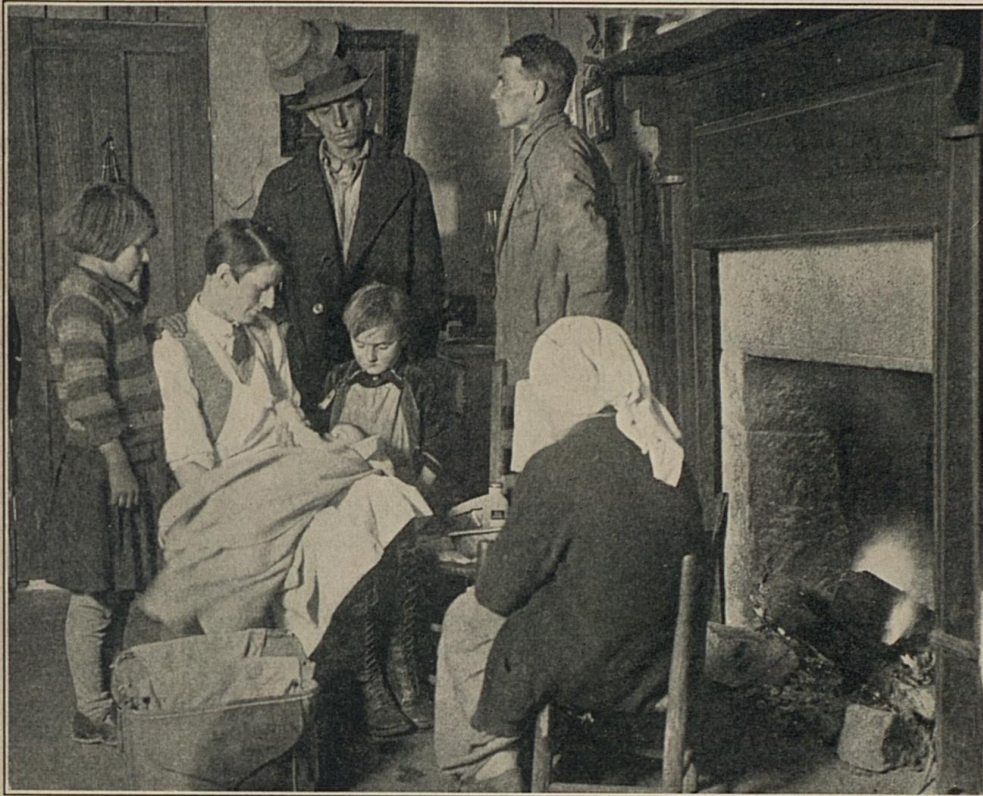


The Quarterly Bulletin of The Frontier Nursing Service, Inc.

VOL. VI.

SPRING, 1931

NO. 4



A Baby a Day



is about our record now. Each costs his parents \$5. That fee covers delivery, pre-natal and postpartum care. If they have no cash, and they rarely have, the fee may be paid in kind or in labor—skins of varmints, fodder for the horses, split-bottom chairs or a quilted “kivver”. In the last two years Frontier Nurses delivered 583 mothers in childbirth without one maternal death, 101 in the last three months.

THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF
THE FRONTIER NURSING SERVICE, Inc.

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FOREWORD

Spring has come again to the Kentucky Mountains. The long, hard year of drought and famine is drawing toward its close. About seventy per cent of our families are on Red Cross relief, families who never in their lives were on relief before. During the six years since the Frontier Nursing Service began its work we could count the people who have asked us for charity on the fingers of two hands. But famine is no respecter of persons—the proud and self-respecting suffer most. Until the next harvest the Frontier Nursing Service must continue its program of supplying four quarts of milk a week to several thousand children. During this one winter alone we had to put shoes on over seven hundred little feet.

Our fight to stave off disease began early. Between June and September of this past year, when the wells and springs were drying up and the rivers turning into deep pools of green slime between sandy bars one could cross dry shod, our devoted little corps of nurses gave 11,023 inoculations to people scattered over 1,000 square miles in the battle royal against typhoid, diphtheria, smallpox, influenza. Dysentery, skin diseases due to scarcity of water for bathing, bowel diseases among the ill-nourished children took their toll. In one day, two Frontier Nurses gave 498 inoculations.

Upland pastures were parched to brown ruin as the months went by without rain; grass withered to yellow straw, corn in the ear wizened in misshapened shocks, cows went dry, many were killed, many driven away to be sold for whatever they would bring. Famine cast a lengthening shadow across the baked hills. Back to this stricken land swarmed thousands who had lost their jobs at the mines or in industry, or on the railroads, back where the margin of living is never far above hunger level, back to swell the cornbread line. This was the picture, and the effects of it are still with us and will be until the next harvest. But with the coming of spring and heavy rainfalls that have penetrated into the subsoil and raised the rivers and re-

stored the wells, we feel that the harvest won't fail us again. Everybody has been working prodigiously—a sort of outpouring of gratitude for the thousands of friends all over the United States who have held back the famine and are seeing the crisis through. Never was such clearing of land, such building of new fences, such a planting of gardens—every man, woman and child is doing his part.

It was not until early April that we got our first real “tide” in two years. The winter before everybody had gotten busy on the timber, and hundreds of rafts of black walnut and white oak lay all through the year scorching on the river bars waiting for water to bear them down the stream. Timber is the mountaineer's one cash crop. The final and awful disaster for us in the drought lay in this unmarketed timber. By the first of last July the depreciation was one-third of its value. When at last this spring the “tide” came the excitement was like the return of troops from war. All up and down the rivers word was passed that the waters were rising. In a few hours they rose ten feet, then fifteen, and the great rafts, each with three men to man them, swung out to mid-stream. The moorings were severed and on a great rush of current they started down. As the first rafts passed they began cheering, these quiet Highlanders, and the people on the shores cheered and waved back at them. Then more rafts followed, over two hundred on the Middle Fork alone, and for forty miles down the river the cheering men were answered by the people on the shore. Women dropped their hoes, men stood at the plows waving their hats. Like a triumphant army the rafts swept on. The drought was broken, the heavens had opened, the harvest is to come.

“I once more smell the dew, the *rain*
And relish versing
Oh, my only Light!
It cannot be that I am he
On whom thy tempest fell all night.”

“I know of no finer work anywhere than that which Mrs. Breckinridge is doing through the Frontier Nursing Service, Inc., for a portion of our population which is sadly in need of help.”

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT.
(Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.)

SAYINGS OF THE CHILDREN

Three-year-old girl, poking her head in the cabin where the Frontier Nurse is dressing a dirty wound with a lysol solution, "I smell a nurse."

Four-year-old boy, inquiringly of a slim, short-haired nurse astride her horse, "Air you a boy or a girl?"

Nurse, with a smile, "A boy."

Four-year-old, "I knowed you was a boy but I thought you was a girl."

Six-year-old girl, asked what she had been eating all winter, shyly replied, "Beans an' ole 'taters."

"It is the women and children of the frontier who suffer most from the lack of woman's nursing, and it is the outstanding work of Frontier Nursing Service, Inc., to go to them with their ministries of mercy and healing. It is incidentally a service of angelic adventure."

JOHN H. FINLEY, Editor,
New York Times.

THE ROMANCE OF A MOUNTAIN HOSPITAL

Every time we visit ours we are thrilled again by the stories of the patients. Here lies a boy with a bullet through his breast, there a man under-nourished and haggard fighting pneumonia; in the children's sunny ward a six-year-old boy with a blood count down to twenty from profound anemia coming from hook-worm, and a skin like parchment—near him a baby getting over a double mastoiditis with hearing badly impaired. The baby has no mother but a neighbor woman is bringing him up with her own seven, and the little blue and white shirt with black collar and cuffs in which he came to us (in the nurse's arms on horseback) was painstakingly stitched by his foster-mother's loving, worn hands.

Where every case is a romance let us describe the last two arrivals only. One is a four-weeks old baby born on Wolf Creek "back of the beyond" without medical or nursing care, her eyes infected—brought down to our nearest nursing station with both eyes so blinded by pus that it is impossible to tell yet whether any sight can be saved at all. Treatment every fifteen minutes for twenty-four hours; the condition clearing up, the doctor holding out a faint hope that the outcome won't be total darkness for life.

Just the day before the latest case came in, an expectant mother riding sideways behind the nurse-midwife on her horse. Where else in the world would a woman at the end of her nine months be brought in such a fashion to a hospital door? She was lifted gently down and carried in. The nurse explained that she was troubled about the case, she was sure the baby was dead and the mother had felt no life for several days, so she had brought her in where our Dr. Capps could see her. The patient

was very tired and had been under-nourished all the past year and overworked. There was no vitality to pass on to the newest "least one." It was born in the night—and dead.

"I bring you a pillow, oh, little dead soul,
Of thyme and green grasses.
I weave you a winding sheet, little dead soul,
Of mist from the passes.
A fair linen napkin I lay on your head,
Bleached white in the light that the harvest moon shed,
And set the tall tapers to burn by the bed,
And chant holy Masses.

I wash you in goat's milk, oh, little dead soul,
From pastures so sunny.
I sweeten your bitter pale mouth, little soul,
With red wine and honey.
A platter of salt now I give you to hold,
And comb the death damps from your ringlets of gold,
And lay on your eyelids, so silent and cold,
A fair piece of money.

But whither and whither, and where, little soul,
Through silence benumbing?
A little wild bee, are you now, little soul.
To God's hive a-humming?
But may Virgin Mary and Jesus, her Son,
The Spirit and Father, the dread Three in One,
With Blessed Saint Peter, and Holy Saint John,
Await you at coming."

A Gaelic Midwife's Dirge.

From the Hebrides.

We are accustomed now to getting letters addressed, "Frontier Nursing Service, Kentucky Mountains," but the other day one came straight to our door by the mule-back mail delivery from South Africa, addressed, "Pioneer Midwives' Association, Kentucky."

IN MEMORIAM

The Frontier Nursing Service records with sorrow the death of Dr. Ralph Waldo Lobenstine at St. Luke's Hospital in New York City at the age of fifty-six.

To his position at the top of American obstetrics he added a sense of public responsibility toward all women in childbirth so fine and so rare that we shall not soon meet his like again. The Frontier Nursing Service shares the grief of his family and friends and of its sister-association, The Maternity Center Association of New York, of whose Medical Advisory Board he was Chairman. The Frontier Nursing Service feels keenly his loss from its New York Committee and from the plans he was directing so ably for a training school for nurse-midwives in New York. No problem of the woman in labor from the congested tenements of our greatest city to the remotest creek in the Kentucky mountains was ever presented to him without receiving his sympathetic consideration. All agencies occupied in better maternal care will look for the guidance of his spirit in the years to come.

"The significance of what the FNS is doing extends far beyond the areas to which you are bringing comfort and relief. All over the world the outstanding health problem of the moment is to devise means of bringing the benefits of modern sanitary science to the remote rural districts. I have had opportunity to study efforts being made along this line in France, Italy, Poland, Jugoslavia, Hungary, and other countries, but I know of no district in the world suffering from such economic handicaps as yours to which so complete and admirable a maternal and health service is being rendered."

C.-E. A. WINSLOW,
Yale University School of Medicine.

IN MEMORIAM

The following resolution was passed on Thursday, April 2nd, 1931, by the Executive Committee of the Frontier Nursing Service. The members present were:

Mrs. S. Thruston Ballard,
Mr. Percy Booth,
Mrs. Mary Breckinridge,
Mrs. Joseph Carter,
Mrs. S. C. Henning,
Mr. Edward Jouett,
Mr. C. N. Manning,
Mr. Bethel Veech.

Since the last meeting of this Committee, Mrs. Embry L. Swearingen, a Trustee of the Frontier Nursing Service, has entered a wider sphere of usefulness in the Great Beyond.

She was a woman of wide vision, broad, deep sympathy and contributed largely of her time and means to the work of this Service. Her great social charm and delightful personality endeared her to all. We shall miss the pleasure and inspiration of her presence at our meetings, but, above all, we shall feel the loss of her able counsel and helpful interest in all that pertains to our cause.

RESOLVED, That we express our deep sympathy to Mr. Swearingen and his family in the death of our former associate, that we place on record our high appreciation of her character and services, and our hope that the influence she so sweetly exerted in life may still guide us in the great unfinished task that lies before us.

• *"This most courageous of present-day social experiments is the outstanding piece of midwifery work being done in the country. Until the methods, here proved to be practicable, are widely adopted in rural America, we can not hold up our heads among enlightened countries."*

HAVEN EMERSON, M. D.,
College of Physicians and Surgeons,
Columbia University.

BRUTUS AND BOWLINGTOWN

These two lovely Centers, the one on an eminence looking for miles up and down Bullskin Creek, and the other nestling on a hillside close to the Middle Fork of the Kentucky, are completing their first winter's work. Almost at once they have stepped into a huge program—clinics of fifty and sixty patients, ardent co-operation on the part of their mountain neighbors, many babies brought into the world, much sickness nursed safely back to life and health again.

The Center at Brutus is a memorial to Belle Barrett Hughitt, a lovely yellow house with orange blinds. It follows the general plan of the Frontier Nursing Service Centers, no two of which are altogether alike and every one of which has the following accommodations: A living room with a fire place of the native stone for the nurses' evenings, social gatherings of the neighbors and local committee meetings; a trim little kitchen; a bedroom for each nurse and one for their housekeeper; guest accommodations; bath, and lastly but most important a well equipped dispensary and large waiting room with a spare bed for the visiting doctor or the patient brought into the Center.

The Center at Bowlingtown, the Margaret Durbin Harper, is of white clapboards with green trimming and shutters. At the first meeting of local citizens the land was donated and local subscriptions of over \$500.00 in lumber and labor, and the use of mules and locust fence posts were pledged as is the custom wherever we start a new Center. The two hundred men and women present were deeply moved to learn that the Margaret Durbin Harper Center was to be given in memory of a baby born on Kentucky soil more than one hundred years ago, by a daughter who has never ceased to cherish her memory. •

"Brought-on" plumber riding in heavily to repair the Hospital water system. "What I don't know about mules would fill volumes and volumes."

A Suggestion to Those Who Have Only Five or Ten Cents to Give

With its huge service covering great distances the Frontier Nursing Service attracts and needs many large givers, but no one need feel on that account that his small gift will not be as useful as it is welcome. We badly need thousands of pocket handkerchiefs for our thousands of children to whom we are trying to teach good health habits. If you have only seven cents to give, buy a gay handkerchief with five and post it to us with a two-cent stamp.

"REFLECTIONS ON BIRTH CONTROL"

BY MARY BRECKINRIDGE

Will appear in an early issue of

HARPER'S MAGAZINE

FRONTIER NURSING SERVICE, Inc.

CHAIRMAN	TREASURER	DIRECTOR
Mrs. S. Thruston Ballard, Louisville, Ky.	Mr. C. N. Manning, Security Trust Co., Lexington, Ky.	Mrs. Mary Breckinridge, Wendover, Ky.

The full report of the work and the expenditures of the Frontier Nursing Service during the past fiscal year will be published in the Summer Issue of the Bulletin, and at the same time the first complete list of its National Board of Trustees and Executive Board will be printed, the names on its various committees and its field staff, its medical and nursing advisory councils. For reasons of space and economy all these names have not been re-issued in the smaller numbers of the Bulletin.

Committees to further and extend this work are now established in:

<p>NEW YORK Chairmanship Pending Executive Secretary: Miss Anne Winslow</p> <p>BOSTON Chairman: Mrs. E. A. Codman Treasurer: Mr. Charles Jackson</p> <p>CINCINNATI Chairman: Mr. James M. Hutton</p> <p>ST. LOUIS Chairman: Mr. Harry French Knight</p> <p>BALTIMORE Chairman: Dr. William H. Welch</p> <p>CHICAGO Chairmanship Pending Executive Secretary: Mrs. John C. Gardner</p>	<p>PITTSBURGH Chairman: Mrs. Charles S. Shoemaker</p> <p>ST. PAUL Chairman: Mrs. Edwin White</p> <p>MINNEAPOLIS Chairman: Mrs. Sumner T. McKnight</p> <p>DETROIT Chairman: Mr. Gustavus D. Pope</p> <p>CLEVELAND Chairman: Mrs. Leonard C. Hanna</p> <p>PHILADELPHIA Chairmanship Pending</p> <p>ROCHESTER Chairman: Miss Helen Rochester Rogers</p>
<p>LOUISVILLE Chairman: Mrs. S. C. Henning Vice-Chairman: Mrs. John Price, Jr.</p>	

FORM OF BEQUEST

For the convenience of those who may be willing to remember this institution in their wills, this form of bequest is suggested:

"I hereby devise the sum of.....
dollars (or property properly described) to the Frontier Nursing Service, a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Kentucky."

It is preferred that gifts be made without restriction, since the Trustees thereby have a broader latitude in making the best possible use of them. Of course, however, they are also welcome where a particular use is prescribed.

To facilitate the making of gifts of this sort, it is suggested that if they come by will there we added to the form shown above some such language as the following:
"This devise is to be used (here describe the purpose.)"

Suggestions for special bequests:

\$50,000 will endow the work of a Frontier Nurse in perpetuity.

\$12,000 will endow a Frontier Hospital Bed.

\$ 5,000 will endow a baby's crib.

\$10,000 will build and equip a Frontier Center for the work of two nurses.

\$15,000 additional will provide for the upkeep, insurance, repairs and depreciation on this center, so that

\$25,000 will build and maintain in perpetuity a center.

A number of these centers have been given and equipped, and two are already endowed.

Any of the foregoing may be in the form of a memorial in such name as the donor may prescribe, as, for example, the Jane Grey Memorial Frontier Nurse, the Philip Sidney Frontier Hospital Bed, the Raleigh Center, the Baby Elizabeth Crib.

Any sum of money may be left as a part of the Frontier Nursing Service Endowment Fund the income from which will be used for the work of the Service in the manner judged best by its Trustees, and the principal of which will carry the donor's name unless otherwise designated.

FRONTIER NURSING SERVICE, Inc.

Its motto:

“He shall gather the lambs with his arm
and carry them in his bosom, and shall
gently lead those that are with young.”

Its purpose:

To safeguard the lives and health of mothers and children by providing trained nurse-midwives for rural areas in Kentucky and elsewhere, as its means may permit, where there is inadequate medical service; to give skilled care to women in childbirth; to give nursing care to the sick of both sexes and all ages; to carry out preventive public health measures in cooperation with State and Federal authorities; to educate the rural population in the laws of health, and parents in baby hygiene and child care; to provide expert social service whenever necessary; to arrange for modern dentistry; to help obtain medical services for those who need it at a price they can afford to pay; to ameliorate economic conditions inimical to health; to cooperate with like-minded individuals and organizations in the pursuit of these aims, and through the fulfillment of these aims to advance the cause of social welfare in rural districts with the help of their own leading citizens.

