

[Page 47 - Dr. A.W. Miller: Notes from a Medical Practice Down North, 1906](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 64](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1993/8/1

Dr. A. W. Miller: Notes from a Medical Practice Down North, 1906 INTRODUCTION  
by H. K. (Kevin) Miller, grandson Dr. Alexander William Miller was born at Margaree, Cape Breton, 20 September 1874, the fourth son of Joseph Miller and his first wife, Judith Fortune. He married Margaret Emma Doyle at Margaree 17 September 1906. She was the daughter of Matthew Doyle and Ann Jane Lafford of Margaree Forks. Alex was educated at secondary schools in Margaree, then went to Boston to work on the tram cars. He broke his leg, and since it did not set properly he could not return to work at hard labour. Having already completed a number of night school courses, he decided to go to university. He enrolled at Dalhousie and finished his studies sometime prior to 1906. He set up a medical office out of the old Margaree Hotel, at Margaree Forks. He left that in January 1906 for a position in Neil's Harbour. A letter (he wrote) describes the trip. He stayed at Neil's Harbour for about two years, then moved to New Waterford where he established a permanent home. Dr. Alex and Emma had a family of seven children. The youngest, Mary Agnes, died at age three (1919) during an influenza outbreak. Harold died of TB (1929) while at university. The remaining five children all attended university and had successful professional careers in the fields of theology, education, medicine, and engineering.

Reminiscences of an Old-Time Practice and Practitioner by Dr. A. W. Miller On January 13, 1906, I harnessed old Dobbin to my riding sleigh, already loaded with two large bags of medicine, and left my quiet and peaceful office in Margaree for parts, to me, unknown. I say quiet and peaceful office advisedly, for there was not enough money taken in to purchase flour for my flapjacks and tobacco for my pipe. I had heard that in the northern part of Cape Breton there was considerable need for a doctor. Proceeded as far as Baddeck the first day. While there I met Mr. McLeod, Councillor for one of the districts to which I was heading. He was attending the Municipal Council then in session at Baddeck. Next morning I started out on my long trek of over one hundred miles. Arriving at Englishtown I thought it an act of courtesy as well as diplomacy to call on the late J. G. Morrison, then local member for Victoria. Margaret Emma (Doyle) and Dr. Alex W. Miller While there, Mr. McLeod telephoned from Baddeck inquiring if Mr. Morrison knew whether I had gone by or not. It seems that Mr. McLeod had received a telegraphic message from South Harbour asking him to send a doctor as soon as possible. Knowing that I was on my way North, he asked me if I would attend to the call. I agreed, and advised Mr. MacLeod to wire them to have a team meet me at North Bay. My first problem was to get across the ferry at Englishtown. The day was stormy and the ferryman did not feel inclined to risk the crossing. Telling him I was a doctor and on a sick call, he changed his mind. Calling his son to his assistance, he soon had myself, my horse, and sleigh safely landed on the other side. I made him accept twice the amount of the fare. Later I was informed that a glass of whiskey was a passport to his good will. So next time I came to his ferry I was armed with a flask of whiskey. Gave him one drink before starting. On landing and paying the fare, asked him if he would have another "Smile." Passing back Cape Breton Boarding Kennels MODERN



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