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I am a writer and historian and for the past few years, I have been researching and writing about an epidemic that hit Bellingham in the last summer/early fall of 1913. Most of the victims who died were children although other people became sick. Newspapers from all over the country reported on the story around Oct. 8, 1913. Oddly enough, there were many different “diagnoses” cited as the possible cause. Here is the story the Sept. 29, 1913 Bellingham Herald wrote about the situation. You will note that at the end of the story they address the idea of water pollution from Lake Whatcom as a possible cause of illness.

The families that were affected lived near the Whatcom Falls Trolley Station. I was not able to find a final definitive government or official report in terms of the epidemic and the individual death certificates also had varying causes ranging from cholera infantum to ileo colitis.

This certainly doesn’t address the situation you are trying to solve today but I thought it might be interesting to have in the records. I can go into much more depth if that might be helpful in your research.

A page of a newspaper

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