



# Saint Mary's Church

Hamburg, Iowa

1874 - 1974

*Hamburg Reporter*

*6/17/1976*

## **St. Mary's parish history published**

Parishioners of St. Mary's Church here have completed a centennial history of their parish, the result of almost two years of research. The book's publication this month is the last event marking the parish's centennial year, 1974-1975.

The centennial book throws new light on the history of the Hamburg-Sidney area before the arrival of Augustus Borchers, Hamburg's founder. In the 1830's, long before Borchers settled here, the Hamburg area was populated by French Canadian trappers and traders who came to trade their furs with the Indians.

These frontiersmen left Canada during the Canadian Rebellion (1836) and settled along the Nishna-botna's east bank at a place which came to be known as French Village. At the time a good share of Fremont County was a part of the State of Missouri.

The first inhabitants of French Village were Joseph Brenard and Simon Fleurie. These were later joined by Claude Gregoire, Jean Baptiste Lamoureaux, Louis Trudeau, Clement Lamoureaux and other French-speaking traders. Clement Lamoureaux's name appeared among the incorporators of the City of Hamburg in 1867. Lamoureaux's daughter Marie married A.D. Richards, owner of the first clothing store in Hamburg.

Besides portraying an accurate account of the history of St. Mary's Church, the book delves into some interesting and humorous facts about some of the old families of Hamburg and later settlers who farmed in the area. It is a real collector's item in this bicentennial year.

TN-2120163

*Saint Mary's Church*

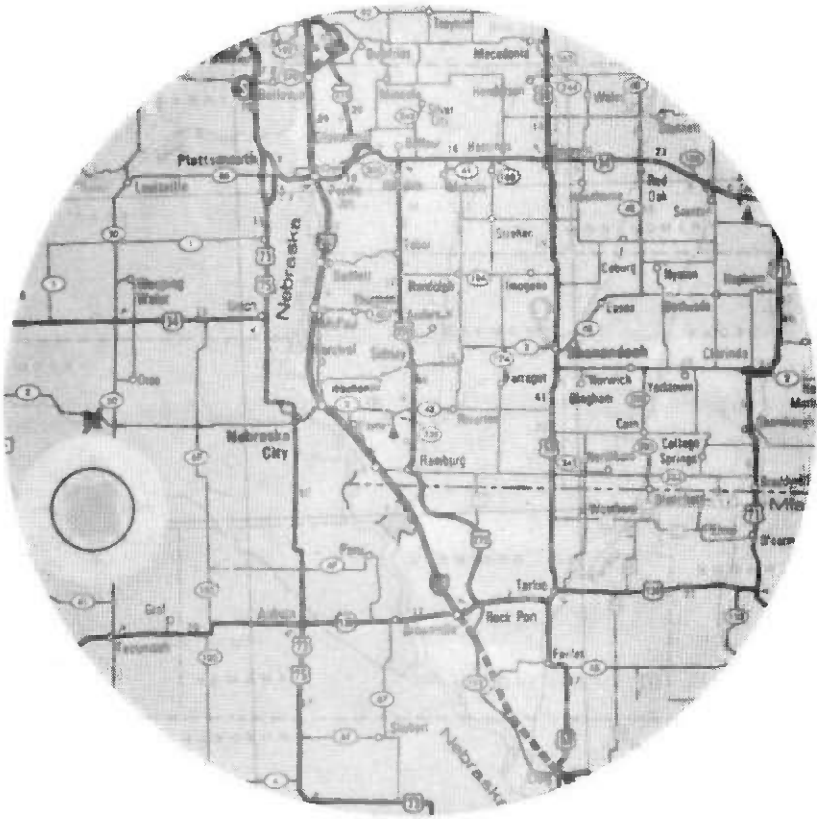
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1874 - 1974

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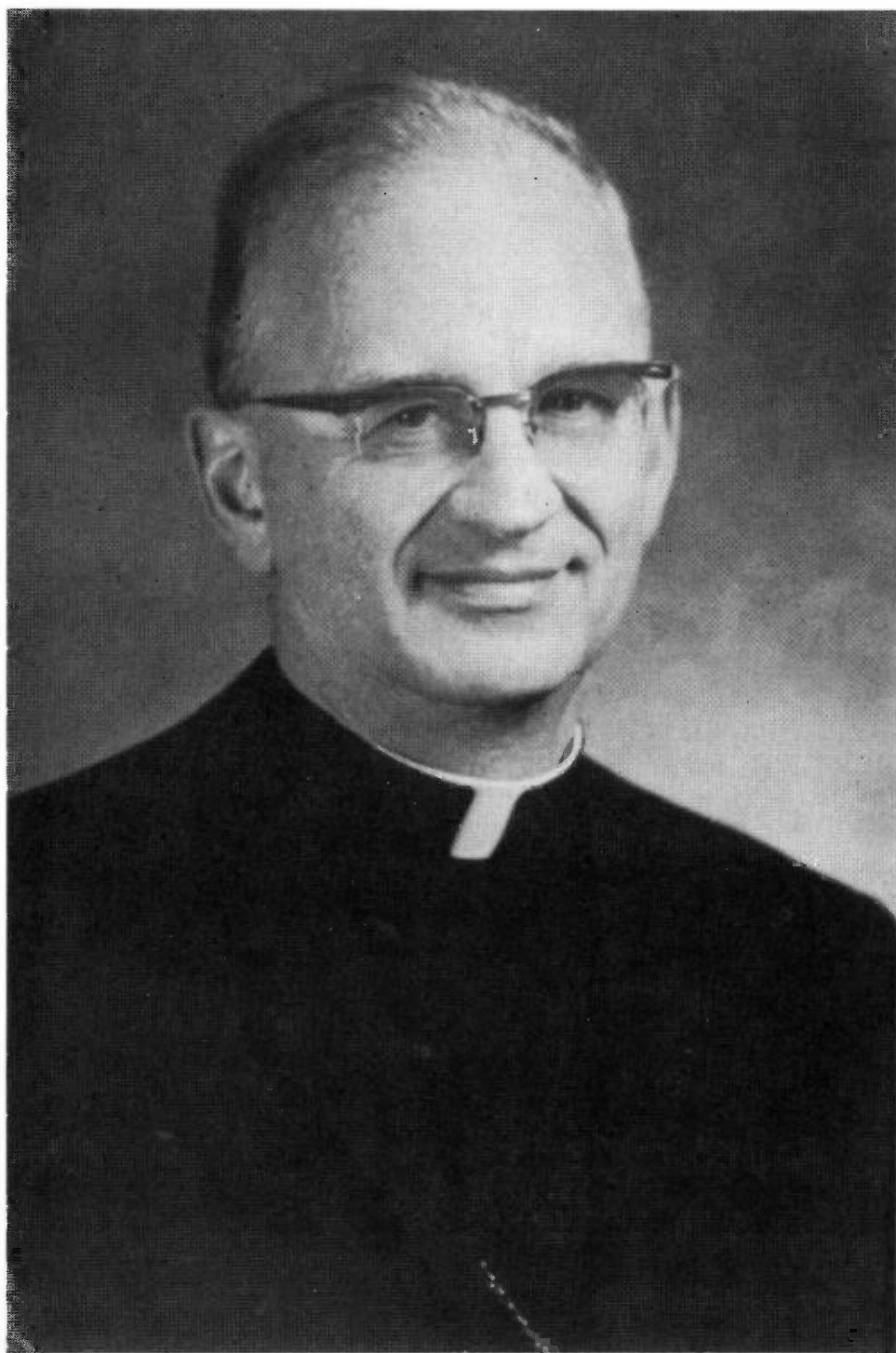


PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS TO ALL CREATION  
(Mark 16)

69102124



HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI



Most Reverend Maurice J. Dingman  
Bishop of Des Moines



THE CHANCERY

## DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

P. O. BOX 1816 • 2910 GRAND AVENUE • DES MOINES, IOWA 50306

St. Mary's Church  
1306 Washington  
Hamburg, Iowa 50640

My Dear Parishioners of St. Mary's:

It is a pleasure for me to congratulate you on the commemoration of your Centennial year as a parish. I recall the beautiful celebration which opened your Centennial year on December 8, 1974. I was most pleased to be in Hamburg on that occasion and share in the joy of that important event. It was obvious to me that such a fine celebration was the result of many hours of preparation on the part of many parishioners.

I am happy to learn of the interest you have taken in the history of your parish as represented by the publication of your centennial history book. I believe it is important to know and value our past, for this leads us to cherish the ideals that previous generations have passed on to us.

Let me encourage you to continue your efforts to be witnesses for Christ in Fremont County and spread the Good News of God's Love for all men.

Working with you to build up the People of God in our Diocese, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Maurice J. Dingman  
Bishop of Des Moines

## Pastors of St. Mary's Parish

Rev. Frederick W. Pape .....	1874-1876
Rev. Gerald M. Stack .....	1876-1881
Rev. John J. Ryan .....	1882-1884
Rev. Peter H. Clarke .....	1884-1885
Rev. John A. Cook .....	1885-1896
Rev. James W. Bulger .....	1896-1906
Rev. George J. Toher .....	1906-1908
Rev. Edmund S. Murphy .....	1908-1910
Rev. Daniel Sheehy .....	1911-1916
Rev. William Treacy .....	1916-1918
Rev. Edmond O'Donnell .....	1918-1936
Rev. Dennis J. Mangan .....	1936-1944
Rev. Patrick A. Flavin .....	1944-1955
Rev. Othmar L. Kaufman .....	1955-1961
Rev. John E. Cunningham .....	1961-1962
Rev. Raphael O'Malley, O. S. B. ....	1962-1966
Rev. John Nemmers .....	1966-1968
Rev. Msgr. Peter Schmitz .....	1968-1971
Rev. Gordon Gittins .....	1971-1973
Rev. Jacob Weiss .....	1973-1974
Rev. James C. Polich .....	1974-

## Administrators or Temporary Assignments

Rev. Michael M. Tierney .....	Spring, 1876
Rev. John L. Garner .....	Summer and Fall, 1881
Rev. William M. Williams .....	Spring, 1885
Rev. John Scherf .....	Spring and Summer, 1908
Rev. Michael J. O'Connor .....	Fall, 1918
Rev. Francis Doyle .....	Summer, 1925
Rev. Joseph Ryan .....	Spring, 1974



## INTRODUCTION

The publication of this book coincides with the close of the centennial observance of St. Mary's Church. It features some of the highlights of the parish's life over the last hundred years.

There has been a conscious attempt to enlarge the appeal of this book to an audience beyond the local Catholic population. That is why it contains information of interest to the general public, as well as information about the beginnings of other parishes of the Shenandoah Region, all of which were missions of our parish at one time.

This volume is divided into three parts. Part One furnishes background information on people and events leading up to the establishment of St. Mary's Parish in 1874. Part Two begins with the arrival of Father Frederick Pape, the first pastor, and closes with the departure of Father Treacy. Part Three opens with the pastorate of Father Edmond O'Donnell in 1918 and brings us to the present day, including the centennial celebration of 1974. Overall, the tenure of pastors provides a convenient way of subdividing the hundred year history.

Of special interest is the section on the French Canadian settlers who came to the Hamburg area in the 1830's and 1840's. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that these first Catholics of the area are the reason why the parish was founded as early as 1874. Their requests for a church and a priest gave impetus to the movement to begin a parish here. For this information we are especially indebted to Walter Farwell of Tipton, Iowa, who has devoted time to researching this interesting topic. We are grateful as well for the source material furnished by the Nebraska and South Dakota Historical Societies.

This book is really the work of many hands. While it would not be possible to name all those who helped in preparing it, special recognition should be given to Mary Ann Athen, who chaired the Centennial Book Committee and researched old newspapers and county records. Mable Hilger's information on the Burkhiser brothers and her work in finding pictures deserves special credit as well.

Some of the pictures of former pastors came from Fran Logan of Glenwood. Pictures obtained by Olive Roup were a valuable find. The family pictures of Raymond and Geneva Hilger, Martin and Merle Hein and Mildred Duncan were a most welcome addition. Finally, all the parishioners who contributed pictures and other information vital to the book can be assured of our most sincere thanks.

Rev. James Polich, Pastor  
St. Mary's Church  
Hamburg, Iowa  
December 8, 1975

# *History of St. Mary's Parish*

## PART ONE

### THE OLDEN DAYS

#### La Chauve Prairie

Those who would assume that early settlement of the Hamburg area began with the arrival of Augustus Borchers in 1847 may be surprised to find a wealth of historical evidence that suggests otherwise. In the late 1700's, more than fifty years before Borchers set foot in Hamburg, French voyageurs on the Missouri had charted the area and befriended its red-skinned inhabitants.

The Lewis and Clark Journal entry for July 18, 1804 states that the French at that time were calling the Missouri Valley around present Hamburg "La chauve prairie (the Bald Pated Prairie)." Lewis and Clark in turn called the bluffs at Hamburg the "Bald Pated Hills."

In the early 1800's the landing area for steamboats and other rivercraft around Hamburg was known as The Narrows, a passageway where boats could put in without becoming entrapped in sand and mud. In 1819 when the S. H. Long Expedition reached the Narrows, Long wrote:

... and arrived Sept. 7, 1819 at the Grand Pass. Here the Nishnebottona, a beautiful river about sixty yards wide, approaches within one hundred and fifty yards of the Missouri, being separated from it by a sandy prairie, rising scarcely twenty feet above the surface of the water. After pursuing for a short distance a parallel course, the two rivers diverge, and the Nishnebottona meanders along the side of the Missouri Valley, about sixty miles to its confluence with the latter river. From this point is a pleasing view of the hills called the Baldpated Prairie, stretching along the north-eastern side of the Nishnebottona, and diminished to the size of anthills in the distant perspective.

The popular name for the landing site on the Missouri was Lewis' Landing. From this point goods brought by steamboat from St. Louis and New Orleans were carried inland and distributed to the Indians and settlers living in that part of the Louisiana Purchase Territory. This area formed the southwest corner of what became the State of Iowa in 1846.

No one today knows the exact location of Lewis' Landing, but it probably was situated about a mile south of the present Iowa-Missouri border. People today find it hard to believe that the Missouri River once bayed in this closely to the city of Hamburg. But there is no doubt that the river has changed course because of various factors, not the least of which was the earthquake of 1867. On May 3, 1867 the Nebraska City News reported:

The shock of another earthquake was felt in Nebraska City about 3 o'clock this morning. It was of longer duration and more violent than the one on Wednesday last; bedsteads were moved from their position, stove pipes tumbled down, and houses were rocked to and fro like a ship in a heavy sea.

This series of tremors probably set the stage for what would happen on the weekend of July 5, 1867 when the headlines of the same newspaper screamed, MISSOURI RIVER SHORTENS ITSELF TWENTY MILES!

The Great Bend in the Missouri River above the Peru Landing has been abolished. On Friday evening July 5, 1867, the waters made a grand rush through the narrow neck of land that connected the peninsula with the mainland. Immediately the entire volume of the Missouri began sweeping through the new channel with the roar of many waters. The "hoarse rough torrent" was distinctly heard at a distance of some miles . . . We shall say more hereafter. At present St. Louis is twenty miles nearer Nebraska City than it was five days ago.

Up the valley from Lewis' Landing where Hamburg is situated, along where Main Street now runs, there was a swampy area overgrown with rosin weeds and cattails "thick and rank and tall as a man." This willow slough was so large and thickly sown during summer and fall that passage through it was almost impossible. To this uninviting locality came Augustus Borchers in 1847.

### Heinrich Augustus Borchers

Heinrich Augustus Borchers, son of Frederick Wilhelm and Amelia Steffen Borchers was born in Hanover, Germany on August 28, 1817. The reasons behind Borchers' decision to leave Germany and come to the United States are obscure. Local legend has it that he came to the New World to "seek his fortune." He arrived in the United States in 1837, at the age of 20.

Employed for two years in a store in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1839 Borchers moved to Weston, Platte County, Missouri, a short distance from St. Joseph. For the next nine years he engaged in the mercantile and trading business with an older brother, George.

Borchers served in the army for several years and after receiving an honorable discharge at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, he moved to Linden in Atchison County, Missouri, then on to Sidney, where he was a merchant for several years after 1850. Dissatisfied with affairs there, and expressing a desire to be located "nearer the large German Lutheran settlement between the Missouri border and Rock Port," Mr. Borchers decided to settle near Lewis' Landing. On June 12, 1857 he married Rosamond Nuckolls. The Borchers had three daughters and two sons and spent the remainder of their lives in Hamburg.

Early in his marriage Augustus Borchers purchased some land north of Lewis' Landing and opened a general store at the foot of the bluff where Hamburg High School now stands. Late in the year 1858 the entire area was surveyed and the borders of a city were marked off by Col. William Dewey, a West Point-trained surveyor. The original proprietors of the town were Heinrich Augustus Borchers, Job Matthews, A. Travis, Henry Brumback, Benjamin Rector, and A. F. Harvey. Under the influence of Borchers, the town was christened Hamburg in honor of his birthplace, the first free city of "Der Vaterland."

The first residence of the new city was that of Mr. Borchers. Aside from Borchers' general store, the first business house in the town was a two-story log building erected and occupied by Jacob McKissick in 1858.

With more settlers moving into the area, the new town gradually increased in importance. Lewis' Landing was now called Hamburg Landing.

To this point goods were shipped by steamboat from eastern markets for distribution in southwest Iowa and southeast Nebraska. Thus the town became a strategic trading point.

On April 1, 1867 the town of Hamburg was legally incorporated. In December of the same year the first railroad, the Kansas City, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs line was connected to the city. The railroad was the final stroke of good fortune for a town that wanted to expand. An 1876 description of Hamburg from the famous Lingenfelter History gives a fairly complete picture of the railroad's contribution to Hamburg's growth.

Hamburg is located in the southern portion of the county, at the junction of the St. Joe and Council Bluffs with the Red Oak branch of the B. & M. railroad. It has a population of near 3,000 people. It has five hotels, one foundry, one brewery, two steam flouring mills, seven dry good stores, eleven grocery stores, two clothing stores, six ministers of the gospel, six churches, two hardware stores, three stores of agricultural implements, three photograph galleries, four meat markets, three drug stores, two bakeries, six doctors, nine lawyers, one jeweler, three millinery stores, two machine shops, one malt house, one soda factory, one pottery, two steam elevators, two tailors, one butter packer, two livery stables, two wagon shops, 5 blacksmith shops, four carpenters, two music dealers, ten saloons, one marble works, two railroad depots, three telegraph offices, two express offices, two newspapers, two insurance agents, two tin shops, two banks, one ice dealer, six teachers, three brick yards, one Masonic lodge, one Masonic chapter, one Odd Fellows' Lodge, one Odd Fellows' Encampment, one Lodge United Workmen, two lumber yards, at which are annually sold \$50,000 worth each; one Catholic convent, four primary district schools, and one new brick high school 70 x 70 feet, three stories high, with twelve rooms, costing when completed \$30,000.

This high school is under Prof. Beard, a graduate of Hamilton College, at a salary of \$100 per month. The other teachers in the subordinate departments are Miss Alice Williams, Miss Ida Edmonds, Miss Eva Danforth, Miss Honn, and Miss Read, each at \$42.50 per month. Children attending school 425, of school age 624 in district. This place has loafers, none; politicians, many.

The description of Hamburg as a city of "near 3,000" is somewhat exaggerated. In 1875 Hamburg's population was only 2,058; in 1880 it was 2,072.

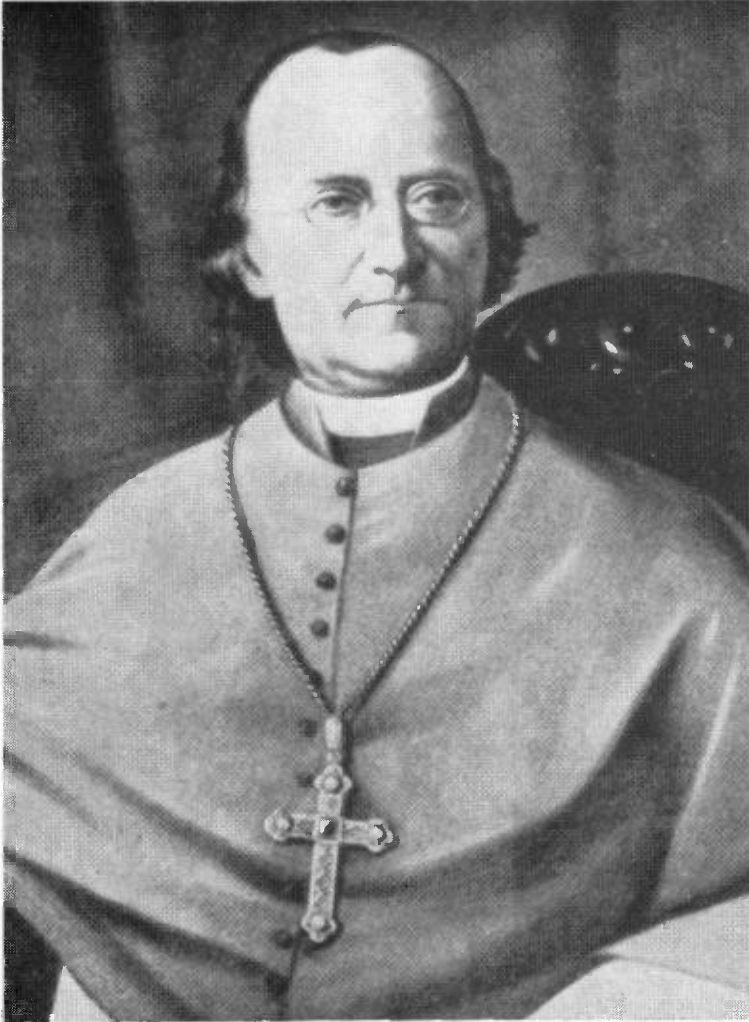
## The Catholic Church in Iowa

The history of the Catholic Church in southwest Iowa begins not with the founding of St. Mary's Parish in 1874, but with two incidents that occurred in the 1830's, fully a decade before Augustus Borchers came to Hamburg. Both events laid the groundwork for the development of the Catholic Church in Iowa.

The first event of importance to the church in all of Iowa was the appointment of Rev. Matthias Loras as the first bishop of Dubuque in 1837. The second event which affected the future of the Hamburg church in particular was the emigration of French-Canadian trappers who came to the

Hamburg area in the 1830's. These Canadians were fervent Catholics whose spiritual needs must occasionally have been tended by the French Jesuits who came to Council Bluffs in 1838.

The very first diocese established in the United States was Baltimore, erected in 1789 under Bishop John Carroll. But this diocese extended only to the Mississippi River. Iowa and the land upon which St. Mary's of Hamburg would be built was included in the diocese of New Orleans established in 1790. In 1826 the Holy Father, Pope Leo XII, created the diocese of St. Louis. Then in July 1837 Father Matthias Loras of Mobile became the first bishop of Dubuque, whose sprawling diocese included the region west of the Mississippi now covered by Iowa, Minnesota and part of the Dakotas.



Bishop Matthias Loras  
First Bishop of Iowa

### **Bishop Matthias Loras**

Born and raised in France, Bishop-elect Loras did not go directly to his new diocese. Instead he went to visit Pope Pius VIII in Rome, then he toured

France in hopes of raising money for his mission diocese and finding priests who would accompany him to the United States. He was able to find two priests and four students.

In October, 1838 in the company of Fathers Jean Pelamorgues and Joseph Cretin, and seminarians Augustin Ravoux, Lucien Galtier, J. Causse and R. Petiot, Bishop Loras arrived in New York on his return trip. By April 19 of the following year he reached Dubuque, his see city. In 1839 there were only three churches and one mission in the whole of Bishop Loras' territory: St. Raphael in Dubuque, completed by the Dominican Father Mazuchelli in 1835, St. Anthony in Davenport, St. James in Lee County, and a Jesuit mission begun at Council Bluffs in 1838.

In 1839 Bishop Loras was installed in the new St. Raphael's Cathedral. He was then forty-five, having spent twenty years in the ministry. His robust health and his powers of oratory stood him in good stead for the huge tasks facing him in his far-flung diocese. Under his administration, new churches sprang up at Fort Madison, Burlington, Keokuk, Bellevue, Muscatine and at other points along the Mississippi River. Later as helpers increased, he sent priests into the interior, organizing churches in Ottumwa, Iowa City, Fort Des Moines, Fort Dodge and other towns. Worn out by his apostolic labors, Bishop Loras died on February 19, 1858, the year that Hamburg was incorporated as a city.

Bishop Loras was succeeded by Bishop Clement Smyth, who died on September 22, 1865, and who in turn was succeeded by Bishop John Hennessey, who became the first Archbishop of Dubuque. The actual beginning of St. Mary's Church, Hamburg, is traced to this third bishop of Dubuque who sent Father Frederick Pape to Hamburg in 1874.

### Council Bluffs or Davenport?

An interesting dispute occurred during the years 1862 to 1881. The controversy centered around the matter of dividing the Dubuque diocese. As early as 1862 Bishop Clement Smyth, when making his official visit to Rome, urged the Holy See to make another division in his diocese. In 1865, shortly after the death of Bishop Smyth, Archbishop Peter Kenrick of St. Louis wrote to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith urging the creation of a new diocese in Iowa. But no decision was forthcoming.

Again in 1870 this matter was discussed before the Congregation when Bishop Hennessey was in Rome for Vatican Council I. Bishop Hennessey and his secretary, Father Pelamorgues, argued for Davenport as the seat of the new diocese. They reasoned that there were now many parishes in southeast Iowa, while southwest Iowa was hardly more than mission territory. But several bishops of the St. Louis Province saw Council Bluffs as the ideal site for a new diocese. They considered it more strategic to have the seat of one diocese in the northeast corner and another in the southwest corner of the State. They saw Council Bluffs as the headquarters for the Church's eventual expansion to the West.

The matter came up again in 1875 when two petitions were sent to Rome — one from the bishops of the St. Louis Province urging the cause of Council Bluffs, the other from priests in Davenport representing the claims of their city. Finally in 1880 Pope Leo XIII considered the matter personally, after the Davenport priests again petitioned Rome. The decision came early in May, 1881: the second diocese in Iowa was to be the diocese of Davenport, with Rev. John McMullen from Chicago as its first bishop. Had Council

Bluffs been chosen as the seat of the new diocese, the subsequent history of St. Mary's Parish in Hamburg would certainly have taken a different course.

## **FRENCH VILLAGE: A LA RECHERCHE DU TEMPS PERDU**

Long before St. Mary's Church was founded in 1874, the closest resemblance to a Catholic parish was French Village. French Village was a collection of Canadian trappers and traders who came to the Hamburg area in the eighteen thirties to trade their furs with the Indians. Originally the village overlooked the close proximity of the Missouri and Nishnabotna Rivers. After the Missouri River changed course on July 5, 1867, the village was seven miles from the once wide Missouri.

French Village lay along the east side of the Nishnabotna River, toward the northeast corner of present Hamburg. It was a four mile stretch from Clode Gegare's home two miles north of the state line down to Joseph Brenard's Ferry and Simon Fleurie's residence, about two miles south of the Iowa-Missouri border. The area to the northeast included a Mormon settlement and McKissick's Grove.

### **Joseph Brenard and Simon Fleurie**

The first occupants of French Village were Joseph Brenard and Simon Fleurie who came from Canada during the Canadian Rebellion in 1836. Land entries were made at Plattsburg, Missouri. At that time the south half of Fremont County had long been considered part of Missouri. Thus many early records of today's Fremont County are in the Holt County Courthouse in Oregon, Missouri.

Joseph Bernard is an intriguing figure in the short history of French Village. He was the founder of French Village and certainly one of its most valuable citizens. In 1832 and 1833 he was employed by the government as a blacksmith striker for the Omaha, Otoe and Missouri Indians. By 1836 and 1837 he must have been farming around The Narrows, for in those years he was paid for corn he had furnished the Indians.

Brenard's Ferry and Home were situated in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of S3 T66 R42, just a mile south of present Hamburg on the east side of the Nishnabotna River. After settling in the area Brenard married an Otoe Indian named Miampema. Brenard must have enjoyed a pleasant relationship with the Indians, who called him "Faw-Faw." His ferry was a much used crossing on the old Kanesville (Council Bluffs) military road.

Simon Fleurie was first employed by the government as a blacksmith for the Omaha Indians. When Bluffs Township was organized by Holt County in 1841, Fleurie's house overlooking The Narrows was the center of township elections until 1842. In 1843 township activity shifted across the present Iowa-Missouri border toward Austin, near Hunsaker's Ferry, and elections were held there. Simon Fleurie left French Village in the spring of 1850 and is said to have gone to Oregon.

### **French Village Grows**

By the 1840's the little French settlement on the Nishnabotna had grown to include the following: Clode Gegare, Louis Trudeau, Pierre Graivremont, Jean Baptiste Lamoureaux, Louis Cartier, Charles Chap de Lain, Joseph Velandres, Antoine Arsineau, Paul Parquette, Francois Benoist, T. S. Benoist, Joseph Merriville, Antoine Bruneau, Jean Fleurie, Charles Martin, Noah Seabeau, Maurice Langdeau, Caleb P. Lownes, Bresheel Breshear, Peter Livermore and Loius LaCroix. Also numbered among those French Villagers were

the family names of Antoin, Bibis, Giggars and Babis. Such well known Pottawattamie Indian names as LeClair, LaFrombois, Michael Barnabe, Theodore Grondais, and Lewis and Michael Willmott are found.

On December 28 and 29, 1850 Father Christian Hoecken visited French Village and described his impressions:

It is occupied almost exclusively by Canadians, by half-breeds, and a mixture of Indians united among themselves. I was received with much kindness, and employed Saturday and Sunday in confirming and strengthening them in the faith.

As soon as my arrival was known, the people collected on all sides, in order to secure to their children the grace of baptism. You can easily imagine what a consolation it was to me after the fatigues of the late journey. On examining the state of things, I found that those people needed instruction in regard to the sacrament of marriage. They listened to me with profound attention, and followed my advice on this point.

I baptized sixteen persons, among whom was one converted from Mormonism and one Sioux squaw. I gave the nuptial benediction to three couples. In the midst of a meeting held in a private house, the conversation fell on the construction of a village church; each one offered his services, and promised to approach the sacraments.

Father Christian Hoecken, along with other French-speaking Jesuits such as Father Pierre DeSmet, was probably not French by birth. During this time many Jesuits had fled persecution in Belgium and had chosen work in the American missions. The importance of Father Hoecken's testimony lies in the fact that even as early as 1850 the French Villagers had plans for erecting a parish church.

### Clement Lamoureux

A frequent visitor to French Village was Clement Lamoureux, a fur trader and freighter from St. Joseph, Missouri. Lamoureux would later become an important figure in the development of St. Mary's Parish.

Sometime before 1862, Clement Lamoureux married Louisa Bordeaux, daughter of James Bordeaux (1812-1878) and Huntkalutawin (the only daughter of Lone Dog, a chief among the Sisseton Santee Sioux). Lamoureux would often travel up the Missouri River to old Fort Kearney (Nebraska City) and then cross the plains to Denver, Laramie or even Salt Lake City, supervising his father-in-law's extensive business interests on the Nebraska Wyoming plains. It is known that in 1862 Lamoureux was over-seeing his father-in-law's trading post at Bordeaux on Horse Creek in Nebraska. In 1865 Clement and Louisa Lamoureux became permanent residents of French Village. In 1867 Clement Lamoureux's signature would appear on the petition for incorporating the City of Hamburg. In 1874 Lamoureux would serve on the building committee of the first St. Mary's Church.

Historians of Fremont County have consistently ignored the importance of French Village, even to the point of denying its existence. One 1881 account says: "It will be observed, however, that there were up to 1846 but two settlements — villages — in the county, one, and the largest, at Pleasant Grove, the other at McKissick's Grove." (Des Moines: History of Fremont County, Iowa, 1881, p. 511.)



The fact was that not only was French Village flourishing in the 1840's, but evidence suggests that these French Canadian villagers owned (by right of pre-emption) all of what is now the City of Hamburg and its environs. The historical picture of Hamburg's original settlement by hearty and courageous Anglo-Saxon pioneers is at best a myth.



James Bordeaux and his Indian wife Huntkalutawin

James Bordeaux and Huntkalutawin were the parents of Louisa Bordeaux, who married Clement Lamoureux and settled in French Village. For several years Lamoureux worked for Bordeaux, who in 1855 established trading posts on the Platte River near Fort Laramie and on Bordeaux Creek near Chadron. James Bordeaux became an important figure in the history of the Old West. From 1866-1870 he sent all his children "back East" to Hamburg to receive their education. While in Hamburg the Bordeaux children lived with their sister and brother-in-law, Louisa and Clement Lamoureux.

—Courtesy S. Dakota Historical Society

### William Censeleur

The representative of the French Villagers was William Censeleur (spelled Kenceleur, Kensler or Cansler in some records). He was a private fur trapper and trader on the Missouri River, ranging from Lookout Fort in South Dakota to St. Joseph, Missouri. There is little doubt that even the famous French Jesuit, Father Pierre DeSmet, visited the French Village. Certainly Father DeSmet would have received a warm welcome in the French Village on his travels from South Dakota to St. Louis. It is known that Father DeSmet baptized William and Zoe Censeleur on November 6, 1846 at Fort Lookout. These were the children of Censeleur and Exstasy A. Bow, a Yanc-ton Sioux: their marriage had been witnessed by Father DeSmet, though it was not recorded until 1849 in Atchison County, Missouri.

William Censeleur must have been a wise businessman. With Peter Livermore he built the Old French Bridge over the Nishnabotna in 1849. The spring floods may have made this bridge impassable, but they did not dampen Censeleur's wily business sense. As recorded by the county treasurer on April 10, 1850 Censeleur and Livermore applied for and received a license to ferry passengers across the Nishnabotna when their bridge was under water. This bridge effort actually brought about the first "Goldenrod" in the form of a trunk road off the Council Bluffs-St. Joseph road west from

McKissick's Grove Post Office toward present Hamburg. In December of 1845 a government surveyor located this rock ford in the NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of S23 T67 R42. The May 1, 1850 issue of Fremont County's *Frontier Guardian* carried the following advertisement:

BRIDGE ACROSS THE NICHINABOTENA: The undersigned have erected a bridge across the Nishnabotna River at the Rock Ford at their own expense, directly on the Route from St. Joseph, Mo., to Kanesville, Old Fort Kearney and the Mouth of the Platte River. The road is excellent and the Bottoms is above high water mark. Emigrants can cross with safety and without delay. Charges cheap. And they leave it to the discerning public to say whether they shall be patronized or not.

Cansler and Livermore

The bridge and the ferry were only the beginning of Censeleur's schemes. In the 1840's he had opened a trading post for French Village. He used the profits from the store and a loan from Joseph Roubideaux of St. Joseph to finance his most famous investment, a bridge over the North Platte River in Wyoming. This bridge on the Oregon Trail was the most notable engineering feat in the history of the Old West.

Unfortunately, Censeleur's enterprising ways posed an obvious threat to the business community of Hamburg, whose patrons from the east had, to pay a toll to cross Censeleur's French Bridge to get into Hamburg. Censeleur was probably shrewd enough to convince prospective Hamburg customers that there was no need to shop in Hamburg when his trading post could fill their needs.

Much to the relief of Archibald H. Argyle, Augustus Borchers and the wealthy Nuckolls family of Hamburg, Censeleur moved to Rulo, Nebraska in 1857, then went west to investigate gold-mining operations along the Platte River. Censeleur's departure signaled an end to the French Village as a commercial possibility. Hamburg was now free to develop a business clientele from the east with no competition whatever. As Hamburg flourished, French Village would be swallowed up and the McKissick's Grove Post Office would be phased out.

Already by May of 1858, within a year of Censeleur's move, it was reported that "ten or twelve houses are in course of erection (in Hamburg) and others are projected." Had French Village survived as a commercial center, it is possible that St. Mary's Church would have been built in the center of this Catholic colony on the east bank of the Nishnabotna, and not on Washington Avenue in Hamburg.

One is led to question why there were so few French-Canadian families remaining in Hamburg when the parish incorporated in 1874. Parish records contain little beyond the names of Lamoureux, Trudeau, Bordeaux and Giggar. The answer lies in the specifications of several government treaties enacted in the 1850's and 1860's. By virtue of various land grants to help the Indians settle outside of Iowa, children of Indian descent were given large tracts of land in southern Nebraska and Kansas. Since so many Canadian trappers had married Indian maidens, large ranches and estates were theirs for the asking. Without hesitation they flocked to take possession of the territory for which they qualified legally. The few who remained either had not married Indians or simply preferred to stay where they had established roots.

## PART TWO

### EARLY HISTORY OF THE PARISH

#### Frederick William Pape

The first pastor of St. Mary's Parish in 1874 was Father Frederick William Pape. He was born at Buern, Westphalia in Prussia on January 21\*, 1844. His father was Wilhelm Pape, born in 1810 at Haggensdorf in Westphalia; his mother, Margaret Hoppe was born in 1800 in Siddinghausen, Westphalia. They were married in Siddinghausen in 1837.

Frederick Pape was among the younger of seven brothers, three of whom were born from a previous marriage of Margaret Meis Pape, whose first husband had died in Westphalia. The entire Pape family emigrated to America in 1850 and settled on a half-section of farmland near New Vienna, a German Catholic colony in northeastern Iowa.

Fred Pape attended the local school in New Vienna, which at that time was simply a boarded-off section of the parish church, St. Boniface. When not in school he and his brothers worked the family farm and hired out to other farmers in the area. He finished his secondary schooling about age sixteen. By that time his half-brother Aloysius Meis had entered the seminary and was ordained in 1862, the first priestly vocation from St. Boniface Parish.

After finishing high school, Fred Pape was undecided about what he wanted to make his life's work. He had intended to stay on the farm with his aging parents, but the death of his mother in 1862 changed all that. At this time Wilhelm Pape, preparing for retirement, divided up his estate among his sons. Still grieving over the death of his mother, Frederick did not want to continue working on the farm. He therefore went to Lyons, Iowa where his half-brother Aloysius was pastor of St. Boniface Church. Frederick spent one year in Lyons as assistant schoolmaster.

As a boy Fred Pape and his friends had visited the shipping docks on Dubuque's riverside. There in the cafes and dockyards they heard the fantastic tales and legends about life downriver in St. Louis and New Orleans. The young Pape dreamed of someday seeing for himself what lay beyond Dubuque County. In 1863 he was able to quench what his German relatives called the "wanderlust."

Returning to Dubuque from Lyons in 1863, Fred Pape traveled to New York with friends from the Dubuque area. From New York he took a steamer to Cuba, then went on to Matamoras in Mexico. For about six months he traveled along the Rio Grande and around Texas. Later he entered New Orleans from the Gulf and traveled by steamboat up the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers to Cincinnati, probably to visit relatives there. He considered his travels an invaluable education for a boy who had not seen much of the country beyond Dubuque County. His curious and adventuresome spirit was one facet of Frederick Pape's personality which in later years would serve him well in his role of missionary to western Iowa.

On his return to Iowa Fred Pape went again to Lyons, this time to open up a general mercantile business. He had often listened to his brother Aloysius speak of the Church's need for strong, courageous men to plant the seed of the Gospel in Iowa. He must have shared his brother's enthusiasm for building the Church in this mission territory, for in 1867 Fred Pape resolved to devote his life to the service of God's people as a priest.

\*Some sources give January 27 as his date of birth.

## Called to the Priesthood

Fred Pape sold his general store to a brother and in the fall of 1867 enrolled at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. Here he took general college courses for one year. In 1868 he entered St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee where he studied for the next six years.

On March 25, 1874 Frederick Pape was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John Martin Henni in Milwaukee. He was thirty years old. One can imagine the delight of Bishop John Hennessy of Dubuque when he looked at this hearty, robust young man and commissioned him to assist Father McMenomy of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The Council Bluffs parish was the farthest outpost of the Dubuque diocese and covered a good share of southwest Iowa.



Rev. Frederick W. Pape  
First Pastor of St. Mary's in 1874

The newly ordained priest traveled to western Iowa by train, by stage-coach, on horseback and on foot. Father Pape must have reached Council Bluffs by June 9, 1874, for that is the date of his first recorded baptism in the Baptismal Register of St. Francis Xavier Church in Council Bluffs.

JOANNES MICHAEL SHEA

I baptized John Michael infant son of Denis and Joanna Shea born 5th day of May. This 9th day of June, 1874  
Sponsors C. Fitzpatrick and Ellen Conor.

F. W. Pape

Apparently Father Pape remained in Council Bluffs during the summer of 1874 assisting Father McMenomy and meeting the needs of Catholics in the outlying rural areas. For weeks at a time he had no home to speak of as he explored a number of small Catholic settlements. His satchel containing his Mass kit, Bible and breviary he slung over his shoulder and on his back carried his bedroll into which was stuffed his food supply. He often slept out in the open or in the home of a Catholic family. In the 1940's one old timer recalled the familiar sight of Father Pape as he "traveled down the road with satchel in hand, securing meals at private homes."

### Father Pape Comes to Hamburg

The exact date of Father Pape's arrival in Hamburg is not known. But it is obvious that he must have been in Hamburg by late fall of 1874. On November 8, 1874 he baptized Francisca Hilger, daughter of Nicolaus Hilger and Margarita Michaels, and Oliver Lamoureux, both born on October 14. On December 15, 1874 Father Pape baptized Bridget Ward who was born on December 8, 1874 to Owen Ward and Johanna Carrol Ward.

The names of Lamoureux, Hilger and Ward are definitely associated with the Hamburg area, even though they are recorded in the St. Francis Register. It appears that Father Pape carried a notebook in which he scribbled the names of the parties baptized or married in Hamburg, then transcribed these names to the official register of St. Francis Xavier in Council Bluffs. This fact is clear from the chronology of baptisms in the Council Bluffs Register. Father Pape's entries often do not follow the sequential order of baptisms in St. Francis Parish; for example, his November baptisms may be inserted after the regular list of December baptisms.

There are interesting gaps in Father Pape's entries in the St. Francis Register. The names of Fr. McMenomy, pastor, and Fr. Simon Carew, his assistant, appear often enough. But Father Pape's name does not appear for as much as two weeks at a time. This could only mean that Father Pape was tending the Hamburg area during these intervals, occasionally reporting back to Father McMenomy at St. Francis Xavier.

## Early Parishioners

By the time of Father Pape's arrival, the city of Hamburg had grown to a population of 2000 since 1858 and there were over forty Catholic families in the area. The names of Michael Hilger, A. D. Richards and Dennis Mahoney were numbered among the prospective parishioners.

Michael Hilger was born in Luxemburg, Germany on May 6, 1836 and came to America in 1854, settling on a 200 acre farm in Fremont County in 1870. In Jackson County he married Elizabeth Medinger, a native of Germany, on May 14, 1859. They had seven children: Daniel A., Mary A., William J., Anthony M., Lucy A., Joseph H. and Leo J.

A. D. Richards was born in Canada West in 1840. He moved to Chicago in 1853 and lived in that city until spring of 1858 when he moved to St. Louis, to remain only a year. In 1868 Richards moved to Hamburg and opened the first clothing store in the city. On February 19, 1871 he married Marie Lamoureux from French Village.

Dennis Mahoney was born in 1832 in County Cork, Ireland and arrived in Portland, Connecticut at the age of nineteen. Seven years later he moved to Illinois, then in 1869 became a resident of Fremont County. Eventually Mahoney bought a farm near Farragut where he and his wife, Mary Connell, raised their six children.

## First Church Erected

Already by November of 1874 a new parish had begun to take shape in Hamburg. Two lots were purchased from Augustus Borchers on November 24, 1874. It could be that construction of the first church began before Borchers actually deeded the lots to the church. For by the winter of 1874 these forty Catholic families had built a church at a cost of \$4000.00 and a rectory costing \$800.00. The building committee consisted of Mike Gordon, A. D. Richards, Clement Lamoureux, Henry Kain, J. J. Hoeppner, James Ward and Father Pape.

The first St. Mary's Church was a two story building with classrooms on the lower level and sanctuary on the second floor. The base of the tower formed a small vestibule at the front entrance. A belfry would be added in 1902 when the floor separating the upper and lower levels was removed. The rectory built in 1874 was simply one room which adjoined the church behind the altar and doubled as the priest's sacristy.

As late as January of 1875 Father Pape was still recording his Hamburg baptisms in the St. Francis Register:

I baptized Adelina infant of Louis Trudeau and Adelina Giggar born 15th Feb. 1874 This 24th day of Jan 1875 Sponsors Clem and Louisa Lemoureux

F. W. Pape

I baptized Jas Andrew infant of Louis Trudeau and Adelina Giggar Born May 3rd 1873. This 24th day of Jan 1875 Sponsors Ambrose Babby and Sophia Velandreu

F. W. Pape

In the St. Francis Xavier Register there is a long gap of Father Pape's entries between January 24, 1875 and April 29, 1876. The gap probably indicates that at this time Father Pape was working exclusively in the Hamburg and Shenandoah areas, reporting back to St. Francis only occasionally. He also visited the missions of St. Peter's in Pacific Junction, St. Boniface in Mills County, and Red Oak.



First Catholic Church in Hamburg

This church served Catholics of the Hamburg area from 1874 to 1924. It was built by winter of 1874 and the interior was finished in 1875. At that time the parish consisted of forty families.



Michael Gordon

Born June 22, 1838 in Eniscouthy, County Wexford, Ireland, Michael Gordon and his family emigrated to the United States, probably in the late 1840's. They settled first in New York, then bought land in Missouri and Iowa. Michael Gordon later married Catherine Doyle and helped build the first Catholic Church in Hamburg in 1874. He died August 6, 1905 and was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery.

### Church Property

The property on which St. Mary's Church is now located consists of Lots 9, 10, 11, and 12 in Block 38 of the City of Hamburg. The first land acquired by the parish was bought from Augustus Borchers on November 24, 1874. On this date through a transaction effected by Father Pape, Borchers sold Lots 11 and 12 for \$200.00 to John Hennessy, then Bishop of Dubuque. This was enough land on which to build the first church.

On May 6, 1875 Father Pape purchased Lot 10 for \$1200.00 from W. A. Stow, mayor of Hamburg in 1875 and 1878. At that time the parish paid \$700.00 for this lot and on January 1, 1877 the remaining \$500.00 due was paid. On June 29, 1877 Father Pape, listed in courthouse records as "F. W. Pape, an unmarried man of Carroll," sold this lot to John Hennessy, Bishop of Dubuque, so that even after Fr. Pape's eventual move to Carroll there would be no question of the diocese's ownership of this property.



On November 28, 1882, about a year after Davenport had become a diocese, Bishop Hennessy of Dubuque turned over title to his Hamburg property to John McMullen, Bishop of Davenport, for one dollar. Apparently the Dubuque Diocese did not know exactly how much land it owned in Hamburg. The deed reads if "John Hennessy owns any other land in Hamburg, it also will be turned over to John McMullen, Bishop of Davenport.

The parish's ownership of Lot 9 was unclear until 1909. In 1876 this lot was owned by A. D. Richards, one of the original parishioners and a member of the building committee of the first St. Mary's Church. Richards willed the land to his widow, Mary V. (Lamoureux) Richards. On May 4, 1909 Mary Richards sold this lot to James Davis, then Bishop of Davenport, for \$200.00. However, George F. Borchers, executor of the estate of Augustus Borchers, filed an Executor Deed on February 12, 1909 to sell Lot 9 to James J. Davis, Bishop of Davenport, for one dollar. It was not until 1909 then, that the Diocese of Davenport held uncontested title to Lots 9, 10, 11 and 12. On April 3, 1914, three years after Des Moines had become a diocese, Bishop Davis of Davenport turned over all church property held by the Diocese of Davenport to St. Mary's Catholic Church of Hamburg for one dollar.

## Hamburg Was Mother Church of Several Missions

Soon after the Hamburg church was erected, Father Pape went to Shenandoah to see about building a little mission church there. He met with Ed Ryan, James Sloan, Patrick Gilmore, John Gleason and others who made up the building committee. Since 1870 Father McMenemy of Council Bluffs had visited these Catholics occasionally and had offered Mass in the home of Ed Ryan. The Shenandoah Catholics were an aggressive group who were eager to have their own church building. Even before Father Pape arrived they had secured from the Burlington Railroad a donation of two lots for a church and established a building fund.

The years 1874 to 1876 were busy days for Father Pape. From his headquarters in Hamburg he served the Shenandoah mission once a month and tended the spiritual needs of Catholic families living in Sidney, Nodaway, Blumer Settlement, Pacific Junction, Glenwood, Malvern, Randolph and Neola. Besides the main church at Hamburg and the mission at Shenandoah, Father Pape oversaw the building of churches at Red Oak and Villisca.

In the Hamburg Baptismal Register Father Pape's last baptism is listed as that of the McCan children of Charles McCan and Bell Meed: Mary, Robert, Peter and Anna, all baptized on December 12, 1875. But it may be presumed that Father Pape was still in Hamburg for Christmas of 1875, for the next recorded baptism in Hamburg is not until January 23, 1876, when John Henderson was baptized by Father Michael Tierney, Father Pape's temporary successor.

## Father Pape Transferred

Bishop Hennessy must have been impressed by the enthusiasm of this zealous young priest, for in the spring of 1876 Father Pape received orders to go north to Carroll and Roselle where he was to serve the German Catholics moving into that area. In Carroll and Ida Counties Father Pape started churches at Carroll, Mount Caramel, Roselle, Arcadia, Templeton, Willey, Wall Lake, Odebolt, Ida Grove and Breda. Father Pape was the first priest to offer Mass in Ida County.

It is interesting to follow Father Pape's career after he left Hamburg. In 1880 he was appointed pastor of Lansing, Iowa. Six months later he was

called to Dubuque to organize Sacred Heart parish, supervise the building of a church, and become the first pastor of that congregation.

In 1882 during his pastorate at Sacred Heart, Father Pape's health began to fail. He asked to be relieved of his city parish in Dubuque, and in the same year was transferred to his home parish, St. Boniface in New Vienna.



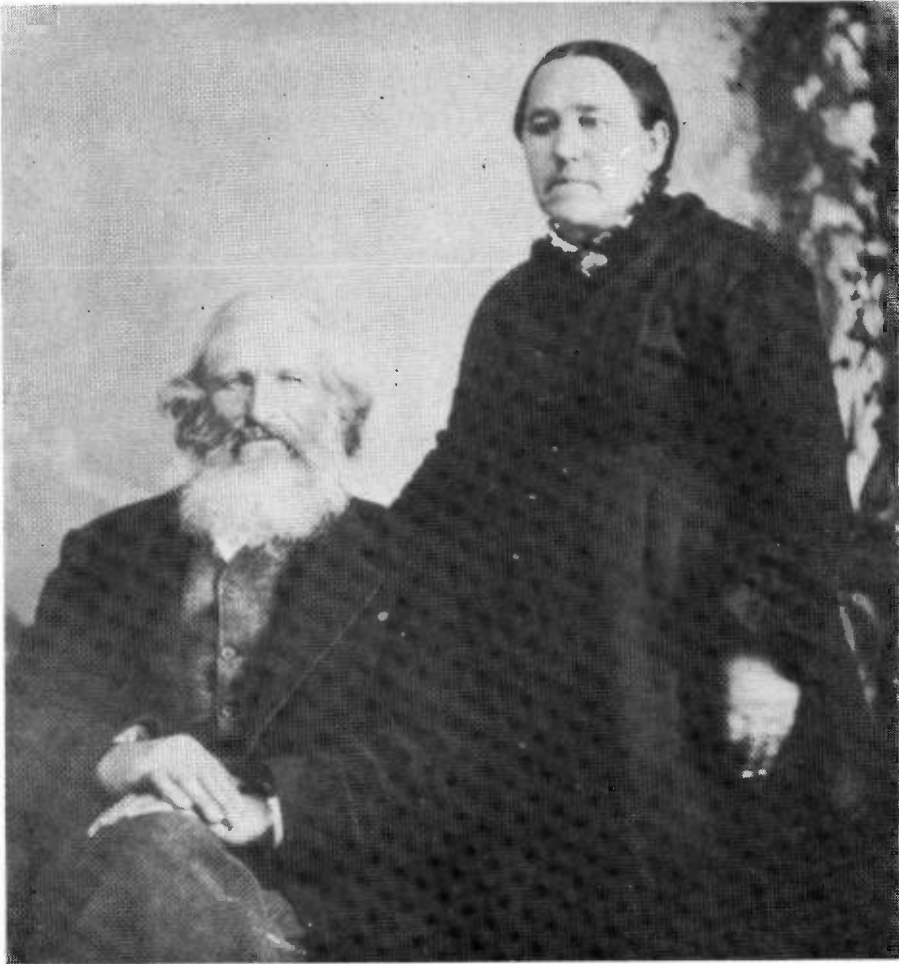
St. Boniface Church in New Vienna

This white Gothic church was built in 1887 while Father Pape was pastor of the New Vienna parish. It stands today as a memorial of the work of an extraordinary man.

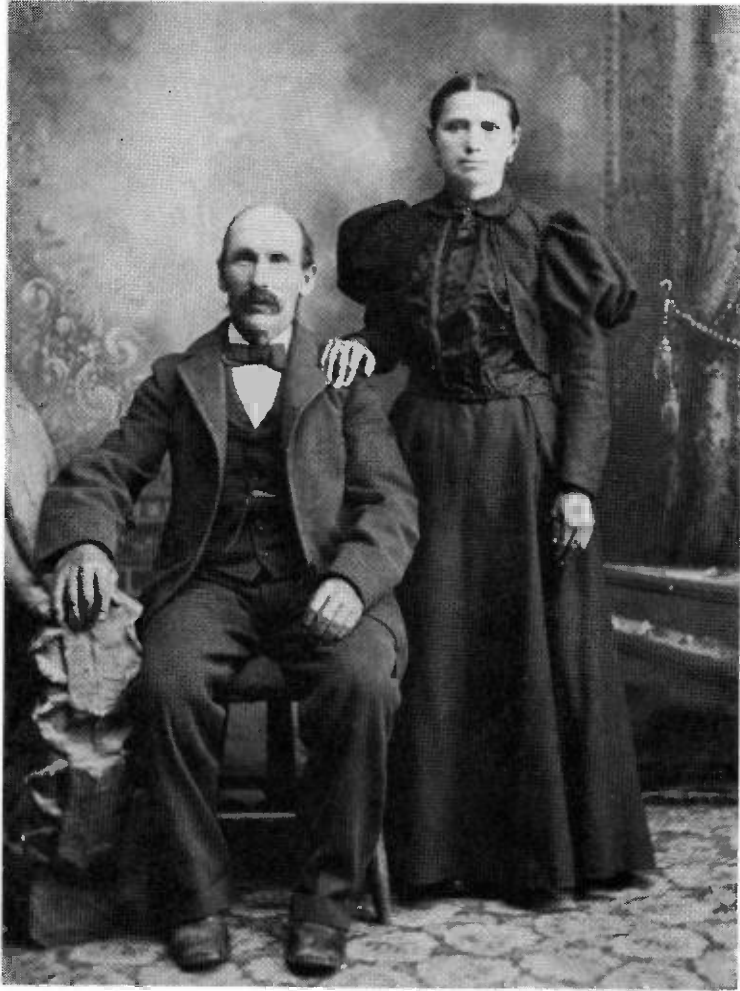
## Father Pape Realizes Lifetime Dream

With the less demanding work in New Vienna and the help of an assistant pastor, Father Pape was able to devote time to what would be the crowning material achievement of his life, the construction of a magnificent church in New Vienna. He wanted a church that would embody the spirit of the remarkable and daring Boniface, the eighth century apostle to Germany. Boniface converted the barbarians to the true faith by cutting down their sacred oak tree and carving a huge cross from its trunk. Indeed, one of the windows in the new church would depict St. Boniface felling the Donar oak while the barbarians look on, waiting for their gods to thunder down punishment on the strident Boniface.

Father Pape also wanted a church that would be an expression of gratitude to the good people of New Vienna for nurturing his vocation to the priesthood. In the summer of 1887 this great church was completed at a



Anton and Catharina (Rogge) Gubser were listed among the early parishioners of St. Mary's. They were married in Davenport, probably in the 1850's. Anton and Catharina were the parents of Genevieve, Nicholas, John, Henry and Lena Gubser. Catharina Gubser died in 1894



Mathias and Elizabeth (Dankoff) Weisenberger were married October 6, 1875 at St. Mary's in Hamburg. Mathias was born in Baden, Germany on April 12, 1840 and came to America in 1870. Elizabeth was born in Prussia on October 4, 1846, the daughter of John and Theresa Dankoff. From 1877 to 1887 the Weisenbergers had six children: Lizzie, Mary, Joseph, Michael, Matilda and Frankie.

cost of \$80,000.00. It is Gothic in style with an exterior of white magnesia limestone.

Not many details of the later life of Father Pape have been preserved. Apparently his love for travel did not dissipate with the years. It is known that from 1894 to 1895 he made an extensive tour of the Holy Land.

During his pastorate at New Vienna, one of Father Pape's delights was to encourage young men to study for the priesthood; any extra money he had was contributed to this cause. The years 1883 to 1919 were marked by numerous vocations from his parish. An obituary in the Dubuque Telegraph Herald dated April 4, 1919, related that Father Pape probably directed more young men toward the priesthood than any other priest in Iowa.

After serving at St. Boniface for a total of thirty-seven years, Father Frederick Pape died suddenly on Wednesday, April 2, 1919 at the age of seventy-five. His Requiem Mass was offered on Saturday, April 5, at St. Boniface in New Vienna. Msgr W. A. Pape of LeMars was the celebrant, and Archbishop J. J. Keane of Dubuque was in attendance. Father Pape is buried in St. Boniface Cemetery's mortuary chapel which he built in 1900.

### **Father Pape Succeeded by Father Gerald M. Stack**

After Father Pape left Hamburg in the spring of 1876 St. Mary's was attended briefly from St. Francis in Council Bluffs. Father Michael Tierney, one of Father McMenomy's assistants, made the regular trips to Hamburg, Shenandoah and the other missions until June of 1876, when he was transferred to St. James Parish in Washington, Iowa.

In July of 1876 Father Gerald M. Stack arrived at St. Mary's as its second pastor. Originally from Chicago, Father Stack came to Hamburg from Immaculate Conception Church in Fairbank, Iowa, a parish founded in 1868. Father Stack's first entry in the Baptismal Register is the baptism of Mary Genevieve Caragher, daughter of Patrick and Mary Caragher, baptized on July 6, 1876.

During Father Stack's pastorate, St. Patrick's Parish in Imogene was organized in June of 1880. In that year a frame church was built at a cost of \$1800.00. The parish started with a membership of only eleven.

Father Gerald Stack remained in Hamburg until 1881. There is no record of Father Stack's destination immediately after his departure from Hamburg, but the Catholic Directory records that by 1883 he was working at St. Mary's in Elkton, South Dakota (now called Our Lady of Good Counsel). That same year found him working in Ivanhoe, Brookings County, South Dakota, a parish now defunct. In 1886 the parish in Kimball, South Dakota was added to his charge. Father Stack remained in this area until 1889. At that time the Dakota Territory was a Vicariate Apostolic, that is, a mission territory headed by a Vicar Apostolic instead of a resident bishop. The first Vicar Apostolic of the place was Rt. Rev. Martin Marty, O.S.B.

The year 1890 found Father Stack at St. Patrick's Church in Colfax, Washington, what was then the Diocese of Nesqually. It is not known how Father Stack ended up in the State of Washington; perhaps he preferred work in mission territories among the Indians.

In 1893 Father Gerald Stack went south to the Diocese of Sacramento, California, possibly because his advancing age demanded work in a warmer climate. In July of 1900 he was assigned to St. Joseph's Parish in Forest Hill, California. Forest Hill was a logging and mining town on the American River, and it was in this setting that Father Stack ended his years on November 20, 1906.

Not much personal data is available on the second pastor of Hamburg. The fact that he did not remain in Iowa and his constant movement account for much difficulty in tracing any more than a sketchy outline of his life and work. Records of Father Stack's early years, his seminary training and ordination were most likely destroyed in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.



A winter portrait of the Louis Trudeau Family. Louis Trudeau, born July 26, 1819 and Adeline Gigar, born September 25, 1836, were numbered among the early French-Canadian settlers of French Village and were founding members of St. Mary's Parish. Pictured above are seven of the twelve Trudeau children born between 1853 and 1882: Evy, James Andrew, Adeline, two unidentified boys, Agnes and Frank. Louis Trudeau raised his children at Wing Flat, the level land about a mile east of the Nishnabotna River and a mile south of the Goldenrod. Adeline Trudeau was the mother of Raymond Hilger.

## Several Priests Follow Father Stack

Following Father Stack's departure from Hamburg in 1881, there was a succession of four priests who remained only briefly at St. Mary's. Father John L. Garner replaced Father Stack in the latter part of 1881. In 1882 Father John J. Ryan was pastor at St. Mary's until his death in 1884. Father Peter H. Clarke succeeded Father Ryan in February of 1884 and remained until February of 1885 when he went to St. Paul, Minnesota. Father William Williams succeeded Father Clarke for a few months in 1885 before going to Mt. Ayr in the summer of that year.

A tragic incident is related about Father John J. Ryan. In February of 1884 he was making a sick call on a bitterly cold night. While attempting to walk across the frozen Nishnabotna River, he fell through the ice. He was able to clamber to safety and complete the sick call. But the freezing temperature proved too much for his constitution and he died of pneumonia a couple days later, February 17, 1884. Father Ryan is buried at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Imogene.

## John A. Cook

On October 2, 1885, Father John Cook came to Hamburg as pastor of St. Mary's. His was the first pastorate of any considerable length in the then short history of the parish. He served at St. Mary's from 1885 to 1896.

John Alphonse Cook was born on July 2, 1855, one of thirteen children of Louis J. Cook and Magdalene Baker of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Four of the Cook children entered religious life: Rev. Louis Cook, C.S.S.R., of Detroit, Rev. Frank Cook, C.S.S.R., of Philadelphia, Father John of Hamburg and Sister Mary Sebastian Cook, who directed St. Donatus Academy for Girls in Dubuque, Iowa.

John Cook attended his parish school of St. Peter the Apostle in Philadelphia. This parish was staffed by priests of the Redemptorist Order (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer). When he thought of entering the seminary, John Cook received private lessons in Latin from the Redemptorist Fathers. There must have been a strong connection between the Cook Family and the Redemptorists, for two of Father Cook's brothers became Redemptorist priests.

In September of 1871 John Cook entered the Redemptorist College at Ilchester, Maryland. In May of 1877 he went to the Redemptorist Novitiate at Annapolis, still intent on entering the Redemptorist Order. However, by November of 1878 John Cook was undecided about joining the Redemptorists and wondered if the diocesan priesthood was not a more feasible prospect.

On November 17, 1879, John Cook enrolled in St. Mary's Diocesan Seminary in Baltimore with the intention of studying for the Diocese of Chicago. Still, he must have been attracted to the Redemptorist Order, for when he ended his philosophy studies as a diocesan candidate, he returned to the Redemptorists for graduate studies in theology. However, a year later, John Cook made his final decision to leave the Redemptorist Order. He re-enrolled at St. Mary's Seminary, this time as a theology student for the Diocese of Davenport.

In 1884 John A. Cook was ordained by Bishop Thomas Becker of Wilmington for the Diocese of Davenport, Iowa. In those days it was not unusual for bishops in frontier dioceses to ask for priests from the more populous eastern dioceses. This fact explains how Father John Cook from Philadelphia could have been ordained for the Davenport Diocese.





Father John Alphonse Cook, pastor of St. Mary's from 1885 to 1896, strikes a pose current for the 1880's. Originally from Philadelphia, Father Cook was ordained for the Diocese of Davenport and assigned to St. Mary's for a pastorate of eleven years.

Father John Cook's first assignment was to St. Boniface Church in Westphalia. Here he had charge of the parish for ten months while Father Weber, the pastor, traveled in Europe. In 1885 Father Weber returned to his Westphalia parish and Father Cook was appointed pastor of St. Mary's in Hamburg. He also had charge of the missions of Shenandoah, Imogene, Red Oak, Villisca and all of Mills County. His work load was lightened when Father Hayes was appointed pastor of Imogene about 1888.



Shortly after his arrival in Hamburg, Father Cook received a telegram from his brother Paul in Philadelphia, stating that Paul's wife had died. Paul Cook was left with four young girls to raise by himself. Father John invited his bereaved brother to Hamburg and in the fall of 1885 Paul Cook brought his four daughters Mame, Anne, Agnes and Clara to Hamburg to live. At about the same time Mary Cook, sister of Paul and Father John, came to Hamburg to be Father John's housekeeper and exercise some maternal influence on Paul Cook's children. Paul Cook was later married to Helena Vollman of Hamburg.

### Concern for Cemetery

From the time of his arrival in Hamburg Father Cook was concerned about the state of the Catholic Cemetery. On November 2, 1885, the Feast of All Soul's Day, Father Cook blessed the Cemetery and gave it the name of St. Mary's Cemetery, the name it has retained to this day.


The cemetery land was donated to the parish sometime before Father Cook's arrival, perhaps around 1880. But before Father Cook came to Hamburg no records had been kept of who was buried in the cemetery, aside from the markings on the stones. Neither was there any record of the date or circumstances of death of the deceased. Father Cook was the first pastor of St. Mary's to obtain and keep current the *Registrum Defunctorum*.

In his *Memoirs* Father Bulger states that about 1893 Father Cook moved his residence from Hamburg to Shenandoah. This was probably because of the declining Catholic population in the Hamburg area as opposed to the growing number of Catholics in the Shenandoah parish. There must have been some increase in the Catholic population in Shenandoah between the years 1885 and 1893 to justify Father Cook's move to that location, rendering Hamburg a mission of the Shenandoah parish.



St. Mary's R. C. Cemetery.  
Blessed Nov. 2nd 1885

Hamburg Iowa

1	2	3	4 North	5	6	7	8
	S. Wierkweit. 10 ft.		Eliz. Fitzsimons 10.00 ft.	Jno. Burkner 5.00 ft.	W. Yeurt. 10.00 ft.		
16 Martin Gordon. 10.00 ft.	15 John Sullivan 10.00 ft.	14 Jno. McFee 5.00 ft. 5.00 ft.	13 L. Wierkweit. 10.00 ft.	12 W. Eichholt. 5.00 ft.	11 M. Gordon. 10.00 ft.	10 M. O'Brien 10.00 ft.	9
17	18 A. Guber Sr. 10.00 ft.	19 H. Lieberman B. Lieberman 10.00 ft.		21 H. Marlow. 5.00 ft. 5.00 ft.	22 Mrs. McAnney.	23	2
32	31 Jacob Vell. 10.00 ft.	30 H. Frede. 5.00 ft.	29 M. Gleason 5.00 ft.	28 Jno. Driscoll.	27 T. Harrington.	26 Jno. Bankhof.	2
33	34 Thos. Pafferty. 5.00 ft.	35 M. Hilger. 10.00 ft.	36 Jno. Gleason 10.00 ft.	37 S. Miller.	38 S. Miller.	39	2
48 Chas. Brown. and family 5.00 ft.	47 John Miller 2 graves + 2 vacant 5.00 ft.	46 H. Hilger.	45	44	43	42	4
49 Mrs. C. A. Smith	50	51	52	53	54	55 M. Graenke. 10.00 ft.	5
						Robt. Harris. 5.00 ft.	

South

West

This Cemetery was blessed by me  
on Feast of "All Soule" November  
27<sup>th</sup> A. D. 1885.

Having received faculties from the  
Very Rev. Father Trevis. V. G. during  
the absence of the Rt. Rev. Bishop,  
Henry Cosgrove, D. D. (He was  
paying his visit "Ad limina  
Apostolorum" after Consecration.  
Following have been buried  
by me, after having received  
Sacraments prescribed by our  
holy Mother, the R. C. Church.  
Before my arrival as Pastor,  
several have been buried by  
other Pastors - of which no  
record has been left.

Following is a record since  
my arrival as Pastor  
October 27<sup>th</sup> A. D. 1884.

Within record will be likewise  
found all burials from the  
missions of Imogene, Malvern,  
and Shenandoah - which  
I attended for three (3) years -  
where, when, and how such  
were buried - record within  
will explain.

Animae eorum et animae  
omnium fidelium defunctorum  
R. C. Pace.

John A. Cook

## Later Assignments

In 1896 Father Cook was transferred from Hamburg to a pastorate in Malloy. Remaining in Malloy only one year, he was assigned to St. Joseph Hospital in Keokuk where he served as chaplain from 1898 to 1901. In 1902 Father Cook took another chaplaincy position, this time at Mercy Hospital in Davenport. From 1904 to 1908 Father Cook was pastor of Immaculate Conception at St. Marys, Iowa. In 1909 he moved to Council Bluffs where he was chaplain at Mercy Hospital in that city. In 1910 he returned to St. Marys, Iowa as pastor, then returned to Council Bluffs in 1911 for a chaplaincy assignment at the old St. Bernard's Hospital. From 1912 to 1913 Father Cook was pastor of St. Patrick Church at Bayard.

Sometime before 1914, probably during his stay at Bayard, Father Cook was struck by lightning during an electrical storm. He recovered sufficiently from this accident to engage in limited pastoral work, but his walking was permanently impaired and he had to use a cane for the rest of his life. The Official Catholic Directory from 1914 to 1918 lists Father Cook as absent on leave and gives his address as 2128 Avenue B in Council Bluffs. He was semi-retired at this time, though he did help out in Council Bluffs parishes on occasion, especially Holy Family Parish. Father Cook was known to take off about a week out of the year and return to Hamburg to visit his old friends there.

In 1918 Father Cook entered full retirement and lived in Council Bluffs with a niece, Mrs. Agnes (Cook) Suder and her family. In this home Mr. Suder built an altar on which Father Cook offered Mass daily until two weeks before his death.

Father John Cook died on December 3, 1932 following a six week's illness of Bright's disease. His Requiem Mass was offered at St. Francis Xavier Church and he was buried in St. Joseph Cemetery in Council Bluffs.



St. Mary's Church, Shenandoah, Iowa

In 1883 Fr. John J. Ryan used a family inheritance to help his parishioners purchase this property, and the Shenandoah parishioners moved their small frame church onto the lot. Fr. Ryan died of pneumonia in 1884. In 1893 Fr. John Cook moved his headquarters from Hamburg to Shenandoah and went to Hamburg once or twice a week. The handsome rectory was built in 1898 when an additional lot was purchased. In 1908 Shenandoah and Hamburg became two separate parishes again, and in 1909 the above church was built during the pastorate of Fr. George Toher.



John and Rose (Harris) Schwebach and their children, Matthew, Joseph and Rose. Married before the turn of the century, the Schwebachs lived southeast of Hamburg on an 80 acre farm in Missouri. Rose Schwebach died at a young age and John moved his children to a farm near Conception Abbey in Missouri.

### James William Bulger

In February of 1896 Father James William Bulger came to St. Mary's to replace Father John Cook. James Bulger was the son of Thomas Bulger and Katherine Hayden, both from Kells in County Kilkenny, Ireland. Around the time of the potato famine, probably in 1847, his parents had come to New York City and were married there.

An interesting combination of circumstances brought Father Bulger's parents to Iowa. The Bulgers leased part of a building in New York City to set up a small store. They were just beginning to build up a clientele when the real owner of the building informed them they had been deceived. The man the Bulgers had dealt with was not the legitimate owner of the building; this imposter had only a lease on the building and it was now expired. The real owner ordered Tom Bulger out at once.

After this disconcerting experience in business, the Bulger family decided to go west and buy some land there. While waiting in line at the bank teller's window to withdraw her savings, Mrs. Bulger began talking to a stranger from the west. This man raved about Iowa and claimed that it was the best place to settle if one was thinking of going west. The Bulgers decided that Iowa must be the place for them. They caught a train to Iowa City which was as far as the train went. In early summer of 1857 the Bulgers purchased a farm near Riverside, a town not far from Iowa City. J. W. Bulger was born on this farm on May 7, 1859.

Jim Bulger initially intended to be a farmer and did not enter St. Ambrose College to study for the priesthood until 1886 at age twenty-seven. He found the work difficult and in 1939 recorded in his Memoirs:

I often felt I would rather work two days on the farm than one on books. I can assure you that anyone who undertakes what I did will have a real task on hand and will need to be earnest, to persevere. There is some embarrassment for a man twenty-seven years old with limited school, to start such an undertaking.

J. W. Bulger did persevere and was ordained May 19, 1894 for the Diocese of Davenport. His first appointment was to Malloy, in Ringold County. He was grateful when in 1896 he received his Hamburg assignment as it meant a second pastorate in a farming community.

### Information From Memoirs

In the Memoirs written in his eightieth year, Father Bulger shared some interesting thoughts on his tenure in Hamburg forty years earlier. Though his memory did not serve him correctly on some of the details, his comments on the history of the parish furnish valuable information that could not have been obtained from any other source.

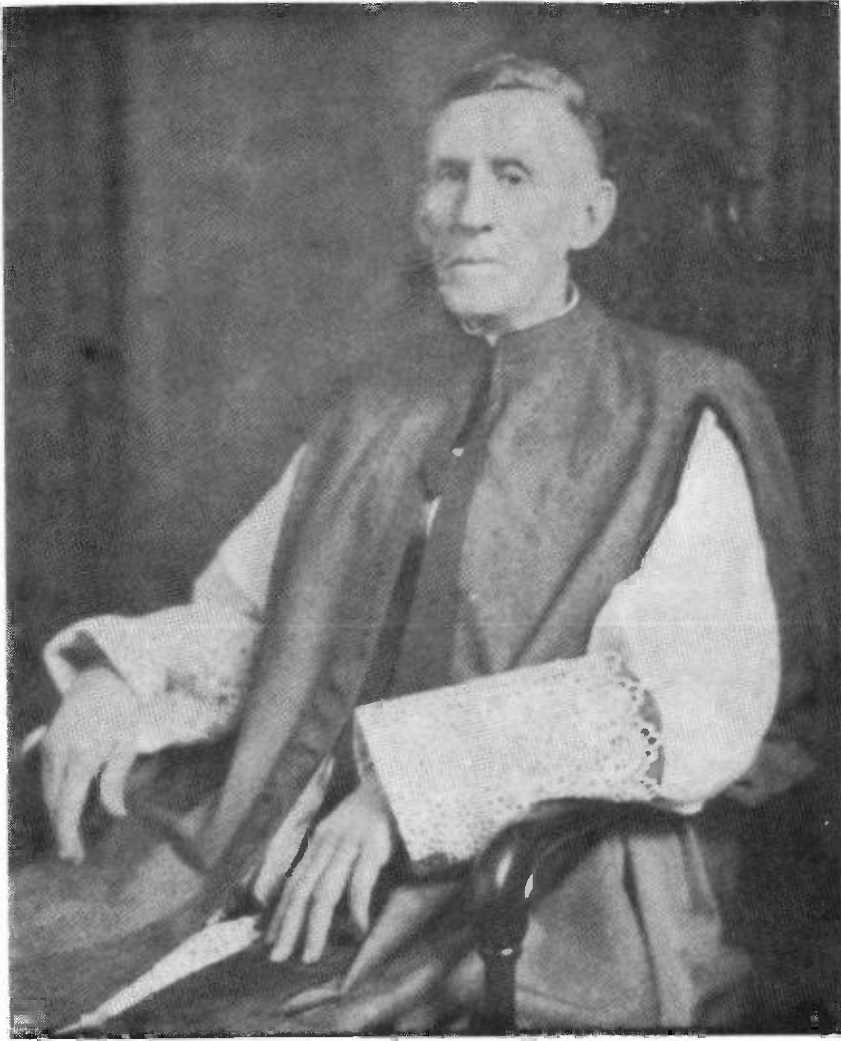
In my day Hamburg was an out mission attached to the Shenandoah parish. As a Catholic center, Hamburg was the first and only Catholic parish in southwestern Iowa. They had a resident pastor; Father Pape in the late 60's or perhaps 1870. The Church was a combination church and school. The parish in those days numbered more than one hundred families. They had a parochial school and sisters as teachers. Some of the parishioners lived in the missions and some up the river near Nebraska City. In time the people of the mission built their own church and some moved away. The members dwindled and about 1893 the pastor moved from Hamburg to Shenandoah. He then had Hamburg as an out mission.

Father Bulger's comment on the parochial school is the only extant record of there ever having been a parochial school in Hamburg. It is not known when the school was closed or what order of sisters taught there.

Father Bulger had pleasant recollections of his weekly trek to the Hamburg parish.

The town of Hamburg, about two thousand population, is situated in a beautiful valley. It is near the mouth of the Nishnabotna River. Behind the city stands a beautiful cliff. The Missouri River Valley lies to the west. I have seen few more picturesque sites. I always enjoyed the trip to Hamburg. The people were scattered, but devout. We improved the church: built a belfry and took out the second floor,

so we had from a combination church and school, a real church.



Rev. Msgr. James W. Bulger

A Golden Jubilee picture of Monsignor Bulger, pastor at St. Mary's from 1896 to 1906, transferred to Ottumwa in 1906, then to Davenport in 1916. During Father Bulger's pastorate St. Mary's was remodeled in 1902. Much valuable information was obtained from Monsignor Bulger's *Memoirs* which he wrote in 1939.

It was during Father Bulger's pastorate that the imposing wood altar was erected in the old St. Mary's Church. The altar was designed by the Dubuque Altar Manufacturing Company of Dubuque, Iowa. It was shipped to Hamburg in 1902. The huge altar occupied almost half of the sanctuary space and had to be rescaled in 1924 when it was moved into the new St. Mary's. In 1902 the church was remodeled at a cost of \$4,000.00. Remodeling consisted of removing the floor separating the two stories and adding a belfry.

Long after leaving the Hamburg area, Father Bulger continued to pray for many of the parishioners whose names were recorded in his book of Mass intentions.

There were about fifty families. I am inserting their names, or most of them, below. Many will not respond to those names now. Their descendants remain.

While I had charge of Hamburg, the two Burkhisier boys, Charles and John, took up studies for the priesthood. They were later ordained for the Des Moines Diocese. Some of the names of the Hamburg parishioners — Mike Gordon, Andy Hydinger, John Burkhisier, James Henderson, Joe Miller, Dan Hilger, John Neff, Mrs. Kaine, Conde Burkhisier, P. Harrington, John Henderson, Martin Gleason, Mr. Weisenberger, John Driscoll, Sr., John Driscoll, Jr., Charles O'Brien, Mart Dugan, Mike Hilger, Joe Hilger, Phil Farley, Mrs. John Foster, Jacob Schwebach, Louis Trudeau, J. Dankoff, Peter Schnitger, Tom Monaghan, Grant Nealey, Hank Dailey, Mrs. McAneny, and Jennie Gubser.



Daniel A. Hilger

Mentioned in the *Memoirs of Father Bulger*, D. A. Hilger was a trustee of the parish for many years. He grew up on a two hundred acre farm owned by his father, Michael Hilger from Luxemburg. He married Adeline Trudeau in the 1890's and bought a farm two and a half miles east of Riverton. Their children were Raymond Daniel, William A., Alma Agnes, Marie and Therold Hilger. D. A. Hilger served on the building committee of the new parish church built in 1924. He died in 1931.

### Later Assignments

After ten years in Hamburg and Shenandoah, Father Bulger was transferred in 1906 to St. Patrick's Church in Ottumwa.

It was not without much regret and sadness that in 1906 I was transferred, from southwestern Iowa to Ottumwa, Iowa. I had become much attached to the people and the work there. My thoughts often return to those days and the



good people out there. My successor took up the work and perhaps improved on mine. If these lines reach the eyes of any of my old parishioners, I say, "God bless you."

In 1916 Father Bulger was appointed pastor of St. Anthony's Church in Davenport, his longest, and what would prove to be his last, assignment. Here his reunion with friends from college days was some compensation for this parish's remoteness from farm country. In his Memoirs Father Bulger wrote:

Here (in Davenport) I felt really at home. Many of the St. Ambrose boys of the late '80's were in the city. Some in business and others in professions. We joined hands and hearts once again.

Father Bulger was well remembered for his generosity to those in need. One of his assistants later recalled that "the back door of Saint Anthony's was the mecca for all wanderers." Even those who became steady customers received their sandwich, their cup of coffee and change. To Father Bulger fell the difficult task of steering St. Anthony's through the tight squeeze of the depression years. When asked in 1932 if his parishioners were giving enough money for the support of the parish, Father Bulger quipped that he would be glad if the people did not ask him for any.



The five children of Anton and Catharina Gubser, all of whom grew up in St. Mary's Parish: Genevieve, Nicholas, John, Henry and Lena.

## Honored Before Death

In 1939 Father Bulger was raised to the rank of domestic prelate, with the title of "Right Reverend Monsignor." In 1944 the whole community of Davenport joined him in celebrating his golden jubilee as a priest. It was his twenty-sixth year as pastor of St. Anthony's, but it was to be his last. Death brought an end to his eighty-five years on December 12, 1944.

At Monsignor Bulger's Requiem Mass, on December 15, 1944 Monsignor Martin Cone said:

The diocese of Davenport has lost a universally beloved priest in the death of Monsignor Bulger. His knowledge of human nature was profound and his mercy was as limitless as the seas. The impression that he made upon

the diocese through these many years will remain indefinitely. Priests and people salute a good priest and a true friend.

Father Bulger's simple and unsophisticated approach to life enabled people to feel at ease in his presence and endeared him to Protestants and Catholics alike. Both communities mourned his passing in Davenport. It has been recorded that on the day of the funeral, parishioners approached Father Martin Manning, the assistant pastor, and requested bits of Father Bulger's clothing. They claimed their deceased pastor was a saint.

## VOCATIONS FROM THE PARISH

### Fr. Charles V. Burkhiser

Reverend Charles Vincent Burkhiser was born on March 30, 1877 to John Burkhiser and Mary Jane Idleman of the Locust Grove community, located in Madison Township about twelve miles east of Hamburg. The Burkhisers were a prominent and wealthy farm family of that vicinity. Mary Jane Idleman's family had migrated from the North Carolina area and settled in Missouri, probably around the time of the Civil War.

Charles Burkhiser's early school days took place at High Creek Public School, a little country school about three miles from the Burkhiser home. Charles' parents sent him to the Christian Brothers School in St. Joseph, Missouri to complete his elementary schooling. His high school years were spent at St. Benedict's Abbey in Atchison, Kansas and at St. Ambrose Academy in Davenport, Iowa. Both schools were boarding schools at that time.

It is not known what Charles Burkhiser did in the days following graduation from high school. He probably worked on the family farm for a few years.

In 1901 Charles entered St. Ambrose College in Davenport where he concentrated in the humanities and philosophy and graduated in 1905. In September, 1905 he entered St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where he studied theology for the next three years. Father Burkhiser was ordained on June 14, 1908 by Bishop J. J. Fox of Green Bay for the Diocese of Davenport. He later joined the Des Moines Diocese when it became a diocese in 1911.

After ordination Fr. Charles served parishes in Ottumwa and Harlan. In 1910 while assistant pastor at St. Michael in Harlan, Fr. Charles also served at Defiance, then a mission of the Harlan parish. When St. Peter's in Defiance became an independent parish, the people of St. Peter's petitioned the bishop to have Fr. Charles Burkhiser as their pastor. Their request was granted and Fr. Charles Burkhiser became the first permanent pastor of the Defiance parish in 1911.

Father Charles remained at St. Peter's in Defiance until 1927 when he retired because of failing health. He bought a home in Nebraska City near St. Mary's Hospital, where he was chaplain until his death in 1938.

Fathers Charles and John Burkhiser were brothers of Mrs. Mary Hilger, youngest member of the Burkhiser family. John Hilger of Hamburg, Iowa, Paul Hilger of Perry Lake, Kansas and Bill Hilger of Milan, Illinois are nephews of Fr. Charles and Fr. John Burkhiser.

## Fr. John Burkhiser



Reverend John Paul Burkhiser was born in Hamburg on October 7, 1881, four years after his brother Charles. He attended High Creek School in Locust Grove and finished high school at St. Ambrose Academy in Davenport. According to a letter in the archives of Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis, John Paul Burkhiser was confirmed at St. Mary's by Bishop Henry Cosgrove of Davenport on May 26, 1897. The letter was written in 1908 by Fr. George Toher, then pastor of St. Mary's.

In 1904 John Burkhiser entered St. Ambrose College in Davenport where he majored in Classics and Philosophy. He entered Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis on September 16, 1908, the same year his brother Charles was ordained from St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee.

John Paul Burkhiser was ordained to the priesthood on June 9, 1911 by Archbishop John J. Glennon of St. Louis for the Diocese of Davenport. Fr. Burkhiser joined the Des Moines Diocese when it was elevated to diocesan status shortly after his ordination.

Fr. John Burkhiser's first assignment was as pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish in Mount Pleasant. After this short assignment he became chaplain at St. Bernard Hospital in Council Bluffs in 1912. From 1912-13 he served as assistant pastor at St. Mary's in Red Oak and in 1913 took another assistant position at St. John's Church in Des Moines. In 1915 Fr. Burkhiser was promoted to pastor of St. Joseph Church in Mt. Ayr where he served for two years. From 1917-24 St. Michael Church in Harlan was his charge until he was transferred to Lacona. In this assignment he was close to his brother, Fr. Charles, who headed the neighborhood parish in Defiance.

Fr. John's longest assignment was as pastor of St. Mary's Church in Lacona where he worked until 1933. In that year he filled the chaplaincy post at St. Joseph Academy for Girls in Des Moines and remained in Des Moines until 1936. His last assignment was to St. Bernard Hospital in Council Bluffs, a position he had filled briefly in 1912.

Father John Burkhiser died at Mercy Hospital in Council Bluffs on September 29, 1945. His Requiem Mass was celebrated on October 2, 1945 at St. Mary's in Hamburg. He was laid to rest in St. Mary's Cemetery near his priest-brother who had preceded him in death by seven years.

## 1906 - 1910

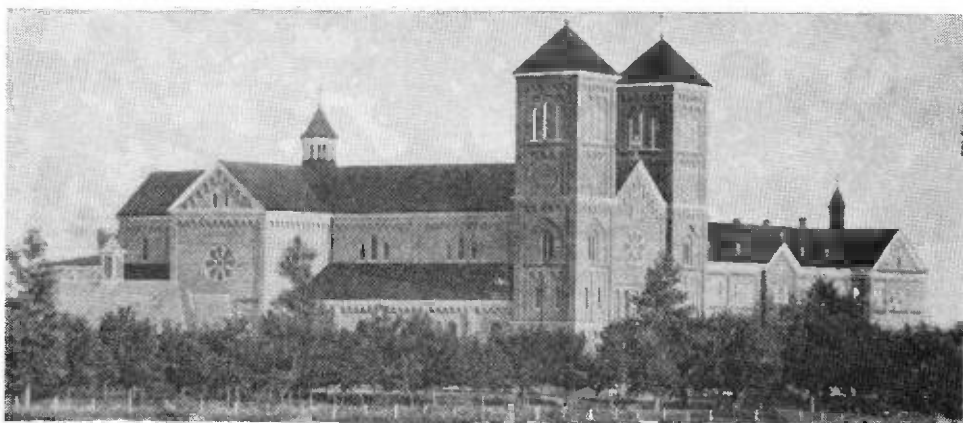
After Father Bulger left Hamburg in 1906, he was replaced for a short time by Father George J. Toher. Like Father Bulger, Father Toher assumed responsibility for both the Hamburg and Shenandoah parishes, with residence at Shenandoah. However, because of Father Bulger's hard work in

Hamburg and Shenandoah, both parishes had grown in size, and it was no longer feasible for one pastor to serve both churches.

Therefore in February of 1908 Father John Scherf came from Keokuk to Hamburg as pastor *locum tenens*, meaning that he held the post until a more permanent pastor was available. In August of 1908 Father Scherf was assigned to St. Joseph Church in Davenport and Father Edmund S. Murphy came to Hamburg.

With Father Murphy's arrival, Hamburg and Shenandoah became two separate pastorates and would remain so indefinitely. Meanwhile Father Toher stayed on at Shenandoah until 1915, when he went to Des Moines, first as pastor of St. Peter's Church in 1915, then as President of Dowling College in 1918.

Little is known about Father Murphy, except that he enlisted the help of the parishioners to build a new rectory next to the church. This project was begun in the fall of 1908, at which time the exterior was completed. The interior of the rectory was finished in 1909, giving Hamburg an authentic example of late Victorian architecture. Father Murphy remained in Hamburg until the fall of 1910, when he was replaced by Father Daniel Sheehy.



The twin towers of Immaculate Conception Abbey rise above the rolling hills of north-west Missouri. Founded in 1873, this Benedictine Abbey sometimes sent priests to Hamburg when the resident pastor was away. Some Hamburg students attended high school here.



James and Mary (Chapman) Henderson were married about 1867 and were members of the parish through most of their married life. James emigrated from County Cork in 1864 and worked on the Union Pacific Railroad. The Hendersons owned a 160 acre farm on McKissick's Island where they raised their eight children: John, James, Charles, William, Lizzie, Nel, Bess and Minnie. Mr. Henderson died in 1901; his wife Mary followed him in death in 1914.



Jacob Hein

Anna Schwebach

Jacob Hein and Anna Schwebach were the parents of Joseph, Frank, John, Nick, Elizabeth, Carl, George, Marie, Jake and Martin Hein. Jacob was born in Wisconsin in 1864. Anna was born in Germany in 1865. The two met in Hamburg and were married at St. Mary's on April 10, 1888.



A September 17, 1895 wedding picture of Clemens Gude and Emma Tretter. Clem was born on Christmas Day of 1862 to Burnett and Mary Gude, natives of Germany who had emigrated to Indiana. Emma was born July 14, 1876 in Indiana, to Lawrence and Philomena Tretter, also from Germany. The Gudes settled first on a farm near Watson where they raised Percheron and Coach stallions. By 1909, Clem Gude had bred the second best German Coach stallion in the United States, the famous "Erdgerst". Clem Gude died on March 16, 1940 at the age of 78. Grandma Gude was active in parish affairs until her death on March 10, 1960.

### Father Daniel Sheehy

In 1910 Father Daniel Sheehy came to St. Mary's as pastor. He was born in Ballyferriter, County Kerry, Ireland on September 14, 1883. He was the son of Thomas Sheehy and Ellen Devine; his baptismal sponsors were Michael Devine and Ellen Moriarty.

Daniel Sheehy attended St. Brendan's College in Killarney and graduated in 1905. He studied philosophy at St. Patrick's Seminary in Carlow from 1905 to 1907, then began his theological studies at Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri in 1907.

Daniel Sheehy came to this country with high recommendations from schools he had attended in Ireland. The archives of Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis contain a letter of recommendation on Daniel Sheehy signed by Professor John O'Neill, D. Th., from St. Patrick's College in Carlow. This letter states, "His examinations during that time (1905-1907) proved him a capable and an attentive student." On June 9, 1907 John Foley, D. D., President of the College, wrote, "Mr. Daniel Sheehy has spent three years with us. He is an excellent student and promises to be a worthy priest in due time."



Lizzie (Henderson) Choate and Sabe Choate with their first child, Mary Matilda, who died at fifteen months. In the 1890's Sabe and his cousin, Smith Fender, came from North Carolina to look for work in Hamburg. Here Sabe met Lizzie Henderson who lived on the island. The two were married at St. Mary's in 1896 and became the parents of Bessie, James, Connie, William and Albert Choate.

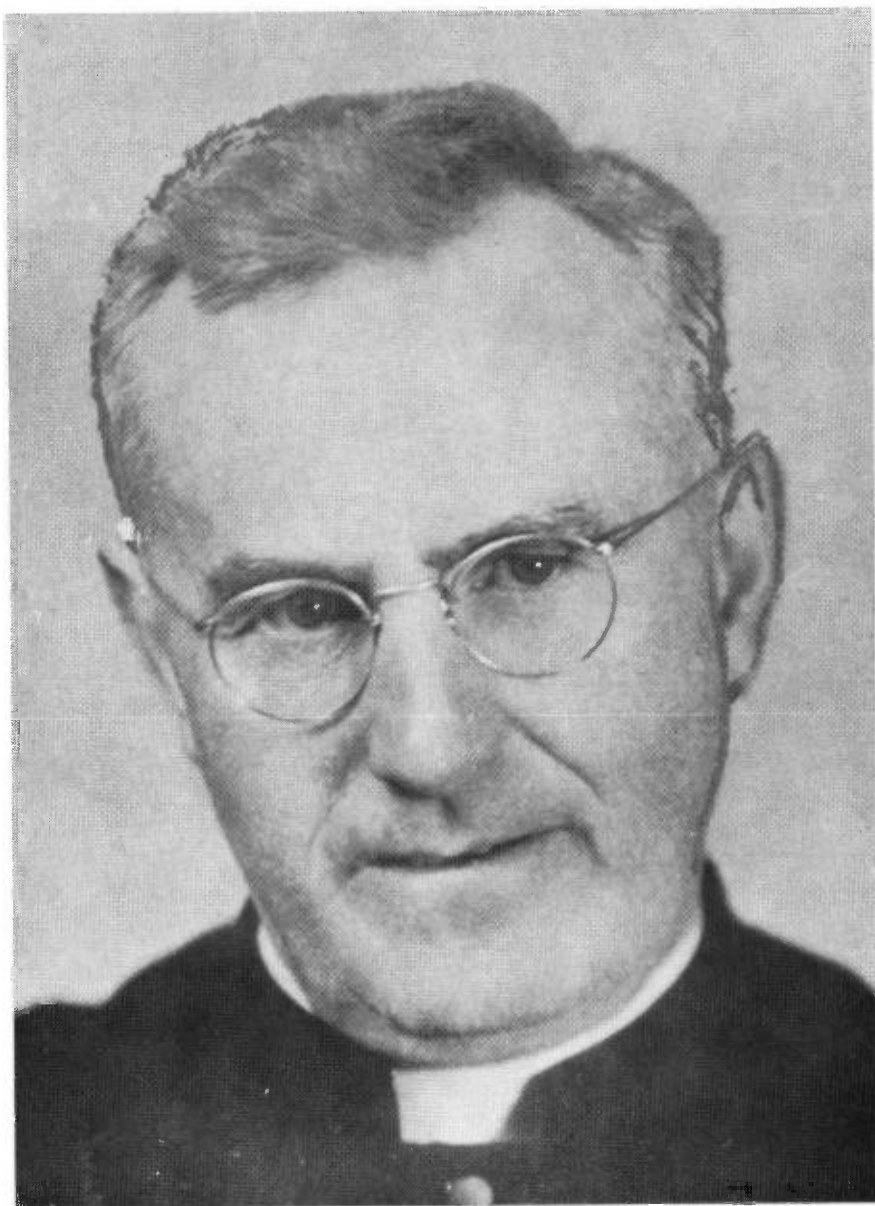


Louis J. Hilger and Mary E. Burkhiser were married at St. Mary's on January 15, 1907. Their children were John, Paul and Bernard Hilger. For many years Lou Hilger operated the Hilger Shoe Store on Main Street.



Married in Nebraska City in 1918, Charles and Maude (Gude) Henderson were the parents of Charles, Lawrence, Mary Catherine, Josephine, Patricia and Rosalie Henderson. This Henderson family farmed on McKissick's Island.





Father Daniel Sheehy

### Confirmation Classes

Two confirmation classes were confirmed during Father Sheehy's pastorate. In May of 1911 Bishop James Davis traveled from Davenport to confer the sacrament of Confirmation on Clara DeHaas, Daniel Gleeson, Maria Gleeson, Helen Gordon, Anna Gude, Leo Gude, George Hein, John Hein, Nicholas Hein, Raymond Hilger, William Hilger, Clyde Hydinger, Joseph Hydinger, Catherine Liess, Minnie Liess, Helen Miller, Maria Miller and Elizabeth Ritchie. In May of 1914 Bishop Austin Dowling, first Bishop of Des

Moines, visited St. Mary's to confirm Catherine Dignan, Maria Giggar, Genevieve Gordon, Joseph Gude, Lorena Gude, Carl Hein, Maria Hein, Alma Hilger, Ruth Hydinger, William Hydinger, Carl Miller, Anna Nies, Frank Nies, Frances Nix, Maria Nix, Maria O'Brien, Mervina O'Brien, Terence O'Brien.

Bishop Dowling would return to Hamburg when one of the largest classes would be confirmed at St. Mary's. On September 17, 1917 thirty-two youths from Hamburg, Percival, Glenwood and Pacific Junction were confirmed by Bishop Dowling. Boys confirmed were James Barrett, Martin Barrett, Orville Buhr, James Choate, William Choate, John Cullin, William Cullin, John Daily, Francis Flynn, Leo Flynn, John Gordon, Martin Gordon, Edward Grudle, John Gude, Robert Gude, Jacob Hein, Martin Hein, Paul Hilger, Philip Hilt, Paul Miller, Frederic Nies, and Laurence O'Brien.

Girls included Bessie Choate, Louisa Choate, Emma Agnes Cullin, Josephine Ferrin, Helen Grudle, Mary Gude, Lydia Halstad, Lulu Henderson, Loretta Hilger, Mary Hilger and Ida Morrow.

### Ordained in St. Louis

On June 10, 1910 Daniel Sheehy was ordained priest in the chapel of Kenrick Seminary by Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis. His first assignment was to St. Joseph's Parish in Winterset, where he remained only a few months. In December of 1910 Father Sheehy became pastor of St. Mary's in Hamburg. Since Shenandoah was no longer a mission of Hamburg, Father Sheehy was responsible for the mission in Pacific Junction. Father Sheehy



John Hein, son of Jacob and Anna Hein, is pictured second from left working in the apple orchards of Conception Abbey. A frequent visitor to the Benedictine Abbey, John found steady work there during the apple season.



Fr. Daniel Sheehy with a First Communion class of about 1915. In the first row are Corrinne Agnes Choate, Loretta Hilger, (unidentified), Lolita Trudeau, Marie Nies, and Fona Trudeau. Second row pictures Martin Barrett, Paul Hilger, William Choate, Jacob Hein, Fr. Sheehy, Frederic Nies, Jim Gude, and Martin Hein.

worked in Hamburg until October of 1916 when he became pastor of St. Boniface Church in Waukee.

Father Sheehy spent the rest of his priesthood serving parishes in Adair, St. Marys, and Casey; he was also chaplain at St. Joseph Academy in Des Moines. In January of 1944 he entered semi-retirement at St. Francis Hospital in Grinnell where he had limited duties as chaplain of the hospital. But on September 29, 1945 he was called to more active duty as pastor of St. Bernard's in Osceola. Apparently the Osceola assignment was too taxing for Father Sheehy, for he had to resign that post in January of 1946 and return to St. Francis Hospital in Grinnell.

Again in December of 1949 Father Sheehy was called out of retirement for a brief locum tenens assignment at St. Columbanus in Weston, Iowa. Father Sheehy finally retired permanently in Des Moines in May of 1951. He died on March 4, 1957 and was buried in Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines on March 7, 1959.

Father Sheehy was succeeded at St. Mary's by Father William Treacy, who was pastor from November, 1916 to July, 1918. Father Michael O'Connor was in Hamburg in the fall of 1918 until the arrival of Father Edmond O'Donnell in December of that year.



World War One pictures of Edmund Roup (taken at Nantes, France) and Raymond Roup, son of Joseph and Lena Roup. These were only two of many Fremont County residents who saw action in Europe during the First World War.

## **PART THREE**

### **LATER HISTORY OF THE PARISH**

#### **Father Edmond R. O'Donnell**

The man remembered as one of St. Mary's most colorful pastors is Father Edmond R. O'Donnell. Father O'Donnell came to St. Mary's in 1918 and holds the distinction of the longest tenure of any pastor of the parish. His pastorate spanned almost two decades.

Edmond O'Donnell was born in Limerick, Ireland on August 22, 1888 to William O'Donnell and Margaret Ryan. He completed his early education in his hometown of Limerick, then attended Mt. Melleray College in Waterford, Ireland for four years, graduating in 1910. Edmond O'Donnell continued at Mt. Melleray for one year's study of philosophy. After another year of philosophy at St. John's Seminary in Waterford, he began his theological studies at St. John's in 1912.

#### **Joins Des Moines Diocese**

On June 11, 1916 Edmond R. O'Donnell was ordained in Waterford, Ireland by Bishop Hackett of the Diocese of Cashel and Emly. At that time Bishop Dowling of Des Moines had asked for Irish priests to staff his newly formed diocese. Fr. Edmond O'Donnell chose the Des Moines Diocese because his brother, Fr. Patrick O'Donnell, had joined this diocese in 1911. Ordained by Bishop Dowling in 1914, Fr. Patrick O'Donnell was already working at St. Ambrose Cathedral when his younger brother Edmond came to southwest Iowa.

Father Edmond O'Donnell was officially incardinated into the Diocese of Des Moines in 1916 and in October of that year was assigned as assistant pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Red Oak. He remained in Red Oak until June of 1918 when he was assigned briefly to St. Anthony's Church in Des Moines. In December of 1918 Father O'Donnell received his first pastorate at St. Mary's in Hamburg. It was not without some apprehensions that Fr. O'Donnell accepted the Hamburg post. He was only two years ordained and not yet very familiar with the American culture.

But it was not long before Father O'Donnell's outgoing manner and love of a good limerick won him the friendship of the Hamburg townspeople, Protestants and Catholics alike. It was said that within a few days of his arrival in Hamburg, Father O'Donnell had met all of the businessmen on Main Street. He had soon developed a morning ritual: his housekeeper, Anna Kilmartin, would have breakfast ready after his morning Mass; he would then saunter through town visiting every shop and business, pick up the mail and return home for lunch. Father O'Donnell became a familiar sight standing on a street corner and talking with whomever passed by.

Father O'Donnell was remembered by a priest friend as a man who had a great love for his priesthood and a special devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary. He especially enjoyed the fellowship of other priests and rarely missed a priest's ordination, anniversary or funeral. He was disappointed if another priest was half a day's journey from Hamburg and did not plan to be his overnight guest.

## Active in Civic Affairs

Father O'Donnell always took a keen interest in sports events in Hamburg. He took a special interest in the football games of Hamburg High School and was more than just a fan at these events. He would pace the sidelines nodding to friends in the crowd, advising the coach on whom to send in, or regaling wide-eyed youngsters with stories about his own athletic abilities.

Father Ed O'Donnell numbered his membership in the Hamburg Kiwanis Club as one of his more important involvements. He liked getting together with the business and professional community and was often in demand as a speaker. He loved to swap jokes and stories and often used these in his talks.

Apparently Father O'Donnell did not view his ministry as limited solely to St. Mary's Parish. At the same time, he did not allow his involvement in community affairs to usurp the time or attention he devoted to his parish. He was keenly aware of the need for religious education of his people, especially of the children of the parish. One parishioner recalled from her gradeschool days the sight of Fr. O'Donnell strutting about the sanctuary as he instructed a catechism class, dramatically interpreting some incident from Bible history. In one class session he could be Moses, David or Goliath, Saint Paul or perhaps Jesus, depending on whatever role he felt like playing on a given day.

A 1930 issue of *The Catholic Messenger*, the old diocesan paper, mentions a mission conducted at Hamburg by Father Vincent, C. P., of St. Gabriel's Monastery in Des Moines. The mission was well attended and was one indication of the spiritual progress Father O'Donnell liked to see among his people.

## New Church Needed

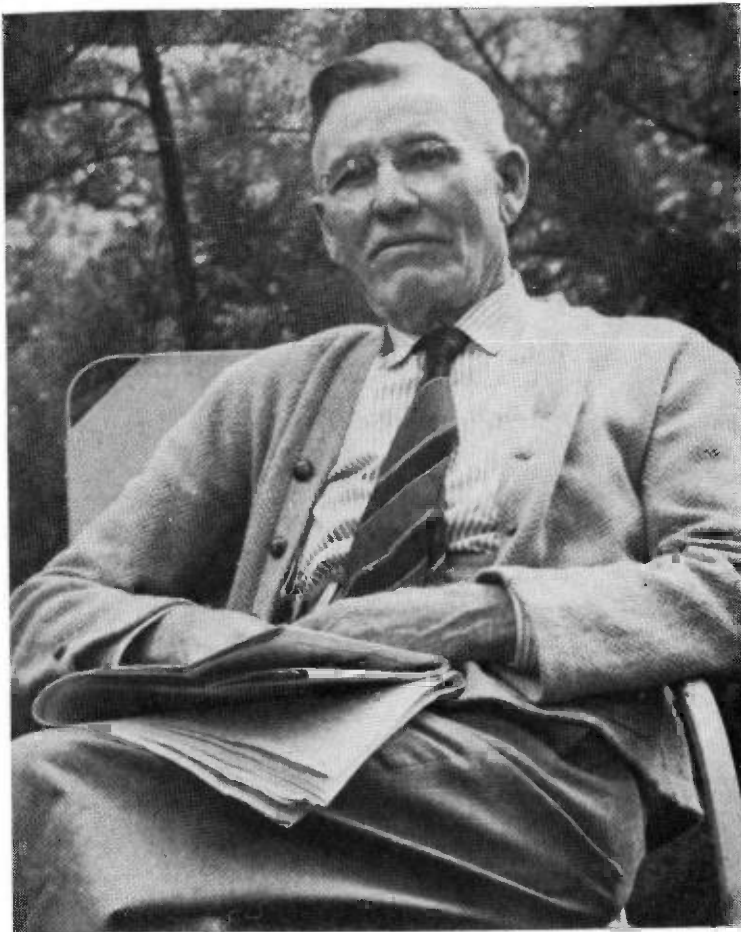
In the early 1920's Father O'Donnell and his parishioners began discussing a sorely needed project, the building of a new church. The original St. Mary's had fairly well served its purpose. The frequent floods and the moisture deposits under the church had caused cracks in the foundation and in the walls. The old structure was too small for a parish that had grown by a few families each year since the days of Father Pape.

Construction of the new St. Mary's began in June of 1924. The architect was Mr. Leo A. Daly of Omaha, who signed his contract on April 19, 1924. Mr. Daly attempted to create a building that would blend with the tone and environment of Hamburg, hence a small edifice with bell tower proportionate to the size of the building. The round lines of the eaves and the gables would give an effect of coziness reminiscent of the thatched roofs of old country cottages. The full basement would provide an area for dinners, meetings and other social events. The large sacristy would serve as a chapel for daily Masses.

The bids for the new church were received on May 3, 1924. The general contractor was Edward Green of Hastings, Iowa. The electrical contract went to Jack's Electric Shop of Hamburg. The electrical contract, signed by Jack Tennant, included labor and material at a cost of \$446.50. No record of a mechanical contractor has been preserved, but the excavation for the church was executed by local parishioners. Contracts were signed by Rev. E. R. O'Donnell, parish treasurer, and the parish secretary, Bernard F. Boyle, father of Mary Boyle.

The entire cost of the new church was fifty thousand dollars. By 1924 the parish had saved a few thousand dollars and pledges were taken for paying the mortgage on the new building. After several years the debt was finally paid through the pledges, parish dinners, card parties and other fund-raising ventures.

Some parishioners still recall Father O'Donnell's enthusiasm for the chicken dinners served by the parish. He enjoyed plucking and cleaning the chickens and had plenty of advice for anyone unacquainted with the best way to clean and cut a chicken. One parishioner today remembers Fr. O'Donnell's uninhibited way of asking for money to pay the parish debt and interest. His approach was not the most subtle. After exchanging pleasantries and assessing the weather, Fr. O'Donnell would suddenly say, "By the way, could you spare a little something for my interest?"



Bernard F. Boyle moved his family to Hamburg in 1920 and soon became active in parish affairs. He and his wife Margaret had moved from Atlantic to Glenwood, then opened a dry goods store on Main Street in Hamburg. His business skills proved valuable in parish fund raising and debt retirement. For several years he served as parish secretary, later as trustee. Bernard Boyle died on December 27, 1953 and was survived by his wife Margaret and daughter Mary.



## Dedication Ceremonies

The dedication of the new St. Mary's Church took place on Sunday, May 24, 1925. The Most Reverend Thomas Drumm, second Bishop of Des Moines, offered the Pontifical Mass assisted by fourteen priests of the diocese. There were visitors from Missouri, Nebraska and other parishes in Iowa.

The dedication was celebrated with great solemnity. A choir constituted especially for the service consisted of parishioners from the Hamburg-Nebraska City area. A quintet of strings accompanied the organ and the choir who sang the Latin chants and motets. As the introduction to his sermon, Bishop Drumm used the opening words of the Introit for the dedication of a Church: "Terribilis est locus iste . . . How awesome is this place." He exhorted the parishioners to open their hearts in gratitude to God for this new edifice which so amply illustrated the faith of the people of St. Mary's. "How awesome is this place . . . Awesome indeed, where the mysteries of salvation are celebrated among God's People." Some parishioners still in the parish who were present on that memorable occasion are Ira and Bessie Dovel, Hollis and Marie Wingate, Raymond and Geneva Hilger, Mark Wirth, Mary Boyle and Olive Roup.

Following the dedication of the new church, Bishop Drumm confirmed twenty-one members of St. Mary's Parish. The confirmands included Margaret Burgess, Henry Davenport, Ira Dovel, John Flynn, Bertyle Frede, Donald Frede, Myra Gordon, Marguerite Gude, Mary Hilger, Louise Hogan, Mary Hogan, William Kenney, James McKown, John Miller, Bertha Nies, John Nies, Agnes Nunn, Vera O'Brien, Edward Roark, Bertha Mae Williamson, and Crystal Williamson.

## I Remember May 24, 1925

Mrs. Edmund (Olive) Roup

It was a lovely spring morning, calm and sunny. And to add to our happiness and delight, our new St. Mary's Church at Hamburg would be dedicated that day. Services would be at ten o'clock that morning with Bishop Thomas Drumm of Des Moines officiating.

This was a great occasion for our parish. During the past year we attended Holy Mass on the second floor of the Colonial Theatre, climbing those long stairs and kneeling on the unfinished floors in the summer heat. Fortunately, work on the new church had progressed so well that we could use the church basement during the winter.

It was with a great thrill and a heart full of thanks that I entered the new church and seated myself among the congregation gathering for the ceremony. Father Theodore Sauer of St. Mary's, Nebraska City, had generously offered his choir and orchestral accompaniment for the occasion and their music filled the church.

We had regained the High Altar of the old St. Mary's and it looked beautiful in Irish linens and candelabra. Today we still have that altar just as lovely in gold and white.

At the appointed time the procession entered the church. It was very impressive, beautiful music, colorful vestments and the congregation standing in reverence, awaiting the entrance of their Bishop.

The cross bearer was Fr. Charles Burkhiser, a native son of St. Mary's with his altar boys, among them, Paul and John Hilger, followed by the visiting priests. I recall a few of them: Father Patrick O'Donnell, brother



of our pastor, Fr. John O'Donnell, cousin, from Early, Iowa; Fr. William Melville of Shenandoah, Fr. Theodore Sauer of Nebraska City, Father O'Connor, Fr. John Burkhiser, a native son, and Father Edmond O'Donnell, our pastor. Last came Bishop Drumm in his colorful robes, wearing his mitre and carrying his crosier. Then followed the Church Building Committee which had worked so faithfully on the new building: Bernard F. Boyle, Dan Hilger, Mart Gordon, Sr., Lou Hilger, Flo Sullivan and Frank Miller. They passed down the aisle and the clergy entered the sanctuary.



Olive Roup, author of the above article, has been an active member of the parish since 1921, working mainly as organist and sacristan. Olive grew up in Manchester, Iowa, attended the Benedictine Sisters' school at Clyde, Missouri and married Edmund Roup at St. Mary's in 1921. Mr. Roup died in March of 1964. Olive is the mother of two children and has eight grandchildren. She is one of the few parishioners who was present at the dedication of the second St. Mary's Church.

The dedication of the church followed, blessing of the altars, the altar stone and other ceremonies which I have forgotten, then the blessing of the church in general, dedicating it to the honor and glory of God.

A Pontifical Mass was sung by Bishop Drumm, assisted by his priests and choir, then confirmation followed the Mass. The ceremonies closed with the recessional, the Bishop blessing the congregation as he passed, the church bell ringing and everyone singing, "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name." A glorious service . . . we had a new church. St. Mary's was ours!

A reception and luncheon was hosted by the ladies of the parish, among them to my remembrance: Mrs. Frank Miller, Mrs. Flo Sullivan, Mrs. Clem Gude, Mrs. Joe Roup, Mrs. Bernard Boyle, Mrs. Dan Hilger, Mrs. Lou Hilger, Mrs. Joe Nies, Mrs. John Nies, Mrs. Wm. Keenan, Mrs. Walter Gordon, Jr., Mrs. Jake Hein, Mrs. Chas. O'Brien, Mrs. Hogan, Mrs. Loyal Shannan, Mrs. Matt Weisenberger, Mrs. Conde Burkhiser, Mrs. Sabe Choate, and the Misses Genevieve Dankof, Katie Dignan, Genevieve Gubser, Maude Roup, Agnes Lenihan and Nellie Gordon.

It was a wonderful day, and in the words of Edmund Ryan O'Donnell, late of County Limerick, Ireland: "It was good, It was great, it was wonderful!"

### Transferred to Stuart

On the third Sunday of January in 1936 Father O'Donnell opened his homily by saying, "If any of you have tears, you may prepare to shed them now." He then related that he was to be transferred to another parish and the parishioners were saddened by this news. He read a letter from Bishop Edward C. Daly appointing him pastor of All Saints Church in Stuart, Iowa.



Father Edmond O'Donnell

Father O'Donnell held the longest pastorate at St. Mary's, from 1918 to 1936.

Father O'Donnell remained at his post in Stuart until his untimely death in 1958.

Unfortunate circumstances surrounded the death of Father O'Donnell. In October of 1958 he had driven with his cousin, Father McNamara of Davenport to visit Father Patrick O'Donnell in Missouri Valley. Returning from Missouri Valley on Highway 83 during a rainstorm, the two priests encountered a violent gust of wind that blew their car off the highway and sent it crashing into a gulley. Father Ed O'Donnell was killed instantly. His friend Fr. McNamara died three days later. The accident occurred on the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, October 7, 1958.

Father Edmond O'Donnell was buried from St. Patrick's Church in Missouri Valley on October 9, 1958. Today Father O'Donnell rests in St. Patrick's Cemetery in Missouri Valley next to his brother, Father Patrick O'Donnell.



A group of young parishioners poses with Fr. O'Donnell in front of the new church, possibly a confirmation picture from May 25, 1928. Those who have been identified are Mary Ann Gordon and Anna Hein (center of first row); Bernard Hilger, Raleigh McIlvan, John Sullivan, Daniel J. Hilger and Laurence Gude (second row); Clara McIlvain (top row, far left), and Mary McIlvain and Irene Nies (top row, third and fourth from left).

### Denis Joseph Mangan

On January 25, 1936 Father Denis Mangan took up residence at St. Mary's in Hamburg. He was born in Ardlahas in Kerry on July 22, 1900. His high school studies were completed at Presentation Monastery in Killarney in 1920. He attended St. Brendan's College in Killarney and graduated in 1924. For philosophy and theology Denis Mangan was sent to St. Peter's Seminary in Wexford. He was ordained in Wexford by the Most Reverend William Codd, Bishop of Kerry, on May 19, 1929.

Father Mangan joined the Des Moines Diocese in 1929 and held several brief assignments at St. Ambrose Cathedral, Holy Family in Council Bluffs, Assumption in Churchville and St. Joseph's in Winterset. His first assignment of much duration was as assistant pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Creston in September of 1931. On September 15, 1934 Father Mangan returned to St. Ambrose Cathedral as assistant pastor where he remained until his transfer to Hamburg in 1936.

When Father Mangan became pastor of St. Mary's some of the debt on the church still remained; it is not known exactly how much. Father Mangan was concerned to pay off this debt. The parish continued to have dinners and other fund-raising affairs until the debt was liquidated by the early 1940's.



Father Denis J. Mangan  
Pastor of St. Mary's from 1936 to 1944

Joseph and Lena Roup, lifelong members of the parish, were the parents of Edmund, Maude, Raymond, Louise, Dorothy, and Catherine Roup. They lived on a 160 acre farm near Watson, but moved to Hamburg when their children were raised. Lena died in 1936 and in 1939 Joseph died following a stroke.



Lawrence Henderson, son of Charles and Maude Henderson, grew up in St. Mary's Parish and served as staff sergeant in the army infantry during the Second World War. On Feb. 7, 1945 he was killed in action in Habscheid, Germany shortly before his twenty-fifth birthday.

Father Mangan's pastorate spanned a critical time in the history of Hamburg and of the country — the War Years. In a town so far removed from the perils of the Second World War Father Mangan saw many young men of Hamburg go off to war, some of whom never returned.

In marked contrast to his predecessor, Father Mangan is remembered as a rather reserved, scholarly gentleman. He saw his main task as imparting the truths of salvation. He preferred meditation and study of the gospels to much participation in civic activities. He believed that the whole of Christian doctrine was summed up in the Ten Commandments and often used the simple directives of the Commandments for sermon material and convert instructions.

Interviewed in retirement many years after he left Hamburg, Father Mangan said that some of his happiest days were spent at St. Mary's. "We did not have a great deal in the way of physical facilities or money," he recalled, "but the faith of the people there was something remarkable." Father Mangan was always impressed by the hard work of his parishioners who had made good farmland out of what he observed to be "primitive brush country."



The Clem Maher Family moved to Sidney in 1937, the first of several Catholic families who eventually settled in the Sidney area. Seated left to right in this family portrait are (front row) Doris, Edna, Clem and Marty; (second row) Duane, Maurice, Grace, Leona, Dick and Marvin.



Picture of Jacob and Anna Hein taken on the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage, April 10, 1938. Jacob and Anna lived in the parish throughout their married life. Jacob died in 1939 at the age of 75. Anna died in 1946 at the age of 81.

Saint Mary's was Father Mangan's second longest pastoral assignment. He remained in Hamburg until September 7, 1944 when he became pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in Massena. Massena was his home for the next six years. On July 1, 1950 Father Mangan moved to Sacred Heart in Mondamin. He worked there until his retirement in 1974. Father Mangan now lives in retirement at the Marian Center in Council Bluffs.

The year 1937 was marked by a five hundred percent increase in the Catholic population of Sidney. This was due to the arrival of Clem and Edna Maher and their eight children: Maurice, Leona, Duane, Richard, Grace, Marvin, Doris and Martin. Clem and Edna were both raised on farms near Imogene and were married in St. Patrick's Church there.

Mrs. Maher recalled that when their family moved to Sidney the only Catholics living there were Mrs. Ned Stiles and Mrs. Francis Doty. "My husband was deputy sheriff and people were quite sociable to us," recalled Mrs. Maher, "until they found out we were Catholics, of course." Mrs. Maher noted two changes she has seen in the parish over the last forty years — the decline of anti-Catholic feeling and the increase in population of the parish. "If the church was half full on Sunday, we thought that was really a crowd. Then the Grudles moved closer and gradually more Catholics moved into Sidney. People are more sociable at church and you can get to know the priests better, so from what I've seen, I'd say we have a changed parish."

### **Reverend Patrick A. Flavin**

In September of 1944 Father Patrick A. Flavin came to Hamburg to replace Father Mangan. Father Flavin had been pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Massena since 1936.



Patrick A. Flavin was born in Clashmore, Ireland on June 25, 1900. His parents were John Flavin and Anastasia Troy. Having received his early education in his hometown of Clashmore, Patrick Flavin went to Waterford in 1915 to complete high school and attend Mt. Melleray College. In 1922 he graduated from St. John's Seminary in Waterford and studied theology there until 1926. He was ordained by Bishop Hackett of Waterford on June 20, 1926.

Father Flavin's first assignment was as assistant pastor at St. Francis Xavier in Council Bluffs. In September of 1928 he moved to St. Anthony's in Des Moines, then became chaplain of St. Joseph Academy in 1930. In 1931 he was assigned to Visitation Parish in Des Moines as assistant pastor. A year later he went to St. Patrick's in Neola as assistant until 1935. Fr. Flavin



Father Patrick A. Flavin

Father Flavin joined the Des Moines Diocese in 1926 and was pastor at St. Mary's from 1944 to 1955.



was appointed pastor of St. Patrick's in Massena in 1936, where he remained until his arrival in Hamburg on September 7, 1944.

There was probably no Irish priest in the diocese who was as little inclined to forget his Irish heritage as Father Flavin. It was said among the priests that no St. Patrick's Day party would be complete without the presence of Father Flavin himself. Father Flavin gloried in his Irish background and longed for the day when he could visit the old sod again. To this end he saved his dollars every month and would not even permit himself the luxury of a car. For transportation he had to rely on the good graces of parishioners such as John Hilger and Charles Henderson. One of his special delights was visiting his older parishioners, especially those who had emigrated from Ireland.

On March 15, 1955 Father Flavin suffered a heart attack while a patient at Mercy Hospital in Council Bluffs. He died a few hours later. Clem Maher, Edmund Roup and Hollis Wingate brought his body back to Hamburg for the funeral liturgy, which was celebrated by Msgr. Coughlin of Council Bluffs, Father Flavin's cousin. Olive Roup played for the Requiem celebrated on March 17, the Feast of St. Patrick. Father Flavin was interred in Council Bluffs in St. Joseph Cemetery.



The First Communion Class of 1952 featuring Helen Hein, Mina Mae Choate, Mary Lou Hilger, Theresa Gude, and Gloria Zuck, with Father Flavin and two Mercy sisters.

### Father Othmar L. Kaufman

Othmar L. Kaufman was born on October 1, 1915 in Ottawa, Ohio to Frederick H. Kauman and Emma Theresa Schroeder. The five boys and two girls in this family grew up on a farm near Leipsic, Ohio. Othmar's elementary schooling took place in a one room country school near Leipsic. He attended high school at Sts. Peter and Paul in Ottawa, about fifteen miles

from his home. In January of his first year of high school, Othmar's parents were involved in a car-train collision in which his father was killed and his mother seriously injured. Othmar and his older brother left school at this time to help their mother with the family farm.

In September of 1931 Othmar Kauman entered high school at the Pontifical Seminary Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio. Here he remained until his ordination on May 30, 1943. There were so many priests in his home diocese of Toledo that Othmar decided to study for a diocese where there was a greater need for priests. As he began his theological studies, Othmar Kaufman was incardinated into the diocese of Des Moines in December of 1939.

Father Kaufman was ordained at the Pontifical Seminary Josephinum on May 30, 1943 by then Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Amleto Cicognani. He came to Des Moines in June of 1943 where he was assigned as assistant pastor at Visitation Parish. An assistant pastor at Visitation, Father Kaufman taught in Visitation Grade School, coached parochial league basketball, and helped Monsignor Joseph Hansen with the many pastoral duties of a large city parish.

In July of 1950 Father Kaufman was assigned to St. Francis Xavier Church in Council Bluffs where he would work with Monsignor James P. Danahey for the next three years. At that time St. Francis Parish had a high school in which Fr. Kaufman taught religion, mathematics and history; he also coached basketball and baseball. In September of 1953 Father Kaufman was transferred to St. Boniface Parish in Westphalia.

Father Kaufman arrived at St. Mary's in Hamburg on March 17, 1955 to fill the pastorate left vacant by the death of Father Flavin. Soon after coming to Hamburg, Father Kaufman set about remodeling the rectory kitchen. Many parishioners helped to tear out the old back porch of the rectory and build a garage. The roof of the church was leaking in several places and badly needed repair. Before long the old wood shingles were torn off and replaced.

A 1959 article in the diocesan newspaper carried the story of improvements at St. Mary's. Preparing for a day's work are Hollis Wingate, Wilbur Travis, Martin Hein and Martin Goracke, only a few of the many men and women who spent tireless hours improving the parish's physical plant.



## Basement Remodeled

The most impressive project undertaken by the parishioners during Father Kaufman's pastorate was the extensive work done on the church basement. For years water had seeped into the basement, making it un-useable for part of the year. Many parishioners helped in digging a trench around the exterior of the basement so that waterproofing insulation could

Three old friends, Emma Gude, Mary Hilger and Anna Nies pose in front of the church they love. Until their final years all three ladies were very active in parish affairs and were especially helpful with the parish dinners. Emma Gude died on March 10, 1960 at the age of 85, Mary Hilger died December 2, 1970 at age 90, and Anna Nies ended her 90 years on April 6, 1964.



Father Othmar Kaufman, pastor from 1955 to 1961, stands in front of the rectory with Merle Hein and Marie Rice, whom Father described as two of his best and hardest workers.

be applied. After the waterproofing was accomplished, a new cement floor was laid in the basement and tiled. New bathrooms were installed in the basement, and the furnace room was separated from the kitchen. Finally, the kitchen in the church basement was remodeled and new cupboards were built. The entire project of the church basement cost about \$4500.00. But so much of the labor was contributed, that the parish saved thousands of dollars in volunteered services. The plumbing ability of Hollis Wingate was put to good use, as was the financial acumen of trustees Martin Goracke and Martin Hein, and Gerald Gude, treasurer of the Holy Name Society.

An unfortunate incident surrounding the remodeling of the church basement was the tragic death of John and Pat Gordon in 1960. John and Pat had been very active in the remodeling project and on June 21 had gone to Sidney to buy some angle irons. Returning from Sidney on Highway 275, the Gordon vehicle was struck by a northbound car. The result was the four-fold fatality of John and Pat Gordon and the two occupants of the other vehicle. An autopsy later revealed that the Omaha driver had suffered a heart attack at the wheel, causing his car to go out of control.

As a fitting tribute to the work of John and Pat Gordon, the parish engraved a plaque over the entrance to the church basement. The plaque stands today to commemorate the life and work of these two fine men.

Joe Travis, Steve Travis and Michael Shellberg made their First Holy Communion on June 11, 1961. Behind them is Cheryl Sebek, another first communicant.

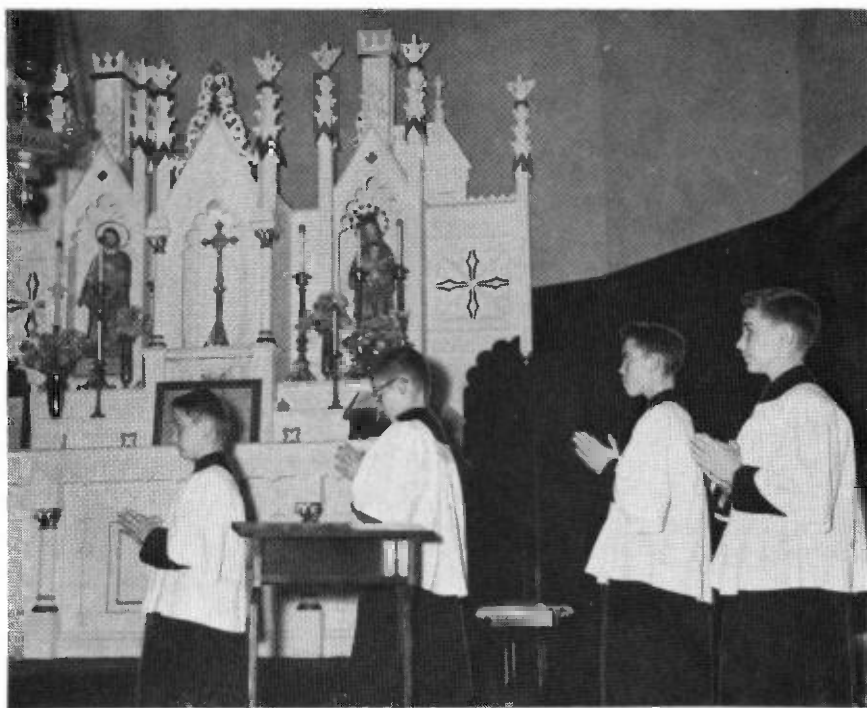


In the spring of 1957 the first chicken dinner in many years was resurrected. There had been a tradition in the parish to serve a chicken dinner on Palm Sunday. On Palm Sunday of 1957 about 350 of the townspeople came to St. Mary's to feast on the delicious chicken dinner with all the trimmings. Palm Sunday of 1958 brought an even larger crowd of 450. The The Palm Sunday Chicken Dinner was well received for several years to come. Under the able leadership of Josephine Zanker and the ladies of the Altar Society, this event netted several hundred dollars for the parish each year.

In June of 1961 Father Kaufman was assigned as full time pastor of Holy Rosary Parish in Glenwood. He had been serving Glenwood on a part-

time basis and was asked to be its first full time pastor when it became large enough to be an independent parish.

When he visited St. Mary's for the Centennial Celebration on December 8, 1974, Father Kaufman recalled the fine spirit of cooperation that existed in Hamburg during his pastorate. He remembered with some amusement the amount in the parish treasury at the time of his 1955 arrival: \$4.69. Father Kaufman recently remarked on his pleasant memories of an active Holy Name Society and a hard-working Altar Society, as well as the devoted catechetical work of Mable Hilger and Leona Travis. He said that it was a pleasure to be the pastor of a parish whose strength lay not in numbers but in the zeal and spiritual depth of its people.



Tommy Rice, Jimmy Million, Tom Hein and Pat Wray prepare to serve Mass (November, 1959).

In June of 1961 Father John Cunningham was assigned as pastor of St. Mary's. Father Cunningham remained in Hamburg until October 1, 1962 when he became pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Imogene.

In October of 1962 Father Cunningham was succeeded by Father Raphael O'Malley, O.S.B., a Benedictine priest from St. Benedict's Abbey in Atchison, Kansas. Father O'Malley worked in Hamburg until May of 1966, when he returned to his Abbey.

Father John Nemmers came to Hamburg as pastor on May 11, 1966. Father Nemmers revived the youth program of the parish and was concerned to initiate the reforms decreed by Vatican Council II (1962-1965). These reforms included greater participation of the people at Mass, including community singing and Mass facing the people. In November of 1968 Father Nemmers received a new assignment in Des Moines.



First Communion Class of May 14, 1967 included Susan Gordon, Debra Mitchell, Janet Hall, Jeri Jo Watton, Michelle Case, Lori Travis, Mary Borrego, Linda Zimmerman, Monica Hendrickson; second row: Simon Lewis, Joseph Sitzman, Robert Gude, Scott Mayberry, Daniel McMahon, Kent Rallis; third row: Jeffrey Hall, Scott Gilman, Martin Van Soyoc and David Gilman. With the class are Sister Pauletta, Fr. John Nemmers and Sister Rose Eva.



### **Msgr. Peter N. Schmitz**

On November 18, 1968 Msgr. Peter N. Schmitz was transferred from St. Anthony's Parish in Des Moines to St. Mary's in Hamburg. A native of Panama, Iowa, Msgr. Schmitz' early schooling took place in his hometown. After graduation from high school in 1934 he attended Dowling Junior College in Des Moines.

In 1936 Peter Schmitz was sent to Rome to study philosophy and theology at the Gregorian University. But in 1940 as war threatened to engulf all of Europe, the American bishops recalled their students to the United States. Peter Schmitz returned to this country to finish his theological studies at Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis. He was ordained by Bishop Gerald T. Bergan in his hometown parish church of St. Mary's in Panama on May 14, 1942.

Father Schmitz was appointed associate pastor of St. Anthony's Church, Des Moines, in June of 1942 until October of 1944. He held several posts in the western part of the diocese until July 1, 1959 when Bishop Edward C. Daly appointed him pastor of St. Anthony's Church in Des Moines.

Approaching the eve of his silver jubilee as a priest, Father Peter Schmitz received a special honor from Pope Paul VI in January of 1966. He was desig-



nated a Domestic Prelate by Pope Paul. Accompanying this honor was the title "Right Reverend Monsignor."

In November of 1968 Monsignor Schmitz was appointed pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Hamburg. When Msgr. Schmitz celebrated Mass on his arrival in Hamburg, Mr. and Mrs. George Neuzil and Mrs. Olive Roup were present to greet him and welcome him to the parish. During his pastorate more new furniture was donated to the church, a lectern, sanctuary chairs, credence table and usher tables.

Not long before Monsignor's arrival in Hamburg, the beautiful trees that graced the church lawn had been killed by Dutch Elm disease. It was a difficult task to remove the huge elms, all of which had succumbed to the disease. But with the help of the Interstate Nursery and the local parishioners, the majestic old elms were soon replaced by about twenty small trees to surround the parish property. With the aid of Tom Million and other parishioners with a green thumb, Msgr. Schmitz took a justifiable pride in the appearance of the church lawn and the Catholic Cemetery.

In the years 1968 to 1971 the Confraternity of Christianity Doctrine program of the parish was enriched by the help of four Ursuline Sisters from Nebraska City. The sisters helped the grade school students prepare for reception of the sacraments. They also assisted the lay teachers in preparing their classes.

On August 18, 1971 Monsignor Schmitz was transferred to a new assignment. Assisted by Hollis Wingate and Mark Wirth, he moved his belongings to Woodbine, Iowa. Monsignor remained at this post only a few months. In January of 1972 he was named associate pastor of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny, Iowa where he is stationed at present.

### Recent Pastors

In November of 1971 Father Gordon Gittins, a native of Guthrie Center, replaced Msgr. Schmitz as pastor of St. Mary's. Father Gittins was also assigned as pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Imogene and for fifteen months had charge of both parishes. In January of 1973 Father Gittins took a teaching position at St. Albert High School in Council Bluffs. This assignment included charge of St. Columbanus, a small parish in Weston.



On April 1, 1973 Father Jacob Weiss arrived in Hamburg as pastor. Father Weiss had been assistant pastor at Earl- ing and Portsmouth, and had taught at Dowling High School in the early years of his ministry. Later he held pastorates at Rosemont-Milo, Massena-Bridgewater and Corning. Before coming to Hamburg Father Weiss had been involved in Urban Ministry for the Des Moines Area Council of Churches and served as Newman Chaplain at Drake University and Still College. Father Weiss had been in Hamburg eight months when because of illness he took a year's health leave in Missouri to regain his strength. After Father Weiss went on leave, Father Joseph Ryan came to Hamburg as a temporary pastor. Father Ryan was in Hamburg from January to April of 1974.



On May 2, 1974 Father James Polich was appointed pastor of St. Mary's. A native of Des Moines, Father Polich attended Immaculate Conception Seminary, Loras College in Dubuque, Aquinas Institute of Theology in Dubuque, and St. John's University School of Divinity in Collegeville, Minnesota before his ordination on May 29, 1971.

Father Polich's first assignment was to Visitation Church and Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel in Des Moines. In September of 1972 Father Polich filled the chaplaincy position at Glenwood State Hospital-School in Glenwood before coming to Hamburg.

When Father Polich arrived in Hamburg parishioners were already making plans for a Golden Jubilee celebration to be held in the fall of 1974. The jubilee would commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the second St. Mary's Catholic Church. While digging into old parish records kept at Shenandoah, the jubilee committee discovered that 1974 was indeed the centenary of the parish. The jubilee committee immediately began planning for a centennial celebration to be held on December 8, 1974.

Wilbur Travis, Verona Mitchell and Lloyd Sebek formed a central coordinating committee in charge of all the centennial festivities. They were assisted by parishioners who organized other committees such as the liturgy committee, the dance committee, the Centennial History committee, and the groups in charge of the Centennial Ball, the decorations, the buffet reception and publicity.

St. Mary's Parish was a beehive of activity in the final days before the centennial weekend. But all committees, involving about one hundred parishioners, had completed their work by the evening of December 7 when the first centennial activity took place, the Centennial Ball at the Sidney Legion Club at 8:00 p.m.

## Pontifical Centennial Mass

Sunday, December 8 brought guests and former parishioners to Hamburg for the Pontifical Mass of the Immaculate Conception at 2:30 p.m. Bishop Maurice Dingman, wearing the beautiful vestments made by June Van Scyoc, was the principal concelebrant of the Mass. He was assisted by Father Jim Polich, pastor, and Msgr. Peter Schmitz, former pastor. Other concelebrants included Fr. Raphael O'Malley of Wellsville, Missouri, Fr. Othmar Kaufman of Glenwood, Iowa and Fr. John Cunningham of Des Moines, all former pastors of St. Mary's. Fr. Gordon Gittins and Fr. Jacob Weiss sent their congratulations and their regrets that they could not attend.

The congregation stood as the church bell rang and organ and trumpets intoned the entrance song, "You Are The Glory of Jerusalem," a marian hymn composed for the Centennial Mass. The choir, under the direction of Ed Beam, consisted of Olive Roup, Leona Travis, Marice Carter, Phyllis Grudle, Connie Styskal, Janel Merical, Helen Maher, Jim Martin, and Joe Travis.

Leading the procession into the church were the senior members of the parish, including Raymond and Geneva Hilger, Hollis and Marie Wingate, Jennie Gordon, Mary Boyle, Irene Nies, Caroline Sebek, Martin and Merle



Before the Centennial Mass, Bishop Dingman paused to greet some of the parishioners who had been in the parish a long time.

Left - Fr. Polich introduces Bishop Dingman to Ira and Bessie Dovel, lifelong residents of Hamburg.

Lower Left - The Bishop enjoys a happy moment with Raymond and Geneva Hilger and Hollis and Marie Wingate.

Below - The Bishop greets Edna Maher of Sidney and Berniece Petree of Watson. Looking on is Mabel Hilger. The Bishop was pleased to meet the oldest parishioner, Jennie Gordon who ended her 82 years on May 30, 1975.





Bishop Dingman chats with Rosetta Wirth before the Centennial Mass. Behind the Bishop are John Hilger of Hamburg and his brother, Paul Hilger, who grew up in St. Mary's and returned for the centennial celebration.

Hein, Ira and Bessie Dovel, Mildred Duncan, Velma and Myra Gordon, John and Mable Hilger, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hilger and Rosetta Wirth. Some of these parishioners had been lifelong residents of the parish.

Servers in the procession were Brian and Brad Dalton, Kenneth Sebek, Tom Mitchell, Tim and Terry Travis, Leonard Styskal, Jim Adamek, Martin Van Scyoc, Mike Hendrickson, and Mark and Bob Gude, main servers. Following the servers were priests from parishes in the Shenandoah region and from Nebraska City.

Bishop Dingman's homily for the Centennial Mass opened with congratulations to the parish on one hundred years of service to the community



The congregation stands as the procession led by twelve servers enters the church for the celebration of the Pontifical Centennial Mass of the Immaculate Conception.



With Fr. Polic and Msgr. Schmitz Bishop Dingman takes the presidential chair and signals the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word. Joan Hess and Henry Martin open the Liturgy of the Word with readings from the Book of Genesis and Paul's Letter to the Ephesians.

of the Hamburg-Sidney area. He asked the parishioners to remember the many deceased pastors of the parish who had planted the seed of the Gospel in this part of Iowa. As the theme of his homily, the Bishop held up his crosier and explained the motto on his coat of arms, "Ecclesia Agricultura — the Church is a field to be planted." He spoke of what an open field the church of any age really is, anxious to receive the seed of God's word, so that it can return a rich harvest to the Lord.

The Centennial Mass ended with the joyful song, "Let Everyone Praise." After Mass the congregation followed the bishop to the church hall where the reception committee had prepared a feast befitting a centennial celebration. Parishioners and guests marveled at the blue, gold and white decorations of the parish hall, the work of John and Joyce Travis, Kathy Aranza, Jerry and Robin Travis, Tom and Emerita Steg and John and Sue Beal. Several ladies of the parish, including Mable Hilger, Verona Mitchell, Helen Watton, Alma Selk and Jeri Jo Watton helped to serve the delicious roast beef buffet dinner. Preparing the dinner were Max Moore, Josephine Zanker, Connie Adamek, and their helpers Marilyn Gude, Ruth Folkes, Marie Rice, Dorothy Moore, Dolores Styskal and many others. After dinner the Bishop and parishioners examined Ray Aranza's charcoal sketches of the first and second Catholic churches in Hamburg.

Before returning to Des Moines, Bishop Dingman thanked the parishioners for their hospitality and remarked that he had seen few finer celebrations of a parish centennial. Everyone agreed that it was a weekend that would be remembered for some time to come.



Standing ready to serve all the parishioners and guests who came to celebrate the parish centennial are Jeri Jo Watton, Alma Selk, Helen Watton, Verona Mitchell and Mable Hilger, only a few of the many ladies and men who provided the hospitality. A beef dinner was served following the Centennial Mass.



The centennial year was marked by several events of importance to the parish community. On March 7, 8 and 9, 1975, St. Mary's hosted a parish mission, a weekend of renewal. In 1974 Pope Paul VI had proclaimed 1975 a Holy Year of Reconciliation and Renewal. As a way of commemorating the Holy Year, the parish mission emphasized living out the sacraments of initiation — baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist. A mission team of fourteen Catholics from around the diocese visited St. Mary's and were weekend guests of various parishioners. Led by Father Frank Bognano and Judge Anthony Critelli, a deacon, the mission team witnessed to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives and helped parishioners to see practical ways of putting their faith to work.



First Communion Class of 1974

With Fr. Polich are Larry Hess, Victoria Dalton, Gregg Martin, Jeff Phillips, Brenda Dalton, and their teacher, Mary Ann Athen.



First Communion Class of 1975

The 1975 Class featured Tim Adamek, Mark McMahon, Jeff Folkes, Teresa Hess and Andrea Jamison.

On April 30, 1975, Bishop Maurice Dingman returned to Hamburg, this time to celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation. On that occasion nineteen parishioners received the grace of the Holy Spirit: Tom Aranza, Edwin Beam, Brad Dalton, Brian Dalton, Mike Hendrickson, Shelley Hendrickson, Janet Long, Monica Hendrickson, James Mayberry, Teri Mayberry, Tom Mayberry, Carolyn McLaren, Elaine McMahon, Linda Mitchell, Angeleen Styskal, Rita Styskal, Lori Sturm, Lori Travis, and Martin Van Scyoc. At the confirmation dinner Bishop Dingman recalled the parish centennial and remarked on what a joyful event it was.

The centennial year ended with a dance at the Sidney Legion Club on November 29, 1975. The number of parishioners who turned out for fun and fellowship was surprising considering the weather that evening, which was not as kind as it had been a year earlier.

St. Mary's centennial year closes a chapter in the story of a parish that has kept the flame of faith burning in southwest Iowa and northwest Missouri. This story is not the tale of a parish that has grown by leaps and bounds from its beginning. In fact the parish has not even doubled in size since the first forty families proudly erected their little brick church in 1874. St. Mary's Parish today is simply the result of the prayer and work of its people through the years. Whatever it chooses to become will be largely the result of the prayer and work of its people through the next hundred years.

One hundred years from now the parishioners, the pastor and the church building may be different, but the one constant that will surely remain will be the faith of the apostles transmitted to successive generations. The Word of the Lord will be heard by different ears, but it will be the same message of salvation. The Eucharist will be received by different hearts, but it will be the same Body of Christ. Each Sunday as Catholic Christians gather to share their faith, they will know in their hearts that "whenever you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes in glory." (I Cor. 11:26)

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On Your Centennial

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SUCH A FINE CHURCH  
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**YOU HAVE OUR VERY BEST WISHES**

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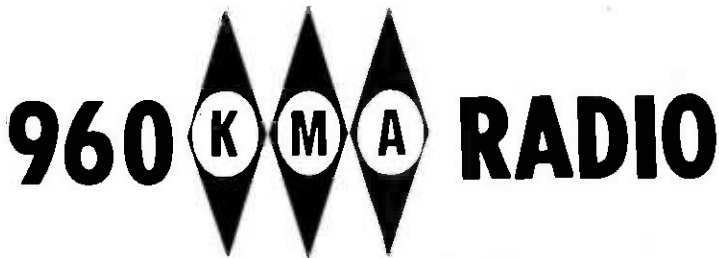
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