

In the course of those fifty years, his was a familiar figure, at one time or another, in practically every home. He stood beside the bed of the dying, and he soothed the fevered brow of the ill, and brought them back to health. He comforted the distressed and gave them new courage. He brought into the world untold numbers of the present members of this community. And many others whom he helped to be born are widely scattered — near and far. In many other ways he served the people who live here, their children and their children's children.

A few days ago I had occasion to speak to a man, now fifty years of age. He happened to be the first baby that Dr. Thompson delivered in this community. I believe that this man's words would be reechoed by all the others who were brought into this world by Dr. Thompson and who, over the years have been the beneficiaries of his skill. This man said, very simply but meaningfully, "Dr. Thompson was a great man. This town was very lucky to have him for so many years".

The poet said, in speaking of men of great achievement:

These were royal-hearted rare.  
Memory keeps with loving care  
Deeds they did and tales they told.

Every member who has lived in this community over the years, has some story to tell about the dedication that Dr. Thompson showed in his work. There are those who will tell of his travels in the winter, by horse and cutter in the early years, and by car in later days — by dog sled to Hecla Island to minister to the people there — on foot when no other means of travel offered. And he did this no matter what the weather. If a call came for him, he went, without regard for the time of day or of night — and without regard for the weather. If a call came, he was ready.

There are those who will tell of his sincerity of purpose and of his understanding of the circumstances of some of his patients. The truth of the matter is that the criterion by which he acted was human need rather than expectation of payment for services rendered. And the people respected him for his help, his understanding and his consideration. And the community tried to show its high regard for him and its respect.

I seem to recall one occasion on which the whole community banded together and presented the Doctor with a new car to take the place of the old one, which had long since passed its prime. A short time ago the people on Hecla Island held a special observance in recognition of his many years of dedicated service, and presented him with an illuminated address, expressing thereby their deep appreciation for his faithfulness to them and their needs. And some four years ago the provincial government presented him with a Golden Boy Award — an award reserved for those who have given outstanding service as Manitobans.