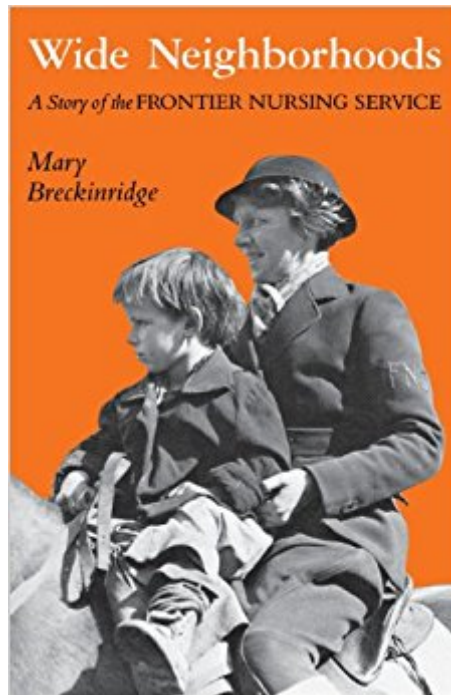


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# Wide Neighborhoods: A Story Of The Frontier Nursing Service



## Synopsis

"The autobiography of Mary Breckinridge, the remarkable founder of the Frontier Nursing Service. Riding out on horseback, the FNS nurse-midwives, the first of their profession in this country, proved that high mortality rates and malnutrition need not be the norm in rural areas. By their example and through their graduates, the FNS has exacted a lasting influence on family health care throughout the world."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a registered nurse who is interested in nursing history and fascinating medical cases, I bought this book with the expectation that the author would not only detail how she accomplished all her noteworthy achievements, but also tell in interesting clinical detail about the cases she treated. Instead, she details at great length the names of people she knew, and where she traveled, and the "administrative" aspects of her career, while covering very little of actual patient cases. The clinical stories are far between, and you must slog through "who was her favorite accountant" for the nursing service, to get to the touching story of how she helped a boy with a congenital heart condition through a flood on a makeshift raft to float downstream to the hospital. She had a fabulously interesting life, and did a great work, and I admire her, I would only suggest that she should have focused on the actual patients in her stories, and left out every little single detail of how the paperwork was done, whom she talked to at the bank, who she had supper with on June 12, 1920, etc, etc. It could have been a much more interestingly written memoir. But still a story very worthy of being told written by a great woman.

A woman surrounded by wealth, widely traveled, followed her "calling" to come to the poorest, most remote area of Kentucky to establish the Frontier Nursing Service in the 1920's. She, almost singlehandedly, established a hospital in Hyden, Ky, started a Midwifery School (still very active) and provided, with her nurses, medical and midwifery service on horseback - later jeeps - to several counties in southeast Kentucky. It is my intent to present this message to those who might be interested in bringing about the long needed story of this woman's life and contributions in a full length motion picture.

Not everyone will appreciate "Wide Neighborhoods" as much as I do. After sleeping in Mary's bed at Wendover (now a Bed & Breakfast). And after spending a month working at the Hyden Hospital. And after seeing patients at the Red Bird Outpost. And hiking the Mountain Trails--and spotting a copperhead snake. No, not everyone will want to buy 5 copies as I have: One for my niece, one for a friend in Australia, one for a church member keen on Kentucky history, another as a gift to a Breckinridge family member--AND one to keep and read & re-read. --Dr. Bob

I bought this book after reading "Mary on Horseback" to my kids and loving it. This book was such a disappointment. What a shame - because the story of how the FNS started is so interesting. The author does say that she didn't use an editor or basically get any help writing this, and it shows. I really wanted to like it. Like others have said, more stories about actual patients would've been nice.

This is the story of my family heritage, being served by the Frontier Nurses, in the mountains of eastern Kentucky. My mother told stories of their riding boots and horses. I have underlined the names of my family for my children to read. How blessed from God, for Mary and her vision.

Mary Breckenridge wrote this so that others might follow her example. After years of preparation, she formed the Frontier Nursing Service in the mountains of Kentucky - an area so remote that there were no roads, no electric service. Just poor families living without any kind of medical care. She brought trained nurse-midwives to the area and built clinics. The nurses rode on horseback in the most alarming conditions to bring care to their patients. She concentrated on fundraising among her high-level friends, and succeeded in lowering the mortality rate even more than in city hospitals. While this book is a difficult read, I think, in that it is crammed with so much information, it is a valuable resource.

Loved local history and the way nursing was brought to the mountains of Ky. The book was well written and only wished there were more pictures. My wife and I are planning to visit the area soon.

I believe that I would have enjoyed the book more if it had contained an index. In that way, I could have referred back to favorite passages. Otherwise it was a wonderful read!

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