

REPORT OF THETFORD MINES

DR. ARMSTRONG
file copy

For a number of years the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has thought it desirable to demonstrate somewhere in French Canada, that the condition of mothers in childbirth, and of babies during their first year of life, could be greatly improved. Pr

In order to arrange for a demonstration of such a programme it presented a plan to the religious authorities of Quebec and obtained their hearty approval. The Archbishop of Quebec, Mgr. Roy thought that an industrial community like Thetford Mines would be typical of French Canada, and that if success was obtained there, it could be obtained in any community of this province. After consultation with the authorities of Thetford Mines, who were entirely agreeable to cooperation with the Company, the work was begun in cooperation with that Community early in nineteen hundred and twenty-one (1921).

The first step was a survey of the city which showed very clearly that no mistake had been made in the choice of Thetford Mines. The infant mortality rates in this city of close to 9,000 population were 232 per 1,000 births in the year 1919-1920 and 261 per 1,000 births in the year 1920-1921. (Figures are from May to May). The Community responded in the most hopeful manner. The clergy were enthusiastic from the very beginning; the City Council and the Mayor cooperated and voted \$700 toward the establishment of the Center and agreed, further, to pay the rent for a period of three years.

At the beginning of the second year, the Council voted a further sum of \$200 toward the doctor's salary. The sum of \$600 was also voted toward the maintenance of the Center during the third year as well as \$200 toward the doctor's salary.

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

MET-233

1244

The doctors in the beginning, were skeptical but as the work continued, its advantages became more and more evident to them and their cooperation was also given.

When the work started ~~not~~ more than 10% of all expectant mothers retained their physician, for the expected confinement and only the few cases which suffered from serious complications, were under medical care.

An effort was made at once by the nurses to get all prenatal patients under medical care before the third prenatal nursing visit. This effort was so successful, that it might safely be said, that from one-half to two-thirds of all expectant mothers now register with their physicians between the third and fifth month of pregnancy.

The actual work was started May 6, 1921. The Center was located in the rear basement of a building on the main street, which was formerly used for a store-room. It was completely renovated by the Metropolitan with the aid of the City.

The Reception and Clinic Rooms were both very well equipped for demonstration. It took about two months to get the Center ready for use. As soon as it was ready the Parish Priests announced the opening. They did this with so much enthusiasm that the place was filled to capacity for the first Mothers' Club.

At these Mothers' Clubs, the mothers were given a series of sixteen talks, each of which did not last more than thirty minutes. These talks covered ~~covered~~ everything from the reason for the necessity for prenatal care, to the care and feeding of the pre-school child. Each of the three nurses took turns in giving these talks.

1245

At the beginning it was almost impossible to get the mothers to take active part in these meetings. After a few months, however, it became quite the habit for the women to give the talks themselves, not directly, but each one taking part, answering questions, and explaining why and therefore.

After the work had been going on a while it was possible to get some of the mothers to bring their babies and have them demonstrate to their companions the proper way to bathe and dress a baby. Others to demonstrate how to prepare for delivery, etc.; and others to teach how to make poultices and apply counter-irritants of various kinds.

Light refreshments were an added inducement to the mothers to attend the weekly conferences. It became known in Thatford Mines that the nurses always procured better apples than any one else could, and on the principle that, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away", the nurses served almost nothing else.

The program consisted primarily, however, of prenatal and postnatal nursing and baby welfare work. The prenatal and postnatal nursing were done according to the method of the Maternity Center Association, New York City, and the baby welfare procedure was copied from the best of its kind in New York City.

A full nursing visit which comprised the taking of temperature, pulse, respiration, blood pressure, doing Urinalysis, counting of fetal heart rate, questioning patient generally as to her condition, diet, etc. and giving of advice as indicated by the picture obtained from her answers, also assistance in solving any social problems which might have an effect either directly or indirectly on the patient's condition, was made on all expectant mothers either at home or at the

Center (preferably at the latter place) until the seventh month of pregnancy, every week or oftener thereafter,. After confinement the patients were visited every day for the first three days, every second or third day until the 10th day, and then every week or oftener until the baby was one month old. At the end of that time the mother was discharged and the baby registered separately for Baby Welfare. Mothers were invited to bring their babies every week to the Center to be weighed and looked after, and all babies registered were weighed as far as possible once a month.

Sick babies were visited daily if necessary. Feeding cases and cases of diarrhoeal disease were frequently visited more often, either to keep up the mother's interest or to keep her from killing the baby by following some kind relative or neighbor's advice.

Visiting Nurse Service for Policyholders was added after the first six months of the work.

In June 1922, the Company provided the nurses with a Ford Car. This enabled them to cover a much larger area than they could otherwise have done.

Around Thetford Mines and all small French Canadian towns, there are what is called "Ranges" which translated means ranges. Around Thetford there are eight of these. The nurses frequently spent their summer evenings covering these ranges in their Ford. They would park the car on the roadside and each nurse go off in a different direction.

It was quite a common occurrence to have expectant mothers as well as mothers with babies come to the Center from places that were anywhere from five to fifty miles distant, for advice and help, also to receive letters, a number of which are still on file, from persons

many miles away asking advice on all sorts of subjects..

Many replies were received to these letters telling of the wonderful results obtained due to the following of the nurses' advice.

The work was not easily developed for the very good reason that the community had never had any similar activity, that nurses, except practical nurses, had not been available heretofore and every step had to be taken with due regard to the natural prejudices of the community to show that what was attempted was right and useful. Nevertheless, the Clinic was successful from the very start because of the common sense of the people and the excellent support of the Clergy. At the first meeting of the Mothers' Club the attendance was 46. Since that time the average attendance has been 15 a week in spite of snowstorms and religious holidays.

The work grew quickly and beginning with two nurses it was found before the close of 1921 that three nurses were needed. Soon, virtually, all the babies born in the community came under the care of the station. For example in May 1922, on the first anniversary of the experiment there were already 326 babies under care in a community where the total number of births in that year and the preceding year was approximately 450. In May 1923, there were 515 babies under care although the number of babies born in the preceding year was only 392. This means, very obviously, that few babies escaped the care of the baby station. The total number of visits made in the last year of the experiment, May 1, 1922 was 14,731, of which 12,707 were home visits and 2,038 were Clinic visits. The Clinic visits do not include the attendance at Mothers' Clubs although this was an important activity. These figures are given in order to show not

only the large extent of the activity in this small community but also the large amount of work done by the nurses. Under the pressure of the need of this Community, the nurses averaged thirteen visits a day including the service at the clinic as well as at home.

The result of the work as measured by the drop in infant mortality rate is very gratifying.. In the first year, May 1, 1921 to May 1, 1922 the infant mortality rate declined to 149 per 1,000 births and in the second year to May 1, 1923 it declined to 117 per 1,000 births. In the two months of May 1922 and 1923 the average monthly rate was 85 per 1,000 births. It is evident, therefore, that a very marked diminution in the mortality was brought about and the decline is continuous. It is now, in fact, less than one half what it was at the beginning of the Demonstration two years ago.

More significant than the figure is the fact that such an activity could be established in a community like Thetford Mines and win for itself the support of all the people. This it has accomplished, not because of any figures of infant mortality, which, after all, people do not understand, but rather because of such simple facts as that mothers who have heretofore uniformly lost their babies are now bringing live babies into the world and keeping them in good health for the first time. Any number of instances of this kind could be given. Such facts are very dramatic and convincing to people who know little about new fashioned health activities but who are willing to benefit from what is good.

It is because of this that good has been accomplished and the Community of Thetford Mines has been able to take over the experiment at the end of a little less than two years as a community project and will support it henceforth with the assistance of the Metropolitan Life

Insurance Company who will continue to pay the salaries of three nurses until January 1, 1924 and of two nurses from January 1, 1924 to July 1, 1924.

The important lessons of Thetford Mines are that the mortality can be reduced in other communities where the effort is made and that any effort must take into consideration the local conditions and the traditions and habits of the people.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alice Ahern
NURSE-IN-CHARGE

affirmatively
from 1925

1250

REPORT OF THETFORD MINES

For a number of years the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has thought it desirable to demonstrate somewhere in French Canada, that the condition of mothers in childbirth, and of babies during their first year of life, could be greatly improved.

In order to arrange for a demonstration of such a programme it presented a plan to the religious authorities of Quebec and obtained their hearty approval. The Auxiliary Bishop of Quebec, Mgr. Roy thought that an industrial community like Thetford Mines would be typical of French Canada, and that if success were obtained there, it could be obtained in any community of this province. After consultation with the authorities of Thetford Mines, who were entirely agreeable to cooperation with the Company, the work was begun in cooperation with that Community early in nineteen hundred and twenty-one (1921).

The first step was a survey of the city which showed very clearly that no mistake had been made in the choice of Thetford Mines. The infant mortality rates in this city of close to 9,000 population were 232 per 1,000 births in the year 1919-1920 and 261 per 1,000 births in the year 1920-1921. (Figures are from May to May). The Community responded in the most hopeful manner. The clergy were enthusiastic from the very beginning; the City Council and the Mayor cooperated and voted \$700 toward the establishment of the Center and agreed, further, to pay the rent for a period of three years.

At the beginning of the second year, the Council voted a further sum of \$200 toward the doctor's salary. The sum of \$600 was also voted toward the maintenance of the Center during the third year as well as \$200 toward the doctor's salary.

-2-

The doctors in the beginning were skeptical but as the work continued its advantages became more and more evident to them and their cooperation was also given.

When the work started not more than 10% of all expectant mothers retained their physician for the expected confinement, and only the few cases which suffered from serious complications were under medical care.

An effort was made at once by the nurses to get all prenatal patients under medical care before the third prenatal nursing visit. This effort was so successful that it might safely be said that from one-half to two-thirds of all expectant mothers now register with their physicians between the third and fifth month of pregnancy.

The actual work was started May 6, 1921. The Center was located in the rear basement of a building on the main street, which was formerly used for a storeroom. It was completely renovated by the Metropolitan with the aid of the City.

The Reception and Clinic Rooms were both very well equipped for demonstration. It took about two months to get the Center ready for use. As soon as it was ready the Parish Priests announced the opening. They did this with so much enthusiasm that the place was filled to capacity for the first Mothers' Club.

At these Mothers' Clubs, the mothers were given a series of sixteen talks, each of which did not last more than thirty minutes. These talks covered everything from the reason for the necessity for prenatal care, to the care and feeding of the pre-school child. Each of the three nurses took turns in giving these talks.

At the beginning it was almost impossible to get the mothers to take active part in these meetings. After a few months, however, it became quite the habit for the women to give the talks themselves, not directly, but each one taking part, answering questions, and explaining why and wherefore.

After the work had been going on a while it was possible to get some of the mothers to bring their babies and have them demonstrate to their companions the proper way to bathe and dress a baby. Others demonstrated how to prepare for delivery, etc.; and others taught how to make poultices and apply counter-irritants of various kinds.

Light refreshments were an added inducement to the mothers to attend the weekly conferences. It became known in Thetford Mines that the nurses always procured better apples than any one else could, and on the principle that, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away", the nurses served almost nothing else.

The program consisted primarily, however, of prenatal and postnatal nursing and baby welfare work. The prenatal and postnatal nursing were done according to the method of the Maternity Center Association, New York City, and the baby welfare procedure was copied from the best of its kind in New York City.

A full nursing visit which comprised: the taking of temperature, pulse, respiration and blood pressure, doing urinalysis, counting of fetal heart rate, questioning patient generally as to her condition, diet, etc. and giving of advice as indicated by the picture obtained from her answers, also assistance in solving any social problems which might have an effect either directly or indirectly on the patient's condition. These tests were made on all expectant mothers either at home or at the Center (preferably at the latter place) until the seventh month of pregnancy, ^{and} every week or oftener thereafter. After confinement the patients were visited every day for the first three days, every second or third day until the 10th day, and then every week or oftener, if necessary, until the baby was one month old. At the end of that time the mother was discharged and the baby registered separately for Baby Welfare. Mothers were invited to bring their babies every week to the Center to be weighed and looked after, and all babies registered were weighed as far as possible once a month.

Sick babies were visited daily if necessary. Feeding cases and cases of diarrheal disease were frequently visited more often, either to keep up the Mother's interest or to keep her from killing the baby by following some kind of relative or neighbor's advice.

Visiting Nurse Service for Policyholders was added after the first six months of the work.

In June 1922, the Company provided the nurses with a Ford Car. This enabled them to cover a much larger area than they could otherwise have done.

Around Thetford Mines and all small French Canadian towns there are what is called "Ranges" which translated means ranges. Around Thetford there are eight of these. The nurses frequently spent their summer evenings covering these ranges in their Fords. They would park the car on the roadside and each nurse go off in a different direction.

It was quite a common occurrence to have expectant mothers as well as mothers with babies come to the Center from places that were anywhere from five to fifty miles distant, for advice and help, also to receive letters, a number of which are still on file, from persons many miles away asking advice on all sorts of subjects.

Many replies were received to these letters telling of the wonderful results obtained due to the following of the nurses' advice.

The work was not easily developed for the very good reason that the community had never had any similar activity, that nurses, except practical nurses, had not been available heretofore, and every step had to be taken with due regard to the natural prejudices of the community to show that what was attempted was right and useful. Nevertheless, the Clinic was successful from the very start because of the common sense of the people and the excellent support of the Clergy. At the first meeting of the Mothers' Club the attendance was 46. Since that time the average attendance has been 15 a week in spite of snowstorms and religious holidays.

The work grew quickly and beginning with two nurses it was found before the close of 1921 that three nurses were needed. Soon, virtually all the babies born in the community came under the care of the station. For example, in May 1922, on the first anniversary of the experiment there were already 326 babies under care in a community where the total number of births in that year and the preceding year was approximately 450. In May 1923, there were 515 babies under care although the number of babies born in the preceding year was only 392. This means, very obviously, that few babies escaped the care of the baby station. The total number of visits made in the last year of the experiment, May 1, 1922 was 14,731, of which 12,707 were home visits and 2,038 were Clinic visits. The Clinic visits do not include the attendance at Mothers' Clubs although this was an important activity. These figures are given in order to show not only the large extent of the activity in this small community but also the large amount of work done by the nurses. Under the pressure of the need of this Community, the nurses averaged thirteen visits a day including the service at the clinic as well as at home.

The result of the work as measured by the drop in infant mortality rate is very gratifying. In the first year, May 1, 1921 to May 1, 1922 the infant mortality rate declined to 149 per 1,000 births, and in the second year to May 1, 1923 it declined to 117 per 1,000 births. In the two months of May 1922 and 1923 the average monthly rate was 85 per 1,000 births. It is evident, therefore, that a very marked diminution in the mortality was brought about and the decline is continuous. It is now, in fact, less than one half what it was at the beginning of the Demonstration two years ago.

More significant than the figure is the fact that such an activity could be established in a community like Thetford Mines and win for itself the support of all the people. This it has accomplished, not because of any figures of infant mortality, which, after all, people do not understand, but rather because of such simple facts as that mothers who have heretofore uniformly lost their babies are now bringing live

babies into the world and keeping them in good health for the first time. Any number of instances of this kind could be given. Such facts are very dramatic and convincing to people who know little about new fashioned health activities but who are willing to benefit from what is good.

It is because of this that good has been accomplished and the Community of Thetford Mines has been able to take over the experiment at the end of a little less than two years as a community project and will support it henceforth with the assistance of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company who will continue to pay the salaries of three nurses until January 1, 1924 and of two nurses from January 1, 1924 to July 1, 1924.

The important lessons of Thetford Mines are that the mortality can be reduced in other communities where the effort is made and that any effort must take into consideration the local conditions and the traditions and habits of the people.

Respectfully submitted,

(SIGNED) Alice Ahern
Nurse-in-Charge

Approximately January 1925

REPORT OF THETFORD MINES

For a number of years the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has thought it desirable to demonstrate somewhere in French Canada, that the condition of mothers in childbirth, and of babies during their first year of life, could be greatly improved.

In order to arrange for a demonstration of such a programme it presented a plan to the religious authorities of Quebec and obtained their hearty approval. The Auxiliary Bishop of Quebec, Mgr. Roy thought that an industrial community like Thetford Mines would be typical of French Canada, and that if success were obtained there, it could be obtained in any community of this province. After consultation with the authorities of Thetford Mines, who were entirely agreeable to cooperation with the Company, the work was begun in cooperation with that Community early in nineteen hundred and twenty-one (1921).

The first step was a survey of the city which showed very clearly that no mistake had been made in the choice of Thetford Mines. The infant mortality rates in this city of close to 9,000 population were 232 per 1,000 births in the year 1919-1920 and 261 per 1,000 births in the year 1920-1921. (Figures are from May to May). The Community responded in the most hopeful manner. The clergy were enthusiastic from the very beginning; the City Council and the Mayor cooperated and voted \$700 toward the establishment of the Center and agreed, further, to pay the rent for a period of three years.

At the beginning of the second year, the Council voted a further sum of \$200 toward the doctor's salary. The sum of \$600 was also voted toward the maintenance of the Center during the third year as well as \$200 toward the doctor's salary.

The doctors in the beginning were skeptical but as the work continued its advantages became more and more evident to them and their cooperation was also given.

When the work started not more than 10% of all expectant mothers retained their physician for the expected confinement, and only the few cases which suffered from serious complications were under medical care.

An effort was made at once by the nurses to get all prenatal patients under medical care before the third prenatal nursing visit. This effort was so successful that it might safely be said that from one-half to two-thirds of all expectant mothers now register with their physicians between the third and fifth month of pregnancy.

The actual work was started May 6, 1921. The Center was located in the rear basement of a building on the main street, which was formerly used for a storeroom. It was completely renovated by the Metropolitan with the aid of the City.

The Reception and Clinic Rooms were both very well equipped for demonstration. It took about two months to get the Center ready for use. As soon as it was ready the Parish Priests announced the opening. They did this with so much enthusiasm that the place was filled to capacity for the first Mothers' Club.

At these Mothers' Clubs, the mothers were given a series of sixteen talks, each of which did not last more than thirty minutes. These talks covered everything from the reason for the necessity for prenatal care, to the care and feeding of the pre-school child. Each of the three nurses took turns in giving these talks.

At the beginning it was almost impossible to get the mothers to take active part in these meetings. After a few months, however, it became quite the habit for the women to give the talks themselves, not directly, but each one taking part, answering questions, and explaining why and wherefore.

After the work had been going on a while it was possible to get some of the mothers to bring their babies and have them demonstrate to their companions the proper way to bathe and dress a baby. Others demonstrated how to prepare for delivery, etc.; and others taught how to make poultices and apply counter-irritants of various kinds.

Light refreshments were an added inducement to the mothers to attend the weekly conferences. It became known in Thetford Mines that the nurses always procured better apples than any one else could, and on the principle that, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away", the nurses served almost nothing else.

The program consisted primarily, however, of prenatal and postnatal nursing and baby welfare work. The prenatal and postnatal nursing were done according to the method of the Maternity Center Association, New York City, and the baby welfare procedure was copied from the best of its kind in New York City.

A full nursing visit which comprised: the taking of temperature, pulse, respiration and blood pressure, doing urinalysis, counting of fetal heart rate, questioning patient generally as to her condition, diet, etc. and giving of advice as indicated by the picture obtained from her answers, also assistance in solving any social problems which might have an effect either directly or indirectly on the patient's condition. These tests were made on all expectant mothers either at home or at the Center (preferably at the latter place) until the seventh month of pregnancy, ^{and} every week or oftener thereafter. After confinement the patients were visited every day for the first three days, every second or third day until the 10th day, and then every week or oftener, if necessary, until the baby was one month old. At the end of that time the mother was discharged and the baby registered separately for Baby Welfare. Mothers were invited to bring their babies every week to the Center to be weighed and looked after, and all babies registered were weighed as far as possible once a month.

Sick babies were visited daily if necessary. Feeding cases and cases of diarrheal disease were frequently visited more often, either to keep up the Mother's interest or to keep her from killing the baby by following some kind relative or neighbor's advice.

Visiting Nurse Service for Policyholders was added after the first six months of the work.

In June 1922, the Company provided the nurses with a Ford Car. This enabled them to cover a much larger area than they could otherwise have done.

Around Thetford Mines and all small French Canadian towns there are what is called "Ranges" which translated means ranges. Around Thetford there are eight of these. The nurses frequently spent their summer evenings covering these ranges in their Fords. They would park the car on the roadside and each nurse go off in a different direction.

It was quite a common occurrence to have expectant mothers as well as mothers with babies come to the Center from places that were anywhere from five to fifty miles distant, for advice and help, also to receive letters, a number of which are still on file, from persons many miles away asking advice on all sorts of subjects.

Many replies were received to these letters telling of the wonderful results obtained due to the following of the nurses' advice.

The work was not easily developed for the very good reason that the community had never had any similar activity, that nurses, except practical nurses, had not been available heretofore, and every step had to be taken with due regard to the natural prejudices of the community to show that what was attempted was right and useful. Nevertheless, the Clinic was successful from the very start because of the common sense of the people and the excellent support of the Clergy. At the first meeting of the Mothers' Club the attendance was 46. Since that time the average attendance has been 15 a week in spite of snowstorms and religious holidays.

The work grew quickly and beginning with two nurses it was found before the close of 1921 that three nurses were needed. Soon, virtually all the babies born in the community came under the care of the station. For example, in May 1922, on the first anniversary of the experiment there were already 326 babies under care in a community where the total number of births in that year and the preceding year was approximately 450. In May 1923, there were 515 babies under care although the number of babies born in the preceding year was only 392. This means, very obviously, that few babies escaped the care of the baby station. The total number of visits made in the last year of the experiment, May 1, 1922 was 14,731, of which 12,707 were home visits and 2,038 were Clinic visits. The Clinic visits do not include the attendance at Mothers' Clubs although this was an important activity. These figures are given in order to show not only the large extent of the activity in this small community but also the large amount of work done by the nurses. Under the pressure of the need of this community, the nurses averaged thirteen visits a day including the service at the clinic as well as at home.

The result of the work as measured by the drop in infant mortality rate is very gratifying. In the first year, May 1, 1921 to May 1, 1922 the infant mortality rate declined to 149 per 1,000 births, and in the second year to May 1, 1923 it declined to 117 per 1,000 births. In the two months of May 1922 and 1923 the average monthly rate was 85 per 1,000 births. It is evident, therefore, that a very marked diminution in the mortality was brought about and the decline is continuous. It is now, in fact, less than one half what it was at the beginning of the Demonstration two years ago.

More significant than the figure is the fact that such an activity could be established in a community like Thetford Mines and win for itself the support of all the people. This it has accomplished, not because of any figures of infant mortality, which, after all, people do not understand, but rather because of such simple facts as that mothers who have heretofore uniformly lost their babies are now bringing live

babies into the world and keeping them in good health for the first time. Any number of instances of this kind could be given. Such facts are very dramatic and convincing to people who know little about new fashioned health activities but who are willing to benefit from what is good.

It is because of this that good has been accomplished and the Community of Thetford Mines has been able to take over the experiment at the end of a little less than two years as a community project and will support it henceforth with the assistance of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company who will continue to pay the salaries of three nurses until January 1, 1924 and of two nurses from January 1, 1924 to July 1, 1924.

The important lessons of Thetford Mines are that the mortality can be reduced in other communities where the effort is made and that any effort must take into consideration the local conditions and the traditions and habits of the people.

Respectfully submitted,

(SIGNED) Alice Ahern

Nurse-in-Charge

Approximately January 1925