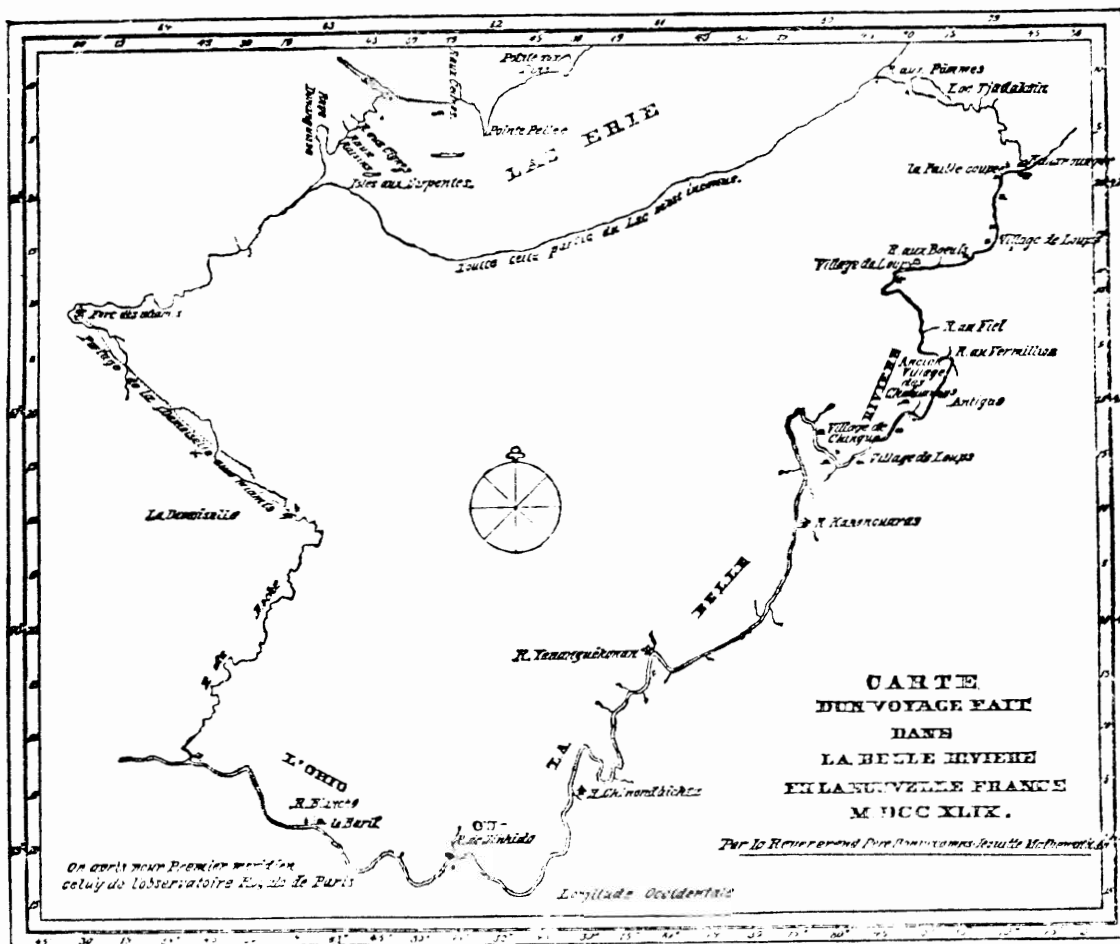


REV. MSGR. H. E. MATTINGLY
EDITOR

197 EAST GAY STREET
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215

FATHER BONNECAMPS' MAP



Above is a copy of the map of Ohio made in 1749 by Father Joseph Pierre de Bonbecamps, Jesuit scientist, who accompanied the French expedition of Joseph Celoron de Blainville from Quebec down the Ohio River (See article in the Catholic Record Society "Bulletin" of November, 1975.) The map is found facing page 63 of Ohio: First Fruits of the Ordinance of 1787 by Rufus King (Boston, 1888). King notes that to Father Bonbecamps "Ohio owes the first map of her boundaries or outlines yet discovered." The title in the lower right corner of the map reads: *Carte dun voyage dans la belle riviere en la Nouvelle France MDCCLIX. Par la Revererend (sic!) Pere Bonbecamps, Jesuite Mathematicien* (Map made during the voyage down the beautiful river in New France, 1749. By the Rev. Father Bonbecamps, Jesuit, mathematician.) In the center of the map (under the circle)

is the Indian name for the Muskingum River - R. Yenanguehonan. One of the lead plates buried by Celoron during his expedition was found on the bank of the Muskingum. Directly below (in the map) on the south bank of the Ohio River is the Indian name for the present Great Kanawha River in West Virginia - R. Chinondaichta. To the left of this and under the word "OU" is the designation of the Scioto River - R. de Sinhioto. The expedition spent several days here, and this is most likely the first place that Mass was celebrated in that part of the State of Ohio.

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THE INCORPORATION OF THE LITERARY SOCIETY
OF ST. JOSEPH'S, SOMERSET, OHIO

By Donald M. Schlegel

The recent razing of St. Joseph's Priory near Somerset, Ohio, and the dispersal of its library has brought to an end the major educational efforts of the Dominican Order in the area of Perry County. At this time it, therefore, seems appropriate to present one of the documents which led to the foundation of the educational institution.

The land on which St. Joseph's is located was entered by Jacob Dittoe on August 19, 1809 (1). Jacob transferred his title to the land to Rev. Edward D. Fenwick, O.P., the Dominican missionary to Ohio, in May, 1818 (2), and seven months later the log chapel of the first permanent parish in Ohio was dedicated to God. Father Fenwick became the first bishop of Cincinnati in 1822 and, since he no longer represented the Dominican Order, it was soon agreed that the title to the property should be transferred from him to that body. To hold the land in the name of the group and not in that of any one individual, the Dominicans were required to apply to the state legislature, as provided by Ohio's original state constitution, Article VIII, Section 27:

That every association of persons, when regularly formed within this state, and having given themselves a name, may, on application to the legislature, be entitled to receive letters of incorporation, to enable them to hold estates, real and personal, for the support of their schools, academies, colleges, universities, and for other purposes (3).

Accordingly, Fathers Stephen Montgomery and Nicholas Young wrote a petition which they gave to Jacob Catterlin, the state senator representing Perry and Morgan Counties. This petition was introduced in the senate on December 30, 1824:

Mr. Catterlin presented the petition of S. H. Montgomery and A. D. Young (sic!), praying that the legislature would grant them an act of incorporation for the promotion of literature, &c., in the county of Perry, near Somerset (4).

A senate committee returned a bill of incorporation on January 4, 1825; it was amended and passed by the senate on January 11 and sent to the house of representatives. The house considered the bill on January 17, amended it, and returned it to the senate on the 19th. The senate considered and agreed to the house amendments on the next day and the final act, as given here, was enrolled on January 28, 1825, only thirty days after the initial petition had been presented (5).

An act to incorporate the Literary Society of St. Joseph's.

Sec. 1. Be enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Ohio, that John A. Hill, S.H. Montgomery, Thomas Martin and D. A. O'Leary, their associates and successors be, and they are hereby created a body politic and corporate with perpetual succession, under and by the name of "The Literary Society of St. Joseph's" and by that name may sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, in any court of justice in this state, and shall have a common seal which they may break, alter or destroy at pleasure.

Sec. 2. That the said society shall have authority to erect and establish an Academy at St. Joseph's in the County of Perry, an Academy at the city of Cincinnati in the County of Hamilton, and an Academy at Canton, in the County of Stark, all in the state of Ohio; and for that purpose to purchase, receive and hold by gift, grant or devise, any property, real or personal, legal or equitable, and the same alien, exchange or dispose at pleasure.

Sec. 3. That said society shall have power to enact by laws for their own government, the institutions under their charge, and for the admission of new members; and that they may thereby create such officers as they may deem necessary for their government and the management of their funds: Provided, That such by laws are not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of this state or of the United States.

Sec. 4. That said corporation shall consist of not less than three nor more than twenty members.

Sec. 5. That the first meeting of said corporation under this act may be holden at St. Joseph's in Perry County, on or before the first Monday in July next, and a majority of all the members of the corporation shall form a quorum.

Sec. 6. That nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize an appropriation of the funds of this corporation to any other use than Literary purposes; and that any future legislation may alter, amend or repeal any of the provisions of this act: Provided, That no such alteration or amendment shall affect the title of said company to any property acquired under this act: Provided also, That the clear annual income of all the real and personal estate of the said society shall never exceed twelve thousand dollars. (6)

The parish, which preceded the priory and college, has survived them both, though the present congregation is small. This is only fitting, for even before the establishment of the college or the large Dominican community, St. Joseph's had an identity as a secular community or settlement unto itself. This is reflected in this act of incorporation, wherein St. Joseph's is mentioned along with Cincinnati and Canton as a unique community. This concept also appears in the statement of Christopher Stahley, a former Napoleonic soldier who migrated from Alsace to Ohio in 1822. Stahley stated that on the last stage of his journey he pushed all of his earthly possessions in a wheelbarrow as he walked from Zanesville "to St. Joseph's" (7), not to Somerset or to Reading township. This concept apparently was due to the attitude of many of the early Catholic settlers, farm owners and farm laborers,

whose reason for settling there was to be near the parish church; the proximity of the village of Somerset was only incidental to them. Only a few years later this separate community identity seems to have died out among the laity as the forests were cleared, roads were built, the use of farm machinery increased and caused a reduction in the farm population, and the children and grandchildren of the settlers moved to Somerset and other towns where Catholic churches, "daughters" of St. Joseph's, were established.

- (1) Tract Book and Entries, Congress Lands, 22 Ranges and U. S. Military Lands, Ohio Auditor of State's Office, Vol. I, page 311.
- (2) Perry County Deed Record Book, Vol. A, page 22.
- (3) Acts of the State of Ohio... also... Constitution of the State of Ohio, Vol. III; Chillicothe, 1805; page lxxv.
- (4) Journal of the Senate of the State of Ohio; being the First Session of the Twenty-third General Assembly....: Columbus, 1824, pages 122-123.
- (5) Ibid. pp. 134, 136, 143, 212 and 249.
Also, Journal of the House of Representatives... Twenty-third General Assembly.....; Columbus, 1824; pp. 257, 273, 276 and 278.
- (6) Acts of a Local Nature, Passed at the First Session of the Twenty-third General Assembly of the State of Ohio, begun and held in the Town of Columbus, December 6, 1824....; Columbus, 1825, pp. 44-45.
- (7) Howe, Henry, Historical Collections of Ohio; published by the State of Ohio, 1898; Vol. I, page 933; Stahley's story was originally published in the "Cincinnati Enquirer."

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SYLVESTER ROSECRANS' CONVERSION
(Continued)

(Excerpts from the "Journal" of Sylvester H. Rosecrans, seminarian, and later first Bishop of Columbus, published here through the courtesy of the Archives, University of Notre Dame.)

. Moreover I did not like my companions. I did not know enough to like virtue. There were some there exceedingly virtuous; and if I had loved virtue I would have sought their company. There was Dr. Sweeney, an exceedingly virtuous retiring man. He was very quiet and very studious. The same of McCarron (McCannon?). But I did not seek the company of them but rather of those who flattered my vanity, of those who were younger and lighter.

One night Father Legouais (1) called me up to his room. I talked a great deal, but it was only about the emptiness of Protestantism. Father Legouais recounted to me a miracle. I remember he did not seem pleased with my volubility. He did not encourage it. Would that then I had less pride and presumption. I would (have) seen his wisdom and would have put myself under his direction and in that case, happy had I been! Instead of making my first Communion so late and afterwards instead of going to Communion so seldom, I would have gone oftener and with better preparation. Ah! Father Legouais was the man to be my director. He was full of the Holy Ghost, and had a peculiar talent for instructing even those who did not wish to be instructed. He penetrated beneath the exterior of politeness which the world uses and met on common ground as a Christian whomsoever he encountered. There was an unction of divine grace in his very manner. Ever that foolish pride has followed me by which I avoided such a man. Foolish that I was!

Once it occurred to me that I might perhaps one day be a priest. I shuddered at the thought under the influence of feelings of an ancient kind. I then thought of so many Protestant families. I who had such hopes of political advancement; I who had figured to myself such a life of proud and stern voluptuousness, I be a priest! I who had determined to live among the refined as first, to astonish men by showing that I could do and would do for power and advancement. I! shrink into a priest, live out my life among the poor unknown uncared for except as the Catholic priest in some ----- city where my equals should pass me by as their inferior as an unknown individual! I remembered the bitterness with which my chum had spoken against the Catholic Priest who had had the kindness to teach his sisters German, and I writhed under the thought of being one of those of whom such things could be gratuitously said. But as I have said, what I most feared and hated was the insignificance of this life, its stillness, its nonelessness. I wrote then, to be sure, how that "when friends are falling around him like autumn leaves and the fondly cherished hope of years is faded forever, he can twine his bleeding heartstrings about the one object above, and still triumphantly hope." Meaning by "him" myself. But that was a beautiful vision of imagination, doubtless proceeding from the grace of baptism, which would that I had fulfilled! Would that I had in reality entwined the hundred tendrils of my heart, detached now from the filthy and trifling things in which I had delighted, around the Eternal and only amiable object! Then I would not have lost that year.

But from what I thought at the idea of being a priest, I easily see in what channel ran my hopes and desires. They were all of the earth. They were with the objects of my love, below, grovelling. Oh, God thou didst bear with me then and then leave it with me. Yet why is it that I did not begin and return Thy love? Time passed, however, and with it passed away my old feeling. Separated as I was from the objects that had excited my grovelling hopes, the visions that those when excited began to grow dim, and other hopes to succeed them. At last on Christmas 1846 I made my First Communion in the little Chapel at West Point. I had been to confession three days before. But what a Communion was that! I knew not what I ought (to) do. I had but a faint conception of what an action I was performing and I did it rather moved from without than from within, rather from a feeling that was due from me rather than hungering and thirsting after the bread of life. Doubtless when we are in Heaven we will look back with surprise at the tepidity of our very best Communions. But indeed my first was most heartless. And for this I have to blame that pride which continually repulsed and kept at a distance from me my confessor. So that he could have but a dim appreciation of my wants, judging me to know more and to be better prepared than I was. If I had not done this but had let him see my interior nakedness of every good habit and every useful knowledge, doubtless he would have had me much better prepared. But God accepted my Communion then through His infinite mercy. He did not cast me from Him but He filled me with desire again to communicate. The next Sunday, however, I did not because I did not want to go to confession to Father Villanies. What good example I have always had! What good men were those of our college, and what good boys were there. And how devoted was Father Villanies, and William. That very New Year's day he gave me an example I shall never I hope forget. He had promised to walk out with the old Prof. of French to make calls. But when he heard that there was to be Mass at the falls he wrote a note to Mr. -- that there was going to be Mass and that therefore he was compelled to forego the pleasure he had anticipated in making those calls. He did not think for a moment of what would be thought of his great devotion, but I remember he said something about the pleasure of which he would deprive the poor old man.

Time passed and with it my first retreat which I could hardly help but **make well**, but which I would have made better had I consulted my confessor more, and with greater simplicity. Then came the spring vacation. And William and (I) were walking on the banks of the Hudson. I remember the place, the grey rocks that laid around us, the little weed I held in my hand. William approached me cautiously saying by way of preamble that the time was now fast approaching when I would be obliged to choose a state of life, etc. I then told him I had already chosen as far as I was concerned, that I had written to Father and Mother to ask their consent. My good brother, how glad he was! Even then I hoped that Father would make some opposition and even the feeblest would have been sufficient. I told him also that I would go, I thought, to Ohio in which he freely acquiesced.

I received my father's letter with his consent given in most loving terms. How ill have I repaid my Father's love! The root of it all -- do I not know it?

Then my commencement and the never-to-be-forgotten labor on my never-to-be-forgotten speech. How intoxicated with vanity was I at the plaudits I received, and the publication and the night after. Smith was a good fellow, but he always had the misfortune to be mistaken of others and by others. He was magnanimous and when he thought he was not laying himself open to ridicule, frank. So was Doherty. That strange Stallo. How his eyes flashed when he described the levelings of his heart, the first far off view of our mountains! Poor dreamer! How soon will he be undeceived and I and all those that there together talked so much about eternal friendship and early recollections!

A month soon passed and William and I entered upon our retreat together. How William did stride forward and how I lagged. He had a mind to sieze upon the vast principles of Religion to penetrate its sublime maxims, and the strength and steadiness of nerve to apply them unflinchingly to himself, more necessary for me perhaps than it was for him. At any rate it was very necessary for me. I finished my retreat. Ah! said Father Thebaud (2), the next one will be better than this (because I had not concluded to be a Jesuit). I do not know whether it was as he said or not. At any rate one of my resolutions then was to accede to any grade of perfection to which God was pleased to call me, to which Dr.T. acquiesced. I suppose the reason he made us the retreat so easily was because he hoped to make me a Jesuit, and those hopes were not at all concealed from what I heard of that wild eyed man who had had the brain fever. I certainly had a very great repugnance to remaining in N. Y. and to becoming a Jesuit also. And whether this repugnance had anything to do for my refusal and how much it had to do I shall see, of course, in the day of Judgment. God help me then. Be that as it may, I then concluded anew to become a priest, and then for the first time began to conceive somewhat of the immeasurable privileges of that high vocation. I did not fear on the other hand. I scarcely cast a thought in that direction. But passed - trusting in God? or in myself? We shall see in the day of Judgment.

Then came my return and my poor rosaries, my farewell to William and Annie, to West Point and Rose Hill and my journey home; Niagara Falls and all; the impression that was made upon me by them. I wrote to William; the visit to my old chum; the Mass (of) J. McD., and all the other circumstances of that, on the whole, unimportant affair, unimportant since after all our long discussion I dont think we shall have come out any better than we entered in.

Then came my visit home, my different discussions there; my encounters with Father O'Brien (3); my half-way attempts to convert my parents. All these I remember well enough. God help me! If I had had the strength of character

which William had they would have been converted without difficulty. But I was feeble; I wavered; now I was here, now there; now on one side, now on the other. I took them to Somerset, sure, and no doubt it did them some good by the prayers of William and F. O'B. But what reward had I for it? Then I went to Cincinnati at last. I remember when I parted from ---- and Mr. Phebie(?). I remember the time we had on our road there too. And finally I was dropped in Cincinnati at the corner of 8th and Western Row, on a rainy day in November.

Mr. Purcell (4) was very kind. I entered upon my new quarters. I was half-wild. Then I did not appreciate where I was or what I was doing. I went to see Uncle Pa. . . . I am always behind, having always somebody else's interest nearer to my heart than God's. I wished to do things carefully so as to save myself trouble and humiliation. Poor Uncle Parmenus(?) was half mad about the Sons of Temperance. I told him what I was going to do, and he did not get into a passion. Poor man! I hope I may be able to revisit him when my Catholicism is more matured and my manner shall be more earnest and subdued.

At last on the eleventh of December I started - one dark dreary night. The Bishop came down to see me. The next morning we were at some little place in Indiana. I remember how the lights in the farmhouses vividly reminded me of home. But I did not feel discouraged. God help me! I remember many of the things that I said and did going down. In eleven days I was in N.O. (New Orleans) alone. Here the book begins.

Sept. 6. I have had a little experience. Put not your trust in princes means not only that the potentates of the earth are not to be trusted, but also that no one is to act for you; no one must be allowed to lead you by the nose. .

Sept. 13. That time is passed and here in Frascati I am dissipated. Whatever of deep intent I ever had seems to be gone and I seem to be resigned to living a harum-scarum life here notwithstanding the stern trials and the fearful hour that waits me hereafter. God help me!

Tonight there was a rumor of dissolving the College and sending us home. How strangely they were affected. I do not believe it. Nevertheless I must be prepared for it. Why cannot I recollect that I am called to the Priesthood, called to carry light to those that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and as this is to be done more by example than by precept.

Sept. 15. It has been now nearly a year and a month since I entered in determination upon the state of life to which I am called. How different were my feelings then from those into which I have worked myself now. I recollect one thing that has distinguished me then was a very great calmness in my resolution to advance in virtue. I had then deeply impressed on my mind the shortness of our worldly existence and the eternity of our existence hereafter, and hence the absolute necessity of virtue and the necessity of nothing but virtue. Hence the calmness with which I determined after my half-hour's meditation to foresee and provide against the dangers of the day.

Sept. 16. This morning I received God within me. He came to unite Himself to me and to change me into Himself.

Sept. 30. Half of Frascati is past now and I would not care if it were all past. I am getting tired of this and beginning to wish for the exercises (5) in order to try to begin more fervently and better prepared to serve God. I have been pulled hither and thither too much already, but today there was a festa of the M^adonna in Frascati. I like to see those poor peasants so devout, those poor old men with their palsied limbs and grey heads -- to see them kneeling slowly down and crossing themselves so reverently and moving their lips saying their prayers. How many of those poor men will have a rank far far above those who look at them and smile at their ludicrous appearance in the Church.

Oct. 24. Tomorrow night we commence the exercises. I am glad God gives me the opportunity of making (them). I recollect nothing so well of my last ones as that "the next ones you will make better." I hope I may.

Nov. 10. Quotidie moriar (6). Since the Exercises I had died to ten days. Ten days have passed since I received the Bread of Heaven. . . .

Nov. 22. I received a letter from William, with such good news as made me almost dance with joy. Mother has been to her first confession and without a doubt before now is a member of the Holy Catholic Church. Lydia is no doubt baptized by this time, and if Henry is not baptized he will no doubt be soon (7). Oh, God why dost thou console me? Why dost thou send me as dew from Heaven the sweet news that they all are gathering into thy fold?

I have thought some on the cause of this. It is certainly owing to the prayers and exertions of William. How fervently he has labored for our conversion. With what faith as of the 'dark ages' he had asked the prayers of others! With what fervor he prayed himself! How often his thoughts ran upon their conversion, upon the means of accomplishing it; the books he might send them; the suggestions he might make them in his letters; the arguments he might use with the illustrations that would strike them.

Dec. 1848. 1st Tuesday in Advent. The little retreat for a happy death. The first meditation was on the sanctity our calling requires of Christians, Priest, Apostles.

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- (1) Rev. Thomas Eugene Legouais, S.J. (1793-1876), had been at St. Mary's College, Lebanon, Ky., before going to St. John's College, Fordham, N.Y., the beginnings of Fordham University.
 - (2) Rev. Augustus Thebaud, S.J. (1807-1885), taught at St. Mary's College, Lebanon, Ky., before going to Fordham in 1846.
 - (3) Father Matthew A. O'Brien, O.P., St. Joseph's, Somerset, Ohio.
 - (4) Bishop John Baptist Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati (became Archbishop in 1850). It was not unusual to address the clergy with the title of "Mr." in those days.
 - (5) The exercises refer to those of a retreat, particularly the Exercises of St. Ignatius and the Jesuits.
 - (6) I delay daily.
 - (7) Lydia and Henry were his sister and brother.

(To be continued.)