

Soon after they arrived, my mother knocked on their door. She suffered from asthma and went to ask Doc for help. Then word got round and other people gradually started coming because he was a doctor. Soon he gave up retirement and began working again because people needed a doctor in the area. This was before the days of the National Health, of course.*



*Dr Arthur Head, Rockford doctor 1921-45.
He was one of seven brothers, six of whom
were doctors, and the other an architect.*

The most common treatment he administered was what he called “a bottle of pink”, which was a general pick-me-up really, I suppose. Cough mixture was the other most common treatment.

Nanna was the dispenser. She had all the little measures and would mix up the medicines from glass bottles kept on either side of the fireplace. She also had a pestle and mortar which she’d grind things up in. She was a trained nurse and a midwife. Gradually more and more people came to Doc and Nan, locals and of course holiday-makers if they were here and needed help.**

Sometimes people would bring him animals to look at too. One time I remember a farmer pulling up outside in his cart and there was a sheep in it with a broken leg. The farmer had hollowed out a

* The National Health Service came into being on July 5th, 1948.

** One of these holidaymakers was the writer C.S. Lewis, who had stayed at Cloud Farm for three weeks in 1925. Lewis records in his diary that Dr Head was asked to visit Cloud to see a sick companion, where he left medicine and ordered a “mustard-plaster” to be made up. Lewis afterwards twice walked to the Doctor’s house in Rockford for more medicine. Once, on the way back, he visited the pub and discovered his host from Cloud, “Old Lock engaged in a game of quoits with some of the other farmers, and all very merry.” Lewis was sworn to secrecy over this and later that evening Farmer Lock returned home and was confronted by his family, who had been looking for him all day. On being asked what he’d been doing he replied with great deliberation, “Oh, one thing and another, you know, one thing and another.”