

# CATHOLIC RECORD SOCIETY

Diocese of Columbus

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COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215

ST. JACOB'S CEMETERY  
Franklin County, Ohio  
By Donald Schlegel

Victor Hugo, in The Rhine, described a common sight of the first half of the nineteenth century: It was a cart, "drawn by a horse and an ass, and contained pans, kettles, old trunks, straw-bottomed chairs, with a heap of old furniture. In front, in a sort of basket, were three children, almost in a state of nudity; behind, in another, were several hens. The driver wore a blouse, was walking, and carried a child on his back. A few steps from him was a woman . . . they were hurrying from misery and starvation. In a word, it was a family of poor Alsatian peasants who were emigrating. They could not obtain a living in their native land, but had been promised one in Ohio."

Many such families from the valley of the Rhine, and particularly from Alsace and Lorraine, found their way to the area now included in the Diocese of Columbus; the counties in which they settled included Perry, Fairfield and Franklin.

The family of Joseph and Margaret Frey appears to have had such an origin, for the family's name and language were German, while their place of nativity was France (1). They were one of the first Catholic families to settle permanently in Montgomery Township, east of Alum Creek, in Franklin County. On February 6, 1837, Joseph Frey purchased from George Sheesley and wife a tract of 40 acres and 50 perches in Montgomery Township (2). The land was situated on both sides of the present East Broad Street, stretching south almost to Powell Avenue and from the present Gould Road west to Stanwood Road in Bexley.

Joseph Frey died in the fall of 1839. There being no cemetery nearby and no Catholic cemetery in the whole county, he was probably buried on the western edge of his property, thus becoming the first burial in what was to be St. Jacob's Cemetery. His will was written in the German language and script on Saturday, September 14, 1839, and was proved on November 4, 1839. The witnesses were Henry Lutz and Mrs. Schlitt, his neighbors. In it Joseph left the forty acres to his sons John and Henry (3).

On October 6, 1846, a group of Catholic men in Columbus purchased a  $3\frac{1}{4}$  acre lot to be used as a burying ground in that city (4). Just 13 days later, On October 19, John and Henry Frey wrote a deed conveying a small piece of their property to Bishop Purcell as a burying ground (5). One wonders whether the short time between these deeds is a coincidence, or if perhaps Father Schonat had preached in inspiring sermon expressing the value of a burial ground blessed for the use of Catholics.

"In consideration of our high regard for the Catholic Church and the members thereof, and of one dollar," the brothers conveyed to Rt. Rev. J. B. Purcell, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cincinnati, "as a Burial place for Catholics who shall reside nearer to it than any other Grave Yard at the time of their decease, and who shall have died in the peace and communion of the Catholic Church, and for other Church purposes, a certain Lot of ground....." The property was situated ten rods north of the south-west corner of the Frey property and was twenty-seven rods long north and south by eight rods east and west: it contained  $1\frac{1}{4}$  acres. The deed also included the use of a road one rod wide from "the old Granville Road" to the cemetery (6). The size of the property and the mention of other Church purposes probably mean that the Freys hoped that a church might eventually be built on the site.

The name of the cemetery is known from a note in the Holy Cross Church record book of the period, on the page preceding the Register of Burials beginning in 1846. The note, in the handwriting of Rev. O. H. Borgess, states: "N.B. The burial place three miles from Columbus called St. Jacob's - across Alum Creek has been acknowledged by the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Cincinnati J. B. Purcell. Dated the 19th of Dec. 1849."

The wording of the deed from the Freys implies a growth in the number of Catholic families in the area. The present Maryland Avenue between Alum Creek and Gould Road was lined by the farms of several Catholic families from the Rhine valley for whose use St. Jacob's was no doubt intended. Joseph Frey's sons, Isadore, Henry and John each raised a family in the area. Andrew Vogle, born in France around 1815, was living in the vicinity in 1850 and purchased land from the Freys in 1856. Peter Schwarta (or Schwarz), born in France around 1804, immigrated to Ohio around 1840. Lawrence Walters came from Alsace or Lorraine in the mid-1840's and purchased 13 acres (now the northwest corner of Maryland Avenue and Gould Road) in 1849. Anton Ruhl, born in Hesse, moved into the area and purchased land just east of Alum Creek in 1854. Henry Lutz witnessed Joseph Frey's Will in 1839 and his marriage was performed by Father Schonat in 1843; he was born in Hesse around 1800 and lived on the present Broad Street. These families can easily be identified; there were probably others.

St. Jacob's Cemetery continued in active use at least as late as 1875. Miss Eva Walters, who died on February 7, 1875, of smallpox, was buried there (7).

As the population of the area grew and the urban limits of Columbus advanced east to Alum Creek, the farms surrounding the little cemetery were divided into smaller and smaller tracts. The Frey property was ultimately reduced from 80 to just over fourteen acres before being broken up into an urban subdivision. In the early 1900's the cemetery was beginning to show the effects of age which afflict all older burial grounds, the headstones becoming tumbled down and knocked askew (8). About 1910, the closing of the cemetery was announced and, as had been the procedure with the Columbus Catholic Cemetery, the relatives and friends were advised to remove the remains of their loved ones to the consecrated ground at Mt. Calvary Cemetery. Bishop Hartley sold the property to Margaret DeConninck on March 25, 1911 (9). Shortly thereafter, it was surveyed as part of Bexley's Ardmore subdivision. The cemetery property can now be roughly identified as the lots at 92 to 146 South Stanwood Road.

- 1) Federal census of 1850, Franklin County, Montgomery Township, page 824, house 101, family 105, gives the birthplace of Henry "Fry" and of his mother, Margaret, as France. Joseph Frey's Will (see note 4) was written in the German language and script.
- 2) Franklin County Deed Record, Vol. 17, p. 482.
- 3) Franklin County Will Record, Vol. C., p. 42.
- 4) See the Catholic Record Society "Bulletin", Vol. III, pp. 275-282.
- 5) Franklin County Deed Record, Vol 33, p. 417.
- 6) Ibid.
- 7) Information concerning Miss Walters' burial there (and removal by her nephew around 1910) was supplied by her grand-niece, Sister Lucille Stewart, O.P. The date of her death can be found in the Franklin County Death Record, Vol. I, page 93.
- 8) The condition of the cemetery is remembered by Mrs. Robert L. Shook, who was raised in the area and was about 19 years old when the cemetery was closed. (Information supplied via the Bexley Historical Society.)
- 9) Franklin County Deed Record, Vol. 503, p. 227.

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FIRST ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT(\*)  
of

St. Joseph's College  
Near Somerset, Perry Co., Ohio, Thursday  
July 8th, 1852

Order of Exercises

Music

Discourse by Austin A. Finck - Subject - The Signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - Good Conduct - James Dittoe - Medal  
2d. - William Beaths  
3d. - John Mattingly, F.D. Young, John Maginn and William Ryan  
First Class of Latin - Premium - Michael A. Nolan  
First Premium - Philosophy - John H. Creighton  
2d. - Martin G. B. Bennet

(\*)From the "Somerset Post", John H. Shearer, ed., Thursday, July 15, 1852, p. 3.

Distinguished - George Dittoe  
Discourse by George Dittoe - Subject: Literature and Religion  
Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - Geometry - Lyman T. Jackson  
2d. Robert T. Brady  
Distinguished - M. F. Maher  
First Premium - History - Austin A. Finck - Medal  
2d. Charles F. Ewing  
3d. - George Padgett  
Distinguished - Lyman J. Jackson and J. H. Creighton  
First Premium - First Class of Algebra - Terence Lynch - Medal  
2d. Lyman J. Jackson  
Discourse by Lyman J. Jackson - Subject: The Patriot's Duty

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - Rhetoric - Lyman J. Jackson  
2d. - Robert T. Brady  
Distinguished - Austin A. Finck, J.H. Creighton and M. F. Maher  
First Premium - Surveying - Lyman J. Jackson  
2d. Robert T. Brady  
Distinguished - M. F. Maher and J.H. McCormic  
First Premium - Second Class of Algebra - Charles B. Ewing  
2d. Robert T. Brady  
Distinguished - M. F. Maher and J. H. McCormic  
Discourse by John H. Creighton - Subject: History

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - First Class of Arithmetic - James Dittoe  
2d. - John H. McCormic  
Distinguished - M. A. Nolan, Thomas rizney and George Padgett  
First Premium - Bookekeeping - John Clements  
2d. - Palin Osborne  
Distinguished - Philip Dunn  
First Premium - Second Class of Arithmetic - Marcellus Moeller  
2d. - William Carroll and Thomas rizney  
Distinguished - John A. Creighton, John Mattingly, Philip Monaghan and Michael Finck  
Discourse by Charles B. Ewing - Subject: Washington

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - English Composition - Lyman J. Jackson - Medal  
2d. - Robert T. Brady  
Distinguished - M. F. Maher and Austin A. Finck  
First Premium - First Class of English Grammar - John H. McCormic  
2d. - William Carroll  
Distinguished - John A. Creighton, F.D. Young and James Dittoe

First Premium - Geography - Marcellus Moeller  
2d. John A. Creighton  
Distinguished - M.A. Nolan and John Mattingly  
Discourse by John McCormic - Subject: The Rise and Fall of Nations

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - French - Francis D. Young  
First Premium - Second Class of Latin - Terence Lynch  
2d. - Francis D. Young  
Distinguished - Austin A. Finck  
First Premium - Second Class of English Grammar - Marcellus Moeller  
2d. Michael Finck  
Distinguished - Patrick Holbrook and Miles Finck  
Discourse by Matthew F. Maher - Subject: The Heroes of the Mexican War

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - Sacred History - John A. Creighton  
2d. - William Carroll  
Distinguished - Marcellus Moeller, Philip Monaghan and John Mattingly  
First Premium - First Class of Christian Doctrine - John H. Creighton  
2d. - M. F. Maher  
Distinguished - L. J. Jackson, R. F. Brady, Charles B. Ewing, George Dittoe,  
John A. Creighton and James Dittoe  
First Premium - First Class of Reading - James O'Hara  
2d. - Henry Hodge  
Distinguished - Patrick Holbrook and Michael Sheridan  
Discourse by Martin G. B. Bennett - Subject: The American Revolution and Its  
Friends

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - Elocution - M. G. B. Bennett  
2d. - John H. Creighton  
Distinguished - Charles B. Ewing, M. F. Maher and George Dittoe  
First Premium - Third Class of Arithmetic - John Lawler  
2d. - John Searle  
Distinguished - Francis Carroll and Patrick Holbrook  
Premium - Grammar - George Dittoe  
Discourse by William Carroll - Subject: The Progress of Improvement  
Discourse in German by Bernard Wagner - Subject: College Education.

Music

Distribution of Premiums

First Premium - Second Class of Reading - Michael Daly  
2d. - Philip Dunn  
First Premium - Second Class of Christian Doctrine - Marcellus Moeller  
2d. - John Lawler  
Distinguished - Michael Cody  
Premium - Third Class of Reading - Francis Dunn  
First Premium - Orthography - Thomas Ryan  
2d. Patrick Holbrook and William Mulligan  
Distinguished - Miles Finck, John Lawler and Michael Cody

First Premium - First Class of Penmanship - Robert T. Brady  
2d. - Bernard Wagner  
Distinguished - J. H. Creighton, Austin A. Finck and George Dittoe  
First Premium - Second Class of Penmanship - William Carroll  
2d. Marcellus Moeller  
Distinguished - Miles Finck and Francis Carroll

Valedictory by Robert T. Brady

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#### HONOR STUDENTS OF ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, 1853

Note: The programs of the first three annual commencement exercises of St. Joseph's College, near Somerset, Ohio, were published in July of 1852, 1853 and 1854 by the local newspaper, the "Somerset Post". The abstract of students' names presented here was made from the issue of July 20, 1853. The numbers in parentheses following some of the names indicate those students who appeared in more than one of the lists; e.g., (2) indicates that the name also appeared in the 1852 program.

Ahern, Michael (4)  
Bateman, Thomas  
Brown, Alexander (4)  
Bennett, V.B. (2-4)  
Boyle, James  
Boyle, Robert (4)  
Boyle, Solomon  
Bennett, Edward L.  
Byrne, Stephen  
Carroll, Francis (2)  
Carroll, William (2-4)  
Creighton, J.A. (2)  
Cummins, Joseph  
Daly, Michael (2)  
Duer, John (4)  
Duer, William  
Duffy, J.D.  
Ewing, C.B. (2-4)  
Finucane, J.L.  
Fitzgerald, Joseph  
Hedges, A.J.  
Heman, Louis  
Holbrook, Patrick (2-4)  
Jackson, L.J. (2)  
Lawles, John (2-4)

Lynch, Joseph  
McBrearty, J.F.  
McCloskey, H.  
McCabe, Patrick (4)  
McCloskey, Patrick  
McCormic, J.H. (2)  
McGahan, William  
Magruder, Charles (4)  
Maguire, Edward  
Mahony, F.  
Mahony, Timothy  
Menge, Bernard  
Monehan, Philip (2)  
O'Brien, James  
Orndorf, Valentine (4)  
Owens, Thomas  
Owesney, William A.  
Poland, James (4)  
Poland, Joseph  
Prenatt, Francis (4)  
Rochford, S.H.  
Rudd, James H. (4)  
Ryan, Michael  
Sowar, Joseph  
Sowar, Stephen

Junior Department: Brown, A.  
Rankin, W.L. (4)  
Ryan, W.

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HOLY CROSS: COLUMBUS' FIRST PARISH

SOME HISTORICAL NOTES

By Monsignor Joseph A. Hakel

(Continued)

In addition to the old frame school house on Fifth Street, the old St. Remigius' Church was remodeled for use as a school after Holy Cross Church was dedicated in 1848. At first there were only two classrooms. About 1850 an extension was built on the rear. A second floor was added in 1857 at a cost of \$1,800.00. After this remodeling, there were two classrooms for the boys on the first floor and two for the girls on the second floor. There were 100 children in school in 1849.

Classes were taught in German and also in English for the benefit of the Irish families who later formed St. Patrick's Parish. Teachers were Jacob Kronenbitter and Albert Fisher in 1848-50; A. Bokern and Linus Berkle in 1851; A. Bokern and Mr. Schuhmann in 1854; Mr. Borghese and teachers for the girls in 1855.

The great event of 1856 was the arrival of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur who were invited to teach the girls in Holy Cross School. The first Sisters were Sister Mary Augusta and Sister Louisa. Even after the establishment of St. Patrick's Parish, there were 3,000 parishioners in Holy Cross Parish according to the census of 1857. By 1863 there were 407 children enrolled in Holy Cross School.

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Holy Cross congregation contributed \$1,200.00 toward the new St. Patrick's Church. They remembered their own struggle to build a church 20 years before. St. Patrick's parishioners were generally very poor.

Archbishop Purcell dedicated St. Patrick's Church on Sept. 25, 1853. High Mass was sung by Fr. M. Blake of Xenia, assisted by Fr. Borgess and Fr. Meagher. Holy Cross Church Choir sang the High Mass under the direction of Professor Kronenbitter. The Archbishop preached an eloquent sermon praising the happy growth of the Catholic Church in Columbus. It is a great tribute to the charity and understanding of Archbishop Purcell, Fr. Borgess, Fr. Furlong and Fr. Meagher that the division of the two parishes was accomplished so happily and amicably.

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Improvements commensurate with the rapid growth of Holy Cross congregation and the advancing financial condition of the people were undertaken by Fr. Borgess. With the completion of the steeple, a chime of three bells, the first in Columbus, was purchased in 1855 at a cost of \$1,500.00. The bells were solemnly blessed and placed in the steeple. The bells weigh 170 pounds, 1,480 pounds and 2,860 pounds. At the blessing, or more properly the baptism of the bells, the sponsors were Jacob Schneider, Louis Keller and Mrs. Theresa Brehl.

Michael Hoermann who had designed the church steeple, also constructed the new altar in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1856. The Married Ladies Sodality paid the cost of \$600.00. Mr. Hoermann also designed and built the

the pulpit in 1856. The St. Aloysius Young Men's Society paid \$300.00 for the pulpit and later that same year donated \$700.00 for frescoing the church. An organ was purchased in Cincinnati for \$1,400.00

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Father Caspar H. Borgess was pastor of Holy Cross Church for ten years (Jan. 1849- May 1859). He was assisted sometimes by his uncle, Fr. Otto Borgess. Early in his pastorate, Fr. Borgess undertook the completion of Holy Cross Church. The tower and steeple were finished at a cost of \$7,000.00. The brick work of the tower had been laid with the church walls but only to the level of the roof. Now it was continued to thirty feet above the roof. On this base, the steeple was built in the shape of an octagon. It was constructed of massive timber donated by John F. Zimmer. Members of the congregation cut the trees and their enthusiasm made them forget the pouring rain and deep mud through which they waded a distance of seven miles. Father Borgess visited them in the afternoon and by his presence kept up their zeal and good spirits. The timber was hauled to town and dressed.

The steeple was finished according to plans drawn by Michael Hoermann who with John Mittelholz superintended the construction. The wooden structure was covered with heavy sheet tin which was painted a slate gray. The top was surmounted by a gilt crown and a gilt cross twelve feet high. The entire height from the ground to the top of the cross measured 183 feet.

Holy Cross was the tallest and largest church in Columbus for some time. It is astounding to realize that this work was done entirely by hand without modern equipment such as cranes, but simply with the aid of ropes, pulleys, ladders and wooden scaffolding. The tower has three levels: the first in the choir loft; the second near the roof top with access to the roof and to the catwalk between the roof and the ceiling; the third at the top of the tower with access to the steeple, the bells and the clock.

(To be continued)

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#### An Addition

The sketch of the first church in Holmes County, featured in last month's issue of the BULLETIN, was made by Wally Toscano of Karlsberger & Associates, Architects, Columbus. The original from which the drawing was made is the treasured possession of the family of Charles Smith, Rural Delivery, Glenmont, Ohio.

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