



Norman Bethune MD

Norman Bethune is most remembered as being the first to introduce the mobile blood bank to the battlefield, where he performed countless blood transfusions in the midst of heavy fighting. Bethune attended the University of Toronto, where his education was interrupted when he enlisted as a stretcher bearer in World War I. He received his MD in 1916. Bethune wrote extensively on the development of new surgical instruments, helping to establish a body of work that would be an essential reference for any surgeon. In 1936, while living in Montreal, Bethune proposed a universal health care system for Canada. Although the suggestion was not readily accepted, Bethune's good works abroad and compelling recommendations would eventually find a place in the Canadian medical system. A doctor to the very end, Bethune died of blood poisoning in 1939, while ministering to a Chinese Army. Canada remembers Bethune as a medical genius; China reveres him as a saint.