

MO-KAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Samuel J. Crumbine
Banquet



Honoring....

Thomas Robin Hood, M.D., MPH

May 1, 1969

GLENWOOD MANOR MOTOR HOTEL

Overland Park, Kansas

THE SAMUEL J. CRUMBINE MEDAL

Presented for outstanding service in public health



- 1946—Samuel J. Crumbine, M.D.*
1947—Clarence H. Kinnaman, M.D.*
1948—Charles H. Lerrigo, M.D.*
1951—Earnest Boyce, CE.
1952—E. V. McCollum, Ph.D.
1954—Earle G. Brown, M.D.*
1955—Karl A. Menninger, M.D., and
William C. Menninger, M.D.*
1956—Ralph I. Canuteson, M.D.
1958—Vernon M. Winkle, M.D.*
1961—Franklin D. Murphy, M.D.
1962—Leona Baumgartner, M.D.
1963—Charles A. Hunter, Ph.D.
1964—Fred Lowe Soper, M.D.
1965—Dwight F. Metzler, C.E., M.P.H.
1966—Geoffrey M. Martin, M.D., M.P.H.*
1967—W. Fred Mayes, M.M., M.P.H.
1968—M. Leon Bauman, M.D., M.P.H.

*Deceased



THOMAS ROBIN HOOD, M.D., MPH

Dr. Thomas R. Hood has been chosen by the Kansas Public Health Association to receive the Crumbine Medal. He was instrumental in initiating the Medal. Now he has been invited back to Kansas to accept it for his outstanding contribution in the field of community health.

His career covers many fields of preventive medicine—from venereal disease control in Italy to the development of a model school health demonstration project in Winfield, Kansas.

Dr. Hood has been particularly effective on the national health scene as Deputy Director of American Public Health Association. Beyond a doubt, he has had an important impact on public health practices across the nation as a result of his activities in APHA.

His high professional standards, administrative capability, determination, humility, and concern for his fellowman entitle him to the Crumbine Medal. The Kansas Public Health Association is proud to add the name of Dr. Thomas Hood to its honor list.

DR. THOMAS HOOD

The 1969 Crumbine Medal recipient is a native Kansan. Thomas Robin Hood was born in Lawrence.

Legend has it that his middle name, "Robin," was bestowed on him—the third son—after his parents had twice successfully resisted the temptation to have a "Robin Hood" in the family when they

named their older sons.

He attended Lawrence public schools and received his AB in bacteriology from the University of Kansas in 1935. He earned his MD in 1939. His internship and resident training were in Akron, Ohio and Richmond, Virginia. Graduate study was at John Hopkins School of Public Health and Harvard School of Public Health. He earned his MPH at Harvard in 1949.

Dr. Hood was in private practice in Lawrence in 1941 and 1942. He served as a part time Health Officer for nearly a year and then went into the service. He was a Major in the U.S. Medical Corps from 1942 to 1946.

As V.D. control officer for the Mediterranean Area in World War II, Dr. Hood gained a new perspective on health and medical care. In a very pragmatic way he learned the importance of prevention, communication and discipline; the stuff of which the practice of public health is made.

When he returned from the War it was with a high motivation and zeal to improve the health and well being of "all the publics"—a zeal that has never burned out.

In the exploratory process of finding "a handle to take hold of" in public health, Dr. Hood, especially interested in local health work, first visited an eastern state whose public health program was highly centralized, and was operated pretty much from the State Capitol. In contrast to this approach he next visited his home State of Kansas, in which he found—much more to his liking—that the several

local health departments were autonomously operating health service programs, with consultation and assistance on request from the State Board of Health. Officer and Dr. Fred Mayes was his Deputy, responsible for assistance in developing local health services. Dr. Mayes took Dr. Hood to visit three local health departments, each of which was looking for a Health Officer to direct its program. Dr. Hood chose Cowley County, the last one of the three to be visited. It was not until some later that he learned that Dr. Mayes had arranged the sequence of visits to build up his interest by degrees, saving the most challenging to the last, hoping that choice would be made as indeed it was.

After once getting his feet on the ground in Cowley County, Dr. Hood's rise in the ranks of responsible positions in public health was rapid and certain.

"This rapid rise in positions of trust was a **result** of his high quality of professional performance and personal integrity in each job as it came, rather than a premeditated plan of ambitious scheming to reach the pinnacle," explains Dr. Fred Mayes, Dean of the School of Health, University of North Carolina.

Dr. Hood was in Cowley County from 1946 to 1948. He left for graduate work. After receiving his MPH degree, he was Acting Director for Local Health Services in the State Department of Health for a short time. He then became Director of the Topeka-Shawnee County Health Department.

In 1951, he resigned to accept the position of

State Health Officer (now known as Director of Health). He was elected by a majority vote of the Board, effective August 1, 1951. After almost seven years, Dr. Hood resigned to become Deputy Executive Director of the American Public Health Association.

A resolution adopted by the Board of Health reads, in part, "... the Board does hereby accept his resignation with regret that the public service of Kansas must thereby suffer heavy loss, but with high commendation to a public servant whose contributions toward the plans and functions of the public health services of Kansas will be an enduring reminder of his dedicated labors in favor of the people of our state."

HELPING COMMUNITIES HELP THEMSELVES

Dr. Hood has long held the theory that the "self-survey" technique not only assembles considerable information about a community's health but in the process, the first steps toward solution of health problems will have been taken. Each of the participants in these surveys will have learned many things regarding health conditions and desirable practices. It is easier for a person to identify himself with the community problems, and his participation is increased tremendously.

During Dr. Hood's tenure as State Health Officer, community surveys were carried out in Linn, Lyon and Johnson Counties and later in Reno County.

In a 1956 report, Dr. Hood wrote, "Providing guidance in this method seems to be an effective

and economical use of the talents of well trained and skilled public health workers in helping communities help themselves to better health."

This, of course, is not always easy. Leila Myers, now Administrative Director of the Southeast Kansas Mental Health Center, gives an example. She remembers when a community divided almost exactly half and half in their enthusiasm for any kind of mental health program. She and Dr. Hood attended a public meeting on the subject.

"There were some pretty sharp exchanges of ideas about who was doing what," Leila recalls, "but we were able to hold our own respectably in the controversy."

Dr. Hood was usually able to hold his own. Although he appears to be quiet and conservative, he had his share of clashes with various groups. This was particularly true when they were reluctant to conform with public health statutes or rules and regulations. One crusade he led was the development of the program of municipal sewage treatment plants.

A retired staff member recalls a specific time when Dr. Hood supported the nurses. Apparently the Medical Society had been misinformed about some new goals of nursing education. Dr. Hood took time out to clarify the situation. He and Roberta Foote, then Director of Public Health Nursing, wrote an article for the **Kansas Medical Journal** about nursing.

He understood how to work with budget people. This was fortunate for it got him sorely needed support from the Budget Director.

Today much is said about coordinating governmental agencies and avoiding fragmentation. Even then, Dr. Hood urged the governor to hold regular meetings of the department heads to better understand all state projects and responsibilities.

REMINISCENCES OF HIS KANSAS DAYS

By nature a neat person, the "never-finished" aspect of his work was frustrating to Dr. Hood at times, especially at first. Shortly after he became State Health Officer, he told a Division Director, "My father taught me to put away my tools when I was finished. The trouble with this job is that it never **is** finished. I get a project started, then I have to wait until someone else does his part before I can go on."

In spite of this, Dr. Hood's desk was always much more neat than most.

Dwight Metzler, then Director of Sanitation, says that Dr. Hood understood problems associated with the environment. Perhaps this was because he grew up in an engineering family. He was very much a part of a "sewage war"—the Kansas River Basin pollution abatement program.

It was about 1954 that Dwight and Dr. Hood met with the city council of a Northcentral Kansas town. The mayor had been on a campaign to cut city taxes.

Dwight reports, "That evening turned out to be almost a disaster. Tom was very straightforward in insisting their sewage **had** to be treated. Next morning's paper referred to Krushev and his assistant

being in town. That of course meant Tom and me."

Dwight tells another tale about a meeting on sewage. It was in the anti-Tuttle Creek ("Big Dam Foolishness") days. Many people in that area had decided that big reservoirs were for the benefit of people downstream. Dwight explains that they were opposed to flood control so it was quite simple for them to decide they would also be opposed to treating sewage.

He and Dr. Hood felt that they didn't have one friend in the court room that evening. One fellow, wearing boots, had an aisle seat in the back of the room. During the proceedings, he kept throwing a loop over the toe of his boot. The loop was in the shape of a hangman's noose!

Dr. Hood and Dwight took turns talking. When the crowd became disorderly and one was losing ground, the other took over.

Heavy fog made it a bad night for driving. Even so, they got out of town as fast they could after the meeting.

Some Kansans remember the black market in babies. Dr. Hood received some "hints" to hush up the matter so he decided he should tell the governor. The result was that the governor decided **he** would handle the situation. He mentioned this in a press conference about 10 a.m. By noon, he called Dr. Hood, asking him to take it all back. Gov. Hall had had enough.

A number of humorous tales came out of field trips with Dr. Hood. One time he and Bill Busch,

the Department attorney at that time, were inspecting a feedlot. Dr. Hood looked at Bill, ankle deep in manure, and commented dryly that it would be easier to hire a new attorney than to clean him up!

His co-workers will probably never let Tom Hood forget a certain pair of pajamas. The team went to Bartlesville, Oklahoma to visit the U.S. Bureau of Mines lab. Dr. Hood forgot his pajamas so the men stopped in Coffeyville where he bought a pair. The selection was limited and he ended up with colorful, flowery pajamas. This was long before "flower power."

Dr. James Mott says that he has known Robin since he watched him going to high school. (Some friends call him by his middle name.) Dr. Mott was always impressed with Robin's concern for his fellow man. This was particularly true for those less fortunate than himself and for those beginning to show the effects of advancing years.

This concern of Dr. Hood was exemplified when he, with Board approval, petitioned the Kansas Legislature to award a pension to a staff member who had given 33 years of his life to public health in Kansas. (This preceded any retirement program and was only the second such award ever made by the Legislature.) Dr. C.H. Kinnaman had served Kansas long and well. Aware of Dr. Kinnaman's failing health, Dr. Hood showed his concern with tangible, kindly action.

Wallace Lane, now Washington State Director of Health, tells of one example of Dr. Hood's dogged

determination. It was when the two men were in medical school.

He writes, "For some unknown reason, Robin developed the desire to learn how to shave with an old fashioned straightedge razor. For someone who did not have to do this, it seemed to call for considerable courage. But Robin persisted until he became quite adept. I don't know how long he used the straightedge, but at least he conquered it."

FAMILY LIFE

One of the characteristics that made Dr. Hood stand out was his insistence on acting with the courage of his convictions, even though such a position sometimes lost him popularity. It has been at this point that Dr. Hood could always count on one "fan" and supporter: his wife and career-long true friend, Philomene.

Dr. Hood married Philomene Bourassa June 16, 1939. Their home is in Tarrytown, New York. They belong to the Second Reform Church and Dr. Hood is past member of consistory.

The Hoods have three sons. Dennis is married and lives in Albany. They have a little daughter and are expecting another baby soon. (It is possible that Dr. Hood may receive a new grandchild about the same time he gets the Crumrine Medal.) The other two sons are still in school. Douglas is attending college in New Canaan, N.H., and Dana will soon graduate from Sleepy Hollow High School in Tarrytown.

One of Dr. Hood's staff members in Kansas says that she remembers some conversations about one of the boys when he was an adolescent. Because of her experience in dealing with children and emotional problems, Dr. Hood frequently discussed the situation with her. She says it was heartening for her when she learned several years ago that the son he worried about finally did grow up to be a good citizen, satisfying to his family in many ways. She had assured Dr. Hood that this would happen, even in spite of him!

His wife reports that the boys have involved him in camping vacations where he is a capable woodsman, auto mechanics (which she notes rhymes with "panics,") the transportation of "rock and roll" bands, and examinations for public health merit badges for scouts.

Since moving to the Hudson Valley, Dr. Hood has become a power boat skipper, scornfully known as "stink potter" by certain "rag hangers." He has however, according to Mrs. Hood, improved his navigation and seamanship skills. He takes his cabin cruiser **Panacea** from New York as far as the Rideau Lake system in Canada and the Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence, as well as to the Finger Lakes of western New York State. Long Island Sound, too, is part of the local cruising scene.

Dr. Hood is a Diplomat, American Board of Preventive Medicine; Fellow, American Public Health Association; past member of Governing Council and Executive Board, APHA; and a member of the Ameri-

can Medical Association and Medical Society of Westchester County, New York State. He has licensure in both Kansas and California. His honorary fraternities are Delta Omega and Phi Sigma.

AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

His employees remember that Dr. Hood always tried to be fair and to look at both sides. If he disapproved, or heard something that might or might not be true, he went directly to the person involved and they talked it over.

Several employees have said, in one way or another, "He was a man you could feel proud to call your boss."

One former staff member writes, "Of the health commissioners with whom I have had an opportunity to work, he, undoubtedly, was the most able administrator."

It is said that Dr. Hood's approach to all problems is realistic and business like. He requires a full quota of work from each employee, and expects him to be courteous and efficient.

Berwyn F. Mattison, M.D., Executive Director of the American Public Health Association, explains that Dr. Hood has served as his "alter ego" at APHA for over 10 years. He writes that he is an integral part of the administration of the Association. He has particular responsibility in two fields: (1) Development of the professional program through the Technical Development Board and its Program Area Committees; (2) supervision of community health surveys.

Dr. Mattison explains in more detail.

"With regard to the first, it involves working with the chairman of the Technical Development Board to develop a balanced professional program for the Association. This is accomplished through a galaxy of program area committees including Air Pollution, Child Health, Chronic Disease, Communicable Disease, Mental Health, Drugs, Environmental Health, Health Planning, Housing, Injury Control, International Health Medical Care Administration, Population and Public Health Administration.

"The manuals and guides produced by these various committees over the past decade have shaped to a large extent the field practice of public health in this country and abroad.

"With regard to his responsibilities in guiding our community health surveys, probably the highlights were encompassed by the activities of the National Commission on Community Health Services. This monumental four-year study by a group of top lay and professional health leaders in the country reported in 1966 a series of recommendations providing a blueprint for administration of community health services over the years ahead. Dr. Hood's contributions to the operation of that commission were particularly in relation to the 21 communities doing self-studies as part of the commission activity, as well as relation to the task force on the administration and organization.

While Dr. Hood was in Kansas, he used APHA guides in similar studies of Kansas communities

and has since helped in re-formulating these guides. His recent surveys include plans for Prince George's County, Maryland; Brookline, Massachusetts; Los Angeles County, California; Guilford County, North Carolina; and Colorado.

Throughout his career, Dr. Hood has emphasized community organization, health education, and competent personnel. His cover letter in the 1956-1958 Kansas Biennial Report indicates this emphasis. It is still timely today.

"Public health decision-making **must** be as imaginative, yet practical, as can be attained. The stakes are so great that only skilled professional persons should be employed. Policies should be instituted consistent with recruitment and retention of a group of capable employees."

Many of the Kansas Health Department's personnel of that era have gone on to national international fame, including Dr. Hood.

Dr. Mayes describes Dr. Hood's role today. "The role of "Deputy" Executive Director of the American Public Health Association is a most difficult and demanding assignment: one that requires untold patience and forbearance, while performing a highly developed professional level of skills; one that requires "staying home and keeping the store," so that more dramatic and spectacular assignments may be done by others; one that requires both depth and breadth of competence in training and experience, while relying on fine sensitivities and an enduring

respect for the integrity and worthiness of his fellow workers."

Dr. Hood possesses all these characteristics—and more—which have earned for him both honor and respect for his superb performance in this role. As the character and stature of the APHA grows and matures as a National force for good in the health arena, so will the stature of Dr. Thomas Robin Hood grow and be recognized for its true dimensions."