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## Food Services at St. Ben's: The Early History

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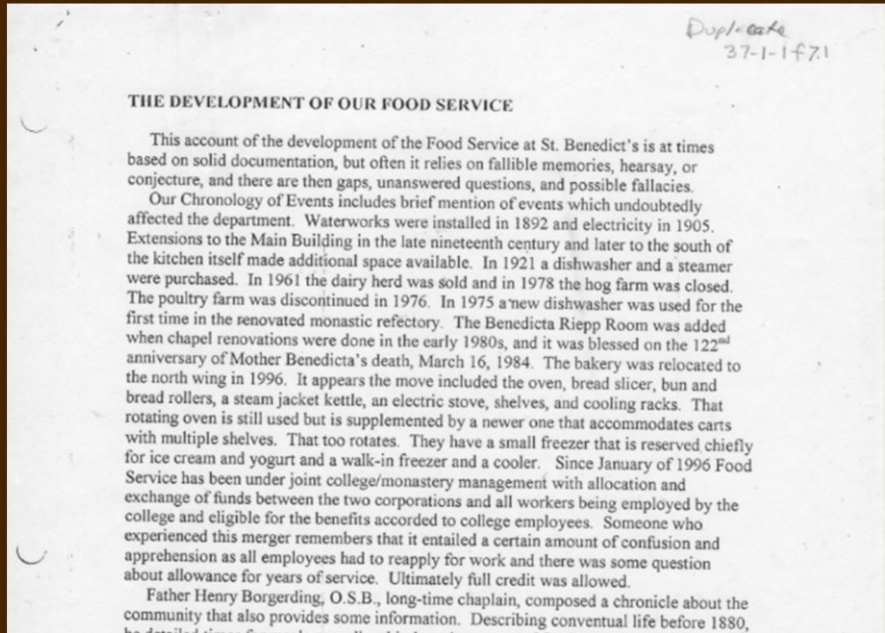
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A Nibble at the (Tasty !) Early History of Food Service at St. Ben's



Photo from SBMA: Main Gertrude Hall 003

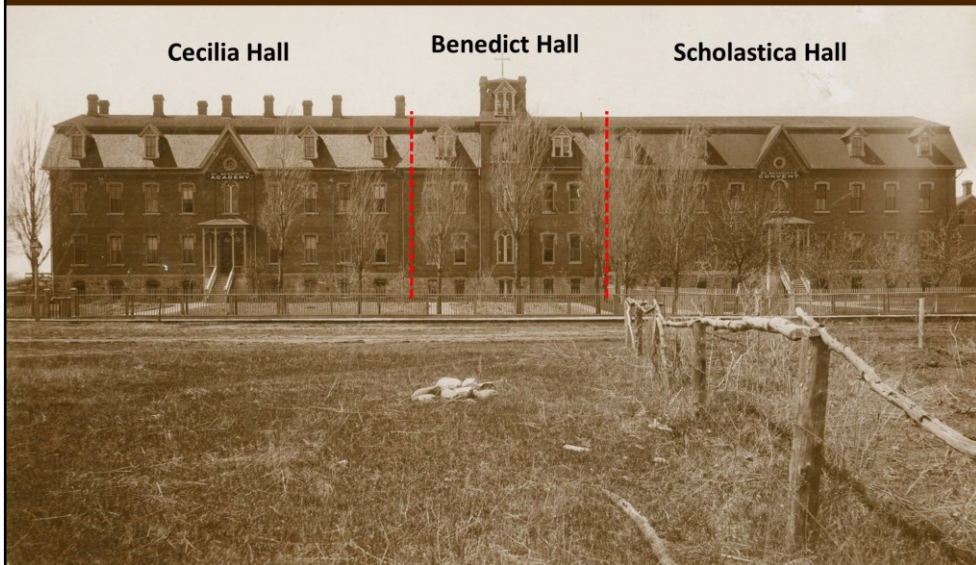
A wonderful historical resource from the Monastery Archives:  
S. Etienne Flaherty & S. Patrice Reed, "The Development of Our Food Service"



From SBMArchives

## 1892: St. Benedict's Convent/Academy

Food was generally prepared on the basement/ground level of these buildings:



St. Benedict's Convent/Academy (Cecilia, Benedict, and Scholastica Halls) in 1892  
<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/26>, SBM.03a

"In 1892 the Convent was enlarged with the addition of St. Scholastica to the northeast corner of St. Benedict, resulting in an elongated 'T' configuration. St. Scholastica was designed to mimic the original St. Cecilia in scale and detailing; it is nine bays long and has the same type of window openings, although the dormers are smaller and have gable roofs with only one double hung window. Centered in the façade is a balconied, one-story, flat roof porch. The gable end has a series of double hung sash on each level, while the rear elevation is essentially the same as the façade except for the porch." -- From National Register Report, "St. Benedict's Convent and College Historic District" (1989).

**Significant dates in the development of St. Ben's Food Service:**

**1892** Waterworks installed

**1905** Electricity installed

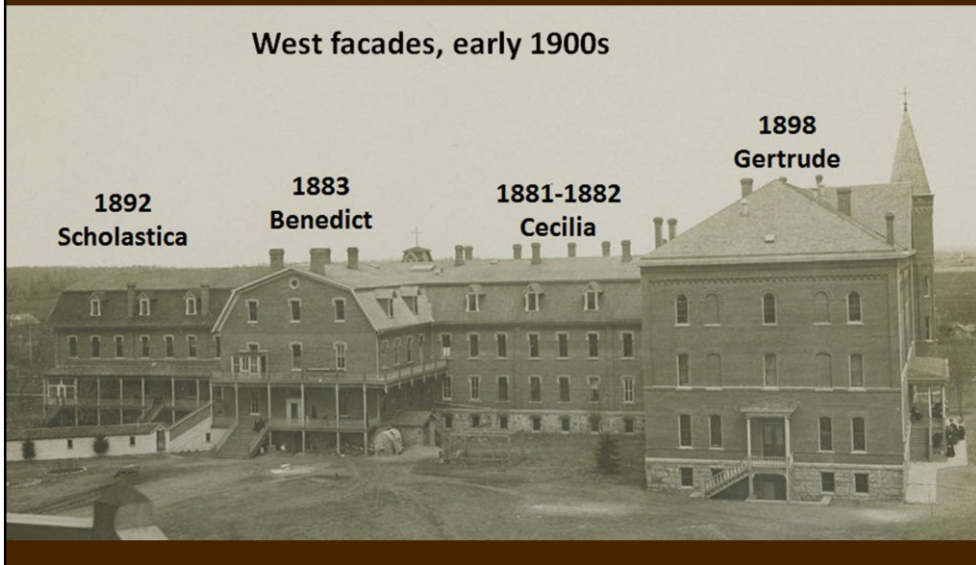


Photo from SBMArchives

1921 Dishwasher and steamer installed

1930s Mechanical refrigeration installed  
(replacing an ice-block cooler)



Photo from SBMArchives



**1938 S. Jameem Mape is the first qualified dietitian on staff  
(state inspections more frequent; CSB seeks accreditation)**



Mr.  
Pfannenstein  
(of St. Joseph  
Meat Market  
acclaim) and  
S. Jameem  
Mape, St.  
Ben's food  
Service and  
Instructor in  
Home  
Economics

Mr. Pfannenstein (of St. Joseph Meat Market acclaim) and S. Jameem Mape, St. Ben's food Service and Instructor in Home Economics.  
Photo from SBMArchives



**St. Wendelin Hall, the meat packing plant, was built in 1954.**

Photo from SBMArchives





Photo from SBMArchives

# CSB's Three New (Old) Buildings



# FOOD FOR FIFTY

Compiled by:

SINA FAYE FOWLER, M.S.  
*Instructor in Institutional Management  
Kansas State College, and*

BESSIE BROOKS WEST, M.A.  
*Professor of Institutional Management  
and Head of Department  
Kansas State College*

NEW YORK  
JOHN WILEY & SONS, Inc.  
LONDON: CHAPMAN & HALL, LIMITED  
1937

164

FOOD FOR FIFTY

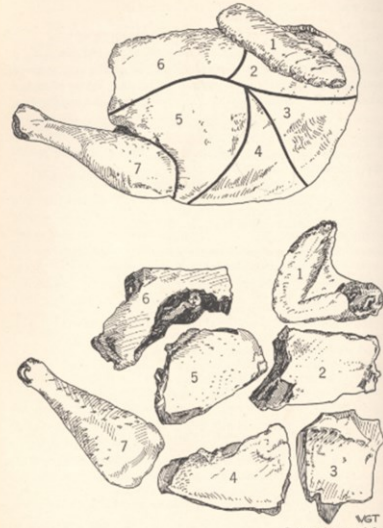


FIG. II.—Cutting seven portions of fowl for fricassee.

1937

One of Food Services' resources, now in the Monastery Archives

Food for Fifty title page 001 37-1-1 f1 and p.164

# FOOD FOR FIFTY

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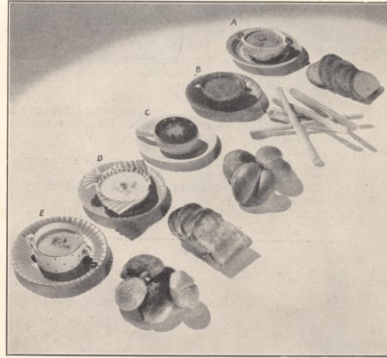
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## SOUPS

Beautiful soup so rich and green,  
Waiting in a hot tureen  
Who for such dainties would not stoop?  
Soup of the evening—beautiful soup.

—*Alice in Wonderland.*



*Courtesy, General Mills, Inc.*

FIG. X.—The right accompaniment may determine the success of the soup course.  
(a) Potage St. Germaine calls for rye bread, (b) Minestrone for Italian bread sticks,  
(c) Onion soup au gratin for hard crusted rolls, (d) Clam chowder for lightly buttered  
toast and (e) Navy bean soup for the hearty plain roll.

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1937

What type of bread to serve with which soup?

Food for Fifty title page 001 37-1-1 f1 and p.239

PART III

MENU PLANNING

The initial step toward a successful meal is a carefully planned menu. The usual dietetic principles and menu-planning suggestions should be followed with special emphasis upon the following points:

1. *The age, sex, and occupation of the group to be served.* In most cases, the type of food suitable for a men's civic club would not be enjoyed by a group of high school girls, nor would the luncheon considered by the high school girls as "perfectly delicious" be fully appreciated by the men's club.

1. *The age, sex, and occupation of the group to be served.* In most cases, the type of food suitable for a men's civic club would not be enjoyed by a group of high school girls, nor would the luncheon considered by the high school girls as "perfectly delicious" be fully appreciated by the men's club. Food preferences are definitely influenced as are food needs, by the age, sex, and occupation of the persons comprising the group being served.

choice of foods. Plan cool, crisp, fresh foods for hot weather. In cold weather the heavier foods high in caloric value may be used. Use foods which are in season; they are less expensive and of a better quality. Certain foods are especially enjoyed at holiday times, such as turkey at Thanksgiving and plum pudding at Christmas.

5. *Equipment needed.* There is a definite relation between the menu and the equipment available for its preparation. The menus should be so planned that the preparation will require only the available equipment. The dining room equipment (dishes, linen, and silver) also limits the extent of the menu, the table setting, and the type of service.

6. *Type of kitchen employees and time for preparation.* If the food is to be prepared by inexperienced class girls or untrained employees, the menu must be kept simple in detail and foods selected that do not require special skill or extra time for preparation. It is always advisable to have a minimum amount of last-minute preparation so that all hot foods may be served *hot* and cold foods *cold*.

1940s Wood stoves and ovens replaced by electric ones



FoodService\_110001 S. Generose Bickler





“Canning was a huge project in the summers; e.g. 700 gallons of green beans.”

1940s  
Stainless steel counters and tables replaced linoleum ones

1942  
Tile floors replaced wooden kitchen floors (which were scrubbed on hands and knees)

Photos: FoodService\_120001 (left) and FoodService\_10001 from SBMA  
 120001: from left: Sisters Mary Andrew Wolf, Philomene Lutgen, Ann Marie Schouweiler, Remberta Westkaemper  
 Quote from “Food Service Management—Historical Background,”  
 St. Ben’s Monastery Record Group 37 Introduction, p. 2

“I entered our community in 1944....My first assignment was to the Foodservice. My job was to work on the potato porch.”



Sister Jane Weber

Quotes from *Nutrition panel Sister Jane Weber.doc* in the SBMA, p. 1 & 2.  
Photo from the SBMA.

I entered our community in 1944....My first assignment was to the Foodservice. My job was to work on the potato porch.

The potato porch was equipped with a commercial electric potato peeler machine. The potatoes were put into a large tank along with water and they spun until the peelings were off. There was an emery stone at the bottom of the tank.

The campus looked very much like a farm. We had a large potato field. The Sisters helped with the harvest. The potatoes were then stored, until needed in the root cellar – that mound in front of Mary Hall.

Back to the potatoes. When they came out of the electric potato peeler, some of the older Sisters came to take the eyes out and to cut them up. They prayed the rosary and litanies during this time.



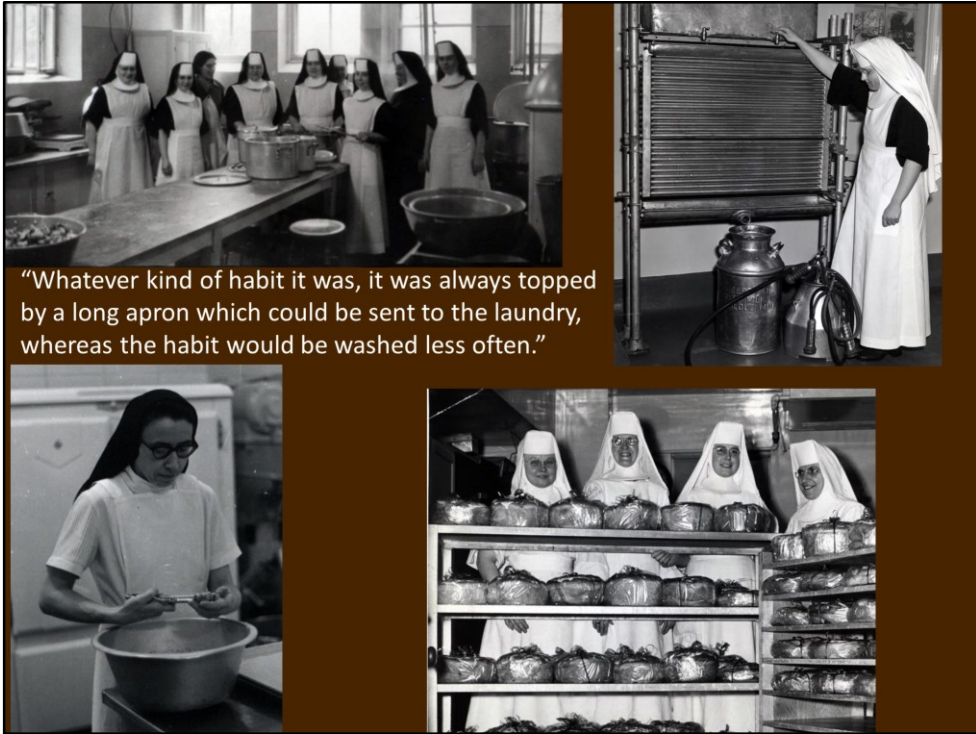
Sister Jane Weber

Quotes from *Nutrition panel Sister Jane Weber.doc* in the SBMA, p. 1 & 2.  
Photo from the SBMA.



“In earlier years the Sisters wore black serge for work. Later they had black poplin habits...and still later they had white garb.”

Photos from SBMA, clockwise from upper left: FoodService\_90001; FoodService\_130001; FoodService\_160001 [from left: Sisters Jeanice Janski, Boniface Salm, Innocent Pruesser, Philomena Lutgen; Christmas sweet bread for Doctors in Ogden 1940s]; FoodService\_20001.



Photos from SBMA, clockwise from upper left: FoodService\_90001; FoodService\_130001 S. Myrna Fischer with milk separator; FoodService\_160001; FoodService\_20001.



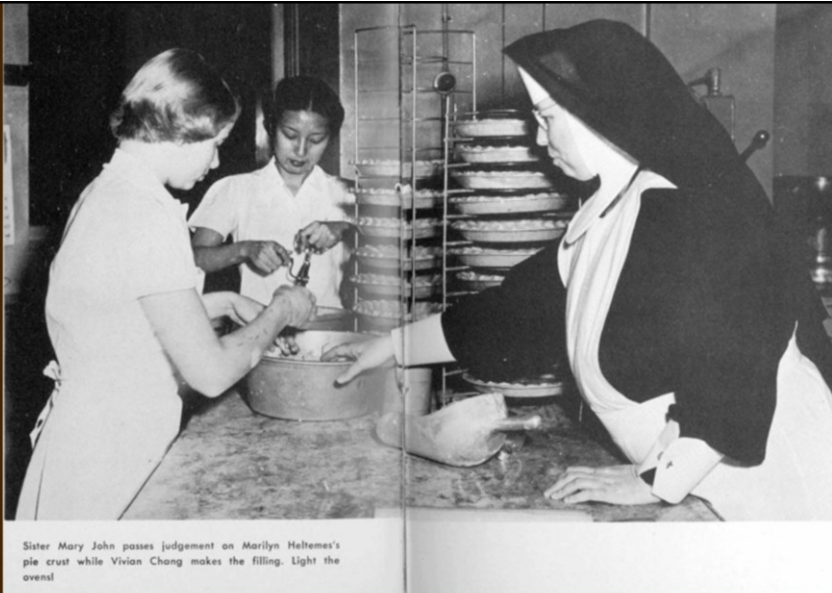
“Sister Mary Elizabeth ...and a host of others were turkey girls when they first came to the community. They named the turkeys, Roosevelt, Delano, Truman, Eisenhower...” Each year the Novices helped pluck feathers on these turkeys.

Sister Jane Weber



Text from SBMA: *Nutrition panel Sister Jane Weber.doc*





“The hired girls lived on campus under the supervision of a prefect. They wore cotton dresses and starched headbands with ‘K’ on the front.”

Photo from 1955 *Facula*

Quote from Flaherty & Reed, “The Development of Our Food Service,” p. 2, SBMA RG 37-1-1 f7.1.

“The hired girls worked long hours and followed a schedule comparable to that of the aspirants. They were apparently happy here despite the work and the discipline.”



“Many of them eventually joined the community and became kitchen sisters and cooks and bakers themselves.”

Photo from 1960 *Facula*

Quote from Flaherty & Reed, “The Development of Our Food Service,” 2005, p. 2, SBMA RG 37-1-1 f7.1.

One of them recalls that they had times of fun and that when they heard the prefect approaching, they would cease whatever they might be engaged in and begin praying the rosary - somewhere in the middle.

Hired  
girls'  
stories



They sneaked out of their rooms at night to go "over town"

Photo from 1960 *Facula*

Quote from Flaherty & Reed, "The Development of Our Food Service," 2005, p. 2, SBMA RG 37-1-1 f7.1.

- We raised tomatoes, green beans, rhubarb, gooseberries, grapes...
- We filled gallon jars with beans, processed them in the steam kettles. They needed 3 hours to process, so we did this canning overnight. We'd get them in the processing kettle and go to our break room, setting an alarm to wake us in 3 hours.
- We also canned rhubarb sauce and different kinds of jams.
- We put up a lot of sauerkraut in huge crock jars, kept in the root cellar. We took it out as we needed it...

"The two acres of orchard with apples and plums on south campus ceased to be profitable for it was so close to the Main Building it was subject to constant raiding by students."



Sister Jane Weber

Quotes from *Nutrition panel Sister Jane Weber.doc* in the SBMA, p. 1 & 2.

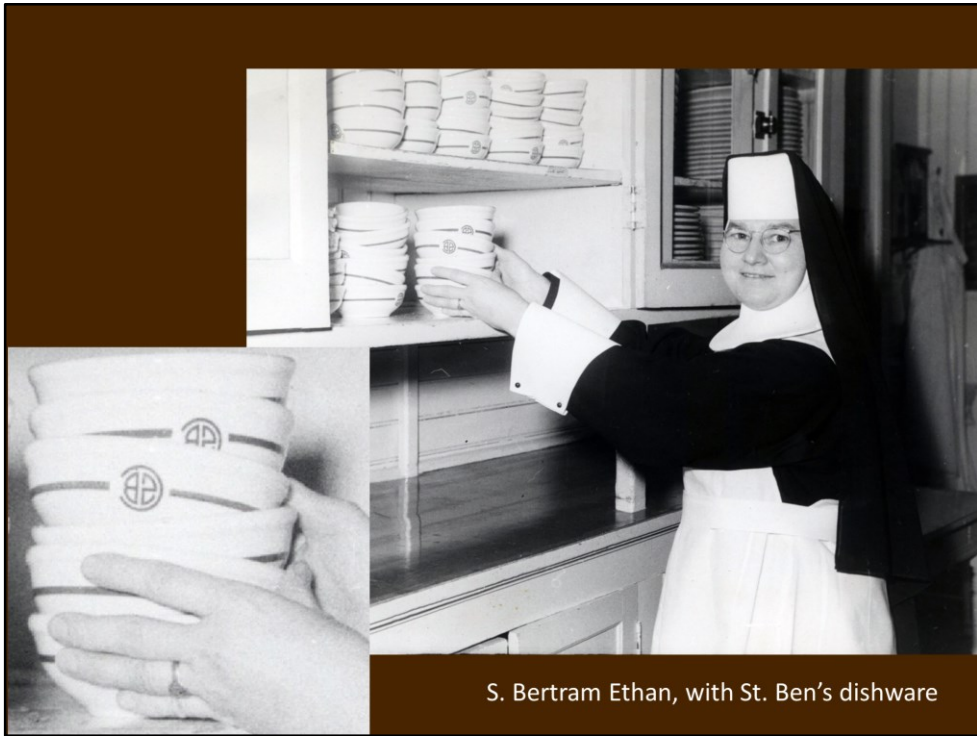


FoodService\_100001



FoodService\_70001 Refectory 1950s





S. Bertram Ethan, with St. Ben's dishware

Photo from SBMA: FoodService\_170001 S. Bertram Ethan with bowls.jpg

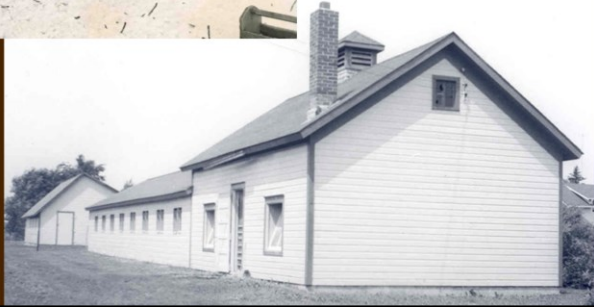
1961 Dairy herd sold



1976 Poultry farm discontinued



Turkeys



Chicken Coop



“It was only in 1996, when 80% of the consumers were college students, that the Community handed over the management of the food service and leased the kitchen, bakery, cafeteria and dining areas to the College.”

S. Eugenia Hartung, one of the last sisters to work full time in Food Service for the College



Photo from SBMA: FoodService\_50001 S. Eugenia Hartung 1960s.jpg

“Food Service Management—Historical Background,” SBMArchives Record Group 37 Introduction, p. 1

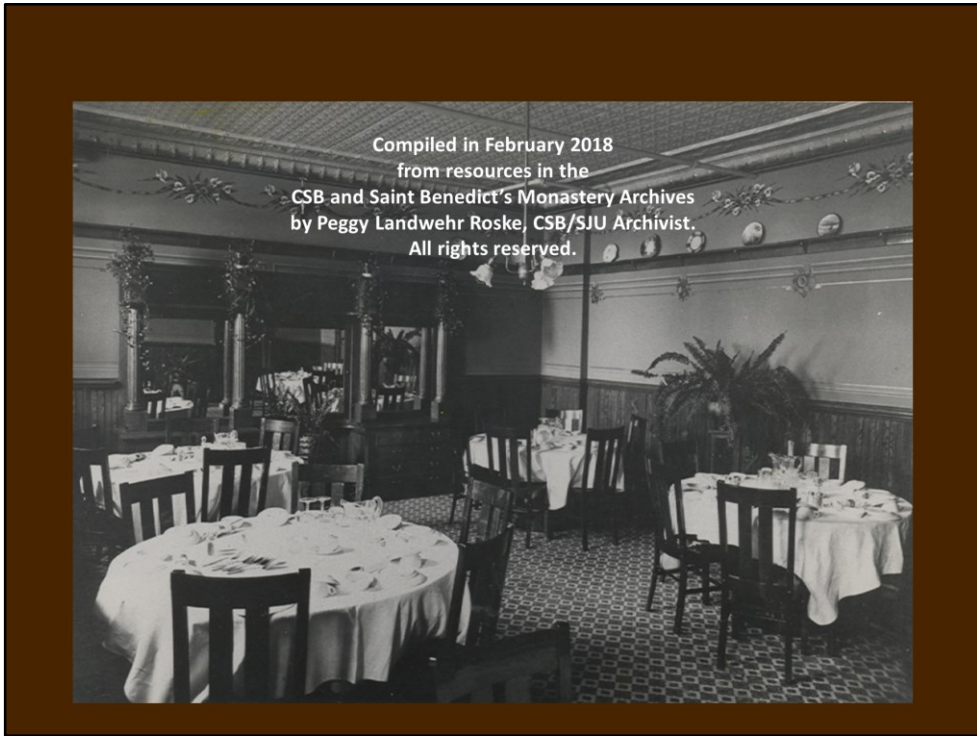


Photo from SBMA: Main Gertrude Hall 003