

Acknowledgments

For nearly three years I have lived in the exhilarating if incorporeal company of Margaret Sanger. Because I had no former acquaintance, my comrade was admittedly the product of her writing, the views of others and the tons of material, including intimate correspondence, divided between the Library of Congress and Smith College.

Since documentation on this much publicized woman is vast and since she lived until the fall of 1966, I had assumed that all important facts were known, but was dismayed to find no firm skeletal framework. The three official biographies, all out of print and two of which she wrote, are almost devoid of dates. Contemporary accounts, such as *Who's Who*, either give no dates or wrong ones. Her obituaries agree that she was born in 1883, but this turns out to be the birth year of her younger sister.

Some of the uncertainties arose because Margaret Sanger was a natural storyteller who stressed vivid impressions, not chronology. Most of the omissions were deliberate. As the leader of a cause widely thought to be obscene, if not subversive, she simply avoided some items which might have helped her enemies. Furthermore, always looking much younger than her years, she encouraged the illusion by suppressing telltale dates. Without the help of her relatives, I might never have established even the starting point.

Of those whom I consulted, I am most grateful to her family who answered my questions with candor and patience. Dr. Grant Sanger interrupted a busy schedule to give me several hours and cheerfully replied to later queries. Olive Byrne Richard, Mrs. Sanger's niece,

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