

Barquilla de la Santa Maria

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This Russian Orthodox church at Trail Run was used until the 1950s, when the congregation merged with one in Byesville. It is now used for storage and the tower has been removed, but some of the Greek paintings are still visible inside and the sanctuary can be recognized on the south, as shown in the photo.

THE SLAVIC CATHOLICS OF GUERNSEY AND NOBLE COUNTIES by Lorle Porter, Ph.D.

Part 2

The Byzantine Bishop and Schism at Trail Run (Continued from Vol. XVII, No. 6)

Matthew Repasky, George Pachen, Michael Porinchak, and Pete Chervenak began to negotiate with the jurators (church board) in Pleasant City about establishing a local church for Trail Run. (46) Trail Run Byzantines were tired of baptizing their children in the Nardona Hall and trudging five miles for Liturgy in the church in Pleasant City. They wanted their own church, but the mother parish was planning a huge building project. Fr. Nicholas Burik suggested moving the old frame St. Michael's to Trail Run, but both churches would continue to operate from the same treasury. Trail Run wanted its own

church, for the village. The men set about converting the Nardona Hall on \$500 lent them interest free by the local Sojedinenija. Land was then transferred from George Pachon, an old Roman Catholic altar was located and redesigned as a Byzantine prestol, a simple iconostas adorned with icons brought from private homes was erected, and the Church of St. George opened. Father Burik dedicated the edifice and said Liturgy once a month.

Still the collection, \$60 to \$70 a month, went back to Pleasant City. The local congregation bitterly resented this. Their money went to Pleasant City for the new church fund and they were still assessed \$25 a month for the hundred children in the church school. So, with immigrant caution, they recorded the deed for St. George "in the name of the people." (47)

Lay control of church property was a bone stuck in the throat of the Byzantine clergy. All across America, ethnic groups -- Poles, Italians, Slavs, "owned church property outright." (48) "The laymen elected their church councils and demanded control over parish finances, sometimes resorting to mob action, dynamite or even secession from Rome in order to get their way." (49) "The Rusin laymen held onto their property because that was the only way they could protect their rite." (50) The clergy at St. Michael's in Pleasant City were used to living with this problem, but a volatile mix of history and personality plunged the local situation into a maelstrom.

The financial discontent of the Trail Run community coincided with the appointment of Father Nicholas Duda as priest at Pleasant City and with the influx of new miners from the fields of Black Lick, Pennsylvania and Brookside, Alabama. Many of the newcomers were Russian Orthodox. There were also "many zealots from the village of Jakubany" and they imported and promoted the Holy Synod's (Orthodox) propaganda. A probable Russian agent, Nicholas Jasenchak, began to visit. A "travelling ikon salesman", he was a well-educated man and advised the community of the "advantages" of joining Russian Orthodoxy. Reunion with the Russian church would guarantee them control over property and negate the bitter feelings all felt over the "persecution" of the married clergy. (51) The arguments were persuasive. Even if they turned their property over to the Russian church (a condition of acceptance), they "were probably willing to do this because they could be confident that their Rite would be protected." (52)

Armed with this alternative, the parish committee met with the new Pleasant City priest, Duda, to discuss the future. "Gasoline touched an open fire." In the emotional outburst, Duda revealed his "intense personal attitude" toward Russian Orthodoxy. Apparently, just before he came to Pleasant City, he had had a fatal encounter with Russian authority in this country. He came to America without orders and applied to the Russians for acceptance "into their fold since he was unattached and there was a dire need for priests," but "a problem" arose and he faced discipline of "penance" in a monastery. Duda severed connections with the Orthodox and was eventually accepted by the Byzantines. (53) His attitude toward the Orthodox was as poisonous as the Orthodox traditional attitude toward the Byzantine Uniates. (54) The angry priest confronted Jasenchak in a church meeting at St. George's and in an outburst told the entire congregation that "they would all go to hell!" (55) The Byzantine community in Trail Run shattered, many never to speak again. Grisak and his party, girded by the Orthodox zealots from Black Lick, Pennsylvania, set about "returning to their roots." (56) Grisak

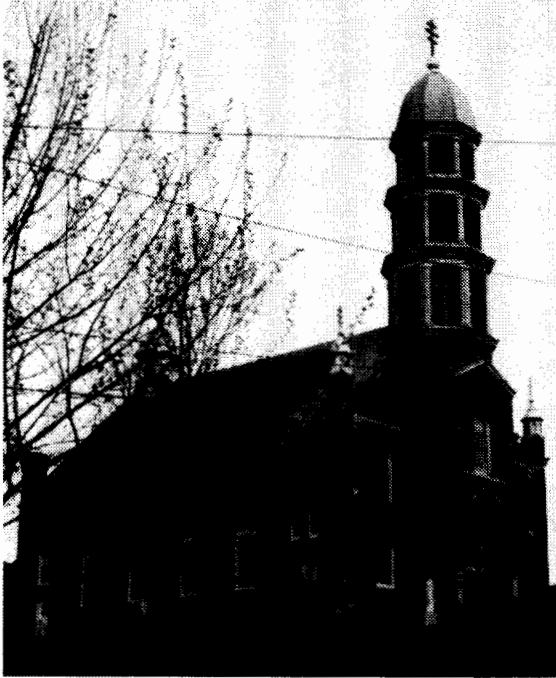
viewed Father Duda with total disdain. No other opinion about Duda has survived. Was he the tyrant of Grisak's pages? Was he a victim of the all too frequent pastor-parishioner fight? Whatever the truth of this, the die was cast.

The Trail Run group went to trial to claim control of their mission church of St. George. In September, the Latin rite priest, Rev. E. E. Berry, baptized a child in Pleasant City, "absente greek priest". Father Duda was gone, for consultation, no doubt. He was back in October, November, and December. The separated group petitioned the Russian Orthodox Metropolitan for a priest. During this process, Father Andrew Solanka, P.O.B. came at a parishioner's request to minister to people he had previously served in Brookside, Alabama. Father Duda sought an injunction against the use of the Trail Run church for Orthodox services. The Guernsey County sheriff then took possession of St. George's and sealed the door. Anger swept the village and spilled over into fist fights whenever partisans came upon one another. Epithets of "Hohols" (goat-beards, as in the manner of Russian Orthodox priests) and "Moskals" (Muskovites) rang out. Mike Repasky, delivering groceries, kept the Orthodox party informed and organized. The explosive situation merited a change of venue and a trial over the ownership of property was scheduled for Noble County. The judge permitted both groups to use the structure for Christmas services. The doors were unsealed in the morning of January 7, 1914 for the Orthodox party, the sheriff's deputies nervously standing guard. Such a large group attended that the Byzantine party "gave up and went to Pleasant City" in the afternoon. (57)

In March of 1914 "the Matter of Pleasant City vs. Trail Run; Duda vs. Representative of the Greek Catholic Church, Pachen" was settled with the judge ruling for the Orthodox faction, the majority. George Pachen hurried home to the church and sounded its bell for the first time. (58) On April 1, 1914 the Russian Orthodox Church was organized under the new name of St. Michael's, with ownership in the hands of the lay officers: Mike Supina President, George Graban Secretary, and Matt Repasky Treasurer. These officers recorded a deed in Muskingum County, "In Consideration of two thousand five hundred dollars, to us paid by his Grace, Most Reverend Platon Rozdestvensky, Archbishop of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in North America," the trustees consigned the building "to the only use of said Archbishop and all his successors...forever for and in behalf of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of Trail Run, Ohio." (59)

This is the source of a folktale that "the Tsar built one of those churches." Indeed, the \$2,500 transferred to the Trail Run church was part of the \$80,000 a year used by the Holy Synod for such purposes. On February 1, 1916 Metropolitan Platon in Odessa, Russia accepted the new Russian Orthodox Church of St. Michael's in Trail Run. Bishop Nemolovsky formally consecrated it in May.

St. Michael's Byzantine Catholic Church in Pleasant City recovered from the shock of Trail Run's defection to Orthodoxy. In 1916 the plans for the new church there, announced in 1913, were completed. Based on the plans of St. Michael's in Donora, Pennsylvania, the huge church reportedly cost \$75,000. (60) Triumphantly, Bishop Soter Ortynski dedicated it in front of an overflowing congregation. The Byzantine Catholics made a defiant statement in brick. (61)



St. Michael's Byzantine Catholic Church

The Russian Orthodox Church was elated with the "coming home" of the Byzantines, but parish by parish what was happening was a painful split, family by family. The presence of the two bishops, Nemolovsky in Trail Run and Soter in Pleasant City, underscored determination. The Byzantine community at Belle Valley began to organize and plan for their church during the very height of the Trail Run-Pleasant Valley war, January 26, 1914. When its church was dedicated in 1915, the altar was the gift of the mother parish, the original altar of the 1899 Pleasant City St. Michael's church. They were Byzantine.

What happened in the five mile stretch from Trail Run to Pleasant City was repeated over and over in the disruption of the Byzantines in America. Bitter feelings lingered through generations. Taunts of "Moskal" rang in playgrounds. Marie Troyan was in the

new St. Michael's (Pleasant City) when the nitro wagon exploded over the hill, shaking the church to its foundations and causing the prized chrysal chandelier to crash down onto the First Communion class. "Miracle" say the Byzantines, that no one was hurt; "Punishment" say the Orthodox, for refusing to "come home."

(To be continued)

NOTES

46. The surviving history of the Russian Orthodox community in Trail Run, compiled by Father Basil Smilak, The History of St. Michael's Church, Robins, Ohio, is an example of fondly remembered history, but the real story is even more interesting.
47. Guernsey County Deed Record, Aug. 3, 1912. It is unclear whether this was a transfer of land for the Nardona Hall, which Joseph Grisak says was remodeled, or for an entirely new structure. (Michael Grisak, The Grisak Family, V. II, privately printed, 1979, p. 64) The Roman Catholic altar may have come from St. Patrick's Church, Gibson Station, which was in disuse by this time, or from one of the renovations taking place in churches in Guernsey, Belmont, or Noble counties.
48. Paul Robert Magocsi, "Carpatho-Rusyns". Harvard Encyclopedia, pp. 200-201.
49. Mark Stolarik, "Slovaks", Harvard Encyclopedia, p. 932.
50. Dyrud, "Greek Catholic Rite", p. 216.
51. Grisak, p. 63
52. Dyrud, "Greek Catholic Rite", p. 216.
53. The story of Duda and Trail Run depends totally on the Grisak memoir. I have been unable to establish any fact about Duda other than his service at St. Michael's. The Byzantine archives in Munhall, Pa. and the Orthodox Church in America Archives in Syssott, N.Y. have not located material on this priest, although it may exist. Duda's "Acceptance by the Byzantines" is intriguing. He was probably a "wandering priest." Although Grisak is partisan, I accept most of his judgements about the attitude of the communities he knew. He seemed to have separated

- himself from the Byzantine Catholic group and downplayed their numbers, claiming that most of Trail Run joined Orthodoxy. There was probably more complexity. The baptismal numbers of Slovak Roman Catholics and "Greek" names at Trail Run in Holy Trinity, Byesville indicate more of a Catholic presence than he remembered. Forty-five Slavic Roman Catholic family names occur in those records following the schism, all residing in Trail Run. See Appendix for a list of the Orthodox in 1915.
54. In Europe the "Russian Orthodox were bent on destroying the Union entirely, because they considered the Union to be a betrayal of" Russian Orthodoxy, the Russian people, and the Russian state. Russians could tolerate the Latin rite, but the Ukranian rite and the Ukranian Catholic Church, united with Rome, was insufferable. M. Michael Solovey, "Latinization in the Byzantine Ukrainian Liturgy", The Romanization Tendency, (Kottamya, India, 1975), p. 34.
 55. Grisak, p. 63.
 56. Ibid., p. 62.
 57. Ibid., pp. 63-68
 58. Ibid., p. 67.
 59. Guernsey County Deed Record 113/36.
 60. Wolfe, p. 408.
 61. St. Michael's Byzantine Rite Anniversary Book.

Appendix

Membership roster of St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Church, Trail Run.

I am grateful to Isabel Kovalchik for providing this and to Pete Panchak for translating it.

Married men with families:

Wasil Trojan,	John Repasky,	Sandor Gergely,
Michal Hudak,	Peter Zmiy,	Steve Vivostko,
Josef Rush,	Mike Slits,	Deymo Varga,
Josef Bulovesky,	Matt Repasky,	Mike Stavrosky,
Mikoly Duffalla,	Mike Evancho,	Steve Odlivak,
Wasly Basalla,	Mike Janosik,	Jozef Beskit,
Mike Visocki,	Steve Negrey,	John Skapura,
John Duffalla,	Andy Hadlavny,	Andy Skapura,
Peter Trojan,	Mikolaj Patchan,	Andy Gravan,
Johan Uhrin,	Joe Repasky,	Mike Odlivak,
Mike Grisak,	Matt Repasky,	Matt Kostelnic,
Steve Uhrin,	John Kostelnik,	Gabor Kistelnik,
Joe Magdos,	George Graban,	Joe Grisak,
George Petras,	Mike Magdos,	Joe Kritak,
John Roman,	George Patchan,	Mike Sulin,
John Hudak,	Peter Bodnar,	George Homulos,
John Yarina,	Mike Novotny,	John Scrilla,
Andy Bigda,	Mike Supina,	John Homulos,
John Hayduk,	Mike Kovalcik,	John Duffalla,
Steve Estock,	John Choma,	George Ribar,
Jozef Guzley,	John Supina,	Mike Hosko,
Andy Hasihak,	Mike Choma,	George Malinsk,
George Uhrin,	John Lesko,	Peter Hatella.
Andy Magdos,		

Single men:

Steve Duffalla,	George Grisak,	Andy Shafer,
John Grisak,	Steve Deymut,	Mike Chehovich,

Andy Magdos,
Stef Kovalcik,
John Kovalcik,
John Petronin,
Mike Osotko,
Andy Kuchira,

Mikoly Magdos,
George Magdos,
Peter Patchan,
Mike Wasil,
Steve Choma,
John Guzley,

Steve Beskit,
Mikoly Copjat,
Mike Guzley,
Steve Duffalla,
John Stucka,
Andy Smorek.

THE FOUNDING OF
ST. STANISLAUS POLISH PARISH, STEUBENVILLE
by Rev. C. Smogor

[This history was written late in 1907 by Father Smogor, then pastor of St. Stanislaus parish, at the request of Rev. L. W. Mulhane. Father Mulhane had been assigned the task of preparing a history of the Diocese of Columbus to celebrate its fortieth anniversary in 1908, in response to an agreement of the fourth Synod of the Diocese. The fortieth anniversary history was never published. This history, preserved in the Archives of the Diocese, contains many details not used in the story of the parish as published in the fiftieth anniversary history of the Diocese in 1918.]

The Polish people, who form the third Catholic congregation in Steubenville, O., belonged formerly, until the latter half of 1905, to St. Peter's Church. Just when the Polish people began to pour in to Steubenville I cannot tell exactly; however, from accounts related to me by the oldest settlers I can reasonably infer that their settlement dates with the erection of St. Peter's rectory under Father M. Hartnedy. Of course, a good many Poles, notably those of Posen, Prussian Poland, lived here prior to that time, but gradually moved away through lack of spiritual ministrations at the hands of native Polish priests. Those who remained awaited a Polish priest whom Father Hartnedy secured twice a year, or else gave up their nationality and began to ascribe their descent from the Germans, who at this time are said to have been quite numerous. Some of the latter type of Poles still adhere to St. Peter's church, though a wonderful transformation took place since in their families -- the younger members not being able to converse in any, save the English language.

Father Ladislaus Miskiewicz, rector of St. Adalbert's church, Pittsburg, Pa., was the first priest who ministered to the Steubenville Polish flock (died April 23, 1906). Later Father Jaworski C. Sp., of Pittsburg, supplied the spiritual wants of the Poles, until the first Polish parish in the diocese was formed at Dillonvale [1898], whence by turns Fathers Adolf Swierczynski, C. Smogor and J. Robaczewski took part in ministering to an already increasing Polish contingent.

In January, 1905, acting on the suggestion of Mr. Stanislaus Karwowski a mutual benefit society was organized under the patronage of St. Stanislaus, which was to serve as a nucleus for a future parish. Shortly after, however, this future parish society was transformed into a group of the Polish National Alliance Society under the name of The Polish Falcon, which still exists.

Meanwhile an emissary of the Polish Independent Church in the U.S. -- a schismatic and heretical social club -- came to look over the ground in the expectation of luring the Polish people of Steubenville into the Independent

fold. He was proclaimed at once as a saviour by some, as a traitor by others, and as the latter were in the majority, the would be missionary made a hasty exit. A petition was then sent to the Rt. Rev. Bishop, James Hartley, of Columbus, stating that the Polish people were ready and willing to support a priest of their nationality, provided the Bishop would send them such a one immediately. Having been apprised of the number of Polish Catholics who were to constitute the new parish the Bishop arranged a mission which was given at St. Peter's by Father C. Tomaszewski, of Pittsburg. At the same time a committee was appointed by the Bishop for gathering the funds toward purchasing a church site. During the space of six months the committee collected about \$1,400 and chose as a church site the Highland Ave. property for the sum of \$6,500.

The committee was composed of Mr. Stanislaus Karwowski, Mr. Alexander and Anthony Grygo, Tomas and Joseph Ziarko, Frank Wirzbieke, Stanislaus Ruskowski, Joseph Borkowski, Frank Michalak, Sebastian Kopras, Stanislaus Wisniewski, with Bernard Fenski as an enterpreter. Other properties there were from which a church site could have been selected, but the committee argued that the other properties were entirely too costly, and that the present Highland Ave. property was especially desirable as it was situated in the heart of the Polish settlement of Steubenville.

Toward the close of the month of June, 1905 the Bishop appointed me pastor of the Polish people in Steubenville. The old Alex Ewing homestead, one of the oldest in town, passed into the hands of the Polish people who executed the deed in the name of the Rt. Rev. James Hartley, Bishop of Columbus. The property at the time of its purchase was in the possession of Mrs. Elizabeth Wood, to whom the committee promised to make a payment of \$2,500 on the 1st of July, 1905. As but \$1,400 was raised I hurried from Dillonvale, my former charge, to increase the amount, but I could not raise more than \$100, which necessitated a loan of \$1,000 to make the committee's promise good. After making this loan I settled in Steubenville. At first the services were held in the basement of Holy Name Church, where our people were cordially welcomed by Father Joseph Weigand and his generous parishioners.

Ground for the frame structure 48 x 89 was broken on the 7th of September, 1905. I entrusted the work on the building to my brother Frank, who erected a number of such buildings in Jefferson and Belmont counties within the last three years. On December 31st, that same year, the building was completed and blessed by the Rt. Rev. Bishop, James Hartley. A month prior to this the church bell from the Meneely Bell Factory was consecrated by Father Specht V.G.

From the outset the newly born parish was confronted with a debt of \$5,000 still due for the church property. The frame building, which combines the church and school cost \$4,000; the church fixtures, pews, vestments, necessaries for the three altars \$4,000; furniture etc. for the rectory \$2,000. Add to this the salary to the priest and the teacher (\$50 monthly almost simulatneously with the erection of the parish), and you will readily agree with me that the debt was rather heavy for a parish composed of 70 families. There are, however, 250 young men who are helping generously to lift the debt and to them great credit is due. When you will look at their names in the Chronicle which I am publishing in Polish twice a year, and behold their steady, generous offerings, you will not wonder that at the close

of A.D. 1907 we have only \$3,200 debt. There are 40 children attending school, and they constitute a society by themselves. St. Stanislaus Society numbers 50 members, St. Cecilia (choir) 20, Our Lady Society, a group of the Polish Catholic Union of America 85; The Rosary Society for married women 30. I can only wish the parish and its active church societies the fullest measure of God's blessings.

REV. CASIMIR SMOGOR
(1871-1940)

[Father Smogor's obituary, published in the Catholic Columbian of March 22, 1940, was written by Frances Krumm. With thanks to the Catholic Times.]

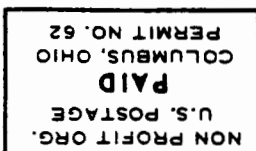
Rev. Casimir Roman Smogor was born in Vongrovec, Poland on December 31, 1871. Fourteen years later he came with his parents to America and settled in South Bend, Indiana. He attended Notre Dame University and was ordained to the priesthood at Notre Dame on September 8, 1897. He also attended Catholic University and received a Ph.D. from that institution in 1900. Father Smogor was a brilliant student and was offered a teaching position at Catholic U. Hew as at one time invited to take the rectorship of Mt. St. Mary's Seminary, Cintinnati.

Father Smogor served as assistant pastor at St. Hedwig's Church in South Bend and later at St. John Cantius Church in Chicago. In 1902 he came to this diocese and was appointed pastor of St. Adelbert's Parish, Dillonvale, where, during his four-year pastorate, he erected a church and school and organized St. Casimir's Parish in nearby Adena. He was sent to organize St. Stanislaus Parish in Steubenville in 1905. During his many years there, the first, wooden church, a rectory, a new, brick church, and a convent were erected; a new school followed in 1927. The parish grew to nearly 300 families.

Father Smogor died in his rectory, only an hour after offering Mass, on March 16, 1940. He was survived by three brothers, Frank A. and Vincent, of Steubenville, and John, of South Bend, a sister, Mrs. P. H. Makielski, of Mishawaka, Indiana, and a cousin, Mary Myczkowa, who had been his housekeeper for thirty-five years.

Father Smogor was regarded as one of the outstanding Polish priests of the country. He was known as an eloquent preacher. While fulfilling his duties as pastor, he found time to pursue his scholarly interests. He published five volumes of sermons and made many contributions to scholarly journals on subjects relating to Polish history. The 1943 Silver Jubilee history of the Diocese said of him, "Father Smogor...was a splendid priest, one who worked earnestly and unceasingly for the Polish people. He was ever faithful in the performance of his parochial work, and was always at hand when the people called upon him."

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