

INSTITUTE HISTORY WORKSHEET

TOPIC: 1809-1816

Places:

- **Namur:** Rue des Fossés as Mother House
- **St-Hubert:** foundation in 1809
- **Ghent:** Sint-Nicolaas Community moved there in 1809, Nouveau Bois opened in 1810
- **Zèle:** foundation in 1811
- **Bresles:** foundation in 1812
- **Rainneville:** very short lived foundation made in 1812 when countess guarantees a small income for community to teach children of village
- **Amiens:** attempt at reunion 1812, eventually all houses in France close by 1814
- **Gembloux:** foundation in 1813
- **Andenne:** foundation in 1813
- **Fleurus:** founded in 1814 with boarding school & day school but no poor school
- **Dinant:** Julie lays plans for opening of house - it opens late June 1816
- **Liège:** negotiations for foundation as early as 1810 – founded October 2, 1816



8 = Bresles 1812

9 = Rainneville 1812

By the end of 1814 the following were closed:

1 = Amiens

3 = Montdidier

6 = Rubempré

7 = Ambleville

8 = Bresles

9 = Rainneville



2 = Sint-Niklaas 4 = Namur 5 = Jumet 10 = Gent 1809
 11 = St-Hubert 1809 12 = Zèle 1811 13 = Gembloux 1813
 14 = Andenne 1813 15 = Fleurus 1814 16 = Dinant 1816 17 = Liège 1816

People & Relationships between them:

- **Countess de Ribaucourt** (né Quarré): sells us Rue des Fossés
- **Sœur Catherine Daullée**: called from Montdidier to Ghent as superior, accompanies Julie to Amiens in 1812; dies (1814) of illness caught while trying to protect loyal priests
- **Sœur Marie-Caroline Cardon**: replaces Sœur Catherine Daullee at Montdidier, 1st superior at St-Hubert where she become known as Sœur St-Jean
- **Bishop de Broglie**: imprisonment and exile for defense of pope 1811, returns to Ghent 1814, protests the constitutional oath of 1815 & projects of William of Orange; describes Julie as head of a man on the shoulders of a woman;
- **Elizabeth Prevost (Sœur Marie)**: de Sambucy brings her in to be superior at Amiens in 1809, tries to convince Sisters at Montdidier to join Amiens, tries to convince Julie to reunite
- **Baron de Coppens** - offers Julie house in Ghent
- **Baroness de Coppens** - tries to get Julie to give Sisters for a school on her estate in Binche
- **Père Sellier**: old friend, delivers 1st request for Julie to return to Amiens
- **Sœur Firmine Queste**: her leaving is very painful for Julie, Mother St. Joseph and Jumet community
- **M. Zoude**: mayor of St-Hubert who suggests asking for SNDs
- **Père Bruson**: gives 1810 retreat for the 2 communities in Ghent, arrested in 1813 just as about to start annual retreat for Ghent community
- **Farmer Lempence**: tenant on a farm belonging to Mere St Joseph
- **Abbé Neujean**: Curé of St-Nicolas in Liège, uncle of Sœur Marie-Cornélie who went to Willamette & California
- **M. Nicolas Dehesselles**: vicar to Abbé Neujean at Liège, later Bishop of Namur who sends sisters to USA

- **Père Medard:** appointed in late 1815 as special ecclesiastical superior at request of Julie to deal with conflict in community over rule
- **Canon Renson:** Julie's confessor, keeps vigil with infirmarian and 2-3 other sisters the night she dies (April 7 to 8)
- **William of Orange:** King of Holland who became ruler of Belgium after battle of Waterloo (Recker dates it June 20, 1814)

Dates & Events:

- **1809: April 21** – 1st Mass at Rue des Fossés
- **1809: May 9** – community moves from St. Nicolas to Ghent with nowhere to live
- **1809: June** – community in Ghent moves into house of **Baron de Coppens**
- **1809-1810:** Julie **makes 9 trips** to try and get Mere St. Joseph's money back from de Sambucy
- **1809: September 21** – Bishop Pisani allows Blessed Sacrament to be preserved at Rue des Fossés
- **1809: November** – visit to Binche and cure of little girl w/disease of eyes (**pp. 355-6, The Life of the Blessed Julie Billiard, edited by Father James Clare, S.M.; 1909 edition**)
- **1809: Nov 21** – 3 Sisters move from Baron de Coppens' house to house on Rue des Femmes
- **1809: December 13** – **SNDdeN purchase Rue des Fossés**
- **1810: February 12** – two mothers go together to Ghent, Mother St. Joseph accompanies community to move into Nouveau Bois



Sint-Anne

Nouveau-Bois,
Ghent 1810

Sint-Pieters,
Ghent 1809

- **1810: August 1** – 1st Mass in chapel at Nouveau Bois - before that the Sister went out to St Anne's
- **1811: struggle with Sœur Firmine at Jumet, both Mothers go to minister to community after she leaves**
- **1812: Ghent** – St. Peter community closes & Sisters go to Nouveau-Bois
- **1812:** request from Bishop Demandolx (via Père Fournier) that Julie return to Amiens
- **1812: November 16** – letter from Bishop Demandolx granting dependence of all houses of the SND on their Superior General (**see pages 58-60 of History of the Rule on pages 6-8 of this document**)

- **1812: November** – Julie and Sœur Catherine journey to Amiens – “Look at me and follow me” vision
- **1813-1815:** Sisters hide loyal priests in Ghent
- **1813: late February/early March** – Julie visits Pope Pius VII
- **1813: October 16-18** – Battle of Leipzig, preparing baskets of lint for wounded
- **1814: April 2 – May 11** – troops have passed and Julie visits Andenne, Gembloux, Fleurus, Jumet, Zèle and Ghent
- **1814:** Jesuits are re-established; Julie signs further letters “Julie, called Sister Ignatius”
- **1815: June 18** – Battle of Waterloo (35 miles from Namur – between Namur and Brussels)
- **1815: July 2 - early August** – visits to Jumet, Fleurus, Ghent, Zèle
- **1815 difficulties over the rule - Julie requests a special ecclesiastical superior from Bishop Pisani; roots of persecution**
- **1815: December 7** – heavy fall on stairs leading to chapel that begins last illness
- **1816: January 14** – takes to her bed
- **1816: April 8** – death

Impact of War/Political Unrest:

- People of Namur are slow to accept “French” Sisters – Bishop Pisani defends Julie and Sisters to the town – become beloved
- Living in the middle of a battlefield 1813-16
- The civil politics (schismatic priests again in Ghent) play a role in Julie’s last cross: persecution by the Sisters
 - 1808 Napoleon occupies Rome
 - 1809 Arrests Pope Pius
 - 1810 Napoleon wants Pope’s approval of his divorce and remarriage – Pope refuses. Anyone who backs Pope is persecuted
 - 1811 Napoleon gathers Bishops and orders them to charge Pope with crimes – Bishop de Broglie leads resistance and is arrested
 - 1813 Napoleon tries to get new Concordat from Pope – he refuses. Napoleon imprisons bishops who support Pope (including Bishop de Broglie of Ghent), appoints bishops who support Napoleon – Sisters in Ghent help hide priests and seminarians who will not support de Broglie’s replacement. They think Pisani is supporting Napoleon (he’s not) and can’t understand why Julie continues to support him.
 - 1814 William of Orange imposes a constitution that deprives clergy of their privileges. De Broglie, Pisani and other church leaders in what will be Belgium protest. De Broglie will eventually be deported
- Difficulty w/trying to continue ministry during a time of war

Relationship with Hierarchy & Clergy:

- Trouble when bishops except Pisani are arrested and Julie is loyal to Pisani
- Carrying messages for priests loyal to Pope and Bishops who support him
- Sisters at Ghent hiding priests loyal to Pope and Bishops who support him
- Asked to help with schismatic Ursulines in Jumet
- Reconciliation with Bishop Demandolx
- Priests trying to control congregation – in little ways like the pastor of St. Peter’s in Ghent and then in larger ways like the priest in Jumet who thinks the house should be separate from Namur.

- Focus on the statutes in the approbation fuel the Sisters' confusion over the rule.
 - Sisters wanting to hold to the experimental rule of 1806;
 - Priests encouraging rigidity
 - Ghent and Tournai dioceses propose separation of secondary houses from Namur
 - Read Letter 39 of the **Selected Letters of Mother St Joseph**

Primitive Spirit:

- Does not agree with Père Minsart's suggestion that day school be discontinued so focus could be on boarding school
- They have the hearts of Apostles and a courage which does not know what difficulty means.
- Pedagogy refined – 3 tiered school system
- We must be united together - charity as greatest virtue - if you see 1 SND you see them all
- Need for adaptability (last cross) **Memoirs, pp. 211-217**
 - Sisters wanting to hold to the experimental rule of 1806;
 - Clerics encouraging rigidity because it's in Approbation,
 - Ghent and Tournai dioceses propose division
- Sharing resources
- Dressing poor children

Spirituality underpinning everything:

- Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament
- Devotion to the cross; kissing crucifix
- Devotion to St Joseph
- Simplicity
- Sees obedience as St. Ignatius did
- Charity
- Common sense about fasting

What touched your heart?

- Julie on guard during war – worry for Sisters – turning to prayer
- Incredible amount of energy Julie must have had for all the travel and letter writing
- Julie does not hold it against the Sisters when they turn against her

New insights?

- How much de Sambucy WAS the problem in Amiens – he is barely out of there when Bishop starts process of bringing Julie back
- How scary for Sisters when both Julie and Mother St Joseph were ill!
- Person so maligned by priests used to bring back schismatic nuns in Jumet!
- Françoise is the stable person at Namur while Julie is on the road

Pages 58-60 from **The History of the Rules and Constitutions of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur** by Sœur Julie de la Sainte-Famille Chisholm, written in 1954:

The second form of "Document D" is obviously more official. The Rules just quoted are, as we have said, on the first two pages. On the third page we have the mandement or pastoral letter of Msgr. Demandolx, a complete and generous reparation for the wrong that had been done to Mother Julia, justifying not only her personal conduct, but vindicating and approving her ideals of religious government.

This letter of the Bishop of Amiens gives to "Document D" a historical value far surpassing that of the other documents examined in this chapter. It brought to the great heart of Mother Julia no mere sense of personal triumph. For nearly four years she had borne in silence the accusations and reproaches of those whom her spirit of faith inspired her to regard as representatives of divine authority. She made no effort to defend herself but trusted to God alone. And her "good God" did not fail her. This message and the personal letters that preceded it lifted the heavy pain she had borne so long, and moved her to repeat over and over again to her daughters: "Let the good God have His way; He knows much better than we do how everything should be arranged. God alone! God alone!" As this pastoral letter is so important both in the history of our Foundress and in that of our Congrega-

tion, we shall quote it entirely using the translation given in the
Life of Blessed Julie Billiart, edited by Father James Clare,

S. J. 18

Jean-François Demandolx, by the grace of God and favor of the Apostolic See, Bishop of Amiens, Beauvais and Noyon, etc., to Julie Billiart, religious of Notre-Dame, health and benediction in the Lord. Intimately convinced of the precious advantages which must result from unity of rules, of function, of custom, of costume, and in general of an entire uniformity among the Sisters of the Association called of Notre-Dame, and thoroughly informed of your wisdom, prudence and other good qualities. We declare that We have recognized you, as by these presents We do recognize you, as Superior-General of all the houses of the Association of the Sisters of Notre-Dame which are, or which in the future shall be, established in Our diocese, and to this effect We give you all the same powers, rights and privileges which have been granted to you in the said capacity or appellation by the Bishops of those dioceses wherein the said Sisters of Notre-Dame have establishments. We recommend in consequences, and furthermore expressly enjoin on each of the Sisters of the Association called of Notre-Dame who are, and who shall be in the future, anywhere within Our diocese, to show to you at all times and in all circumstances the respect, submission and obedience due to their Superior-General.

These presents shall be read in presence of the whole Community established in the Faubourg-Noyon of the City of Amiens, and transcribed on to their Register; and the Superior shall communicate them to all the Sisters dispersed in the houses of Our diocese, so that none shall be able to plead ignorance thereof.

(Letter concludes on page 60)

60

**Given at Amiens, under Our hand and seal,
and countersigned by Our Secretary, Monday,
the sixteenth of November, of the year of our
Lord, eighteen hundred and twelve.**

**J. Fr., Bishop of Amiens.
By command, etc. Gravet,
Cañon, Secretary 19**

(Place of Seal)

Also of interest from page 54 of The History of the Rule is a quote from a document held in the Archives at Namur concerning Julie's signature on a letter to Mother St. Joseph written February 24, 1809. What is below did not make it into the printed editions of the letters, but shows Julie referring to herself as a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur in 1809:

Document D

Rules of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

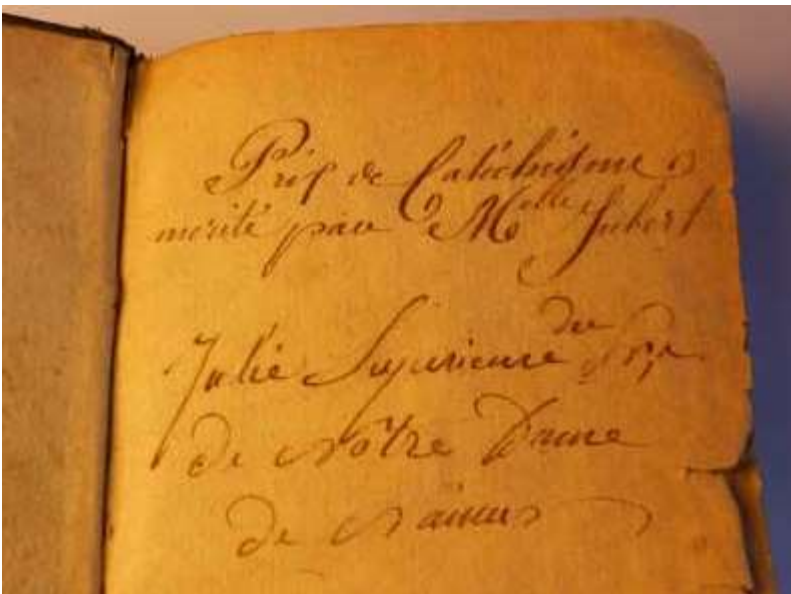
The occurrence of "Namur" in the title after "Sisters of Notre Dame" would seem to indicate that this document dates from some time after 1809, after the transfer of the Mother House to Namur. In like manner, Mother Julia, in writing from Namur on February 24, 1809, ends her letter to Mother St. Joseph by saying:

"Des compliments à tout le monde qui vous
parleront de la pauvre Julie, Soeur de Notre-
Dame de Namur, non pas d'Amiens." 15

The quote can be translated:

Compliments to everyone who will tell you about poor Julie, Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, not of "Amiens."

The Ohio Archive does not have a copy of the letter with the signature above, but there is this signature on the Heritage Centre website: "Julie Superior of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur".



The image shows a handwritten signature in cursive on aged, yellowed paper. The text is written in two lines. The first line reads "Prof de Paternité" and the second line reads "monté par M^{lle} Subert". Below this, there is a signature that appears to be "Julie Supérieure" followed by "de Notre Dame de Namur". The paper is slightly wrinkled and the ink is dark.