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William Wiseman's Exploit

(Abstracts from *The Catholic Telegraph*, Continued, from Vol. XXIV, No. 12)

The following story is from the Catholic Telegraph of April 19, 1849. Its hero is William Wiseman, a Catholic of Old Maryland stock of St. Mary's County, born about 1772, who spent his later years near West Rushville, Fairfield County.

For the Catholic Telegraph

A Chapter of Pioneer History

"THEY LINGER YET," OUR OLD PIONEERS

One who looks at our flourishing city, to which the proud title of "Queen of the West" seems ungrudgingly conceded, its teeming population, its institutions, literature, magnificent public buildings, and the uncounted evidence of progress and civilization which are apparent everywhere around us, and reflects that only about sixty years have rolled by since that which is now the abode of refinement and civilisation was almost an unbroken wilderness, the scene presenting only a few log cabins of the homeliest construction -- must indeed wonder at the indomitable energy of the race that has subdued the ruggedness of nature, and wish to inquire more minutely into the history of the trials and struggles, the dangers and escapes of those who pioneered the wonderful enterprise, equaling almost the strangeness of eastern fable.

The inquiry, it might be supposed, could be made under circumstances favorable for knowing the facts, at least, of actual occurrence,

because the events are comparatively recent, the actors themselves have not all passed away from the stage of action, and of those who have gone, their memory and the remembrance of their brave deeds, is cherished in the hearts of their immediate descendants. Nevertheless, with regard to that incident of our pioneer annals, which I have undertaken to rewrite, I have observed in Judge Burnett's notes, and Oliver Spencer's narrative, evidence to show that there is much uncertainty in even recent history -- some speak of romance in the Pioneer History of Cincinnati, as in the ambitious pages of David Hume and Thomas Babington Macauley.

I intend to speak of the attack upon Dunlap's Station, now Colerain's. It was a stirring event in the annals of Hamilton county. It occurred on the 9th, 10th, 11th of February, A.D. 1791. Judge Burnett accurately and vividly describes the hardships and privations of the pioneers, and the necessity which dictated that species of association or communion, from which Charles Fourier or St. Simon might have borrowed an idea. It was the association of the brave for mutual protection and defence against -- not the injustice or avarice of civilized man, but against the remorseless cruelty of a savage foe, goaded it must perhaps be admitted to vengeance by uncounted wrongs, and stimulated by an apprehension of their coming exile from the land where hitherto had beamed their council-fires, and where the green sod covered, and the

primeval forest sung a ceaseless requiem above the graves of their sires.

"Those," says Judge Burnett, "whose lands were in the same neighborhood united, as one family; and a number of associations were formed, amounting to a dozen or more, who went out from the neighborhood and protection of the garrison at Fort Washington (further out into the wilderness), resolved to maintain their positions. "Each party erected a strong block house, near to which their cabins were put up, and the whole was enclosed by strong log pickets. This being done they commenced clearing their lands and preparing for planting their crops. During the day, while they were at work, one person was placed as sentinel to warn them of their approaching danger. At sunset they retired to the block house and their cabins, taking every thing of value within the pickets. In this manner they proceeded from day to day and from week to week, till their improvements were sufficiently extensive to support their families. During this time they depended for subsistence on wild game, obtained at some hazard, more than on the scant supplies which they were able to procure from the settlements on the river.

"In a short time these stations gave protection and food to a large number of destitute families. After they were established the Indians became less annoying to the settlements on the Ohio, as part of their time was employed in watching the stations. They viewed these stations with great jealousy, as they had the appearance of permanent military establishments intended to retain possession of the country. In that they were correct, and it was fortunate for the country that the Indians wanted either the skill or the means to demolish them."

Such an establishment was that called D'UNLAP'S STATION. The fort was on the east side of the Miami, and was picketed on the three sides, while the fourth was protected by the deep water of the stream. A small detachment of United States troops under the command of

Lieut. Kingsbury occupied the fort. It consisted of a corporal and eleven men, besides the commandant. We give their names, in the hope, that if, perchance, any of them survive, their testimony may confirm our narrative, and moreover, it would be a gratification to one whom we know to survive (May 1848,) to hear from any who shared with him the dangers and the laurels of frontier warfare. Their names were Taylor, Neef, O'Neil, O'Leary, Lincoln, Grant, Strong, Sowers, Murphy, Abel, McVicar and Wiseman. There were on the north side of the fort, Horn, McDonald, Barrett, and Barket, with their families; and on the south side, White with his family, and McDonald whose family was not at the station; all of whom were busy at their clearings during the day, but sought the shelter of the fort in the evening.

The leader of the Indians was a renegade white man, infamously notorious as Simon Girty. There was present also a Shawnee chief of portly form, who was called Blue Jacket, who after the treaty of Greenville talked with our informant of the incidents of the event, and who settled at and it is believed died at Fort Wayne. A Mr. Sloan, with three other persons, were engaged, on the 8th of Feb., 1791, (Saturday,) in the neighborhood of the Fort, surveying lands, when they were attacked by the scouts of the Indian party and one man killed, Sloan himself wounded, and a third man taken prisoner, namely, Abner Hart, from New Jersey. Sloan and the other person of the party, succeeded in making good their retreat into the Fort, which they reached about sunset the same evening. It was not apprehended by Sloan that the Indians were infesting the Station in such large numbers; it was supposed that the party had been fallen upon by a few stragglers only on a predatory excursion, and a party of five or six were dispatched on Sunday to bury the dead man of the surveying party, which was accomplished without molestation, or seeing any evidence that there was a large hostile body in their neighborhood.

It was owing only to a lucky chance of vi-

giance, on the part of Lieut. Kingsbury, himself, that the Fort was not taken by complete surprise. With soldier-like generosity he had yielded his quarters to the wounded Sloan, and on Sunday night he occupied himself with entertaining and lively stories, and jocose anecdotes, his small command who were willing to forego their wonted repose, and share in the forced vigilance of their commander. They had however retired to bed. The sentinels to be sure were duly posted, but it was apprehended that they had fallen into the arms of the dreamy god, since the alarm which it was theirs to give was first given by the commandant himself. He, towards the dawn of Monday morning, indicated his resolution, to the company which had kept awake during the night in the block-house, his purpose of seeking somewhere a place of repose. Leaving the block-house for this purpose, in the space of less than five minutes, he gave the alarm by clapping his hands and crying, "Indians! Indians!" It indicates the security in which the garrison was, and how little they expected an attack, that all but the sentinels and the commandant were in bed.

The alarm was received, with incredulity, yet each man spring to arms. It was found now in the grey dawn of morning, that the small stockade was infested by a large body of savages, believed to number more than five hundred. That number at least they claimed in the parley which succeeded. The prisoner, Hunt [sic, but Hart above], who had been taken on Saturday, was put forth as an interpreter, Girty, probably with some remnant of shame, not choosing to show himself. The surrender of the garrison was demanded -- the terms promised, were so very equivocal, that Lieut. Kingsbury, like Gen. Taylor, on a subsequent similar occasion, was compelled to decline as respectfully as he could, compliance with the imperious demand. The parley between Kingsbury leaning over the pickets, and the prisoner *Hunt*, pinioned without and held by Girty, who was lying concealed behind a tree, lasted about an hour. This passed on the East side of the Fort. Meanwhile, the

soldiers on the west side, as often as a savage would peep from the shelter of a dead log or tree, would crack at him with their muskets, and some undoubtedly were killed, for the remains of two were afterwards discovered, while others were removed and buried by their savage associates. Girty through his interpreter complained, "what sort of a treaty is this, where you keep up a constant fire pending the parley?" The commandant turned around, and with a soldierly oath, threatened instant death to the next one that fired a musket, but took care to add, *sotto voce*, "Kill the rascals if you can!"

The end of the parley was succeeded by incessant volleys of musketry from the assailants, which lasted over two hours, when they retired to recruit, threatening to return in the evening to carry all by storm. The garrison was illy provided with ammunition, having only 24 rounds of cartridges per man, and no ordnance, none was therefore to be wasted. The enemy renewed the attack in the afternoon with musketry, and also by bows and arrows, firing brands within the stockade with the hope of firing the fort. The volleys were continued during the evening interrupted by moments of parley through the prisoner Hunt, who earnestly begged on his own behalf the surrender of the garrison, because he was threatened with a death of horribly lingering torture. About midnight they retired to execute the threat. The prisoner was nearly stripped naked; laid upon his back upon the ground, and pinioned by his wrists and ankles, his arms and legs out-stretched in a most painful manner. They then built a fire upon his naked abdomen. His groans were distinctly heard by the garrison during the remainder of that sad night; becoming fainter and fainter, till about day break, they finally ceased.

When morning dawned the Indians returned to the attack, and continued their firing for a half-hour or more. It was a crisis which tried the souls of the little garrison as well as their valiant commandant. When, during this morning's assault, he retired for a moment into the chief

block-house, he was met by the tears and screams of the mothers and their children, of the half dozen families. "What shall be done? what have we to expect?" were their eager inquiries. "We must all suffer together," was his sad response; for relief was no nearer than twenty miles through a wilderness to Fort Washington in Cincinnati. He declared he had endeavored to induce several old veterans, and each of the garrison, by the promise of a reward, to go to Cincinnati to give the alarm and bring relief, but in vain. This was overheard by a young stripling of eighteen years, who had been relieved just then from duty outside all night, but who was allowed the relief of watching through a port-hole, a crafty warrior, who, behind a tree, was endeavoring by several ticks to draw his fire and so allow him an opportunity to escape. The commandant's declaration surprised him, because no such proposition had been made to him. He at once said, "Mr. Kingsbury you have never offered to send me!"

"Will you go? you shall have the reward!" "Not a cent; but I will go, if you parade the rest in front of the block-house, and let them see me cross the river." The intention was not of idle bravado, but to give the garrison whatever fresh courage and patient endurance, might be engendered by the hope, or certainty, of relief being speedily brought. The volunteer on this forlorn hope (his name was William Wiseman,) was unacquainted in a great degree with the country, and the route by which he was to reach Fort Washington. He was told of a ripple two miles below the garrison, where he could ford the river (he was unable to swim, and the river full of drifting cakes of ice,) but if he missed that, he would be obliged to follow the stream to North Bend. In sight of the rest of the garrison, in broad daylight, (10 o'clock, A.M.,) and amid the volleys of musketry of the Indian assailants, Wiseman, alone in the canoe, succeeded in setting himself across the river, and regaining the opposite bank -- the one farthest from Fort Washington. He took his course with all speed

down the stream, and after stripping off and making two attempts to wade, in vain, concluded he must make the best of his way to North Bend. But in the course of two or three hundred yards further, he fortunately discovered the fording place, which he was enabled to pass without finding it more than knee-deep. About three o'clock, P.M., he reported himself to Gen. Harmer, the commandant at Fort Washington, with the news of the critical state of things at Dunlap's Station. Some obscure intelligence had been received already, by means of a hunter who had overheard the firing, and Gen. Harmer had already despatched a message to Columbia, for a reinforcement, which arrived at Fort Washington, during that evening, or the next morning.

A force of about 500 regulars, and a small body of militia, was despatched on Wednesday morning, under the command of Col. Strong, which, guided by Wiseman, (the youngest soldier in the army,) reached the invested post, soon after mid-day. The Indians aware of the force advancing against them, speedily raised the siege, and retreated up the river; their last raft crossing the stream, as Col. Strong came in sight. Finding it impossible to pursue them, without the means of crossing the river, he returned to the Fort. The joy of the besieged who had been in momentary expectation of nothing less than a most horrid butchery, for more than three days, can be better imagined than here painted.

The dangers of the situation, exposed to the incursions of the savage foe, caused a temporary abandonment of the Station. Both the settlers and the military left it in about five or six weeks, inasmuch as in the attack, which we have been describing, the savage foe had destroyed all the accumulations of the preceding season, and one scene of wild ruin and desolation was spread around. The houses of many, besides those whose names we have given, who had provided dwellings which they purposed to occupy in the spring, shared in the common conflagration and ruin, and the panic for a while retarded the

settlement of a locality, now among the most flourishing and peaceful of Hamilton county.

It has been our good fortune many a time, and oft, to be seated around the blaze of his cheerful hearth, or at the hospitable board of one who was a conspicuous actor in the scene, whose history we have related, and more than once, and long before we had seen either Judge Burnett's notes, or Mr. Spencer's narrative, have we listened with interest to his narrative, of the thrilling history of his youthful adventures and fearless daring. He continued in service, for five years after and was present at the unfortunate defeat of St. Clair, and led his captain, (Truman,) severely wounded, from the field, on that disastrous day. It is with no invidious feelings, towards those who have unjustly claimed the laurels that belong to another, that we have attempted to re-write the chapter on the attack on Ludlow's [sic] Station. For much is due to the truth of his story. And every one will be willing to subscribe to the Roman adage: "*Palmam qui meruit, ferat.*" J.M.

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Rev. N. D. Young mentioned Wiseman and told a short and slightly different version of this story that was published in the 1883 *History of Fairfield and Perry Counties*, pages 293-294.

The author of the above newspaper article relies on first-hand accounts of the story, as told by Wiseman himself and the old pioneers, to dispute the identification of the hero as John S. Wallace, a well-known citizen of Cincinnati, later called Colonel Wallace. The two works referred to, that ascribe the heroic feat to Wallace, are Jacob Burnett's *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory* (pp 110-112) and Oliver M. Spencer's *Indian Captivity: A True Narrative* (pp 15-16). The 1881 *History of Hamilton County* by Henry A. and Mrs. Kate B. Ford seems to resolve the controversy, by naming Wallace as the other member of the surveying party, unnamed above, who escaped

to Dunlap's Station with Mr. Sloan. It identifies the hero only as "a runner," not Wallace.

Wiseman went on to serve with the regular army in the remainder of the Indian War. As mentioned above, he was at St. Clair's defeat, at the site of Fort Recovery, on November 4, 1791. He also was at the battles of the Maumee Rapids and Fallen Timbers (August, 1794).

Mr. Wiseman married Rebecca, daughter of William Ijams, and settled near West Rushville in the early years of the nineteenth century. He died on February 2, 1854 and is buried at Holy Trinity Cemetery in Somerset. According to Hervey Scott's *History of Fairfield County*, "Mr. Wiseman acquired considerable wealth, and dying childless, willed it principally to the Catholic church at Somerset, Perry County, of which he was a member."

(The Abstracts will be continued.)



Chronicle of Events in the Diocese of Columbus for 1999

Universal Church

May 7 Pope John Paul II began a visit to Romania, hosted by Orthodox Patriarch Teostist, the first visit of a pope to an Orthodox country since the Great Schism of 1054.

October 26. The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued a letter directing that the statutes of the International Commission for English in the Liturgy be revised thoroughly and without delay. The letter noted an undue autonomy in the translations prepared by the commission, lack of response to the Holy See's concerns, and alteration of rubrics without authorization, and cited the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the 1988 Apostolic Letter *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*.

Parishes

Jan. 10 A new parish center attached to St. Patrick Church in London, containing meeting areas, banquet room, and kitchen, was dedicated.

March 28 Ground was broken at St. Joseph Parish in Sugar Grove for a multi-purpose addition to the north side of the church.

May 2 New additions to the St. Michael Parish facilities in Worthington, completed in March, were blessed, including a gathering place and meeting rooms, a three-level addition to the school, and other rooms.

May 23 Three bronze bells were blessed at Columbus St. Andrew Church by Bishop Griffin.

July 1 Columbus St. Leo Parish was merged into St. Mary, from which it had been formed in 1902. The church remains available for special occasions.

July 1 St. Ladislaus and Corpus Christi parishes in Columbus were placed under a common administration, located at Corpus Christi.

Aug. 14 A new parish center at St. Coleman Parish in Washington Court House was dedicated.

Aug. 29 St. Joan of Arc Parish in Powell broke ground for a social hall and additional religious education classrooms.

Sept. 26 The new Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Grove City was dedicated by Bishop Griffin.

October 16 Ground was broken for the new Holy Trinity Church at Zoar.

Institutions

Jan. 31 The Villas at St. Therese at 25 Noe-

Bixby Road, a 117-unit living facility sponsored by the diocese, was dedicated by Bishop Griffin. Management is by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm.

Feb. 5 A new science wing at Bishop Ready High School was dedicated.

Feb. The new All Saints Chapel at Tuscarawas Central Catholic High School was blessed.

Feb. The Salesian Boys & Girls Club opened a unit on Dawnlight Ave. (near the Rosemont Center) to provide services in a home-like atmosphere for children to use after school.

Mar. 9 A fire destroyed the portion of the Villas at St. Theresa that was still under construction.

June 2 Our Lady of Bethlehem Convent in Columbus closed.

Vocations

April 18 Shawn D. Corcoran, diocesan seminarian, was ordained to the diaconate at St. Turibius Chapel at the Josephinum by Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer, Bishop of Victoria (Texas).

April 19 Jeffrey E. Tigyer, diocesan seminarian, was ordained to the diaconate at St. Vincent Archabbey Basilica, Latrobe, Pa., by Most Rev. William G. Curlin, Bishop of Charlotte.

June 12 Rev. Patrick Kelly, a native of Columbus, was ordained to the priesthood in the Society of Jesus (Detroit Province) by Most Rev. A. Edward Pevec, Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland, at Gesu Church, University Heights.

June 26 Rev. James Christopher Csaszar was ordained to the priesthood at St. Joseph Cathedral by Bishop Griffin.

Aug. 15 Sister Beverly Huffman, Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, professed final vows in

Nazareth, Ky. She is a native of Columbus.

Nov. 13 In the Cathedral of St. Peter, Scanton, Pa., Eric Flood of Canal Winchester was ordained to the diaconate (transitional) for the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter by Most Rev. John Dougherty.

Retirements

April: Msgr. Edward J. McFarland, pastor of St. Matthew Parish in Gahanna and Rev. Charles R. Griffin.

July: Msgr. Carl P. Clagett, pastor of Columbus Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish; Rev. James W. Jones, chaplain at the Franklin County Jail; and Rev. Robert F. Reilly, pastor of Circleville St. Joseph Parish.

Personnel

Nov. 21 The papal honor of Protonotary Apostolic was conferred on Msgr. Robert L. Noon and that of Prelate of Honor of His Holiness on Msgr. Stephan Maloney and Fathers William A. Dunn, James A. Geiger, Stephen B. Hawkins, and Edward L. Kessler.

Necrology

- Jan. 14 Rev. Joseph J. Buzek, aged 83 years, in Winter Park, Fla., retired priest of the diocese A native of Bellaire, he served as a Navy chaplain.
- Jan. 17 Rev. Peter V. Sartori, aged 84 years, in Columbus. A native of Columbus, ordained for this diocese, he retired from the Diocese of Steubenville.
- Feb. 27 Sister Mildred Uhl, O.P. at St. Mary of the Springs, aged 96, a native of Lancaster.
- June 5 Sr. Mary Jovita (Louise Therese) Hatem, O.S.U., in Louisville, Ky., aged 73, a native of New Straitsville.
- June 19 Sister Charlene Saunders, O.S.F. (Stella Niagara) in Columbus, aged 85; she was aborn Helen Saunders in New Lexington.
- June 25 Sister Juniper Bickel, O.S.F, at Assisi Heights Motherhouse in Rochester, Minn., aged 62; she was born Mary Priscilla Bickel in

Portsmouth.

- October 14 Rev. Frederick G. Fury, SS.CC, aged 80, in Fairhaven, Mass., former associate pastor of Marion St. Mary Parish and chaplain at Marion Correctional Institute.

- October 18 Sr. Fidelia Widrig, O.P, at St. Mary of the Springs, aged 88 years, a native of Newark.

- October 23 Rev. Joseph E. Knecht, S.J., aged 73, in Patna (Bihar), India, a native of Jeffersonville and missionary to India.

- December 10 at St. Mary of the Springs, Sr. Elvira Menduni (Sr. Mary Cosmas), O.P., a native of Columbus.

- December 22 in St. Raphael Home, Most Rev. Edward J. Herrmann, age 86, retired Bishop of Columbus.

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St. John the Evangelist Church, Zanesville: Baptisms, 1828-1842

(Continued, from Vol. XXV, No. 1)

1835, continued

July 17 John, son of John King and Sarah Hays; spon. John Farrel. C. P. Montgomery, O.S.D.

July 26 James, son of Isaac Kain and Mary Ann Reid; spon. Elizabeth Lucretia Reid. Joseph T. Jarboe, O.S.D.

August 16 Mary wife of James Devore; spon. Mary Dur--

same day Sarah wife of John King; spon. Ann Rogers.

same day Cecilia, daughter of Charles Roberts and Lucy Fuller; spon. Susanna Fauch.

same day Elizabeth, daughter of James Devore and Allison Hopkin[page torn]; spon. Isaac Osmund.

same day Elizabeth, daughter of John King and Sarah Hays; spon. Margaret Fullerton. CPM

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August 16 Sarah Ann McGraw, daughter of John McGraw and Jane Royan(?); spon. Margaret Fullerton.

same day John, son of John King and Sarah Hays; spon. Catharina Green.

same day Emily, daughter of the same, sponsor John Farrel.

same day Hester Jane, daughter of James Devore and Allison M. Hopkings; spon. William McCaddon.

same day Samuel, son of the same; spon. James Durbin. JTJ

September 6 Augustus, son of John Garshbogh and Ann Wongler; spon. Anthony Diss and Teresa Rush. JTJ

Sept. 20 John Charles Joseph, son of John Joseph Chenot and Mary Barbara Fester; spon. Charles and Elizabeth Chenot. JTJ

September 26 Jane Pilkinton, daughter of Roland Pilkinton and Catharine Pilkinton; spon. Patrick and Ann Shearlock. JTJ

September 26 Edward Thomas, son of Martin and Ann Shearlock; spon. Edward and Ann Shearlock.

same day Patrick, son of John Canning and Mary Ann Canning; spon. Martin Shearlock and Rosanna Ownes. JTJ

Sept. 27 Peter, son of Francis Martin and Brigid McMahon; spon. Arthur Mellahon and Mary Mellahon. JTJ

same day Francis, son of John C. Bagly and Theresa Frances Dugan; spon. Andrew Dugan and Ann Rogers. Thomas Martin, O.S.D.

Oct. 25 John C. P., son of John Coulter and Ann Davis; spon. Thomas Kilty and Ann McLone.

same day Lydia, wife of Bernard Rogers; spon. Mrs. John Cassilly. JTJ

November 1 Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Farrell and Margaret Denny; spon. James Durbin and Margaret Fullerton. JTJ

November 27 John, son of Philip Callahan and Mary Curren; spon. Margaret Callahan. JTJ

December 6 Helen Mary, daughter of Timothy Lavin and Mary Dolan; spon. FitzGerald and Helen Doyle. JTJ

December 10 Joseph Wine; spon. Teresa Hasket. JTJ

1836

January 18 Peter Augustine, son of William Conklin and Brigid McKernan; spon. N [nomen?] McKernan. JTJ

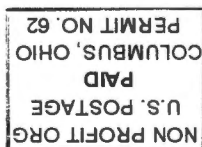
(To be continued)

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