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# Our Family and It's Ancestors



By Leo A. McMullen, L.L.D.

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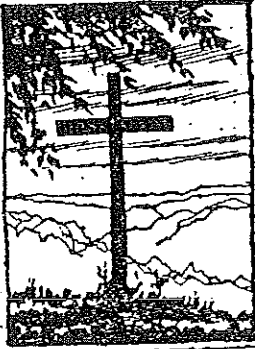
# Augustine Smith

By William A. White

The name Augustine Smith perhaps does not mean much, if anything, to the great majority of today's Western Pennsylvania residents.

Nor would it mean anything to the average run of people anywhere in the United States, excluding those in Cambria County around Loretto.

But if the name Prince Demetrius Gallitzin were mentioned it would undoubtedly be recognized by many persons, and especially by those of the Roman Catholic faith, as that of "The Apostle of the Alleghenies."



Yet Augustine Smith and Prince Gallitzin were one and the same persons, and how one became the other, a story told over and over down through the years, again has been revived.

This was inevitable when Secretary Maurice K. Goddard, of the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters, took a group on a tour of the big Prince Gallitzin State Park being developed in Cambria County.

And old as it is, the story of the youthful Russian nobleman who renounced title and fortune to spread the word of God in America almost 170 years ago still enthralled most people to whom it is told.

Prince Gallitzin was born at The Hague in 1770, son of Prince Dmitri Gallitzin, Russian ambassador to Holland, and his wife

Countess Amella, daughter of a high-ranking Prussian officer.

The countess was Catholic, her husband Greek Orthodox. The boy prince, named Demetrius Augustine, accepted his mother's faith when 16. At the age of 22 (1792) he visited America under an assumed name—Augustine Smith.

Head of the Catholic Church in America at the time was Bishop John Carroll, in Baltimore, and to him went "Augustine Smith" with letters of introduction. Shortly, renouncing his title, he was enrolled in St. Mary's Seminary as a student priest.

Ordained three years later and assigned to Maryland and Pennsylvania settlements, he was summoned in 1796 to a place in the Pennsylvania mountains, founded by Captain Michael McGuire, when a priest became dangerously ill.

In Gettysburg at the time, 150 miles away, he rode horseback to the settlement—near the present Loretto—and immediately envisioned there his own pet project, a "Catholic Community."

Three years later he came back to establish a church and in 1816 laid out Loretto, named in honor of an Italian shrine on the Adriatic Sea.

His Russian nobility was first revealed, in 1802, to many persons when he became an American citizen and the "Father Smith" soon was forgotten in favor of "Prince Gallitzin." The royal fortunes were lost in Napoleon's invasion in 1812 and the prince-priest died heavily in debt in 1840.

Bearing his name and standing as monuments to his memory for many years have been a school (Mt. Gallitzin Academy, Baden, a borough, a township, a famous spring, an equally famous railroad tunnel. And, now, an added monument: Prince Gallitzin State Park.

## FOREWORD

LORETTO, PENNSYLVANIA—At last, after so many frustrating delays, I have now put together the history of our family.

It has always been my intention to put the result of extensive research and investigation into writing. However, there was always an unconnected end—a trace of story or lore—an untold episode—even a missing date. Now, in 1960, it seems certain nothing more can be uncovered. I only wish my investigations had begun fifty years earlier so that the many persons then alive could have contributed materially to the facts herewith presented.

On the pages that follow, I have put down information gleaned from my own memory, secured from relatives or learned from earlier generations who had received their knowledge from their forebearers. A wealth of information has been contributed by my beloved wife's brother, Joseph, from his recollections and also from a historical family notebook started by his grandfather.

Still other pertinent facts have been gathered from historical volumes in Carnegie Library, State Historical Society, Catholic Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State Archives, Souvenir of Loretto (a book compiled by Reverend Ferdinand Kittell in 1899), Book of Saint Benedict's Church in Carrolltown and the Centenary of Saint Joseph's Church near Carrolltown which were both written by Reverend Modestus Wirtner, O.S.B., History of St. Augustine's Parish by an unknown author and finally from The Life and Works of Prince Demetrius Gallitzin by Father Peter Henry Lemke.

# Our Family and its Ancestors

BY LEO A. McMULLEN, L. L. D.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my beloved wife,

Mathilda Sophia Keiser, died February 28, 1946.

Pray for her.

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Since the settlement of Loretto and the surrounding countryside was either the birthplace or growing-up site of all my ancestors, excepting the father and mother of my grandmother Behe, several brief remarks about that area are in order. Brief, because its history and that of its founder has been penned in the works mentioned earlier. The description, as it applies to our family, will be covered later in this history.

Father Gallitzin was born at The Hague, Holland, son of the Russian Ambassador to the Netherlands. He renounced the Russian Orthodox Church at the age of seventeen and became a Roman Catholic. In 1792, he visited America and became acquainted with Bishop Carrol of Baltimore. Within a very few months the young man realized and accepted his vocation to the service of God, entering the Sulpician Seminary in Baltimore. Father Gallitzin was ordained there in 1792 and was immediately sent by Bishop Carrol, as a missionary, to the homesteaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

He came to McGuire's Settlement in 1799 and permanently located there, renaming the community "Loretto." Here he purchased a great tract of land and then resold small portions to settlers on generous terms. A log church was erected on another stretch of land donated by the McGuires and the first Mass was celebrated on Christmas Day, 1799. To this town and the surrounding countryside flocked homesteaders from eastern Pennsylvania. Among these settlers were my ancestors, about whom I shall tell on the following pages.

## CHAPTER II

### My Family

I was born on April 14, 1881, in St. Augustine, Pennsylvania. Our home, now destroyed, was directly across the street from the Church.

My wife was born on Beaver Avenue, Pittsburgh, December 18, 1882. My family moved to Pittsburgh in 1886 and for several years lived on Island Avenue. We later moved to Beaver Avenue, then to Columbus Avenue and finally back to Island Avenue. In 1903, Father, in poor health, moved his



Birthplace of Leo A. McMullen, Saint Augustine, Pennsylvania

family once more; this time to San Antonio, Florida. I remained in my beloved Pittsburgh.

I received my grade school education at Saint Andrew's went to high school at Holy Ghost College (now Duquesne University) and then studied architecture at the Carnegie Institute of Technology. My music training was begun by my Mother. Leo Ohmler was my piano and music theory instructor and Father John Griffin taught me to play the organ.

In 1896, Father Henry McEvoy appointed me organist at Saint Malachy's Church, South Side, Pittsburgh. Two years later I accepted the position of organist at Saint Andrew's Church from Father Mathew Carroll. My father directed the choir until I gained enough experience to carry on as organist and choir master. I retired from this position in 1953 after 55 years of service. My three pastors there were Father Carroll, Father Patrick J. Quilter and Father John Hackett.

My first venture in the architectural profession was in the office of Olaf M. Topp where I worked from 1902 to 1911 and embarked for six months of travel and study in Europe. On my return to Pittsburgh, I accepted a position as draftsman at Carnegie Tech and worked on several buildings there, principally the School of Fine Arts.



Doctor John C. and  
Mrs. Anna Mary McMullen

year, at a public reception by the American Institute of Architects, I was named one of the five men who had done the most for the profession of architecture during the preceding fifty years.

Thomas Pringle died in 1951 and the firm was dissolved when the projects then underway were completed. The firm name of Leo A. McMullen and Edward C. McMullen was then revived.

In 1953, I retired from my appointment as Lecturer in Fine Arts at Saint Vincent's College; a post I held with pride for 22 years. In 1932, I was awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws honoris causa from Saint Vincent's.

When my family left for San Antonio, Florida, in 1903, I went to live with the Frank Braun family on Ridge Avenue, Pittsburgh, and moved with them to Bellevue the following year. My wife and I were married at Saint Andrew's Church on January 4, 1905, by Father Patrick Quilter. We lived with my wife's mother, at 2340 McCook Street, until 1907 and then moved to Bellevue setting up housekeeping in a duplex between Kendal and Grant Avenues. Five years later, we moved to 80 North Jackson Avenue and then in 1915 to 637 Tingley Avenue. We moved for the last time in 1944 to 82 North Jackson Avenue where my wife died February 28, 1946. She is buried in the Keiser Plot, North Side Catholic Cemetery. The Keiser plot is located in the Saint Philomena part of the Cemetery. The Saint Philomena Cemetery was formerly located on Troy Hill. Years ago, this plot was purchased

In 1914, I returned to the Olaf M. Topp firm as associate architect. Three years later John T. Comes offered me employment as a designer. In 1921, I became a member of the firm of Comes, Perry and McMullen; specializing in ecclesiastical architecture. John Comes died that same year and, in 1929, Mr. Perry announced his retirement. I then practiced alone until 1946 when my son Edward joined me under the firm name of Leo A. McMullen and Edward C. McMullen, Associate Architects. Our offices were in the Renshaw Building, Pittsburgh. In 1950, along with Thomas Pringle, Francis W. Swem and my son Edward, the firm of McMullen, Pringle, Swem and McMullen was formed. That

and the bodies moved from Troy Hill to the new Saint Philomena's Cemetery.

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Leo A. McMullen



Mrs. Leo A. McMullen  
(Mathilda Sophia Keiser)

#### FAMILY TREE

Leo Andrew McMullen — Mathilda Sophia Keiser

John Franz—Bertha Chatlos: Gertrude Mary Margaret—Arthur James McGuire  
Edward Charles—Bernice Gillespie Anna Marie—William Larkin Sheehan  
Leo Andrew Jr.—Dorothy Kopp

John Franz—Bertha Chatlos

Kathleen Maria Theresa  
Gertrude M.—Arthur J. McGuire

Patricia Ann: Nancy Margaret: Sarah Alice—James Arthur

Patricia Ann—Robert McChesney Nancy Margaret—Joseph J. Wagner

Pamella Ann—Patrick Robert Kim Marie—Wayne—John Russell

Edward Charles—Bernice Gillespie

Patricia Dorothy: Edwinna Claire: Charles John: Michael William  
Anna Marie—William Larkin Sheehan

Barbara Ann: William Larkin John & Mary, twins; died in infancy  
Robert Joseph: Edward Patrick:

Leo Andrew Jr.—Dorothy Kopp

David Ronald: Donald Jean



### CHAPTER III

#### The McMullen Family

The McMullen family name dots county histories back over two centuries. Our branch settled in the Tuscarora Valley. We find that a William McMullen of Path Valley, near the Tuscarora Valley, was present at the ear-cropping, in 1778, of a Tory named Jacob Hare at the home of Nathaniel Paul. There are records of a John Donahue in the list of taxables of Shirley Township, just a few miles from the Valley. (The variation in the spelling is not uncommon. Such differences often occur in the same family. Refer to the Kehler and Behe families.) There are McMullens in Black Log Valley but they are without a family history. I could find no Donahues in Shirley Township. I have visited the Tuscarora Valley and met several McMullen families who are Presbyterians.

My great grandfather was James McMullen and my great grandmother was Ann Donoughue, a Catholic. Some bitterness arose over their marriage and the young couple



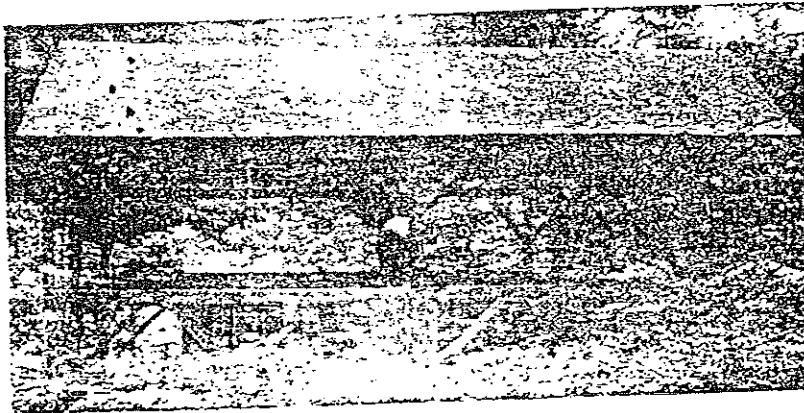
Mathew McMullen Residence

moved from the Valley to Black Log Valley, where James took up lumbering. James was killed in the forest by a falling tree and it is said that Ann cut the tree away herself to recover the body. As their children grew older, some of the boys went to work building the Old Portage Railroad. The names of Hugh, James and Charles are among a list of contributors to a collection taken up, by Father Gallitzin, among the laborers on that railroad.

Another son, Mathew, took his mother and a fellow named John Durbin to Chest Springs about 1830 where the

two men bought adjoining tracts of timberland. Ann Donoughue died in 1830 and was buried at Loretto. There was a John Donoughue, born in 1735, who died at Loretto in 1805. Also his wife, who died the following year, who I believe to be parents of Ann.

There was another McMullen family that came from Conawaga, Pennsylvania to Loretto, and it is said that a relationship existed between the two families. However, I have been unable to confirm this. It is interesting to note that marriages occurred between two members of each family. Mathew McMullen died in 1882 and Adeline



Remains of Mathew McMullen's Water-Power Saw Mill

in 1879. They are buried at Saint Augustine. After the Portage Road was completed, Hugh, James and Charles migrated to Chest Springs and worked in the timberland. Most of the wood from these tracts was cut into lumber on a water power mill built by Mathew on his farm. When I was a boy, my father took me to see the mill pointing out, with great pride, the fruits of his work. It was destroyed some years later.

My father was John Chrysostom McMullen, born in Chest Springs, Pennsylvania, May 16, 1852, and died March 3, 1910 at San Antonio, Florida, and is buried in the San Antonio Cemetery. My mother was Anna Mary Behe, born in Saint Augustine on January 16, 1855, and died February 26, 1929, in San Antonio. She is buried near her husband.

My father told me that he earned the money for his education by lumbering and teaching school. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree "cum laude" at Saint Vincent's College and his Doctor of Medicine degree from Jefferson Medical College in Baltimore.

He opened his first office in a home directly across from the church in Saint Augustine, Pennsylvania where Father Martin Ryan was the pastor and Father Henry McEvoy the assistant pastor. Eventually, Father McEvoy was transferred to Saint Andrew's Parish, Pittsburgh, and persuaded my

father, in 1886, to move to Pittsburgh and open an office. However, father's health failed and he moved to San Antonio, Florida, where he completely recovered. In 1910, he contracted typhoid fever while attending patients in the swamps and died a very few days later.

#### FAMILY TREE

John Donoughue—Mrs. John -----  
 Robert -----: Ann—James McMullen; Paul—Mary Farrell  
 James McMullen—Ann Donoughue:  
 Mathew—Adeline Ann Weakland (always called Eveline)  
 Hugh—Catherine McMullen Ann—William McMullen:  
 Charles—Susan Conrad—Susan Zimmerman: Isabella—Michael Flannigan  
 Mary, unmarried: Bridget, unmarried:  
 Mathew McMullen—Adeline Ann Weakland  
 Celestine—Martina Zerbe: Lydia—John Durbin:  
 Alice—Luke Durbin: Amanda—James Zimmerman:  
 Mary, died in infancy: John Chrysostom—Anna Mary Behe:  
 James—Margaret McCarthy: Lewis—Agnes Calahan:  
 Hilarion (Dick)—Ida Nagle.  
 John Chrysostom McMullen—Anna Mary Behe  
 Leo A.—Mathilda Sophia Keiser: Mary, unmarried:  
 Flavia, Sister of the Holy Names: Beatrice, died young:  
 John Chrysostom Francis Regis, died in infancy:  
 Joseph Callistus—Mary Evans: Bernadine—Allan Keegan  
 Josephine—John Roberts Adaline, unmarried.

John Donoughue, born 1735, died 1805; Mrs. John born (date unknown) died 1806, both buried at Loretto. James McMullen, date of birth and death unknown, buried in Black Log Valley. Ann Donoughue, born 1777, died 1840, buried at Loretto.

#### CHAPTER IV

##### The Weakland Family

Three Weakland brothers, John, William and Zephania, came to Loretto from Maryland. A sister, Susan, married to John Brown, lived in nearby Lily. They migrated to their new home at an early age; John, William and Susan's names appearing in the Paschal Communion List of 1911. (Refer to the Chapter "Facts on John Weakland" for further information.)

*Miss  
Miss*

# FAMILY TREE

*my great grand father*

John Weakland—Mrs. Weakland  
 John Weakland—Catherine Jackson: Zephania—  
 William Weakland—Mary Barbara Ruffner  
 James—Ruth Farrell: Peter—Therese Adams: William—Airy Burgoon:  
 John—Margaret : George—Ellen McKinney:  
 Samuel—Bridget Flannigan: Michael—Mary Gardiner:  
 James Weakland—Ruth Farrell  
 Catherine— : Adeline Ann—Mathew McMullen:  
 John—Sarah Kane: Augustine—Catherine Sutton:  
 Simon Joseph—Susan McDermott: Sylvester—Kate Riffle:  
 Demetrius—Ann Wills

John Weakland died 1854, aged 96, and his wife Catherine died 1861, aged 92. James died about 1879, age unknown, and his wife Ruth, died 1870, aged 37. James and Ruth are buried at Saint Augustine. The parents of Ruth were probably Cornelius and Margaret Farrell; but I have been unable to confirm this. They lived in Saint Joseph.

## CHAPTER V

### The Behe Family

My great, great grandfather, Emanuel Peché or Behe, along with his wife and sister, Mary Ann, came from Alcese to



Mr. & Mrs. Mathias Behe



Mrs. James McVey (Kearney)

Baltimore in 1790, according to family tradition. I have not, however, been able to find written record on their movements.

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From Baltimore, they journeyed to Conawaga and finally to Loretto. According to tax records, Emanuel was still living in Loretto in 1815. His wife is listed in the Loretto Paschal Record of 1810 as A. Behe, wife of Emanuel. Her first name was probably Ann or Anna, surmised from the repeated use of the name among her descendants. Mary married Peter Simon.

#### FAMILY TREE

Emanuel Behe—Anna \_\_\_\_\_:

Anthony—Mary Noel:

Conrad—Elizabeth Noel:

Mathias—Catherine Kehler:

Susan—Englebert Walters:

Joseph—\_\_\_\_\_:

Mathias Behe—Catherine Kehler

James—\_\_\_\_\_: Elias, died young: Elizabeth Ann—Lewis. Carl:

John—Margaret McVey: Henry—Catherine McConnell: Mary Ann—James Phelan

Francis Elias—Elizabeth Ann Eckenrode:

Luke—Jean Neason:

John Behe—Margaret McVey

Anna Mary—John Chrysostom McMullen:

John—Bedelia Carney:

James—Amanda Delozier:

Elizabeth—Robert Barr:

Margaret—Julian Donoughue:

Catherine, Sister of Charity:

Edward—Elizabeth Mattes—Ellen Adams:

Joseph—Catherine Dunnegan

Rose Mary, unmarried.



Mrs. John Behe



John Behe

My grandfather, John Behe, and his wife, Margaret, lived on a farm at Saint Augustine. John, after erecting his water power saw mill, sawed lumber for furniture and

cabinets and also built houses and barns for the people in the district. John was born in 1824 and died in 1904. Margaret, his wife, was born in 1826 and died in 1908. They are buried in the Saint Augustine Cemetery. I remember the old mill very well and saw it working many times under the direction of my grandfather. It is no longer in existence, the frame having been sold after the death of John.

## CHAPTER VI

### The McVey (McAvey) Family

My grandfather, James McAvey, was born to a wealthy Irish Protestant family. He was disinherited when, against the wishes of his parents, he married Mary Quinn, a Roman Catholic. The young couple came to America (I have been unsuccessful in learning the date) and James managed to obtain a contract to dig the section of the Pennsylvania Canal through Pittsburgh, which was completed by him, also the canal viaduct across the Allegheny River. He started the canal tunnel under Grant's Hill but his contract was cancelled before completion of his first project. My grandmother told me that James had made an error in estimating the cost of the undertaking.

This miscalculation evidently ruined him financially and he took his family to Williamsburg, Pennsylvania, where he was placed in charge of the canal horses. During a flood, James plunged into the river in an effort to save a number of his herd. He died of pneumonia a short time later. The date of his death and place of burial remain unknown. James McAvey's descendants changed the name to McVey.

### FAMILY TREE

James McVey—Mary Quinn (later Mrs. Michael Kearney)

Margaret—John Behe:

John—Bedilia Carney:

Charles—

Michael Kearney—Mary McVey Kearney

Patrick—Regina Litzinger:

Mary—David Fleming:

## CHAPTER VII

### The Kehler Family

Peter Kehler was born in Germany in 1753. He came to America on the ship "Sally" when he was twenty-one and fought for his new land in the Revolution. His name is etched on the soldier's monument at Ebensburg. Peter spent the winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge with Washington.

Peter lived near Conawaga for several years and his name appears on the 1799 tax rolls of Berwick Township, with a valuation of \$388. He came to Loretto before 1810 and his name was on the Paschal Communion list of that year.

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He evidently married Elizabeth before coming to Loretto as the marriage is not recorded there. He and his wife are both buried at Loretto. The family name on the tombstone is spelled "Kehler" while his wife's name is spelled "Kaylor."

#### FAMILY TREE

Peter Kehler—Elizabeth Adams

Peter—Agnes Leavy:

Jacob—Catherine McConnel:

Catherine—Mathias Behe:

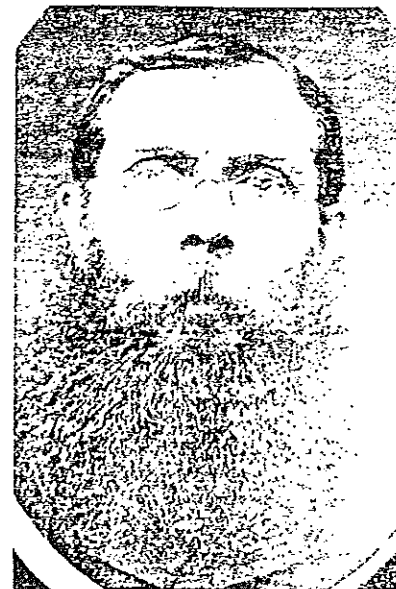
#### CHAPTER VIII

##### The Keiser (Vocke) Family

John Stephan Keiser (date of birth and death unknown) was a school teacher and grandfather of my wife. He married M. Therese Helke in February, 1838, at Riehenbeck, Germany. Gertrude Sophia Therese Keiser, mother of my wife, was born November 5, 1839, in Saerbeck, Germany. She died in Bellevue, Pennsylvania, in 1922. Frederick Vocke, a coal



Mrs. Frank Keiser (Vocke)



Frank Vocke (Keiser)

miner, was born March 19, 1812, in Wallenhorst, Germany, and died April 13, 1879. Maria Elizabeth Schwab, his wife, was born in Germany, March 7, 1836, and died January 10, 1855. Frank Vocke (Keiser) was born at Wallenhorst on March 7, 1836, and died in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, September 25, 1894.

Frank Vocke, known as Frank Keiser, and Gertrude Sophia Therese Keiser were married in Germany, probably at Ibbenburen. The couple was bitterly opposed to the German military movement and longed to move to America, lacking

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only the money for the trip. When Joseph, their first born, was old enough he was placed in a machine shop as an apprentice. It was stipulated that upon satisfactory completion of his apprenticeship he would receive a bonus of 1,400 marks (about \$350). Joseph finished his term, was given the bonus, and quickly turned it over to his parents. Thus they found the means to realize their dream of gazing upon the Statue of Liberty.

Since Joseph was now subject to call with the army, it was necessary to leave as quickly as possible and also with utmost secrecy. On June 4, 1881, Frank spirited his family from their home in Bochum to safety in Antwerp, Holland. From Antwerp they sailed to Hall, England, then to Liverpool and finally to America, arriving on June 21. After they came to Pittsburgh, and on the advice of Father Kaufman of Saint Joseph's Church, Frank changed the family name from Vocke to that of his wife's—Keiser.

The Vocke-Keiser family information is contained in the historical notebook mentioned in the Forward. The notebook was begun, in Germany, by my wife's grandfather, continued by his descendants and is now in possession of my son, John. Still other facts were related to me by my wife's brother, Joseph.

Ferdinand Vocke and his wife, Marie Elizabeth, were the owners of a large farm at Wallenhorst, near Osnabruck, Germany.

#### FAMILY TREE

Ferdinand Vocke—Marie Elizabeth Schoallenberg

|

Elizabeth—married name unknown      Frank      Gerard

Ferdinand and Marie were born and died in Germany.

Frank Vocke (Keiser)—Gertrude Sophia Therese Keiser

|

Joseph—Therese Marochner      Mary (first marriage)—Frank Tegethoff

Mary (second marriage, no children)—Simon Oberhofer

Anna—Died in infancy      Frances—Henry Hartman

Gertrude Sophia—died young      Frank Theodore—Therese Burger

Alphonse Gerhard—Annie Choffat      Clement Joseph—Died in infancy

Mathilda Sophia—Leo A. McMullen      John—Died in infancy

Frank Vocke (Keiser) was born in Germany in 1836, died in Pittsburgh in 1894. Gertrude, his wife, was born in Germany in 1839, died in Pittsburgh in 1921. The year of her death on the family tombstone is incorrect. They are buried in the North Side Catholic Cemetery, Saint Philomena Section.



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## CHAPTER IX

### Some Facts About John Weakland

The following excerpt is taken from a paper read, by the author, at the gravesite of John Weakland on July 20, 1947. The occasion was a visit by a delegation from the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania to Saint Joseph's Church, Hart's Sleeping Place, near Carrolltown.

"There is a tradition current in all branches of the Weakland family of Cambria County to the effect that three Weakland brothers came to America with the first colony sent out by the Second Lord Baltimore, arriving in Maryland on March 25, 1634. One of the three brothers married the daughter of an Indian chieftain. He was the ancestor of the Weaklands who settled in this section of Pennsylvania. This story came to my family through its Weakland ancestors and was related to me in my early youth. Father Modestus Wirtner, O.S.B., a native of Carrolltown and noted historian and student of Indian lore, thought enough of the tradition to transcribe the circumstances on page eighteen of the Diamond Jubilee Book of Saint Benedict's Parish, Carrolltown. I have inquired, whenever I met Weaklands, as to their knowledge of the tradition and find most of them familiar with it and believing the tale to be factual.

According to Father Modestus, the first Weakland in the mountains was a John Weakland, who was here before Father Gallitzin but, as far as I can determine, did not settle permanently. However, a daughter, Susan, Mrs. John Brown who lived near Lily and three of his sons, Zephaniah, William and John, settled in this region. Susan is probably buried at the Summit and William at Loretto. Of the burial place of Zephaniah I have learned nothing. But John Weakland, my great, great grandfather, lies buried beneath this stone."

John Weakland was born in April, 1758. He married Catherine Jackson at Hagerstown, Maryland, and later brought his little family to Loretto when Father Gallitzin settled there. He first appears on record in 1800 when Father Gallitzin baptized one of his sons, George. In 1802, he purchased 100 acres of land from Father Gallitzin which he cleared for farming. It was probably in 1807 (date disputed) when John was 49 years of age, that the famous defense of Father Gallitzin occurred.

The residence of Father Gallitzin, and also his church, where somewhat separated from the rest of the community. One day, the priest was surprised by a band of ruffians and was forced to flee to the church. (I will continue the story as it appears in *The Life and Works of Prince Gallitzin*, authored by Father Lemke, assistant to Father Gallitzin, and first resident pastor of Saint Joseph's Church, Hart's Sleeping Place. The work was written in German and later translated into English by Father Joseph C. Plumpe.) Father Lemke tells of the low character of those conspiring against Father

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Gallitzin and of the fear of the people to mingle in the trouble. He writes:

"In the present instance it was the same old story, until one of them, the most peaceful among the peaceful, stepped forward and acted as an intermediary in a most unusual fashion. An elderly lady who, as a young girl, had been an eye witness, told me the story. It was so touching—and delightful, too—that I do not have the heart to remand it to oblivion.

The party of agitators seized upon Gallitzin and taunted him with insults. Above all, they were bent upon forcing certain concessions from him by which he would have renounced his rights and his position of leadership. When he refused, they prepared to treat him with violence. He would have been subject to a veritable siege if John Weakland had not then chanced along.

John was the tallest and strongest man within a hundred miles. Once, when he was alone in the forest, he met and fought a furious bear for hours, his only weapon being the limb of a tree hastily snatched from the ground. On another occasion he captured a wolf, gagged it and brought it home for amusement of the children. At the same time, he was remembered as a man of few words, of mild and gentle nature; a man who would not harm a fly. He was a great admirer of Gallitzin and was of the number that had come with him into the mountains from Maryland.

When he saw what was afoot, John decided that here he should make an exception to his accustomed rule of life—that is, minding his own business. He quickly looked about him for a limb or its equivalent, seizing upon an oaken fence stake which neatly fit his hand. With it he calmly advanced upon the mob which, awed and frightened, started to retreat, obviously thinking that without further ceremony he would strike loose at them. But this he did not for the nonce; instead, giving a speech, a longer one than they were accustomed to hearing from him. He spoke approximately as follows:

"I have fought with bears and other animals it is true, but to date I have never, thank God, done harm to a human being. But now it looks as something else might happen. Go home, therefore, for if there is any more monkey business or if anyone acts improperly about the House of God or dares to lay hands on the anointed of the Lord, let them beware! (And here he lifted up the fence stake.) As true as I live, I'll crush his skull for him!" This put a decisive end to the trouble."

John M. Brown, an old friend of mine who died years ago at an advanced age, was a grandson of Susan Weakland Brown and had known the Weakland brothers in his youth. He described them to be tall, broad and powerful men even in their old age. Their coarse hair and high cheek bones plainly revealed their Indian ancestry. John said he had asked William Weakland what he knew of the truth of the

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Indian tradition and found that with the Weaklands of that day it was also a tradition. The brothers of my grandmother McMullen, who was a granddaughter of John Weakland, had these racial characteristics to a remarkable degree. One of them, Demetrius Weakland, hauled coal on the mountains while in his nineties. He was often referred to as the "Old Indian." I remember a fight years ago near Saint Augustine in which a tough character got one of the Weaklands down on his back and began pounding his face until he gave in. When the fight was over he remarked to the bystanders that he would just as soon pound an old plow point with his fists as to beat the face of a Weakland.

To go back to our subject, Sargent, in Mitri—his biography of Father Gallitzin—states that during the War of 1812, John Weakland shouldered a musket and marched off to defend his country against the British. The Loretto Centenary Book states that Captain Richard McGuire, in 1814, formed a company of volunteers in answer to President Madison's appeal to defend the city of Washington. At the time John was 56 years old, and although it seems incredible that he would be joining the army at that age, the soldier's monument at Ebensburg carries the name of John Weakland as a private in the war. His son John was but 16 at the time. Evidently, 56 was merely the prime of life for a man destined to live beyond the age of 96.

A few years after the war, John decided to leave Loretto and we refer again to Father Lemke:

"Our old friend, John Weakland, owned a small piece of ground near Loretto. Since the site held no prospects for his children to acquire properties of their own as they grew up, he moved to the place mentioned (Hart's Sleeping Place) and there acquired enough land for each of his seven sons to found his own home in the course of time."

We find in the record that in 1816 John bought 637 acres of land which he patented under the name of Hart's Sleeping Place. The strange name was derived from the fact that John Hart, an Indian trader, was accustomed to camping at a spring at this place from time to time during his travels.

The quotation from the above paragraph is taken from page 218 of Father Plumpe's translation. In a footnote, Plumpe states: "Though John Weakland had a numerous progeny, it seems he had but three sons. One of these, John, Jr., in 1816, bought a tract of 637 acres at the place referred to by the author, 'Hart's Sleeping Place.' This was later known as the Weakland Settlement. (Wirtner 14; Kittell 16) However, Father Plumpe was wrong and Father Lemke was right about the seven sons. Evidently, Father Plumpe confuses John with the older John Weakland who was there before Father Gallitzin but did not settle in the vicinity. He is the Weakland who had three sons including John, the hero of the defense episode described earlier.

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Father Lemke clearly identifies him in his reference as "Our old friend John Weakland." His seven sons were James (my great grandfather), Peter, William and John, all born before the family came to Loretto; and George, Samuel and Michael, born at Loretto.

Prior to the arrival of John, a number of the families had already settled here. As time went on, still others came to the neighborhood. Because of the long distance to Loretto, many became anxious to have a church close at hand. My friend and distant cousin, John M. Brown, to whom I referred earlier in this paper, said that the numerous Weaklands were foremost among those urging Father Gallitzin to establish a church at Hart's Sleeping Place. However, their desire was not realized until 1829 when Gallitzin, yielding to their entreaties, took up a subscription among the families which amounted to \$332.50. Nearly one-fifth of this sum was subscribed by the Weaklands and, in addition, John donated ten acres of land for the purpose. Logs were cut and shaped, mortar prepared and the church built. Among those actually engaged in building the church were the names of Bender, Miller, Cunningham, Yost, Luther, Byrne, McGuire and, of course, John Weakland along with four of his sons: Peter, William, John, Jr. and George. The church still stands. The logs are now covered by the wooden siding that was later put on. According to Father Modestus, whose writing supplied this information, it was dedicated in honor of Saint Joseph on Sunday, October 10, 1830. Father Gallitzin celebrated the first Mass.

Father Lemke says that John Weakland did not die until 15 years after Father Gallitzin had passed away, that he left a posterity of more than 100 souls and that a great granddaughter with her child in her arms followed him to his grave. Father Plumpe, in a footnote on page 151 of his translation, disputes this. Plumpe says that the inscription on his gravestone states John died October 17, 1851. Father Plumpe was misled by a photograph of the stone which was not clear. The correct inscription is: "John Weakland, died October 17, 1854, aged 96 years, 6 months." Father Gallitzin died May 6, 1840, and John survived him over 14 years and five months. Lemke was not far wrong.

These corrections of the footnotes of Father Plumpe are not to be construed as an adverse criticism. My only reason for pointing them out is to set the record straight. Copies of the book written by Father Lemke are rare and are not made available even to those who can read German. Historians, together with all others interested in the life of Father Gallitzin and his labors at Loretto, must be ever profoundly grateful to Father Plumpe for making available, to the general public, a translation of his work. The author, Father Lemke, was not only an eye witness to much that he relates, but as well had an opportunity to gather at first hand the wealth of information presented.

According to one James P. McCans, whom I knew in my youth but now dead many years, this is not the original

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burial place of John Weakland. When the first grave was opened to move his body the right arm and hand, with which he defended Father Gallitzin were found intact. I quote from the History of Saint Augustine's Parish, published in 1922( and from page 22. "Sister Martini (Charity) relates that her father, the late James P. McCans, was cognizant of the fact that when Mr. Weakland's body was being removed from the grave in which it had reposed, his right hand and arm were found to be uncorrupted." Those not familiar with the history of Loretto and vicinity may wonder why such information should appear in a history of the Saint Augustine Parish. (Saint Augustine is some eight miles from Loretto.) All the parishes for miles around owed their origin to Loretto. In the history written of each it has been customary to give a short biographical sketch of Father Gallitzin, together with a condensed history of Loretto, as an introduction. In later years, Mr. McCans lived directly across the road from the Saint Augustine Church. Sister Martini was his daughter, Margaret.

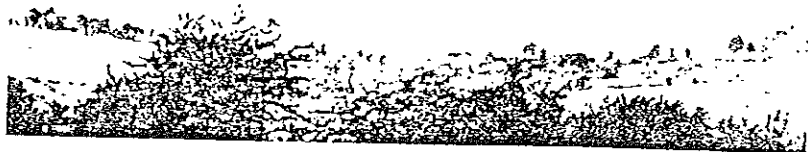
John Weakland is now dead more than 100 years. The recent renewal of interest in the life of Father Gallitzin has lifted him from the status of hero, known only to the people of the countryside here, to a figure of national interest. It is a name that will live on proudly through the years with the memories of Gallitzin and Lemke. God rest his soul. A recent article on John Weakland called him the "Davy Crockett" of the Allegheny Mountains.

As the sacristy of Saint Joseph's Church was built later than the main building, it is probable that John Weakland's first burial place was where this sacristy now stands.

## CHAPTER X

### The Village of Saint Augustine

The young traveler of today can drive through Saint Augustine in less than half a minute, unaware that the few houses to be seen are the remnant of a once prosperous village with an interesting history.



The Village of Saint Augustine in 1900

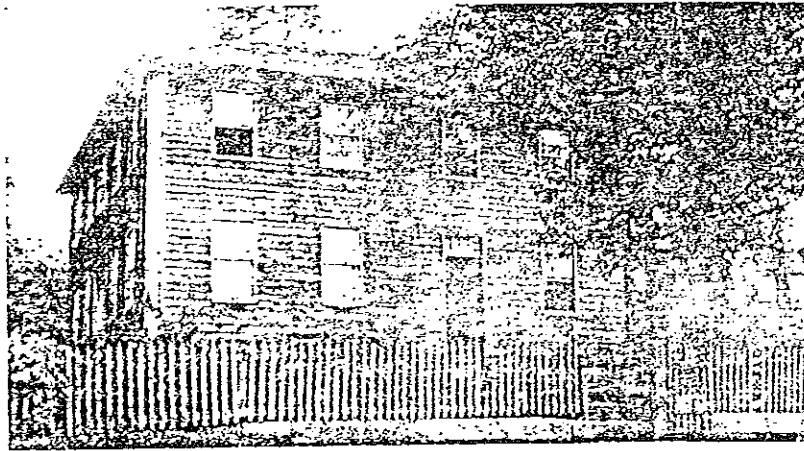
With the arrival of Father Gallitzin in Loretto in 1799, many settlers came eastward at his invitation to found new homes in the wilderness. The more adventurous of these pushed out from the settlement in all directions in search of land suitable for clearing and farming. Thus, we find

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that early in the nineteenth century pioneers were establishing themselves in the region called the "Loup" named after a tribe of Shawnese Indians.

The community grew rapidly and, in 1847, when the congregation of Saint Augustine was founded, a census taken by Bishop O'Connor found the Catholic population to consist of about 500 souls. The territory covered by the new congregation included, not only the village attached to the church, but also, Ashland Furnace (now Ashville,) Frugality, the Beaver Dams, a part of the adjoining territory toward Carrolltown and much of the present parish of Saint Monica, Chest Springs.

Curiously enough, a plan of the village was recorded in 1849 at the county court house under the name of "Gallitzin." However, popular usage soon changed the name to Saint Augustine and the honor of being called Gallitzin went to the railroad town at the summit of the Alleghenies.

A map of 1867 lists the business houses of Saint Augustine as consisting of three stores: those of Edward R. Dunnegan, Mrs. Barnes and S. (probably Stanislaus) Wharton who was also postmaster. There were two hotels: The "American House," owned by George McGough, and the "Washington Hotel," operated by Michael Barnacle. The craftsmen were Edward G. Kreise, carpenter; Francis Hoover, chairmaker and Charles Dillon, blacksmith and wagon smith. The map also shows the church and a public school at the crossroads.



John Behe's Residence

My memory goes back to 1886 when the village was at the peak of its development. The last great stands of pine were being cut out of the woods and the American House was still operating with John Bender as proprietor. Bender was followed by Gent Burgoon and then Simon Nagle, who closed the house when Prohibition came to rule the land. My memory fails me as to whether or not the Washington Hotel was still in existence. However, a new house had now been added

—the "Arlington Hotel," owned and managed by George Harber. Edward R. Dunnegan still kept the general store and Thomas Dunphy had replaced Mrs. Barnes, then 67, as owner of the store across the road. Alice Wharton was now postmistress and also ran a small store.

Tal Delozier made furniture, coffins and acted as undertaker when the need arose. Charles Dillon, hale and hearty, was still working at his forge though he had competition about half a mile northeast of town from Joseph Yahner, who shod horses, and Luke Behe who did general smithing. A photographer by the name of John Drummond did a thriving business, making many portraits—mostly tintypes—which are today cherished as heirlooms by the descendants of this early generation.

Hans Mueller made boots and shoes to order and a barrel maker had established himself on the Chest Springs Road at the edge of town. A little farther on, at the Glass farm, a cider mill pressed apples in season. Still another three quarters of a mile distant was a small tannery, operated by a man named Adams, at a point still called "The Tan House." The building has long since disappeared.

Bill Wharton was the local well digger and he "found water" by manipulating a forked peach twig, the efficacy of which he believed implicitly. I recall Bill, after digging down some twelve feet for water at his own home, abandoned the project and began a new well some fifty or sixty feet distant. He showed me how the twig pulled stronger towards the ground at the new site than at that which he had now filled up.

My father hired Bill to deepen the well at our place and rigged up a windlass over the well with a tub. Bill, down in the well, would fill the tub and my father would wind it up and dump the contents. When Bill thought the well was deep enough, he prepared to shoot it by filling a bottle with powder and attaching a fuse. He lit the fuse, stepped into the tub and shouted, "Pull 'er up, Doctor." My father did not pull up fast enough to suit Bill and he became excited, shouting repeatedly, "Pull 'er up, Doctor." Well, my father got to laughing, the handle of the windlass slipped out of his hands, and Bill dropped to the bottom of the well. Fortunately for Bill, the powder had become wet and did not go off.

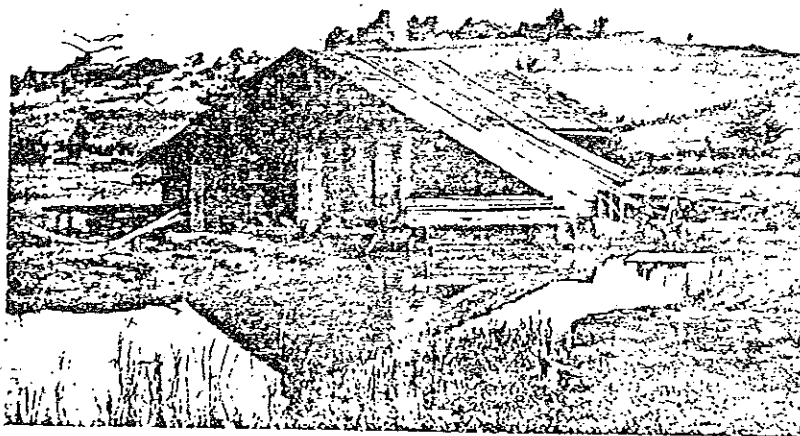
In the valley north of town, Andrew Carl operated a water power saw mill, the mill dam affording the best fishing and swimming to be had in the neighborhood. In the valley to the south, Arthur Wharton and John Behe ran saw mills on adjoining farms. Wharton produced rough lumber while Behe, not only sawed the lumber, but also built wagons, did cabinet work, made furniture and built houses and barns.

Father Martin Ryan was pastor of the church and Father Henry McEvoy was his assistant. Charles Miller was organist and director of the choir and also taught music to the young people of the countryside. My mother, one of his pupils, suc-

ceeded him and served as organist until we left the mountains. She served later as organist for two years at Saint Malachy's Church, Pittsburgh, and for several years held a similar position in San Antonio, Florida. Conn Dunn was the sexton of the church and Mary Glass the sacrestan. They retained their offices for years. Mary is also reputed to have taught catechism to five generations of children, assisted at times by Mrs. William Adams, Annie Byrne, Annie Dunnegan, Mary C. Behe and others. My father, Doctor John C. McMullen, was the resident country physician and lived across the road from the church.

There was a place in the Beaver Dams called Fort Hill, the site of a former Indian village. In the locality, many arrow and spear heads could be picked up while plowing. One morning a farmer, named Noel, came to town and told Father Ryan that a tree had blown over during the night. In the morning, when he came out of his house, he saw imbedded in the roots an Indian skull grinning down at him. Father Ryan sent him over to my father who went to the Beaver Dams with Mr. Noel and dug up the old fellow. He brought back the skull, some of the larger bones, a tomahawk, a red stone pipe and a necklace of bear claws. These articles were preserved in our home for years. I do not know what finally became of them.

The old frame church stood at the edge of the cemetery and parallel with the road and a large mission cross dominated the front of the structure. Of the old church, Father Lambing, noted historian of the Pittsburgh Diocese, said, "So



John Behe's Saw Mill

unique in construction as to defy description." However, the style of the building was what we call today "Carpenter Gothic" in which masonry details such as buttresses and ornamental features are executed in wood.

One of my earliest recollections is that of the old pulpit, which was fitted with casters and stood at the Gospel end of the communion railing. When the time for the sermon was at



hand, two venerable gentlemen laid hold of the pulpit and pushed it, amidst great creaking of its ancient joints and shrill squealing of its unoiled casters, to the center of the church. They returned it, with the same accompaniment, when the sermon was completed. The church was furnished with box pews, after the Puritan style, straight backed and most uncomfortable. If they have not been thrown out, some of them may still be in use in the gallery of the new church.

Between the old church and the road stood the frame rectory, of which a large room on the ground floor served as a morning chapel during severe weather. A church bell hung in an open frame structure resembling a small oil derrick, and when the wood work decayed and became unsafe, some mountain genius hung it in the sawed-off fork of a large locust tree. It was also provided with a small shingled roof to protect it from the elements—a practical and picturesque arrangement. The old bell, its mournful tone long muted, is preserved in a brick memorial on the church grounds.

The hitching grounds occupied the site of the brick church and at its lower edge stood a one-room frame school house where John McVey taught the three R's and kept strict discipline with the aid of a stout birch rod. I spent my first year in grade school here.

Sister Augustine Wharton, who became noted for her works of charity in the vicinity of Youngstown, Ohio, tried for many years to establish a motherhouse on the farm of her father at Saint Augustine, but all to no avail. The energy of this remarkable woman later benefited the people of another diocese.

To the best of my recollection, there was a grist mill and five water-powered saw mills within a radius of a mile from Saint Augustine. The saw mills, however, consumed but a small part of the lumber produced. For the most part, the trees were cut into logs, lashed together with chains and then pulled down the valley, on log slides, by horses to points where sufficient water was available to float them further downstream.

These were prosperous days for Saint Augustine. The lumbering activities furnished employment for all able-bodied men to whom that sort of work appealed. The merchants and tradesmen were kept busy and the hotels did a land office business, especially on paydays. That was the day the roistering lumberjacks headed for town to blow off steam and spend some of their hard-earned cash.

The honest country folk took no part in this carousing. Their amusements were of a different sort, such as quilting parties or husking bees where the lad who got an ear with red kernels kissed the girl he thought the prettiest of the group. Came a house or barn to be built, the masons set the foundations, the carpenters fabricated the timber framing to size and length and then invitations were spread far and wide by word of mouth. On the appointed day the men came

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in their work clothes, the women donned their aprons and prepared seemingly inexhaustible quantities of chicken and other farm delicacies to feed the men while they "raised" the frame and pinned it together with hickory pins. Such a project took the full day. In the meantime, the threshing floor of a convenient barn had been cleared and when evening came the young people, and many of the oldsters, made merry in the square dances to the rollicking accompaniment of the music of a country fiddler. If there were no houses or barns to be raised, it did not take much of an excuse to arrange another frolic. Often groups of young people would gather at farm houses, preferably those where there were melodeons or cabinet organs and enjoy themselves in game and song. One of the most interesting customs in Saint Augustine, and in similar districts, was the "Shavarii." When a couple was married, the friends gathered in the evening at the house where the celebration was being held and serenaded the young couple by blowing horns and beating tin pans, creating a din which could be heard for miles in the clear mountain air. Charlie Noel was the local bard, he was much in demand, for his humorous renditions in song and doggerel, of all the doings of the community. All this, as the poet aptly expresses it, in the words of the "Kerry Dance." "Gone alas like our youth, too soon."

The annual picnic was instituted before my time and was originally held in a pine grove a short distance beyond the tan house toward Chest Springs. Later, in the early nineties, a hall was built on the church property which provided a place for square dancing, entertainment and friendly meetings for three generations of young people. It burned to the ground in 1949 and was replaced by a social activities building. The new hall was first used in 1950 for a chicken dinner—the feature of the annual picnic—which is attended by many old timers.

The time came when the best of the timber was exhausted and the lumbering industry moved on to other forests. However, Saint Augustine managed to retain a goodly measure of its prosperity. Situated at a crossroads, it formed a convenient center for shopping and trading. People came to town frequently for mail and, at the same time, made necessary purchases—the business deals often being by barter.

On Sunday, the whole community came to church. They arrived in buggies, surreys and spring wagons. The crowd was so great, in good weather, that some of the parishoners stood outside and heard Mass through the open windows. With the advent of the rural free delivery, people rarely came to town except on Sundays. My father, recognizing the trend, went to Pittsburgh to seek a better field in which to carry on his profession. Later, the appointment of resident pastors to Saint Monica, in Chest Springs, and to Saint Thomas, in Ashville, took away a great segment of the congregation. Saint Augustine's prosperity was ended. The craftsmen and trades people gradually died off and there were no young

men to take their places. One of the last—the boot and shoemaker—discouraged and melancholy, locked his shop one day and went up to the cemetery where he drank a tin cup of poison and hung the cup on a branch of a sapling pine. It swung idly in the wind for several years before finally rusting away.

A very sad thing happened just before we left Saint Augustine, one that affected me very much. One winter day William Adams, who lived about a mile from town, started to walk to Altoona with his young son. A snow storm blew up and he sent the boy back home. The boy never arrived. When William returned and found the boy missing, searching parties were dispatched to search for him. My uncle, Edward Behe was one of the men who discovered him a week later seated on a large stone and frozen stiff. Tear drops of ice stood on his cheeks.

Today, Saint Augustine sleeps peacefully, dreaming of vanished glories. The craftsmen and tradesmen are all gone. A single hotel remains—the "Arlington"—although it is now only a tavern. The American House which was quite large, fell to the low estate of housing chickens, then collapsed a few years ago. Today, just a few stones of the foundations remain while the site of the Washington reveals not a trace of its existence.

The people who took part in the busy life of this community, in its active days, sleep the sleep of the just in the cemetery on the hill. Their spirits live on in the souls of their descendants. A few still live in the vicinity, many in Altoona, Johnstown, Pittsburgh and other parts of the state. Others are scattered over the country from New York to California. They are rearing new generations and handing down to them, as their heritage, the sterling qualities of their pioneer ancestors.

However, a day of prosperity may come back to Saint Augustine. It is rumored that the state will erect a dam on Chest Creek, which would back the water nearly to the town. The dam will be stocked with fish and used for boating. The result may be a fine summer resort with Saint Augustine gaining thereby.

## CHAPTER XI

### The Johnstown Flood

Late in the last century, a group of Pittsburgh men formed a hunting and fishing club and purchased a plot of land on the south fork of the Conemaugh River. They built a dam atop one of the old canal dams and stocked the reservoir with fish. The group then built a number of cottages for the accommodation of members.

A heavy rain, on May 30, 1889, overflowed the dam. The next day the structure ruptured and sent the imprisoned waters cascading down the narrow gorge, spewing destruction

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upon everything in its path. At Cambria City, a suburb of Johnstown, the furious waters crashed into the first large residential district, lifting the houses from their foundations and hurling them against the stone arch bridge of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Many persons were trapped in the wreckage of their homes. Soon the hot stoves in the homes began a fire and most of the terrified persons burned to death in the holocaust.

In all, some 5,000 lives were lost in the area due to the flood. In Johnstown alone, about 2,290 were victims of the swirling torrents. Many of the dead in Johnstown were buried in Grandview Cemetery of whom 441 were identified and 115 remain unknown. Others were interned in cemeteries in Johnstown and the surrounding communities.

Members of the family of Bishop Hugh C. Boyle were lost. His mother was rescued from the roof of a house at Bolivar some 12 miles below the city. The Bishop was a student at Saint Vincent's College at the time.

When the wreckage floated down the Allegheny into Pittsburgh, my father took me to the river where we watched the houses drift on downstream. At that time, there were no dams on the river so most of the homes were still intact. My mother's sister, Catherine, was a nun in the Charity Order, her religious name being Sister Perpetua. She was stationed at the Saint John Gaulbert Convent in Johnstown at the time of the flood. When the news of the disaster reached Pittsburgh, Edward, my mother's brother, went in search of the Nun. He found her safe and brought her to Pittsburgh. She told us that, when the flood struck the convent, they took refuge in the chapel which was in a wing on the top floor. The water rose so high that they could hear the furniture on the floor below striking against the ceiling. Only the chapel wing remained after the waters subsided. A number of our relatives were lost and two young orphaned girls came to live with us until their relatives could be located.

About six weeks after the flood, my father took me to Johnstown. The site was almost bare with only a few houses standing and those cocked at odd angles. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad depot, plus a few industrial buildings, were left practically undamaged. A large pile of rusted cooking stoves was a lone memento to the homes that had burned at the railroad bridge. Men were digging everywhere in search of items of value. One was uncovering books, another a piano and still a third had a real find—several barrels of whiskey.

The broken dam may still be seen today with a jagged hole gaping through its center. The old cottages form the nucleus of the village of Saint Michael which was built since the terrible day so long ago.

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## CHAPTER XII

### Happenings In Woods Run

Although born in Saint Augustine, I was only six when my father moved his family to Pittsburgh. We took a house in the Manchester district, near Woods Run. It was in Woods Run, with its constantly supercharged atmosphere of excitement, where I spent most of my time. I have included in this history a number of happenings there; some ludicrous and some tragic.

One of my earliest—and dimmest—recollections was of the night of August 1, 1889. During the night, the A. W. Miller Oil Refinery, located between Washington Avenue (now Columbus,) Preble Avenue, Adams Street and the Ohio River, burned. The fire was attributed to an overheated still. Mr. Miller, the owner, lost his life in the fire and reportedly only a portion of his shoe was ever found. At that time, we lived on Washington Avenue just about 150 feet from the refinery. The fire was touched off by an explosion, late at night, which shook us from our sleep. We hurried to the roof of our home and watched the rapidly spreading flames. Two large tanks of oil burned but the firemen succeeded in preventing the fire from enveloping a tank of benzene which, had it ignited, would have caused a catastrophe.

The Woods Run I remember vividly is the one from 1895 on. It was a robust, thriving community. The principal industry was the Pressed Steel Car Company which started its industrial life as the Schoen Car Wheel Company. This plant was expanded to manufacture steel freight cars and at the height of its development produced fifty cars each day. This poured an immense sum of money into the Run each week and all the workmen, most of them Slovaks, lived in boarding houses. The number of saloons multiplied, many of them little more than dives. Fights occurred nightly and murders were not uncommon.

There were three policemen to man the district when ten would not have been enough. One of these was James Livingstone, popularly known as "Sleepy Jim," and the second—whose name I have forgotten—was called "Little Mike." These were two good men. The third was tagged with the name of "Assistance" and who, as a policeman, was a weak character. He received his nickname from the time, while attempting an arrest, he was knocked down and severely beaten. He yelled to the crowd for assistance but they howled at him. Some wag composed a bit of doggerel which became very popular and went as follows: "Sleepy Jim, he is a cop and everybody knows it. . . he has a whistle up his a—and Assistance has to blow it." Little Mike came to a sad end. One of his enemies shot him from behind a fence and the perpetrator of the crime was never apprehended.

There were two squires in Woods Run; one by name of Hartnett; the other called Lynch. It could not be truthfully

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said that justice prevailed in their courts. Bribes were the order of the day. When a hated Slovak was sued before one of them, the other squire promptly sent his constable to get the accused party to enter a cross suit in the second court.

One of the characters in the district was James P. Wall, nicknamed "Tinker" Wall. Tinker ran a little tin shop, making pots and pans and other items. He was very successful and enlarged his business until he had a large factory; finally becoming a millionaire. He had a son, James, an only child on whom the elder Walls lavished all their affection. At the height of their affluence, James suddenly died prostrating his parents with grief. Tinker lost all interest in business, sold out his holdings and began pouring money into charities. The principal beneficiary was the Little Sisters of the Poor for whom he built the Home for the Aged on Benton Street. The Walls went to live in this home, lovingly cared for by the Sisters, and died penniless.

While most of the conflict in the infamous Pressed Steel Car strike took place in McKees Rocks, it affected the populace of Woods Run so greatly that it must be mentioned here.

The strike began July 14, 1909. The management called in train and boat loads of strike breakers. Armed deputies and the state militia grabbed the hordes of breakers as fast as possible and escorted them into the plant; holding them prisoner there. Pearl L. Bergoff, a professional strike breaker, said later it was one of the bloodiest strike breakings he ever organized. The workers tried to burn and dynamite the plant, but were repulsed. On August 22nd, 4,000 strikers captured the plant and held it for 48 hours. Seven strikers were killed before the militia succeeded in capturing the plant. In all, 10 of the battling employees lost their lives. President Taft ordered a probe and several of the accused were tried on a peonage charge. The company gave in on September 8th, promised wage increases, and work resumed the next day.

The Pressed Steel Car Company finally went into bankruptcy and the great prosperity of Woods Run was over. However, there is still a decent living to be made there. Today, the plant has been removed to make way for a large sewage disposal plant.

There is an Italian Parish, "Regina Coeli," on Juniata Street, where the feast of the Assumption was celebrated with fireworks and other festivities. A feature of the celebration was a child dressed as an angel who flew suspended from a wire from a house across the street to the door of the church. On this occasion, unfortunately, a flaming Roman candle set the little girl's flimsy dress afire and she burned to death before anyone could reach her. That terminated the celebrations.

At the corner of Beaver Avenue and Rebecca Street stood the so-called salt works. Wells were driven into the earth to a salt bed which underlies the city. The salt water from these wells was fed into wide troughs criss-crossed with steam

pipes. The salt water boiled, salt was deposited on the bottom of the trough and then shoveled into carts and taken away.

One day a group of boys stole, unobserved, into the works and began playing near the troughs. One of the boys was the son of James Galvin, a player for the Pittsburgh Ball Club. He fell into the scalding water in the trough, the frightened boys fled, and the lad died in the boiling water.

During the Civil War, news reached Pittsburgh that a Confederate Army was coming up the Ohio River to attack the city. Earthworks were quickly constructed around Pittsburgh and one of these called Fort McKeever, was erected on a hill above Manchester at the highest level of Marshall Avenue. It consisted of a redoubt about two hundred feet square with cannon emplacements at the corners and a moat. Rifle pits were installed at the lower level. The Confederate Army did not reach Pittsburgh, so the forts were never used. The cadets from Saint Andrews Church in Manchester used Fort McKeever as a drill ground and for fighting sham battles.

Marshall Avenue was earlier called Strawberry Lane and ran through a ravine between Island Avenue and Brighton Road. This ravine was filled in to the level of Marshall Avenue, Brighton Road and adjoining land. Strawberry Lane now lies buried up to forty feet under Marshall Avenue. Sixty years ago Fort McKeever was in perfect condition, but today only a few traces remain of the old earthworks.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### Coxey's Army

Coxey's army was started by Jacob G. Coxey in Massillon, Ohio. His army marched into Pittsburgh, April 3, 1894, via the Brighton Road where I watched it from the sidelines. It was on its way to Washington to demonstrate to the authorities the need of legislation to remedy the depression which was then in effect. However, the army never got inside the city as the Washington police dispersed it; so it ended in a fiasco.

### CHAPTER XIV

#### Hydrophobia Comes to Manchester

Along about 1900, there was an up-and-coming heavyweight fighter named Edward Kennedy. He had a sparring partner by the name of Gagey Lavelle. One day, while they were standing at the corner of Beaver and Island Avenues, a dog came trotting past. Lavelle leaned over to pet the dog and was bitten. A few days later, Gagey was seized with hydrophobia. His friends rushed him to Mercy Hospital but were too late and he died there.

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There was an old character who used to hang around the saloons of Woods Run. For a few drinks, he would tell me the early history of the Run. He asked me if I remembered the death of Lavelle and I told him I did. He said he knew where the dog came from that bit Lavelle. A few more drinks brought out the story.

It seems there was an old German and his son living in the neighborhood, both working in the warehouse of one of the local express companies. A bull dog, enclosed in a crate, arrived one night addressed to Mercy Hospital. The Germans stole the dog and took it home. The next day it was revealed that the stolen dog was suspected of having rabies and was being shipped to the hospital for examination. When the two heard this, they quickly turned the dog out on the street. I asked him why he did not report the affair to the authorities. He told me that he was afraid to mention it since he was not in good standing with the police at the time.

## CHAPTER XV

### Ingenuity of Youth

The Jennings Steel Mill stood on Preble near Island Avenue. About 1896 it was dismantled, the buildings and machinery were moved away and only the foundations remained. Looking over the place, the young lads of the neighborhood saw that it would make a fine ball field if the foundations could be removed. However, such an undertaking was beyond their resources. They thought the matter over and finally came up with a plan. The old Jennings' office, a one-story brick building, was still standing and was complete with office furniture, file cabinets and account books. Two of the older boys opened the office and hung out a "Men Wanted" sign. In a few days some fifty Slovaks were industriously removing the thick foundations with a couple of lads as bosses. Each man picked up a metal check when he reported for work and returned it to the office at quitting time. The tools were stolen from a box car in the railroad yards.

In two weeks the field was completed and graded. On pay day the workmen called at the office for their wages but found it closed. They complained to the police but their appeals fell on deaf ears. The police were mostly Irish and every Slovak that moved into Woods Run—and worked for lower wages—pushed an Irishman out of a job.

## CHAPTER XVI

### Farming on Brunots Island

There were plenty of fresh vegetables available in Woods Run in the early days. Brunots Island, where the Duquesne Light plant is now located, was a huge truck garden owned and operated by a family named Cummings. They had a flat boat ferry running between Doerr Street and the Island. Wagons were loaded with vegetables on the island, ferried to



Woods Run, and then sold to grocery stores and the Allegheny Market.

In addition, the Ohio River was teeming with fish and catching them by net was a flourishing industry.

## CHAPTER XVII

### Jack Reilly

Some sixty years ago Jack Reilly ran a restaurant at the corner of Beaver and Island Avenues. Jack was a good cook and did a steady business. He specialized in preparing lunches, to take out, for the railroaders. Many of them wanted their lunches at night, when he was closed, so Jack arranged a scheme to deliver them and still get some sleep. As his room was on the second floor, Jack attached a rope to his leg and dangled one end out of the window. The railroader, coming for his lunch, gave the rope a tug and Jack would awake, drop a lunch out of the window then jump back into bed.

One night, a bum got off a freight train and wandered out onto Island Avenue. He spotted the rope hanging out the window, took a quick run, grabbed the rope and began to swing on it. Jack was dragged to the window where he saved himself from falling by clinging to the frame.

Jack sold his restaurant and worked as night conductor on the Western Avenue car line, becoming well known to the young blades of the day on their way to and from dances.

When he retired from the car line, Jack went to Notre Dame, Indiana, and joined the Brothers, taking the name of Brother Mathias. He died some years ago and now sleeps peacefully in the monastery cemetery.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### Trip to Canada

My wife's mother was of German extraction and could scarcely speak English. Naturally, they spoke German at home. I became interested in the language and began to study it. My wife assisted by carrying on conversations with me.

In 1914, my sister Flavia was being professed at Montreal in the Sisters of the Holy Name and we went there for the ceremony. We took our daughter Anna, then a baby, with us.

After the profession ceremony, we visited awhile with Flavia then went sightseeing in Montreal, finally taking the night boat to Quebec. After strolling around the city, we boarded the train for Buffalo.

As usual, while travelling together, we were speaking German. Someone must have reported us for suddenly a man, identifying himself as a police officer, stopped at our seat and began questioning us. He asked where we lived, where the

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baby was born and various other questions. He then left.

After the train made several more stops another police officer came to our seat and began asking questions about Pittsburgh, a city with which he was familiar. These we were able to answer satisfactorily. He then asked why we were speaking German. We told him. He said it made people suspicious to hear strangers speaking German during war time and advised us to converse in English for the remainder of our homeward journey.

## CHAPTER XIX

### Bob Barr and Governor Cox

My cousin Bob Barr, from Akron, Ohio, and Governor Cox of Florida were alike as identical twins. It was quite common for people on the street to come up to Bob and address him as "Governor."

In 1928, my mother was stricken with a fatal illness and we departed immediately for Jacksonville, Florida, and then on to San Antonio for the funeral and burial in the family plot. When we returned to Jacksonville, my wife arranged to stay a few days longer and drive back to Pittsburgh with Uncle Edward Behe.

Well, Bob and I left by train, arriving in Washington on the day before Herbert Hoover's inauguration. When we got off the train the reception committee, mistaking Bob for Governor Cox, happily marched us to a carriage and whisked us off to fine rooms in the Mayflower Hotel. From there, we were grandly escorted to the grill room where we were provided with champagne and an elegant meal. When we were full, we quietly retired from the festivities, went back to the railway station and boarded the train for Pittsburgh.

## CHAPTER XX

### Riot in Woods Run

I will close with one of my own adventures which may be of interest. Some seventy years ago John Dillon had a saloon at the end of Cass Avenue. Most of his customers were Slovak but a few of the boys from Manchester would visit Dillon's place from time to time. One evening one of our boys got into a fight with one of the Slovaks and gave him a good licking. As we passed an alley going home, a crowd of Slovaks jumped us and, isolating the lad who had been fighting, forced him into the alley. He finally broke away from them and ran through a yard into Cass Avenue. Then he went to a barber shop to clean up. He found out what a narrow escape he had, for the overcoat he was wearing was badly slashed, although the knife had only given him a slight cut on the arm.

There was a character named Hanrahan—nicknamed "The Wise Guy"—who frequented Dillon's. He asked our friend

if he knew where the Slovaks lived who had attacked him. He said yes and the Wise Guy went out and returned shortly with a three by three inch timber, whittled to a handle at one end. We went to the house which was one of a row, and looked through a window. The Slovaks had a keg of beer on the table and were seated around it drinking. The Wise Guy told us to get cobblestones. As he was battering down the door, we were to heave the stones through the windows.

No sooner said than done and quickly Slovaks were pouring from the house. We ran up the street to Cass Avenue and smack into Little Mike the cop. However, the Wise Guy had the answer—he told Little Mike that the Slovaks were staging a riot. Little Mike said, "I can't handle this thing myself, so I must deputize you boys to help me." Back we went and sent fifteen of them to jail in the paddy wagon. The next morning the magistrate sentenced them to thirty days in the workhouse for inciting a riot.

Another time, several of us were returning home from an evening at Dillon's and, upon passing a dark spot, heard and saw two men fighting on the ground, one on top of the other. The odd part was that the man on top was screaming in pain. One of my friends pulled him from his adversary. The man on the ground then got up and spit out the other man's ear—which he had bitten off.

## CHAPTER XXI

### Vacation In Coyleville

When I was about 12 years old, (1893), Father Henry McEvoy, visiting our home, suggested that I spend two weeks with him at Coyleville, Pennsylvania, where he was Pastor of Saint John's Church. The church was actually located two miles from the town. Well, I was shipped off to him, via The Allegheny Valley Railroad, and had to walk four miles from The Great Belt Railroad Station. The man of all work, Andy McBride, had been instructed to meet me at Great Belt, but forgot, and he received a sound dressing down from Father McEvoy.

After dinner the first evening, Father McEvoy laid out a daily schedule as follows: mornings, up at six o'clock and serve Mass for Father McEvoy. There was a bath tub located in a shed, adjoining the side of the Rectory. Next, it was my job to pump this tub full of water. Father McEvoy would get in the tub and, afterward, would go out in the yard wearing shorts and warm up by throwing a cannonball around. Later, I had to fill the tub for myself and go through the same procedure after which I walked two miles to his brother, James, for milk, then recreation until lunch. After lunch I walked to Coyleville for the mail. After the mail was delivered to Father McEvoy I was free until dinner. Following dinner was religious reading, and finally, night prayers and to bed at nine o'clock.

The first time at recreation, I noticed a grindstone mounted in a frame next to the stable. I tried turning it

with the treadle attached, however, the frame was badly rotted and consequently collapsed. The grindstone rolled across the lawn, hit a tree and broke in two. After dinner in the evening, Father McEvoy asked me how the grindstone was broken. I told him and Father merely remarked I would have to be more careful in handling church property.

There was a well dug in front of the Church, with a windlass and a rope attached to a copper kettle used for watering horses. Curious about the arrangement, I let the kettle down into the well, filled it with water and drew it to the top. When I tried to draw it over the edge of the well curb, it slipped out of my hands, the rope broke, and the kettle dropped to the bottom. This time, Father McEvoy was very angry and threatened me with a thrashing if any more damage was done to church property.

I had been thinking for some time about this job of pumping two tubs of water every morning. So one evening, I quietly pumped the tub full. In the morning, I rattled the pump for a while, then told Father McEvoy the tub was ready. Unfortunately, during the night, two kittens had fallen into the tub and drowned. When Father got into the tub and found the kittens, he let out a yell. I thought for sure the promised thrashing was coming, but it didn't. Andy McBride had to pump the water after that occurrence. After breakfast each morning, Andy had to take me to his home and bring me back at bed time.

The most embarrassing incident in my life occurred when I was about 22 years old, (1903). John Connolly had asked me to serve as groom's man at his marriage with Olive Evans. About a week before the ceremony, Mrs. Evans had a gathering at her house, consisting of relatives and friends. She lived on a steep hill leading off Perrysville Avenue. I had never met John's mother before the gathering. The night of the affair there was a sleet storm and the streets were very slippery. I left the trolley car at Perrysville Avenue and started down the steep street, slipping, sliding and finally, landing against a telephone pole in front of the house. While I was holding on to the pole, a large, fat woman started down the street and fell on her back and slid, twisting and turning. There was nothing I could do for her as she slid further down the street out of reach. I went into the house and told them of the amusing affair. While they were all laughing about it the doorbell rang and a policeman brought the fat woman into the house. She was John Connolly's mother.

The most interesting event in my life occurred some forty years ago. Father Francis X. Foley went to New York to take a post-graduate course at Columbia University. Before Father left he told me he was to live with Monsignor John P. Chidwick, the former chaplain of the battleship Maine, sunk in Havana Harbor. This incident was one of the causes of the war with Spain. Father invited me to visit him the next time I was in New York. A few weeks later I had business in New York. I called on Father and was

introduced to the Monsignor. The Monsignor told me that he had gone ashore to meet some friends and thus escaped the explosion which killed so many of the sailors. The Monsignor showed me the remains of his chalice and paten and also his vestments which had been recovered from the vessel. The Monsignor was an accomplished raconteur, and told us many incidents of his life in the Navy.



#### McMULLEN COAT OF ARMS



Blazon or description of McMullen Coat of Arms: Argent on a mount with an oak tree proper perched thereon a falcon.

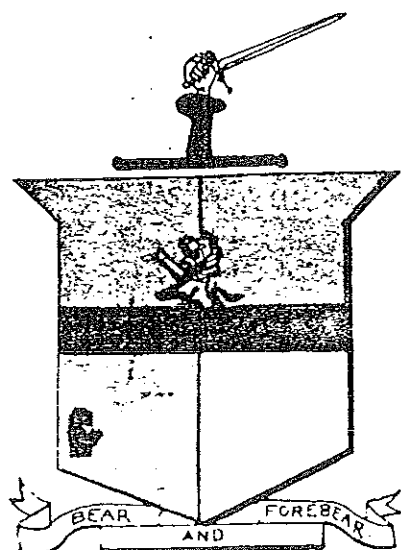
This means the upper part of shield is Silver, the lower part Green. The oak tree Green, with falcon perched thereon, between in base, two cross crosslets.

The crosslets, Red, is the kind used by the Crusader in his journeys to the Holy City. Whenever he stopped to rest, he struck the sharp-

ened end into the ground and then he worshipped. The elephant is the charge upon which the Knight rode.

The motto "CONN GAN AN" means "WISDOM WITHOUT BLEMISH."

## McAVEY COAT OF ARMS



Blazon or description of McAvey Coat of Arms: Per fess azure and per pale or and ermine, a fess gules, issuant therefrom a demi-lion argent, in the dexter base a dexter hand coupé at the wrist of the fourth.

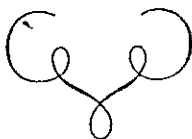
This means the upper part of the Shield is Blue, the lower left (as you look at the arms) Gold, the lower right (as you look at the arms) Ermine. The broad band through the middle (or Fess) is Red. The hand coupé at the wrist (cut off at the wrist) is the right hand and is in the fourth color mentioned - Gules (or Red). Of

course, dexter means right and if one were wearing the shield the hand would be in the dexter or right base rather than, as it appears from looking at a picture, in the left base. The demi-lion (half lion) is Silver.

Crest of the McAvey Arms: A cubit arm erect, vested gules cuffed ermine, in the hand a sword proper.

It means the arm is in a Red sleeve with an Ermine cuff (Ermine is a Gold Fur with Black spots). A sword proper means that it would be depicted in its true shape and natural colour.

Motto: BEAR AND FOREBEAR.



#### TANK CAR EXPLOSION

While the accident described herein occurred in the Sheraden Railroad Yards, across the Ohio River from Manchester, some of the dead and injured resided in the Manchester area; so the catastrophe is worthy of mention in this history.

On May 12, 1902, a shifting engine collided with a tank car train causing several of the tank cars to be derailed. One of the tank cars, loaded with oil, caught fire and resulted in a tremendous blaze which attracted many spectators who gathered on the hillsides above the conflagration. After awhile, as the flames were consuming the contents of each car, a gasoline tank car exploded, showering the spectators with burning gasoline.

I was leaving home, on Island Avenue, Manchester, at the moment the gasoline exploded and had an excellent view at a safe distance. The explosion belched forth huge volumes of fire, smoke and flaming gasoline and appeared in the sky, to a height of about 300 feet, in the resemblance of a huge luminous umbrella. At the acme of its ascent, the burning gasoline spread out and showered its destruction upon the spectators. It was reported that twenty-two persons were killed, others died later from severe burns, and two hundred were injured.

#### TRAGEDY ON THE NORTH SIDE

Another tragic occurrence took place on November 4, 1927, at about 10 A.M. Three gigantic steel tanks, built to store enormous quantities of natural gas, stood on Rebecca Street, near Ridge Avenue, on the North Side. The exterior of the tanks was being prepared for painting by workmen who were using gasoline blow torches to burn off rust and grease spots. Somehow, a torch set-off the contents of one of the tanks which in turn exploded the other two tanks. The resulting concussions rocked the City of Pittsburgh and the surrounding suburbs.

The fatalities numbered thirty workmen and four hundred fifty persons injured who were residents in nearby dwellings. The property damage amounted to ten million dollars.

Erratum Page 30. This chapter is written as if the visit to Washington was made in 1928. However, it actually occurred in 1929 when Bob Barr and I were visiting in Florida. President Hoover was inaugurated March 4, 1929.

George Swetnam, writer of special articles for the Pittsburgh Press, spent much time on research into the history of Manchester and Woods Run, so that this book should be as complete as possible; for which the author is grateful.



# CATHOLIC TRAILS WEST

## *The Founding Catholic Families of Pennsylvania*

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### VOLUME 2

Sacred Heart Chapel, Conewago (1719-20)  
St. Paul's Church, Cosheshtoppen (1741)  
St. Mary's Church, Lancaster (1742)  
St. Vincent's Church, Westmoreland County (1790)  
St. Michael's Church, Loretto (1799)

By  
Edmund Adams  
and  
Barbara Brady O'Keefe



JOHN  
m. Abigail Coleman, 17 Aug 1817  
c. Henry; Mathias; John; William; Solomon; Samuel (1820-1831)

BEER  
CHRISTIAN  
m. Mary Magdalen ---  
c. Adam; William; Juliana; Henry; Margaret; Demetrius Aug. (1816-1831)

BECKER/BECHER  
JOHN  
1808-12 Tax List  
1807 Gallitzin Petition  
1810 Allegheny Twp, Cambria Co Census  
m. Elizabeth Little/Klein at Conewago, 2 May 1802  
1810 Pascal Communion  
1811 Pascal Confession  
p. William and Catherine Klein/Kline  
c. Henry, b 1803; John, b 1804; Mary, b 1806; Mary Catherine, b 1808; Mary Elizabeth, b 1811

BECHT  
PHILIP  
m. Mary ---  
c. Elizabeth, b 1807

BEHE  
EMANUEL  
b. Bavaria, Germany  
d. 1837  
1810 Allegheny Twp, Cambria Co Census  
1808-15 Tax List  
1813 Pascal Confession  
m. Mary Ann ---  
1811 Pascal Confession  
1813 Pascal Confession  
c. Joseph, b 1780, Germany; Susan/Susannah, b 1780, Germany; Anthony, b 1788, Germany; Mathias/Matthew b 4 May 1790; Conrad, b 1796, Marie; Mary

ANTHONY, son of Emmanuel and Mary Ann  
b. 1780, Bavaria, Germany  
d. Munster, Cambria Co, PA  
1807 Gallitzin Petition  
1811, 1813 Pascal Confession  
m. Mary Noel at Loretto, 14 Sep 1813  
b. 1793  
p. Nicholas and Elizabeth Kuhn Noel?  
c. Mary, b 1818; Elizabeth, b 1819; Veronica, b 1821

CONRAD, son of Emmanuel and Mary Ann  
b. 1796  
d. 9 June 1866  
m. Elizabeth Noel 26 Oct 1817  
p. Nicholas and Elizabeth Kuhns Noel?  
c. Henry; William; Jos. Conrad; Nicholas (1820-1838)

MATHIAS, son of Emmanuel and Mary Ann  
b. 4 May 1790  
d. 4 Nov 1882  
m. Catharine Kaylor, 26 Mar 1818  
b. 14 Feb 1795  
d. 16 Oct 1866  
p. Peter and Elizabeth Adams Kaylor?  
c. James; Elias, b 3 Nov 1820; Elizabeth Ann; John; Mary Ann; Joseph; Henry; Mary Magdalene; Francis Elias; Luke (1819-1838)

BENDEN/BANDON  
JOHN  
1813 Pascal Confession

