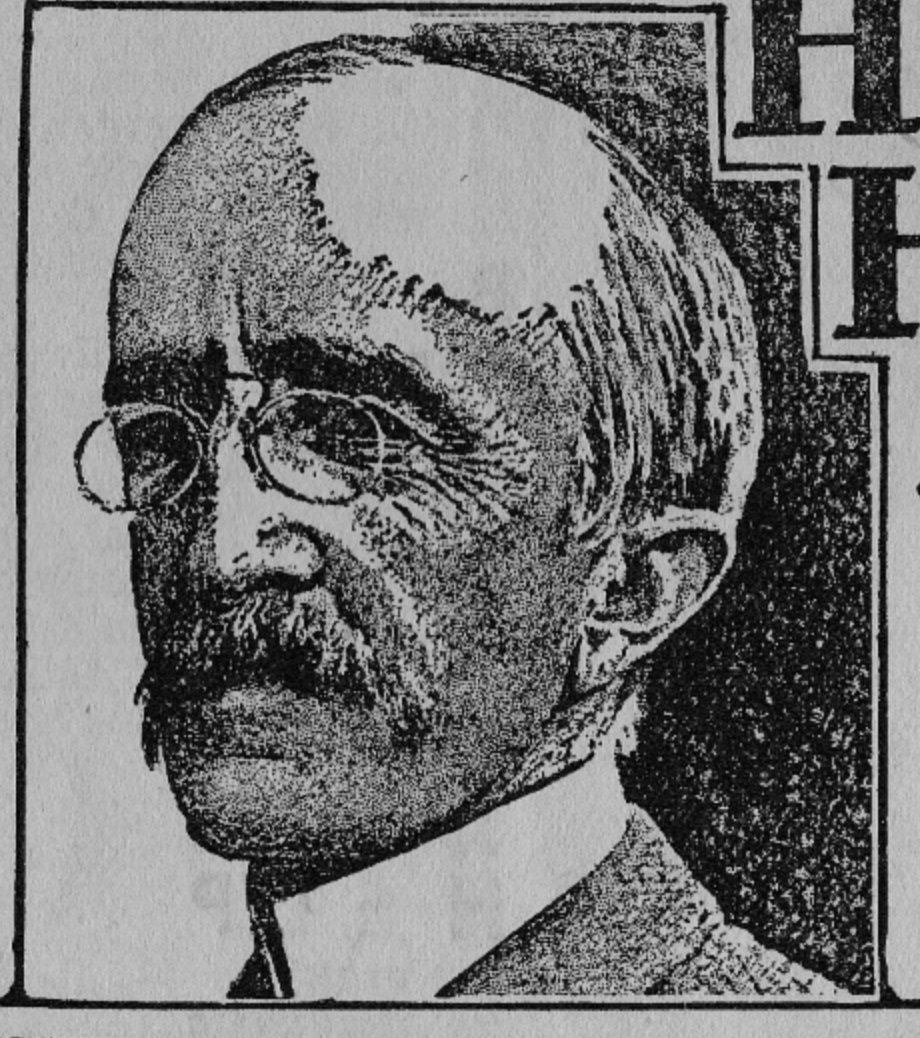




A Christmas Seal that Honors a Health Hero



Edward Livingston Trudeau



The "Little Red"



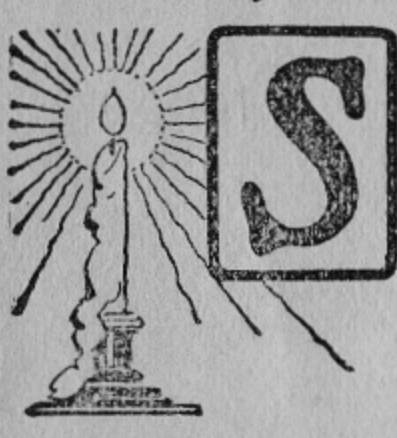
Memorial to Dr. Trudeau at Saranac Lake



The First Christmas Seal



By ELMO SCOTT WATSON



SOME of our Christmas symbols date back for centuries and have been contributed to the lore of the Yuletide by many different countries. But there is one which is only 35 years old. Although it had its genesis in Denmark, America has been principally responsible for its rapidly increasing and widespread popularity. That is the Christmas seal, the symbol of health during the Christmas season.

The story of the origin of the Christmas seal is a familiar one—how Einar Holboell, a Danish postal clerk, in 1904 conceived the idea of decorating Christmas letters and packages with a penny seal to raise money for a much-needed hospital in Copenhagen; how his idea was approved by the Danish royal family and how the generous citizens of Denmark purchased enough seals to finance the building of the hospital and to provide a chance for health for many children.

The Christmas seal came to America in this way: Jacob Riis, the famous Danish-American author, found one of them on a letter from his homeland. Upon learning the reason for it, the possibility of using the same idea in this country immediately appealed to him. The result was an article in the Outlook magazine which attracted the attention of Miss Emily Bissell of Wilmington, Del., who was trying to raise money for a tuberculosis pavilion for children in her state and who saw in the sale of Christmas seals a solution to her problem.

That was in December, 1907, and \$3,000 was raised. The pavilion was built. As a result of this first successful sale, Miss Bissell was able to induce the authorities of the American Red Cross to undertake a nation-wide sale of tuberculosis Christmas stamps in 1908. Influenced by her leadership, women's clubs, religious groups, various publications, as well as local Red Cross chapters gave their support to the sale. By such united and enthusiastic effort more than \$135,000 was raised in the first national sale.

From 1907 to 1910, the National Tuberculosis association had been organizing a nationwide warfare against tuberculosis. These pioneers had the support of the foremost scientists, but very few funds for their work. To strengthen the organization's effort, the American Red Cross and the National Tuberculosis association joined forces to conduct the Christmas seal sale together. The Tuberculosis association became the general agent of the Red Cross and assumed the responsibility for the organization, conduct and methods of the seal sale; besides supervising the financial arrangements between national, state and local groups and determining the manner in which the funds were spent. The Red Cross gave the undertaking its moral and financial backing, its emblem and its name.

The partnership between the American Red Cross and the National Tuberculosis association lasted ten years. During that time the scarlet emblem of the American Red Cross appeared on the annual issues of Christmas seals. In 1919, however, the double-barred cross, international emblem of the anti-tuberculosis campaign and trade mark of the National Tuberculosis association, was also embodied in the design of the seal.

In 1920 the American Red Cross wished to concentrate its efforts on the annual Roll Call, begun during the World war. Because it did not wish to appeal to the public for funds twice a year, a new arrangement was made whereby the National Tuberculosis association conducted the sale alone and used as the sole emblem on the seals the double-barred cross. Since 1920, the seals have been "Tuberculosis Christmas seals."

This year, for the first time in the history of the Christmas seal, it depicts something other than one of the familiar Christmas symbols. Not only does it commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the tuberculosis sanatorium movement and the beginning of the first rational study of the disease in the United States but it also honors an American health hero, Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau.

For the picture on the 1934 Christmas seal, designed by Herman Giesen of New York, an Ohio boy who for a number of years has been drawing illustrations for children's books and magazines, is that of "Little Red," as it is familiarly called, a one-room cottage at Saranac lake in the heart of the Adirondacks, which Doctor Trudeau built in 1884, just 50 years ago. There

he began his intensive observations resulting in the present methods of treatment of the disease. This little cottage was the nucleus from which sprang Trudeau sanatorium, a world-famous center for treatment and research and some 600 other sanatoria throughout the country.

Incidentally, Doctor Trudeau's first patient was himself. At the time the diagnosis of the disease was equivalent to a sentence of death. No cure was known, and the unfortunate individual contracting it could only mark time against the inevitable. But Edward Livingston Trudeau changed all that.

Trudeau was born in New York city on October 5, 1848, the son of a family of doctors, for both his own father and his mother's father were physicians. His father was also a lover of the outdoors, a friend of the great authority on birds, John James Audubon, whom he accompanied on some of the naturalist's scientific expeditions and for whom he often drew illustrations of birds and eggs. Young Trudeau inherited his father's love for the woods and this was to play an important part in his later life.

When Trudeau grew up he was not quite sure what he wanted to do. An older brother had gone into business, but this did not appeal to him. Finally he decided upon a career at sea and he was about to enter the United States Naval academy when something happened that was to change his whole life. His brother became very ill of tuberculosis and young Edward gave up his appointment to Annapolis and returned home to nurse his brother to whom he was greatly devoted.

In those days the infectious nature of tuberculosis was not fully understood and young Trudeau did not realize that his devotion to his brother would so seriously affect his own health. Of this Trudeau in his autobiography says:

"We occupied the same room and sometimes the same bed. I bathed him and brought his meals to him, and when he felt well enough to go downstairs I carried him up and down on my back and I tried to amuse and cheer him through the long days of fever and sickness. . . . Not only did the doctor never advise any precautions to protect me against infection, but he told me repeatedly never to open the windows, as it would aggravate the cough; and I never did, until toward the end my brother was so short of breath that he asked for fresh air. . . . How strange that, after helping stifle my brother and infecting myself through such teaching as was then in vogue, I should have lived to save my own life, and that of many others, by the simple expedient of an abundance of fresh air!"

After his brother's death, Trudeau realized that he must start again on choosing a career, there being an added incentive in the fact that he had fallen in love with a New York girl, Charlotte Beare. He finally decided to become a doctor and in the fall of 1868 he entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York city.

Miss Beare allowed Trudeau to announce his engagement to her a year before he was graduated from medical school. The young couple went abroad after their marriage on June 29, 1871. On the return trip Trudeau began to show symptoms of tuberculosis, but they were not understood as symptoms at that time. He and his wife took a little cottage on Long Island and there spent a very happy year. But Trudeau felt that he would make more progress in his profession if he were in New York. He took a house in the city and two months later he was offered a partnership with a well-known physician. After Trudeau was settled in New York he began to feel tired all the time and was advised to have his lungs examined. The doctor who examined him told him that his left lung was actively tuberculous.

In those days consumption was considered absolutely fatal. Trudeau says:

"I pulled myself together, put as good a face on the matter as I could, and escaped from the office, after thanking the doctor for his examination. When I got outside, as I stood on Doctor Janeway's stoop, I felt stunned. It seemed to me the world had suddenly grown dark. The sun was shining, it is true, and the street was filled with the rush of noise and traffic, but to me the whole world had lost every vestige of brightness. I had consumption—that most fatal of diseases! Had I not seen it in all its horrors in my brother's case? It meant death and I had never thought of death before! Was I ready to die? How could I tell my wife, whom I had just left in our unconscious happiness with the little baby in our new home? And my rose-colored dreams of

achievement and professional success in New York! They were all shattered now, and in their place only exile and the inevitable end remained!"

Trudeau thought that if he had only a short time to live he would like to spend it in the "peace of the great wilderness." He decided to go to the Adirondacks because of his love for the great forest and the wild life. In May, 1873, after a long, tiresome journey, he and a friend reached Paul Smith's, a famous hunting lodge in the Adirondacks. Mrs. Paul Smith's brother carried Trudeau upstairs, and put him down on the bed. Trudeau says he made the comforting remark: "Why, Doctor, you don't weigh no more than a dried lamb-skin!" But Trudeau didn't mind, for he was so happy to be in his beloved woods once more that he forgot the hardships of the trip.

Life in the mountain wilderness did wonders for him. In September he returned to the city with a gain of 15 pounds. But he soon lost ground again in his fight for health and again he went to the Adirondacks to spend the summer. Then he decided to spend the winter there, too, but it was with difficulty that he persuaded Paul Smith to permit him to stay, for so deep-rooted was the belief that a consumptive should seek a warm climate and avoid colds and storm that Smith did not want to be a party to the consequences if Trudeau subjected himself to the rigors of an Adirondack winter. Trudeau won the argument, however, and stayed. On his hunting trips during that winter the observations began which resulted in a complete revolution in the treatment of this disease.

"I found," said Doctor Trudeau, "that I could not walk far enough to stand much chance of seeing any game or getting a shot without feeling sick and feverish next day, and this was the first intimation I had of the value of the rest cure. I walked very little after this, and my faith in the cure became more and more fully established."

From this time on Trudeau's health improved and it was not long before he began casting about for ways and means to let other sufferers share in the benefits he was deriving. He chanced to read of a Silesian sanatorium, Doctor Brehmer's, and he began working on the idea of one for the Adirondacks.

No information was available on the building of sanatoria, but Doctor Trudeau felt that close housing should be avoided and that segregation such as could be secured by the cottage plan was preferable, as by this means abundant fresh air supply could be secured and the irritation of constant close contact with strangers avoided.

Friends in New York began contributing funds and "Little Red" was the first cottage built. It consisted of a single room, 14 by 18, with a small porch. It was furnished with two beds and was heated by a wood-burning stove. This little cottage, now kept as a relic and a museum, was the first sanatorium in the United States where the modern treatment of tuberculosis was given.

As Doctor Trudeau's work became known he began receiving the co-operation of leaders in the medical profession, and his sanatorium became an assured success. His single-handed fight to regain his own health had resulted in so much good to others that he was looked upon as a leader in his field, and when the National Tuberculosis association was formed in 1904 he was unanimously chosen its first president.

In the years from 1893 to 1904, when the sanatorium was growing so rapidly, great sorrow came to Trudeau and his wife. In these years they lost their daughter, Chatte, a beautiful young girl, and their son, Ned, a young man of great promise, who had just started to practice medicine in New York. In speaking of his son's death, Trudeau says: "Through all these terrible dark days, the tender sympathy and love of our friends and his friends shone, and shines even now, like a soft light in the midst of impenetrable gloom."

In spite of his sorrow and failing health, Trudeau kept his own light burning. It is burning still, although Trudeau died in 1915. The Trudeau sanatorium at Saranac lake is the living symbol of Trudeau. The Trudeau spirit is still alive there and it will live as long as the personality of this man is remembered. It is like a lamp set in the wilderness for all those who need help and comfort in their battle against tuberculosis and the cheery colors of this year's Christmas seals are at once a tribute to Edward Livingston Trudeau and beacons of hope to those stricken by the white plague.

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