
HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

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NEWS AND NOTES

WORK IN PROGRESS

Janice Farnham, RJM, in addition to seeking a publisher for her recently completed dissertation (see N & N June, 1989), is beginning to gather research materials concerning the contributions of the French-Canadian sisters to the New England scene, as well as their "political" ministry vis à vis disputes over national parishes in the nineteenth century.

Annabelle Raiche, CSJ, with whose research many are familiar from the magnet group session at the June, 1989 Conference, is continuing to bring together the "shared story" of the nine teaching congregations which developed Catholic education in the state of Minnesota beginning in 1851. She and the two other researchers involved in the project are uncovering significant differences among immigrant groups as they develop the shared story effort. We look forward to further progress reports as this intercommunity research is pursued.

Mary Elizabeth Brown, working out of the history department at Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA 19530, is interested in hearing from historians, archivists, or persons who were themselves involved in an

apostolate to unwed mothers. She is especially interested in material dealing with New York City between 1865 and 1945.

Ann Miriam Gallagher, RSM, is using a sabbatical leave from Mt. St. Mary's College & Seminary in Emmitsburg to carry out a major research-writing project aimed at publication of a biography of Mother Catherine Seton (1800-1891)--the first New York Sister of Mercy, and the daughter of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Virginia M. Arraiz, a doctoral student at SUNY at Buffalo, is planning on doing a dissertation on the Catholic education of women in Niagara Falls.

Ann Colette Wolf, SP, from Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, is continuing research on the missions of the Sisters of Providence in China and Taiwan, 1920-1990. This congregation shows up in Karen Kennelly's recently published article, "Foreign Missions and the Renewal Movement," REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, 49:3 (May/June, 1990), 445-463, as one of the earliest U.S. congregations of women to begin missions in China.

Patricia Wittberg, SC, has some sociological research underway. Pat, who is with the sociology

department at Fordham, is currently collecting data on changes in living patterns across various congregations with an eye to identifying and analyzing trends.

Michael Engh, SJ, from Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, has been active in the study of women in the West. He presented a paper, "Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish Women in the Frontier Los Angeles Community, 1848-1885," at the American Society of Church History last December, and is now researching Brownson Settlement House, Los Angeles, 1900-1920.

Barbara Misner, SCSC, is drawing to a close her year of intensive archival research in Europe, laying the basis for a history of her Congregation which has a mixture of provinces in eastern as well as western Europe and the United States (and elsewhere in the world). It has been a challenging as well as an exciting time for her to be engaged in such work while drastic changes were overtaking eastern Europe. She writes that she has been overwhelmed at the amount of primary documentation, and feels she "could write a book on the work of the Sisters in World War I alone."

PUBLICATIONS

Barbaralie Stiefermann, SSSF, has authored STANISLAUS . . . WITH FEET IN THE WORLD (SSSF Books, 1515 South Layton Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53215, \$9.00 plus

\$1.50 postage/handling per book). This biography of Mother M. Stanislaus Hegner, Superior General of the School Sisters of St. Francis (1930-1942), describes the subject as the congregation's last link, as a superior, with their foundresses, one who emphasized professional preparation for ministry in education, music, and nursing; who strengthened European-U.S. bonds; and whose expansive social vision facilitated congregational growth into Asia, Latin America, Africa, and India.

Rosalie McQuaide, CSJP, worked with Janet Davis Richardson, CSJP, on a biography of Margaret Anna Cusack, the Nun of Kenmare and founder of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace. The essay appears in PAST AND PROMISE: LIVES OF NEW JERSEY WOMEN (Scarecrow, 1990), due to have been released in March.

Trudelle H. Thomas, with the English department at Xavier University, has written a literary/historical analysis of the Brown County, Ohio Ursulines, 1845-1920. She would be happy to respond to inquiries about her work, and states that she is especially interested in the use of sacred space and community myths in religious orders.

Mary Denis Maher, CSA, from the English department at Ursuline College, Pepper Pike, Ohio, now has her dissertation in print with Greenwood Press (1989), TO BIND UP THE WOUNDS: Catholic Sister Nurses in the U.S. Civil War.

CANADA MISCELLANY

Claudette Lacelle, a staff historian with the Canadian Parks Service, 10 Wellington Street, Hull, Quebec, Canada K1A 0H3, is conducting a survey of male and female communities founded in Canada between 1611 (the Jesuits) and 1939 (her cut-off date). The goal of her as yet unpublished work is to assess the social contributions of each community surveyed emphasizing their participation in the fields of health, welfare, education, culture and missions. Although the work is still in progress, she would be able to offer information on the relevant communities which she has covered.

A word about the Canadian Parks Service: it includes a research branch which does work on historical reconstructions. Most of the projects which involve the French fact of the Canadian French-English duality nearly always have a Roman Catholic convent and/or institution. The files of the Park Service on Wellington Street are open and, generally, by appointment, researchers can receive assistance.

Elisabeth J. Lacelle chairs the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa; the department recently set up a Canadian Centre for Research on Women and Religion, and has begun publishing a Newsletter which includes coverage of convent life in New France and the Province of Quebec.

Another Canadian publication, CULTURES DU CANADA FRANÇAIS, num. 6, 1989, includes six articles dealing with the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa and the Rideau Street Convent, and women religious educators in French Canada in the nineteenth century. All of the articles are in French and are available from Les Presses de l'Universite d'Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 6N5.

J. R. Miller, history department, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada S7N 0W0, writes concerning his research on a comprehensive history of residential schooling for native (Indian and Inuit) children in Canada. Women religious were involved in many of the schools. Women who served on the staff of such schools, were students at them, or have information regarding them are urged to contact him.

BOOK REVIEW

OUR BELOVED UNION: A History of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union, by Mary Regina Warntz, RSM, 424 pages, 1989. Available from Christian Classics, Inc., P.O. Box 30, Westminster, MD 21157.

One of the first things one might notice about OUR BELOVED UNION is its appearance. Printed in a wide format with lots of pictures and large white spaces, it might appear to be of the "coffee table pictorial history" genre rather than the academic

institutional analysis. In a sense, it is both. The layout, in fact, is indicative of this dual approach. A little more than half of the width of each page is devoted to text, while beside it are pictures, statistics and excerpts from letters which give human character to the information they parallel.

The information itself covers a broad range. It begins with the 1919 amalgamation of many of the communities of Sisters of Mercy in the United States, forming the Sisters of Mercy of the Union. After introducing the persons and processes of this significant time, the author proceeds to describe in some way almost every dimension of the life and ministry of the Sisters of Mercy in twentieth century America. The structure around which the story is woven is primarily that of the leadership and administration of the Union. In particular, the renewal process of the Vatican II era can be seen in the detailed descriptions of the discussions and decisions of the general chapters during those years. Nearly half of the book is devoted to the chronicles of those sessions.

Stepping as it does into a particular period in history, it presupposes a certain familiarity with the structure. It does not give substantial background regarding the charism and founder of the Sisters of Mercy or introduction to the individual communities which were operating at the time of the amalgamation. The nature and structure of such

things as provinces and general chapters are presumed to be understood. Likewise, at the other end of its time span, it contains only very broad references to what has been developing since 1979.

Nevertheless, it is quite illustrative of the fifty years it does cover. Anyone who is pursuing some aspect of the study of American religious life will probably find something of interest in this book. It touches upon issues of leadership, service, culture, trends in the church, the role of women, the renewal of the apostolic communities. As the split pages suggest, it is a very typical history, exemplifying what many communities have experienced while it is the deep personal experiences of the individual women who are the Union.

Judith Sutura, OSB, Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, KS.

CONFERENCES, PROJECTS

The eighth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women will have taken place, June 7-10, at Douglass College (Rutgers) before most readers receive this newsletter. Brief critiques of sessions of particular relevance for the history of women religious are invited, for sharing in our next issue. Deadline September 1.

The National Women's Studies Association conference June 20-24, University of Akron, Ohio, has as its theme "Feminist Education: Calling the Question."

"For the Sake of the World: Choices for a Monastic Future" will be the focus of a conference sponsored by Benedictines August 8-11 in Yankton, South Dakota. For information write Eileen Neville, OSB, 1005 West 8th, Yankton, SD 57078. The limited scholarship funds available for communities and individuals who find the registration fee a hardship must be applied for by June 22.

The Carmelite women's Bicentennial Symposium is August 12-18, at Loyola College, Baltimore. For registration packet, write Carmelite Sisters of Baltimore, 1318 Dulaney Valley Road, Baltimore, MD 21204, or call (301) 823-7415.

The seventh annual conference of the National Historic Communal Societies Association is set for October 25-28 in New Lebanon, New York and Pittsfield, Massachusetts, with the theme of "The Individual and the Community." Information available from Andrew Vadnais, Mount Lebanon Shaker Village, P.O. Box 628, New Lebanon, NY 12125.

"American Catholicism in the Twentieth Century" is the theme of a conference to be held November 1-3 at the University of Notre Dame. For information, contact the Center for Continuing Education, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

The annual meeting of the Oral History Association will be held November 8-11 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. For information, write Richard Smith, Executive

Secretary, 1093 Broxton Avenue, #720, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

The fourth Women's West conference is tentatively set for late July or early August of 1991 in Lincoln, Nebraska. The meaning of regionalism for western women is the theme. Proposals on place, comparative regionalism, and women's lives; race, class, and ethnicity; and region and the construction of gender are especially welcome. Send three copies of a 1-page proposal and short vita to Paula Petrik, History Dept., University of Maine, Orono, ME 94473 by August 1, 1990.

OPPORTUNITIES

Garland Publishing is developing a volume on EUROPEAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES. Specifically, they are seeking concise biographical essays (200-500 words) which focus on the contributions and experiences of first-generation European immigrant women in the United States who are no longer alive. Among the nuns who have been identified but are as yet unassigned are Mary Frances Clarke, Emilie Kemen, Mary Hannappel, Mother Benedicta Bauer, Mother Marianne Cope, Mary Theresa Dudzik, Mother Joseph Periseau, Louise Van der Schrieck, Mary Xavier Mehegan, and Mother Mary Zita. Do you have other names to suggest? Can you suggest individuals who might be interested in writing biographical sketches of the above mentioned names? If so,

contact Judy Barrett Litoff,
Professor of History, Bryant
College, 450 Douglas Pike,
Smithfield, RI 02917-1284.

Several more local or regional
projects are underway: the
Minnesota Historical Society
has begun a Women's History
Research and Grant Project
which involves in its first
stage compilation of an
annotated bibliography of
published works about the lives
of women in Minnesota and the
Upper Midwest. Project
director Jo Blatti invites
comments and suggestions at the
MHS, 690 Cedar Street, St. Paul,
MN 55101.

The Chicago Area Women's History
Conference is beginning work on
documenting women's lives, work,
organizations and contributions
of whatever kind to Chicago's
history. Women and religion
is one of their categories.
Outcomes include a book, an
archive, printed pamphlets
and papers, and a bibliography.
Contact Rima Schultz, TELLING
WOMEN'S LIVES project director,
320 N. Ridgeland, Oak Park, IL
60302.

The Coalition for Western
Women's History is up-dating an
earlier bibliography of works
on western women's history and
has received an offer from
G. K. Hall to publish.
Archivist Teri Conrad asks
help in locating works--
especially masters theses,
conference papers, and articles
that have appeared in other
than historical journals. She

can be contacted at Box 140,
Kingston Village, Austin, NV
89310.

CORRECTIONS

A typographical error in the
last issue gave Cresfeld in
place of the correct Coesfeld,
Germany as the foundation
house of the Sisters of Notre
Dame.

Please correct the residence
for Dr. Dorothy L. Latz to the
city of New Rochelle, NY
rather than, as incorrectly
stated in the February issue,
the College of New Rochelle.

GRADUATE EDUCATION

Kathryn Kish Sklar and Gerda
Lerner have made a significant
contribution to the area of
graduate training in U.S. women's
history by their leadership in
organizing a conference on that
subject in October, 1988. A
report on that conference has now
been published. Of particular
interest are the Recommendations
for Action, and the listing of
completed dissertations (125) and
dissertations in progress. For
more information contact Kitty at
SUNY-Binghamton, P.O. Box 6000,
Binghamton, NY 13902-6000.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please have copy for the October
issue to the editor by
September 1.