

How many people remember the great fear people had about the scourge of scarlet fever and diphtheria, over a century ago.

Lindsay had a medical health officer who was a law unto himself and whenever a contagious disease cropped up in the town the health officer was quickly on the scene and a large placard was placed on the door, saying diphtheria or scarlet fever.

These were dreaded diseases, as was mumps. These forbidden signs frightened the neighbors. Parents and children remained in doors for weeks on end.

It always seemed strange that the Medical Health officer and Sanitary Inspector entered these places regularly and apparently never contacted a disease. Their clothes generally smelt of disinfectants but they appeared to be immune to being laid low as a result of close contacts.

These men were generous with their time and never seemed to mail bills or statements for their labors.

Doctors were at the beck and call at all hours of the day and night and never turned down a call. Even when the call for the doctor was made in the dead of night and perhaps the sick person lived miles away in the country, the genial physician never failed to respond. There were no automobiles but the doctors cutter hauled by high stepping horses and many times the brute sank to its knees as it plowed its way up and down vale and through deep pitch holes.

It seemed to be that people had more ailments during the night than in the daytime. It was a tough business in winter and as today people were more prone to be ailing in the winter time.

At times the doctor carried a lantern but mostly he depended on the stars and moon for guidance. The trusted steeds became so used to moonlight that the driver often tucked his head under the big collar of the old coon coat, pulled his head deep down under the fur collar and dozed off in dream land. Perhaps lured by the merry tinkling of sleigh bells and dreams of a feather bed at home.

The doctor of old was a martyr, always a philosopher, always the "family" doctor.

A good and tried medicine was a poultice of mustard and perhaps onions and a swig once and a while of good old McGinnis stout.

What a man a physician, a humorist a politician philosopher and even a preacher at times.

The doctor was humanity's best friend in the "good old days," when he looked after patients by the feeble rays from a coal oil lamp. Hospitals were too far away, when there was only one telephone or none in the country. The winters were long and severe and the side roads were not plowed.

The doctors were dedicated and truly good men.