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When I was writing my MA thesis, “Bells in Merton’s Early Poetry 1940-1946,” I asked Brother Patrick if he would mind recording the bells of Gethsemani. Bells and their history had always interested me and Merton in his poems was acutely attentive to his abbey’s bells. Patrick recorded more than just the bells. He had carried a pocket recorder with him through one day and taped all the hours of the office for me. The joy of having this recording and Patrick’s hospitality overwhelmed me. My first meeting with him was at Pentecost 1984. My husband Christian and I attended Mass, and afterwards we met Patrick face-to-face. He asked if we wanted to visit Merton’s hermitage. “Well, yes!” As we entered the hermitage, Patrick told Christian to take a photo of me sitting in “Jacques Maritain’s chair.” Then he directed a photo of me at the foot of Merton’s cross and its wagon wheel outside. As we were leaving the abbey, Patrick suggested that I share my thesis with Bob Daggy at the Thomas

Merton Center. It would be yet another meeting that spirited my life toward taking another lovely turn. I was keen to introduce and edit *Tom's Book*, the journal his mother Ruth had kept about his first two years. My hopes sometimes wavered in finding a publisher, but Patrick encouraged me to carry on. Then my friend Jonathan Montaldo suggested we drive to meet Gray Zeitz at his Larkspur Press in Monterey, KY. Urging patience, as he would need to "live with the words," after several months Gray hand-printed and hand-bound *Tom's Book* in 2005. Patrick blessed all our efforts by writing the Preface. He was even willing to re-write it when I, surprised at my own cheek, urged him to stress the family's happiness in those early years. The last time Pat wrote to me, he asked me to send him a photo taken by Timothy Hoover, Rusty Moe's

husband, at Bob Daggy's grave in 1998. Tommie O'Callaghan had invited me to spend the weekend at her house on Eastern Parkway to celebrate Bob's life and passing. We had gone to Mass at Gethsemani and had then gathered to view Bob's new headstone. Tim's photo captures memories. Tommie is in front, then Jonathan Montaldo, Brother Pat, Rusty Moe, "Lady Jane Grey" (as Pat called me that day as the wind constantly threatened to carry my large floppy hat away) and Brother Paul Quenon. That night I would be the last person to sleep in "Merton's room" at the O'Callaghans'. He often stayed

overnight in that room when he visited doctors in Louisville. He had slept there the night before departing Louisville for Asia. I was to be that room's last guest, as Frank and Tommie were moving to a new house on Monday. "Bells" rang for me in "Merton's room" that night. Through my many years with dear Brother Patrick, he unfailingly supported me. He mentored me; I could lean on his good humor and joy. May my life's great friend rest in God's peace.



Sheila Mary Milton



"Lady Jane Grey" and Friends

Sheila Mary Milton is a former ITMS Shannon Fellow who has specialized in writing about Merton's mother Ruth and her relationship with her son.