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letter--there were very few telephones. And then, of course, I'd give them all the information that they should have about how to carry their baby and how to watch their diet, and all that. (You were doing even that?) Oh, yes. Well, land sake, you'd have to explain to, say, a young woman-- she didn't know anything about it. You'd have to tell her what to do, how to take care of herself, how to watch her baby, that she didn't do anything that would hurt her baby. All that. (There was no prenatal care then either, was there?) Well, not too much, no. Oh, of course, women those days, they worked hard and it didn't bother them any. No. Oh, I had to get a few babies alone, you know. If everything was coming all right, it was all right. But if not, of course, I couldn't... (You wouldn't have any tools?) No, I had no instruments, you know. Only I had my own bag with all the stuff that I needed for myself. I carried a little of everything. Oh, I carried a thermometer, different articles that you'd need around. When you'd go into a house, well, there wasn't anything to work with. I'd have scissors and I'd have lots of sterilized cottons and things, old cottons in the bag, you know, if I needed it. Or probably I'd go to a house and there wouldn't be any? thing. I've"been to a house where there wasn't even a basin. I'd go to the neighbour's, if there was a neighbour near, and I'd borrow a basin, or if it's in the town here, I'd come home and I'd take my own stuff up to the house. I'd tell the woman, if I knew she was going to have a baby, I'd say, "Save all the newspapers you can." And I'd tell her how to make a pad, too. You see, you lay them together, you know, and then you take an old sheet and you cover them all over. You make a pad that would cover the bed. The whole bed would be covered with that, see. And that's the only protection that I had. The last few years, of course, they got rubber sheets. Before my time, I've heard my mother say, the mother, the woman that was going to have the baby, she'd make a , little mattress out of straw, clean straw. The men thrashed the straw, you know, the oats and the barley, and then they'd have this clean straw for putting under the cows and horses for bedding. So she'd make a little mattress, see, out of that, and put it on the floor. And she'd deliver her baby on that. (Did they deliver in the same position-- were they on their backs?) Well, whichever way the woman was most comfortable. That's the way we did. But today in the hospitals, they have a delivery room, and they put you on a thing--it's not much wider than that. Probably you've seen it. And that's where they deliver their babies now. Well, the way I delivered the babies those days was--well, whichever way she was most comfortable in her pains. Sometimes women have pains all in the back and none in the front. And that's terrible hard, that's an awful hard birth. The pains were all coming from the back instead of where they should come, to press down. And then you'd have to take and rub that woman's back, or press against her back. You'd have to get in the bed--if the doctor was with you, or if you had another woman to help you-- you'd have to get behind her in the bed and hold right onto her back and press all you could. So that's the way the poor children were born those days. (If it was a long labour, what would you do?) We'd just have to wait. Well, you could find out that the baby's head was coming. A midwife was



allowed that. The nurses are allowed that, too. You can examine with your hand, a rubber glove on. If you find the baby's head up there, well, you'd know that it's coming all right. But a breech birth, that's a hard birth. (Would you arrive generally just when labour was beginning?) Well, just whenever the woman would have the first pain, she'd send for the doctor, and then the doctor'd call me. (Would you usually get there before the doctor?) Oh well, I'd go with the doctor. I wouldn't need to take my own car. One year Dr. MacMillan had one of those

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