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**Demographics of Entrants:
Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's, 1809-1849
And
Daughters of Charity, Province of the United States,
1850-1909**

BY

BETTY ANN McNEIL, D.C.

Overview

This project has been gestating since Cecilia Maria O'Conway (1788-1865) arrived in Baltimore to join Elizabeth Bayley Seton, 7 December 1808, and the fact was recorded for posterity. Concerted efforts have been underway since 1996 to identify, review, and transcribe manuscript personnel records, but staff time and funding were not available to digitalize, integrate, and analyze the information. In 2000 the archival team of the Daughters of Charity Archives located at St. Joseph's Provincial House, Emmitsburg, Maryland, USA, concluded that there were at least four types of primary sources for data related to the first one hundred years of the sisterhood. The Treasurer's Notebook (1808-1843) compiled by Sister Margaret George, S.C., Entrance Registers (Catalogues), Personnel Registers (Notes), and Council Minutes provide data for the Sisters and Daughters of Charity in the United States.

While these sources were complementary they were often contradictory and incomplete. A 1998 review of the Council Minutes from 1809-1852 highlighted further discrepancies.¹ These observations pointed to the need for a single database of all entrants based on the earliest and most reliable source documents. In 2002 the Vincentian Studies Institute approved a research grant with the following purpose:

To develop a database and track all admissions to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's (1809-1849) and the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, United States Province (1850-1909) during the first one hundred years of the Company of Charity in North America, founded in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

¹ A study of the Council Minutes candidate-by-candidate has been completed for the period 1809-1846, and it contains a wealth of supplementary material and additional information to be integrated with the data of this study.



Portrait of Elizabeth Ann Seton. Artist unknown.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, Maryland

Purpose

A few months before her death, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821), foundress of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's (1809), wrote her friend and benefactor Antonio Filicchi that "our poor little mustard seed spreads its branches well."² This project is derived from Seton's dynamic view of her community in order to trace and document the development of the mustard seed: *The Charity Personnel Project — Admissions to the Sisters/Daughters of Charity: Emmitsburg, 1809-1909*.

Background

The Emmitsburg community is the prototype apostolic community for religious women in the United States. At least six institutes trace their roots directly to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's, and several others also have a historical relationship with the 1809 foundation by Elizabeth Bayley Seton.³ This project benefits the history and heritage of six congregational members of the Sisters of Charity Federation and the Daughters of Charity provinces in North America.

² Elizabeth Bayley Seton to Antonio Filicchi, 18 April 1820, in Regina Bechtle, S.C., and Judith Metz, S.C., eds., Ellin M. Kelly, Ph.D., mss. ed., *Elizabeth Bayley Seton Collected Writings*, Vols. 1-3a&b (New York: New City Press, 2000-2006), 2:643.

³ See Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., *The Vincentian Family Tree* (Chicago: Vincentian Studies Institute, 1996).

Funding

The Vincentian Studies Institute provided a total of \$12,000 in research funds.⁴ Under the direction of Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., Provincial Archivist (province of Emmitsburg), data input for the project began on 1 September 2002. Mrs. Selin James, Archival Assistant, immediately began training in MS Access. Her competence, commitment, and attentiveness to details brought this complex project to completion. Support for the preliminary phase of this study was absorbed by the operating budget of the Archives of the Daughters of Charity, Emmitsburg.

Estimated Time Frame

The scope of this study was projected to include approximately two thousand women who joined the Vincentian family at Emmitsburg, 1809-1909. A few of the source documents, but none of the entrance records, had been either transcribed or digitized. Adding to the time factor for completing the project was the necessity to scrutinize each primary source as often individuals did not appear in the personnel listing but were named in Council Minutes and vice versa. The time line for completing this project was also underestimated,⁵ and was originally designed as two tiers with about equal admission rates for the periods: 1809-1849 and 1850-1909.

Part I, 1809-1849. Based on an earlier review of Council Minutes, by 1849 over one thousand candidates were believed to have entered the community. Results of the current study indicate that 791 actually did. Data will continue to be refined as discrepancies continue to be resolved.

Part II, 1850-1909. By 1909 at least another thousand candidates may have entered, but that figure now seems to have been underestimated by 2000 admissions.

Methodology

In December 2001 the archivists of the five Daughters of Charity United States provinces agreed to use the *Microsoft Access* data base program

⁴ The Vincentian Studies Institute provided grant funding in 2002 (\$4,000), 2003 (\$4,000), and 2004 (\$4,000).

⁵ The initial application for grant funding underestimated the time required for completing this project. As written in the application: "Based on a formula which projects that 25% of the records require complex analysis (40 minutes), 25% moderate analysis (20), and 50 % routine (10), every 100 records would require 33 hours staff time. Part I and Part II are projected to have one thousand records which would require 330 staff hours for each part. Due to the part-time staff availability, each part would probably require at least six months for completion depending on the complexity of research required to resolve problems related to individual records. The total project could be completed in about 18-24 months, including an article about the findings."

as much as possible for managing data in Daughters of Charity archival collections. The Archives of St. Joseph's Provincial House (ASJPH) at Emmitsburg began implementing this decision and took the additional step of networking four work stations so that all members of the ASJPH team might have access to the data simultaneously.

Sources

Data is being drawn from both primary documents and collateral sources available on-site in the Archives of the Daughters of Charity at Saint Joseph's, or through the Daughters of Charity motherhouse in Paris. *Primary Source Documents* are identified by an alphabetical code and collateral sources by a numerical code.

The primary sources for this study include personnel lists and Entrance Registers, diaries of founding members and the papers of Elizabeth Bayley Seton. (See Appendix for complete list.) Data has been included in this study from the following primary sources: *Elizabeth Bayley Seton Papers* (1809-1821); *Treasurer's Notebook of Sister Margaret George* (1808-1843); *Catalogue [A-Z], 1809-1890*; and *Notes, A-Z, 1809-1890*. The latter two documents (*Catalogue* and *Notes*) were compiled retrospectively sometime after 1850 based on then existing records, which may not be extant today, and possibly also from memory and/or oral tradition. The format in both the *Catalogue* and the *Notes* follows the template used by the Daughters of Charity in Paris. One characteristic of this is a large cross (†) to the left of the entrants' names who withdrew from the community, and another identical mark (†) below the mission list of those members who died as Sisters/Daughters of Charity.

The major collateral sources for this study which have been entered to date include the following: *Cecilia O'Conway Memoir, 1808-1815*; *Memoirs and Chronology [1805-1838]*; the *Journal of Mother Rose White*; and notes from particular sessions of the Council of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's (1809-1852), and selections from the *Provincial Annals of the Sisters/Daughters of Charity*.

As far as is possible, the statistical characteristics of the entrants to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's and the United States Province of the Daughters of Charity will be differentiated. Where this is not possible, aggregate findings for the period 1809-1909 will be reported as the early *Company of Charity* in the United States.

Variables

This project expanded and utilized some of the labels first developed for the West Central Province by Sister Genevieve Kuesenkothen, D.C., and her staff at the Archives of the Daughters of Charity in Saint Louis. *Microsoft Access Data Base 2002* is being utilized to compile all available data on each

candidate using approximately forty (40) variables dealing with biographical information on the individual, her family of origin, formation and mission history, significant achievements, obituary, and burial site, etc. In addition, labels were added to identify: converts, widows, probate of wills, relatives in community, transfers and withdrawals, etc. (See Appendix.)

Significance and Findings

The early Company of Charity in the United States made a significant



Calvary sculpture owned by Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, Maryland.

contribution to the New Republic, both in civil and ecclesial spheres, not to mention a variety of desperately needed human services. Noted for education of women, their contribution to social services and health care was equally significant. Among their many milestones, the Sisters and Daughters of Charity were the first:

- To open a free Catholic school for girls staffed by religious women (Emmitsburg, 1810);
- To manage the first Catholic orphanage in the United States (Philadelphia, 1814);
- To be the first religious women to work in institutional health care (Baltimore Infirmary, 1823);
- To establish the first Catholic hospital in the United States (Saint Louis, 1828);
- To administer the first Catholic psychiatric hospital in the United States (Baltimore, 1840).

The Emmitsburg community has particular hallmarks which distinguish its role in American history, both from ecclesiastical and societal perspectives:

- Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first saint born in the United States, formed and led the founding generation of Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's;
- Saint Joseph's Valley near Emmitsburg is the cradle of the American Sisters of Charity, the first community of religious women native to the United States;
- The roots of the United States province of the Daughters of Charity (1850-1909) are at Emmitsburg as are those of the majority of congregational members of the Sisters of Charity Federation;
- The early Company of Charity includes the founding women of the earliest two branches of the American Sisters of Charity: the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of New York (1846); and the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati (1852).⁶

Discrepancies and Problem Resolution

The records of approximately 333 (7%) contain factual discrepancies which require additional research in order to resolve the given question. Most of these involve conflicting dates, e.g., birth, vocation, habit taking, and death. To easily locate these records for problem resolution, they were flagged with an asterisk. The conflicting data resulted from multiple primary source documents compiled manually, probably the result of incorrect reporting or transcription errors.

⁶ See McNeil, *Family Tree*, 62, 64. See also papers by Regina Bechtle, S.C., Kathleen Flanagan, S.C., Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., and Judith Metz, S.C., "'The Charity of Christ Urges Us!' The Nineteenth Century Sisters of Charity in the United States. A Case Study of Interpretations of Mission and Ministry," presented at the *Conference on the History of Women Religious* in Chicago (June 1998), published as separate papers in *Vincentian Heritage* 20:1 (1999).

Unforeseen Outcomes

This project presents an opportunity to discover twenty-six “missing persons” included in the list prepared by Margaret George in her *Treasurer’s Notebook* but excluded in the later Entrance Register compiled sometime after 1850 according to the French format. Anecdotal accounts also enhance the understanding of the vocation stories of the women seeking admission to the Sisters/Daughters of Charity. There are also other interesting persons whose records came to light through this project.

Sister Emerentianna Bower. One such example is Sister Emerentianna Bower who entered in 1836 and made her vows on mission, probably at Pottsville, Pennsylvania (according to Council Minutes), but who was recalled to Emmitsburg in 1843 for medical consultation about her eyes. There was even question of whether she could safely travel alone. By September 1845 she had left the Valley for Rochester, New York, whether on mission or to leave the community is uncertain. Without this project, her existence would have remained unknown.

Sister Ann Gruber. Another discovery was the grave site of Sister Ann Gruber, one of the first sisters, who was known to have died at Pittsburgh, 14 November 1840, when en route to Emmitsburg from Saint Louis. The site of her final resting place was questionable but believed to have been Saint Paul’s graveyard (site of the old Pittsburgh Mercy Hospital), where she was probably buried 16 November 1840. Through collateral research it was learned that in February 1874 her remains were removed to Saint Mary’s cemetery and reburied in the lot of Timothy Hesson, the father of children who attended the Sisters school. Sister Ann was the first religious woman buried in Western Pennsylvania.

Martha Hartwell. From the pen of Margaret George, we have the colorful account of an entrant of 1815: “Remained a few weeks. An odd being and went away early in the morning or late at night ----*sans ceremonies*---”; and a note written in the margin: “A true romantic spirit--poor child.”⁷

Sister Theophilia Posey. Margaret Posey, Sister Theophilia, brought \$3.93, whereas some others brought \$25, \$50, or \$100 when they entered. Mary Elder first entered the Sisters of Charity at age seventeen in 1824 and was known as Sister Priscilla but returned home because of poor health. In 1830 she returned to the community and brought \$25, her bed and bedding. Then she received the name Sister Mary William.

⁷ *Notebook of Sister Margaret George*, #44, Archives of St. Joseph’s Provincial House, Emmitsburg, MD. Hereinafter cited as ASJPH.

Discoveries

Sisters exiled from Mexico. Early in 1875 came a tragic message from south of the Rio Grande. Thirty-seven (37) Daughters of Charity exiled from Mexico asked for refuge in the United States. A number reached San Francisco on 19 February. Soon after, Mother Euphemia Blenkinsop, welcomed one group in New Orleans and then traveled to California to arrange matters for those harbored there. Some remained in the United States, including a postulant, Miss Francisca Javier Santa Ana, later Sister Maria Santa Ana, while others went to missions elsewhere beyond the United States.⁸ Eventually Sister Maria was missioned from Emmitsburg to Panama.

Naming Patterns. Multiple sisters by same or similar names were sometimes in the community simultaneously, like the two women named Ellen Brady of the Seton era. Such duplications tend to be very confusing. Once a community name was given a pattern of naming emerged. For example, if a name were repeated when the sisters are contemporaries, Mary (or a derivative) always precedes the name, as with Sister Ellen and Sister Mary Ellen.

- Ellen (1) Brady became Sister Angela (1793-1825, entered 1809/10).
- M. Ellen (2) Brady became Sister Ellen (1798-1818, entered, 1816/17).
- Mary Ellen (3) Brady became Sister Mary Ellen (1857-1927).

This variation may or may not occur after the first sister with the name is deceased.

- Joanna O'Keefe became Sister Camilla (1st) (1815-1887).
- Mary Jane O'Keefe became Sister Camilla (2nd) (1857-1895).

Status to Date

Data has been completely digitalized from at least fourteen primary sources and the most significant collateral sources. These represent several thousand pages of manuscript entries.⁹ Selected information on a case-by-case basis has been transferred to the database from narrative accounts in these sources. Council Minutes have become a rich source of data on additional entrants who were omitted from other records. In many instances entrance data was discovered that was missing from Entrance Registers and

⁸ Chronological Index, pp. 112-112a, ASJPH; *Provincial Annals*, 1875, pp. 22-23; 1872-1881, pp. 59-66. See [John Mary Crumlish, D.C.], 1809-1959 (Emmitsburg: 1959), 108.

⁹ ASJPH Rare Book Collection, RB #69 *Treasurer's Notebook of Sister Margaret George*; #82 *Catalogue A-Z, 1809-1890*; #75 *Notes A-Z, 1809-1890*; #120 *Catalogue A-L, 1890-1942*; #121 *Catalogue M-Z, 1890-1942*; #123 *Notes A-L, 1890-1942*.

other official records of members, perhaps through secretarial error or the result of copyists overlooking entries in original documents. Since these are in narrative format this process was time consuming, but it was facilitated by utilizing an earlier compilation of information on entrants.¹⁰ Integrating this data provided a more complete and comprehensive profile of entrants and members.

Membership

According to a 1998 study of Council Minutes (1809-1849), approximately 1100 candidates entered the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's prior to 25 March 1850, of whom 737 or 67% persevered. Prior to 1821, 105 candidates entered. Eighteen sisters died prior to Elizabeth Seton in 1821, plus her two daughters, Annina and Rebecca, and her sisters-in-law, Harriet and Cecilia Seton.

Based on the current study during the first one hundred years the Company of Charity at Emmitsburg grew from seventeen entrants by the end of its first full year (31 December 1810) to an average of fifty admissions annually by 31 December 1909.¹¹

During the period studied, 31 July 1809 through 31 December 1909, a total of 4999 (100%) women entered the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's and/or the Province of the United States of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul.¹² Of these, 1408 withdrew (28%); and 391 (8%) were dismissed. Forty-seven (0.9%) of those who withdrew also reentered the community at a later date. Of these, 22 (0.4%) also withdrew a second time. The majority of the returnees left again before making vows for the first time.¹³

Some details, like date of withdrawal, may be found in Council Minutes instead of the Entrance Registers. This is an example of the necessity for reviewing all available primary sources in order to have the most complete and accurate personnel record possible for posterity.

Of the entrants whose age is known, 645 were octogenarians and at least 113 were age ninety or more when they died. Five became centenarians. The oldest, Sister Catherine Kuhn, reached 103. Over 300 sisters are known to have died before their thirtieth birthday.

¹⁰ Researched and compiled by Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., during the period 1998-2000.

¹¹ At Emmitsburg there were 161 habit sisters on mission at Saint Joseph's Central House, and 41 sisters in the seminary on 31 December 1880.

¹² Data and analyses are current as of 1 July 2006.

¹³ Each entrance is recorded separately in the primary sources. For this study, entrants include a duplicated count of women who entered the community more than once. The total number of individuals admitted is 4999.

Marital Status and Converts. The majority (99.3%) of the young women who entered had never been married, but at least thirty-seven were widows (.74%). Most were probably baptized Catholics either at infancy or at a young age, but at least sixty-two (1.2%) were converts from other faiths. Although not recorded in the Entrance Register, according to Council Minutes of June 1828, Mrs. Mary Catherine Hall petitioned for admission but her request was delayed pending receipt of a civil decree of nullity of her marriage.

Withdrawals, Transfers, and Separations

Based on this study, some of the individuals who had previously entered other religious communities may be identified as well as those Sisters/Daughters of Charity who withdrew to enter other congregations. There were thirty-eight withdrawals during the period 1809-1820 while Elizabeth Bayley Seton was alive. Sixty-four percent (64%) persevered during the Seton years. By the centennial of the community membership was 1732.¹⁴

Transfers to the Sisters of Charity. The earliest women to enter the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's from another congregation are the mother (Bridget Connolly) and three members of a failed Trappistine Monastery in Baltimore who were under the direction of Rev. Jean Moranvill , S.J. They came to Emmitsburg in 1814. All seemed to have entered as a group.

- Mrs. ___ Llewellyn, Sister Mary Joseph (1786-1816).
- Elizabeth Bean, Sister Scholastica (c.1791-1835).
- Bridget Connolly (c.1795-?), withdrew from Emmitsburg due to poor health.
- Mrs. ___ Liddle, (c.1779-?), withdrew from Emmitsburg after a few months.

In addition to the Trappistines, Sister Innocentia McCallion entered the Sisters of Charity after having previously been in Carmel for an unspecified time. Sister Mary Alexine Fahnstock, who had also been in the Carmel of Baltimore, entered at Emmitsburg along with her own sister, Sister Laurentia Fahnstock; both Fahnstocks later withdrew from the Sisters of Charity.

Transfers to other Congregations. Some of the Sisters/Daughters of Charity felt called to a more contemplative lifestyle and entered cloistered communities including the Visitation, Carmelite, and the Ursulines. Sister Cecilia O'Conway (1788-1865), who was the first candidate to join Mrs. Seton at Baltimore (1808) and became the first American Sister of Charity, was also the first professed sister to withdraw and transfer to another community. In

¹⁴ *Provincial Annals*, 1909, p. 141. Sixteen sisters were dismissed during the period 1853-1880. See *Register of Dismissals, Daughters of Charity, USA Province (1850-1909)*.

1823 she followed the call of her heart and entered the Ursuline Monastery in Québec City, Québec, Canada, where she died in 1865.

Among those who entered Carmel was Sister Mary George Hackett, a novice, who withdrew in 1832. Sister Callista Wilcox entered at Emmitsburg in 1834. After making her vows she went on mission to Norfolk, Virginia, in 1837, but left from there to join the Carmelites.¹⁵ Based on the documents consulted for this study, entrants who transferred to a Visitation Monastery include Sister Mary Eulalia McGerry, Sister Claudine Olganier, and Sister Ann Scholastica Wickham. In such situations, it was necessary to contact the archivist of the receiving community for the date of death and new religious name (if applicable) of the sister. For example, Mary Ann McGerry was known as Sister Mary Eulalia but in the Sisters of Charity as Sister Mary Theodosia.

Charity Separations. The data provides an overview of the early religious lives of the founding members of both the Sisters of Charity of New York (1846) and the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati (1852), both which developed from the Emmitsburg root.

New York. The faith-filled women who were forced to make the painful choice at the end of 1846 of whether to return to Emmitsburg or remain in New York were courageous. Thirty-three chose to remain in New York and formed the nucleus of the Sisters of Charity of New York as a diocesan community under the ecclesiastical authority of Bishop John Hughes. These women were the following: Sister Elizabeth Boyle, Sister Mary Valeria Rowan, Sister Lucy Ann [Mary Vincentia] Conklin, Sister Mary Francine Bigham, Sister Ann Assisium Bird, Sister Mary Pelagia Boyd, Sister Francis Borgia Taylor, Sister Mary Josephine Wheelan, Sister Mary Frances Wallace, Sister Mary Arsinius Burchell, Sister Mary Ellen Timon, Sister Casimir [Mary Ann] Connolly, Sister Mary Beatrice Healey, Sister Mary Calista Delaney, Sister Magdalen Shirley, Sister Mary Anastasia Ambrose, Sister Ann Borromeo Obermeyer, Sister Mary Ulrica O'Reilly, Sister Mary Jerome Ely, Sister Mary Domitilla Fanning, Sister Mary Cornelia Finney, Sister Mary Philippine Beaven, Sister Mary Catherine Livingston, Sister Mary Regina Lawless, Sister Mary Veronica Goff, Sister Susan Knott, Sister Mary Constantia Hull, Sister Mary Joseph Hadden, Sister Mary Edith Barry, Sister Mary Hickey, Sister William Anna Hickey, and Sister Mary Angela Hughes.

Cincinnati. The "mystic seven" at Cincinnati who became the nucleus of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati in 1852 were: Mother Margaret George, Antonia McCaffrey, Mary Anthony O'Connell, Eleazar [Josephine] Harvey, Sophia Gilmeyer, Louis Regina Mattingly, and Mary Gonzalva Dougherty. Others who joined them from Emmitsburg (Angela McKay, Zoé Shaw, and Ann McQuaid) arrived later.

¹⁵ *Notebook of Sister Margaret George, #272, ASJPH.*

Charity Configurations—Then and Now. The Sulpicians of Baltimore negotiated with the Paris-based Congregation of the Mission for the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's to be united in 1850 with the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of Paris. This union resulted in the Daughters of Charity Province of the United States (1850-1909). The growth in membership and expansion of missions led to the province being divided to create the Western (Normandy) Province (1910-1968) and the Eastern (Emmitsburg) Province (1910-1968), 31 July 1910. In response to changing times, increased personnel, professional demands, and emerging societal needs, the Councils agreed that effective management required additional provinces. The Western and Eastern provinces were then sub-divided into five new provinces, 4 January 1969:

- East Central Province, Evansville, Indiana (1969-2011)
- Northeast Province, Albany, New York (1969-2011)
- Province of the West, Los Altos Hills, California (1969-present)
- Southeast Province, Emmitsburg, Maryland (1969-2011)
- West Central Province, St. Louis, Missouri (1969-2011)

Recently, diminishing entrants motivated the Albany, Emmitsburg, Evansville, and St. Louis provinces to collaborate in a five year discernment and planning process, *Visioning for the Mission*. Ultimately the four provinces united to form the Province of St. Louise, 31 July 2011. Administrative offices are in St. Louis, Missouri, but historical records will be consolidated for preservation in a new state of the art archival repository. The Daughters of Charity Archives Province of St. Louise is located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. (For information see: www.daughtersofcharity.org)

Military Service

The data of this study erroneously indicates that only 233 of the entrants were involved as nurses in military service. This number is inconsistent with research findings in other original documents which identify about three hundred sister nurses, particularly first person accounts by Daughters of Charity who served during the Civil War (1861-1865). All Daughters of Charity who served in military service are registered with the National Memorial of Women in Military Service located at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. Sister Caroline Eck served in the Civil War on the *Vanderbilt*, a transport along the Potomac River (Virginia to New York), and later in the Spanish-American War at Montauk Point, Long Island (New York), and Camp Cuba Libre (Jacksonville, Florida).

Civil War. Of approximately eight hundred Daughters of Charity, at least three hundred sisters served at more than sixty sites in fifteen states

during the Civil War, and they rendered nursing care and spiritual assistance to victims from both the United States Army and the Confederate Army.¹⁶ The corrected figure of 300 represents 6% of the total entrants, or 34% of their membership during the war years. During the period studied, the data shows that at least 32 of the sisters were professionally prepared as graduate nurses prior to 1909.

Spanish American War. Another two hundred Daughters of Charity (201) served in the Spanish American War (April 1898-February 1899) at ten sites in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and within the United States.

Parental Profile

Mother's Occupation. Almost 100% of this field were either left blank or described as unknown regarding the mother's occupation. Among the few who were identified were housewives (2), dressmaker (1), and educator (1). The latter two refers to Elizabeth Bayley Seton, mother of Anna Maria Seton, and the other to Agnes Hoffman Harty whose daughter Cordelia withdrew sometime after 1875. The mother of Sisters Camilla and Benedicta Corish entered a Visitation monastery. Sister Mary Antonia Cornish, who also entered about the same time (1813) may be of the same family.

Father's Occupation. The majority (40%) of the fathers of entrants worked the land or with their hands, although some were involved in mercantile enterprises. It is not surprising that agriculture was identified as the primary occupation of 1162 (23.24%) of the fathers of entrants, followed by laborers (413), carpenters (164), and merchants/storekeepers (182).¹⁷ Only 271 (5%) earned their living by the following trades: tailor (75), blacksmith (69), mechanics (71), and masons (56). Other trades also represented included coopers (39), painters (34), butchers (33), weavers (30), bakers (29), builders (13), brewers (10), and hatters (9).

Place of birth

Geographic Region and Ethnicity. Of all the entrants, the majority (55%) were born in the United States, followed by the British Isles (26%), Europe (4%), and Australia (.1%). Of entrants native to North America, 96% (2737) were born in the United States. Of those native to the British Isles, 93% (1202) were born in Ireland. Of those native to Europe, 60% (117) were born

¹⁶ Although records list 232 names of sisters missioned to wartime nursing by Emmitsburg, local Sister Servants had delegated authority to send sisters to meet emergency needs in their region. This accounts for the involvement of approximately 300 sisters in total. Daniel Hannefin, D.C., *Daughters of the Church* (New York: New City Press, 1987), 110. See also Angela Tully, D.C., *Maryland in the Civil War* (Unpublished thesis, Canisius College, Buffalo, N.Y., 1933), 51, ASJPH.

¹⁷ Agriculture includes farmers, planters, and gardeners.

in Germany. Of those native to Central and South America, 97% (47) were born in Mexico.

North America	2838
British Isles	1288
Europe	196
Central and South America	49
Indies	1
Australia	7

Among the entrants from other birthplaces, were Sister Bernadine Hartman and Sister Mary Josephine (Marie) Smith, for whom the Atlantic Ocean is listed as the country of their birth, apparently having been born at sea. Another, Annie Durham, who withdrew sometime after 1885, was born in the East Indies where her father was a soldier on an important British military base.¹⁸ Seven women who entered were born in the West Indies.¹⁹ Among these were some from the founding generation: Sisters Adele Salva and Louise Roger, of Martinique; Mary Xavier Mestezzer Clark of St. Dominique; and the later Sister Francis Regis Berrett whose birthplace is recorded as the West Indies, Isle of Cuba.

Eighty percent of entrants were born in either the United States or Ireland. The majority of entrants were born in the following countries: 55% in the United States (2737), 24% in Ireland (1202), 2.3% in Germany (117), and 2.3% in Canada (115). Three percent of the entrants were born in England (59), Mexico (47), France (25), Scotland (20), and Prussia (14). Other countries marginally represented include the aforementioned West Indies (7), Italy (7), Australia (7), Spain (7), Bavaria (6), Switzerland (5), Nova Scotia (5), Holland (4), and two each in Flanders, Belgium, Wales, Austria, and Bermuda.

Within this article it was not possible to differentiate between entrants of immigrant parents who were the first generation to be born in this country and those whose families had been in the United States for several generations.

By State. Sixty-one percent (1658) of the 2722 entrants born in the United States came from eight states: New York (461), Maryland (411), Pennsylvania (398), Massachusetts (272), Louisiana (174), Missouri (136), Virginia (111), and Illinois (105). Ten percent (269) of the entrants were born in three distant states and the District of Columbia: Michigan (82), California (75), Washington, D.C. (60), and Wisconsin (52). At least one hundred fifteen entrants traveled long distances from various parts of the country to Emmitsburg to pursue their vocation: from the southwest: Texas (12), Arizona

¹⁸ Peshawa.

¹⁹ Jamaica (1), Martinique (3), Saint Dominique (1), Cuba (2).

(2), Nevada (1); from the Midwest: Iowa (24), Minnesota (6), Nebraska (4), Kansas (2); and New England: Maine (8), Vermont (4), New Hampshire (4).

By City. From 1809 through the early 1850s many entrants to the Sisters of Charity missions/ministries came from population centers. The predominance of Roman Catholicism in these areas was also a major factor in the higher entrance rates at these locales. Fourteen percent (710) of all entrants, or 14% of the entrants who remained in community (3199), were women from the top five cities where the Sisters of Charity had opened their earliest missions. The number of entrants was proportionate to when the community opened a mission in that city: 1808/1823, Baltimore (220); 1814, Philadelphia (161); 1830, New Orleans (122); 1828/1848, Albany and Troy (108); and 1832, Boston (100). Secondarily entrants came from Saint Louis (87), San Francisco (32), Syracuse and Utica (37), Detroit (39), and New York City (39).



Aerial view of St. Joseph's Academy, Emmitsburg, Maryland. Painting by Ludwig Enke, 1873.
 Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, Maryland

Year of Entrance

During the first 100 years, an average of 50 women entered the Sisters of Charity annually at Emmitsburg. The number of entrants of the founding generation varied during the lifetime of the foundress Elizabeth Ann Seton. From the first entrants in 1809, numbers peaked slowly through 1818 when 13 were admitted that year.

The year with most admissions was 1897 when ninety-nine women entered the Daughters of Charity, followed by the years 1865 (98), 1896 (95), 1898 (89), and 1902 (86). The year with the fewest admissions was 1811 when only two women entered the Sisters of Charity — although at this time the

community was still being formed, and the Sulpicians, along with Mother Seton, were considering various governmental models while the proposed rule of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac was under advisement. Other years with a low number of entrants include the following: 1810 (8), 1816 (06), 1824 (07), and 1819 (08). Since these are within the community's first fifteen years of existence, the findings reflect growth patterns.

1865, the year General Robert E. Lee gallantly surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, Virginia, also marked the highest number of entrants (98) since the founding of the community, exceeded only in 1897. During the Civil War Years of 1861-1865 almost four hundred women entered the Sisters of Charity at an average rate of 77 per year: 1861 (74), 1862 (67), 1863 (79), 1864 (69), and 1865 (98). During the war years, the Daughters of Charity Province of the United States opened nineteen (19) new missions including some located far from Emmitsburg, e.g., California, Massachusetts, Louisiana, and Ontario.

After the foundress died (1821), entrance patterns continued to increase steadily. It is interesting to note that during the tumultuous era of conflict, separations, and the union with France (1846-1852), an average of 45 women entered annually at Emmitsburg.²⁰ The pattern for these years: 1845 (36), 1846 (36), 1847 (18), 1848 (40), 1849 (35), 1850 (55), 1851 (60), and 1852 (68). Within two years eighty-one women entered the community in 1854.

Age of Members

Age at Entrance. The records give the dates the entrant was born and was admitted to the community rather than her given age. Mathematical calculations for age have not yet been completed due to the large volume of individuals studied.

Age at Death. Despite the untimely premature deaths of many founding generation sisters during the first years in Emmitsburg, later some were centenarians: Sisters Frances Miller (101), Catherine Gallagher (100), Mary Alice Farrell (100) and Colette Zetelle (100). At least six sisters who entered before 1909 reached the age of 98 or 99.²¹ The last surviving companion of Mother Seton, who had also been a pupil at the Academy, was Sister Martha Daddisman who died at the age of 92 in 1889.

²⁰ The Sisters of Charity of New York were established as an independent community in 1846, as were the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati in 1852. The Sulpicians of Baltimore negotiated the union of the Emmitsburg community with France in 1850.

²¹ The following died at the age of 99: Sisters Adele Bacon, Martha Walsh, and Rosina Andrews. Those who died at age 98 were Sisters Frances McSweeney, Clara Groell, and Lelia Sheedy.

Burial Sites

The general practice was that sisters were buried in the city where they died. Almost six hundred (590), or twelve percent of the entrants in this study, are buried at Emmitsburg. The last chapters of these lives were varied.

Sister Alphonsa Lilly. Thought to have died in Baltimore at the end of January of 1845, where she was receiving medical treatment. It was only discovered by chance that Sister Alphonsa was actually buried in Frederick, Maryland (where she had relatives), first in the graveyard of the Jesuit novitiate but later transferred to Saint John's Cemetery.

Sister Lucy Ignatius Green and Sister Honorine Geary. Sister Lucy and Sister Honorine died of tropical illness on the Isthmus of Panama en route to California in 1852 and are buried in unmarked graves in Amador Cemetery, Panama City..

Sister Consolata Conlan. Only nineteen at the time of her death in 1862, Sister Consolata contracted typhoid fever while serving on medical transports between New York and Virginia. She died at Point Lookout, Maryland, and was the only Daughter of Charity to die in the line of duty during the Civil War. None died in battles nor were any sisters mortally wounded while performing military nursing. After the war, the remains of Sister Consolata were returned to Washington for burial in Mount Olivet Cemetery.

Relatives

Twelve percent (718) of the entrants had one or more relatives in the community, either at the time of their entrance or subsequently. Among these were 667 natural sisters (same parents) representing about three hundred nine (309) sisters whose sibling group in community ranged in size from two to four sisters. In addition, at least 46 other women were close relatives (nieces, aunts, and cousins) of community members.

Sibling Groups

The d'Aunoy's. Antonia, Felicite, and Naomi d'Aunoy:

- *Felicite*, Sister Felicite d'Aunoy [1] (1838-1862), entered 1860 and died two years later in Richmond, Virginia, while nursing the sick and wounded there during the Civil War.
- *Naomi*, Sister Felicite d'Aunoy [2] (1844-1892), entered 1863, the year after their older sister died and received the same name. She also nursed the sick and wounded during the Civil War at Hammond Hospital, Point Lookout, Maryland; Gettysburg; and Satterlee Hospital, West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- *Antonia*, Sister Adelaide d'Aunoy (1853-1924), entered 1871, was

the youngest to enter and died at fifty-two years vocation in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, where she started a school lunch program which continues in operation today. Sister Adelaide was one of the founders of the first mission in Puerto Rico at Mayaguez where she served tirelessly for almost twenty years until her death in 1924. Buried along with seven other Daughters of Charity in the Redemptorist cemetery,²² Sister Adelaide is revered for her contribution to nutritional programs for children. In gratitude the Puerto Ricans erected a monument in her honor.

*The Tylers.*²³ Information on the Tylers (Rosetta, Martha, Catherine, and Sarah Maria) in the primary sources does not lead one to think that they are siblings, but previous research in Council Minutes confirms their family relationship. The Tylers are an example of the necessity of data input from multiple primary and collateral sources in order to present a complete picture.

- *Rosetta*, Sister Genevieve (1792-1839), admitted 1820.
- *Catherine*, Sister Mary James (1800-1830), admitted 1826.
- *Sarah Maria*, Sister Mary De Sales (1804-1899), admitted 1827.²⁴
- *Martha*, Sister Beatrix (1809-1858), admitted 1826; withdrew from the Emmitsburg community while on mission at Cincinnati and entered the Visitation Convent at Kaskaskia, 29 July 1838. She died as a Visitandine in the monastery at Saint Louis, Missouri.

Mothers and Daughters

- *The Butterlys.*²⁵ Sister Marie Azelie Buttlery (1815-1890), a widow, and her daughter Sister Aimée Buttlery (1837-1908), who both entered the community 5 June 1857.
- *The Ferralls.* Sister Bridget Ferrall (1765-1847), and daughter Sister Margaret (Ferrall) George (1787-1868), both widows.

²² The old Redemptorist cemetery plot dates to 1877 and is today known as the “old municipal cemetery of Mayaguez” on Calle Post.

²³ *Lives of Deceased Sisters*, 1901: 35. The Tylers were nieces of Virgil and Jerusha Barber, notable converts to Catholicism in the nineteenth century. See Roy A. Lucier, *First American-born Priests and Catholic Religious of New England* (Replica Books, 2005).

²⁴ The nuns of the Visitation monastery at Kaskaskia moved their monastery to Saint Louis after the flood of 1844.

²⁵ For notes about the Butterlys and the death of Sister Azelie, see *Provincial Annals*, 1890a, 11.

Notoriety

Every community has characters who add zest to the story of life. Among the entrants studied, the following are noteworthy:

- *Edolia Hogan*. Edolia Hogan of Napa Valley, California, an entrant of 1875, soon withdrew to marry the love of her life, Hilaire Belloc.
- *Josephine Buckley*. Josephine Marguerite Buckley (Sister Buckley), a convert from Norfolk, Virginia, who entered in 1854 withdrew after six months in the seminary. Afterward she wrote a scurrilous novel about her experiences entitled, *The Testimony of an Escaped Novice from the Sisterhood at Emmitsburg, Maryland, The Motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity in the United States* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1855).²⁶
- *Mary Catherine Hewitt*. Kate Hewitt (Sister Hildegardis) entered in 1864 and withdrew from the community before making vows for the first time. Her entrance was the result of a promise she made to her fiancé, General John F. Reynolds, of the Union Army of the Potomac, the first officer killed at Gettysburg.



Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821).

Drawing by Stephano Ghezzeni.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, Maryland

Evaluation

The primary source documents contained inherent limitations. There are significant omissions in the personnel data, particularly missing biographical information and incomplete histories of the missions and

²⁶ There are two editions, the first authored by Miss Buckley; the second, more bigoted and prejudicial than the first, was supposedly unauthorized by her.

ministries of individual sisters. The gaps in mission history may be supplemented by a meticulous line-by-line review of Council Minutes of the period. There is no extant contemporary memorandum which identifies the founding generation of women who formed the Western Province (Normandy, Missouri) in 1910, only Council members are identified.²⁷ This information is available from the archival collection of the West Central Province, soon to be transferred for preservation, in the Daughters of Charity Archives, Province of Saint Louise, Emmitsburg, Maryland.

The initial data base design was functional, but minor improvements were made based on experience. The mission history segment was laid out with individual fields for each year and mission in order to capture a record of service chronologically. In retrospect it would have been better to have all mission information in one field, separating year of transfer and name of mission by semi-colons, since it is not possible to sort in multiple fields simultaneously. Facilitating sorting in this manner would expedite data retrieval.

Dissemination of Findings

The data directly relates to a projected monograph on the history of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph's (1809-1849). Articles of a thematic or biographic nature may be culled from the data for future publication in *Vincentian Heritage*. Some of the findings may also be made available to scholars through the History of Women Religious Conference and online through the Vincentian Studies Institute. The findings may be distributed by CD to the Sisters of Charity congregations directly linked to the Emmitsburg foundation and the Daughters of Charity provinces in the United States.

Indeed, Elizabeth Seton could again report that her "poor little mustard seed spreads its branches well" even after one hundred years.²⁸ In response Vincent de Paul could affirm: "The Company of Charity is still alive."²⁹

²⁷ The founding officers of this province were: Sister Eugenia Fealy, Visitatrix; Sister Mary Barbara Regan, assistant; Sister Baptista Lynch, directress; Sister Isabella McCarthy, treasurer; and Rev. James J. Sullivan, C.M., provincial director.

²⁸ Elizabeth Bayley Seton to Antonio Filicchi, 18 April 1820, *Collected Writings*, 2:643.

²⁹ #51 "On the Spirit of the Company," 9 February 1653, *Vincent de Paul: Correspondence, Conferences, Documents*, ed. and trans. by Jacqueline Kilar, D.C., Marie Poole, D.C., et al, 1-13a & 13b (New York: New City Press, 1985-2009), 9:467.

Appendix

Primary Sources

Treasurer's Notebook of Sister Margaret George, Rare Book #69
Catalogue A-Z, 1809-1890, Rare Book #82
Notes A-Z, 1809-1890, Rare Book #75
Catalogue A-L, 1890-1942, Rare Book #120
Catalogue M-Z, 1890-1942, Rare Book #121
Notes A-L, 1890-1942, Rare Book #123
Notes M-Z, 1890-1942, Rare Book #124
Council Minutes 1812-1840, 3-3-5:1
Council Minutes 1828-1852, 3-3-5:2
Council Minutes 1843-1852, 3-3-5:3
Council Minutes 1852-1885, 3-3-5:4
Council Minutes 1886-1891, 3-3-5:5
Council Minutes 1887-1911, 3-3-5:6
Council Minutes 1891-1887, 3-3-5:7
Council Minutes 1898-1905, 3-3-5:8
Council Minutes 1905-1916, 3-3-5:9
Memoirs and Chronology [1805-1838]
 Elizabeth Bayley Seton Correspondence

Collateral Sources

Cecilia O'Conway Memoir, 1808-1815
Journal of Mother Rose Landry White
Provincial Annals of the Sisters/Daughters of Charity

Variables

Primary Source Document/Page
 Collateral Document/Page
 Discrepancy, date or event
 Surname and Community Name
 Other Community Names
 Baptismal Name
 Father
 Adoptive/Foster/Step Father
 Parent's Occupation
 Mother
 Adoptive/Foster/Step Mother
 Birthplace

Date of Birth
Baptism
Postulatum
Vocation Date
Habit Taking
First Vows (Vows for the first time)
Missions
Date of Death
Place of Death
City / State
Name of Cemetery
Grave site
Age at Death
Probate of Will
Years of Vocation
Province of Entrance
Biographical Sketch
Comments
Other
Date of Withdrawal
Date of Transfer
Convert (denomination)
Widow (name of spouse)
Last will / testament (date of probate)
Photograph
Siblings and Relatives in community
Mission History
Military Services
Special Services
History of Individual Ministries
Leadership Roles