PREFACE

A study of the Order of Friars Minor in the Middle Ages in the Crown of Aragon presents many difficulties, most of which are due to the fact that many of the Franciscan archives belonging to the individual houses are no longer extant. Furthermore, the documents which do remain are few and tend to deal mainly with economic or legal matters. The daily life of the friars, therefore, would be impossible to reconstruct without having recourse to the archives maintained by other bodies, the most important being the Crown of Aragon Archives. Many of the documents contained in the registers preserved in these Archives refer to the Franciscans but to find them is a laborious and time-consuming task which today is made more complicated by the fact that most of these registers have been microfilmed and the reader no longer has access to the originals. While microfilming is an excellent way to ensure that the registers themselves do not deteriorate, and can be useful for certain types of studies, it makes it extremely difficult to undertake a thorough search for specific names or topics in hundreds of registers over a long period of time. It was with this in mind that the present work was conceived.

The elaboration of this reference manual has presented many challenges. It seemed appropriate to ensure that while facilitating archival references it should, at the same time, serve as a nomenclator of Franciscan friars. Basically, the aim has been to produce a work which, far from being definitive, should form the basis of a more extensive permanent guide to Franciscan studies. Consequently, the most important aspect was to make available the hundreds of references to individual Franciscans obtained during a systematic search, folio by folio, of the registers housed in the Crown of Aragon Archives, from the reign of James I to that of Alfonso the Magnanimous.

These archives, although containing the most numerous references, are not the only source for Franciscan names, and there are many other archives which supplement the information found in them. It has not been possible to include all of them, for reasons of space and ease of consultation. The reader will find included the majority of those from Catalonia and Valencia, and a few from Majorca and elsewhere. There are some notable omissions, largely because the details found were either insignificant or could be located easily in published material.

The names of some friars do not appear in the general nomenclator either because the information concerning them was unreliable or incomplete, and therefore had no place in a manual of this kind or because their names did not occur in the archives we included. An exception has been made for the friars from Puigcerdà whose names are not only included in the general nomenclator up to the end of the sixteenth century when the house was closed but also in a special nomenclator. In view of the fact that there are so many surviving documents relating to Sant Francesc de Puigcerdà, and the fact that it enjoyed a certain independence from the other houses as it was in the franciscan province of Provence and not that of Aragon, we decided it would be preferable to provide a special nomenclator rather than include a disproportionate amount of references alongside the names in the general nomenclator.

There follows an Annotated bibliography containing the works which the present author found the most useful but there are many others which the reader may wish to consult. In general, these are older works but the annotated bibliography has been drawn up to reflect the main purpose of this volume, to produce references pertaining to individual friars rather than to the institutional development or spiritual mission of the Franciscans. There is also a descriptive list of archival sources with the relevant abbreviations which will be found immediately following the list of friars and references.
Every effort has been made to be as accurate as possible, and in the cases where archives have recently changed the classification system, the references have been updated to conform to the changes. It should be emphasized, however, that this manual includes the names of the majority of known medieval Franciscan friars in the Crown of Aragon and those who had some connection with it, but in no way claims to be exhaustive.

Finally, in dedicating this work to archivists, librarians and historians who have given of their time and expertise, the author wishes to express her profound gratitude for their helpfulness and willingness to go to great lengths to uncover possible sources of material. She wishes especially to thank the librarian and staff of the John M. Kelly Library at the University of St. Michael’s College, Toronto, for their support and assistance during what at times has seemed an interminable project, and to recognise the help of many others who are too numerous to name individually but without whom this manual would never have been completed. Clearly any error which remains is the responsibility of the author.