

<b>Reference Code:</b>	ACJ/MW
<b>Title:</b>	Papers relating to the life and work of Venerable Mary Ward, foundress and education pioneer.
<b>Creation Dates:</b>	1585–present
<b>Level of Description:</b>	Collection
<b>Medium:</b>	41 archival boxes; 120 volumes
<b>Extent:</b>	19 linear metres
<b>Creator:</b>	Members of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, now the Congregation of Jesus
<b>Administrative and Biographical History:</b>	<p>Mary Ward (1585–1645) was born in Yorkshire to a staunchly Catholic family at a time when Catholicism was illegal in England and Wales. Her maternal grandmother spent fourteen years in prison because of her Catholic faith, and two of her uncles, John (1568–1605) and Christopher Wright (c.1570–1605), were executed for their involvement in the Gunpowder Plot of November 1605. Inspired by the deep faith of her family, Mary felt called to the religious life. Initially she joined a Poor Clare Community in Walloon in Flanders, but soon established the first English Poor Clare Convent, at Gravelines, in 1608. By 1609 it had become apparent that she was being called to something quite different, to establish a community of autonomous unenclosed apostolic women religious.</p> <p>She returned to London, where she was joined by five companions: Mary Poyntz (1604–67), Jane Browne (1581–c.1632), Catherine Smith (1585–1655), Suzanna Rookwood (1583–1624) and Winefrid Wigmore (1585–1657). Together they opened a school in St. Omer, mainly for English emigrants.</p> <p>At first Mary struggled to find the form of religious life which suited her vision, where the members would be free from enclosure and ready to undertake whatever they felt was necessary. Her vision for her community was given clarity by the calling to ‘take the same as the Society’, in other words to base themselves on the apostolic life of the Jesuits.</p> <p>This was in direct contradiction of the Council of Trent and presented great difficulty for the leadership of the post reformation church. While the Pope expressed interest in her work, he was prevented by Church law of the time from giving his approval. Mary went to Rome to plead her case. During these years she travelled extensively throughout Europe, mainly on foot, opening new houses and seeking support for her cause. Schools were established in</p>

	<p>Belgium, Bavaria, Austria, Hungary and Italy.</p> <p>However, despite the success of the schools and local support for their work, the cardinals of the Inquisition objected to her plans and, hence, to Mary Ward herself, her companions, their ideals and work. In 1631 Pope Urban VIII (r. 1623–44) signed a Bull of Suppression, condemning Mary as a ‘heretic, schismatic and rebel to the Holy Church’. She was imprisoned in Munich. Her Institute was pronounced to be ‘suppressed, extinct, uprooted and abolished’. The schools were closed and the members of the Institute dispersed. While Mary was eventually released from prison, her life’s work had been shattered. With a few faithful companions, Mary returned to her native Yorkshire and died in Heworth 1645. The exact location of her burial is not known, although it is believed to be at Osbdaldwick church.</p> <p>Following her death, a donation of 500 pistoles to the struggling community in January 1649/50 from Edward Somerset (1600–1667), 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Worcester, provided the funds for a house in Paris, and from there, contact with England was gradually re-established, leading to the foundation at Hammersmith in 1669, and in York in 1686. By 1703 the community were forced to abandon her controversial proposals and agreed to live by a limited rule based on the Ignatian way of life. They were specifically forbidden to make reference to Mary Ward as their founder. Despite this injunction, they managed to keep her spirit alive. It was not until 1877 that her order was officially recognised by the Church, and in 1909, three hundred years after she began her work, Pope Pius X (r.1903–14) lifted the ban and Mary Ward became recognised as foundress of the Institute. In 2003, Mary Ward’s vision was finally realised: the order was granted use of full Ignatian constitutions, and changed their name to the Congregation of Jesus.</p> <p>Ward’s Cause for Canonisation was officially opened in 1929 and accepted by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 1995. In 2009, Ward was declared Venerable by Pope Benedict XVI (r. 2005–13): work towards her beatification and canonisation continues.</p>
<b>Archival History:</b>	Collected by members of the Congregation of Jesus (previously IBVM) in 19 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> centuries. Some older material has also been retrospectively added to the collection.
<b>Scope &amp; Content:</b>	This collection is largely uncatalogued. It includes a number of transcripts and copy documents relating to the life of Mary Ward (many of the original papers are housed in Munich), original correspondence, manuscripts and a range of documents relating to her Cause (usual restrictions apply).
<b>Arrangement:</b>	Arranged and part-catalogued by Sr Gregory Kirkus (1911–2007) in the late 1980s. This original arrangement has been preserved, where

	<p>possible, during large scale recataloguing carried out by Dr Hannah Thomas from 2018 onwards.</p> <p>ACJ/MW consists of 10 series:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MW/1 – Life and Times <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. MW/1/1 – Family History</li> <li>b. MW/1/2 – Physical Appearance</li> <li>c. MW/1/3 – Letters and Writings</li> <li>d. MW/1/4 – Places</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. MW/2 – Burial and Excavations</li> <li>3. MW/3 – Contemporary Accounts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. MW/3/1 – The Painted Life</li> <li>b. MW/3/2 – The Brief Relation</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. MW/4 – Miracles and Intercessions</li> <li>5. MW/5 – Relics and Objects</li> <li>6. MW/6 – Material from other archives <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. MW/6/1 – Nymphenburg</li> <li>b. MW/6/2 – Augsburg</li> <li>c. MW/6/3 – Vatican</li> <li>d. MW/6/4 – Rome</li> <li>e. MW/6/5 – St Omer &amp; Liege</li> <li>f. MW/6/6 – Westminster</li> <li>g. MW/6/7 – PRO</li> <li>h. MW/6/8 – Misc other.</li> </ol> </li> <li>7. MW/7 – Biographies and Publications</li> <li>8. MW/8 – Correspondence about, 1923–1962</li> <li>9. MW/9 – Cause Papers</li> <li>10. MW/10 – Events, Celebrations and Jubilees</li> </ol>
<b>Conditions Governing Access:</b>	By appointment only, and at the discretion of the Special Collections Manager.
<b>Language of Material:</b>	English; Latin
<b>Related Material:</b>	See also ACJ/EP: Papers of the English Province; ACJ/BC: Papers of the Bar Convent.