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COLUMBUS' FIRST CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Few remember that there was a "Catholic College of Columbus" in 1884. It had, at the most, fifty students and continued for only four years.

Sadlier's Catholic Directory, Almanac and Ordo for 1884 under Institutions of the Diocese of Columbus, page 262, has this entry:

Catholic College of Columbus, Northwood, North High Street, Columbus, Ohio. Rev. H. L. Magevney, President, with three professors, 30 boarders, 20 day-scholars.

The next year the entry was:

Catholic College of Columbus, Northwood, North High Street, Columbus, Ohio. Rev. John Larkin, Ph.D., President; with four professors, 20 boarders, 20 day-scholars.

In 1886 the location of the college is changed:

Catholic College of Columbus, 177 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio. Rev. John B. Oeinck, President, with two professors, 40 scholars.

The final entry in the Directory was in 1887:

Catholic College of Columbus, 177 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio. Rev. John B. Oeinck, President, with three professors, 40 scholars.

The first president of the little college was Father Hugh L. Magevney, S.J., who in 1881 was professor of ecclesiastical history and sacred eloquence at the College of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, conducted by the Jesuit Fathers at Woodstock, Maryland. In 1883 he was stationed at the Jesuit parish, St. Aloysius, in Washington.

After leaving Columbus Father Magevney served for four years at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Morrison, in the Vicariate-Apostolic of Colorado, where Rev. D. Pantanella, S.J., was pastor.

He next spent six years at the Jesuit College of the Sacred Heart, Highlands, Denver, Colorado, where he was listed as professor of English literature and eloquence.

Beginning in 1896 Father Magevney served for four years in the Diocese of Little Rock, Arkansas. The first two years were spent at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Little Rock, after which he went to Fayetteville, Washington County, Arkansas.

Father Magevney returned to Ohio and spent the last years of his life in the archdiocese of Cincinnati, where he died May 2, 1908.

The second president of Columbus' first Catholic College, the Rev. John Larkin, Ph.D., came to Columbus from Mt. St. Mary's Theological Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland, where he was a member of the faculty. After two years at the college in Columbus, he became pastor at Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Wellston, Ohio.

After one year at Wellston, Father Larkin transferred to the Diocese of Nashville, Tenn., where he remained until his death probably in 1911. His first years in Tennessee were spent at the Cathedral in Nashville. He spent one year each in Brownsville, Haywood County, and at Immaculate Conception Church, Knoxville. He was then appointed to St. Brigid's, Memphis, where he remained for twelve years. His last active years were as chaplain at the Old Soldiers' Home, Johnson City, Washington County, Tenn.

The Rev. John B. Oeinck, a priest of the Diocese of Columbus, was the third president of the Columbus Catholic College. He was born in Quincy, Illinois, Feb. 17, 1858. After completing studies at St. Francis College in Illinois, and Mt. St. Mary's, Emmitsburg, Maryland, he was ordained by Bishop Watterson, Aug. 25, 1885. His first assignment must have been to the little college where he was listed as president in 1886, a post he held until the demise of the institution after two years.

Father Oeinck was pastor at St. Louis Church, Gallipolis, Ohio, for five years, after which he served in the same capacity at St. Bernard's, Corning, for eight years. In 1904 he was appointed pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, Fulda, a post he held until his death Oct. 29, 1929. Father Oeinck was fluent in German as in English, and was a highly respected priest of the Diocese of Columbus at the time of his death.

According to the Columbus city Directory of 1883-4, the Columbus Catholic College was located on the east side of North High Street, at Northwood Avenue, north of Woodward Avenue. The next two issues of the city directory locate the college at Northwood, east side of North High Street, north of Lane Avenue.

For its third year the Columbus Catholic College was located at 177 East Broad Street. This was most likely the southeast corner of East Broad Street and Fourth Street. During this time Father Oeinck lived at the northwest corner of Fifth and East Broad streets, the site of the Cathedral.

St. Aloysius Seminary (about which the Catholic Record Society hopes to have an historical article) was discontinued about 1882. It is surmised that Columbus Catholic College was an attempt to fill the gap caused by the closing of the Seminary.

The Catholic Record Society is anxious to have any information about the first Catholic College of Columbus. Data about former students is especially wanted.

EARLY CATHOLIC MIGRATION INTO
SOUTH EASTERN OHIO

by Kathy Elizabeth Kreppner
(continued)

Irish and German workers clashed in 1839 while constructing the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. Blood was spilled in Cincinnati in 1842 following a German military parade. These immigrants were proud of their heritage; they fought over it and they clung to it. For example, one of the Catholic churches erected that year in "Pigeon's Roost," Jackson Township, Guernsey County, was named Saint Patrick's due to the majority of the faithful being Irish or of Irish descent.

From the best information at hand, the earliest Catholics in Guernsey County appear to have been construction workers on the National Road, "...at Fairview in 1827 or 1828. Priests from the parish in Belmont County near the Monroe County line....said Mass in private homes in Fairview for the benefit of (Irish) Catholic immigrants....who were working on the National Road...."(55). Bishop Purcell's Letter, published in the Cincinnati Telegraph, a Catholic newspaper, on June 27, 1834, witnesses Catholic settlement along the National Road:

(around June 2, 1824)

at Cambridge, and near the residence of Mr. McCune, on the same (National) road, there are several Catholic families anxious for an opportunity of practicing their holy religion. A numerous congregation assembles occasionally at Washington, 8 miles from Cambridge, where church is held, at present, in the house of Mr. Lawn, to whose own and his neighbors' strong attachment to the 'Faith once delivered to the Saints', we render most willing testimony.....In Middletown (Middlebourne) there are a few Catholics, but there is no church (56).

The following day Bishop Purcell preached in the schoolhouse at Fairview and "...administered the Holy Sacrament....in the house of Mr. Scott, to a small number of fervent communicants" (57). It is interesting to note that the Bishop commented on the scatteredness of the Catholics in Guernsey County; he states the following: "...the distance of his place from the residence of a priest and the want of a church have hitherto essentially impeded the diffusion and practice of our doctrines in this (far eastern) section of Guernsey County (58).

A church was constructed between 1840 and 1845 in Washington, which is about 8 miles from Cambridge. A letter written by Susanna Gallagher to George Washington Gildea in Pennsylvania, 1844, states that "this church will be eighty by forty five in the Gothic style and dedicated to God under the invocation of Ireland's glorious apostle (Saint Patrick)." "As there was no resident priest in Washington at this time, Father Boomer (Bloomer, Gloomer?) and other priests of Temperanceville attended this church...."(59).

The Central Ohio Railroad (later the Baltimore and Ohio) traversed Wills Township, and by-passed Old Washington. Thus, many of the Irish Catholic constructionists settled in Wills Creek. With many of the Catholics at Old Washington moving to Gibson Station near Wills Creek and the numerous Irish populace, a church was needed. It was Dr. George Gildea who donated a plot of his farm land in Wills Twp., bought the building of Saint Patrick's in Old Washington, and helped to move it to the new site during the 1860's.

This migration, although before the 1848 famine in Ireland, is symptomatic of the growing crisis of the young church on the plains -- ethnic/culture clash.

Non-Anglo-old-Irish settlements appeared in Dresden, Wills Creek and Zanesville.

The town of Dresden, fourteen miles from Zanesville, was settled by German Catholic pioneers who named the settlement after their native town in Germany. The Ohio Canal brought more German Catholics from 1841 to 1848, and still later, Irish emigrants settled here. A frame church, Saint Michael the Archangel, was built on Railroad Street in the 1850's.

Wills Creek, in southern Coshocton County in Linton Township, about eighteen miles northeast of Dresden, was also cared for by the Dominicans. About 1850, two mission churches, Saint Nicholas and Saint Mary, were built due to the ethnic/culture differences between the French and German descent families (59b). As for the other two mission settlements of Dresden and Mattingly's, Father Bender followed the Dominican priests of Somerset and then Zanesville in caring for the spiritual needs of the parishioners.

At first the Catholic Church in Zanesville was sued by all Catholics of the town. However, as the German population increased, the English and German-speaking Catholics chose to separate to form two churches. "From the Catholic Telegraph of 1836, it appears that the Bishop and Father Stahlschmidt visited Zanesville and the German speaking parishioners" (60). Thus, Saint Nicholas, a small gray church, was erected on the corner of Main Street and Greenwood Avenue. The Rt. Rev. John Baptist Purcell, D.D., Bishop of Cincinnati, dedicated the 45 by 60 feet church on Dec. 1, 1842. On Dec. 26, 1842, the first resident pastor, Rev. Joseph Gallinger, arrived. He remained so until April 4, 1847, at which time Father Otto Borgess became pastor (61).

Another colorful example of ethnic/culture differences also occurred in Zanesville. In May, 1832, Father Charles Montgomery, the brother of Father Samuel Montgomery, succeeded Father Miles, who was elected Prior of St. Rose Convent, Springfield, Kentucky. In 1834, at Saint John the Baptist Church, the first Dominican to be ordained in Ohio was Father John George Alleman, O.P. He received the Sacrament of Holy Orders from the Rt. Rev. John Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati. Father Cubero was assigned the assistantship at the Church of St. John the Baptist. He was again a assistant pastor under the aforementioned converted Father Wilson, who was made pastor as Father Montgomery was elected Provincial of the Dominicans in 1840. Father Montgomery died in 1860 in the rectory.

The assistant pastor, Father Cubero, was Spanish and had a terrible time in speaking English. To make matters more pressing, the Father also had his own views of how one was to live in one's home. Thus, on both counts, Father Cubero clashed with the nearly all Irish or of Irish descent congregation. As often as the parishioners kept him in hot water, he furiously scolded from the pulpit. The ethnic/culture clash continued. However, Father's departure was pleasant, with one often-scolded couple remarking: "Mike, hasn't he bin scolding us hot and heavy ever since he's been here/" "Arrah, be aisy," says Mike; "it's all right; what wud we ha bin if he hadn't scolded us?" (62).

The ethnic/culture clash also occurred with a German priest who filled in during a pastor's absence. His extreme strictness conflicted with the Irish heritage. Needless to say, these conflicts resulted in misunderstandings and difficulties for the priests and the congregation.

The above are two excellent examples of the ethnic/culture clashes, on the Zanesville local level, that occurred throughout the United States (63).

Conclusion

Catholicism from the 1790's to 1850 was the religious faith of a small minority of the population. Its adherents, suffering from the traditional prejudices which most Americans entertained for the Catholic Church, migrated west, and eventually settled scatteredly throughout Ohio and surrounding areas. The migrants of the Faith settled before the clergy, and thus, followed the Faith as they had known it. Thus, the Catholics of old-English stock, with roots firmly planted in the American colonies, especially Maryland, had few, if any, cultural differences from the non-Catholic migrants. With this commonness between them Protestants and Catholics had uncommonly good relations. Catholics had established their own schools and newspapers, but it is interesting to note that "...with the exception of the seminaries, all these institutions were open to Catholic and Protestant alike" (64). The local study cited many instances of Protestants attending Catholic services, donating money or land, and even converting. This was due not only to the basic commonness of the ethnic root of the pioneers, but also to organization of the Church. This Catholic "army" of priests in the west, which constantly grew in number, worked in close contact with their superiors, and did so night and day.

The men who acted as Protestant ministers were but pious pioneers who turned from weekday labors with ax and gun to conduct Sunday prayer service. Because such men had no knowledge of theology, and no schools of Protestant divinity appeared west of the Appalachians till long after the frontier days were past, this was a time of innumerable schisms from old sects and the foundation of as many entirely new creeds (65).

The local study recognizes the number of sects, and does not overlook the evidence of Protestant circuit riders. However, from the best information at hand, one must concede to the organization, training and universal practices of the minority Catholics the art of being more unified in religious -- not ethnic/cultural -- beliefs than the many Protestant sects.

As the number of immigrants took an upswing in the late 20's and especially the following two decades, the Church was given a foreign coloring. No longer did Protestants and the "new" Catholics share common roots. It appears that the ethnic/cultural heritage gave an increased feeling of separation to the Catholics, especially as this minority religion was propagandized as designing to conquer and control the area west of the Appalachian Mountains. Increasing numbers migrated to this area due to the availability of jobs in transportation construction and rich farm lands, as well as to escape nativistic prejudices, which were especially directed against Catholic foreigners. Nevertheless, anti-Catholic, anti-foreign

violence did exist in Ohio -- the Ohio State Times "printed anti-Irish and anti-Catholic items, such as a riot and murder on the Central Railroad involving Irish laborers in Zanesville....", but, such acts occurred most often during the Know-Nothing Period, which followed the great wave of immigrants, and was not evidenced in this local study. Moreover, this investigation depicts the Catholic immigrant clinging to his ethnic/cultural heritage on the local level. It also depicts how the ethnic identity caused clashes among Catholics: it caused congregations to split and build churches according to their national background (Wills Creek and Saint Nicholas), as well as it caused disagreement and misunderstandings between a priest of one background and a congregation of another (Zanesville). In spite of the ethnic/culture clashes, the Catholic Faith in South-Eastern Ohio, according to baptismal and marriage records, cemetery records, genealogical studies, personal letters, as well as the increasing number of priests and churches, grew in number by more than birth increases. The increasing number of conversions and immigrants played a major role in the growth of this minority religion in this region.

This minority is usually overlooked, neglected, or lost in a sea of vague statements in state and county histories. Hopefully, this study went beyond national generalities, to probe specific local instances, and substantiated the vital role of Catholicism in helping to settle and develop South-Eastern Ohio.

(Footnotes and references in this article will be given in the next issue of the "Bulletin".)

Gifts

The Catholic Record Society is most grateful to Father Thomas Bennett, of St. Charles Preparatory School, Columbus for to donation of two rare volumes. Of especial interest is his gift of a bound volume of the sermons of Bishop Rosecrans, written in his own hand-writing. The second gift was the booklet, The Golden Secret of Green Acres, written by Monsignor Joseph A. Cousins, Ph.D., a member of the faculty of St. Charles College. It was prepared as a pageant for the convention of the National Catholic Life Conference in Columbus, Nov. 6, 1949. Monsignor Cousins died shortly before the convention, Oct. 16, 1949. His little volume is now hard to find.



A Souvenir

Shown here is a souvenir given by Bishop Fenwick in 1825 to Mrs. John S. Dugan, widow of a Catholic pioneer of Zanesville. Her husband was killed in a stage-coach while driving the Bishop from Cumberland to Ohio. The text under the picture is in very old Italian. It reads:

Jesus Christ says: He who wishes to come after me, must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.

DICE GESÙ CRISTO
Chi vuol venire dietro di me, nieghi se stesso, prenda la sua Croce ogni giorno, e mi seguiti.

Eterno Padre in nome di Gesù misericordia. Si avverte, che vi sono cento giorni d'Indulgenza ogni volta, che si recita la suddetta Giaculatoria, concessa dal Sommo Pontefice Pio VI.

Sia fatta, lodata, ed in eterno esaltata la Giustissima, Altissima, ed Amabilissima Volontà di Dio in tutte le cose. Amen.

Ogni volta che si recita la suddetta Giaculatoria l'Indulgenza di cento giorni e una volta il mese Indulgenza Plenaria a quelli che l'avranno recitata ogni di Confessato e Comunicato applicabile alli Fedeli Defonti concessa da Papa Pio VII li 2. Mag 1800. per lo spazio di 20. Anni.

Eternal Father, for the sake of Jesus, have mercy. (100 days indulgence for each recitation of this ejaculation. Granted by Pope Pius VI.)

May the most Just, the most High, and the most Loved Will of God be done, praised and eternally exalted in all things. Amen. (100 days indulgence each time, and a plenary indulgence once a month

for those who recite this ejaculation daily and go to Confession and Communion. The indulgence is applicable to the Faithful Departed. Granted by Pope Pius VII, May 2, 1800, for 20 years.)