

Sister Miriam Theresa (Caroline Gleason) Papers

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Date: 1913-1962

Extent and Forms of Material: 6.51 cubic feet, including photographs, one map and one poster (14 boxes and two oversize folders).

Creator: Sister Miriam Theresa (Caroline Gleason), 1886-1962

Abstract: Papers relating to Caroline Gleason's minimum wage law research and career prior to entering the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (1913-1916); as Sister Miriam Theresa, her life as a professor of social work (1937-1959) and her participation and interest in various groups related to social work and social justice (1916-1962).

Repository: Archives of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, U.S.–Ontario Province, Holy Names Heritage Center, 17425 Holy Names Drive, Lake Oswego, OR 97034

Collection Number: 2007.23.1

Processing Note: Processed by S. Sue Woodruff and Sarah Cantor, November 2007

Preferred Citation: [Title and date of item], Sister Miriam Theresa (Caroline Gleason) Papers, Archives of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, U.S.–Ontario Province

IN-DEPTH INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLECTION

Administrative/Biographical History: Caroline Joanna Gleason was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on March 15, 1886, one of five children of John M. Gleason and Fidelia M. Lucia. Her parents' Irish and French-Canadian backgrounds ensured that the children were raised with a solid Catholic foundation. Following elementary education at Holy Rosary Parochial School in Minneapolis, Caroline graduated from St. Clara Academy, run by the Sisters of St. Dominic in Sinsinawa, Wisconsin in 1904. In 1908 she received her B.A. and high school teaching certification from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. At the suggestion of then-Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara (1881-1956), a family friend of Gleason's from Minnesota who was serving as a priest in Oregon City, Oregon, she moved to Portland, Oregon where she taught Latin and English at St. Mary's Academy and College until 1910. During this time she also organized and administered the Catholic Women's League of Portland, a group dedicated to the interests of young women wage earners, especially "girls adrift"—those in town with no near family or friends.

In the fall of 1910 she returned to the Midwest for graduate work at the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, later the University of Chicago School of Social Work. During this time she lived at the Chicago Commons Settlement House where she took charge of the young boys' club.

In 1911 Gleason returned to Portland. She immediately re-involved herself in the community, serving both as field secretary and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Catholic Women's League. She was in charge of two different homes for indigent young women with disabilities and was appointed by the Juvenile Court of Multnomah County to administer the Mothers' Pension law.

At the same time, Gleason became very involved with the Oregon Consumers' League. In 1913 she prepared a housing survey for the League that resulted in the implementation of a new housing code for Portland, but it was her work on wage and hour regulations that became the focus for much of her later career. In 1912 she was appointed director of a survey to study family living cash and wage rates. She worked "undercover" in several Oregon factories doing research on women's hours and wages. On trips to the East Coast and Midwest, she visited factories, gathering comparative information. Her intensive and thorough investigation provided the solid base for the Minimum Wage Law for Women, passed by the Oregon State Legislature in 1913. The Constitutionality of this legislation was later upheld in both the Oregon and the United States Supreme Courts, becoming the first enforceable minimum wage legislation in the country. Building on this success, in 1914 Gleason undertook a similar survey for the State of Washington, preparatory to that state's minimum wage legislation.

To ensure the implementation and enforcement of Oregon's Minimum Wage Law for Women, the State established the Oregon Industrial Welfare Commission; Gleason was chosen as its first secretary, a position she held until 1916.

In June 1916, Gleason received an M.A. in Public Service and Research from the University of Oregon. [Note: there is some dispute about this degree; it may have been only honorary.] She resigned from the Industrial Welfare Commission in July to enter the Society of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, making her novitiate at Marylhurst, Oregon. She received the religious name Sister Miriam Theresa and was known by that name until her death.

As a Sister of the Holy Names, Miriam Theresa returned to teaching at St. Mary's Academy and College in Portland. At the same time, she continued her post graduate education in economics and psychology at the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Chicago. In 1924 she was awarded a Ph.D. in economics with minors in sociology and psychology from The Catholic University of America. Her thesis, *Legislation for Women in Oregon*, was published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, as *Bulletin #90*.

In 1930, St. Mary's Academy and College split into two entities with the college, now called Marylhurst College, moving to Marylhurst, Oregon. In addition to her teaching duties, Sister Miriam Theresa became Dean of the Department of Social Sciences. She held this position until 1941 when she moved to Holy Names College in Spokane, Washington.

In 1943 she returned to Oregon to found the Marylhurst College School of Social Work, located at St. Mary's Academy in downtown Portland. This school closed in 1945 and Sister Miriam Theresa returned to the Marylhurst campus.

Besides the colleges in Spokane and Marylhurst, Sister Miriam Theresa taught, usually summer sessions, at the College of the Holy Names in Oakland, California; Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska; and Viterbo College in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

In addition to her teaching, Sister Miriam Theresa served on the Executive Committees of the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the National Conference of Catholic Charities. She was a founder and later served as president of the Board of Directors of the Oregon State Conference of Social Work. Other positions held over the course of her career include: assistant executive secretary of the Portland Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems; member of the Executive Committee of the American Catholic Sociological Society; chair and secretary of the Western Regional Unit of the College and University Department of the National Catholic Education Association; and moderator of the Legion of Mary at Marylhurst College. Her participation on the Oregon Governor's Committee for the Codification of Child Welfare Legislation and on the Oregon Governor's Committee on Children and Youth prepared her to represent Oregon as a delegate to the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1950.

Throughout her life, Sister Miriam Theresa shared her knowledge and experience with her students and with a larger audience through her writing and speeches. For her work she received many honors and accolades during her lifetime: In 1939 she received an honorary doctorate from the University of Portland. In 1951 the *Oregonian* selected her as one of twenty-five outstanding women during the previous 100 years; in 1956 she received the "Woman of Achievement" award, one of five women so honored by the Portland chapter of Theta Sigma Phi, a professional organization of women in journalism; and in 1958 she was one of eight women honored for their activities by the Oregon chapter of the National Council of Christians and Jews. In 1959 she was honored on the floor of the U.S. Senate by Senator Wayne Morse, who had an *Oregon Labor Press* article honoring her read into *The Congressional Record*.

After her retirement from Marylhurst College in 1959 Sister moved to Christie Home on the Marylhurst campus. At the request of the Oregon Supreme Court Justices, she began research on a book detailing the history of labor laws in Oregon, which was to be published by the Oregon Historical Society Press. On March 3, 1962 she boarded the city bus, headed for further research at the Oregon Historical Society. On the bus she suffered a stroke that left her incapacitated. The remainder of her life was spent at the infirmary at the Marylhurst Provincial House where she died on May 12, 1962. She is buried in the Sisters' cemetery at Marylhurst.

Scope and Content: The Sister Miriam Theresa (Caroline Gleason) Papers are divided into thirteen series: Personal; Materials Generated after Death; Minimum Wage Law; Speeches and Writing;

Marylhurst School of Social Work; Other College Course Material; Catholic Charities; National Conference of Christians and Jews; Child Welfare; Professional Associations; Education; Social Justice; and Labor.

Related Artifacts: *list once they are processed*

Container Listing

Box Folder

Series 1: Personal

- 1 1 Biographical information
Correspondence
- 1 2 Family and friends, 1943-1960
- 1 3 Religious, 1942-1961
Photographs
- 1 4 Family
- 1 5 Religious
- 1 6 Retreat notes, 1927-1943
- 1 7 Retreat notes, 1961
- 1 8 News clippings, awards and honors, 1945-1961
- 1 9 Oregon Women of Achievement award, 1956
- 1 10 Honorary doctorate, University of Portland, 1939-1959
- 1 11 Miscellaneous

Series 2: Materials Generated after Death

- 1 12 Newspaper clippings, 1962
- 1 13 Reminiscences, 1962-1964
- 1 14 Memorial Masses, 1962
- 1 15 Memorial scholarship fund papers, 1962-1967
- 2 1 Public recognition, 1967-1987
- 2 2 Bibliography, 1973
- OS Folder Poster, Women in Portland's History, c.2004

Series 3: Minimum Wage Law

Investigative research

- 2 3 Log, time and payroll, Oregon Packing Company, 1915
- 2 4 Log, time and payroll, various companies, 1915
Industrial Welfare Commission, State of Oregon
- 13 Minutes, 1913-1916
- 13 Minutes, 1916-1923
- 14 Minutes, 1924-1931
- 2 5 Copies of correspondence on drafting of Minimum Wage Law, 1912-1917
- 2 6 Publications, 1914-1930

		Oregon State Welfare Commission
2	7	Minutes, 1931
2	7	Biennial report, 1932
		Oregon State Wage and Hour Commission
2	8	Biennial reports, 1928-1956
2	9	Minutes, 1941-1959
3	1	Correspondence, 195[?]-1959
		Publications
3	2	Wage and labor, Oregon publications, 1915-1958
3	3	US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Bulletins, 1920-1930
3	4	US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Bulletins, 1931-1941
3	5	US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Bulletins, 1959-1960
3	6	US Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletins, 1915-1928
3	7	US Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletins, 1929
4	1	Minimum wage law, publications of national organizations, 1927-1955
4	2	US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Pamphlets, 1951-1960
OS Folder		Map, states with labor laws, c. 1955
		Manuscript, history of Oregon minimum wage law, 1961-1962
4	3	Milk Law notes
4	4	Text drafts
4	5	Research sources
4	6	Research notes
4	7	Correspondence
		Series 4: Speeches and Writing
		Speeches
4	8	Government action and Pope Pius XI's encyclical, 1924
4	9	TB in Oregon, c.1940
4	10	Catholic ethics and modern trends, c.1940
4	11	Child welfare, c.1940-1951
4	12	Women's roles, 1945-1954
4	13	Labor, 1946-1947
4	14	Given to school groups, 1946-1953
5	1	Women in Oregon, 1947-1950
5	2	Miscellaneous, 1940-1950
5	3	Education
5	4	Conference programs where Sr. Miriam Theresa spoke, 1943-1959
		Writing
5	5	Social work, unpublished, c.1935-1946
5	6	Social work, published, 1916-1960
5	7	Women's roles
5	8	Book review, undated

Series 5: Marylhurst School of Social Work, 1943-1945

Opening of school, 1943

- 5 9 Statement of need
- 5 10 Progress reports on school setup
- 5 11 Invitation to opening
- 5 12 Correspondence about opening
- 5 13 Correspondence about hiring teachers
- 5 14 Day planner
- 5 15 Address book
- 5 16 Newspaper clippings
- 5 17 Photographs

Administration

- 6 1 Reports and financial data, 1943-1945
- 6 2 Day planner and administrative notes
- Correspondence
- 6 3 American Association of Schools of Social Work, 1943-1945
- 6 4 Miscellaneous, 1943-1945
- 6 5 Isabel Devine, 1943-1945
- 6 6 Survey of colleges, 1945

Students

- 6 7 Publications, social work field research, 1924
- 6 8 Notes and research, educational leave policies, 1941-1944
- 6 9 Correspondence with potential students, 1943-1945
- 6 10 Correspondence about scholarships, 1944-1945
- 7 1 Notes and research, social work jobs
- 7 2 Notes and research, field placement of students

Courses

- 7 3 Elementary law for social workers, 1943
- 7 4 Miscellaneous outlines and bibliographies, 1943-1945
- 7 5 Correspondence with teachers and speakers, 1943-1945
- 7 6 Psychiatric social work, 1944
- 7 7 Work forums, 1944-1945
- 7 8 Medical information for social workers, 1945
- 7 9 Philosophy of social work, 1945

School closing, 1945

- 7 10 Reports and correspondence leading to closure
- 7 11 Correspondence following closure
- 7 12 Correspondence, student placement
- 7 13 Correspondence, teacher placement
- 7 14 Later correspondence, 1947-1962

Series 6: Other College Course Material

Marylhurst College, 1940-1960

- 7 15 "Construction of a syllabus," c.1940
- 7 16 Principles and techniques of guidance, 1952
- 7 17 Bibliography for social work, anthropology, and social problems, c.1955
- 8 1 Anthropology, 1957
- 8 2 Principles of social reform
- 8 3 Field of social work
- 8 4 Contemporary social problems
- 8 5 Introduction to sociology
- 8 6 History of social thought
- 8 7 Introduction to social case work
- 8 8 Correspondence, 1959-1961
- 8 9 Viterbo College, grades, 1953
- 8 10 Marrillac College, correspondence, 1958

Series 7: Catholic Charities

National Conference of Catholic Charities

- 8 11 Proceedings of national meeting, 1933-1947
- 8 12 Proceedings of national meeting, 1950
- 8 13 Correspondence, 1944
- 8 13 Membership card, 1960

Oregon Catholic Charities

- 9 1 Catholic Charities Survey Committee, report, c.1940
- 9 1 Organizational documents, 1940-1960
- 9 1 Catholic Welfare Institute program, 1943
- 9 1 Invitation, 1945
- 9 1 Catholic Institutional Council, research and report, 1960
- 9 1 Advisory board minutes, 1960
- 9 1 Reports and recommendations

Catholic Services for Children

- 9 2 Advisory board roster, minutes and agendas, 1954-1961
- 9 2 Committee for unmarried mothers' residence, 1960
- 9 2 Personnel practices, 1960

Children's Bureau

- 9 3 Archdiocesan Survey Committee, 1943-1944
- 9 3 Correspondence, 1950

Series 8: National Conference of Christians and Jews

- 9 4 Oregon chapter Executive Committee, roster and minutes, 1958-1961
- 9 5 Correspondence, 1959-1962
- 9 6 Pamphlets

Series 9: Child Welfare

Oregon State Public Welfare Commission

- 9 7 First Pacific Coast Conference of State Welfare Commissions, minutes, 1937
- 9 8 Child welfare biennial reports, 1940-1960
- 9 9 Publications, child welfare laws and regulations, c.1940
- 9 10 Publications, child welfare laws and regulations, 1945-1951
- 9 11 Legislative Interim Committee on Public Welfare, minutes, 1960

Publications

- 10 1 National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1921-1949
- 10 2 Miscellaneous, 1926-1935
- 10 3 Miscellaneous, 1938-1953
- 10 4 US Department of Labor, 1933-1944
- 10 5 Bibliographies, reference books on child welfare, 1927-1937

Oregon Governor's Committee on Children and Youth

- 10 6 Correspondence, 1946-1949
- 10 7 Minutes, 1959
- 10 8 Official reports, 1959
- 10 9 Follow-up to official report, 1960

Mid-century White House Conference on Children and Youth

- 10 10 Correspondence, 1950
- 10 11 Official report, 1951
- 10 12 Reports and speeches, 1951
- 10 13 Social Security Administration, Children's Bureau, reports, 1944-c.1950
- 10 14 Child Welfare League of America, Oregon child welfare survey, panel summary, 1949
- 10 15 Portland Council of Social Agencies, Committee on Adoptions, report, 1946

Series 10: Professional Associations

- 11 1 Catholic Council of Social Workers, proposed bylaws, 1948
- 11 2 Clackamas Community Council, agendas and minutes, 1961

American Catholic Sociological Society

- 11 3 Convention program, 1959
- 11 4 Membership application

Oregon State Conference of Social Work

- 11 5 History of social work in Oregon, report, 1940
- 11 6 Correspondence, 1940-1959
- 11 7 Publication, Social Welfare Reporter, 1941-1942
- 11 8 Minutes and rosters, 1943-1945
- 11 9 Committee report, 1952

Series 11: Education

Women's education

11 10 Publication, 1950
 11 11 Correspondence, 1951
 11 12 Catholic education, publications, c.1930-1961

Series 12: Social Justice

Human rights

11 13 Commission on American Citizenship, publication

Equal Rights Amendment

11 14 Research notes and speech fragment, 1943-1952

11 14 National Catholic Welfare Council, publication, 1944

Race relations

Interracial marriage

11 15 Reports, 1960

11 15 Oregon House bill, 1961

Oregon

11 16 Oregon State Bureau of Labor, Civil Rights Division, report, c.1958

11 16 Urban League of Portland, report, 1961

Publications

11 17 Catholic organizations, 1944-1954

11 17 National organizations, 1948-1956

11 17 Appreciate America, cartoons, c.1948

11 18 Correspondence, 1947

11 19 Notes and speech fragments, c. 1948

11 20 Notebook, various topics, c.1952

Series 13: Labor

Labor and the Catholic Church

National Catholic Welfare Conference, Social Action Department

11 21 Labor Day Statements, 1956-1961

11 21 Social Action Sunday, pamphlets, 1958-1959

Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems

11 22 First annual meeting, proceedings, 1923

11 22 Publications, 1939-1940

Encyclicals

12 1 Pope Pius XI, 1942

12 1 Pope Pius XII, 1944

12 2 Publications of national organizations, 1940-1959

Labor movement history

12 3 Bibliography, c. 1944

12 3 US Department of Labor, publication, 1956

Miscellaneous publications

12 4 I.W.W. study, 1924

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| 12 | 4 | American Federation of Labor, wage negotiations pamphlet, c. 1936 |
| 12 | 4 | Right to work laws, dissertation abstract, 1961 |