

# Child Birth

**Collector:** Gertie Fowler

**Contributor:** Ruby Cabot

**Gertie Fowler:**

Today is July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009, and I'm here in West St. Modeste with Ruby Cabot and Ruby is going to share a story with me now, about a midwife.

**Ruby Cabot:**

Yeah.

**Gertie Fowler:**

... or maybe even herself.

**Ruby Cabot:**

Yeah. I'm going to tell you about this experience, I had now when I was sixteen year old.

When I was sixteen year old, I left on the Northern Ranger to go over to have my tonsils removed at St. Anthony hospital. And after you... you had to wait for the Northern Ranger, go on to St. John's and come back which would approximately eight to ten days. But anyway, after I had my tonsils removed and ah... waiting for the Northern Ranger to come back from St. John's, we use to all stay to a place called the Annex.

The Annex had one ward and into it was fifteen beds, it was all in one room, like fifteen beds right?

**Gertie Fowler:**

All around?

**Ruby Cabot:**

All around, yup.

But anyway, this night I was ....I was in the bed and I heard this woman moaning and moaning and I woke and I didn't know ...well I didn't know what the trouble was.

But she was in the bed next to me and I said.... and her name was Mary Jane Whalen from Flower's Cove. Her husbands name .... I can remember so well, was Frank Whalen.

But anyway, I said to her "what's wrong with you mame". She said "my dear, I'm having me baby". I said "you mean you're having your baby". "Yes" she said, "I'm having me baby, the baby is coming in the world". And she threwed the bed clothes off herself and of course, I'm only sixteen year old, was all frustrated. And I ..... she threwed the bed clothes off of herself and I said "you hold on now" I said, "I knows two people here in the Annex"...there in that same ward. I said "Aunt Jane O'Brien is here and" I said, "she's a good woman...you know she might be able to help you". And I said "Maude Butt was there from Pinware". So I went over and I called Maude Butt and I told her about this woman was having a baby there in the ... in the ... in the ward there and I called Aunt Jane.

But anyway, the two of them got up and came over to the bed and she said "oh my, yes sure the baby is in the world."

And sure enough the baby was in the world, lying on ..... in the bed and she there in the bed. And she ....Aunt Jane said to me "Ruby run down and call Mrs. Compton, hurry up and ask her for a piece of thread and scissors". She said "tell her" she said, "that there's a woman up here got a baby".

**Gertie Fowler:**

Oh my.

**Ruby Cabot:**

Now, Mrs. Compton slept downstairs and we were kind of upstairs, she was the head over the ...the Annex.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Okay.

**Ruby Cabot:**

But anyway, I went downstairs and I knocked on the room door and sure enough. I told her, I said "Mrs. Compton, hurry up, I needs some kind of a thread" I said "and a pair of scissors, there's a woman upstairs just delivered a baby". Frustration and everything, she got out and anyway, she was looking for stuff she didn't know what to get but finally she came across something, anyway... whatever... whatever kind of thread it was.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Sure

**Ruby Cabot:**

And she gave it to me and she said... I said "call the hospital.. try to get through to the hospital" but at that time there was no telephone from there to the hospital. So what she

done... I ran upstairs with the scissors and the thread and ah... she got through or sent her husband, got her husband out of bed and sent him up to the hospital, which wasn't very far, just up...just up over the hill right.

But anyway, they cut the babies cord and fixed it up and all that and ah... Aunt Jane said, I can remember Aunt Jane saying "well now we got to get the afterbirth". I didn't know what afterbirth was, although I was sixteen. So I stayed there and they kept pressin' on her belly here, she had nice lot of pain and bun by this came. I said "my God, it's another baby is it Aunt Jane?" And Aunt Jane said "no, my dear that's what you calls afterbirth" she said. "That's what the baby lies in" she said, "the babies sac" and she said "everything is okay now, my dear".

She didn't know who this woman was. But anyway Mrs. Compton came upstairs and she said, "that's Mary Jane Whalen, my dear" she said, "from Flowers Cove". So it wasn't very long before in comes two nurses rushed in and said "oh my gosh, we come for the baby". And left the mother behind, they came for the baby. They took the baby, my dear and went on with it, out through the door and gone for the hospital. And it was a long while after that before down comes this man and he came in and he came over and he said "Mrs. Whalen" he said, "I was sent down, you're gonna have a baby hey?"

And she said "Sir", she said, "I got me baby". He said "you got your baby, well where's it at?" And she said "Me baby is born", she said "and it's gone up to the hospital, two women here, just born me baby". And ah... he was kind of stupefied like hey. So he said "you got your baby". "Yes", she said "I got me baby". She said "It's me you came after" she said, "I got to go up to the hospital". "Well" he said, "that's not the message I got," he said, "The message I got is you were suppose to have a baby and we had to get you to the hospital". "No" she said, "I got me baby".

But anyway, they came in and you know what that they did not bring in a stretcher for that woman. They got that woman out and he walked her up that hill ... the slope of that hill to the hospital. The same man that came down, it was a doctor or intern or what he was. But he caught her ought by the arm and one foot over the other she took her time and walked up to the hospital from the Annex. That's where I got my first experience at.

**Gertie Fowler:**

So Ruby what was it a boy or girl?

**Ruby Cabot:**

A boy.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Boy.

**Ruby Cabot:**

I can remember him saying to her. He asked her "what did you have a girl or a boy?" and she said "a boy". He said "you're gonna have to call him after me then."

Now whatever his name was I don't know.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Whatever that reason would be.

**Ruby Cabot:**

Yeah, whatever that reason... but that's my first experience with ah... and I was there and..

**Gertie Fowler:**

I think that's wonderful.

**Ruby Cabot:**

Yeah. It was when I was sixteen years of age and that makes that guy , now... let me see..73 ... that makes that guy now..fifty what? fifty seven? Yeah, Fifty seven and sixteen, yup. He's suppose to fifty seven year old. If he ever hears the story, well he'll know who he is and where he came from.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yup.

**Ruby Cabot:**

But anyway, his mother was Mary Jane Whalen and his father was Frank Whalen, Flower's Cove and that'll give him now fifty seven year old.

**Gertie Fowler:**

I'd like to thank you very much for your memories.

**Ruby Cabot:**

Hmm.