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# The Glasgow Corporation Milk Depot 1904–1910 and its Role in Infant Welfare: An End or a Means?

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*Social History of Medicine*, Volume 19, Issue 3, 1 December 2006, Pages 443–460,  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/shm/hkl041>

**Published:** 01 December 2006

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## Summary

The role of nutrition in combating high rates of infant mortality was an important topic in the first decade of the twentieth century. Seeking to

mirror the success of the French *Consultations de Nourissons* and *Gouttes de Lait*, English municipal depots aimed to provide vulnerable infants with sterilised cow's milk modified to resemble breast milk. This idea was adopted by Glasgow Corporation when it instigated an infant milk depot in 1904. However, in this paper we suggest that, learning from the English experience, there was a good deal of scepticism in Glasgow, even among the key proponents of the venture, that the provision of milk would, in and of itself, provide a solution to the problem of infant mortality. Rather, while it was hoped that the depot would bring benefit, this strategy was regarded from the outset as only part of a growing portfolio of infant welfare measures. Early involvement with Glasgow's Milk Depot brought together local political and medical interests and led two individuals—Baillie W. F. Anderson and the city's Medical Officer of Health A. K. Chalmers—to prominence in national debates in this field. As a city which played a significant role, both in the milk depot movement and the broader promotion of infant welfare, Glasgow provides fresh insight into this topic in the first decade of the twentieth century.

**Keywords:** [infant welfare](#), [nutrition](#), [milk depot](#), [infant mortality](#), [Consultations de Nourissons](#), [Gouttes de Lait](#), [public health](#), [Glasgow](#)

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Online ISSN 1477-4666

Print ISSN 0951-631X

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