

wrapping paper taken from packages of laundry, and surrounded the walls of Lea Cottage, one of the cabins of Trudeau Sanatorium, Saranac Lake, New York.

Dr. Bethune was admitted to Trudeau Sanatorium in 1926 and was one of seven patients afflicted with pulmonary tuberculosis. He made little progress, but after a pneumothoracic operation, in which one of his lungs was collapsed, his condition steadily improved. One day the resident physician who had operated on Bethune came to visit him and found him standing on a table "painting" the mural "in between spasms of coughing". He worked frantically for several days until the mural which he called *The T.B.'s Progress* was completed. It comprised nine panels and formed an allegory of his life and death. Below each panel was an explanatory verse.

Grim theme

Bethune is depicted as being pursued from birth by a T.B. bacterium in the form of a prehistoric flying lizard. Undismayed by his Nemesis he confidently enters manhood by enlisting in the crew of a Spanish galleon *Youth at the Helm*. Like Ulysses, he hears the song of the sirens, in his case, the Sirens of Fame, Success and Wealth, who lure him to the "Castle of Heart's Desire" on the summit of a lofty crag. About to enter the castle he is attacked by a flock of T.B. bats. He

falls headlong through a jagged chasm into a river of blood. While falling he discovers that the castle is only make-believe.

In the depths of the abyss, where he lies in an advanced state of consumption, he sees another castle representing the Trudeau Sanatorium, where he finds shelter from the hovering bats. However, the Siren of Spurious Fame lures him to the city where he is again assailed by the bats. Finally, he is "gathered in" by the Angel of Death who holds his wasted cadaver in its arms, while looking down on the cemetery in which Bethune and his six fellow patients are interred. His epitaph reads "Norman Bethune, Died 1932".

Hunt begins

Where is the mural today? Wayne Colwell, who is a curator with Parks Canada, has been assigned the task of assembling a didactic display of Bethune memorabilia in Bethune's old home in Gravenhurst, Ontario. Learning of the mural from Roderick Stewart's book *Bethune* he decided to track it down and, if possible, bring it to Gravenhurst.

The first stage of Wayne's quest was easy, for it seems that a Dr. Barnwell, who shared Lea Cottage with Bethune, took the mural with him in 1928 to the University of Michigan, when he was appointed head of the T.B. Unit. In 1929, when the new university hospital was

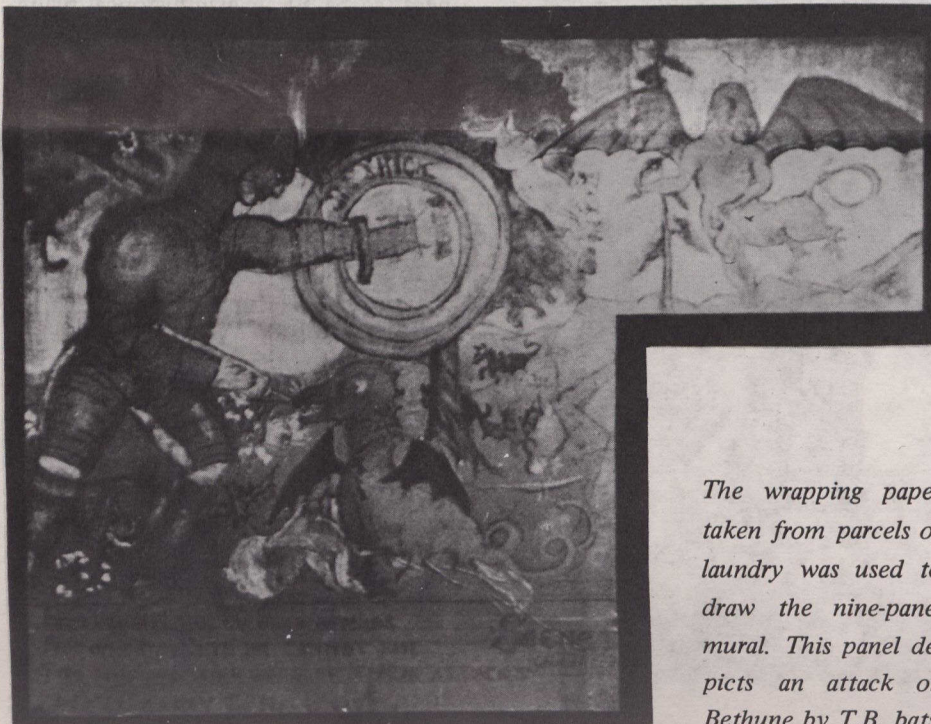
completed, the mural, cut into nine panels, was framed and hung on the walls of the fluoroscopic clinic. It remained there until 1960, when it was sent to Saranac Lake Free Library. Owing to lack of display space, it was stored in the basement, where it steadily deteriorated. In the summer of 1967 it was purported to have been shipped in "a wooden crate" to the John F. Kennedy Centre for Military Assistance, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

No trace — quest continues

Here the trail peters out and despite Wayne's staunchest efforts no further trace can be found of the mural. Correspondence has criss-crossed the continent and even crossed the Atlantic to West Germany. Curators and colonels remember reading and writing letters on the sending of the mural to Fort Bragg, but no one recalls seeing it.

Why was it sent to a military establishment anyway? Apparently the "China Division" of the John F. Kennedy Centre thought the mural a good subject for psychological analysis.

The quest hasn't ended for Wayne Colwell, but he still seeks news of the mural itself and will not cease until he has learned of its whereabouts or destruction. "If it exists," he said, "We should have it in Gravenhurst."



The wrapping paper taken from parcels of laundry was used to draw the nine-panel mural. This panel depicts an attack on Bethune by T.B. bats.

Bethune story filmed

Once spurned by Canadian historians, Dr. Bethune has now achieved legendary stature in this country. His turbulent personal life (he was twice married and twice divorced from the same wife), petulant temperament, and single-minded devotion to the Chinese troops make him an obvious subject for dramatic treatment.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation recently broadcast a 90-minute drama, complemented by documentary footage, starring Donald Sutherland, Kate Nelligan, Patrick Watson, and Etrog award-winner David Garner. Directed by Eric Till, produced by Robert Sherrin and written by Thomas Rickman, *Bethune* was filmed in the CBC Toronto studios. There are plans to film a motion picture, also starring Sutherland, in the near future. The crew hope to film several scenes in China.