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James Taylor of Duncan's Falls (1785-1854) He Lost It All, but Cared Not

In the story of the mission of St. Ann at Philo, we promised to present a sketch of the life of James Taylor, founder of Taylorsville or Philo, and convert to the Catholic Faith.

James Taylor was born in Frederick County, Va., on Sept. 9, 1785, migrated to Zanesville in 1810 and was a merchant, manufacturer, and land dealer in Muskingum county.¹ By 1814 he had married Francis Doster (spelled consistently with an "i" in deeds and on tombstone), but no marriage record for them is to be found in Ohio or Virginia. The listings of their household in the 1820 and 1830 censuses indicate that they had no children.

One of James Taylor's earliest business ventures was to build Zanesville's second glass factory at the mouth of Slago Run on Wayne Avenue in 1816, in partnership with Alexander Culbertson.² In 1824 he moved to a place nine miles below Zanesville, on the Muskingum River, and opened a store above the mouth of Salt Creek, at Duncan's Falls. He operated this in partnership with James Doster as "James Taylor & Co."³ In June of 1826 he made his first large purchase of real estate, buying 1,070 acres lying north of Duncan's Falls.⁴ By 1829 he owned almost

1,500 acres on the north side of the river in the vicinity of Duncan's Falls, as well as 134 acres to the northwest in Wayne Township.⁵

Taylor was one of thirteen men of Washington, Morgan, Muskingum, and Coshocton counties who incorporated The Muskingum Navigation Company in February, 1828, with the objective of building dams, locks, side-cuts, toll-houses, and other structures to improve the navigation of the Muskingum River from Marietta to the Ohio Canal near Dresden. Perhaps indicating his leadership, his name was listed first in the Act of the Ohio Legislature that completed the incorporation. A week earlier he had received legislative permission to build a dam across the river near the head of Duncan's Falls.⁶ In 1829 he built the dam along with a saw mill on the south side of the river. The next year he built a grist mill at the same place. Mr. Taylor also kept a ferry, engaged in the manufacture of salt, and a number of other enterprises.⁷

During this prosperous period, James lost his wife, Francis Doster Taylor, who died on May 30, 1830 at the age of 35 years. She is buried with her siblings in Zanesville's Greenwood Cemetery. Two and a half years later, on

November 29, 1832, he married the widowed Mrs. Barbara Caroline (Schweitzer) Dugan of Zanesville, widow of John S. Dugan, who was called Barbary. The wedding took place at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Zanesville, before Rev. Richard P. Miles, O.P.⁸ Taylor became convinced of the truth of his new wife's Catholic faith and soon joined the Church and was said to have been "a most consistent and exemplary convert."⁹

It was about this time that James built Mound House, on a hill about 3/4 mile north of Duncan's Falls. He built the front of the present house, which is at 400 Mound Road. The rooms to the rear were built by a later owner. It was considered to be a Catholic station, where the priests from Zanesville visited and offered Mass for Catholics of the vicinity.¹⁰ This house has "the finest spiral staircase in the county."¹¹

Development of Taylorsville

Taylor purchased 795 acres lying south of the Muskingum River at Duncan's Falls. It held a forest of timber with, in many places, a dense growth of hazel brush and grape vine. In later times it was described as a clear, healthy location, surrounded by a rich farming country.¹² Here he laid out the town of Taylorsville and sold the first lot in May, 1833. It was said that he aligned the plat of Taylorsville so that from Mound House he could look across the river and directly down Main Street of the town. Taylor donated lots for several churches in Taylorsville, including one for a Catholic church, and he and Barbara began a subscription to build the latter.¹³

In 1836 Ohio's canal commissioners let contracts for improvement of the Muskingum River from Marietta up to Dresden. At the end of that year Taylor surrendered to the State all the rights and privileges he had gained under the legislation of 1828, including his right to build a canal at Duncan's Falls; he granted the State land for a canal and a dam; but he retained the use of water power for his mills.¹⁴ The improvement project

took five years to complete, from 1837 until 1842, and brought many Catholic laborers into the valley. It also created great demand for timber and farm produce. Lots at Taylorsville were sold during this boom period for "more money than they would bring since the completion of the public works."¹⁵ Taylor's dam was replaced by Colonel James Sharp, under a contract with the State, in 1837 and 1838. The Taylorsville canal was completed in 1840, a mile long, with locks 36 feet wide by 200 feet long. It ran from the dam down to the river east of Sixth Street.¹⁶

The *Catholic Telegraph* of Aug. 18, 1836 described the town in glowing terms. "When we consider the great local advantages of Taylorsville, its immense water-power, the vast quantities of coal and iron-ore in the adjoining hills, and the strength and copiousness of the salt springs in its immediate neighborhood, and the liberal appropriation (\$400,000) made by the state legislature at its last session, for the improvement of the Muskingum, we have no doubt that it will be, before many years, distinguished for wealth, manufacture, and commerce."

In 1841 Taylor laid out the village of Duncan's Falls on the north side of the river.

Financial Reverses

Taylor's financial problems seem to have begun as early as 1835 but did not begin to snowball towards a collapse until late 1837. By 1835 Taylor was owed \$3,000 by William A. Ritchie and was to be paid by H. B. Ritchie. In 1836, in connection with this debt, Taylor and William A. Ritchie promised to pay the Belmont Bank of St. Clairsville \$4,000.

The country entered a financial crisis in 1837 and Taylor's personal situation followed. The banking system at that time was virtually unregulated. Money in circulation consisted of paper notes issued by the many local banks, which was subject to varied depreciation. In

1836 President Jackson ordered the Treasury to accept only gold or silver, or bank notes that could be redeemed for the same, as payment for public land sales. This virtually destroyed the banks and their currency. In 1837 prices rose suddenly, more than doubling; there were bread riots in New York City; banks were driven to suspend payments in hard money. The problems continued through the early 1840s.

Early in 1837 Taylor promised to deliver 4,000 bushels of corn, corn meal, and ship-stuff to Ira Belknap, aboard Belknap's boat at Duncan's Falls, after the next harvest, for \$2,492.50, of which Belknap paid one-quarter down. Taylor did not deliver the promised products that summer or fall (probably because of the sudden inflation that had occurred). His problems apparently were growing, for in August Taylor and his step-son Lewis H. Dugan signed notes promising to pay \$11,000 to Alvah Buckingham and Solomon Sturges. The next month Taylor was sued by John Funk and Thomas Caldwell for goods, wares, and merchandise sold to him, as well as money loaned or advanced. Also this year the Belmont Bank filed suit to recover their claim on the \$4,000 in notes.

That December Taylor and James Doster signed notes to the Bank of Zanesville for \$34,545 and in January Taylor mortgaged what remained of his 795 acres at Taylorsville as security on this loan.

In 1838 and 1839 several suits filed against Taylor, which he appealed to the Supreme Court, were lost by him. Ira Belknap filed in July, 1838 and that year was awarded \$1,484.69. In the suit of Funk and Caldwell, the court found in 1839 that Taylor owed them \$1,929.75. In the Belmont Bank's suit, in which Taylor's former partner James Doster supported him by executing an appeal bond, the court found in November, 1839 that Taylor owed \$3,580.50.

Apparently to raise money to pay these judgments and other debts, on March 27, 1840

Taylor mortgaged his 795 acres at Taylorsville to secure (1) the old notes of \$11,000 to Alvah Buckingham, (2) the debt of \$34,545 to the Bank of Muskingum, and (3) a new debt of \$19,535.05 to the German Bank of Wooster. According to a series of articles in the *Zanesville Times Recorder* in 1890, noted by Norris Schneider (1959), "the whole amount was loaned at a high rate of interest." Less than a year later, on February 5, 1841, Taylor sold his 1,070 acres on the north side of the river and his water rights to Alvah Buckingham at a stated price of \$45,350. In June the Bank of Zanesville filed suit against the Taylors, Lewis Dugan, Alvah Buckingham, the German Bank of Wooster, and some thirty others to clear its claims. As a result, the property north of the river was divided into several tracts and sold.¹⁷

By 1850 the Taylors were living in Harrison Township (i.e. south of the river) with Barbara's son and two grandchildren. None of them reported owning any real estate, but they did manage to have two female servants.

The Taylorsville post office opened in 1850 and, there already being a Taylorsville post office in Ohio, it was named Philo, for the wealthy Philo Buckingham, a relative of Alvah, the new owner of Mound House. Thus, even the name of the town Taylor had founded was taken over by the new owners.

Later Life

By the early 1840s Lewis H. Dugan, son of John S. and Barbara, in partnership with steamboat captain William Bowen, had built a large, frame flour mill near Taylorsville, making the place a first-class wheat market. Dugan's cousin Robert J. J. Harkins later took over the business, but it was ruined when the railroad came to Zanesville from the east and the farmers began taking their grain to be shipped by that faster mode of transportation. The wheat market at Taylorsville closed in 1858. (The railroad eventually was built to Taylorsville.)¹⁸ The mill building

survived until 1897 when it burned down.¹⁹

On Friday, Nov. 11th, 1854, Mr. Taylor died, at his residence at Duncan's Falls at the age of 69 years. "He lost all his wealth by the misfortunes of the times several years before his death, but, as he remarked to the writer of this notice, he cared not for what he lost, since God had given him what was infinitely better--the true faith!"²⁰ His burial place is unknown; burial was from St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, so presumably he is in the old parish graveyard, and probably on the Dugan lot.

It was said of Mrs. Taylor that "the poor and unfortunate will ever remember her as their constant friend and benefactor." "Her conversation being always agreeable, intelligent and interesting, her society was sought for by all who knew her, and none knew her but to love her." From the mid-1840s until the end of her life her bodily sufferings were constant and at times excruciating, but she bore them all with patience and resignation.

Mrs. Dugan moved from the Taylorsville vicinity to Putnam about 1866 and died Nov. 16, 1867 at the age of 83 years.²¹ Her grave is in the somewhat neglected old cemetery of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, where there is a tall monument to Barbara, her first husband John Simon Dugan, and their son Lewis Henry Dugan.

Other James Taylors

In order to assist future researchers, and perhaps avoid some of the confusion that has prevailed in the past, we will briefly list here several other James Taylors who lived in Muskingum County in the first half of the 19th century.

Captain James Taylor

Captain Taylor (1769-1843) came to Muskingum County in 1804. He and his wife Jane McMehan (1788-1865) lived near Zanesville in Falls Township, where they had a large farm. They,

like James and Francis, dealt extensively in real estate. They had no children, but he had two nephews, Ralph and Grondo Taylor. Their graves are in Woodlawn Cemetery.

James Taylor Junior

James Taylor Junior was born in the early 1800s. He lived in Zanesville and appears in deeds with his wife Juliet in 1834. In "History's Shrouded Web - The James Taylor Story" in *Muskingum Annals Number One*, 1985, Gary Felumlee confuses our James Taylor with James Taylor, Senior, of Campbell County, Kentucky, who was father of James Taylor Junior. James of Kentucky owned property in three states as well as slaves in Kentucky. However, it is made clear by his will record (Muskingum County, D/524 ff) that this man lived in Kentucky and was deceased by November of 1848. James Taylor Junior, of Muskingum County, died Oct. 8, 1853 (Probate Court, Administration Docket C/174). Oddly, the present tombstone of Francis Doster Taylor at Greenwood Cemetery calls our James "SR." or senior. However, this is a relatively new, replacement stone and a reading of the original stone does not list this postscript to James's name.

James Taylor husband of Maria

Maria Davis married a James Taylor in Muskingum County on December 3, 1818.

James Taylor husband of Betsey

James and Betsey Taylor owned 80 acres in Clay Township in southwestern Muskingum County. They were sued for money due and the court issued an order to sell their property in 1831. (Deed Record L/431)

James Taylor husband of Susan

James Taylor married Susan on May 19, 1833 at Putnam. Susan sued for divorce in 1840. She was granted the divorce, alimony, and custody of their child Joseph. (Supreme Court Record E/368)

James P. Taylor

This man, who lived from 1822 until 1852,

according to records at Zanesville's Oak Grove Cemetery was buried in Columbus.

NOTES

- 1) Taylor Obituary, *Catholic Telegraph*, Nov. 18, 1854; and obituary seen by Norris F. Schneider, mentioned in his article "History of Mound House is Clouded" in Zanesville's *Sunday Times Recorder*, Dec. 20, 1959.
- 2) Schneider, Norris F., *Y Bridge City: the Story of Zanesville and Muskingum County, Ohio*; Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1950; p 92
- 3) Muskingum County Supreme Court Record D/128
- 4) Muskingum County Deed Record H/616
- 5) 1829 tax duplicate
- 6) *Acts of the Ohio Legislature, year 1828*, general page 47 and personal page 55
- 7) *History of Muskingum County, Ohio...*; J. F. Everhart & Co., 1882; p. 348. Biographical and historical memoirs of Muskingum County, Ohio; Chicago: Goodspeed, 1892; p. 312
- 8) *Catholic Telegraph*, December 15, 1832

- 9) Taylor Obituary, *Catholic Telegraph*, Nov. 18, 1854
- 10) *Catholic Telegraph*, June 13, 1834
- 11) Schneider, *Y Bridge City*, 187
- 12) "History of St. Ann's Catholic Church of Philo", Ohio typescript by Mary Amelia and Hilda G. Kussmaul, 1955 (in files of the Catholic Record Society)
- 13) See the *Bulletin*, July, 2006
- 14) Muskingum Co. Deed Record R/452
- 15) *Bulletin*, 2002, page 248 (Hackney story). Goodspeed, op. cit., p 96
- 16) Everhart, 1882, p. 348 and 350. Goodspeed 312
- 17) Muskingum County Supreme Court Records E/23, E/150 E/194; Muskingum County Deed Records T/260, Y/13, Y/16, Z/442, 1/143
- 18) Goodspeed, p 476
- 19) *Zanesville Courier*, Apr. 25, 1899
- 20) *Catholic Telegraph*, Nov. 18, 1854
- 21) *Zanesville Signal*, Nov. 21, 1867

Abstracts from The Catholic Telegraph

(Continued from Vol. XXXI, No.10)

February 3, 1855

MARIETTA.--Rev. Mr. Perry writes from Marietta: "All the Catholics of this congregation, with the exception of about twenty, have approached the Sacraments for Christmas and the Jubilee. Many who had not received the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist for years availed themselves of this holy season. Those who have lived here the longest say they have never seen so many at Communion.

"There were in the course of the year 1854, ninety-five baptisms, thirty-four marriages, and ten deaths. There were twenty-two dollars collected for the orphans in Marietta, at Meigs' Creek church, and at Mr. Taggart's. Of these, five were given by Mr. Brennan, of Marietta."

The new church of Marietta is still unfinished. It has been so for more than eighteen months.

We hope an effort will now be made to pay the debt first, and then to finish the building.

At St. Peter's Church, Steubenville, Ohio, there were during the past year 54 marriages, 120 baptisms, and 37 deaths - adults 17, children 20.

February 17, 1855

Statistics of Marriages,
Baptisms, and Deaths.

Rev. Father Bokel sends us the following statistics of the congregations therein names in Perry county. The alms of the Jubilee were appropriated for the support of the orphans of St. Mary's, Somerset, Perry county.

St. Pius' congregation.-- Marriage, 1; Baptisms,

9; Deaths, 4.
St. Michael's, Deavertown.-- Baptisms, 8;
Deaths, 4.
St. Joseph's.-- Marriages, 7; Baptisms, 32;
Deaths, 16.
St. Patrick's.-- Marriages, 2; Baptisms, 44;
Deaths, 15.
St. Dominic's.-- Marriages, 4; Baptisms, 59;
Deaths, 20.

March 3, 1855

To the Clergy of the Archdiocese.

The Rev. Peter Perry, of Marietta, begs to inform his reverend brethren, that in consequence of the means failing to which his congregation looked for liquidating the debt on their new church, and the builder having threatened to bring suit and sell it and the lot on which it is built, consent has been obtained and encouragement given by our Most Rev. Archbishop to solicit aid from the various congregations of the archdiocese. He trusts, therefore, that his reverend brethren will show him the same happy faces and welcome greeting with which they have been accustomed to receive him at the holy times of ecclesiastical retreat.

Marietta, Feb. 22, 1855.

March 17, 1855

This issue contains a long description of the Manual Labor School for Girls at Mishawaka, Indiana, and St. Mary's Academy, Bertrand, Michigan.

March 24, 1855

Died.

Mrs. MARY C. MCCUNE, having received all the sacraments of the Catholic Church, departed this life on the 3rd of March, 1855, at her residence, in Keokuk, Iowa, surrounded with her beloved husband, family, and numerous friends, at the age of 38 years, 5 months, and 17 days. Born in Maryland, she followed, yet a tender child, her parents, emigrating into Ohio, where the scenes of her girlhood passed away. She became Mrs. McCune in 1843. The family removed and settled permanently in Keokuk, in the fall of

1850. Having joined the Catholic Church at the age of 12 or 13 years, she has been ever since a strict, zealous, and exemplary member of that Church. ...she was under God the chief instrument in the foundation of the Convent of the Visitation of St. M. in Keokuk, where her last thoughts and her last cares lingered away, in the hope that her five little girls would find there another home, and a solid and Christian education...

March 31, 1855

For the Catholic Telegraph.

Biographical Notice of late Rev. F. X. D'Hope. The subject of this brief notice was born at Meulebeke, in Belgium, January 4th, A.D. 1813. Having finished his studies at Thielt, he resolved to embrace a religious life. To carry this resolution into effect, he left his native country for the United States, A.D., 1837, and entered the Noviciate of the Jesuits at Florissant, Mo., on the 22nd November of the same year. At the close of his noviceship he was sent to the St. Louis University, and appointed assistant disciplinarian over the students. Subsequently sent to Louisiana, he taught Rhetoric and Natural Philosophy for several years, with success, at St. Charles' College, Grand Coteaur. While here, he was promoted to the priesthood, in New Orleans, by Archbishop Blane, August 29th, 1845.

From that time to the hour of his death, he was faithful in discharging the several duties imposed by his superiors. Although suffering for many years from chronic affection in both legs, yet he was invariably at his post, and it is remarkable how his zeal increased with his sickness; for the malady which took him from our midst had been contracted on his return from a mission given by him at Madison. His unpretending piety and zeal procured for him many friends. He slept in the Lord, March 23rd, at four o'clock, P.M., at St. Joseph's Infirmary, Louisville, Ky. The following day, a solemn Requiem Mass was sung, at which the greater part of the clergy of the city, with their distinguished Prelate, Bishop Spalding, assisted. The funeral ceremonies were

performed by the Bishop, who in his usually felicitous style, made some pertinent remarks on the virtuous life of the deceased. The warm interest manifested by the Bishop and his clergy in a departed co-laborer, strongly reminded one of that passage in the Psalms, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

The remains were carried to St. Joseph's College, Bardstown, and deposited near the church.

[Father D'Hope served at Chillicothe in 1848 and 1849.]

April 7, 1855

Statistics for 1855, Holy Trinity Church, Somerset: 49 baptisms, 27 deaths

Died,

On Saturday, the 24th of March, Sister OSANNA MORRIS, in the 35th year of her age. She was a professed Sister, of St. Mary's Convent in Somerset, receiving the white habit of St. Dominick on the 8th of September, 1839, and made her religious profession the 8th of December, 1840. She was an humble religious, the best encomium the Christian could wish in life or death; bearing her protracted bad health for some years past, with patience and resignation. Her remains were deposited in the Conventual Cemetery, after a solemn Mass and panegyric by the Rev. Director of the Community, taking for his text, "Blessed are they who die in the Lord;"...

to be continued...

Taylorsville Marriages, 1849-1882

Recorded at St. Nicholas Church, Zanesville

Marriage records of St. Nicholas Parish from 1843 through 1847 appeared in the *Bulletin* of March and June, 2006. The vast majority of the subsequent marriage records at this parish do not list a location. Most of those abstracted here were chosen because the persons or family names appear in other Taylorsville sacramental records. Records from about 1882 to 1944 were kept at St. James Parish in McConnellsville. Beginning in the spring of 1944 they were kept at St. Thomas Aquinas in Zanesville.

1849, Nov. 4, John Fettler to Caroline Schmidt, in the presence of the congregation at St. Anna, Taylorsville; witnesses Francis Andrew Sommer and Catherine Trummel [perhaps Kimmel?]. Matth. Deslaers

1850, Nov. 24, Francis Roll to Magdalene Stehle, witnesses George Hosan and Mary Ann Stehle. William Deiters

1851, May 6, Henry Töbele to Barbara Till, wit. Nicholas Till and Mary Till. W. Deiters

1851, Sept. 21, Nicholas Till to Catherine Loos, wit. Nicholas Krier and Mary Till. W. Deiters

1853, Aug. 30, Andrew Sommer to Sophia Kimmel, wit. Kilian and Eve Kimmel. W. Deiters

1854, July 20, Henry Ulrich to Mary Stehle, wit. John Dünch and Louise Downy. W. Deiters

1859, March 1, Jacob Hossan to Elizabeth Roll, wit. Nicholas Hossan and Josephine Kussmaul. F. Goetz

1859, May 8, John Riff to Mary Till, in the church in Taylorsville. F. Goetz

1860, Apr. 11 in Taylorsville, Valentine Runser to Margaret Till; spons. John Runser and Therese Till. G. Uhlinger

1861, Aug. 15, Nicholas Krier to Mary Wise or Weis, wit. Joseph Mühlfeld and Margaret Krier. A. Hechinger

1865, Oct. 12 in Taylorsville, John Peter Grier to Josephine Eberst, wit. Peter Gersbach and Justine Eberst. John Jos. Rauck

1866, Apr. 17, Joseph Peter of Wayne Township to Margaret Schmitt of Taylorsville, wit. Jacob Durant and Susan Schmitt. John Jos. Rauck

1866, July 3, John Fluke, protestant, to Catherine Voll, in Taylorsville, wit. William Tool and

- Juliana Voll. John Jos. Rauck
 1866, Sept. 16, Albert Stiers to Ann Hook, wit. Jacob Engelhard and Mary Steir. Both of the married couple reside in Taylorsville. John Jos. Rauck
 1867, May 8, Jonathan Hall (Protestant) to Mary Kimmel in Taylorsville. John Jos. Rauck
 1870, Apr. 24, John Kussmaul to Henrietta J. Baughmann, previously married before a civil magistrate, wit. Peter Hummes and Anna Christ. Magnus Eppink
 1872, July 15, Taylorsville, Alfred Kinkade (not baptized) to Carol Sullivan, married before a justice four years ago, wit. Henry Eppink and the mother of the woman. Magnus Eppink
 1873, May 6, Joseph Waltz to Mary Muehlfeld, wit. Nicholas Muehlfeld and Teresa Till. Magnus Eppink
 1873, Oct. 23, John Henry Basehart to Barbara Kussmaul (living in Taylorsville), wit. Louis Basehart, Leonard Gabele, Sarah Basehart, and Teresa Kussmaul. Magnus Eppink
 1876, Nov. 29, Henry Kimmel to Sarah Basehart, both of Taylorsville, wit. Louis Basehart and Frances Krigbaum. Magnus Eppink
 1877, Feb. 9, Louis H. Basehart to Mary Frances Krigbaum. Magnus Eppink
 1877, Nov. 14, Christian Kussmaul to Emily Fresch, wit. Francis Fresch and Clara Kimmel. Magnus Eppink
 1878, Feb. 12 in Taylorsville, Charles Basehart to non-Catholic Helen Jamkins, married 13 months previously by a secular judge, wit. Louis and Katherine Basehart. Magnus Eppink
 1879, Jan. 21, William Fattler to Elizabeth Paul, wit. Peter Paul and Margaret Fattler. Magnus Eppink
 1880, Apr. 20, John Fattler to Margaret Roll. Magnus Eppink
 1880, Nov. 23, Peter N. Paul to Margaret Fattler, wit. Frances Fattler and Mary Paul. Magnus Eppink
 1881, Nov. 3, Charles C. Smith (non-Catholic) to Josephine C. Frasch of Taylorsville, wit. Francis Frasch and Helen Eppink. Magnus Eppink
 1882, Oct. 5, Joseph Francis Muehlfeld to Bertha Hornust?, wit. Nicholas Muehlfeld and Ann Sullivan. Magnus Eppink

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