' West could be seen,

Yes, he killed de rich an' poor, an' he's goin' to kill more

If you don't turn away from your sins.

In Memphis, Tennessee, doctors said it soon would be,  
In a few days influenza will (we'LL?) control.  
But God showed that He was head, an' He put de doctor to bed,  
And the nurse they broke down with de same.

Influenza is a disease, makes you weak all in your knees;  
'Tis a fever ev'ybody sure does dread;  
Puts a pain in ev'y bone, a few days an' you are gone  
To a place in de groun' called de grave.

Tune basically "Jesus Christ" ("Jesse James") and may be hearable by copying th  
e link,

[pnm://lweb.loc.gov/data/ammem/afcss39/3552b3.ra](http://lweb.loc.gov/data/ammem/afcss39/3552b3.ra) directly in the RealAudio  
Sung by Ace Johnson, Clemens state farm, Brazoria, Texas, April 16, 1939.

So, a question. There was always death from flu, especially in the under health-  
cared  
South. But this song seems to speak of the great pandemic of 1919, not 1929. Fa  
r as  
I know, US flu deaths were at an extreme low about 1929.

Another one of those oddities. There's plenty of (blues) songs about TB but oddl  
y  
rare on the flu. I mean the Spanish (ie, originating in China) Flu that killed s  
ome  
22,000,000 people.

AS

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