

DR. ALLAN ROY DAFOE

Inducted 2004

Dr. Allan Roy Dafoe was born 29 May 1883 in Madoc Village and he died 2 Jan.1943. He was son of Dr. William Allan Dafoe & Essa Van Dusen; was one of ten children: 8 girls & 2 boys. His mother Essa was a direct descendant of Conrad Van Dusen U.E. She had grown up in Tweed but taught school at Bogart for 4 years, to earn enough money to attend the Ontario Ladies' College at Whitby. Allan Roy's father, Dr. William Allan Dafoe was born on a farm in the hamlet of Bogart, just north-east of Tweed. William made his own way in the world from age 14 - he was an axe-man to the Michigan woods for 3 years. He earned money there for his early education. In 1870, he first taught school near Stoco for \$14 a month; then, by 1875, taught at Chapman's, getting \$500 a year; the money he used for his university expenses. He graduated as a Gold Medalist from Trinity Medical School (U of T) in 1878 and had post-graduate training in Edinburgh.



He started practising in Madoc in 1879 - travelled by horseback, or cutter to outlying parts of Hastings Co. & into adjoining counties. Two of the ten children died as infants; seven attended U of T and other one graduated from KGH as a nurse. When William retired after 50 years; the citizens of Madoc presented him with a loving cup and an illuminated address, expressing their feelings: "A man of great energy & physique, with unrivalled memory; an outstanding physician using surgical procedures ahead of his time; served his people as a friend, lawyer, counsellor and even as a spiritual advisor. He took a prominent part in church & educational activities of Madoc."

Son Allan Roy Dafoe attended Madoc Schools, the University of Toronto and graduated as a doctor in 1907. For 25 years, at least by 1919, he had a General Practice in Callander, a village near North Bay, on Lake Nipissing. In May, 1934 he officiated at the birth of the Dionne quintuplets, and supervised their survival, protection and growth for 8 years, serving as one of their official guardians 1934-1939. In recognition of his services to the Quints, he was awarded the OBE (Order of British Empire). It has been written that these five births and survival was one of the most outstanding events in the history of Medicine. Following their birth, he certainly became the best-known physician in the world, and earned the nickname "The Little Doc".

He contributed many interesting articles to magazines & newspapers on medical & surgical subjects. Apparently in Medical School, Roy was an average student but in private practice he developed a special ability in treatment of wounds, especially in the restoration of lost functional ability. A competent diagnostician, he delivered many infants. In Callander, he became an accomplished organist, having taught himself; was an avid reader all his life, much of it of a serious nature. Other honours he received included being made a life-member in both the Canadian & Ontario Medical Associations; he was also created Honorary Fellow Academy of Medicine, Toronto.

Roy married nurse Bertha Morrison in 1914; they worked long hours during the 1918 flu epidemic, which may have helped cause her early death in 1926. He was left with one son William, born 1917. Dr. Dafoe died in North Bay in 1943 and was buried in Park Lawn Cemetery, Toronto.