

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

Carroll's Yesteryears
31 March 1991

Medical profession a family tradition
by Joe Getty

The work of a local historian frequently involves tracing traditions. The daily lives of many Carroll countians today are deeply rooted in the customs and cultural practices of the previous generations that lived. Our themes of local history, including business, religion, politics social organizations, and agriculture, can be analyzed by viewing the evolution of local traditions in our heritage.

Family traditions are of particular interest to the local historian. In Carroll County, we take pride in families that have lived on the same farm for many generations. We are also proud of our businesses that have continued in operation over many decades. Family traditions can provide a sense of place and perspective on the modern world in which we live.

These thoughts come to mind as I review the recent project completed by Dr. Theodore E. Woodward, M.D., about the medical heritage of Carroll County. Woodward himself continues a family tradition of medical practitioners, being a son and grandson of Carroll County physicians. Moreover, he took on the task of documenting the many biographies of local doctors in his book, "Carroll County Physicians of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries."

The Historical Society will be celebrating the release of this publication with a Medical Heritage of Carroll County dinner on April 4.

Dr. Woodward's grandfather, Lewis Woodward, came to Carroll County in April 1871 as a stranger and began his medical practice in Westminster. He was the youngest son of Joseph and Mary Klair Woodward, born on November 22, 1848, near Wilmington, Del. He read medicine under Dr. Caleb Harlan of Wilmington and on March 10, 1871, graduated in medicine from the Hahnemann Medical College of Philadelphia.

In a letter written to his brother on April 11, 1880, just ten years after coming to Westminster, Woodward described his status in Westminster: "Someone has said that if a physician hasn't a good practice, he is not of much account, and when he has, he has more than his share of trouble, and so it is. I came here determined to succeed and I believe I have; have generally plenty to do, of course, a good deal of it not very remunerative having to take my share of charity patients with the rest. The very low rate of charges here is a drawback to anyone desiring to become rich, but s my inclination is not in that direction that does not worry me. During my settlement here, I have lost 150 patients; of these, 70 were under five years of age and 19 were over 70 years of age. During the last few, I lose an average of twenty-two patients a year. Have had, I suppose, over 200 patients under treatment at one time and prescribed for twenty today, which is a little less than average."

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

Lewis Woodward married Martha Jane Roop on April 11, 1876, just five years after beginning practice in Westminster. His office and their home was at 31 West Main St. Their son, Lewis Klair Woodward, also received his medical degree from Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia in 1899. He began general practice immediately in Westminster and maintained his office in his home at 31 West Main Street until 1928, when the family moved to 1 Park Ave., Belle Grove Square. He continued practice for more than fifty-five years with his office in the house that originally stood where the W.H. Davis Building on Main Street is today.

Dr. Theodore Woodward describes his father's practice as follows: "For several years, he used a horse and buggy and like other Carroll County practitioners, had a busy office practice as well as a home practice into the county and beyond the confines of Carroll County. His practice included minor surgery and always he had a fondness for obstetrics... Woodward was reserved in manner, straightforward in his relationships with associates and was respected for a stern sense of integrity. He was a little brisk or tart with patients particularly when his advice was ignored; yet he instilled confidence in patients."

Among his many accomplishments was his completion of fifty years of active practice which was commemorated by a special meeting of the Carroll County Medical Society on October 13, 1950, at the Charles Carroll Hotel where he was presented with a gold medal on behalf of the society.

Dr. Theodore E. Woodward, son of Dr. and Mrs. Lewis K. Woodward Sr., and grandson of Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Woodward, was born in Westminster at 31 West Main St., on March 22, 1914. After his early education at the West End School and the Westminster Elementary and High School, he attended Franklin and Marshall College where he graduated in 1934. He received his medical degree from the University of Maryland School of Medicine in 1938.

After a two-year rotating type internship at the University of Maryland Hospital, he trained in internal medicine and gastroenterology at the Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, Michigan. All of this was preparatory for his plans of beginning a practice of general medicine in Carroll County.

Prior to the advent of World War II, Woodward entered the service of the United States Army in January, 1941. During the ensuing five years, he served in various medical units and the United States of America Typhus Fever Commission with assignments in North Africa, Italy, England, France, New Guinea and off-shore islands, and the Philippine Islands.

Following discharge from the military service in June, 1946, Woodward entered the private practice of medicine. In 1948, he was appointed as a full-time Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Maryland School of Medicine. In June, 1954, he was appointed to the Chair of Medicine, a position which he held until 1981, at the time of his retirement.

He is the author of numerous scientific articles and chapters in medical textbooks. He also has written books about medical history including "The Armed Forces Epidemiological Board – Its

Carroll County Times “Carroll’s Yesteryears” Articles

First Fifty Years 1940-1990,” and “Department of Internal Medicine, University of Maryland School of Medicine 1807-1981.”

Woodward has maintained an active interest in Carroll County activities. His book “Carroll County Physicians of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries” not only documents his own family traditions but also records the lives of many of Carroll County’s medical practitioners. His research and publication greatly enhance our knowledge and perspective about Carroll County’s past.

The historical society’s “Medical Heritage of Carroll County” dinner will be held on April 4, at Martin’s Westminster. This will provide an opportunity to meet and hear Dr. Theodore E. Woodward describe his experiences in compiling his research for the book. The program will include recognition of the families of early medical doctors who practiced in Carroll County. For reservations and information, contact the Historical Society of Carroll County at 848-6494.

Photo credit: Courtesy of Historical Society of Carroll County

Photo caption: The lives of Lewis Woodward, Lewis Klair Woodward, and Theodore E. Woodward, represent a family tradition.