



BUBONIC PLAGUE

The Black Death!



by Stephen Person

[Intentionally Left Blank]



BUBONIC PLAGUE

The Black Death!



by Stephen Person

Consultant: Susan Straley, Ph.D.
Microbiologist and Plague Researcher
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky

BEARPORT
PUBLISHING

New York, New York

Credits

Cover and Title Page, Courtesy of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Dr. Jack Poland; 4, © The Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley; 5T, Courtesy of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 5B, © Robert Clay/Alamy; 6, Courtesy of The Library of Congress ; 7T, © The Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley; 7B, © Gridley Herald, November 12 1924/Newspaper Archive; 8T, © Science and Society/SuperStock; 8B, © Eye of Science/Photo Researchers, Inc.; 9T, © Courtesy of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 9B, © Stephen Dalton/NHPA/Photoshot; 10, © George Bernard/NHPA/Photoshot; 11, © Alinari Archives/The Image Works; 12, © Costume designed to protect doctors from the plague, 1720 (w/c on paper), French School, (18th century)/Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France/Archives Charmet/The Bridgeman Art Library International; 14, © RIA Novosti/Alamy; 15T, © Classic Image/Alamy; 15B, © Sergey Sorokin; 16L, © Siège d'Auberoche (1345)/Bibliothèque Nationale de France; 16R, © Lourens Smak/Alamy; 17, © SuperStock; 18, © De Agostini/SuperStock; 19T, © The Art Archive/SuperStock; 19B, Courtesy of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 20L, © Mary Evans Picture Library/Alamy; 20R, © Mary Evans Picture Library/Alamy; 21, © Wellcome Library, London; 22, © Gianni Dagli Orti/The Art Archive/Alamy; 23, © Science Photo Library/Photo Researchers, Inc.; 24, © Felidae Conservation Fund; 25, © Felidae Conservation Fund; 27, © Ting-Li Wang/The New York Times/Redux; 28, © Paris Pierce/Alamy; 29, © cmsbiology/Newscom; 31, © Maslov Dmitry/Shutterstock.

Publisher: Kenn Goin
Senior Editor: Lisa Wiseman
Creative Director: Spencer Brinker
Design: Dawn Beard Creative
Photo Researcher: Daniella Nilva

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Person, Stephen.

Bubonic plague : the black death! / by Stephen Person.

p. cm. — (Nightmare plagues)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-1-936088-03-4 (library binding)

ISBN-10: 1-936088-03-7 (library binding)

1. Plague—Juvenile literature. 2. Black Death—Juvenile literature. I. Title.

RA644.P7P367 2011

614.5'732—dc22

2010008028

Copyright © 2011 Bearport Publishing Company, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.

For more information, write to Bearport Publishing Company, Inc., 101 Fifth Avenue, Suite 6R, New York, New York 10003. Printed in the United States of America in North Mankato, Minnesota.

062010
042110CGC

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

A Mysterious Killer	4
Plague Hits Los Angeles	6
A Tale of Rats and Fleas	8
Bubonic Plague	10
Three Ways to Die.....	12
The Worst Pandemic	14
Bodies from the Sky.....	16
Black Death Batters Europe	18
Counting the Dead	20
Treatment.....	22
Plague Strikes Again!	24
Plague Lives On	26
Other Famous Plague Pandemics.....	28
Bubonic Plague Facts	29
Glossary	30
Bibliography.....	31
Read More.....	31
Learn More Online	31
Index	32
About the Author	32



A Mysterious Killer

It was a hot day in Los Angeles, California, in September 1924. Jesus Lajun (hay-SOOS la-HOON) noticed a terrible smell coming from somewhere in his house. He went down to the basement and spotted the source. It was a dead, rotting rat. Not thinking much of it, Lajun picked up the rat and tossed it in the trash.



Jesus Lajun and his family lived in a house like this one on Clara Street near downtown Los Angeles.

Days later, Lajun came down with a fever along with muscle pain and headaches. Then he noticed a lump on his thigh. It was the size of an egg and very painful. About a week later, he started coughing up blood. Within three days, he was dead.



The lump on Lajun's thigh looked similar to the ones shown here.



Lajun found a dead rat in his basement.

At first, doctors had no idea what had killed Jesus Lajun. They thought it might have been meningitis or pneumonia. Both of these illnesses cause **symptoms** similar to the ones that Lajun was experiencing.

Plague Hits Los Angeles

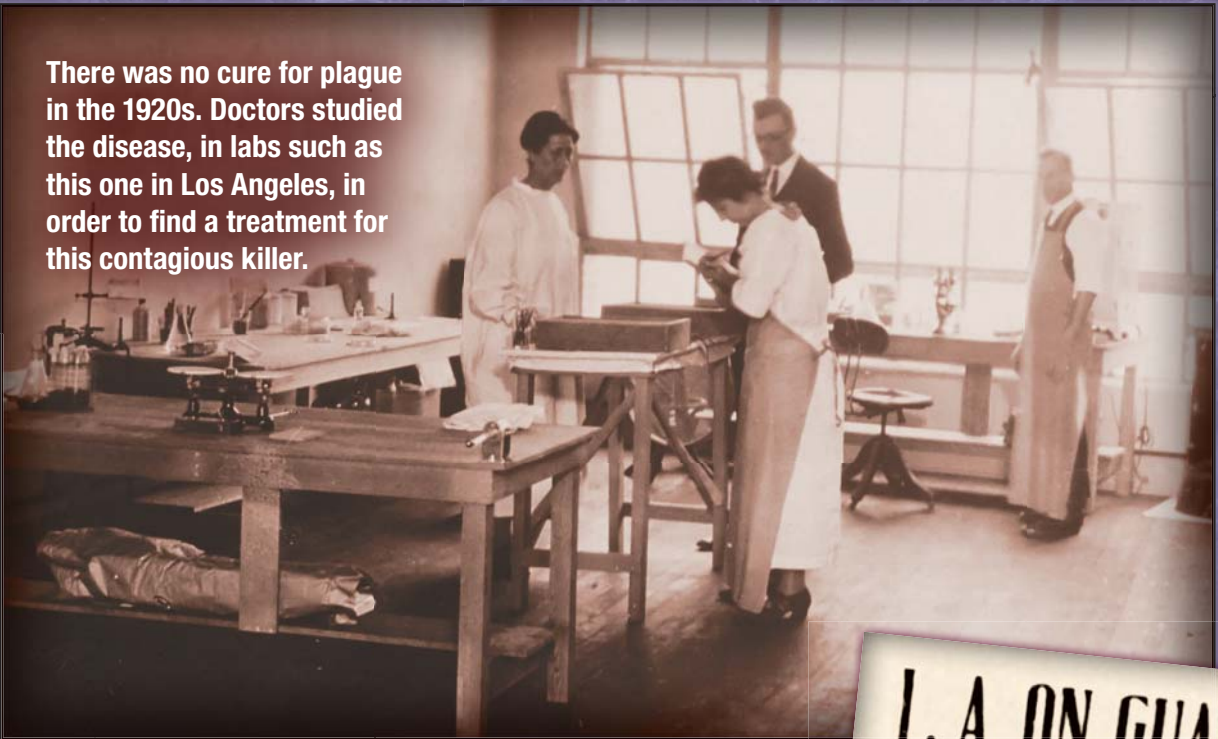
Within days of Lajun getting sick, his teenage daughter caught the same strange illness and died a week later. Then several neighbors became sick and died. So did the ambulance driver who had taken them to the hospital. Even the priest who had performed their funerals got sick and died. As the mysterious killer continued to spread, panic ripped through Los Angeles.



In 1924, Los Angeles was a growing city of about 600,000 people.

At a city hospital, a doctor studied a sample of blood from one of the victims. He was shocked by what he saw under the microscope. The killer disease was **plague**. Since plague is very **contagious**, city officials quickly **quarantined** the entire neighborhood where the disease was found. No one was allowed to leave the area. Thanks to the quarantine, the disease, which had hit in September, stopped spreading by the middle of November.

There was no cure for plague in the 1920s. Doctors studied the disease, in labs such as this one in Los Angeles, in order to find a treatment for this contagious killer.



Newspaper reports of plague spread fear in the 1920s.

L. A. ON GUARD AGAINST ENTRY OF NEW PLAGUE

Two Cases of Suspected

A total of 37 people died of plague in Los Angeles in 1924. This was the last large **outbreak** of plague in an American city.

Index

- antibiotics 23, 26–27, 29
- bacteria 8, 10, 12–13, 17, 22–23, 25, 28–29
- biologist 24
- Black Death 18–19, 28
- buboes 11, 13, 15, 22, 29
- bubonic plague 10–11, 12–13, 14–15, 16–17, 18–19, 20–21, 22–23, 27, 28–29
- Caffa 16–17, 18
- China 11, 28
- Constantinople 28
- fleas 8–9, 10, 13, 18–19, 27, 29
- France 19
- Grand Canyon 24–25
- Italy 18–19
- Lajun, Jesus 4–5, 6, 8–9, 12
- Los Angeles 4, 6–7, 14
- lymph nodes 10–11, 13
- Messina 18
- pandemic 11, 14–15, 21, 24, 27, 28
- Plague of Justinian, The 28
- pneumonic plague 12–13, 25
- prevention 29
- quarantine 7
- rodents 8, 29
- San Francisco 28
- septicemic plague 12–13
- symptoms 5, 11, 12–13, 29
- Third Pandemic, The 28
- U.S. Public Health Service 29
- World Health Organization (WHO) 29
- York, Eric 24–25, 26

About the Author

Stephen Person has written many children's books about history, science, and the environment. He lives with his family in Brooklyn, New York.

[Intentionally Left Blank]



BUBONIC PLAGUE

The Black Death!

On a hot September day in 1924, Jesus Lajun picked up a dead rat off his basement floor and tossed it into the trash. A few days later, he became deathly ill. Soon family members and other people in his neighborhood of Los Angeles, California, were coming down with the same illness. Within a month, they were all dead. Doctors who studied the blood of one victim were shocked by what they found. The cause of the sickness and death was plague—a disease that had wiped out millions of lives in Europe in the 1300s.

How did this killer disease reappear and start spreading again? Look inside to find out more about Jesus and other victims of plague. You'll also discover what causes the dangerous illness, how it affects the body, and—most important—how to protect yourself from it.

Bubonic Plague
The Black Death!

The Flu of 1918
Millions Dead Worldwide!

Malaria
Super Killer!

Smallpox
Is It Over?

Tuberculosis
The White Plague!

Typhoid Fever
Dirty Food, Dirty Water!

BEARPORT
PUBLISHING

www.bearportpublishing.com

