

INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC—1918/19

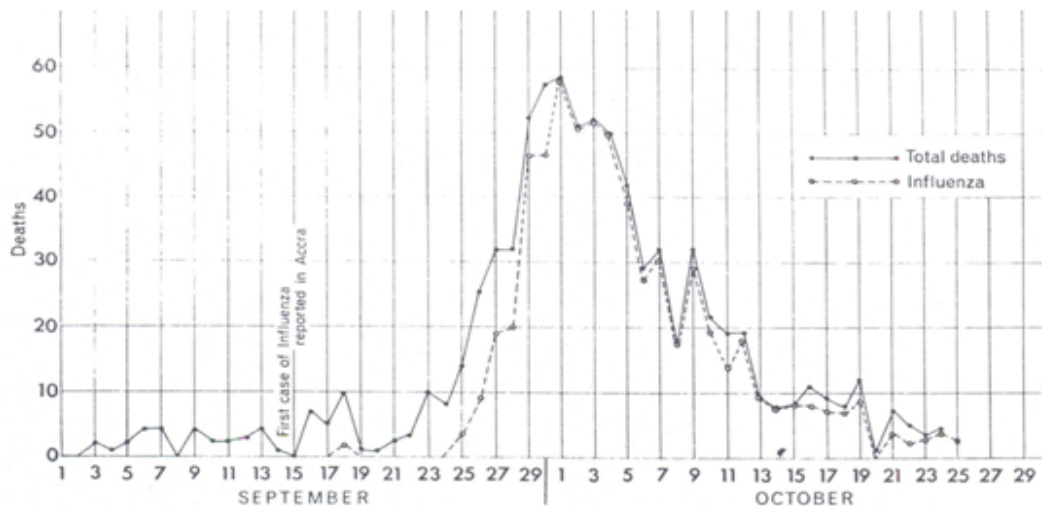


FIG. 18. Daily numbers of deaths reported in Accra in September and October 1918, showing the effect of the epidemic of influenza.

The Gold Coast was hard hit by the global pandemic. This epidemic claimed more lives globally than any other epidemic in history. Total number of deaths was put at about 15 million worldwide.

Estimated number of deaths was at least 60 000 and possibly as high as 85 000 for the Gold Coast Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories combined.

In the Legislative Council, Africans criticized the colonial government for the shortage of physicians, many of whom had been sent to other posts because of the First World War, and for its discriminatory practices against training and hiring African doctors.

Thomas Rice was principal medical officer.