



Voices from an Early American Convent: Marie Madeleine Hachard and the New Orleans Ursulines, 1727--1760

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In 1727, twelve nuns left France to establish a community of Ursuline nuns in New Orleans, the capital of the French colony of Louisiana. Notable for founding a school that educated all free girls, regardless of social rank, the Ursulines also ran an orphanage, administered the colony's military hospital, and sustained an aggressive program of catechesis among the enslaved population of colonial Louisiana. In *Voices from an Early American Convent*, Emily Clark extends the boundaries of early American women's history through the firsthand accounts of these remarkable French missionaries, in particular Marie Madeleine Hachard. These fascinating documents reveal women of determination, courage, and conviction, who chose to forgo the traditional European roles of wife and mother, embrace lives of public service, and forge a community among the diverse inhabitants -- enslaved and free -- who occupied early New Orleans.

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