

Catholicity in
Western Pennsylvania

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Phases of Catholicity in Western Pennsylvania

During the Eighteenth Century

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WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA, especially the territory drained by the Allegheny, Monongahela, and upper Ohio rivers, is a fertile field for the historian. Several tribes of Indians, the Delawares, Shawnees, and Senecas used it as their camping, hunting, and warring grounds. They often had their villages close to each other, and F. Bonnécamps even stated that in one village of 60 huts, at Logstown, near Beaver Falls, all three could be found.¹ This was extraordinary in Indian history.

When the first white man came into this region, the picture became still more colorful. For a time two nations and three states contested this locality. Historians speak of three explorations during the 17th century. Some assert that the French from Canada under Sieur de La Salle arrived first in 1670. George Washington, Francis Parkman, William Darlington, and some modern writers are of this opinion.² A greater number, however, claim that in the same year Governor Berkley of Virginia commissioned Alvord and Bidgood to explore the Monongahela valley.³ A third group of writers believe that Arnaud Viele, a Dutch "bushloper" from New York, was the first white man to penetrate this section. He came to present Pittsburgh in 1692 by way of the Susquehanna-Allegheny rivers route. The first two explorations are disputed; the last is certainly historical. From a religious standpoint only La Salle was a Catholic.

FIRST CATHOLIC SETTLERS COME FROM SOUTH

The first permanent settlers came into this district from Virginia, and in this way the first Catholic colonists may have come. Virginia had at that time some Catholics, but they could practice their faith very little for want of priests. This is all that can be said as regards this point. With the beginning of the eighteenth century we get better information.

Mr. William Darlington says in his introduction to *Christopher Gist's Journals*:⁴ "By 1728-9 the Shawanese were settled along the Allegheny, to which region they were drawn chiefly by the measures adopted by the Marquis Vaudreuil in 1724." This would indicate that these Redmen were at least friendly to the French and to their faith. The same author continues: "...in 1729 M. de Lery, Chief Engineer of Canada, with a detachment of troops, crossed Lake Erie to the Chautauqua Lake and thence

to the Conewango Creek and the Allegheny River, descending it and the Ohio. They made a careful topographical survey of the course of the rivers, with observations of the latitude, longitude and distances as far as the Great Miami."⁵ The Canadians never started on such an expedition without a chaplain, but the name of this priest has not been revealed as far as the sources could be consulted.

Two years later, in 1731, as Archbishop Canevin stated in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, from the correspondence of Jesuit missionaries we can safely say today that French Canadians were the first Catholics who tried to settle at the Forks. History does not record their names. Their stay was short because the Indians drove them away.

Still better knowledge we have from the expedition of Baron de Longueuil in 1739. The Marquis de Beauharnois, governor of Canada, organized it. It had a force of 442 Canadians and an Indian contingent of 319 warriors. The roster is in existence. Among the officers were Legardeur de St. Pierre, who met Washington at Le Boeuf in 1753, and Ligneris, who demanded his surrender at Ft. Necessity on July 3, 1754. Likewise other later commanders took part: Portneuf, Benoist, and two Joncaires as Indian agents. In a letter of the governor to the Minister in Paris Father De Lausan is praised because "he was helpful during the preparations for this expedition, especially by staying with the Indians till their departure, and responsible for their great number."⁶

THREE NATIONALITIES DISPUTE TERRITORY

They were joined by 100 Iroquois at the Belle Rivière (Allegheny). Father Vernet, a Recollect, was chaplain of the Canadians while the Fathers La Bretonniere, a Jesuit, and Queret, a secular priest and missionary among the savages from the Lake of the Two Mountains, were the chaplains of the Indians from the tribes of the Iroquois, Algonquins, Nepissings, and Abenakis. The map of this expedition was made by Chaussegros de Lery, the son of the engineer who had passed over this territory ten years before. The explorers were well received by the Shawnees, another proof that they were friendly to the French and their faith. There is, however, no record when and where they stopped in the neighborhood of present Pittsburgh, most probably at Logstown.⁷

By that time this territory was hotly disputed by English traders, French trappers, and even Dutch "bushlopers." Most of them were French or French Canadians, and so there cannot be any doubt about their faith, as Canada was one hundred per cent Catholic. However it was quite natural that many who spent months and years with the Indians—some of them even marrying Indian squaws—often practiced their faith very little. The earliest on record was Peter Chartier⁸ who had his store for Indians near present Tarentum. There are two creeks named after him: Chartier's Creek at McKeesport,⁸ and Chartier's Run in Westmoreland County. We cannot have any doubt about his Catholicity. His father had been with La Salle in Illinois, and it is well known that this explorer always looked to the spread of the Faith as one of the main objects of his expeditions. Moreover, Peter himself received the commission of a captain in 1744, a rank which would not have been granted at that time in Canada to any man but a Catholic.

JONCAIRE BUILDS A FORT AT VENANGO

The most prominent trader was Philip Joncaire,⁹ who had been raised near Ft. Niagara, a French post of Canada.¹⁰ He had been with B. de Longueuil in 1739, and he accompanied B. Céloron de Bienville in 1749. In the latter expedition he acted as Indian interpreter. A Protestant would never have been chosen for such a post. Besides, he constantly compared notes with Father Bonnécamps, the chaplain of that expedition. Later he represented French interests in this vicinity, and among other achievements he superintended the building of Fort Machault (Venango), where he met Washington in December, 1753. He was one of the officers who signed the capitulation of Ft. Niagara (1759).

Among these must also be reckoned Andrew Montour,¹¹ after whom Montour County is named. He was baptized a Catholic but later in life became a liberalist in religious matters and espoused the English cause. His mother, the celebrated Madame Montour, remained loyal to her faith and the French, both of which seemed so synonymous at that time that they caused no little irritation to English colonials. Such persons have sometimes been called traitors to the colonies. The accusation is unjust. Until 1768 all western Pennsylvania between the Allegheny mountains and the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers

was not incorporated into any colony, and the land west of those rivers became part of the United States by purchase only in 1784. Moreover, the principles of toleration on which William Penn had founded his colony were later disregarded by his sons, who even changed the peaceful policy of their father towards the Indians.¹² Therefore persons like Madame Montour, who was by descent Catholic and French and connected with the Indians by marriage, could not act otherwise.¹³

FRENCH PROVE SUCCESSFUL MISSIONARIES

During the early eighteenth century there were also Indians in western Pennsylvania who had accepted the Catholic Faith. Historians agree that the French understood much better than the English how to win over these aborigines to Christianity and to civilization. Even Francis Parkman says in this respect: "English civilization scorned and neglected the Indian, French civilization embraced and Christianized him."¹⁴ In a similar manner Rev. Barton, an Episcopalian minister, wrote from Huntington, Pa., to Dr. Beaucroft in London on Nov. 8, 1756: "While the French were industrious in sending priests and Jesuits among them to convert them to popery, we did nothing but send a set of abandoned profligates to trade with them, who defrauded and cheated them, which set the English and Protestant religion in such disadvantageous light that we have reasons to fear that they detest the name of both."¹⁵

The Shawnees, who were afraid of the Six Nations that favored the English, removed from the Susquehanna to western Pennsylvania before 1730 and put themselves under the protection of the French, and it has been said that they received them as children. In their history we have an event which is singular in Indian annals and which was undoubtedly dictated by Catholic influence. In 1738 these tribes on the banks of the Conemaugh, Kiskiminetas, and Allegheny rivers took steps to restrain the pernicious traffic in rum. On March 20 of that year they wrote a letter to Governor Thomas Penn, and James Logan, Secretary of the Provincial Council, in which they stated that they had a good understanding with the French, the Ottawas, and all French Indians, that they would keep off drinking for 4 years, that there were no traders among them except their friends Peter Chartier and George Miranda.¹⁶

About the same time a number of Senecas also must have been Catholics. Count Zinzendorf, the well-known Moravian missionary, wrote in 1743: "When the Senecas or any of the Western Indians come to Philadelphia, they go to the Popish chapel at Mass."¹⁷ We can well imagine that their Catholicity was often only superficial. We have the record of one of these converts. Shikellamy, the celebrated Oneida chief and viceroy of the Iroquois, was according to Mr. Sipe the most picturesque Indian character that lived in Pennsylvania.¹⁸ Some authors assert that he was really a Frenchman whose parents had died when he was a mere child and that he was adopted by that tribe. But this is certain, that he was baptized by a Jesuit in Canada. He lived many years in Pennsylvania and acted several times as agent between western Indians and the eastern government. Some of his expressions were genuinely Catholic, yet when he died and no Catholic priest was near, he accepted the ministrations of a Moravian missionary.

MASS IS CELEBRATED FOR FIRST TIME

This "Era of Dawn" in the Catholicity of western Pennsylvania changed suddenly into a morning glow with the advent of the French explorers under Captain Bienville de C eloron in 1749. As is well known, the original account of this journey is in the archives of the Marine in Paris and the diary of F. Bonn ecamps is in Quebec, Canada. Both were published by the late Msgr. Lambing in the *Historical Researches in Western Pennsylvania, Principally Catholic*, in 1885. From this source we learn that these explorers stopped at the present Tarentum (Old Chartier's Town) above and at Logstown (near Beaver Falls) below Pittsburgh, on Aug. 7, 8, 9, and 10. These records do not give any indication about services, but as it was customary to say Mass on such occasions when they landed, there are three possibilities: Tarentum (Aug. 7), McKees Rocks (Aug. 8), Logstown (Aug. 9, 10).¹⁹

Another event in which Catholics figured took place soon afterwards. In November and December, 1753, George Washington undertook his memorable journey to Ft. Le Boeuf to interview the French Commander. Among his companions on that trip there were two with distinctly Irish Catholic names: John McGuire and Barney Curran. It might be presumptuous to conclude from the names alone that the men were Catholics.

However it is certain that the McGuires were prominent Catholics in Winchester, Va., through which Washington passed. A McGuire had a hotel there, and a descendant built the first Catholic church in that place.²⁰ Moreover, they were not the only Catholics in that district as the diaries of two Moravian missionaries, who passed through Frederick County there in 1743 and 1749, prove.²¹

ENGLISH LAWS OPPOSE CATHOLICS

In much the same manner two others, Daniel Lafferty and Henry O'Brien, whose names indicate sufficiently that they came from Southern Ireland, and Andrew Montour were with Washington at Ft. Necessity in 1754. Some might object that English laws at that time forbade Catholics to enlist,²² but the laws of Pennsylvania and Virginia were not so strict in this respect. We are even certain that Philip Pendergrass, a well-known Catholic of the neighborhood of Bedford, was one of the soldiers in the expedition of Col. Armstrong to chastise the Delaware Indians at Kittanning in 1756. Likewise if the passenger list of the ship *Anderson*, which landed in Philadelphia on August 26, 1751, is a criterion, quite a number of Catholics must have come into the colonies at that time. Among the 236 immigrants on that ship about fifty belonged to the Catholic faith.²³ In some Protestant quarters the increase of Catholics was considered dangerous, because no matter to what nationality they belonged, they were considered allies of the French.²⁴ Thus Rev. Christian Post, the well-known Moravian missionary who was frequently engaged as an agent of the English government, addressed the Indians at Kuskuski (New Castle) on October 1, 1758, as follows: "...you must know that there are a great many Papists in the country, in *French* interest, who appear like gentlemen, and have sent runaway Irish papist servants among you, who have put bad notions into your heads, and strengthened you against your brothers, the *English*."²⁵

FATHER BARON'S RECORDS OF INDIAN BAPTISMS

Finally with the occupation of the Forks by the forces of Captain Contrecoeur we reach real historic ground in our subject. To be brief, Father Denis Baron, a Recollect, was the chaplain of the expedition. The Fort was first called Fort of the

Assumption, and he dedicated the chapel in this bulwark "to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin of the Beautiful River."²⁶ He kept a record of the baptisms and burials extending from July 11, 1753, at Presqu' Isle to Oct. 10, 1758, at Ft. Duquesne. It is preserved in the archives at Montreal and it has been published by Msgr. A. A. Lambing.²⁷

Let us examine it more closely! It reveals at once that Father Baron did more than a chaplain's ordinary duties, or rather that he acted like the other chaplains in similar French posts, *viz.*, as missionaries for the whole surrounding district. In this case his ministrations included persons of French, English, Irish, German, and Indian nationality. Thus on Nov. 3, 1754, he baptized a Delaware girl, twelve years old, who died two days later. On March 2, 1755, he christened Mary Vermet, the daughter of a French father who had been killed by the Shawnees and of an English mother. On Sept. 18, 1755, he poured the water of regeneration over the head of John Daniel Norment, the first white child born in this region, as far as we have any record. On April 27, 1756, he baptized Coroco, an Ottawa Indian from Detroit, and a few months later, on August 10, he christened Catherine Smith, of English parentage, who had John Candon, an Irishman, and Barbara Conrad, a German, as godparents. A few days later, on August 28, he buried a Huron Indian and on Dec. 17 of the same year he baptized Christiguay the great chief of the Iroquois, who was already 95 years old and who died a few days later. Several English children whose parents were not known either because they had been killed or captured by neighboring tribes are mentioned in these records.

It is rather strange that Father Baron gives only 7 burials after the battle on Braddock's field, July 9, 1755, and not one of them was that of an Indian warrior. The others, especially the Indians, must have been interred on the battle-field itself.²⁸ In proof of this it may be interesting to note that some years ago (1885) a Benedictine medal was found buried four feet under ground in the neighborhood of the Pennsylvania Station at Braddock, which is within the limits of that battle-ground. It had been minted in 1712. In all probability it belonged to a Catholic Frenchman or Indian that fell in that eventful battle and was buried with him. It is now in St. Vincent archives.²⁹

If the statement of some writers (perhaps founded on that burial record) that only seven French lost their lives in that

skirmish is correct, the medal must have belonged to an Iroquois, for according to John G. Shea, the eminent Catholic historian, Iroquois Indians were the main allies of the French. "They figure, indeed, in every engagement from Braddock's defeat, where they played a conspicuous part, down to the close of the war, and were never charged with the barbarities which disgraced the western Indians..."³⁰ Undoubtedly their conduct could be called a sign that Christianity had an influence on them. It is also well known that newly converted Indians were fond of wearing such medals, as we can read in the life of Shikellamy and others.

FORT DUQUESNE BECOMES CATHOLIC CENTER

With the capture of Ft. Duquesne (1754) the French tried to extend their influence over the neighborhood. There is one record of having missions for the Indians in this respect. On October 21, 1757, a missionary wrote a letter from St. François in which he speaks of "a deputation of twenty Abnakis appointed to accompany Father Virot, who has gone to found a new mission among the Loups [Delawares] of Oyo, or the beautiful river... tribes that appear inclined to receive it" (the Faith).³¹ In general Ft. Duquesne was even considered the center of the Catholic and anti-English movement in the colony during that time. In 1755 five justices of the peace in Berks County sent a most alarming manifesto to the governor of Pennsylvania and asked for immediate intervention. They stated that "the priests at Reading and Cussahopen last sunday gave notice that they would not come again in less than 9 weeks; whereupon some imagine that they have gone to consult our enemies at Ft. Duquesne."³²

The victory of Forbes in 1758 ended all this activity. The laws of England excluded all Catholics from political, social and economic life. Only the doubt whether these laws applied also to Pennsylvania stood in the way, because King Charles II had granted a special charter to William Penn. This was the reason why in 1733 the Catholics in Philadelphia could acquire land to build a church, St. Joseph's, which is still in use and which is the parent church for all Pennsylvania.³³ This was at that time the only public place of worship in the English colonies, as the law of 1707 allowed only private chapels to families in Maryland.

CONEWAGO IS "GATEWAY OF THE FAITH"

Eight years later, in 1741, two more churches were constructed in the eastern part of the state: St. Paul's at Goshenhoppen (now Bally,³⁴ 45 miles northwest from the City of Brotherly Love) from which many families emigrated later to western Pennsylvania, and a "Mass-house" at Conewago, in Adams County, near Gettysburg, which became the first parish church for western Pennsylvania from 1741 till 1789.³⁵ Conewago has been called the "Gateway of the Faith." Its long-time venerable pastor Father James Pellentz, S.J. (1764-1800), became known as the "Apostle of interior Pennsylvania." A number of priests who were the first to minister exclusively to Catholics in western Pennsylvania were his assistants before they went westward: Fathers Causé, Fromm, and especially the prince-priest D. A. Gallitzin. Upon special inquiry it was learned that the early baptismal and burial records of Conewago have not been preserved. The Very Reverend John F. O'Donnell, the present pastor, informed me that they begin only with the year 1791. We know, however, that two families in our vicinity, the Lambings and the Beelons, resided there for some time.

During the period from 1758 to 1775 several events have been recorded that give us a fair picture of those times. In 1763 the first celebration of St. Patrick's day took place in Ft. Pitt. On March 19, 1763, Captain Ecuyer, commandant of Ft. Pitt, wrote to Bouquet: "We had St. Patrick's fetes in every manner, so that Croghan could not write by this express."³⁶ In 1769 Messrs. Cauffman and Cottringer, two Catholic merchants of Philadelphia, tried to buy land in present Indiana County, apparently for a Catholic settlement. They applied to the Assembly for a special act which would empower them to do so, because they were Catholics and not yet citizens and did not wish to take the Oath of Supremacy.³⁷ The Assembly met on May 26, 1769. When the members could not reach a decision, the question was referred to the governor, who refused his consent.³⁸

PROPERTY ACQUIRED AS SITE FOR CHURCH

These laws continued till October, 1775, whereupon Mr. Cauffman took up the question again, and he bought twelve estates of about 300 acres each in that same locality (Feb.-March, 1776). They are recorded in Deed Book A at Greensburg for July 12 and 13, 1776. Most probably one of them was for a church

and its support.³⁹ At least this is certain, that on August 9, 1806, a farm in that district was transferred to Mr. Wilcox and others "in trust for a house of religious worship and rectory and burial place for the Catholics in the vicinity and for the priests to minister to them."⁴⁰ At that time Father Matthew Carr, O.S.A., pastor of St. Augustine Church, Philadelphia, tried to establish a community of Irish Franciscans on this land. The property is now held by the diocese of Pittsburgh for St. Patrick's church, Cameron's Bottom.

Another item of interest to Catholics in Pittsburgh is a property transfer in 1770. Mr. Garrett Pendergrass, a well-known Catholic of Bedford, lost to the commonwealth the estate which he had received from the Six Nations. Thereupon the Redmen offered him another tract called Long Reach, near the mouth of the Youghiogheny. When they learned that this was already in the hands of a third party who had improved it, they deeded him a third tract on the Allegheny river. The deed reads as follows: "We...grant a tract of land on the northside of the Aligani River opposite Fort Pitt, in form of a semicircle from said landing, granting him full liberty to build houses, make improvements etc."⁴¹ This singular deed, which includes a large section of lower Northside Pittsburgh, was made out in February, 1770, and has the signatures (marks) of three representatives of the Six Nations and of the grantee affixed. It was even recorded in Bedford, then the county seat of all western Pennsylvania, on September 17, 1772.⁴²

When the War of the Revolution broke out, the lot of the Catholics became at first worse⁴³ because many ardent patriots suspected them of favoring England, which had shortly before, in 1774, granted toleration to the Catholics in Canada through the so-called "Quebec Act."⁴⁴ Still the names of four known Catholics in the various meetings of that period held in Westmoreland County are proof that they took an active part in the revolutionary movement.⁴⁵ The condition of adherents to the Faith improved with the alliance with France in February, 1778, and finally the victory in 1783 brought, at least gradually, an era of toleration.

CHIEF CATHOLIC SETTLEMENTS

Shortly afterwards the first appeals for a priest for western Pennsylvania were made. By that time two main settlements of Catholics had been formed in western Pennsylvania. The one—

most probably the older and more populous—was in the Monongahela valley. These Catholics came from Maryland and Virginia (the first record in 1778). They were mostly of Irish nationality. Their center was Redstone (Brownsville).⁴⁶

The second group consisted of families from Berks and Adams counties. They were mostly German, and their leaders lived in the neighborhood of present Greensburg (the first record in 1774).⁴⁷ Later, towards the end of the century, two more settlements arose, both Irish. One was at the junction of Jacob's Creek and the Youghiogheny, in Westmoreland County. There the people worked for the Alliance Furnace Co., which was built in 1790. The other was at Slippery Rock and Buffalo Creek, in Butler and Armstrong counties, where Catholics arrived about 1795.⁴⁸ This latter colony was so thoroughly Gaelic that in 1803 Mr. Connel Rogers wrote to Bishop Carroll of Baltimore, asking him to send them a priest "who could understand the Irish language."⁴⁹ Most probably Father Patrick Lonergan, who visited the settlement in 1800 or 1801, preached the first Gaelic sermon in the United States in this colony.⁵⁰

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA WORTHIES

Local historians have given a detailed account of the affairs of these centers of Catholicity in early western Pennsylvania. Here only some of the most prominent members can be mentioned. In the Monongahela district Felix Hughes, Neal Gillespie, the Blaine and later the Noble families were prominent. In the Greensburg section Philip Freeman, the three Ruffners, and Henry Kuhn became the leaders. In the Butler-Armstrong colony, Neal Dugan, Neal Sweeny, James Sheridan, John McLoughlin, and Connel Rogers were the trustees. In Pittsburgh, which, compared to these three, had a very small number of Catholics, Col. James O'Hara, the grandfather of Father Harmar Denny, S. J., and Mrs. Schenley, was easily the best-known member of our faith.⁵¹ Sometimes Col. O'Hara is mentioned as a charter member of the First Presbyterian church⁵² because he contributed towards its construction in 1787. Undoubtedly he did this for his wife and his two daughters, who belonged to that congregation, but he himself never relinquished his faith. Missionaries were always welcome⁵³ at his house, and later he contributed ground for the first Catholic church in Pittsburgh.⁵⁴

At that early period there was another Catholic who obtained some influence in Pittsburgh. Of him little was known until Dr. Lawrence Flick published his biography in the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia* in 1900-1901. Dr. Flick based his study on the diary of this cultured Irishman. A synopsis of the career of this man, from an intellectual standpoint the most prominent Catholic in early Pittsburgh, may not be out of place for a more complete picture of Catholicity itself.

THE CAREER OF MATHIAS O'CONWAY

Mathias O'Conway emigrated from Cork, Ireland, to the Western Hemisphere in 1783. Seventeen years old at the time, he went first to the West Indies and then to Philadelphia in April, 1784. There he enlisted in David Ziegler's company, which was ordered shortly afterwards to Fort Pitt, where he arrived on November 29 of that year. A few days later the company was sent to Fort McIntosh⁵⁵ (Beaver, Pa.), and here O'Conway served as sergeant for a year. The certificate of his release as well as his diary and other personal documents are preserved in the archives of the Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia. Because he knew French and had learned several Indian dialects, he thought it profitable to become an Indian trader, and he settled in Pittsburgh. He dressed like an Indian, and during the next eighteen months he made a number of journeys to Carlisle to purchase goods for his customers.

Among other experiences his diary relates odd and curious incidents like the following: As he was traveling along the Allegheny in the company of the Seneca warrior Thickleg and his squaw and a German by the name of Kleinshot, the Indian woman suddenly became very ill. Her husband surmised at once that she had been poisoned by a Wyandot warrior who had vainly paid special attention to her in a frolic in the woods near Robinson's Ferry, opposite Pittsburgh. But the Seneca chief knew a remedy. He hurried into the neighboring woods, brought a plant, an emetic, which he induced her to eat and thus cured her.

THE RELIGION OF REBECCA ARCHER

Mr. O'Conway was fairly on the road to prosperity when he fell a victim to Dan Cupid. In a letter of that time to his mother in Ireland he wrote: "I returned to the American settle-

ment to purchase goods and I found a spouse." The facts in the case were these: He fell in love with Rebecca Archer, the step-daughter of Major Smallman, who kept an inn about three miles from Pittsburgh. She was the child of Reuben Archer, a Protestant of Dublin, and Mary Frassey, a Catholic of Cork who had emigrated to eastern Pennsylvania. As her father died soon after her birth, her mother married Mr. Smallman, by whom she had six children. Rebecca, born at Carlisle, was baptized a Catholic and received a fair education.

There cannot be any doubt about her faith. In his letters to his mother Mr. O'Conway always speaks of her as a Catholic. In his diary he nowhere mentions that she was received into the Church, a fact which he would have never omitted. In the baptismal records of their children she is always entered as a Catholic. Moreover at the time of her birth, about 1768, Carlisle had a fair-sized Irish congregation, which was regularly visited from Conewago. However her step-father must have objected strenuously to this marriage with Mr. O'Conway, a well-known Catholic of the community, because later she was even disinherited on that account.

There is a family tradition that their marriage was blessed by a visiting priest in Pittsburgh, but history does not know of such a visit. Moreover, the fact that the union was later, on May 19, 1791, solemnized in St. Louis Church, New Orleans, is sufficient proof to the contrary.⁵⁶ The diary states that the marriage was contracted on March 9, 1787, but it fails to record before whom. We can only say that most probably it was before a civil magistrate. The *Pittsburgh Gazette*⁵⁷ of the year 1787, which was examined and which gives all the marriages at which the Rev. S. Barr, then the only minister of the Gospel in Pittsburgh, assisted, does not mention it.

MATHIAS O'CONWAY BECOMES A TEACHER

With this marriage Mr. O'Conway gave up the roving life which he loved so much, and settled in Pittsburgh as a teacher, opening a school of foreign languages. Towards the end of the year 1787 a daughter was born. She was named Cecilia, and according to her later testimony she was baptized privately by her own father. The ceremonies were subsequently supplied in New Orleans. In 1808 this girl became an associate of Mother

Elizabeth Seton, a convert of the Bayley-Roosevelt family, and foundress of the Sisters of Charity, whose canonization process has, as is known, been introduced. This Cecilia O'Conway, born in Pittsburgh in 1787, has frequently been called the "first nun of Philadelphia." She should really be called the first nun of Pittsburgh.

Shortly afterwards three Frenchmen, Messrs. Pique, Sangrain, and Raquet (the last a member of Pulaski's legion) stopped at Pittsburgh for a time. They invited Mr. O'Conway to become their teacher of English, and later their secretary in a colonial enterprise in the West. However when Dr. Breckenridge, then Director of the Pittsburgh Academy, the forerunner of the University of Pittsburgh, heard of this, he made him a more favorable proposition: a professorship of languages at that institution and the directorship of studies; and the proposition was accepted.⁵⁸ Today this is one of the few facts known of the early professors of this seat of learning.⁵⁹ There is no doubt that Mr. Breckenridge, who was of a tolerant disposition,⁶⁰ had only the good of the school at heart in this appointment, but others, who were narrow in their religious views, most probably caused difficulties, and Professor O'Conway decided to leave.

After remaining with the Academy until December, 1788, he accepted a similar position in New Orleans under more favorable conditions so far as his faith was concerned. In 1795 he became official French and Spanish interpreter at Havanna. In 1798 he removed to Philadelphia, where he continued his brilliant teaching career until his death in 1842 except for the years 1836-39, when he again lived in Pittsburgh. One of his children, Peter, who was born in 1809, had Mother Seton as godmother at baptism. Mr. O'Conway, it may be noted, carried on correspondence with her.

THE FIRST PRIEST VISITS PITTSBURGH

It was about the time that Mr. O'Conway came to Pittsburgh, so far as we know, that the first priest, who was on his way to the West, stopped there. He was Father Paul de St. Pierre (Heiligenstein),⁶¹ a German Carmelite who had been chaplain with the French forces during the Revolutionary War. He might have remained if the Rt. Rev. John Carroll, at that time Prefect Apostolic, could have given him faculties.⁶² Passing through this district in October, 1784, a month later he was already in Illinois.

During the next year (1785) the first move was made by the Catholics in the Monongahela valley to have a regular ministration, at least once a year. They sent a man east with a signed petition, and Father Ferdinand Farmer of Philadelphia, who was first approached, wrote on July 19, 1785, to his ecclesiastical superior: "There is now a man in town from near Pittsburgh with a petition to have the visit of a missionary at least once a year. There are joined to the petition about seventy names of Roman Catholics living on or near the Monongahela in three places: Muddy Creek, Ten Mile Waters, Shirtee Waters; the chief of whom seems to be Felix Hughes."⁶³ These creeks are all west of the Monongahela and are known today as Charrier's Creek, Ten Mile Run, and Muddy Creek in Green County.⁶⁴ All efforts to get the list of subscribers to this petition have been futile so far, but from other sources quite a number of these Catholics are known today.

Father Farmer proposed to the Rt. Rev. Superior to send Father Sewall who was then stationed at Frederick, but Msgr. Carroll did not act, and in this way these colonists were deprived of regular ministration for years. In 1788 Msgr. Carroll asked Father Ryan, who had just arrived from Ireland (Aug. 1), to go to Pittsburgh, but he preferred Charleston, S.C.⁶⁵

FATHER CAUSÉ AT GREENSBURG

Later, on August 7, 1785, Father Farmer writing again recommended Father Fidentius Causé, an Alsatian Franciscan, who, as he said, besides his native German, "spoke English middling well and some French."⁶⁶ This missionary who was stationed at Conewago, came west a short time afterwards. Some say this was during the next year, after the Greensburg colony also had applied for a priest.⁶⁷ In any case, Causé stopped at the Greensburg colony and according to tradition held services in the house of John Probst, a few miles northwest of Greensburg. He then returned east again.

The most important result of this missionary journey was that several of the influential men of that colony formed a committee to buy land for church purposes in Newtown (Greensburg), which was then laid out. With this aim Mr. Philip Freeman, one of the wealthiest of them, acquired a tract of land from Mr. William Beass on January 2, 1789. Two months later,

on March 10,⁶⁸ for the nominal sum of five shillings, he deeded one acre over to the trustees of the congregation: John Probst, John Young, Patrick Archbold, and the three brothers Simon, Christian, and George Ruffner.⁶⁹ These pioneers of this first organized parish in the diocese of Pittsburgh have been traced. They lived mostly along the then "Great Road to Ft. Pitt," now the Lincoln Highway, from Laughlinstown to Harrison City, but in a wider sense Pittsburgh belonged to this congregation. The property itself, the oldest in the Pittsburgh diocese, is still part of the plot of ground on which the Holy Sacrament Church of Greensburg stands.⁷⁰

THEODORE BROUWERS AND SPORTSMAN'S HALL

A few months later this parish received its first resident pastor. Father Theodore Brouwers, a Dutch Franciscan, who had been Prefect Apostolic in Curaçao in the West Indies, from 1776 to 1787, resigned and went to Philadelphia in 1788. When he heard of the desire of the Greensburg congregation to have a resident pastor, he applied to the Rt. Rev. John Carroll, who was still Prefect Apostolic, for permission to settle there. The latter gave his consent.⁷¹ As Brouwers knew from experience that he could expect little or nothing in the way of support from colonial beginners, he bought a farm of about 170 acres from a certain Arthur O'Neill of Chester, Pa.⁷² This is now called the "Seven Mile Farm" because it is about that distance from St. Vincent Archabbey.

Father Brouwers came west in the autumn of 1789. When he saw that the location of this land was not convenient for his parishioners and as he did not wish to live in Greensburg, he boarded during the winter with some of the parishioners, especially the Ruffners. Finally, on April 16, 1790, he bought another property of 300 acres called Sportsman's Hall, for which he paid 475 lbs. of Pennsylvania money; a large sum for those days. It is situated eight miles east of Greensburg on the Lincoln Highway and forms part of the St. Vincent Archabbey lands.⁷³ The one and one-half story log house of that farm became the first residence of a Catholic pastor in western Pennsylvania, and one of the rooms of that building served as the first church. The log house was preserved until 1888.

FIRST PARISH IN WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Recently a stone marker taken from the Seven Mile Farm was erected on a base taken from the original foundation of the log house at Sportsman's Hall. It stands on the site of the original building. On the marker is a bronze tablet with the legend: "Site of Sportsman's Hall Log Cabin which served as the first Catholic parish Church of Western Pennsylvania. The property was bought by the Reverend Theodore Brouwers, O.F.M., First Pastor of the Congregation, April 16, 1790."

From that date this parish became the center of Catholic life in western Pennsylvania and remained so for nearly 18 years. It included Greensburg, where the chapel was never finished. It comprised the Monongahela valley where Father Fromm said the first Mass on May 4, 1794.⁷⁴ The settlements in Butler and Armstrong Counties belonged to it at least till 1807. Even Pittsburgh⁷⁵ was a part of it till 1808, although the latter was frequently visited by other priests as they passed through this "Gate of the West" during the last decade of the century. For this reason Sportsman's Hall has been called by Father Lambing very properly "the Cradle of Catholicity in Western Pennsylvania."⁷⁶

The first description of this church property is from the pen of Bishop Carroll who added the following postscript to a letter in 1792: "Mr. Brouwer's place, 300 acres of as good land as can be, of which about 60 acres cleared and near 40 acres more nearly so, about 20 acres are made meadow and 80 more may be converted into meadow; a comfortable dwelling house for the priest, consisting of two rooms with a kitchen adjoining; another dwelling house for the farmer, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile distant. Two tolerably good barns and another outhouse which may be converted into a stable—another place about 5 miles distant of between 100 and 200 acres of tolerable land—improvements on it; about 40 acres cleared, house and small barn for the farmer; — chapel under roof in Greensburg."⁷⁷

NUMEROUS PRIESTS VISIT DISTRICT

It is remarkable how many priests visited Pittsburgh towards the end of the eighteenth century. Father Paul de St. Pierre, also called Paul Heiligenstein, whose name was really Rignatz, stopped here in October 1784, as has been mentioned, on his

way to Illinois. In 1786 Father Peter Huet de la Vilmière, who had walked from Philadelphia, also took a boat here for the Illinois missions.⁷⁸ In the spring of 1787 Father Charles Whelan, an Irish Capuchin from New York, passed through here on his way to Kentucky.⁷⁹ Father Lemke's statement that Father Brouwers held services in Pittsburgh could be true only of the years 1789 or 1790. If the assertion is correct, these were the first ministrations by the regular pastor of the district.⁸⁰ In 1791 Dom Pierre Didier, a French Benedictine, passed through here from Gallipolis to Baltimore to consult Bishop Carroll.⁸¹ In 1792 Father Benedict Flaget, the future Bishop of Bardstown, Ky., who had a letter from Bishop Carroll to General Wayne, was detained six months waiting for a suitable water-stage; meanwhile he ministered to the people.⁸²

During the year 1793 at least four priests visited Pittsburgh. On May 13, 1793, Bishop Carroll wrote to Father Fromm at Sportsman's Hall: "From a letter of Rev. F. Nadoux, a French priest, I hear that you had a conversation with him at Pittsburgh."⁸³ Towards the end of the same year Fathers Badin and Barrières waited two months till a boat could take them to Kentucky. They left on November 3. In 1794 Father Fromm visited Pittsburgh again, as is seen from his letter to Bishop Carroll on March 9 of that year.⁸⁴ There is no record of any priest stopping in 1795, but on May 26, 1796, Father Lawrence S. Phelan wrote to Bishop Carroll from Greensburg: "I have been in Pittsburgh since my last letter (April 10). Although I could assemble but few Catholics yet I hope at my return to have a considerable number...The Presbyterians have signified their desire to hear me again."⁸⁵

PITTSBURGH'S CATHOLIC POPULATION IN 1796

From October 28, 1796, till the first days of February, 1797, Father Fournier and a companion were detained for various reasons. He held regular services, and in a letter to Bishop Carroll he complained that "although there were about a hundred Catholics in the town, only six came to his services."⁸⁶ Some writers have questioned this statement.⁸⁷ They say Pittsburgh had only 1395 inhabitants in 1796⁸⁸ and one hundred Catholics among them would have been an astonishingly high percentage. Even eight years later when the prince-priest Gallitzin had

services in Pittsburgh only fifteen persons attended Mass.⁸⁹ Perhaps Father Fournier included in his report the Catholics of the vicinity, for from another letter of Father Sylvester Phelan, dated October 10, 1795, we learn that "the Country was full of Catholics."⁹⁰

Father Fournier must have been convinced of the need of a priest in Pittsburgh in 1796, because in the same letter he asked Bishop Carroll for a resident pastor. Moreover, Father Dilhet, another French priest who stopped here in 1798 for nine days, repeated Father Fournier's request.⁹¹ However, ten years more were to pass before the wish could be fulfilled. Towards the end of the same year Father Salmon, who was on his way to Kentucky, passed through Pittsburgh.⁹² Thus we are justified in saying that during the last decade of the eighteenth century Pittsburgh had "itinerant pastors."⁹³

FATHERS GALLITZIN AND HELBRON ARRIVE

Finally in 1799 two important events for western Pennsylvania brought a great and almost sudden change. In August Father D. A. Gallitzin arrived in McGuire's settlement, now Loretto, Cambria County, and in the following November Father Peter Helbron came to the Sportsman's Hall parish. The first, a convert and scion of an old princely house in Russia was not yet thirty years old; the second, a Capuchin, came from a middle-class German family in the Saar district and was past sixty. They became friends almost at once and remained friends in spite of many difficulties. The first built up a strong Catholic community in the Allegheny mountains, the latter visited the various sections of western Pennsylvania—"Five Counties, as far as the lake" (Erie). For this reason, while the prince-priest Father Gallitzin can well be called "the Apostle of the Alleghenies," the Capuchin Father Peter Helbron deserves justly the name "the Apostle of western Pennsylvania."

NOTES

NOTES

¹ *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* ed. Thwaites, Reuben Gold (Cleveland, 1896-1901) LXIX, 297.

² Steck, Francis Borgia, O.F.M., *The Jolliet-Marquette Expedition, 1673* (*The Catholic University of America Studies in American Church History*, Vol. VI. [Quincy, Ill., 1928]), p. 123. Talon, the governor of Canada wrote in 1670: "Since my arrival here I have despatched persons of resolution, who promise to penetrate farther than has ever been done; the one to the west and to the north-west of Canada; and the others to the south-west and south. . . . It is by this same river [the St. Lawrence] that we can hope some day to find the opening to Mexico, and. . . we. . . have sent the sieur de la Salle, who is very enthusiastic for these enterprises" (p. 117). "Very probably after separating from the Sulpicians he [La Salle] pursued the original object of the expedition; instead of proceeding to Montreal, he turned toward the south and eventually reached the Ohio River. Nothing is known for certain, however, either of this expedition or of the one he undertook the following year [1674] (*ibid.*, p. 122). The fact "that La Salle really reached the Ohio is generally admitted" (Shea, John Gilmary, "The Bursting of Pierre Margry's La Salle Bubble" [New York, 1879, pamphlet], p. 17, quoted by Steck [*op. cit.*, p. 123] with reference also to Chesnel, Paul, *Histoire de Cavalier de la Salle* [Paris, 1901], pp. 33-39).

³ See Alvord, C. W., and Bidgood, L., *First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians, 1650-1674* (Cleveland, 1912).

⁴ Darlington, W. M., *Christopher Gist's Journals* (Pittsburgh, 1893), p. 27; Sipe, C. Hale, *The Indian Chiefs of Pennsylvania* (Butler, Pa., 1927), p. 109.

⁵ Darlington, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁶ *The Expedition of Baron de Longueuil*, Pennsylvania Historical Commission, Harrisburg, 1940. (Paris Arch. Nat. Colonies C 11 A, 71, f 33.)

⁷ A mimeographed account of this expedition with the maps of G. De Lery has lately (1940) been published by the Pennsylvania Historical Commission from various sources in France, Canada and the United States. "It was the first large military force to use the Chautauqua-Allegheny route and hence the first to pass through northwestern Pennsylvania" (Introduction).

⁸ Sipe, C. Hale, *op. cit.*, pp. 109 ff.

⁹ Thwaites, R. G. ed. *Early Western Journals, 1748-1765* (Cleveland, 1904), p. 54.

¹⁰ Philip de Joncaire was born in 1707 and followed his father's career as interpreter for Indians. He was intimate with the Iroquois and Senecas. Some even claim that his mother was a Seneca squaw, but Tanquay says that his mother was Madeleine de Guay (*Jesuit Relations*, LXIX, 293).

¹¹ Thwaites, *Early Western Journals, 1748-1765*, p. 27.

¹² Ganss, H. G., *History of St. Patrick's Church, Carlisle, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1895), p. 18.

¹³ Peter Chartier was the son of Martin Chartier and a Shawnee squaw, Peter married a Shawnee squaw. He lived at "Chartier's Old Town" (Tarentum) until 1744 when he allied himself with the French and received a military commission. His work in Pennsylvania was over.

¹⁴ Parkman, Francis, *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West* (1879), p. 13.

¹⁵ *The American Catholic Historical Researches* ed. Griffin, M. I., XX (Oct., 1903), p. 182.

¹⁶ Sipe, C. Hale, *op. cit.*, p. 72. Neucheconneh and other Shawnee chiefs who were induced by the Colonial authorities to come to Philadelphia in 1739 to renew their friendship with the English stated that Chartier and Miranda deceived them into taking this pledge (p. 105). This cannot remove the fact itself. The English traders constantly supplied them with rum, to weaken them. They had complained repeatedly against this traffic and they would have made war on the English before, if they had not been dissuaded by Peter Chartier.

¹⁷ Reichel, W. C. ed. *Memorials of the Moravian Church* (Philadelphia n. d.), p. 120.

¹⁸ Sipe, C. Hale, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

¹⁹ Judge H. H. Breckenridge wrote in 1786 that on the rocks at McKees Rocks the names of French and English officers were written (*Historical Researches in Western Pennsylvania, Principally Catholic* ed. Lambing, A. A., [Jan. 1885], p. 88).

²⁰ "From James McGuire and Cecilia McNamara Reigh, of County Kerry, was born Constantine McGuire, who married Julia McEllengot, of Kerry. Edward Maguire, their son, belonged to the staff of General McGuire, in Austria, and came to Philadelphia in 1751, with wines, in which he had invested his patrimony. He went to Alexandria, thence to Winchester, in 1753, where he built a hotel, gave the ground and built the Catholic Church at Winchester, 1790; died in 1808. . . . He married a Miss Wheeler, a Catholic. . . ." (Reily, John T., "The Irish and Catholics in the Virginia Valley," *The American Catholic Historical Researches*, XXII [Jan., 1905], p. 16).

²¹ In November, 1743, two Moravian missionaries (Schnell and Hussey), passed through Virginia. They stopped in Frederick County with a German innkeeper, Jost Heidt. He told them of Irish settlements close by. In 1749 Schnell and Brandmueller wished to preach in the house of Stephen Schmidt, a Catholic, but he assured them that the people were much incensed at them. He himself had heard how Rev. Mr. Klug had warned the people to be on their guard (*The American Catholic Historical Researches*, XXI [Oct., 1904], pp. 154, 155).

²² Act of Parliament, 1740; 13 George II.

²³ *The American Catholic Historical Researches*, XIX (Jan., 1902), p. 34.

²⁴ Sipe, *The Indian Chiefs of Pennsylvania*, p. 325.

²⁵ Thwaites, *Early Western Journals, 1748-1765*, p. 216. Also on other occasions; thus a note to this passage says: "The *Indian* traders used to buy the transported *Irish*, and other convicts, as servants, to be employed in carrying up the goods among the *Indians*. The ill behaviour of these people has always hurt the character of the *English* among the *Indians*." Thwaites attributes this statement to Charles Thomason, a Philadelphia Quaker, later secretary of the Continental Congress. Many Catholics, Irish and German, came into this country at that time as "Redemptioners" induced to emigration by "Eldoradoan promises," and when they arrived they were sold at auction for their passage money at £10 to serve their masters for three to four years (Ganss, *History of St. Patrick's Church, Carlisle, Pennsylvania*, p. 32).

²⁶ The French came down the river on April 16 in the afternoon. Therefore the first Mass in the place that is now Pittsburgh could not have been before April 17, a Thursday.

²⁷ *Historical Researches in Western Pennsylvania, Principally Catholic*, I (Oct., 1884), pp. 60 ff.

²⁸ Smith's relations (he was an English prisoner in Ft. Duquesne in July, 1755): "From the best information I could receive there were only seven Indians and four French killed in this battle" (Knight, Charles, *Our Western Border*, p. 75). Father Baron indicated at every entry whether the soldier was killed or wounded and when interred, one on the battlefield itself (cf. reference 27, pp. 113 ff).

²⁹ *Catholic Historical Researches* ed. Lambing, A. A., II (April, 1886), p. 158.

³⁰ Shea, John Gilmary, *History of the Catholic Missions Among the Indian Tribes of the United States* (New York, 1881), p. 339.

³¹ *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* ed. Thwaites, LXX, 91. Rev. Joseph Virot, pastor of the mission of the Abnakis of St. Francis of the Lake in the diocese of the Three Rivers was absent in 1757 for some months, having been sent with 20 Abnakis to the valley of the Ohio to try to establish a mission among the Loups (Delawares). He could not succeed on account of the continuous wars (Lambing, A. A., *Catholic Historical Researches*, II (1885), p. 80. This mission was near Beaver Falls. "But scarcely had he laid the foundation of his proposed work, when he was forced to withdraw by Pakanke, chief of the Wolf branch of that tribe who lived at Kiskaskunk, a short distance below New Castle (Lambing, A. A., *Brief Biographical Sketches of the Deceased Bishops and Priests who Labored in the Diocese of Pittsburgh from the Earliest Times to the Present, with an Historical Introduction*, I [from 1749-1860; vol. II was not published] [Wilkinsburg, Pa., 1914], p. 58 [On the binding the title is: *Foundation Stones of a Great Diocese*]).

³² This was not the only instance of this kind. Conrad Weiser, the celebrated Indian agent reported to the governor in Philadelphia that the German Catholics in Berk's County (Goshenhoppen) intended to help the enemy at Duquesne (*Records of the American Catholic Historical Society*, VI [1895], p. 178). Even Croghan and Post were suspected. In 1757 an official Act demanded that all Roman Catholics be registered. This resulted in the registration of 1365 persons above twelve years (the majority of them German Catholics). Naturally Pittsburgh (French) was not included. Official Register: Germans, 949; Irish and English, 416; (*The American Catholic Historical Researches*, VII [April, 1890], pp. 88-89).

³³ *The American Catholic Historical Researches*, XIV (Oct., 1887), p. 163.

³⁴ Cf. *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, II (1886-88), pp. 316 ff.

³⁵ Gamble, A. D., "Conewago, a Sketch" (1941), p. 13.

³⁶ McCall, G. A., *Letters from the Frontier; During Thirty Years' Service in the U. S. Army* (Philadelphia, n. d.), p. 118, quoted in *The American Catholic Historical Researches*, X (June, 1893), p. 143. G. Croghan was a Presbyterian, but from a census taken up at Ft. Pitt in 1761 it is evident that there were some Catholics in the town, among them a Charles Boyle, Philip Boyle, Patrick McCarthy, Patrick McQuaid, William Cassidy, etc. Naturally they celebrated St. Patrick's day (*The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet* [mimeographed] ed. Stevens, Sylvester K. and Kent, Donald H. for the Pennsylvania Historical Commission [Harrisburg, 1942], pp. 103-108).

³⁷ With the accession of William III and Mary in 1689 the law was passed in England which excluded Catholics from holding office, and the Provincial Council of September 2, 1692, had to make a similar declaration, which remained in force until October, 1775. Still more burdensome was the Act of George I, which was renewed by the Act of George II in 1740 with the provision that "all foreign-born persons who had resided in or who should reside in the colonies for 7 years continuously should become citizens by making the declarations provided for in 1st George, chapter 13" (*The American Catholic Historical Researches*, XVIII [July, 1901], p. 108).

³⁸ *Colonial Records of Pennsylvania*, IX, 596.

³⁹ There is also half of a deed signed by Jos. Cauffman which conveyed land in Westmoreland County contiguous to that obtained from Lechler to Mark Wilcox and the Rev. Matthew Carr, O.S.A., of Philadelphia. By this it appears that on Nov. 8, 1776, this land was granted and confirmed to Jos. Cauffman and enrolled in the Roll's Office of Pennsylvania in *Patent Book A* vol. 16, p. 75, the half of the deed providing for a "clergyman or clergymen to officiate at the congregation aforesaid as to him shall seem meet to discharge the Pastoral functions at the said congregation—and the said Joseph Cauffman and his heirs the said described tract of land hereby granted with the appurtenances unto the said Mark Willcox and Matthew Carr." It is witnessed by Abraham Stein and Frederick Beates.

⁴⁰ Records of Deeds, Westmoreland County, Greensburg, A, 131.

⁴¹ "Know ye therefore that we under or within bound subscribers who have hereunto caused our names to be set and have put our marks, the first of us assigning being one of the chiefs and the other two deputies off the six Nations to give and to grant to the said Garrett Pendergrass, his heirs and trustees forever, our full leave and liberty of us, and for and in behalf of the said six Nations to settle on a tract of land on the north side of the Aligani River opposite to Ft. Pitt, in form of a semicircle from said landing, hereby granting him and his heirs, trustees and assigns full liberty to build houses, make improvements and cultivate the said. . . (Egle, W. H., *History of Pennsylvania* [Des Moines, Iowa, 1876], p. 366).

⁴² Garrett Pendergrass also had land in Ligonier in 1775 which he sold on September 14, 1775, to James Boyle. He sold land to John Sunwell on the south side of the Youghiogeny in 1778 and other land on the river "Yock," improved in 1771, to George Croghan (Records of Deeds, Greensburg, Pa.).

⁴³ Guilday, Peter (*The Life and Times of John Carrol, Archbishop of Baltimore 1735-1815*) [New York, 1922], pp. 71-72): "The colonial period of American history . . . was ending in a whirlwind campaign of anti-Catholicism, or *No Popery*, when the Revolution broke out. . . The bonds of bigotry bound down all whose conscience would not permit compromise in matters of faith. Toleration, when it did come, came not as the result of any high-minded principles of liberty on the part of the leaders of the Revolution, but accidentally as the by-product of the policy which was born with the spirit of independence."

⁴⁴ The First Continental Congress on Sept. 5, 1774, adopted an Address to the People of Great Britain, denouncing the Quebec Act (*The American Catholic Historical Researches*, XXIV [July, 1907], p. 239). On October 19, 1774, Congress "declared they would not submit until that Quebec Act was repealed" (*The American Catholic Historical Researches*, X [April, 1893], p. 52).

⁴⁵ Albert, George Dallas, *History of the County of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia, 1882), p. 69.

⁴⁶ The Gillespie family is "the oldest Catholic family of settlers recorded" in Brownsville. Neil Gillespie arrived there in 1778 (Brennan, Martin J., *The Historic Church of St. Peter* [Brownsville] [Brownsville, Pa., 1936], pp. 26-27).

⁴⁷ The oldest record of a Catholic in the Greensburg district is of Patrick Archbold, March 8, 1774 (Records of Deeds, Book A, Greensburg); M[oo]smueller, O[swald], *St. Vincenz in Pennsylvania* (New York and Cincinnati, 1873), p. 43.

⁴⁸ Lambing, A. A., *Foundation Stones of a Great Diocese* (see reference 31), pp. 65, 75.

⁴⁹ Letter of Connel Rogers, Nov. 26, 1804, Baltimore Archives, VII, E, 2.

⁵⁰ Letter of Connel Rogers, May 24, 1803, Baltimore Archives, IV, E, 1.

⁵¹ The Pittsburgh *Gazette* of 1786 called him "one of the leaders of Pittsburgh Culture." An advertisement of the same year announced that he expected a "complete cargo of West-Indies goods." On January 10, 1787, he offered a "reward of \$100 for the capture of John Buchanan, who ran away on Oct. 11 last, being an indentured Irish servant man about 20 years old, 5' 5" tall, of black complexion, of very effeminate appearance with short black hair, speaks with a brogue, is very proficient with artifices and a notorious liar; he took along two horses, a woman who he said was his wife, was bought of Jeremiah Warder Parker and Co. Philadelphia, on May 27, 1784, says he was born in Cork" etc. Mr. O'Hara became one of the wealthiest men in Pittsburgh. In 1796 he had the first "glass-house," etc.

⁵² Darlington, W. M., in the *Critic*, a Pittsburgh newspaper, Dec. 12, 1875.

⁵³ Letter of Peter Helbron, Nov. 22, 1806, Baltimore Archives, IV, E, 9.

⁵⁴ Allegheny County Deed Book, Nov. 6, 1811.

⁵⁵ The picture which John Wilkins gave of Pittsburgh in December, 1784, is not a pleasant one. He wrote: "All sorts of wickedness were carried on to excess, and there was no appearance of morality or regular order. There appeared to be no signs of religion among the people." Arthur Lee wrote: "Pittsburgh is inhabited almost entirely by Scots and Irish, who live in paltry log houses, and are as dirty as in the north of Ireland or even in Scotland.... There are in town four attorneys, two doctors, and not a priest of any persuasion, nor church, nor chapel, so that they are likely be damned, without the benefit of clergy" (Lambing, A. A., "Points on the Early History of Pittsburgh," *Historical Researches in Western Pennsylvania, Principally Catholic*, I [Jan., 1885], p. 95).

⁵⁶ The renewal of the marriage contract took place on Thursday, May 19, 1791, in the church of St. Louis in the presence of Father Joaquin de Postillo, who performed the ceremonies and rites of the Church over the contracting parties and gave them the nuptial blessing. The marriage certificate records these details (*Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, X [1899], p. 279).

⁵⁷ Photostatic copies are accessible in the library of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh.

⁵⁸ Starrett, Agnes (Lynch), *Through One Hundred and Fifty Years: The University of Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh, 1937): "We have no way of telling who the very first Academy schoolmasters were, but there is plenty of evidence that classes were held in a log-building."

⁵⁹ Mr. O'Conway's own words in his diary: "The boat and everything else being prepared for the departure I was in the highest spirits with the contemplation of the new scenes, when a M. Breckinridge, one of the trustees of the contemplated Academy, came to me with proposals from the members, to postpone my departure and to accept the direction of the establishment, that I should be allowed a liberal salary, and a house rent free until a suitable [one] could be erected, that as I had a family it behooved me to attend to its welfare and prefer a certainty to a precarious subsistence, more particularly as the river was infested by Indian war parties who daily committed depredations and massacred such unfortunate victims as they encountered. Without resolving upon an answer, I immediately imparted the proposals to my French friends. They approved of them and recommended me to accept them..." (*Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, X [1899], p. 270).

⁶⁰ Mr. Breckenridge answering some of the objections of the trustees stated: "I thought no more of the religious denomination of any one than of the clothes he wore the last time I saw him. I nominated those who lived in Pittsburgh or near it who would attend the business of the Academy" (*Pittsburgh Gazette*, 1787).

⁶¹ He left Rotterdam June 24, 1784, for Philadelphia to meet F. Farmer, to be introduced to Msgr. J. Carroll, and he went to Rock Creek where the latter resided. "Because of some technicality in the Church's laws the Prefect Apost. would not employ this priest who had labored and suffered more than all the American priests in the cause of American independence." Therefore he decided to go west—to territories outside the 13 States. "He may have turned up at the forks of the Ohio at the end of October, 1784. F. J. Carroll informs us that he had gone to Illinois, Nov. 24, 1784" (Lenhart, John, O. M. Cap., *The Pittsburgh Catholic*, Feb., 1923).

⁶² "I shall in the meantime request permission to give faculties to other clergymen than those sent by the Propaganda, of whose virtues and talents I shall have sufficient documents. For want of this power the Catholics in New Jersey, New York, the great western country bordering on the lakes, the Ohio . . . are entirely destitute of spiritual succor. The Catholics in some of these settlements have, at the expense of paying the passage of some Irish Franciscans, erecting places of worship, providing for their subsistence, sent for such missionaries. These men brought good testimonials, but I am precluded from giving them special powers. . . ." (Letter of Rt. Rev. J. Carroll to F. Farmer, Jan. 12, 1785, Baltimore Archives). "Before I received your Eminence's letter there went to them a priest, German by birth, but who came last from France, he professes to belong to the Carmelite Order; he was furnished with no sufficient testimonials by his Superior" (Letter of Rt. Rev. J. Carroll to Cardinal Antonelli, Feb. 27, 1785, Baltimore Archives).

⁶³ Baltimore Archives, III, P, 1.

⁶⁴ St. Vincent Archives, Canevin Letters.

⁶⁵ "At first F. Ryan, a very pious Irish priest who arrived in Philadelphia August 1, 1788, was offered the mission where a large colony of Irish Catholics are soliciting a priest and offer his maintenance, but he preferred Charleston, S. C." (Msgr. Carroll to Dr. Troy, Aug. 11, 1788 [*Spicilegium Ossoriense*, III, 505]).

⁶⁶ Baltimore Archives, III, V, 2.

⁶⁷ M[oosmueller], O[swald], *St. Vincenz in Pennsylvanien*, p. 47.

⁶⁸ Westmoreland County Deed Book, A, Greensburg.

⁶⁹ Westmoreland County Deed Book, D, Greensburg.

⁷⁰ The text of this oldest deed to Catholic Church property in western Pennsylvania, recorded March 26, 1789, in Deed Book D, p. 91, Greensburg, has been published in *Historical Researches in Western Pennsylvania, Principally Catholic*, I (April, 1885), pp. 154-155.

⁷¹ *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, XXV (1914), p. 356.

⁷² Chester County Deed Book, D, 249.

⁷³ Westmoreland County Deed Book, D, 450.

⁷⁴ Baltimore Archives, IV, E, 14.

⁷⁵ Baltimore Archives, IV, E, 14.

⁷⁶ In 1794 Bishop Carroll offered to the Benedictines in Downside a place in western Pennsylvania to establish a monastery and a school. He wrote on Sept. 19, 1794: "Nothing can be more pleasing to me than the prospect of having in my diocese a settlement of English Benedictines. . . I am decidedly of opinion that the neighborhood of the town called Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, about 300 miles from this would be the properest place for a settlement and a school. . ." (Downside Archives; a copy of this letter is in St. Vincent Archives).

⁷⁷ Baltimore Archives, IX, I, 11.

⁷⁸ Baltimore Archives, IX, D, 1.

⁷⁹ *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, XXI (1910), p. 176. The letter of Bishop Kenrick quoted here mistakenly says "Maurice Whelan" for "Charles Whelan." *

⁸⁰ Lemke, Rev. H., "Autobiography," *The North Cambria News*, 1879.

⁸¹ Baltimore Archives, IX, A, J, 2.

⁸² Lambing, A. A., "The Early Days of Catholicity in Pittsburgh" *Historical Researches in Western Pennsylvania, Principally Catholic*, I (July, 1884), pp. 34-35.

⁸³ Baltimore Archives, IX, A, J, 2.

⁸⁴ Baltimore Archives, III, U, J.

⁸⁵ Baltimore Archives, VI, G, 10.

⁸⁶ Fournier Letter, Nov. 22, 1796, Baltimore Archives.

⁸⁷ *Historical Researches in Western Pennsylvania, Principally Catholic*, I, 5.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, census of Pittsburgh, *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Jan. 9, 1796.

⁸⁹ Albert, George Dallas, *History of the County of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania*, p. 269.

⁹⁰ Baltimore Archives, VI, G, 6.

⁹¹ "au fort pitt, 8 mai 1798

"Ils deviennent avoir un prêtre, et m'ont assuré que plusieurs dans la campagne ont la même desir. Et P. Fournier que ce gentilhomme Limousin connoit lui avait promis de vous en parler. . ." (Dilhet, Baltimore Archives, III, D, 1). He took a "Bateau" from Pittsburgh to Franklin, and on the French Creek to Fort de Boeuf (Dilhet, Letter July 26, 1798, Baltimore Archives).

⁹² Salmon Letter, May 29, 1799, Baltimore Archives.

⁹³ "Itinerant Pastors": F. Fournier wrote to Bishop Carroll from Pittsburgh, Nov. 22, 1796: "In the different places through which we passed we have baptized ten people, some of them 16 years old, and we arrived at Pittsburgh on the 28th of the last month" (Baltimore Archives).

⁹⁴ Baltimore Archives, IV, E, 8.



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