

WASHINGTON DC-OBITS



The Washington Post – 6 Nov 1902

Dr BOUQUILLON dead

Distinguished Professor of the Catholic University Passes Away

A cablegram was received at the Catholic University of this city last night announcing the death in Belgium of one of its most distinguished professors, the Rev **Thomas BOUQUILLON**, who occupied the chair of moral theology. He had been with the university from its beginning having come to it from Belgium in 1889 from the University of Bruges and Li--.

He was famous in his church as a --- ---. He was sixty-two years old. He had been in poor health for some time suffering from general debility. He went to Belgium last summer to visit his old home and friends and --- hope of recovering health. He submitted to an operation in the hospital at --- and it is supposed that he could not recover from this though the details as to his death are not yet known.

Boston Globe - April 13, 1997, by Renee Graham, Globe Staff

May Sarton, who died at age 83 of breast cancer in 1995, was said to have feared how biographers might have their way with her. This, the first Sarton biography, would seem to justify her concerns. As unveiled by Margot Peters, Sarton is selfish, disloyal, capricious, and perhaps even undeserving of the acclaim that came to her late in her life. Nonetheless, Peters's dishy biography should go a long way toward enhancing Sarton's literary reputation.

For one thing, given the amount of space it takes to dissect Sarton's myriad affairs, her betrayals of lovers and friends, and her overall bad behavior, it is remarkable that Sarton found time at all to write, let alone publish, nearly 50 books of prose, poetry, and essays.

In her introduction, Peters acknowledges that Sarton may not fare well under the glare of biographical scrutiny. She even writes, "One is tempted to post a warning, 'This biography is strong medicine. Not to be taken internally by Sarton fans.' " Indeed, those who admire Sarton -- and her fans are notoriously protective -- will likely take Peters to task for her unflattering take on their idol.

Yet "May Sarton" cannot be dismissed as a nasty tome designed to pick over the bones of its subject: This is an authorized biography, and an engrossing one. During the last four years of her life, Sarton (who lived in York, Maine) gave Peters access to her writings both published and unpublished, introductions to friends and colleagues, as well as more than 50 hours of interviews. Certainly, Sarton was enough of an egotist to relish the notion that historians would pore over her words and interview her friends, seeking to put into context her often complicated and conflicting years.

In one of her best-loved novels, "Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing," Sarton could well have been writing about herself when she said of her titular heroine, "There were moments when Hilary saw life as tending chaos, when it seemed that all one could be asked was just to keep the ashtrays clean, the bed made, the wastebaskets emptied, as if one never got to the real things because of the constant exhausting battle to keep ordinary life from falling apart." Emotional chaos would always haunt Sarton. Born in Belgium in 1912, she was the daughter of **George and Mabel Sarton**, neither of whom greatly desired to become a parent. Mabel was often sickly, and seemed too frail for childbearing. George was too preoccupied with his work, an international journal devoted to the history of science.

A rambunctious baby, May proved more than her ailing mother or distracted father could handle, and she was sent off to stay with family friends. Even after the family left Belgium during World War I for Mabel's native England, much of May's childhood was spent in the arms of nannies and assistants. It created in her an emotional distance she would never reconcile.

Eventually, when George landed an appointment at Harvard, the family members found themselves immersed in the intellectual and bohemian circles of Cambridge. There, poetry beckoned young May, and she would find the first of her many muses in Katherine Taylor, principal of Shady Hill School.

Sarton would always have a muse, including the great actress Eva Le Gallienne, who encouraged a career in the theater. Many others would become her lovers. What she sought from them was guidance and inspiration; what she offered was love. But it was nothing less than a highly conditional love, and once she gained what she needed, she discarded them and moved on.

Certainly, this will not be the last book to be written on Sarton -- the first volume of her selected letters, edited by Susan Sherman, is due next month, and that may prove more palatable to Sarton's fans. But Peters answers the greater questions about what lurks behind the artist's mind and heart, how fine art emerges from the remnants of sloppy lives. The book also becomes a subtle meditation on society's easy seduction by icons, as Peters strips away Sarton's public persona -- one crafted and cultivated through readings and personal appearances. Her works, such as "Halfway to Silence," "After the Stroke," and "As We Are Now,"

are so flush with humanity and emotion that they carefully masked a woman who "never learned a code of honor or responsibility."

"No public figure levels completely with an audience -- and Sarton was a performer above all," Peters writes. "Her real life, as opposed to the myth she created, was turbulent, guilt-ridden, full of pain and disappointment -- and just plain messy. Yet perhaps the real May Sarton will be more lasting inspiration than the myth, a phoenix risen from the ashes of fires hotter than anyone guessed."

By Margot Peters. Knopf. 474 pp. Illustrated. \$30.

Veteran Foreign Service Officer - Washington Post - March 1, 1999

Francoise G. Queneau, 85, a Foreign Service officer who retired in 1964 as a Bangkok-based senior research officer for the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, died of pneumonia Feb. 25 at Hermitage of Northern Virginia in Alexandria.

Ms. Queneau had served 22 years in the Foreign Service at her retirement, including assignments in Washington, Europe, South America and the Far East. She was special assistant for political affairs to the ambassador to Laos from 1959 to 1961. Later, she was acting chief of the Laotian desk at the State Department. From 1968 to 1970, she was director of the International Rescue Committee in Vietnam. She was born in Belgium to a French father and an American mother and she grew up in England and France. She came to the United States for college, and she graduated magna cum laude from Mount Holyoke, where she was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She received a master's degree in philology at Bryn Mawr, and she studied history at the Sorbonne in Paris. She also studied at the University of Poitiers in France. She studied political science at Columbia and languages at Middlebury College in Vermont. She taught Romance languages at preparatory schools in the United States and at Beaver College in Pennsylvania before joining the Foreign Service in 1942. She was a member of Grace Episcopal Church in Alexandria. Survivors include two brothers, Paul Queneau of Cornish Flat, N.H., and Bernard Queneau of Pittsburgh.