



# **The Frontier Nursing Service: America's First Rural Nurse-Midwife Service and School: 22 (Contributions to Southern Appalachian Studies)**

*Marie Bartlett*

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There was a time when the average American woman was more likely to die from childbirth than from any other condition except tuberculosis. This was especially true in areas where hospitals and quality medical care were scarce or nonexistent. But deep in the rolling hills of eastern Kentucky's Cumberland Range, one woman almost single-handedly changed those dismal figures. Her name was Mary Breckinridge, and her goal was to introduce quality, professionally trained midwifery to the United States. The Frontier Nursing Service, opened in 1925 in Leslie County, Kentucky, set out to meet the health needs of women and infants in one of the poorest regions of America. This book tells the story of Breckinridge's unparalleled dedication to midwifery and provides a historical overview of the first 40 years of the Frontier Nursing Service.

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