

HISTORY QUESTION OF THE MONTH

During March of 1917, why was nearly all the community of Butlerville placed under quarantine by the Salt Lake County Health Department?

ANSWER

On March 19, 1917, one of Ed Tucker's teenager sons was diagnosed with "Small Pox." His family had the only telephone in the area and many of the local people came to the Tucker home to use their telephone. Dr. Emery who was the Assistant County Physician said that because of this exposure a serious outbreak might develop as it was impossible to tell how many people had been exposed. He recommended that the Butler School be closed for at least a week and those that were known to have been exposed were placed under quarantine. The following day, it was learned that the Tucker boy had delivered hand bills to every home in the area. According to Dr. Emery, "... the hand bills constituted a typical medium for the dissemination of the disease germs." County inspectors canvassed the whole area placing everyone who had been exposed to the handbills under quarantine and providing vaccinations for the people in the area. The vaccinations seemed to head off the outbreak as only nine other cases were diagnosed.

Published March 2015 & March 2016 – Gayle Conger