

Barquilla de la Santa Maria

BULLETIN of the Catholic Record Society -
Diocese of Columbus

Volume XII, Number 4

April, 1987

REV. JOHN B. EIS
THE INTRACTABLE RECTOR OF COLUMBUS SACRED HEART

(Continued from Vol. XII, Number 2)

The next series of events between Father Eis and the diocese began in 1892, as described nine years later by Father Goldschmidt:

Some time in Autumn of 1892, Rev. Father Eis came to me and asked me if I knew of any body, of whom he could borrow some money, as he was owing a bank, where he had to pay 7% interest; that the Bank wanted its money, and he was anxious to pay it. As a friend of his I told him I would make every exertion to help him out of his difficulty; at any rate I thought 7% int'st was too much for him to pay. I was then making preparations to build the New Front Building and was borrowing money at 5% int'st. I succeeded in getting \$1,000.00 at 5% int'st and felt rejoiced that I was thus able to help Father Eis. On October 27th, 1892 I gave him the \$1,000.00 and in return he gave me his note for thousand dollars at 5% int'st. He offered to give me 6% int., which I refused, telling him I was paying only 5% myself, and was only too glad to do him the favor.

More people offered me money at 5% int., which I took, feeling glad that I could thereby further help Father Eis for the present, and that later on I would need the money myself towards the projected new building. So on November 11th 1892, I again gave Father Eis \$1,500.00, for which he gave me his note for that amount at 5% int'st. He paid the interest on the notes to May 11th 1894. In September and October 1894 I very much needed the money to pay some contracts of the newly erected building. So I informed Fr. Eis to let me now have the money; but he put me off saying he did not have it, but would try to get it for me. When pushed to the utmost and unable to put off any longer of paying certain contractors, I called on Father Eis about Oct. 30th 1894 and represented to him in earnest words what trouble and embarrassment it was causing me in not getting the money I had so kindly furnished him.

He in an angry tone replied: "I don't owe you any thing. The Orphan Asylum owes me a great deal more." I was wholly perplexed on hearing this, but replied to him, that if the Orphan Asylum owed him any thing to submit his claim to the Bishop of the Diocese, and I would do my best in seeing his claim satisfied; but that by me

letting him have this money (\$2,500.00) was a personal transaction between him and me, and had nothing to do with any claim he might have against the Orphanage. At any rate, I said, I would like to know what his claim against the Orph. Asyl. was. He replied he would let me know. On making him urgent representations that I had to have this money, he told me he expected to get money from an institution at Tiffin, Ohio, and would then pay me, but so far I have not received anything.

He sent a statement of his claims which I gave to Bishop Watterson, but as far as I know nothing has been done in the matter.

Many of Father Goldschmidt's statements in this letter of December 1901 are verified by copies of letters the two priests exchanged as the events occurred.

Father Goldschmidt allowed the matter to rest for a year and then sold the Oct. 27, 1892 note of \$1,000 to Reinhard & Company's bank on South High street for a fraction of its face value. John G. Reinhard notified Father Eis of the bank's intention to take him to court, if necessary, to collect on the note. Father Eis apparently explained his position to the banker, for Thomas E. Steele, an attorney, stated the whole situation succinctly in a friendly letter to Bishop Watterson on April 29, 1896. In that letter, after stating the facts regarding the note, Father Eis' claim of offsetting debts, and Father Goldschmidt's position that one debt was personal and the other was institutional, Mr. Steele continued:

Father Eis has prepared a very clear and concise memorandum, clearly showing money and property advanced to the Orphan Asylum, and I do not understand that he is unwilling to pay Father Goldschmidt this \$1000 now, provided his claim be acknowledged and some provision made for its payment.

Rinehard stopped me on the street the other day and said that you [Bishop Watterson] told him that there was nothing coming to Father Eis. This is probably a mistake. I hope that you will for the present prevent any suit being brought and that you will give me an opportunity to lay the matter before you from Father Eis' standpoint at an early date.

When Father Eis heard of the Bishop's statement to Mr. Reinhard, he apparently reached the end of his patience. On May 29 he went to Mr. Steele's High street office and had the stenographer type up a letter to Bishop Watterson, the substance of which was that since the Bishop's position in the matter was essentially a counter-claim against Father Eis, the Bishop could not "proceed juridically" against him. Father Eis quoted appropriate passages of canon law and nominated Rev. Henry Anderson, priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, as arbiter in the matter. Mr. Steele, in accord with Father Eis' request, forwarded the letter to the Bishop, but with the disclaimer, "I do not desire to engage in any litigation or controversy involving either Fr. Goldschmidt or Fr. Eis for they are both friends of mine; much less do I desire to be drawn into any controversy between you & Fr. Eis."

In Father Eis' "statement of his claims" which he sent to Father Goldschmidt in November 1894, he made the interesting assertion that "since

there is justice in the Church of America now, I will make my claim good at any rate." This apparently is a reference to the appointment of Francesco Cardinal Satolli as the first permanent apostolic delegate in the United States in January of 1893. The Cardinal had lectured on Canon Law at the Pontifical Academy of Noble Ecclesiastics in Rome during the period from 1886 to 1892. In this hope Father Eis was disappointed, for when he visited Cardinal Satolli he was admonished not to spread accusations against Bishop Watterson and was forbidden to use the Cardinal's name. Further, he was told, "If you will devote yourself to minding your own business and attending to your own work you may perhaps accomplish some little good in the world." Father Eis seems to have taken this advice to heart and he let the matter drop.

Reinhard & Company prepared a petition on August 29, 1896 to file in Common Pleas Court against Father Eis to recover the value of the \$1,000 note. No evidence has been found that this case was ever filed.

Bishop Watterson died on April 17, 1899; Monsignor Specht served as administrator of the diocese until the installation of Bishop Henry Moeller, D.D. on August 27, 1900. As early as November of 1900 some sort of investigation of Father Eis' situation was under way. Information concerning him had been requested of Mr. A. V. D. Watterson, the late Bishop's brother, an attorney residing in Pittsburgh, by Luke Byrne of Columbus, an attorney who had been employed at times by Bishop Watterson. On Thanksgiving Day Mr. Watterson wrote as his reply a scathing attack on Father Eis, which perhaps reflects more unflatteringly on the attorney than on the priest. He enclosed letters which, he claimed, would "very clearly demonstrate the feeling of intense animosity entertained by Father Eis against Bishop Watterson. Letters or documents, however, are not necessary to prove that fact. Father Eis' conduct, known to a large portion of the people of Columbus, is ample for all purposes...I refer to his refusal to mention the Bishop's name in his church and to request the prayers of the congregation for the repose of his soul." The enclosed letters seem to have been less damaging to Father Eis than Mr. Watterson supposed. (10)

By December 1901 Bishop Moeller had requested and received statements regarding their controversy from both Father Eis and Father Goldschmidt. In January, at the Bishop's urging, Father Eis submitted a further statement of expenditures made in connection with the three acres of diocesan property adjacent to the Sacred Heart Parish facilities during the years 1877 through 1900. Bishop Moeller also wrote to Bishop N. A. Gallagher in Galveston and to Mr. John G. Reinhard in Brooklyn requesting information. Bishop Gallagher responded that he knew "little or nothing" of the controversy, but his letter provides two interesting sidelights on the affairs of the diocese in the 1870's:

Mr. Nothnagel was for several years Organist at St. Patrick's Church during the time that Bishop Rosecrans made his residence at St. Patricks and acted as Pastor of said Church, but when Bishop Rosecrans left St. Patricks Church there was due as salary to Mr. Nothnagel a large sum (I presume the amount stated in the list) which Mr. Nothnagel donate, Rev. Eis says to him for his church, but I doubt it, as that sort of a transaction it seemed to me was a great unkindness to Bp. Rosecrans.

I am not aware that any of the books or Records of the Diocese were destroyed. (Rev. J. B. Eis may know). It is true that when I took charge as Administrator I could find no book which contained a reliable account of the financial affairs of the Diocese, and it was only by picking up information here and there that an imperfect knowledge of Diocesan affairs was obtained, and a list of claims against the Diocese was made out, but Rev. J. B. Eis did not present to me his list of claims.

Old Jacob Reinhard, founder of Reinhard & Company's bank and an active Catholic citizen of the city since the 1830's, had died in 1893. His sons, John G. and Henry A. Reinhard, took over operation of the bank, but the firm went bankrupt in the year 1900. John G. Reinhard's response to Bishop Moeller, dated April 27, 1902, also sheds some light on the early history of the diocese.

Your letter of the 24th asking pardon for troubling me to make clear a certain matter in which the Diocese of Columbus is interested is certainly no inconvenience to me, but the greatest pleasure to be able to give you the desired information.

The cemetery note in question was donated to Bishop Rosecrans. Father and I talked about it at the time and he referred to the donation as a most pleasant surprise to the Bishop. Father also related to me the purchase of the Cemetery, the loaning of the money and the value of the donation as being equivalent to at least \$1500.

I might add that Father never transferred any note to a second party either as a donation or a payment since I was with him in the Bank from 1868 to 1893 when he died. I am positive that the donation of that note to the Bishop was considered a claim cancelled against the Diocese and I cannot understand by what right Father Eis should be the beneficiary for the Sacred Heart Church.

Whenever any donation was given to Father Eis, which was considerable, it was either in cash or a rebate of interest on borrowed money by Father Eis from the Bank....

I rec'd a letter from Father Goldschmidt relative to the western land. Will act promptly in the matter.

The meaning of this letter is made plain by the settlement agreement later signed by Bishop Moeller and Father Eis: the land for Mt. Calvary Cemetery had been purchased by the Diocese, but the Diocese was to be reimbursed by the Columbus parishes. The settlement agreement makes it clear that \$1,200 had been borrowed by Bishop Rosecrans (as pastor of St. Patrick's) from Mr. Reinhard to pay for the English-speaking Catholics' portion of the cemetery. It has been known that Holy Cross parish paid a sum to the diocese to reserve the northern half of the cemetery for the German-speaking Catholics, but this is the first evidence to come to light that a similar payment was undertaken by the English-speaking Catholics of St. Patrick's and the Cathedral for their southern half of the property, which is still called the "Cathedral Division."

By March 31, 1902 Bishop Moeller had completed most of his investigation and wrote a very kind letter to Father Eis in which he re-stated Father Eis' claims against the Diocese and the Orphanage, but he also stated Father Eis' financial obligations to the Diocese. He had not verified all of Father Eis' claims but assured him that "they will not be questioned, if I am satisfied

that they should be allowed." He then continued, "As regards the money which Rev. Goldschmidt loaned you, I feel that you did not pursue the proper course when you declined to return it to him. I think you ought to pay the \$2,500.00 and interest to him, and he ought to return the land to you. If this is not agreeable to you then he will sell the land as soon as he can, and you will have to make up whatever deficit there may be to satisfy the obligation of the notes. This is my view of the matter, but I am willing to hear what you have to say about it." He apparently was referring to the "western land" mentioned by John Reinhard. It would seem that Father Eis had come by some real estate which he gave to Father Goldschmidt in place of the \$2,500 cash.

Bishop Moeller then pointed out to Father Eis that he owed the Diocese most of the principle on the \$10,000 note he had signed to consolidate his debts to Louis Zettler in 1880, together with the interest on the note since 1893. Father Eis also owed the collections for the Orphan Asylum, the Assessment, and the Cathedraticum which he had not forwarded for about six years. The Bishop also pointed out that Sacred Heart had never paid the Diocese for the one acre of ground it occupied. Ignoring the collections and the cost of the acre of ground, all of the claims netted a balance of some \$2,700 due from Father Eis to the Diocese.

A complete reconciliation was concluded on July 25, 1902, when Father Eis, his case heard at last, signed an agreement with Bishop Moeller. By this agreement the Bishop, "in consideration of concessions made" by Father Eis cancelled all claims against Father Eis except the balance of the parish's assessment toward eradication of the debt of the Diocese. Father Eis cancelled all claims against the Diocese or the Orphanage. Father Eis apparently had convinced the Bishop, despite John Reinhard's statement, that the note on the debt for the cemetery property would be considered a debt due to him. Father Eis gave to the Bishop the claim of \$1,200 and the interest "transferred to said party of the second part [Fr. Eis] by Mr. Jacob Reinhard. Said account...is a claim against said Cemetery." Father Eis authorized the Bishop to use the money for the benefit of the Diocese.

The ease with which this agreement seems to have been reached leads one to think that, in the final analysis, what had mattered most to Father Eis in his disagreement with Bishop Watterson was not the money or financial obligations, but was the honorable relationship between Bishop and priest.

[To be concluded.]

NOTE

(10) The letter is addressed only to "My dear Luke," but a note at the end, "With kindest regards to Rose and Eleanor," verifies the identity of the recipient. These were the wife and daughter of Mr. Byrne, as shown by the Federal census of 1900.

In this letter Mr. Watterson also stated, "I have preserved them [the letters] & also the correspondence of all the priests, as well as that from others respecting them from any standpoint. If Bishop Moeller wishes these I will send them to him as they are important in that they will aid him in determining the character & conduct of certain of his priests in doubtful cases." By his personal will Bishop Watterson left all of his "private papers" to his brother, but how letters to a bishop from his priests could be considered private and not his property as bishop is not immediately obvious.

SACRED HEART CHURCH
GENEVA, RUSH CREEK TOWNSHIP, FAIRFIELD COUNTY
CORRECTED BAPTISMAL RECORDS, 1863-1894

The reader is referred to the Bulletins of August and September, 1982 (Vol. VIII, Nos. 8 and 9), where as part of the history of Our Lady of Good Hope, Pine Hill, Hocking County our late editor Monsignor H. E. Mattingly published the baptismal register of the three missions of Geneva Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Good Hope, and St. Joseph near Sugar Grove, which together formed one pastorate. Monsignor Mattingly was working from the original register, which had become torn, faded, and illegible in some places. The old register had been transcribed in 1915 by Rev. James Nevin while it was much easier to read. The information in his transcription is much more complete than that which can now be gleaned from the original. In order to make this information available, those records which were incomplete or illegible in the earlier publication will be republished, beginning in this issue. We will include the names of sponsors and priests, which were not published in 1982.

"The following is a list taken from the Old Church Records Re-copied by Rev. James T. Nevin. 1915 Schmelzer Mission of the Sacred Heart."

1863

Oct. 27, 1863 I baptized Rosanna born 5th of October 1863, of Leopold Schmelzer & Susan Spire. Sponsors George Spire and Mary Myers. Chas. F. Hone same. George, born 1 Sept. 1863 son of George Schorr and Mary A. Cooney; spons. William Schmelzer & Mary I. Kirk. Chas. F. Hone
Dec. 1. Joseph, born 18 Nov. 1863, of Joseph Kellenbacker and Barbara Shore; spons. Joseph Fox and Margaret Shore. Chas. F. Hone

1864

Mar. 30 Julia Elizabeth, born 27 Jan., of Patrick Kirk and Elizabeth Hatfield; spons. James & Maria Schorr. J. W. Brummer
May 11 Joseph George, born 6 May, of Anselm Schmelzer and Margaret Keller; spons. Joseph Keller and Mary Philips. J. W. Brummer
May 12 Sarah Ellen, born 7 May, of Anselm Schmelzer and Margaret Keller; spons. Joseph Keller and Mary Philips. see below J. W. Brummer
May 12 Sarah Ellen, born 7 May, of Frederick Kinks and Agnes Elder; spons. Anthony Schmelzer and Catharine Schmelzer. J. W. B.
June 14 (Susan ?), born 1 May, of Wunibald Schmelzer and Rose Washinstein ?; spons. Leopold & Susanna Schmelzer. J. W. B.
Sept. 11 James, born 9 Aug., of Bartholomew Leahy and Helen Sharkey; spons. Leopold & Susanna Schmelzer. J. W. B.
Sept. 25 Joseph, born 16 May, of John Fritz and Walburg Luff; spons. Joseph Edelmann and Maria Luff. J. W. B.
Sept. 25 Matthew, born 23 Aug., of Jacob Koning and Frances Kost; spons. Matthew Kost and Maria Anna Braun. J. W. B.
Aug. 27 Susanna, born 27 Aug., of Nicholas Thimmes & Susanna Yager; spons. John Schneider and Susanna Thimmes. J. W. B.
Oct. 9 Mary Elizabeth, born 9 July, of Jacob D. Meyer and Mary Ellen Hensman (or Huntman?); spons. George Schorr and his wife. J. W. Brummer
Oct. 18 Daniel, born 2 Oct., of James Hines and Mary Maddon; spons. Timothy H. and Catherine Flavchen. J. W. Brummer
Nov. 27 Theresa, born 24 Oct., of John Shonk and Catherine Vohl; spons. Conrad Pletch and Cath. Shonk. J. W. B.

Nov. 27 Charles, born 27 Oct., of Mathias Kost & Rosina Spook; spons. Joseph Huber and Cunigunda Henli. J. W. Brümmer

1865

Jan. 22 Helen, born 20 Jan., of Peter Themmis and Maria Wolshier; spons. Nicholas Themmis and Helen Wolshire. J. W. Brümmer

Feb. 19 John Stephen, born 16 Jan., of James McNaspey and Alice Hen(ly)?; spons. John McKahy & Alice Car? J. W. Brümmer

Feb. ? Agnes, born 30 Jan., of Cornelius Sullivan and Mary Kelly; spons. M. Morgen and Maria Sahm. J. W. Brümmer

Feb. 24 John William, of Anthony Schmelzer and Catharina Zavey; spons. Frederick Kienz and Mary Agnes Keinz. J.W.B.

Dec. 5 James, son of Adam Boch and Frances Kobel; spons. James Conlin and Margaret Schorr. J.W.B.

Mar. 26 John, born 20 Jan., of [Mary] Holstein or Wolshire; spons. John Brown and Margaret Young. J.W.B.

[Four baptisms at "Good Hope Mission" on Mar. 23 as previously published]

June 18 Sarah Catherine, born 21 May, of Tony Mulligan and Ellen McQuade; spons. Catherine & James Taylor. J.W.B.

same William Edward twin of Sarah Catherine and son of the above; spons. Elizabeth Owens & Edward McQuade ? J.W.B.

same John Wendelin, born 25 May, of Joseph Rosenkranz and Mary Messberger; spons. Landelin and Genofiva [Genevieve?] Gessberger. J.W.B.

July 2 Anna, born 24 June, of Frederick Keintz and Mary Agnes Elder; spons. Leopold and Susanna Schmelzer. J. W. Brümmer

July 30 Margaret, born 21 July, of Joseph Gerard and Magdalene Kuney; spons. Wm. Schespiel and Margaret Schorr. J.W.B.

Oct. 1 Albert, born 3 Sept., of Francis Beiter and Lucy Everst; spons. Joseph Edelman and Gertrude Henli. J.W.B.

[The next five records agree with those previously published.]

1866

Sept. 16 Ellenor Jane, born 4 Mar. 1865 of Hugh Hardwich and Mary Louise Hill; spons. Wm. & Elizabeth Meyers. J. W. Brümmer

Sept. 30 Frederick, born 25 Sept., of George Schorr and Mary Kuney; spons. Anthony Schmelzer and Teresia Boch. J. W. Brümmer

[The next two records agree with those previously published.]

Dec. 26 Catherine Cecilia, born 6 Dec., of Diepold Lakin (?) and Mary Dunne (?); spons. Joseph Messberger and Elizabeth Philips. J. W. Brümmer

1867

April 7 John William, born 4 Apr., of Wunibald Schmelzer and Basalia Weninger; spons. Blasius Schmelzer and Magdalena Schmelzer. J. W. Brümmer

April 7 Henry Julius Meyer, convert from Judaism and received into the lap of the Church, age about forty years; witnesses Blasius Schmelzer and his wife. J. W. Brümmer

[The next eight records in the original and as previously published, dated May 12, through Sept. 2, do not appear in Father Nevin's transcription.]

[To be continued.]

ST. JOSEPH MISSION
FRANKFORT, CONCORD TOWNSHIP, ROSS COUNTY
A NOTE ON SISTER DEXTER, S.C.

Sister Laura Marie Watson, S.C. spent a great deal of time on our request for information on Sarah Dexter, niece of John McNally and daughter of George and Mary Dexter of St. Joseph mission. She was able to find the following: "On September 22, 1870, Sallie Dexter entered the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati at the age of 20, and on December 25, she received the habit and the name of Sr. Domitilla. In September 1871, she left the Community on account of ill health and returned to the Community the following year when her health was restored. In February 1874, Sr. Domitilla was missioned to Dayton and in 1880 she was missioned to Alpena, Michigan. On October 18, 1892, Sr. Domitilla Dexter left the Community."

We are grateful to Sister Laura Marie for her effort in helping us to complete the story of St. Joseph mission.

GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

Come to Life: A Centennial History in the Spirit of Mount Carmel, 1986. (Gift of Julia Herman)

The following four items were gifts from Pat Mooney:

- Program for Last Mass in First Church Building, Christ the King Parish [Columbus]; 1965.
- Columbus St. Leo parish, 75th year anniversary booklet, 1978.
- Cradle of the Faith in Ohio (St. Joseph near Somerset), 1968.
- The Spirit of Life, Centennial Issue, 1986, Mt. Carmel Medical Center.

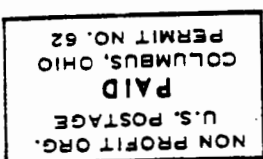
Interment Record, 1831 through 1892, St. Thomas Catholic Church, Zanesville; Sylvia Smedley Hargrove, translator. (Gift of Sylvia S. Hargrove)

McAllister, Anna Shannon, Flame in the Wilderness, (life of Mother Angela Gillsepie, C.S.C.), an autograph copy dedicated to the author's husband. (Gift of Miss Mary Geist)

McAlister, M. (of Columbus, O.), An Authentic History of Ireland, and Its People; Columbus: Columbus Steam Printing Works, 1880. and

O'Keefe, Thomas P., A Centennial Celebration 1880-1980 of... [of McAlister's History, above]; Columbus: 1980. (Gifts of Donald Schlegel)

Copyright 1987, Catholic Record Society - Diocese of Columbus
197 E. Gay Street Columbus, Ohio 43215 Donald M. Schlegel, editor



CHANCERY OFFICE
DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS
198 EAST BROAD STREET
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215