



# Barquilla de la Santa Maria

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## The Shepherd Affair -- Catalyst for Catholic Action in 1902

**Coming to Columbus: Convent Life Exposed, Great Lectures on Romanism, Opportunity to Hear the Eloquent and Brilliant Ex-Romanist Margaret L. Shepherd, nee Sister Magdalene Adelaide, Late Consecrated Penitent of Arno's Court Nunnery, Bristol, England...Lectures at the I.O.O.F. Hall, South High Street...**

Thus, or something very like this, read the four-page leaflet handed to bookkeeper Miss Lizzie Sullivan of North Ninth Street in Columbus on a Winter day early in 1902. Outraged at the slurs against her religion and her people, she penned a reply that was published in *The Columbus Press* on Sunday, January 26, setting off one of the more interesting chains of events in the history of Catholicism in Columbus.

### Personal History

Mrs. Margaret Lisle Shepherd, or as she was then known, Louisa Egerton, in October of 1879 was sentenced to six months in the old Westminster prison in Tothill Fields, England, for obtaining money under false pretenses. She then was about 21 years old and already she had been in two or three penitentiary institutions in London. For the workers at the prison she wove a story of an Indian army father (an artillery colonel named Philip Egerton Probyn), work as governess in a nursery, being led astray, losing a child, and being connected with many persons of rank and distinction.

When she had served her time in Tothill Fields, she was placed in the St. James Home in Fulham, a Church of England institution, in March of

1880. She was registered there as Louisa Helen Westley, told the same tales, and left of her own volition in July, after only four months. She "had such pleasant manners it was difficult for those not experienced not to be taken in by her." However, "Not a word she said could be believed." Shortly after, she greatly deceived the clergy of St. Albans, and obtained the interest of people by representing herself as connected with a well-known clergyman, whereas in fact she had met his daughter who was staying at the St. James Home while she was there.

As Mrs. Georgina Parkyn she landed in Bodwin Gaol in 1882 on charges of forgery and false pretenses, "but she pleaded her own case so cleverly that she was acquitted." (She had married Richard Parkyn of Roche, Cornwall, but the story goes that they both had lied about their means and, after mutual recriminations, they separated.)

In 1883 she was taken as a prostitute to the Catholic "penitentiary" in Arno's Court, Bristol, the Convent of the Good Shepherd, perhaps her first and only real exposure to the Catholic faith, which she turned against so vehemently a few years later. She ran away from there and wandered into the Salvation Army barracks in

the same city, identified herself as Margaret Herbert, and represented herself as homeless and anxious to go the Salvation Army Rescue homes in London. The Army sent her to London to live in their Home there. This was during the "famed Armstrong case" and she "was employed to ascertain facts concerning the case." One day during this work she was allowed to go to the city, but she escaped her escort and later was found "much the worse for drink." The Salvation Army then kept her in separate lodgings and, at her urging, sent her to America to avoid the evil influence of her old companions, as she convinced them. It was about 1885 that she was sent to the Salvation Army in Hamilton, Ontario.

By 1887 she had moved to Boston and there she entered into a new, "respectable" phase of her activities, writing an "autobiography" called *The Little Mother*. She joined the anti-Catholic movement, started the Society of Loyal Women of American Liberty, and was that group's first president. In 1889 she published *Confessional Unveiled...*, which was revised and published about 1894 as a 44-page booklet titled *Secret Confession to the Priest and the Abomination of Pre-Natal Baptism Exposed; as Taught and Practiced by the Priests of Rome*. She also wrote *The Pope, The Jesuits, and the People*.

Soon she moved to Chicago where two men appeared, each of whom she called her husband. One was Asa B. Shepherd, from whom she took the name she commonly used; the other was M. V. Riordan. Riordan, she claimed, was a defrocked priest (perhaps Church of England). (He was in Columbus about the winter of 1890; one wonders what he was doing in Ohio.) In 1891 the Chicago branch of the Society of Loyal Women discovered her background and, embarrassed, they seceded from the society and made an effort to induce the Boston branch to discountenance her. The Bostonians sustained her, though many members ceased attending their meetings.



*Mrs. Shepherd, from her book The Pope, the Jesuits, and the People. Courtesy of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary Library, Wynnewood, Pa.*

In the spring of 1893 Mrs. Shepherd appeared in St. Thomas, Woodstock, London, and neighboring towns in Ontario, where she reaped the benefit of a strong anti-Catholic feeling. She told suggestive stories of her bad birth and her dissolute life, along with tales of priests' letters being found in strange places, rifles and ammunition stockpiled in Catholic church cellars, and a massacre of Protestants arranged for the preceding September. She also was in Prince Edward Island, Toronto, and many other places. Her practice was to "turn the edge of incriminating evidence and to convert every condemnation into useful advertising matter." There she founded the Protestant Protective Association.

#### Controversy and Arrest in Columbus

Mrs. Shepherd had come to Columbus for several years prior to 1902, abuse of Catholics

being her trade, making vague and general charges without name, date, or place, but until that year the Catholics generally ignored her.

She scheduled a lecture in Columbus for January 26, 1902 and advertised it by means of hand-bills, in which she challenged any of the Catholic clergy or laity to attend her lectures and debate her. (Fifteen cents was the price of admission to a lecture.) No notice of her presence was taken by the newspapers until January 26 (Sunday) when *The Columbus Press* ran a letter from Miss L. Sullivan, 199 North Ninth Street. Elizabeth (Lizzie) C. Sullivan, a 23-year old bookkeeper, daughter of the late Paul P. and Margaret Sullivan, in whose home she still lived, described herself as "a Catholic young lady." She would not attend any of the lectures, but professed herself "ready and willing to challenge" Shepherd through the pages of *The Press*. Among other general remarks, she challenged Shepherd to attempt to prove her assertions by having her audience inspect the confessionals, visit the convents, and examine the lives of their Catholic neighbors.

Claiming to have once been a nun, in her lectures Mrs. Shepherd told as truths "the lascivious visions of her own corrupt imagination -- the lies of a prostitute about the priests and nuns of the Catholic Church." In conjunction with her lectures she sold a book, *Revelations of the Secret Confession -- Horrors of the Carmelite Nunnery*.

Shepherd apparently left Columbus after that lecture, but soon returned and on February 1 wrote a reply to Miss Sullivan that appeared in *The Press* of February 2. This letter consisted largely of a list of headings from a purported translation of *Gury's Moral Theology*, a Catholic handbook, chosen apparently for their usefulness in leading astray the imaginations of her readers. Sullivan replied with a quite creditable letter that appeared in *The Press* on February 3. She noted

that Shepherd had not answered the challenge to have her audience inspect the confessionals, convents, and lives of the Catholics; she challenged Shepherd to quote the passages in the only approved, Latin edition of Gury; and she explained a few of the headings that Shepherd had noted. She closed, "You conclude that it would be of no benefit to continue this controversy, as you are unwilling to take advantage of my position. Be candid, in this one instance, at least, and admit that one reason for your being unwilling to continue it is that it would not involve any 'fifteen-cent admissions' which you could 'take advantage' of for your material benefit. I am willing, therefore, that you should 'take advantage of my position,' for I feel that I am well equipped with 'knowledge of my religion' to hold the fort with the standard of 'Truth.'" Mrs. Shepherd made no further reply in the newspaper.

Other than the exchange in *The Press*, the series of lectures apparently did not attract much public attention, but they aroused much indignation among Catholics, who failed to see any reason why they should remain silent sufferers of the calumnies coming from such polluted lips. She "carried her brazen impudence beyond the bounds of endurance, and it was felt that Catholic manhood and self-respect demanded that some action should be taken."

Within several days a return Columbus engagement was announced, to commence in the Odd Fellows' Hall, 198 1/2 South High Street, on Sunday afternoon, February 16. On Saturday, February 15, representatives of the prominent local Catholic societies called on Director Byrne of the city's Law Department and requested that he draft affidavits against Shepherd. Three affidavits were drawn up and were sworn to by Charles A. Brown (an employee of *The Catholic Columbian*, shortly thereafter President of Columbus Printing Co.) and patrolman Peter Albanese. Two affidavits accused her of selling

and offering for sale lewd and obscene literature (the book *Revelations...*) at the I.O.O.F. hall on January 26. A third affidavit charging her with disorderly conduct and inciting to riot was prepared in case there were troubles at the lecture. Warrants were issued and it was planned to arrest her on Sunday afternoon. The newspapers somehow got ahold of this information and published it in their Sunday morning editions. Detective Frank Wolf, detailed to arrest Mrs. Shepherd, had difficulty finding her, but from a description he had been given he recognized her as she arrived at the I.O.O.F. hall to deliver her Sunday lecture and arrested her on the spot.

Wolf took her to police court at the City Prison (Town and Scioto streets), followed by a crowd of perhaps 2,000 loiterers, principally boys. These expected some excitement and did their best to create some by their shouting. Shepherd posted bond, secured Judge D. F. Pugh, Demus B. Ulrey, and J. D. Porter as attorneys, and was released, with a hearing scheduled for Monday. She then went to the hall with her sympathizers and delivered her lecture, but she was, it was said, "very guarded" in her remarks. She called off the Sunday evening lecture, but her manager, S. Mossman, told the evening crowd that she intended to complete the scheduled lecture series.

On Monday Mrs. Shepherd appeared in a crowded court, entered a plea of not guilty, and demanded a jury trial. Further proceedings were postponed until Wednesday morning. Mrs. Shepherd then went to the I.O.O.F. hall, which was packed with supporters, the majority being women, and delivered that day's lecture.

On Tuesday morning in the presence of her attorneys Mrs. Shepherd told Director of Public Safety Philbrick that, if the charges were dropped she would eliminate all abusive and offensive matter, she would make no further

engagements in Columbus, and she would leave the city. Her attorneys were consulted further and agreed to the conditions, upon which Philbrick requested Prosecutor Shields to drop the charges. (*The Press* of Tuesday evening reported that all of her Columbus engagements had been canceled and that she was leaving the city at once. Judge Pugh in a letter to the *Columbian* disputed that she had made such an agreement, but the *Columbian* claimed the support of both Safety Director Philbrick and Mr. Wildermuth of the city's Law Department. Both sides of the story appeared in *The Press*.)

The case was formally dismissed on Wednesday. As *The Catholic Columbian* remarked on February 22, "The fact of her unwillingness to go to trial was a confession of her guilt, and the entire community may well be congratulated on being forever rid of the malice and peace-destroying work of this shameless woman."

#### Secular Papers Criticized by Columbian

*The Catholic Columbian* was highly critical of some of the local papers. It said that the *Ohio State Journal* and *The Press* had been appealed to by the most representative Catholics of the city to add nothing to the notoriety of Shepherd, to give no aid to the dissemination of her impurities to the corruption of their readers, and to have regard for the rights and feelings of their Catholic patrons. A deputation of clergymen appealed to the *Press* on behalf of public decency and good order. Even a personal appeal of Bishop Moeller failed to rouse the *Journal* from its lethargy. Instead, according to the *Columbian*, they exploited her, made a sensation of her arrest, treated her with as much consideration as if she were a respectable person. This all seems a bit of an exaggeration, for it easily could be claimed that these papers ignored Mrs. Shepherd until the Catholics made an issue of her, by Miss Sullivan's letters to her and by having her arrested.

(To be concluded)



# Episcopal Lineages of the Bishops of Columbus

## Part 2: Bishops Ready, Griffin, Herrmann, and Fulcher

A-10 Prospero Lambertini (Pope Benedict XIV)

Vicar of Rome from 1834 until 1838. He then entered the Society of Jesus.

B-11 **Carlo della Torre Rezzonico** (1693 Venice -1769) joined the curia in 1716 and was named a cardinal in 1737. He was consecrated in Rome by Pope Benedict XIV on March 19, 1743 as Bishop of Padua. In 1758 he became **Pope Clement XIII**. He supported the Jesuits in opposing the suppression of their Society, then being sought by the rulers of Europe.

B-16 **Constantino Patrizi** was consecrated by Cardinal Odescalchi on December 21, 1828 as Archbishop of Philippi. (He ordained Sylvester H. Rosecrans to the priesthood in 1853.)

B-12 **Marco Antonio Colonna** (died 1803) was consecrated by Pope Clement XIII on April 25, 1762 as titular Archbishop of Crinthus. He was named cardinal in 1759.

B-17 **Lucido Maria Parocchi** (born 1833 in Mantua) was consecrated on November 5, 1871 by Archbishop Patrizi as Bishop of Pavia. He was named a cardinal in 1877 and was Archbishop of Bologna. He was Vicar of Rome from 1883 to 1903 and was Secretary of the Congregation of the Inquisition.

B-13 **Hyacinthe Sigismond Gerdil** (1718 Savoy - 1802 Rome) joined the Barnabite congregation at the age of fifteen. He was a philosopher and theologian and served as provincial of his order. He was made a cardinal in 1777 and was consecrated by Cardinal Colonna as Bishop of Dibbon the same year.

B-18 **Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto** (1835, Riese, Venice - 1914) was consecrated in Rome by Cardinal Parocchi on Nov. 16, 1885 as Bishop of Mantua. He became Cardinal Patriarch of Venice in 1893 and in 1903 he became **Pope Pius X**. He condemned the heresy of Modernism in *Lamentabili* and *Pascendi*. He did away with secular interference in papal elections and encouraged the early reception of First Holy Communion. He was beatified in 1951 and canonized in 1954.

B-14 **Giulio Maria Della Somaglia** (1744 Piacenza - 1830 Rome) was employed in the Roman curia. He was consecrated by Cardinal Gerdil on December 21, 1788 as titular Patriarch of Antioch. He was created a cardinal in 1795 and was imprisoned during the French occupation of Rome. In 1814 he was appointed Bishop of Frascati and Secretary of the Holy Office. He became Bishop of Ostia and Vallettri in 1820 and was Secretary of State for Leo XII.

B-19 **Gaetano DeLai** (1853 Malo, Venice-1928) was named a cardinal in 1907 and worked in the curia. He was consecrated by Pope Pius X on December 17, 1911.

B-15 **Venerable Carlo Odescalchi** (1768 Rome - 1841 Modena) was son of a prince of the Roman empire. He was named a cardinal and was consecrated by Cardinal Della Somaglia as Archbishop of Ferrara on March 10, 1823. He became Bishop of Sabina about 1826 and was

B-20 **Rafaale Carlo Rossi**, O.C.C. (1876 Pisa-1948) was consecrated by Cardinal DeLai on May 25, 1920 and was named a cardinal in 1930. He was Secretary of the Congregation of the Consistory.

B-21 **Amleto Giovanni Cicognani** (1883 Brisighella, Romagna, Italy - 1973 Rome) was

consecrated on April 23, 1933 in Rome by Cardinal Rossi as Titular Archbishop of Laodicea in Phrygia and was appointed Apostolic Delegate to the United States. He was recalled to Rome in 1958 and was named cardinal by Pope John XXIII. He was Secretary of State for both Pope John and Pope Paul VI.

**B-22 MICHAEL JOSEPH READY** (1893 New Haven, Ct. - 1957 Columbus) was consecrated by Archbishop Cicognani on December 14, 1944 in St. Matthew Cathedral, Washington, as fifth Bishop of Columbus

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**B-21 Amleto Cardinal Cicognani**

**C-22 John Francis Dearden** (1907 Valley Falls, R.I. - 1988) was consecrated in Cleveland on May 18, 1948 as Titular Bishop of Sarpeta and was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh. He became Bishop of Pittsburgh in 1950 and was named Archbishop of Detroit in 1959. He was created a cardinal in 1969.

**C-23 James Aloysius Hickey** (born 1920 Midland, Mich.) was consecrated in St. Mary Cathedral in Saginaw by Archbishop Dearden on April 14, 1967 and was appointed Titular Bishop of Taraque and Auxiliary Bishop of Saginaw. He was Rector of the North American College in Rome from 1969 to 1974. He became Bishop of Cleveland in 1974 and Archbishop of Washington in 1980. He was named a cardinal in 1988.

**C-24 JAMES ANTHONY GRIFFIN** (born Fairview Park, O. 1934) was ordained bishop by Bishop Hickey on August 1, 1979 as Titular Bishop of Holar (Iceland) and Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland. In 1983 became the tenth Bishop of Columbus

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**B-18 Giuseppe Sarto (Pope St. Pius X)**

**D-19 Giacomo della Chiesa** (1854 Genoa - 1922) served in the papal Secretariate of State. He was consecrated by Pius X on December 22, 1907 as Archbishop of Bologna. In 1914 he was named a cardinal and three months later was elected **Pope Benedict XV**. He adopted a strict neutrality during the first World War.

**D-20 Eugenio Maria Giovanni Pacelli** (1876 Rome-1958) was consecrated by Benedict XV on May 13, 1917. He was quickly named papal nuncio to Bavaria and then to all of Germany. He was named a cardinal in 1929 and Secretary of State in 1932. In 1939 he became **Pope Pius XII**. He vigorously opposed the policies of the National Socialist government in Germany.

**D-21 Francis Joseph Spellman** (1889 Whitman, Mass. - 1967 New York) was consecrated in Rome on September 8, 1932 by Cardinal Pacelli as Titular Bishop of Sila and was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Boston. He became Archbishop of New York in 1939 and was named cardinal in 1946.

**D-22 Patrick Aloysius O'Boyle** (1896 Scranton-1987) was consecrated in New York by Cardinal Spellman on January 14, 1948 and was appointed Archbishop of Washington. He was named cardinal in 1967.

**D-23 EDWARD JOHN HERRMANN** (1913 Baltimore, Md - 1999 Columbus) was ordained bishop by O'Boyle on April 26, 1966 in St. Matthew Cathedral, Washington, as Titular Bishop of Lamzella and Auxiliary Bishop of Washington. He was named ninth Bishop of Columbus in 1973 and retired in 1983.

**D-24 GEORGE AVIS FULCHER** (1922 Columbus - 1984 Indiana) was ordained bishop in St. Joseph Cathedral, Columbus by Bishop Herrmann on July 18, 1976 as Titular Bishop of Morosbisdo and Auxiliary Bishop of Columbus. He was appointed Bishop of Lafayette in 1983.

## Irish Nativities Recorded in St. Colman Cemetery, Washington Court House

The first Catholics of Washington Court House were Irish railroad construction laborers of the 1850s, a few of whom stayed on after the tracks were laid, soon to be joined by other fellow-countrymen. They were organized by Father Blake of Xenia and in 1862 purchased a site for a church, at East and North streets, where the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption was built in 1866. It was commonly called St. Mary's.

Shortly thereafter, Judge Daniel McClain donated land for the cemetery, on the south side of town. Father John O'Donoghue of Morrow, the pastor, purchased more land in 1870, making the property just over 3.5 acres, measuring 346.5 feet along the south side of Plum Street and 455.5 feet on the east side of Elm. (Elm Street is not improved.)

The second parish church, a brick structure measuring 40 by 62 feet with a bell tower, was built on the cemetery property in the early 1870s and was named for the Irish Saint Colman. This church was too far "out of town" in the opinion of the pastor and Archbishop Elder. In one period it had to be reached from the rectory in town by railroad handcar, because the streets were not yet improved. It was decided that a church in a more convenient site was needed, so the third, present, church was built in 1885. The old church was abandoned in the cemetery and the 1978 parish history includes a picturesque photo from perhaps 1890, in which the tower and part of the front wall are still standing amidst the tombstones.

There are many St. Colmans of Ireland and the parish, wishing to celebrate its patronal feast but not knowing which saint to honor, petitioned Bishop Herrmann, who in 1978 settled the issue by designating as patron St. Colman of Cloyne, the bishop-founder of Cloyne in County Cork.

Stones in the cemetery mark the graves of two priests:

Rev. Michael J. Kelly, born Jan. 8, 1869, ordained June 19, 1894, died Nov. 13, 1904

Father Joseph A. McDonald, born Jan. 2, 1902, ordained June 3, 1945 in Springfield, Ill., died March 23, 1959

South of the priests' lot and flagpole:

Edward Bahen, born King's Co. 1824-1888  
Hannah his wife, born in Limerick Co. 1835-1908

Mary, wife of John Burke, born in the parish of Knockgraffon, Co. Tipperary, Ireland, died Dec. 10, 1885, aged 75 years

Thomas Frayn, a native of the parish of Dunboyne, Co. Meath, Ireland, died Sept. 7, 1899, aged 84 years.

Catherine Frayn, a native of the parish of Dunboyne, Co. Meath, Ireland, died July 14, 1885, in her 55th year

John O'Brien, born in Co. Tipperary, Ireland, died Feb. 25, 1875, aged 43 years

John Gleason, died Jan. 1, 1873, a native of Co. Tipperary, Ireland

Thomas Brennan, Native of the Half parish of Killaraght, Half Barony of Coolavin, Co. Sligo, Ireland, died Nov. 13, 1895, aged 85 years

Margaret wife of Thomas Brennan and native of Yo-l---d [Youtown?], Parish of Tautarun [Tintern?], Co. Wexford, Ireland, departed this life Sept. 27, AD 1877, aged 49 y, 2 m, 28 d.

Darby Brennan, died Dec. 14, 1882, aged 78 years

John Kennedy, Native of Co. Clare, Ireland, died July 22, 1873, aged 45 years

Bridget, wife of Laurence Early native of Inishmagrath, Leitrim Co., Ireland, died Apr. 21, 1876, aged 61 years [Inishmagrath, an island in Drumreilly parish]

Thomas Gilmartin, Native of Bournna [Bourney parish], Co. Tipperary, Ireland, died Jan. 3, 1897, aged 80 years

Mary wife of Thos. Gilmartin and Native of Bournna, Co. Tipperary, Ireland, died Dec. 5, 1882, aged 85 years

Patrick Driscoll, Co. A., 54th O.V.I., Born in Co. Gallway, Ireland, 1829-1916

Mary wife of John Dempsey, born in Co. Roscommon, Ireland, died Mar. 2, 1914, aged 78 years

John Dempsey born in Cloonfree Parish of Cloonfinlough, Co. Roscommon, Ireland, died Sept. 29, 1884, aged 47 yrs, 3 mos, 23 ds

Southwest corner, beyond the drive:

James O'Sullivan, native of Co. Kerry, Ireland, born Dec. 30, 1830, died Jan. 20, 1876

Ellen wife of J. O. Sullivan, A native of

Ballinarig[?], parish of Killmoily, Co. Kerry, Ireland, born Sept. 16, 1826, died May 24, 1876

HILLERY:

Timothy, 1802+1875 Bridget, 1838+1903 Natives of Co. Clare, Ireland

Michael O'Donnell, born in County Mayo, Ireland, 1844, died Aug. 14, 1912

North of the Priests' lot and flagpole:

Cornelius Curry, Native of A-----, Co. Clare, Ireland, died Aug. 12, 1890, aged 75 years

Frank King, born in Co. Sligo, Ireland, Aug. 11, 1821, died Jan. 8, 1901

Edward Reardon, native of Co. Tipperary, Ireland, 1839-1918

Bridget Mulvihill, a native of Co. Kerry, Ireland, died Aug. 8, 1909, aged 78 years [Mrs. Patrick Mulvihill]

Edmond Mulvihill, native of Co. Kerry, Ireland, 1844-1921

Wm. Ging, a native of Castledermot, Co. Kildare, Ireland, 1828-1908

Anna wife of Anthony Griffin, born Co. Mayo, Ireland, 1830, died Aug. 23, 1896



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