



Barquilla de la Santa Maria

BULLETIN of the Catholic Record Society -
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Sisters of St. Francis, outside of the convent at St. Peter: Sr. Alma Ide, Sr. Patrice Holahan, Sr. M. Robert Fenzel, unidentified visitor, Sr. Constantia Crotty, Sr. Josella Faso, Sr. Madeleine Reinbold, Sr. Carolyn Distelzweig, and Sr. Cordula Gaughan

St. Peter Parish, Columbus, 1896-1969

(Concluded, from Vol. XXXIV, No. 7)

Troubles in the 1960s

The quiet and stable life that St. Peter Parish experienced in the postwar era did not last. The Great Depression had taught people to save money, World War II gave them high wages, and the post-war boom accelerated prosperity. Many of the young people of the parish followed this prosperity to newer sections of Columbus and the suburbs. Father Anthony noted that as the old ethnic groups joined the affluent society and moved out, they were replaced for the most part by poor people. More

importantly for the parish, which had lived with poverty for many years, few of the newcomers were of the Catholic faith. Compounding the problem, the interstate highway cut a swath through the heart of the parish, from north to south, beginning with the purchase of properties and right-of-way clearing in the late 1950s. It took homes and businesses and forced more families to move away.

Parish numbers peaked about 1950. Baptisms peaked at 98 in 1949 and weddings at 39 in 1950. After that a slow decline set in, but the impact of the

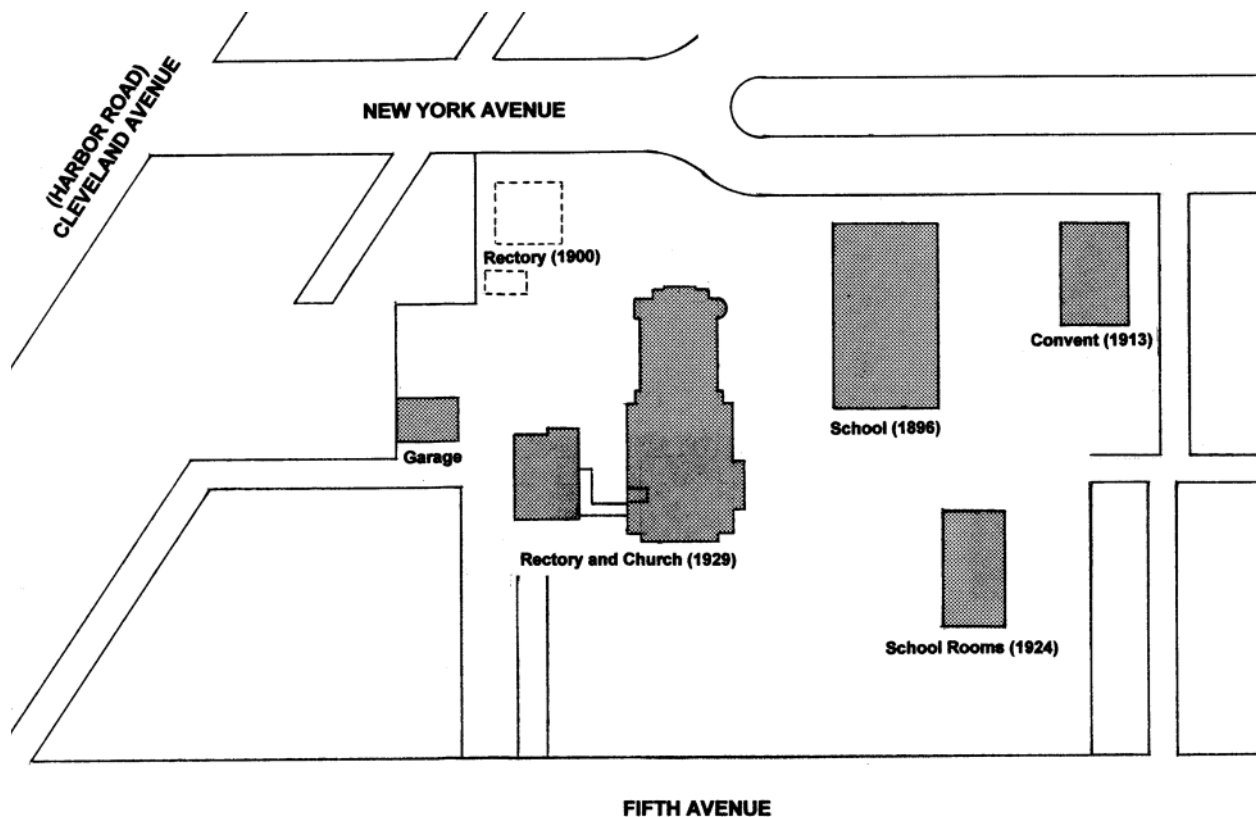
freeway clearing was dramatic. Baptisms dropped from 41 in 1960 to 26 in 1961 and marriages from five in 1960 to one in 1961, numbers lower than ever before experienced in the parish, even in the first year of its existence. The October count of average Mass attendance dropped every year, from 628 in 1958 to 287 in 1963.

Due to decreasing enrollment, in 1962 four classrooms in the main school building were sufficient and the “temporary” school building was abandoned after 38 years of use. The school was closed in June of 1965 and the children attended Sacred Heart school that Fall. The St. Peter’s Booster Club was formed to build support for the parish among former members and the first homecoming was organized in 1963 by Henry “Heinie” Monaco and a committee of twelve. The first homecoming attracted about a thousand present and former parishioners. The club sponsored the reunion Mass on the third Sunday of each October until the parish was closed.

The church’s combined tower and chimney was

hit by lightning during a thunder storm in August, 1964. The bolt broke off pieces of the ornamental terra cotta top. Chunks of the material fell and damaged the roof of the side chapel.

In June, 1965, when Msgr. Schlernitzauer was nearly 77 years old, Bishop Carberry withdrew Father Soroan as assistant, to take up administrative duties in the high schools, and sent in his place Father Thomas F. Duffy. Duffy was Director of Ecumenical Affairs for the diocese. He had been “teaching” at St. Charles High School, which he was to continue on a limited basis, and had “a great interest in sociology.” “It is believed,” the bishop wrote, “that he will be able to continue his studies and activities in this most important field while living at Saint Peter’s Rectory.” In another letter Bishop Carberry suggested that the school building be used that summer for Project Head Start, for early education of pre-kindergarten children, part of President Johnson’s Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. He also informed the pastor that a committee would



Plat of the property and buildings at St. Peter Parish, based on Insurance Maps of Columbus, Ohio by the Sanborn-Perris Map. Co

discuss with him “further possibilities of utilizing the facilities of the school building during the coming year with other educational, social welfare, and medical aid programs for deprived youth and their parents.”

As a result of the bishop’s suggestion, a class of about thirty pre-kindergarten children used the building for a few months. The parish made some improvements to accommodate them, of which only 10% was ever reimbursed. No compensation was made to the parish for the use of the rooms, restrooms, grounds, furnishings, janitorial services, utilities, or repairs.

Under the direction of Father Duffy, the use, first of the convent and then in the spring of 1967 the school, were made “in-kind contributions” to the Columbus Metropolitan Area Community Action Organization or CMAAO. This apparently means that the parish received no compensation for the use of the buildings. On June 7 an adulatory article appeared in the *Columbus Citizen-Journal*. Agencies and offices housed in the school and other buildings then included: Peoples’ Poverty Board, Welfare Rights Organization, Milo Grogan Council, Kappa Gamma Rho, North Side Youth Club, Girl Scouts, Youth Hobby Group, Adult Hobby Group, Neighborhood Block Clubs meeting center, St. Stephen’s Community Center ballet classroom, Head Start, Northeast Service Center, and city housing inspectors. The story noted, “There’s a report going around that old St. Peter’s Church and Parish are dying. If so, they are dying with their boots on—in service to humanity.”

A group of parishioners noted that this article sounded “like some of Father Duffy’s propaganda.” The real situation was that the buildings were being damaged, property was missing, garbage, rubbish, and worse were strewn in the buildings, transients lived in the convent, junk cars remained in the yard for weeks at a time, cars were repaired there on Sundays, and there was no parking room for parishioners when the organizations were having meetings or when the non-Catholic neighborhood or other children were playing on the grounds. It was an era of great racial tensions and the people were afraid. The situation drove many of the



Rev. Anthony Joseph Schlernitzauer was appointed to be the second pastor of St. Peter’s in September, 1925. The future pastor was born on July 1, 1888 and was baptized on the 15th at St. John Church, Bellaire, Ohio, by Father Richard J. Fitzgerald. His parents were Louis and Mary Gerard Schlernitzauer, who had come to this country from Lorraine. He was confirmed at St. John’s in 1900 by Sebastian Martinelli, Apostolic Delegate.

Young Schlernitzauer attended St. John school in Bellaire; St. Vincent’s at Latrobe, Pa., and Mt. St. Mary’s of the West. He was ordained at St. Joseph Cathedral by Bishop Hartley on May 29, 1915. He served as assistant pastor at St. Mary Parish in Columbus and then at St. Mary Parish in Lancaster. He was made pastor at St. Sylvester Parish in Zaleski in 1918 and moved to St. Joseph Parish, Tiltonsville in 1922. He then spent over 44 years at St. Peter Parish. Here, it was noted, he was “a real witness to the love of Christ.” He was a lover of nature who tended a beautiful rose garden, a scholar, a linguist who knew Latin, Greek, and Spanish, a lover of music, children, animals—and an occasional evening of cribbage. Primarily, however, he had a love for and an acceptance of poverty; he had listened well to the Sermon on the Mount and lived by it. (John A. Geiger, *Catholic Times* editorial, Oct. 15, 1976)

After St. Peter’s closing, Msgr. Schlernitzauer moved to Nazareth Towers. He died on October 8, 1976 at St. Raphael’s Home for the Aged.

remaining members to other parishes.

Father Duffy's response to all this, it was said, was to ignore the people of the parish as if they did not exist. The people thought they needed an assistant pastor to help Monsignor Schlernitzauer, "not someone who is off on a march or some other project that bears no fruit." Despite all the agencies and offices in the parish buildings, they said, the parish and the St. Vincent de Paul Society were left unaided to help the poor of the neighborhood.

Closing of the Parish

To this mix was added the value of the parish real estate for commercial purposes. The location on Fifth Avenue near Cleveland Avenue and near the freeway made the site attractive and several offers were made to the diocese to purchase part or all of the land. Word of the offers had reached the people by the spring of 1969 along with rumors the parish was to be closed. By this time loss of the old school and convent would not have meant too much to them, but they all had known the church building for many years and did not want to lose it. Msgr. Schlernitzauer remarked that if the church were removed, some of the people would move away or join other parishes, but some would leave the Church. He also noted, "The likelihood of increase in the Catholic population in the area is, from present prospects, remote." But in the end he assured Bishop Elwell that he and the people of the parish would abide by the bishop's decision. The bishop chose Msgr. Bennett Applegate to deliver the sad news of the parish closing to his former pastor and teacher, one of the most difficult tasks of his life.



*Rev. Thomas F. Duffy
(1918-1999), in 1953*

The last homecoming or reunion Mass was offered in the church by Bishop Clarence Elwell on October 19, 1969. Some two thousand attended, including former members of the Young Ladies Choir, directed for the last time by Mrs. Schirtzinger. By that time the property had been sold to Shell Oil, which intended to build a gas station and motel there. But the date of closing the parish had not yet been determined. The last baptism in the church was administered by Father Schlernitzauer on December 21, 1969. The parish account books were closed in mid-January, 1970. Most of the parish territory was joined to that of St. Dominic to the south.

Father Anthony offered one last Mass in the church, on January 17, the cold and snowy morning of the feast of St. Anthony of the Desert. He made a point of telling those in attendance that at the end of Mass he would call down the blessing that God had imposed upon the church at its dedication in 1929. After that he remarked that the building was no longer a church.

As the buildings were razed in May, Father Anthony stood on the corner each day praying the rosary. Several women of the parish also kept vigil, and the squirrels would huddle around the priest. Every morning of the several decades he lived at St. Peter's, Father Anthony had walked around the property and tossed nuts to the little animals. He often would instruct the children not to attempt this because the squirrels were wild. When the crashing sounds of the demolition began and the dust rose and the trees fell, the panicked animals ran to the only safe place and sat on the ground around Father.

Father Anthony retired when the parish closed. He was 81 years old. Father Duffy left the diocese about 1970 and later became an Episcopal clergyman in New York City. He founded the Institute for Applied Social Logic there in 1989 and died in 1999.

Most of the people whose lives had been launched in St. Peter Parish moved on, but they — the 3,256 baptized and the 875 couples married within those walls — never forgot the goodness they had found there. Bishop Elwell established the new St. Peter Parish on the far northwest side of the city

in June, 1970, and specifically named it for old St. Peter. The 1896 cornerstone of old St. Peter's is embedded in the vestibule wall of the new church. The stained glass windows of the old church, the outdoor shrine statue of St. Peregrine, the indoor statue of St. Anthony of Padua, and many other relics of the old parish are now to be found at the Jubilee Museum. Reunions for the families of old St. Peter continue to be held each year at Holy Family Parish, organized by Dante Guzzo..

Vocations to the Priesthood

Rev. Ralph Augustine LaPlante, O.P., was born in Columbus on March 9, 1878 to John and Rose (Mulbay) LaPlante. He was educated at Sacred Heart School and the public high school, then left to enter the Dominican Order just prior to the dedication of St. Peter Church. He completed his education in various Dominican houses and was ordained in Columbus by Bishop Hartley on December 17, 1904. His first Mass was offered in St. Peter's on Christmas Day. He was the first young man from the North Side of Columbus to be ordained. He worked in various places stretching from New York City to Houston, Texas, including two terms at St. Patrick Parish in Columbus. He died at Mt. Carmel Hospital on November 4, 1921 and is buried at Somerset. He was "the true priest of God—zealous, pious, reserved, a model disciple of St. Dominic. (Coffey, Rev. James R., O.P., *Pictorial History of the Dominican Province of St. Joseph, U.S.A.*; New York: 1946, p. 147; *Catholic Columbian*, Dec. 24, 1904 and Nov. 11, 1921.)

Rev. William C. Hayes was born in Lebanon, Ohio in 1890 and was raised in Columbus. He attended St. Peter and Sacred Heart elementary schools, Aquinas High School, and Mt. St. Mary of the West. He was ordained by Bishop Hartley on May 29, 1915 and offered his first Mass at St. Peter's on May 30. When the Diocese of Steubenville was erected in 1944 Father Hayes was Pastor at Bellaire and he stayed at that post until retiring in 1953. He then came back to Columbus and assisted at several parishes, including St. Aloysius. He died on Feb. 14, 1965. Children loved

Father Hayes, but he was always a "priest in dignity and fatherliness." (*Catholic Times* editorial by Rev. George A. Fulcher)

Another priest who received his elementary education at St. Peter's was Father Charles A. Curran. He was born October 9, 1913. After St. Peter's he went to St. Charles and then Mt. St. Mary of the West and was ordained by Bishop Hartley on March 4, 1939. He taught at St. Charles Seminary and in 1944 earned a Ph.D. in psychology at Ohio State University. He served on the diocesan school board, served as administrator of St. John the Baptist Parish, and was assistant editor of the *Columbus Register*. In 1953 he was elected president of the American Catholic Psychological Association. In 1955 he accepted a teaching post at Loyola University. He served as a *peritus* at the Second Vatican Council and wrote many scholarly books. He died in East Dubuque, Illinois on July 25, 1978 and, after services at St. Augustine Church in Columbus, was buried in St. Joseph Cemetery. It was remembered that, during his time at St. John the Baptist Parish, he did not speak much, but when he did, his words showed a lot of wisdom. (Father Casto Marrapese in *A Century of Faith 1896-1996*.)

Patrick J. Dolan, son of Cornelius J. and Dorothy (Krauss) Dolan, was ordained on May 26, 1962 by Bishop Issenmann. He had attended St. Peter School, St. Charles High School, and Mt. St. Mary of the West. He offered his first Mass in St. Peter's on May 27. His assignments included associate pastorates at St. Mary Parish in Chillicothe and Immaculate Conception in Columbus and teaching at Bishop Watterson and Bishop Flaget high schools. He resigned from the ministry about 1972 and died in Stuart, Florida on May 19, 1987.

Msgr. C. Bennett Applegate was born in West Virginia in 1916. He attended elementary school at St. John the Evangelist and at St. Peter, then public and St. Charles high schools and Mt. St. Mary of the West. He was ordained by Bishop Ready on Feb. 24, 1945. He was named acting superintendent of the diocesan schools in 1951 and was superintendent from 1952 until 1970. In the latter

year he was named Episcopal Vicar for Education. In 1975 he became rector of the cathedral. He served on national advisory councils on child nutrition and education. He died on March 22, 2000, having led a “long life and a fruitful one...servicable to others and filled with enduring friendships.” (RT Winel, editorial, *Catholic Times*, April 2, 2000)

Rev. James Joseph McEwan (1911-1994) is sometimes claimed as a son of St. Peter Parish. He was one of thirteen children of Mr. and Mrs. James McEwan of East Fifth Avenue and offered his first Mass in St. Peter Church in 1935. However, that was his only connection with the parish. His birth and education all occurred elsewhere.

Vocations to Religious Life

Sister Mary Serbacki, O.S.F., archivist, in Stella Niagara, N. Y., provided the names of these Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity who were from St. Peter Parish:

- Sr. Catherine Gale, O.S.F.
- Sr. Emma Gale, O.S.F. (deceased)
- Sr. Anselma Mulbay, O.S.F. (deceased)
- Sr. Tarcissia Mulbay, O.S.F. (deceased)
- Sr. Helen Welch, O.S.F.
- Sr. Mary Frances Welch, O.S.F.
- Sr. Julia Fala, O.S.F.
- Sr. Sarah Doran, O.S.F.
- Sr. Ethel Marie Wozniak, O.S.F. (deceased)
- Sr. Irene DiPietro, O.S.F. (deceased)

Notes by Father Schlernitzauer mention Sister Luella Politis, O.S.F, a missionary to Brazil in the 1960s, and Sister Joseph Maria Troski of the Dominican Sisters of the Sick Poor.

SOURCES for PARTS 2 and 3

- Catholic Columbian*, July 8, 1927, July 11, 1928, Dec. 6, 1929, , May 21, 1937
- Catholic Times*, Oct 3, 1958, Aug. 25, 1950, Sept. 27, 1957, May 1, 1959, Aug. 7, 1964, Oct. 19, 1969
- Bill Arter, “St. Peter’s on New York”, *Columbus Dispatch* Magazine section, April 5, 1970
- Carla Banks-Williams, “See you on the grounds of the old St. Peter”, *C. Times*, Oct. 19, 2003

- Lou Fabro, “Midnight Mass at the old St. Peter Church”, *The Catholic Times*, Dec. 22, 2002
- Typescript history of the parish by Rev. Msgr. Anthony Schlernitzauer, about 1967
- Columbus Citizen-Journal*, June 7, 1967; May 10, 1980
- Columbus Dispatch* Oct 15, 2000; Don Tiberi, in *The Columbus Dispatch* Magazine section, August 5, 1979. Gilia Iafolla quoted in *The Columbus Dispatch*, Oct. 15, 2000. Dante Guzzo quoted in *The Columbus Dispatch*, Oct. 15, 2000, D1.

Letters in the Diocesan Archives:

- Schlernitzauer to Ready, Feb. 20, 1948
- Carberry to Schlernitzauer, June 2, 1965 and June 4, 1965
- Schlernitzauer to Sorohan (Chancellor), March 15, 1967
- Curtis A. Brooks, CMACAO, to Duffy, April 14, 1967
- Anonymous to Carberry, June 14, 1967
- Anonymous to Carberry, March 14, 1968
- Schlernitzauer to Elwell, May 17, 1969
- Columbus News Index* for 1968 and 1970
- Insurance Maps of Columbus, Ohio*; New York: Sanborn-Perris Map. Co., 1901; Vol. 2 pages 217-218
- Same, 1921 edition updated to c. 1946, Vol. 4, page 350.
- Anecdotes provided by Rev. Kevin Lutz and Bennie Andreoni.

Mt. Calvary Cemetery, New Straitsville Lot Owners (to 1971) and Tombstones

(Concluded, from Vol. XXXIV, No. 6)

Section 18

- Lot 88 - Peter Custis half; P. Flynn and Montell half
- Peter Curtis 1862 - 1915
- Margaret Curtis 1863 - 1928
- Joan Eileen Montell 1932 - 1932
- + Mary M. Montell Feb. 13, 1903 - July 9, 1985
- + Thomas J. Montell OHIO COOK CO B 28 INFANTRY WORLD WAR I Oct. 19, 1894 - Sept. 27, 1965
- Patrick Flynn Aug. 10, 1916 aged 80 y

+ William R. Harrington PVT US ARMY
 WORLD WAR I 1895 1985
 Lot 89 - Daugherty half; Mrs. Cannon half
 + John Cannon 1840 - 1917 May his soul rest
 in peace.
 Julia Cannon 1844 - 1925
 Lot 90 - Mike Monahan
 MONAHAN: Michael 1848 - 1919
 Katherine 1858 - 1945
 Daniel C. Monahan 1887 + 1968
 Lot 91 - George McQuade
 MCQUADE: George O. 1902 - 1972
 Sue A. 1907 - 1989
 [George McQuade age 70 10-20-72]
 Lot 92 - John Spicer
 SPICER: Chastine E. Nov. 10, 1930 - blank
 John F. Nov. 14, 1927 - July 3, 1994
 Parents of John, Mary Ann, Glen, Joe,
 Karen, Tom, Anita
 footstone: John F. Spicer PFC US ARMY
 WORLD WAR 2 Nov 14 1927 + Jul 3,
 1994
 Lot 93 - (no stones)
 Lot 94 - Mary Montell
 John H. Jenkins AB1 US NAVY WORLD
 WAR II KOREA Aug 9 1925 + Mar 9
 1994
 Lot 95 - Crowe (no stones)
 Behind Lot 95:
 Thomas A. Crowe July 22, 1897 - Nov. 25,
 1959
 Michael & Francis Crowe infant sons of Agnes
 & Francis
 Lot 96 - Leonard
 Mary Feeney (Mother)
 Annie Feeney (Daughter)
 Johanna Feeney
 {James S. Leonard 1858 - 1930
 {Margaret Leonard 1862 - 1935
 Behind Lot 96:
 + Robet J. Leonard Feb. 22, 1902 - Feb. 27,
 1967
 + Frank J. Leonard OHIO PVT CO A 34
 ENGINEERS WORLD WAR I Apr 4
 1894 Oct 26 1968

Lot 97 - Farnk Saulbeamer; John & Betty Miller
 MILLER: John H. 1917 - 1990
 Betty J. 1923 - blank
 John H. Miller S2 US NAVY WORLD WAR II
 1917 + 1990
 "I will love you forever and a day" + Carl E.
 Miller Sept. 14, 1940 - Dec. 17, 1990
 SAULBEAMER: Frank 1891 - 1986
 Myrtle 1897 - 1980
 CALLAHAN: Joseph M. 1898 - 1982
 Bess 1899 - 1989
 THEISEN: Richard L. Sept. 20, 1940 - blank
 Juanita F. Mar. 7, 1943 - Jan. 21, 2007
 Lot 98 - Rose Eaton
 "Going home" Lula Mae Vincent Jan. 6, 1916
 - Aug. 2, 1996
 Lot 99 - (no stones)

Lots to the east of Section 18

Lot 101 - Fergie Friel
 Lots 102, 103, 116, and 117 - Beaven
 David Bevans 1887 - 1973
 Anna Mae Beavin May 19, 1889 - June 29,
 1964
 BEAVAN: Benjamin P. 1863 - 1937
 Hannah C. 1864 - 1938
 Jennie Bevans 1890 - 1973
 Mary Louis Beavens 1970 (Roberts Funeral
 Home marker)
 Lot 104 - Prewitt
 PREWITT: Nick 1869 - 1939
 Ival 1896 - blank
 Lot 134 - Donaldson
 DONALDSON: Perry F. 1875 - 1940
 Margaret 1881 - 1966
 Lot 135 - Denny
 + Jacob Newton Denny PVT US MARINE
 CORPS WORLD WAR II 1915 1976
 + Rita M. Denny 1918 - 1977
 Richard J. Denny 1940 - 1961
 Denny Infant Son
 Lot 136 - Matheny
 Lot 178 - Little
 LITTLE: Warren H. 1883 - 1970
 Mary C. 1881 - 1955

Other Lots

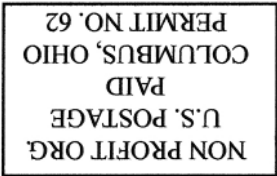
John J. Gallagher born Oct. 21, 1886 died
 Sept. 22, 1887
 {Raymond E. Phillis Nov. 23, 1928 (Twins)
 {Rita J. Phillis Nov. 23, 1928 - Sept. 11, 1929
 Baby Ruth Spires died 1913
 Joseph Stewart
 James Feeney
 + Clyde F. Groff PFC US ARMY WORLD
 WAR II Nov 7, 1910 Oct 31 2001
 + Samuel L. Groff PVT US ARMY WORLD
 WAR II 1904 1983
 Evelyn B. Boyle Dawley 1925 + 2007
 BOYLE: William J. Aug. 13, 1935 - June
 19, 1997
 Rita J. Nov. 12, 1937 - blank
 [married:] Aug. 3, 1957
 Parents of Kevin, Keith, Kimberly &
 Kathy

North to South along the East Fence

Kenneth E. Gottke April 7, 1954 + Feb. 4,
 2002
 SPENCER-THOMPSON
 Larry L. Jan. 12, 1946 - blank
 Curtis L. Aug. 30, 1987 - Jan. 25, 1996
 Margaret E. Oct. 2, 1941 - blank
 VERNON: Donald C. May 29, 1923 - Jan.
 22, 1996

Ada M. Wilson Nov. 10, 1927 - blank
 Parents of Bob, Mary Lou & Susan
 footstone: Donald C. Vernon PVT US ARMY
 WORLD WAR II May 29, 1923 + Jan.
 22, 1996
 "My loving son" James Michael II Davis Nov.
 14, 1975 - May 29, 1995 We love you -
 In God we trust - Rest in peace
 HILL: Wilda M. Feb. 17, 1936 - blank
 Ralph W. Mar. 9, 1924 - Nov. 20, 1994
 footstone: Ralph W. Hill TEC 5 US ARMY
 WORLD WAR II Mar 9 1924 + Nov 20
 1994
 LANNING: Anna Mae Aug 2, 1928 - blank
 Ernest O. Apr. 27, 1923 - May 2, 2003
 Parents of Kathye, Lynn, Lori & Lisa
 footstone: Ernest O. Lanning TEC 5 US
 ARMY WORLD WAR II Apr. 27, 1923 +
 May 2, 2003
 Caleb Keller 1999 - 1999 (J. F. Humphrey
 funeral marker, Shawnee, O.)
 + Nelson Douglas, July 3, 1924 Son of Harry
 & Mary Douglas

Title to Mt. Calvary Cemetery was transferred to
 the City of New Straitsville on November 16, 1973
 and since then it has been open to burials without
 respect to religion.



Chancery Office
 Diocese of Columbus
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