

When Chairman Mao heard of his death he wrote an essay to his memory. It is one of three required readings in China today.

His Background

He had been born in 1890 in Gravenhurst, Ontario, a small lumbering town 100 miles north of Toronto. His grandfather was one of the founding doctors on the medical faculty of Trinity College in Toronto, his father was a Presbyterian minister. The family moved six times before Norman was 14, and his own adult life was highly mobile. In 1911 he interrupted his studies in biology at the University of Toronto to set up classes for immigrant workers in a bush lumber camp in northern Ontario. He enlisted in the army corps at the outbreak of World War I, was wounded at Ypres, France, and returned to Canada to finish his medical degree. In 1917 he re-enlisted, this time in the Royal Navy. After the war he stayed in England for post-graduate studies.

In the Doctor's Honor

Much has since been accomplished to honor Dr. Bethune. His model hospital has been rebuilt in China, and a bomb shelter, the disused temple in which he operated, the houses in which he lived, all have been made museums in his memory. In Canada the former Presbyterian manse, his birthplace, was acquired by the federal government in 1973, and opened three years later as a Canadian memorial. It is operated by Parks Canada on behalf of the ~~federal~~ Department of External Affairs.

The visitor to this house, which had been used as the minister's residence until acquired in 1973, will find the extensive restoration and refurnishing reflect the habits and taste of the Bethune family. The main rooms have been decorated in the style of 1890 while the second floor is dedicated to a biographical display of the most famous family member, Norman. Employing quotes and pictures to depict his life, the display ends with