The Story of "Doctor" and "Joan."
HONORARY DEGREES

In this issue we review briefly the work of Dr. Isabel Dumont and her co-worker Joan Mulder, friends and “medical” partners of the Edmundite Fathers in Selma since 1944.

In recognition of their unique service both “Doctor” and “Joan” will receive honorary doctorates this Summer from St. Michael’s, our Edmundite college in Vermont.

We know you, our Mission friends, share our pride in saluting these outstanding good samaritans.

This little clinic recalls the humble beginnings of Good Samaritan Hospital 22 years ago.

Below, Dr. Dumont and Miss Mulder with their first clinic patient, Mrs. Estelle Baker.
Dear Friend of the Edmundite Missions,

Have you ever thought that the spirit of Christian renewal our age clamors for is probably best begun, as the above poem suggests, by each of us developing a deeper sense of awareness!

Awareness, first, that we know our neighbor too often only in cliches, sometimes bad cliches. Awareness of how much all men have in common just by their humanity—a face, a heart, anguish, seeking, hoping. Awareness of God in everyone. Awareness, the full awareness, that what we do to the least of men we do to Him. And what we neglect to do for our neighbor indeed we neglect to do to Him.

Mission activity by its very nature is an awareness of others. That is why we Edmundites praise you, our mission partner, for being so alive to “The cruel wounds our neighbors bear” and for cooperating so wholeheartedly in our mission efforts to heal some of these wounds.

May the Risen Christ, this Easter, bless you for your “awareness.” And may He bless you, too, for your warm Mission friendship!

Gratefully,

Father John P. Crowley, S. S. E.
Mission Director

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How cruel the wounds our neighbors bear
And we pass by quite unaware
Eyes to the ground unseeking for light
Soul never waking to neighbor’s plight.
Stab my soul fiercely with others’ pain

Stir up the coals, Christ, of Your love again.
Give me the courage to do what is right
Flood me with knowledge, drowned me with light
Please keep me eager to do my share
God—let me be aware.

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Mission Director
They Wanted To Be Missionaries

On September 8th of this year, German-born Doctor Isabel Dumont and her friend and co-worker, Joan Mulder, a native of Holland, mark their 22nd year of serving the Negro sick in Selma. They have been a part of Good Samaritan Hospital from its beginning. Their Clinic is right next to the hospital.

Doctor Dumont remembers, as a little girl, wanting to be a Missionary to Africa. In nearby Holland, another young girl, Joan Mulder, had the same stirrings in her heart. This was in the late 1920's.

Doctor Dumont came to the United States on an Exchange Scholarship to attend St. Catherine's College in St. Paul, Minnesota. She continued her studies at the University of Minnesota and at Women's Medical College in Philadelphia where she received her M. D. in 1939. She
Some 50 patients a day are seen by Doctor Dumont.

Doctor and Joan examine an unusually severe case of arthritis.

wanted to develop skills in several general medical areas so she interned at St. Mary's Hospital in Philadelphia and followed this with a year's work in obstetrics at St. John's Hospital in Pittsburgh.

Joan majored in Biology at Trinity College in Washington, D. C. after achieving the highest mark in the Netherlands country-wide Lyceee examination.

Doctor Dumont and Joan met in Washington, D. C. Their mutual Mission interest helped to form a strong, and lasting, bond of friendship. With their plans to go to Africa thwarted by World War II, Doctor began a residency at St. Vincent's Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama. Joan taught the nurses there and worked as a free lance artist.

They soon met His Excellency, Archbishop T. J. Toolen, who told them about Father Frank Casey's plan to open a hospital for Negroes in Selma. In short order, a visit with the Edmundites, “we liked their Community Spirit,” and a look at the poor medical facilities then available to the Negro people of the Black Belt convinced them they had found their “Mission.” “We let our hearts decide,” they said.

In recognition of their dedicated service, the Church, in 1961, awarded Isabel and Joan the “Pro Ecclesia” Medal.
“In their simplicity some people can give you a lesson. Some people are real just downright good,” says Doctor Dumont.

“Joan, she’s positive but fair,” one lady remarked. Here Joan interviews a patient. She prepares them for Doctor’s examination, and does many lab examinations herself.
FIRST CLINIC

“When we arrived Father Casey had completely renovated the old building. And had taken these little shacks and added them on. The last shack, it used to be a beer joint. And that was my little clinic. A little waiting room, an examining room, and an office. That was it!” (Doctor Dumont)

HOMEMADE AMBULANCES

“I have seen many a day when people from outside town would have a bed on the mule cart with the patient in the bed. It was a homemade ambulance. Yes. And if there was something wrong with the mule, you had to treat him, too. They used to bring chickens for payment.” (Doctor Dumont)

Does it hurt?
Just . . . a little!
POVERTY STATISTICS—DALLAS COUNTY

There are about 12,457 families in the County. Some 6,480 of these families earn less than $3,000.00 a year. And of these families 2,585 earn less than $1,000.00 a year. About 30-85% of these poor are Negro families.

“PUNY BABY” CLINIC

“Oh, yes, it started about 7 years ago. It’s for little children 1 year to about 6. Especially the little babies... real tiny ones, underfed, neglected. Doctor Dumont gets the disease out of their system but they still need strength. Sometimes the mothers try to treat the babies too long at home before bringing them to the Doctor.”

“The ‘Puny Baby’ Clinic is completely free. We give them what they need, not just samples but also shots and other medicines.” (Joan Mulder)

WHY HOME DELIVERIES

“Most Negro mothers continue to deliver their babies at home first of all for financial reasons. Secondly, they don’t want to leave their other children alone. But mostly, it’s a question of poverty. There are 34 registered mid-wives in the County. These have only a limited training.” (Doctor Dumont)

BIRTH STATISTICS

Good Samaritan Hospital draws patients from a 6-county area, but the majority come from Dallas County. It’s perhaps interesting to note that from 1960-65, in Dallas County, there were 9935 babies born. Of these 6353 were Negro; 3582 were white.

4543 of the Negro babies, more than 70%, were born at home. Five of the white babies were delivered at home. About 90% of the Negro babies born in a hospital were born at Good Samaritan.
FATHER CASEY HAD A HEART AS BIG AS A CABBAGE

Q. “Tell us a little bit about Father Casey?” (The founder of the Selma Mission and Good Samaritan Hospital.)

A. Doctor: “Well, Father Casey had a heart as big as a cabbage. A most charitable man! When he opened the hospital he said if you have one bed left and 2 patients arrive, then take the charity patient and let the other go home.”

Joan: “At our first meeting Father Casey asked me, ‘What are you?’ I said, ‘I’m an artist.’ He said, . . . ‘How horrible! Don’t you know anything else?’ Father Casey was very practical you know. I said, ‘Yes, Father. I also have an A. B. in Science, etc.’ He said, ‘Fine, then you can do for the laboratory.’”

“We made a great number of home calls the first 6 or 7 years. How many times we got stuck in the mud. In the middle of the night! You had such a hard time finding the houses. If people did have lights in the house they couldn’t afford to put lights on the porch too.” (Doctor Dumont)

“And one time we went on a home call and it was dark in this tiny little house in a tiny little room and there was a woman

An early morning operation.
INTERVIEW

lying in bed in a corner and there were two little children and a
candle. I saw this couch-like af-
fair and I sat on this couch and I
sat right on top of a man! There
was a man sleeping there. That's
a fact! This thing that moved! I
flew up! And I looked. And this
man turned over and went back
to sleep! He was not at all con-
cerned! Never even saw his face.
He just lay there asleep." (Joan
Mulder)

Q. “Didn’t you have difficulty
getting blood donors at one time?”

A. “Well, in the early days I
used to run into
the Colored Cafes
because there was no Red Cross
blood.”

“I asked, ‘Are you a Christian?’
They say, ‘Yes!’ I say, ‘Come with
me. There is a lady . . . she is
bleeding to death and you have to
give your blood, etc!’ . . . They
did, you know. Shaking and all.”
(Joan Mulder)

Q. “Are patients able to pay for
services?”

A. “No. Most of them can’t pay
the whole thing. But they pay
something. It’s the same at the
hospital. There is much poverty.
If a person is sick they can come
in and in the privacy of my office
tell me that they have no money.
But they have to tell beforehand.
That’s the only rule.”

Q. “What was your most dra-
matic experience?”

A. “One evening we came from
Montgomery. When we checked
the hospital a man came in sliced
from here way over to there. His
lung was hanging out. Air was
coming out. You could see the
heart beat. He had been drinking
bad liquor and had fought over
the money. Isabel says, ‘Quick,
Joan, put some stuff in his veins
and you start sewing on one side
and I’ll start sewing on the other.’

The Clinic Staff takes a breather!

You know I know only the turkey
stitch. But I met the Doctor at the
middle. And no anesthesia! No
anesthesia because he was drunk
you see. We thought sure that
was the end of him. But a few
weeks later he was out walking!”

Q. “Were you always accepted
in the community?”

A. “Well, the Doctors all knew
us and were very, very nice. We
never tried to go and dive into
the whole community. It just
never dawned on us. We met
people at the Mission, in Church,
and we met people through our
work. They were all very nice.
We just kept right on working.
We didn’t feel that we were kept
back or anything like that.”

Q. “What do you think is the
role of Good Samaritan for the
future?”

A. “Well, the medical facilities
that Good Samaritan can give
now and will be able to give are
far superior to what it used to be.
I think Selma is a real medical
center now. We have five sur-
geons . . . many specialists . . .
we have good well-trained men.
The future looks bright.”

11
A quiet conference between teammates.

Time out for a cup of coffee with some Doctor friends at Good Samaritan.

SATISFYING YEARS

“I’ve been most happy here. I’ve had a very close connection with the Mission. And I enjoy my work.” (Doctor Dumont)

MEDICINE

“I did surgery that I wouldn’t dream of doing now. I took part of a lung out, removed part of the frontal lobe of the brain, sewed up a trachea, and did fantastic things that I wouldn’t do now. There was no other help. These were dire emergencies. Nothing else to do but go ahead. And most were wonderful recoveries.” (Doctor Dumont)
PURPOSE IN LIFE

“I thought it would be nice to use the things that God had given me to help people who needed it most. I was never interested in money. My parents raised me very simply. My father always said, “make your life as beautiful and as useful for your fellowman as you can.” (Joan Mulder)

ART IN LIFE

“I really like art very much. That is why I study ceramics. I did wood engravings, and murals, you know, just everything.” (Joan studied Art in Holland as well as at St. Mary of the Woods, Terre Haute, Indiana.) “My father said, if you want to be a good artist, you can see the best artists in Holland. But I don’t want you to die in an attic, so learn something else.” (Joan Mulder)

HARDSHIPS

“There were hardships. But the main thing is that you do and talk. Do and talk. Keep busy. You see very little progress, you know.”

“But we came here to teach the people. Not only to make them well but to teach them principles. Not to make them Catholic. To make their lives more liveable. Father Rivard (one of the early Mission pastors) said: ‘Don’t look for success. That will not come in your life.’”

COUNTY HEALTH CLINIC

For about 10 years, Doctor Dumont conducted a bi-weekly Maternity and Pediatric Clinic for the Dallas County Health Department in addition to her regular practice.

To obtain proper pre-natal care for expectant indigent mothers, Doctor set up a program whereby such mothers would have to come to the County Health free clinic for 3 pre-delivery check-ups. Without these check-ups no midwife was permitted to attend the mother's delivery alone, but would have to contact a physician. This “check-up” program was successful in preventing many unnecessary deaths.
"Oh, I suppose I've delivered close to 3,000 babies at Good Samaritan."
(Doctor Dumont)

The Lord Thy God bless thee in all the works of thy hands that thou shalt do.

Deuteronomy 14:29
It is said that four things come not back: the spoken word, the sped arrow, time past, the neglected opportunity.

We thank you, our friends, for not neglecting the opportunity to support, and to share in the accomplishments of, the Edmundite Missions.

YOUR CONVENIENT ANSWER PAGE

A short note from you means a lot to us. Please use this page.

Dear Father Crowley:

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Signature.

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