

**The Quarterly Bulletin of  
The Kentucky Committee for  
Mothers and Babies, Inc.**

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VOL. III.

AUGUST, 1927

NO. 2

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**THE NURSES**

THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF THE KENTUCKY  
COMMITTEE FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES, Inc.

Published quarterly by The Kentucky Committee for Mothers and Babies, Lexington, Ky.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE \$1.00 PER YEAR

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*“Entered as second class matter June 30, 1926, at the Post Office at Lexington,  
Ky., under the Act of March 3, 1879.”*

## In Memoriam

### Colonel Edgewood

(A Horse)

Stricken suddenly in the line of duty, this devoted animal—high spirited and eager—succumbed to an illness of unknown origin in August. He is the first horse we have lost. We had no better. We should like to put it on record that he never had to be urged, even at the end of a long day's rounds, and that more than one mother and baby owe their safety to his speed and sure-footedness on dark winter nights. *Ave atque vale!*

## Newfoundland and South Africa up Against Same Problems as Rural America

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A LETTER TO MISS ELLEN HALSALL, NURSE MIDWIFE, KENTUCKY  
COMMITTEE FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES, INC., HYDEN, KY.

Garnish, Fortune Bay, Newfoundland,  
October 4, 1926.

Dear Miss Halsall:

I was most interested to read your letter in Nursing Notes (England) for September. Well, I am nursing here for the Newfoundland Outpost Nursing and Industrial Association and I think the work and conditions are similar to yours. I am an English trained nurse and took my Central Midwives Board in London. The roads here are very bad and my nearest doctor 25 miles away and in the spring and winter I am unable to get him at all. I have all work to do—dental extractions, midwifery and all accidents as well as dispensing.

The whole settlement is related as they seldom go outside and there are a lot here who have never been away from it or who have never seen a train. Quite a lot cannot read or write. The houses are wooden and it is nothing to be able to see thro' the bedroom floor to the kitchen! No sanitary conditions here, very primitive in every way but they are kindness itself.

I have been here two years and am now starting my third year. I came out under the Overseas Nursing Association, London.

If you are not too busy I would like to hear from you. I go about by pony and sleigh in the winter and in the summer horse and carriage if I have to go any distance.

Best wishes and all good luck.

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) Gladys Hughes, S.R.N.

A LETTER TO MISS EDNA C. ROCKSTROH, R. N., HYDEN, KENTUCKY,  
U. S. AMERICA

Choma N. Rhodesia, South Africa,  
Macha Mission,  
April 18, 1927.

My Dear Miss Rockstroh:

I have just read your most interesting article in the March number of "The American Journal of Nursing." Your work must be most interesting and helpful to those people, finest early American stock as you said.

The part which has been of greatest interest to me, in your article, was the saddle bag. Perhaps you will wonder why. I have been looking for something convenient for carrying medical supplies over these African woods and plains. We do not have horses here but we do have donkeys and a motor-byke for use when convenient.

I am a graduate from the "Englewood Hospital" of Chicago. Have been in Africa just three years as a Medical Missionary. The work is most interesting and I enjoy it even amidst the inconveniences and difficulties. We are three days journey from a physician, so many times you may know I feel that deprivation keenly.

Now this is what I should like to ask,—would it be possible to purchase these bags either equipped or unequipped? If so what is the price?

I shall be happy to receive a reply from you concerning this or any other suggestion you may have.

I wish you every success in your noble work.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Martha M. Kauffman, R.N.

### Difficulties of Remoteness in Childbirth

During the month of July we had two of the gravest obstetrical complications that exist (placenta praevia), and from the bottom of our hearts we are glad to be able to report that both mothers are living. Nothing could better describe the difficulty of getting medical service in the country than the fact that we sent to four counties for the first of these cases before we could get a doctor. Leslie's doctor was on a holiday, the nearest doctor in Bell County was also on holiday, the nearest doctor in Harlan County could not come, but finally we got one in Perry County, who rode thirty-three miles through the night on horseback to reach the patient. But if there had been no service of nurse-midwives there would have been no doctor summoned, because there would have been no one who understood the need of making this desperate effort to get a doctor.

For the second complication the doctor did not arrive in time and the nurse-midwife had to carry on until his arrival some hours later. He wrote afterwards:

"Hazard, Kentucky,  
July 23, 1927

"I sure was glad to hear about both patients getting so much better. Also was glad to find Mrs. —— better when I got there. If Miss Caffin had not had the nerve to plunge and take hold she would have been a dead patient by the time I got there. So we certainly have to commend her for bravery, and I think she deserves a medal more so than Lindbergh.

J. P. Boggs, M. D."

Everybody interested in the Kentucky Committee's program for reducing the maternal and infant death rate in rural America, is advised to read "Observations on the Maternal Mortality in the Midwifery Service of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute" by John S. Fairbairn, M.A., B.M., B.Ch.Oxon., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., obstetric physician to St. Thomas's Hospital, in a recent issue of the British Medical Journal. We have reprints of this article in "Nursing Notes" for March, 1927, which we will be glad to send to anyone interested enough to apply for them.

## WARNS AMERICANS OF MATERNAL LOSS

Our Death Rate of Mothers Is Highest in World, Newman Says in Yale Lecture.

### SEES BIG SOCIAL PROBLEM

Civilization Has Mastered Plague, but Faces New Causes of Mortality, He Declares.

(*The New York Times*, May 26, 1927)

New Haven, Conn., May 25.—The "making and safeguarding of its mothers" was tonight pronounced by Sir George Newman of England to be the greatest physiological problem before any nation. He spoke at Yale in the Dodge lecture course on "Responsibilities of Citizenship," devoting his talk to health problems which have become prominent in civilization.

He stressed health and death statistics, particularly those of infant mortality, asserting that problems relating to deaths which are associated with maternity, abound in America. \* \* \*

He stated that there was reduced fertility among women in modern civilized communities, a relatively high maternal mortality and a heavy burden of invalidity among the surviving mothers. The rate of maternal

mortality in the United States was the highest in the civilized world. \* \*

"It is a grave thing for a nation to lose by death 18,000 young women in childbirth and approximately 100,000 dead infants as the immediate result of childbirth," Sir George said. "We have here the origin of one of the most acute social problems of our times, one of the factors where the most intimate and complex social disharmonies are actually being created year after year. We seek by effort and enormous expenditure of wealth to diminish the effects, but we are doing little to remove its cause." \* \*

### Maternal Mortality Highest Here.

Sir George declared that the "present maternal mortality of America is the highest among the civilized nations of the earth, and twice that of Great Britain." In relation to the American position he said:

"In America many more deaths are attributable proportionately to maternity. \* \* \* For instance, the deaths attributed to childbirth are proportionately more numerous, estimated in 1925 at not less than 18,000, compared with 2,700 in England and Wales. Thus the total maternity mortality in America is 7.5 as compared with 3.8 per 1,000 births in England. \* \* \*

"In no state in the Union is there a maternal mortality rate similar to that of England, which is, in any case, much higher than it ought to be.

"After examining the official return of the last five years I cannot escape the conclusion that the maternal mortality rate in America is a grave problem calling for the most serious attention of the American people."

## The Summer's News in Leslie County

Work has begun on the Hyden Health Center and cottage hospital at the beautiful site on the slopes of Thousandsticks Mountain above Hyden, donated by our State Chairman, Alexander J. A. Alexander. This building which will be of the native stone, is in two sections, each section a memorial to a Louisville, Kentucky, woman. The central section is the gift of the estate of Mary Parker Gill through the United States Trust Co., in her memory. The right wing is the gift of Mrs. S. Thruston Ballard in memory of her daughter, Mrs. David Morton. The Hyden District Nursing Committee has on hand as its contribution nearly two thousand dollars in money and over seven hundred dollars in pledges of labor, material, etc., with which to defray costs of the barn, driveway, fencing, etc. The Louisville & Nashville Railroad, with its usual generosity in all public enterprises, is giving a fifty per cent rebate on freight for outside materials used in the construction. A building committee, composed of Sherman Eversole, M. C. Begley and Walter Hoskins, at Hyden, is passing on all details of construction.

We are sometimes asked how much Kentucky is bearing financially of this national demonstration. Our last report showed that she bore a heavier part of the budget than any other state. It is good to be able to add that this, the largest and costliest center at the county seat, is, from first to last, the gift of Kentuckians.

The construction of the fourth center for our work, called Possum Bend because of its location just above a great sweep of the river, near Confluence postoffice, is well under way. This is the gift of Mrs. Chester Bolton, of Cleveland, with five hundred dollars in lumber, labor and money contributed by local citizens. A nurse is already in residence, living temporarily in a one room log cabin and holding her clinics this balmy summer weather out of doors. She has inoculated single-handed as many as one hundred and forty people against typhoid in one morning. Already a number of expectant mothers have registered with her.



The money for our fifth center, complete with all its furnishings, has been generously donated by Mrs. Henry Ford of Dearborn, Michigan. We are only waiting to build until we have allowed for its maintenance in the new budget, as we dare not expand ahead of our budget.

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Dr. Robert Sory of the U. S. Trachoma Hospital at Richmond, Kentucky, and Miss Grace Harwood, R.N., spent a week in the county holding eye clinics at widely scattered points. Miss Frances van Norstrand, R.N., of our staff was detailed to accompany them.

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Miss Ruth Reilly of the University of Kentucky Extension Division, held canning demonstrations at Hyden, Wendover, Up River and Confluence.

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Dr. Kobert of the State Board of Health, held tonsil clinics at Wooton. Miss Lois Harris, R.N., of our staff, was assigned to assist him.

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At the request of the State Board of Health, we have been holding all summer ten weekly typhoid inoculation clinics in seven different parts of the county.

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As this bulletin goes to press, a young mother who expects her baby within two weeks, has just ridden twenty miles on muleback to her parents' home near our Wendover center, in order to have our nurse-midwives give her confinement care.

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Miss Ella Woodyard, Ph.D., of the Division of Psychology in the Institute of Educational Research Teachers College, Columbia University, spent two weeks in late summer at Wendover studying and tabulating nursing records of the Kentucky Committee. When this work is complete we will issue a printed monograph of her findings and the conclusions that can be drawn from them.

We again extend our thanks to Brooke Kirkland, age fifteen, of Kent School, for another summer's volunteer work. This year he has not only gone to meet all of our guests at the railroad, often leading two horses besides his own—a day's ride each way—but he has acted as escort to numerous guests over the county. He has bathed a number of horses every week himself, in the river, and looked after their general wants in a hundred ways. In addition he has acted, under oath, as U. S. Assistant Postmaster and mail carrier for the Wendover postoffice. As he goes back to his school we gratefully bid him God speed.

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### Staff Notes

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Miss Freda Caffin and Miss Edna Rockstroh have gone to the University of California for a year's study.

Miss Alice Logan has returned from a nine months' stay in England as scholarship nurse of the Kentucky Committee, where she took a course in midwifery at the York Road General Lying-In Hospital, and, after passing the English Central Midwives Board examination, stayed for post-graduate work and experience at the Post Certificate School and its busy district midwifery service in the heart of London's East Side. Miss Logan succeeds Miss Caffin as supervisor of the work in Leslie County.

Miss Mary Willeford has returned from a summer course at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, where she took her Master of Arts degree. Miss Gladys Peacock spent her holiday in New York.

Miss Emily Williams, formerly assistant superintendent of nurses and assistant inspector of midwives in Hertfordshire, England, has joined the staff of the Kentucky Committee and will be stationed with Miss Ellen Halsall at Possum Bend in the Confluence section of Leslie County.

Miss Doris Park has succeeded Miss Ellen Halsall as nurse in charge of the Wendover center.

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THE KENTUCKY COMMITTEE FOR  
MOTHERS AND BABIES, 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 young children by providing trained nurse-midwives for rural areas where resident physicians are few and far between—these nurse-midwives to work under supervision; in compliance with the Regulations for Midwives of the State Board of Health, and the law governing the Registration of Nurses in Kentucky; and in co-operation with the nearest medical service.



