

New stamp honours foundress of Grey Nuns

Canada Post will issue a commemorative postage stamp on September 21 honouring Mother Marguerite d'Youville, who founded the Sisters of Charity, called the Grey Nuns.



In 1737 Marguerite founded a small community of companions to minister to the poor and sick of New France. Not long after, the little band became the centre of controversy when, because of her proven administrative abilities, Marguerite was chosen to restore Montreal's foundering general hospital. Opponents to the restoration plan sought to discredit Marguerite and her group by accusing them of degenerate activities, including drunkenness. They were nicknamed "les coeurs grisés", a pun on the word, which can mean either grey or drunk. (The sisters eventually dignified this once-infortunate title by adopting grey habits, and so became respectably known as the Grey Nuns.)

Recognition

After nine years of public harassment and personal hardship, Marguerite was finally appointed administrator of the hospital, which by then was financially ruined. The sisters' fund-raising efforts, which involved sewing for the military and merchant class, and making candles and hosts for the church, blossomed into a thriving commercial enterprise. They managed a bakery, brewery, and farm. They rolled tobacco, fabricated and sold building products, organized excursions for the public. They expanded the hospital, built a church, and in 1761, founded a home for

abandoned children — said to be the first in North America.

During the next two centuries, Mother d'Youville's followers went further afield to continue the good works of their foundress. Today the Grey Nuns have communities in Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, the Northwest Territories, Quebec, and also in the U.S. states of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

Mother d'Youville died from a stroke in her seventieth year. Because of extraordinary accomplishments ascribed to her and the exceptionally holy life she led, she was "beatified" by Pope John XXIII in 1959, the next step before sainthood.

This commemorative stamp illustrates an incident from Marguerite d'Youville's life. During the general famine which preceded the fall of Montreal in 1760, the mysterious appearance of unobtainable food supplies in the sisters' refectory was attributed by them to their foundress' unwavering faith in divine providence.

The general colour scheme of the 14-cent stamp is blue and gold and the design features Mother Marguerite d'Youville praying while, in the background, the poor of Montreal help themselves from barrels of flour.

Tourism officials plan strategy

An international marketplace designed to increase tourism in Canada took place in Vancouver, British Columbia, from September 6 to 8.

"Rendez-vous Canada 1978" brought together over 400 delegates from Canada and abroad, representing provincial and municipal tourist bureaus, carriers, hotels and outfitters, for discussions on "package" tour development and new services and facilities.

A spokesman from the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce said officials from the Canadian Government Office of Tourism were planning for a 20 to 30 percent increase in tour sales during the next three years in such countries as the U.S., Mexico, Australia, Japan, Britain, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

The city of Toronto will soon hire a multicultural relations officer to advise boards and commissions on multicultural issues, and to work with all community groups concerned about racial problems.

Canada and Japan sign amendment to nuclear co-operation agreement



Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce Jack Horner and Japanese Foreign Minister Sunao Sonoda exchange documents after signing a protocol amending the 1959 Canada-Japan agreement on nuclear co-operation bringing the existing agreement into line with the Government's policy on the safeguarding of material, technology and equipment of Canadian origin. Mr. Horner was in Tokyo recently on a five-day visit to Japan.

CP wirephoto