

HORSE AND BUGGY DOCTORS LIFE NOT EASY  
ASPRIN AND PRAYER WERE BEST REMEDIES AVAILABLE

Horse and buggy doctors often traveled many miles to care for patients in the wilderness areas. They braved howling blizzards to deliver babies of pioneer farm women and often their only pay came in the form of wild blueberries or a piece of venesin, for that was all the homesteaders had to offer.

The doctor in newly settled territories held a position of high~~ly~~<sup>i</sup> esteem and was loved and respected by everyone.

Dr. E.E. dBarnum was one of Pine City's first physicians. He received his degree in Medicine in 1876 and was given special recognition in physical diagnosis and surgery, surgical anatomy and diseases of children.

There is little to be found on Dr. Barnum except that he died in January, 1907 in Pine City.

DR. ROBERT WISEMAN came to Pine City in 1897. He was resident doctor of the Pokegama Sanatorium when it first began but discontinued that work to concentrate on his private practice.

Dr. Wiseman was health officer of the village and gave his time generously in caring for the people of the community. He was an ardent booster of Pine City and Pine county.

Being an avid sportsman, he was happy to live in an area where he could pursue his hobby rather than moving to a metropolitan area that might have been more financially lucrative.

A piece of land in downtown Pine City was dedicated by the Wiseman family to be held as a park. The new Pine City municipal building was constructed on that site and the building was dedicated to the memory of Dr. Wiseman and the contribution he made in making Pine City what it is today.

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DR. A. K. STRATTE was the last of Pine City's horse and buggy doctors.

Practicing medicine over a 50 year span in Pine City, Dr. Stratte saw the methods of treatment change from mustard plasters to antibiotics.

He saw the population of the town grown, not within the city limits but as the property around the two lakes developed.

Dr. Stratte said, "When I came here they didn't have electricity in the country. Maybe three or four farmers had electricity which they generated themselves with windmills."

The economy of the town was based strictly on agriculture they. with the only industry in town was the creamery.

"When I first came to town there was an epidemic of smallpox and chicken pox, polio and measles all at the same time. It made it pretty difficult to make a diagnosis. Now there is no small pox in North America and polio is a thing of the past."

One of the biggest changes for the country doctor came through improved road conditions.

"Years ago they didn't plow the roads during the winter. We had to make a lot of ~~calls~~ house calls. Sick people couldn't come in to the office. Half of my time was spent calling on my patients," he said.

Half of the babies were delivered at home. When the doctor arrived if the labor was prolonged he often had to sit in the home for six or seven hours or more just waiting.

Profit in house calls was washed out by livery charges for the horses to get him there.

"I charged the patient \$5.00 and the livery cost me \$8.00" he laughed

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" We always got there even if we had to walk. We used sleds and horses, but when we got stuck we'd keep going on foot. The easiest way was by horse and sleigh," Dr. Stratte said.

Dr. Stratte recalled the worst trip he ever made. It was during the blizzard of Armistice Day, 1940.

"Eight people froze to death. It was cold and the storm raged on and on.

When he arrived at his destination he found a youngster with pneumonia. He was blue from lack of oxygen. Dr. Stratte managed to get him back to the Pokegama sanatorium where he was put in an oxygen tent.

"It was one of the most satisfying house calls I ever made," he said.

Dr. Stratte recalled how meager his early equipment was.

"I couldn't afford anything fancy. I did have a microscope and did some lab work for my colleague."

Dr. Stratte served in both World War I and World War II.

Medicine has come a long way during the past century and still has a long way to go. Increased technology and sophisticated surgery techniques have made the impossible become reality.

Why did Dr. Stratte choose to come to Pine City ?

"It was more or less by accident. We met somebody in Minneapolis who sent us up here. We drove around the area, saw the river and lakes, and stayed. There were nice people here then and there are nice people here now," he said.

Dr. Stratte retired early in <sup>the</sup> 1970's and he and his wife continue to make their home here.

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