

**Country Doctoring
Quality Health Care
A Way of Life
in
Buxton & Hollis...**

Accessing quality health care was an issue of great concern to the generations before us just as it is today; history repeats itself. When "Old Dr. Wiley" (as my mother always referred to him) retired, the citizens of Hollis and Buxton found themselves in an uncomfortable void when they needed medical attention.

Dr. Wiley had met their needs for many years. He had delivered most of the adults and children in the two towns. Trekking through all kinds of disasters, he had delivered baby after baby, including my mother and her eleven siblings. In 1924, Dr. Wiley purchased a large home in Bar Mills (Hollis side) which had been built by Captain Paul Woodman. He converted the home to a well-equipped facility, thus establishing the "Buxton and Hollis Community Hospital," as discussed in 2009 article on Dr. Wiley. The two towns then had a proper and convenient focal point for medical care. In 1940, management of the hospital was turned over to the *Buxton-Hollis Hospital, Inc.*, although Dr. Wiley continued his association

with it for some time, eventually spending the last days of his life as a beloved resident/patient there.

Dr. Wiley had withdrawn from active practice during the 1940's because of declining health. The loss of his services left a vacuum at the little community hospital. Dr. Eppinger of West Buxton was available and, according to some sources, provided excellent care. However, he was a recent immigrant, an Austrian of Jewish descent and the local citizenry was uncomfortable entrusting their medical problems to him. When there were no responses to notices of a "practice opening" in local papers, the Buxton-Hollis Hospital Association board decided to recruit further afield, and turned to advertising in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The advertisement from the Buxton-Hollis Hospital attracted Dr. S. Dunton Drummond's attention, and he sent a query to the Board of Directors.

We might speculate that his recent marriage to Betty (Elizabeth) Jane persuaded him that a small town in Maine would be a good place to settle down. Dr. Drummond may also have felt an affinity for small-town Maine because

he had not always been a city boy. He was born and raised in Virginia, where his ancestors had been original settlers of the Jamestown Colony. His father died when he was young, and his mother, a nurse, moved to New York in order to find work. Young Dunton graduated from high school when he was only sixteen years old. Lying about his age and growing a moustache in order to look older, he entered Columbia University.

By 1940, Dr. Drummond had graduated from Columbia University and the Long Island College of Medicine in Brooklyn, New York, and had interned for a year at the King County Hospital in Brooklyn. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant Commander when the United States engaged in World War II. A primary assignment was serving as a ship surgeon stationed off the coast of New Zealand. After he had finished his tour of duty, the young doctor completed a residency at St. Luke's Hospital in Newburgh, New York, and opened a practice on Long Island.

The Association responded immediately to Dr. Drummond's query. Their letter to him describes the pleasant character of the area and the opportunity to work in a well-equipped local hospital, carrying on the country doctor legacy from Dr.

Wiley. They delicately explain as there is no local doctor available except an Austrian Jew and that many in the area would "prefer an American."

Dr. Drummond accepted the offer with alacrity, traveled to Hollis, and began his practice in 1950. In 1952, he and Betty bought the Nathaniel Miller house right beside the hospital.

This was a wise move, as Dr. Drummond was on call "24/7." In today's terms, he was not just the "first responder," but often the "one and only" responder to a medical crisis. His duties included office hours, regular house calls, nursing home visits, and his duties at the hospital. He was also on the staffs of Maine Medical Center and Mercy Hospital in Portland and of the Webber Hospital (Southern Maine Medical Center) in Biddeford. He was a superb diagnostician, relying on his own knowledge, a lot of common sense, his varied experience, and a thorough knowledge of medicines. Perhaps most important, the doctor knew his patients both in and out of the office. He never stopped thinking about a patient's problem, even after the examination was over, until he had solved the problem. He was a life-long student, reading and researching in his every spare moment.

Stories of humor about Dr.