

FRIAR IN THE WILDERNESS:

Edward Dominic Fenwick, O.F.M.



Loretta Petit, O.P.

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Project OPUS: A HISTORY OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS IN THE UNITED STATES

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“I have become, as they call me here, an itinerant preacher. It often happens that I am obliged to traverse vast and inhospitable forests where not even a trace of a road is to be seen....

Many times, overtaken by night, I am obliged to hitch my horse to a tree and making my saddle a pillow I recommend myself to God and go to sleep with bears on all sides.”

Edward Fenwick to a friend in London, 1818.

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FOREWORD

It is doubly fitting that Edward Dominic Fenwick should be the subject of the initial publication of *Project OPUS: A History of the Order of Preachers in the United States*. First, Fenwick established the initial Dominican province in the United States. Second, no account of his heroic and colorful life has been published in more than seventy years. The many documents now available, including those collected assiduously by the historian Victor O'Daniel, reveal the stature of Fenwick as a model of Christian evangelization for today and tomorrow.

Letters and other documents in the rich collection of St. Joseph Province Archives at Providence College have been provided graciously by the archival staff. The Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism has made available, along with a travel grant for research, the papers related to Fenwick that are preserved in the Notre Dame Collections.

The staff of PROJECT OPUS is grateful to Donald Goergen, provincial, and the Dominican friars of the Province of St. Albert the Great who have subsidized the printing of this work as their contribution to the history of the Order of Preachers. In a special way the work honors Robert Botthof O.P., who as president of Fenwick High School, Oak Park, IL, encouraged its writing and publication.

Gratitude is owed to many readers who helped the shaping of this introductory biography; and especially to Mary Clemente Davlin, O.P., the final editor.

This biographical essay anticipates a full biography of Edward Fenwick now in preparation by the same author.

Mary Nona McGreal O.P.

Director of Research

Project OPUS

June 1, 1994

I

GROWING UP ON A PLANTATION

On board an American sailing vessel in the summer of 1784, Edward Fenwick, sixteen years old, was bound for Belgium. His thoughts moved rapidly back toward home and forward to his destination, wondering about his unknown future. Home was the family plantation in southern Maryland, where his elder brother James took the place of their deceased parents in his concern for Edward. Would the youth return from college to plantation life, and perhaps to leadership in the new State of Maryland? Or might an adventurous future lie before him? Edward had plenty of time to consider the options. These were many for a Fenwick of the fifth generation, growing up in the young nation.

Whatever his dreams on shipboard, Edward could not have foreseen the reality of his future life. Never did he picture himself in the near future wearing the robes of the Blackfriars of England, the Dominican friars. Nor could he have expected mistreatment and imprisonment at the hands of the French Revolutionaries who poured into Belgium. Even less likely would he see himself as founder of the Order of Preachers in his native land, living in self-chosen poverty. He could not imagine himself as an itinerant preacher in the untamed Kentucky wilderness; an outspoken advocate of the neglected Indians of the Northwest; and spending himself among the settlers on the Ohio-Michigan frontier as the first bishop of the

Catholic Diocese of Cincinnati. Yet all these scenes became realities in his life.

Birth and Ancestry

Edward Fenwick was born on August 19, 1768, on a plantation in Southern Maryland. Little is known of his childhood before the age of 16. He was the fourth of eight children who grew up on the family estate in St. Mary's County. Between him and James, the first born, were two girls, Mary and Sarah. All were probably tutored at the plantation home in basic subjects.

Edward's father was Colonel Ignatius Fenwick and his mother Sarah Taney of the same family line as Roger B. Taney, famous chief justice of the United States Supreme Court. Ignatius was prominent as a large landholder among the earliest settlers in Maryland. He had inherited land along the Patuxent River from his mother, Mary Cole Fenwick, whose father, Edward, of St. Mary's County, in 1761 had left a large estate called Wallington to his grandson, Ignatius Fenwick. For this reason Ignatius was not mentioned in his own father's will because he already "had much more than he needed."¹

The first Fenwick in the colonies, Cuthbert, had lived in Maryland as early as 1634, the same year that Lord Calvert started his settlement for religious freedom.² Cuthbert acted as attorney to an early commissioner appointed in Maryland by Lord Baltimore to assist the governor with affairs of the colony. In 1638 he held membership in the colonial assembly and thereafter enjoyed a place of prominence in the development of Maryland. Although he died at an early age, around 40, he had acquired much land along the Patuxent River that he willed to his descendants.³

Maryland Plantation Life

Life on a Maryland plantation like that of the

Fenwicks must have been both challenging and exciting, but at times lonely. Vast woodlands between the Patuxent River and the Chesapeake Bay separated families from their nearest neighbors. Their large landed estates usually consisted of hundreds of acres used to produce cash crops that were planted and harvested by slaves, as slave labor was profitable and seldom questioned as an ethical practice. The supply of fish and wild life in the creeks and forests of the area enabled farmers to supplement the household diet and furnish recreation.

Children of the plantation family performed many tasks around the farm that did not require adult skills. Boys especially learned early to ride horses and accompany their fathers on journeys. For both boys and girls the family was the center for learning social skills and absorbing cultural values. Usually private tutors gave elementary instruction to the children in the manor house. In religious matters, men of the Society of Jesus were the pioneer instructors during Edward's boyhood, for the key to the life of Catholics in Maryland lay with Jesuit priests who ministered to them, often celebrating Mass in the plantation home. Edward cherished the memories of these men and in adult life counted some of them among his closest friends.

The American Revolution

In 1776, the American Revolution changed political and religious affairs in the colonies for all time. With the success of the Revolution, the body of priests ministering in the newly independent nation decided the time was right to seek a national status for the American Catholic Church. Accordingly, they petitioned Rome to establish an episcopal see in the United States with its own bishop chosen by the priests serving here. The pope granted this request, and John Carroll who had been the mission superior of priests in the colonies became the first bishop in the

United States in 1789 with his see at Baltimore. This gesture by Rome enabled the American church to have a larger share in local decision-making.

Family Life and Education

Edward as a fifth-generation Marylander and offspring of sturdy pioneers, was an eight-year-old in 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was signed. His life was touched by the hardships of war when his own father enlisted in the Revolutionary Army and served with the rank of Colonel. His mother, who during the war carried the responsibility of the family, died during the conflict. Colonel Ignatius died in March of 1784, leaving his oldest son, James, as the executor of his estate.

For years, the wealthy planters of Maryland had chosen to send their sons to the Jesuit colleges in Europe to complete their education. With the closing of these institutions, because of the papal suppression of the Society in 1773, other options had to be found. In Edward's case the family had already found an alternative. His uncle John who was only nine years his senior wrote glowing accounts of the education he was receiving at the Dominican College of Holy Cross in Bornhem, Belgium.

II

STUDENT, FRIAR AND PRISONER

Holy Cross College in Bornhem, Belgium, like many schools of other English religious orders, was established when the English friars were forbidden to accept and educate the young in England after the Reformation. The English Dominicans looked across the channel and decided to set up in friendly Belgium a college where young English men could complete their education and if desired study for the priesthood in the Dominican order. It was at this institution that John Fenwick, brother of Colonel Ignatius and uncle of Edward, had enrolled in 1773 when Edward was five years old. Eleven years later the nephew, Edward, followed his uncle John to Holy Cross.

John Ceslas Fenwick

John completed his classical studies at Bornhem and shortly after that entered the novitiate of the English Dominican province located on the same campus. He chose the name Ceslas at his profession and subsequently was known as John Ceslas Fenwick. After his profession he pursued advanced studies at the well-known Catholic University of Louvain. His ordination to the priesthood in 1785 occurred about the time that his nephew Edward was sent by his family to the college at Bornhem for his classical studies. Whether John's influence entered into the decision to send Edward to Holy Cross remains a question but it would seem logical to believe it did. The year after Edward's arrival in Bornhem in 1784, John would be on the faculty of the college.

Edward at Holy Cross

In 1784, shortly after the death of his father, as the new nation at home was developing, Edward undertook the perilous journey abroad to finish his education. He probably took solace in knowing that his uncle John would be at Holy Cross to console him at the loss of his father, and assist him. Courses in the humanities in a traditional classroom would be different from plantation tutoring he had known. No doubt he missed the wide open spaces of his Maryland home on the Patuxent. Nevertheless he pursued his studies successfully. Edward had been at Holy Cross, Bornhem, about eight months, when John Ceslas wrote to his cousin in America, "Edward goes on well and is now equal for the first Place with another. There are about twelve in his School, he is in the second School as he had not forgot all his latin when he came; and from what I can judge of him, he has a pretty good Genius and behaves well."* Edward finished his courses in the humanities in the usual four years.

As the son of a wealthy family in the new nation he then had to choose among options. He could return to his home to take his place on the plantation as co-executor of his father's will with his brother James. Another avenue open to him was to take his share of the inheritance to set up his own smaller plantation. He might even seek employment in Baltimore where young men of good social and educational backgrounds were employed with the promise of rapid advancement in the business world. Edward chose none of these.

Edward, A Dominican Friar

No amount of speculation can produce the reason why Edward Fenwick chose to join the Dominican Order, the Order of Preachers, in September of 1788. Could his uncle John have encouraged him? Had the idea of serving God in religious life been on his mind from his earliest years as he

witnessed the faithfulness of the Jesuit priests in serving the people in the face of so many odds? Or did he see and admire the friars who were his teachers at Bornhem to the extent that he felt inclined to join them?

Upon being received into the English province of the Dominican friars, Edward chose the name of Dominic and thereafter was known as Edward Dominic Fenwick of the Order of Preachers. After a year and a half spent as a novice learning the spirit and customs of the friars, Edward made his solemn profession in the Order, pronouncing his vows for life. Then he began his courses to prepare for the priesthood. Scarcely had he begun these studies when the rumblings of revolution were heard in neighboring France. The English Dominicans, who had found Belgium a safe haven in the Penal days of England, now had to be on guard against a similar fate on the continent.

Ordination to the Priesthood

These troubled times interfered with Fenwick's education, a fact he never forgot. He felt that certain inadequacies in his later life stemmed from these distressing years.

The calamitous & revolutionary times that have prevailed for some years past deprived me of all the advantages of regular study...I have had no course in philosophy or divinity, of the latter have a very superficial idea, a mere smattering applied to it...only about 18 months all together, being frequently interrupted for weeks & months together.⁵

This lack of study was particularly unfortunate for a Dominican whose mission of preaching was to be based on a knowledge of theology. Yet despite the interruptions and distractions in his regular courses caused by the unrest of the French Revolution, Fenwick was ordained on February

Flight from the French Revolutionaries

After ordination Fenwick remained at Bornhem but was soon to experience the harsh realities of political unrest in Belgium caused by the French Revolution. The English friars knew that it would be dangerous for them to remain, and, as the English chronicler wrote when the college had to be abandoned, "In the spring of 1794, the French arrived at Brussels....Within three days, goods were stored or packed, business affairs arranged as well as could be, one Father (an American) and four Belgians were left in charge at Bornhem."⁷ The American was Edward Fenwick. It was thought that since the revolutionaries had no quarrel with America no harm would come to him. Nevertheless, Fenwick was taken into custody, imprisoned, and released only after an anxiety-filled detention.

Thoughts of Return to America

He then rejoined his Dominican congregation in Carshalton, England, temporary site near London of the confiscated Holy Cross College at Bornhem. There Edward Fenwick served from 1794 until 1803 as teacher, while he studied some courses he had not been able to take at Bornhem. He lived and ministered at Carshalton until he completed ten years of service in various capacities with the English province. By this time Fenwick had been away from his homeland almost 20 years and a dream had matured in his mind, to return to his native Maryland and establish the Dominican order there. He determined that the year 1803 was the time to act.

III DREAMS OF AN AMERICAN DOMINICAN PROVINCE

Edward Fenwick was not the first of the friar preachers to carry the gospel to the people of the former British colonies. Before and after the American Revolution, Dominican missionaries from European provinces of the Order served under Bishop John Carroll. These men came on a mission, most never to return to their country of origin, others returned after a few years of service. They served where the need was greatest. One of these early missionaries was John Ceslas Fenwick, Edward's uncle, who had returned to his native Maryland in 1800 and served in the parishes of the Jesuit priests until his death in 1815 at St. Thomas Manor, Port Tobacco, Maryland.

Planned Return to United States

In 1803, Edward Fenwick began a systematic plan for returning to his native Maryland to establish a Dominican community and college. He knew he needed help from persons in and out of the Order. He had to secure permissions from his English Provincial, from the Master of the Order of Preachers⁸ in Rome, and from Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore. His first step was to write to Luke Concanen, an Irish Dominican and assistant to the Master of the Dominican Order. On receiving Concanen's enthusiastic encouragement, Fenwick, in March of 1803, thanked him for his "zealous attention to my vague proposal of an establishment of our order in my native country where the cries of religion & repeated solicitations of my friends pressingly call for me & all who feel for their spiritual wants."⁹

Events moved rapidly from that point onward. Concanen assured Fenwick that he had presented his plan to the Vicar General of the Order and "found him disposed and propitious towards your project."¹⁰ Permission from Bishop Carroll was expected because there were few priests in the single diocese that embraced the entire United States at that time. Concanen wrote in the same November letter, "the most worthy Doctor Carroll is already well affected, and encourages the scheme." Then Concanen assured the Bishop of Baltimore that Fenwick's proposed plan for a community of friars or a college in America "will have every due encouragement from this quarter."¹¹

But all did not go so smoothly as they hoped. The English Provincial, Anthony Underhill, had at first approved of Fenwick's plan to return to America, but when he realized that he would lose three additional members from his already depleted province, he demurred:

The English Dominicans in 1806 felt they had reached a crisis. There was no novitiate, no regular monastery, and no prospect for the future.... The immediate effect of the secession of Fr. Dominic Fenwick and his companions was disastrous in the extreme, and well-nigh caused the dissolution of the English Province.¹²

Fenwick had solicited for his project the services of several key people from Holy Cross College. Samuel Thomas Wilson, one of the most learned of the English Dominican scholars, who had returned to Bornhem in 1795, left the deanship there to join Fenwick. Two other English friars from the college also volunteered, William Tuite and Robert Angier. After the refusal by Underhill to allow the American project to go forward, appeal was made to the highest authority in the Order. Only by the

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overriding decision of the Vicar General were Fenwick and his confreres free to finalize plans for the journey to Maryland. Edward Fenwick and Robert Angier arrived in America in the autumn of 1804; Wilson and Tuite followed in September, 1805. For Fenwick it was a return after twenty years. For Angier, Wilson, and Tuite it was a new challenge- American frontier life in conditions foreign to their experience.

Unanticipated Obstacles

The long and tedious passage to the United States was only the beginning of formidable obstacles that faced Fenwick and his companions. From Prince George County in southern Maryland, Fenwick wrote to John Carroll to inform the bishop of his arrival with Angier, and of their intention to visit him after Christmas. He added that he was "sorry indeed to learn here that nothing is prepared for me, no place fixed upon, as I had flattered myself & others there would be."¹³ Apparently Fenwick had written to his brother James to arrange for his share of his father's estate, but James Fenwick failed him.¹⁴

Even from Carroll himself Fenwick was to suffer a reversal. Instead of sending encouragement and a blessing, the bishop counseled him to be prudent and "to consult deliberately & wait experience & favorable circumstances."¹⁵ Fenwick seemed impatient and frustrated at being advised to wait. For his part, Carroll apparently was waiting for Fenwick's visit to make known his own proposal for the friars from the English Province.

Bishop Carroll's Plans

As Edward Fenwick pondered the options for his college and community in Maryland, Bishop Carroll's totally different plan was in his own mind a *fait accompli*. It was already known in far-off Kentucky, and confirmed by a letter of Stephen T. Badin, proto-priest in the United States and missionary near Bardstown, who wrote to Bishop

Carroll, "I am happy to hear of the Dominicans coming shortly to this state..."¹⁶ What a surprise this would be for Fenwick! Carroll had already decided to send the Dominicans to Kentucky without first proposing the plan to them.

Bishop Carroll was aware of conditions, of which the newly-arrived Dominicans were ignorant, both in Maryland and in Kentucky, the western frontier of his diocese. For one thing, the flourishing state of Maryland at this time already could boast of one college, Georgetown Academy, established by Carroll himself. Carroll was also fully knowledgeable about the settlers who had been moving westward from Maryland, Fenwick's native state, into Kentucky for about two decades. In the year 1785, a "League" of sixty families had begun their migration from St. Mary's County in southern Maryland to the land near Pottinger's Creek, Kentucky. Twenty-five families left in 1785; the rest followed at their convenience.¹⁷

The exact reason the Marylanders left home probably differed for each family, but in general there were economic and religious reasons. Practically all the families in the 'league' were Catholic. Religious difficulties in Maryland had declined considerably since mid-eighteenth century, but suspicions of anti-Catholic bigotry on the part of local magistrates remained. However, economic conditions figured more prominently in their move to the west. The good soil for growing tobacco in Maryland was exhausted and exaggerated accounts of rich, fertile soil in Kentucky lured landowners to the frontier. Under the Articles of Confederation the people of Maryland and other colonies suffered from trade barriers and devaluation of currency. Among the most prominent names in Kentucky's history were those who came with the "League." Some familiar names included Hayden, Hagan, Miles, Spalding, Bowles, Nally, Boone, Mudd, Mattingly and Edelin.¹⁸

Fenwick's Introduction to Carroll

In the early spring of 1805, at the first meeting between Carroll and the Dominican friars Fenwick and Angier, the bishop revealed his plan that they turn their attention to Kentucky. Despite their surprise and disappointment, the two college instructors, cherishing their apostolic vocation more than their original plan, agreed to explore the possibilities. In early May of 1805, Edward Fenwick, accompanied by his brother-in-law, Nicholas Young, journeyed to Kentucky to consider the prospects of a successful Dominican establishment there.

They were received cordially by an effusive Stephen Badin who wrote Carroll,

I have the happiness this day of enjoying the company of Rev. Mr. Fenwick which you had announced in former letters, intimating as soon as he arrived in America that...you would engage him to turn his views toward our desolate congregations. I hope you will grant me the favour or leave of transferring to that religious order [the Order of Preachers or Dominicans] the Ecclesiastical property now in my hands, to which I have added 220 acres of my own land.¹⁹

The Dominicans were later to discover that Badin's initial enthusiasm and generosity about church properties could not be taken too literally.

This warm reception in Kentucky encouraged Fenwick to write to Luke Concanen, his Roman brother and sponsor:

I have mentioned twice to you the advice and encouragement Bishop Carroll gives to fix our establishment in the Province of Kentucky...which I have accepted of conditionally; i.e., if our General approves of it, and my confreres arrive and unite with me in opinion."²⁰

Fenwick had much to learn yet of the impulsiveness of Badin and the rapid change in mood the French missionary was often to demonstrate. Fenwick and his brother-in-law Young returned to Maryland. There he reviewed all that he had seen in Kentucky as he anticipated the arrival of Wilson and Tuite from Belgium.

The Waiting Period

As he eagerly anticipated the coming of his confreres from Bornhem, needed encouragement came in the form of a letter from Concanen who wrote, "You cannot imagine how much your pious undertaking is admired and applauded by the most Em. Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation. Indeed by everybody that knows of it." And then to forestall too much optimism on Fenwick's part he added, "You cannot expect any pecuniary assistance from this quarter for you ought to reflect that the fatal revolution in this country has given enough to do...to reestablish their own churches & religious houses."²¹

It was pecuniary assistance that Fenwick needed. He knew his patrimony²² could buy scarcely more than land and a building or two, plus the necessities of life for the friars' household until the income of a school could help to cover some of these costs. He could expect practically nothing from the farmers of Kentucky; they were for the most part "land rich and cash poor." Yet he remained optimistic as he wrote to Concanen, "I visited Kentucky to inform myself of the climate, situation & resources - I am much pleased with the country & inhabitants - I mean to sell my land/800 acres in order to raise money to take us to Kentucky & carry on the establishment."²³

While he waited, Fenwick became increasingly concerned about the prospect of working with Stephen Badin. He had no word from Carroll about ownership of the Church properties promised by Badin on his previous visit. Fenwick fully expected at this point that the Kentucky mis-

sionary would keep his word of deeding to the Dominicans the titles to several churches. However, he would soon discover that the issue of church properties would fade to insignificance with the coming to Kentucky of Charles Nerinckx.

The Changed Scene in Kentucky

Charles Nerinckx was a Belgian priest who sought refuge in the United States from pursuit at the hands of French revolutionaries. When he presented himself to John Carroll in Baltimore, the bishop sent him to Kentucky to assist Badin. He arrived in July 1805, shortly after Fenwick and Nicholas Young left Kentucky to return to Maryland.

The influence of the Belgian on Badin was strong and detrimental to the Dominicans. Three months after Nerinckx arrived, Badin wrote to Carroll that the transfer of ownership of the church properties that he formerly promised the Dominicans should not be made. He said Nerinckx supported him in his decision. Moreover, Badin added that Nerinckx strongly suspected the Dominicans because he felt their behavior in Belgium indicated that they were on good terms with the French Revolutionaries.²⁴ Obviously Nerinckx knew nothing of the frenzied flight of the Dominicans from Bornhem as the revolutionaries approached and the subsequent incarceration of Fenwick.

The Friars Arrive on the Kentucky Frontier

Fenwick's plans for the future could only go forward after the arrival of Thomas Wilson and William Tuite. They reached America in September of 1805 and conferred with Fenwick and Angier in southern Maryland. The four men together, in accord with the Dominican practice of communal decision-making, formulated their historic plan to settle in Kentucky.²⁵ Since Wilson and

Tuite had not taken on any pastoral responsibilities in Maryland, as Fenwick and Angier had done, they traveled to Kentucky without delay.

Their trek across the mountains was a challenging introduction to the American frontier. Never before had these two professional teachers experienced anything like the ride across the Alleghenies to Kentucky. Neither Wilson, former provincial and newly-named Doctor in the Dominican Order, nor Tuite, long-time professor at Bornhem, had ever ridden 700 miles over mountainous terrain in a crude farm wagon drawn by horses. Mindful of the Englishmen's inexperience in America, Fenwick provided men to drive the team of horses. Robert and Nicholas Young, teenage nephews of Fenwick, rode along. The trip on the eastern side of the mountain was uneventful. Shortly after they drove through the Cumberland Gap on the western slope of the mountain, the horses became frightened, bolted and upset the wagon. The boys and the drivers were unhurt but Wilson broke his arm and Tuite sustained a deep cut in his forehead.²⁶ After basic first aid the party continued on to Kentucky.

By late December the group arrived at the log cabin home of Stephen Badin. He received them with civility, if not enthusiasm, and soon found rooms elsewhere for them because he could not accommodate the entire group in his small cabin. Wilson and Tuite were still not aware of all that had transpired in Kentucky since Fenwick's meeting with Badin the previous May. However, they came to know conditions on the Kentucky frontier.

IV ON THE KENTUCKY FRONTIER

Even the Maryland colony that young Edward Fenwick had known when he left home for Belgium was more cultivated than the frontier of Kentucky that he was to adopt as the site of his Dominican community and school. Kentucky had had sufficient population to enter the Union in 1792, the first state west of the Allegheny Mountains to do so. Yet roads were generally of poor quality, mostly wagon trails made by the Marylanders as they migrated into Kentucky in the years following 1785. Most people travelled by crude rafts down the Ohio River, then overland on the trails or "traces" that could scarcely be called roads. Because of the difficulty of transporting goods and furniture across the mountains, furnishings were minimal and rough. There were still wilderness and large forested areas with widely scattered settlements beyond the population centers of Lexington and Frankfort. Travel within the state for most people was on horseback or in crude wagons drawn by horses. Agricultural labor was carried on by slaves brought from Maryland.

The best that Fenwick and his fellow Dominicans could hope for was to purchase land that had been cleared, worked and cultivated by a previous settler. On his first trip in 1805, Fenwick must have seen good prospects in the Cartwright Creek area. On his return the following year he lost no time in purchasing land there.

Challenges, Physical and Psychological

The Dominicans had yet to realize that, even though

the country west of the Alleghenies was undeveloped, many religious denominations were active there. In 1805 Badin in a letter seeking financial assistance from Europe claimed that Calvinists [Presbyterians] predominated in the Bardstown area. He said that Anabaptists and Calvinists conducted services in a new manner called "Camp Meetings" and in such meetings engaged "in all manner of play, of chants, of falling to the earth as if dead, jerking movements of all parts of the body and embracing in what they call the kiss of peace."²⁷ Further he indicated that there were more traditional sects like Methodists, Quakers, Menonites, Moravians, Universalists, and Lutherans in Kentucky.

All frontier life in nineteenth-century America demanded stamina both physical and psychological. The Kentucky and Ohio wildernesses were no exception; they presented formidable obstacles even to stalwart farmers and dedicated clergymen. Although Fenwick never enjoyed robust health, he would endure many hardships of a physical nature. He would travel thousands of miles on horseback, and sleep in the forests with his saddle for a pillow, earning the title of pioneer of Kentucky and Ohio. Cartwright Creek was an immense distance culturally as well as geographically from colonial Maryland.

First Dominican Province in the U.S.

Before Fenwick could join Wilson and Tuite in Kentucky he had to sell property in Maryland, the inheritance from his father. After months of waiting he did sell the land and began his journey to the west, this time alone, as Bishop Carroll requested that Angier remain in Maryland until a replacement could be found in the parish he served.

Upon Fenwick's arrival in July of 1806, he made an initial payment on the John Waller farm on Cartwright Creek in Washington County. The farm of 500 acres con-

tained "a tolerable good brick house, other convenient buildings, a grist mill and a saw mill."²⁸ Final payment was made and the property deeded to Fenwick on December 1, 1806.²⁹ At last the friars were to be united and begin the work so long anticipated. Their new home was blessed and named St. Rose Priory, in honor of Rose of Lima, a Dominican and first canonized saint of the Western Hemisphere.³⁰ In his March letter to Concanen, Fenwick indicated there was still repairing and building to do, admitting that community life was disrupted, "being much distracted with temporals as well as spirituals." Their plans, he said, included opening their school for 10 or 12 boys or as many as the house would accommodate.

Samuel Thomas Wilson, First Provincial

All permissions and authorizations had been sent to Fenwick from Rome to set up a new Dominican Province in the United States. At first his dream had been to establish a community and college as a part of the English Province, but conditions for religious in Europe had continued to deteriorate under Napoleon, so that it was thought more prudent to begin a new province. Fenwick was to be the superior pro tem of the group until such time that he wished to designate another.³¹

From the initial stages of planning, Fenwick had wanted to designate Doctor Samuel Thomas Wilson as the first provincial of the new Dominican province. He now sent his formal request to Concanen.³² The official word from Rome dated February 27, 1807, "appointed and instituted " Wilson as Prior Provincial, Head and Pastor of the Province of St. Joseph in North America.³³ Organizational plans were begun so that the work of the mission, establishment of a school and ministry to nearby parishes, could go forward.

The spiritual distractions Fenwick referred to in his March 3rd letter stemmed not only from the disruptions of

community life but also from the practices of the diocesan priests, Badin and Nerinckx.

Meeting the Rigid Pastors

As early as the autumn of 1806, before the Dominicans could take possession of their farm, Wilson and Fenwick planned a trip to the northern counties of Kentucky. They set out on horseback for the various settlements in order to know the people and to serve them in their spiritual needs. They found some situations they did not expect to encounter. As Wilson told Carroll, he found a rigidity in Badin and Nerinckx which filled him with fears for Catholicity in Kentucky, a state

where thousands neglect the sacraments through the too great zeal of the former missionaries. Young people are not admitted to the sacraments without a solemn promise of not dancing on any occasion whatever, which few will promise and fewer still can keep...all priests that allow of any dancing are publicly condemned to Hell. People are taught that every kiss lip to lip between married persons is a mortal sin.³⁴

In spite of this, Fenwick wrote to Carroll that he was moved by the zeal and liberality of the people. "We are everywhere followed and pestered for Confession. Many have not been for 3 to 12 years chiefly because they would not go to Mr. Badin and some because they were too far off or could never get a hearing when they attempted it."³⁵ The storm of disagreement was to continue for the next five years and did not ever really die out. John Carroll must have been either somewhat amused or angry at the correspondence from Badin and Nerinckx. In August of 1808 Badin wrote a 40-page letter inveighing against lay church members and Fenwick. His complaints dealt with disagreements over marriage cases. In these circumstances it might well be that Badin was better qualified to judge than

Fenwick, whose preparation in church law and parish problems was extremely limited.³⁶

On the question of amusements and reception of the sacraments, however, Badin and Nerinckx held a rigorist point of view that possibly stemmed from Jansenism they had known in Europe; they even boasted of their severity and rigorism. The Dominicans, on the other hand, were in accord with the practices that Kentucky Catholics had been accustomed to in Maryland.³⁷ The policy of the Jesuits in Maryland was one of adapting their teaching, wherever possible, to the cultural patterns of the area. Fenwick was familiar with that sociological position because he had been taught by the Jesuits before going to Belgium. Wilson, as a theologian would have been knowledgeable about adaptation.

In an effort to bring peace, Bishop Carroll wrote to Nerinckx counselling more moderation on the part of Badin and Nerinckx. To the Dominicans he proposed "at least a partial adoption of the drastic measures against dancing, so strongly insisted upon by their co-laborers."³⁸ Although scandal had been given because of imprudent criticism of each other in public, yet as the years passed, preoccupation with their own duties tended to minimize their differences. A new era for Badin and all missionaries in Kentucky began with the selection of the first Bishop of Bardstown. With that appointment, the hostility between the Dominicans and the rigorist priests was replaced by tolerance if not cordiality.

The First Bishop of Bardstown

Bishop Carroll had petitioned Rome repeatedly to form new dioceses from his vast jurisdiction. Roman authorities finally acquiesced in 1808, naming Baltimore an archdiocese and adding four new dioceses: New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and for the West, Bardstown, Ky. The Dominicans and many of the laity were apprehensive

lest Stephen Badin be named the bishop of Bardstown. His untiring efforts for the cause of religion would have been a recommendation for that honor but his harshness in the confessional and unrelenting attitude toward amusements did not recommend him as a candidate for bishop.

For the Dominicans, Wilson wrote in a veritable understatement,

We hear R. M. Badin is to be our Bishop, tho from this & other differences, Your Rev. may easily imagine we should prefer another...yet as your Rev. judges him the fittest person,...I promise your Rev. I shall use my best endeavours to close up the breach that subsists between us & endeavour to lighten his burden as far as lies in our power.³⁹

Edward Fenwick was much more explicit in his opposition to Badin as bishop of Bardstown. He wrote: "He is generally more zealous than prudent—in fine, much of a Frenchman. Consequently I think he is an unfit man to be Bishop of Kentucky. I wish him not to be, for our sakes, and for religion in general."⁴⁰ When the new Bishop of Bardstown was named, however, he was the French Sulpician, Benedict Joseph Flaget.

Flaget never wanted to be a bishop anywhere, much less in a diocese that embraced Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, and the Territories of Michigan, Indiana and Illinois. In his vain attempt to be released from the appointment he journeyed to France to ask his Sulpician superior, Jacques Andre Emery to assist him in declining the responsibility. The story is told that when Flaget approached Emery, the superior greeted him with the remark, "Why aren't you in your diocese?"⁴¹ The appointment to Bardstown was made in 1808; Flaget did not arrive there until June of 1811.

On a "Comfortable Ark" Down the Ohio River

Fifty days on a flatboat on the ever-winding Ohio

River in 1811 would not be the epitome of comfort for nine adult passengers and one pilot. It was by this mode of travel that Benedict Joseph Flaget came to his new diocese of Bardstown, Kentucky. However, the ride from Pittsburgh to Louisville and overland to Bardstown took place in May and June when the weather conditions were generally pleasant. The journey was made enjoyable through the thoughtfulness of Edward Fenwick, who met the party at Pittsburgh after their journey over the mountains. Jean Baptist David, one of the priests accompanying Flaget, told a friend, "Father Edward Fenwick joined us at Pittsburgh, and in giving us a pleasant useful travelling companion, he has freed us of the discomfort (which they say is extreme) of having a horse on board since he sent our horse over land by two of his nephews who are taking his own horses."⁴² The writer endeavored to allay the fears of his friend by informing him that the ride was enjoyable enough, time was not heavy on their hands, and the roof was high enough not to oblige anyone to stoop. He called the flatboat "their comfortable Ark."

There was indeed a sigh of relief in Kentucky at the appointment of Flaget. Both Badin and the Dominicans welcomed him. Badin declared to Carroll that he received the news "with the greatest satisfaction. I wrote yesterday to R. R. Mr. Flaget to tender him my submission."⁴³ This "great satisfaction" would change dramatically when Flaget asked Badin to deed to the bishop all church properties held in Badin's name.

Fenwick's pleasure with the improved atmosphere after Flaget's arrival was overshadowed by personal loss: the death of his trusted friend, Luke Concanen, who died in Naples, June 19, 1810, as he awaited passage to his new See of New York. The Irish friar had been friend, supporter, and benefactor whose help had been essential to the forward movement of Fenwick's plans. In anticipation of

Concanen's arrival, Fenwick had journeyed to New York to greet him. On the way, while waiting, he served a parish in Buffalo. Then he waited in vain until word came of his friend's death. His disappointment was compounded by a dangerous illness which prevented him from attending the Memorial Mass for Concanen in New York on September 11, 1810.⁴⁴ Yet even in death, Concanen assisted the infant province. He bequeathed to the friars his library and two thousand dollars.⁴⁵

Growth of the Province

During the initial years of the Province of St. Joseph, Wilson and Tuite were left principally in charge of their school, St. Thomas College at St. Rose, Kentucky, and a small seminary for initiates into the Dominican Order. Though officially assigned to the provincial house in Kentucky, Fenwick found satisfaction more and more in traversing the mission fields.

The years 1809 and 1810 were significant in the growth of the small community of friars at St. Rose, Kentucky. In 1809 six young men donned the habit of the Dominican Order and in May of 1810 five of these novices pronounced their vows. These five in the years to come expended much energy in service to the settlers in Kentucky and Ohio. They were Richard Pius Miles, later the first Bishop of Nashville, Stephen Hyacinth Montgomery, Samuel Louis Montgomery (no relative), William Thomas Willett and Nicholas Dominic Young, nephew of Edward Fenwick. Six years later Flaget and the Dominicans rejoiced at the ordination in September, 1816 of the first four Dominicans to become priests in the United States, all native born, all educated under the leadership of Father Wilson. The fifth, Nicholas Young was ordained a year later.

First Dominican Sisters

Fenwick was delighted with the number of young men

who joined the friars, but he had always envisioned having young women serve in the mission field as well. The year 1822 opened with the fulfillment of this long-time dream of Fenwick to have Dominican women religious share the missionary labors in America. As early as 1807 he wrote to Concanen in Rome, "there are many good, pious girls and women well-disposed to become nuns if I had but the means to provide for them and one or two to form them – however I have a plan in contemplation and I hope Almighty God will enable me to execute it."⁴⁶ The other friars shared this hope, although they had not experienced such collaboration in Europe, where all Dominican women were cloistered nuns.

Early in 1822, Father Wilson in his Sunday sermon at St. Rose's Parish invited young women to form the nucleus of a community of Dominican Sisters. The response was gratifying. Nine young women presented themselves. On April 7, 1822, four of these candidates were formally received; they were Sisters Angela Sansbury, Margaret Carrico, Magdalen McMahan and Columba Tarleton. In August of the same year six more received the habit of the Order.⁴⁷ Almost immediately these sisters opened St. Mary Madgalen school for girls a short distance from St. Rose. Wilson charged young Richard Miles with their spiritual direction. Chosen by these pioneer religious women in Kentucky, Angela Sansbury became the first superior of the group. St. Catharine Kentucky Dominican Sisters trace their origin to this first community of Dominican women in the United States that began with a membership of native-born citizens. But Fenwick had no time to enjoy the accomplishments of the sisters in Kentucky because more challenging activities awaited him in Ohio.

V

PREACHER ON HORSEBACK

Fenwick probably visited Ohio for the first time in 1808, on his way to or from visiting Carroll in Baltimore.⁴⁸ Carroll knew the needs of Ohio settlers from the frequent letters of the pioneer settler, Jacob Dittoe, who promised to give land for a church and requested a priest to serve there.⁴⁹ One of the most colorful stories in Ohio church history comes from this area. Acting upon Carroll's recommendations to visit Jacob Dittoe, Fenwick rode through the forests of Perry County near Somerset, searching for the Dittoe family. At one point he heard the sound of axes. He followed those sounds until he came to a clearing and the home of Jacob and Catherine Dittoe. There, gathered under the trees, Fenwick celebrated Mass with Dittoe, and his happy relatives and neighbors.

How often Fenwick visited Ohio between 1808 and 1818 is not known but his journeying is described in the following excerpt from a letter of 1818:

It is now two years since I have lived in the Convent of St. Rose in Kentucky, having become as they call me here, an itinerant preacher. I am continually occupied in traversing these immense tracts of country. In the state of Ohio, which has a population of 500,000 souls, there is not a single priest. There are Germans and Irish who do not know any English at all, hence you can well imagine the pains I take and the efforts I make to be understood by them and to understand them, and to offer them some little spiritual helps. It

often happens that I am obliged to traverse vast and inhospitable forests, wherein not even a trace of a road is to be seen, and many times overtaken by night in the midst of them, I was obliged to hitch my horse to a tree to sleep with bears on all sides. However, Our Lord in his mercy lightens for me these trying experiences, and sweetens them with very sensible consolations.⁵⁰

First Catholic Church in Ohio

Life in the saddle became easier for Fenwick in 1818 when his Dominican nephew Nicholas Dominic Young, newly-ordained, joined him in his work in Ohio. In May of that year, Jacob Dittoe and his wife Catherine had deeded to Fenwick the land on which the St. Joseph chapel would stand in Perry County, Ohio.⁵¹ The document named Fenwick as owner of the property “in consideration of the friendship and confidence which they entertain for and in the said Edward Fenwick...for the use and benefit of the Roman Catholic Church in the said County of Perry near Somerset.”⁵²

The log-cabin chapel, which was the first Catholic church in Ohio, was formally opened and blessed on December 6, 1818. It was described in this way one hundred fifty years later:

The infant house of God, like all things born to grow, was tiny and close-quartered, measuring only 22 feet in length, and 15 feet in width. There was kneeling room only. Square openings in the walls served as windows; and where gaping chinks might have let in the frigid air, they were plastered with mud and sealed against the cold. Notwithstanding these precautions, the temperatures at times fell so low that a brazier of small coals had to be kept burning at the elbow of the priest, lest the wine in the chalice be frozen. The altar was a table of unpolished wood, crudely fashioned and irregular.⁵³

Attached to that chapel was a log cabin that the two friars could call home between their long missionary journeys. Ohio from that period forward would be served solely by the Dominicans until diocesan clergy could be obtained in 1824 to assist the friars.

Appeals for Assistance

Fenwick and his provincial, Samuel Wilson, hoped to receive some assistance from John Augustine Hill, representative for the American Province of Dominicans, then resident in Rome. Fenwick told Hill that Ohio contained 3000 Catholics, spread over an area of 700 by 800 miles. His needs included a priest who knew German, and “apostolic men who can carry the burdens of heat and cold, weariness, thirst, and will not find it too difficult to travel across mountains and through valleys to seek out stray sheep.”⁵⁴

Knowing that Hill would soon be coming to America, the provincial, Samuel Wilson, informed him that the economy in Kentucky was not so favorable as it had been in the past. The friars had suffered severe financial loss, “for like most people in this part of the country we have been obliged to sell on credit.” Wilson was referring to the first serious financial panic in the fledgling United States resulting from curtailment of credit and the 1817 Congressional order mandating the resumption of payment in hard currency. In the years from 1814 onward the national financial situation was plagued by commodity inflation, land speculation and unwise policies of the Second Bank of the United States. The plight of the debtor was harsh, often leading to imprisonment. Wilson continued, “Don’t let this discourage you from bringing along volunteers you mentioned...A few lay brothers could double our income. We can assure the recruits an abundance of pork, bacon, turnips, and even some inferior potatoes.” He told Hill that frequently they had chicken, duck, goose

and turkey. In a spirit of camaraderie he concluded, "When you get here I hope I am able to treat you to a couple glasses of beer, at least-up to the present all we had to drink was wretched water mixed with worse whiskey that tastes like chewing tobacco."⁵⁵

A Diocese for Ohio?

Shortly after Fenwick and Young built their church and cabin at St. Joseph's near Somerset, rumors arose about a possible diocese for Ohio. Wilson and all the Dominicans became concerned. Fenwick was convinced that he would not be chosen because of his own inadequacies, which he brooded over and expressed to his friends and superiors. Continuing his ministry throughout Ohio, he was more concerned about the lack of money and personnel for the missions than about an impending bishopric.

Back in Bardstown, Bishop Flaget was certainly interested in the choice of a first bishop for Ohio. Early in 1820, he petitioned for the formation of new dioceses from the vast regions of his bishopric.

Flaget wished to propose the erection of two new dioceses from Bardstown, one for Ohio and one for Michigan. For Ohio he presented two names. He suggested the Jesuit Benedict Fenwick, cousin of Edward, "for his talents for theology and for preaching...his qualities as an American...his character as a Jesuit..." The second name was Edward Fenwick because "he has a great knowledge of the country and of the Catholics who are there...he would be sure of having some help from his [Dominican] confreres, but he has very little learning and his practical experience is very much on the line of being somewhat easy and good-natured." In a rather surprising move and as a second thought, the Bardstown Bishop suggested that Demetrius Gallitzin, son of a Russian prince, then serving as priest in a community of Loreto, Pennsylvania, should

join the Dominican order to enhance his chances as a prospect for the bishopric in Ohio. Although Flaget had the reputation of being a holy man, he was apparently not above politics, or at least fitting a possible religious vocation to the needs of a church see.

Impatient for a reply, Flaget wrote a week later, still convinced that Gallitzin should be asked to join the Dominican Order. If this should be untenable, then he would propose Edward Fenwick, who

I am obliged in conscience to say...is a missionary full of zeal and humility; he has a turn truly admirable for making converts; only lately he wrote he had received into the church twelve persons, among them was a lawyer. If he has not all the learning that he ought to have...at least he has the appearance of having as much as I.⁵⁶

He added that when he asked Edward Fenwick his opinion of the best person as bishop of Ohio, Fenwick suggested his provincial Samuel Thomas Wilson, because of the latter's knowledge of theology and reputation as a scholar. But Flaget did not believe Wilson was a good choice because the provincial "does not want to preach, has difficulty in travelling because of rheumatism."

There was no lack of anticipation and apprehension as the Dominicans and others waited for the establishment of a diocese in Ohio and the nomination of its first bishop by the authorities in Rome. Happening almost simultaneously, however, were other events that affected Fenwick and the American Dominicans. One was Badin's departure from Kentucky. In a surprise move, Stephen Badin left Kentucky for his native France in 1819. He and the bishop had difficulties resolving the question of ownership of properties that the veteran Kentucky missionary had acquired over the years. Badin remained in France for ten years; his biographer noted that he "abandoned Flaget and

the missions of Kentucky, yet hardly was he in Europe before he began to work for those same missions... He did not have a deep animosity for Flaget; rather a deep sorrow over their relationship.”⁵⁷

John Augustine Hill

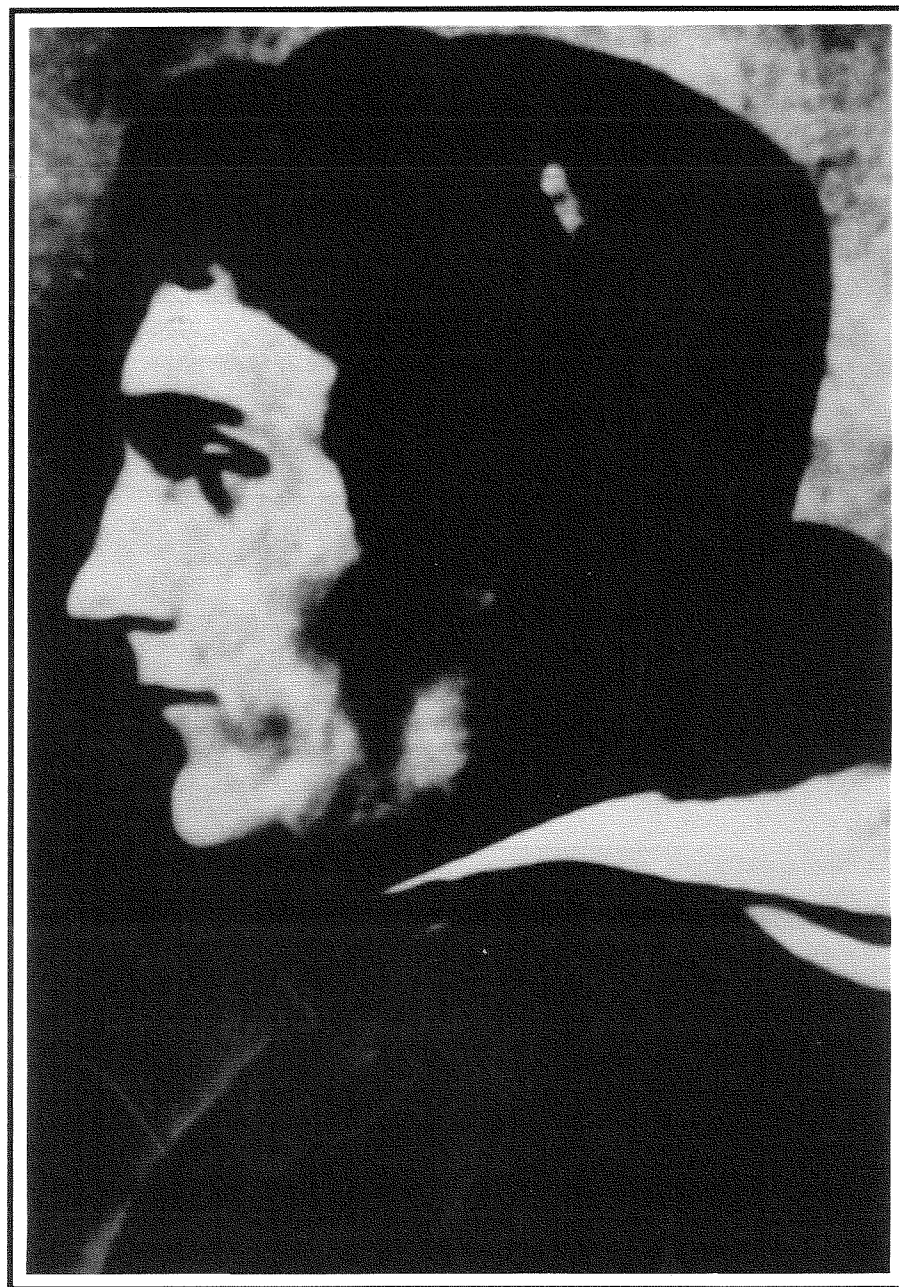
The second event that affected Fenwick and the Dominicans was the arrival of John Augustine Hill, OP, from Rome. Hill was a colorful man who loved to be in charge. This “take charge” attitude was developed in the years he had been an officer in the British army. He sold his commission in the armed forces when he joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1800. At that time he left England with his wife and bought a house adjacent to Holy Cross College of the Dominican friars at Bornhem, Belgium. There he became friends with the friars and especially Samuel Thomas Wilson. Some time between 1800 and 1818 Hill made the decision to become a priest in the Order of Preachers. By mutual agreement with his wife, he separated from her and fixed for her an annuity for life.⁵⁸ Hill entered the Dominicans in Rome where he made his religious profession for the American Province.⁵⁹ He chose Augustine as his religious name.

During Hill’s stay in Rome he received every concession because he was an educated man. He was “a person of fine abilities & pleasing address & a perfect master of the Latin tongue. His probation was shortened by papal dispensation.... He was rapidly advanced to the priesthood.”⁶⁰ So rapid was Hill’s advancement that he celebrated his first Mass on Christmas Day, 1819, not even a year from his time of entrance into the Order.

Hill arrived in New York August of 1821, accompanied by three other Dominican volunteers, John T. Hynes of the Irish province, John B. DeRaymaecker of Belgium, both of these seminarians ready for ordination, and one Irish novice, Daniel O’Leary. Hill wrote that he had “much

conversation with Bishop Connolly in New York on the affairs of religion in the United States.” With instant judgment Hill deplored the disruptive power of trusteeism⁶¹ and the degradation to which the clergy of this country was reduced.⁶² After about a month’s travel with a “good strong horse and a light wagon,” Hill and companions reached St. Rose in Kentucky in September, 1821. Within five months of his arrival, Hill joined Fenwick in Cincinnati. Possibly he was the one who brought the documents from Rome that would affect the future of the whole church in the region. These established the new Diocese of Cincinnati and named as the first bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick.

FIG 1
EDWARD DOMINIC FENWICK, O.P.



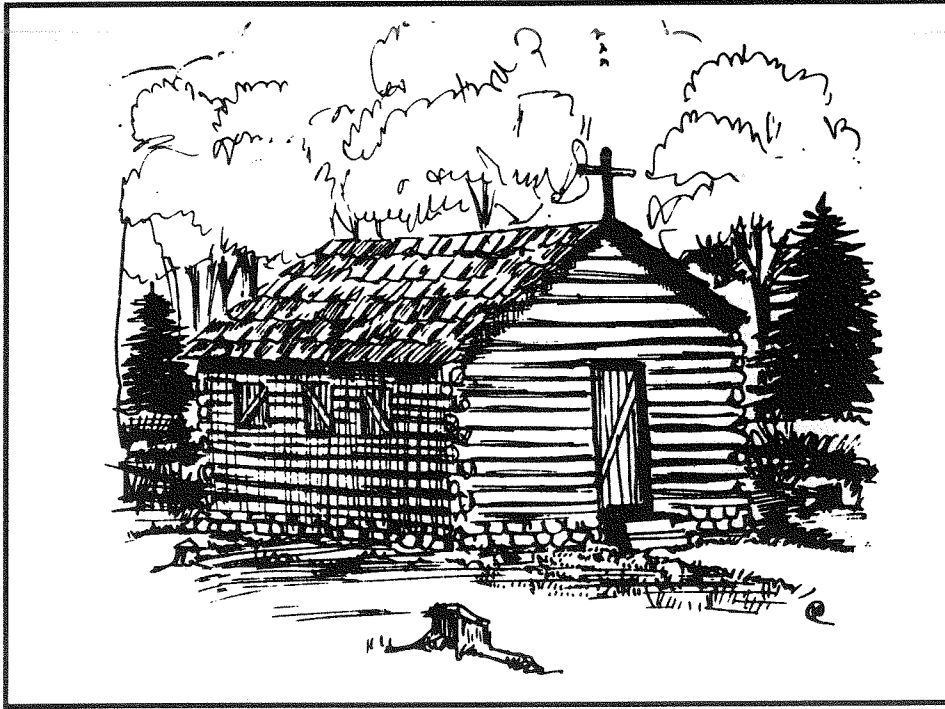


FIG. 2. FIRST CHURCH IN OHIO, ST. JOSEPH'S SOMERSET, 1818



FIG. 3. DRESSER USED AS ALTAR BY FENWICK

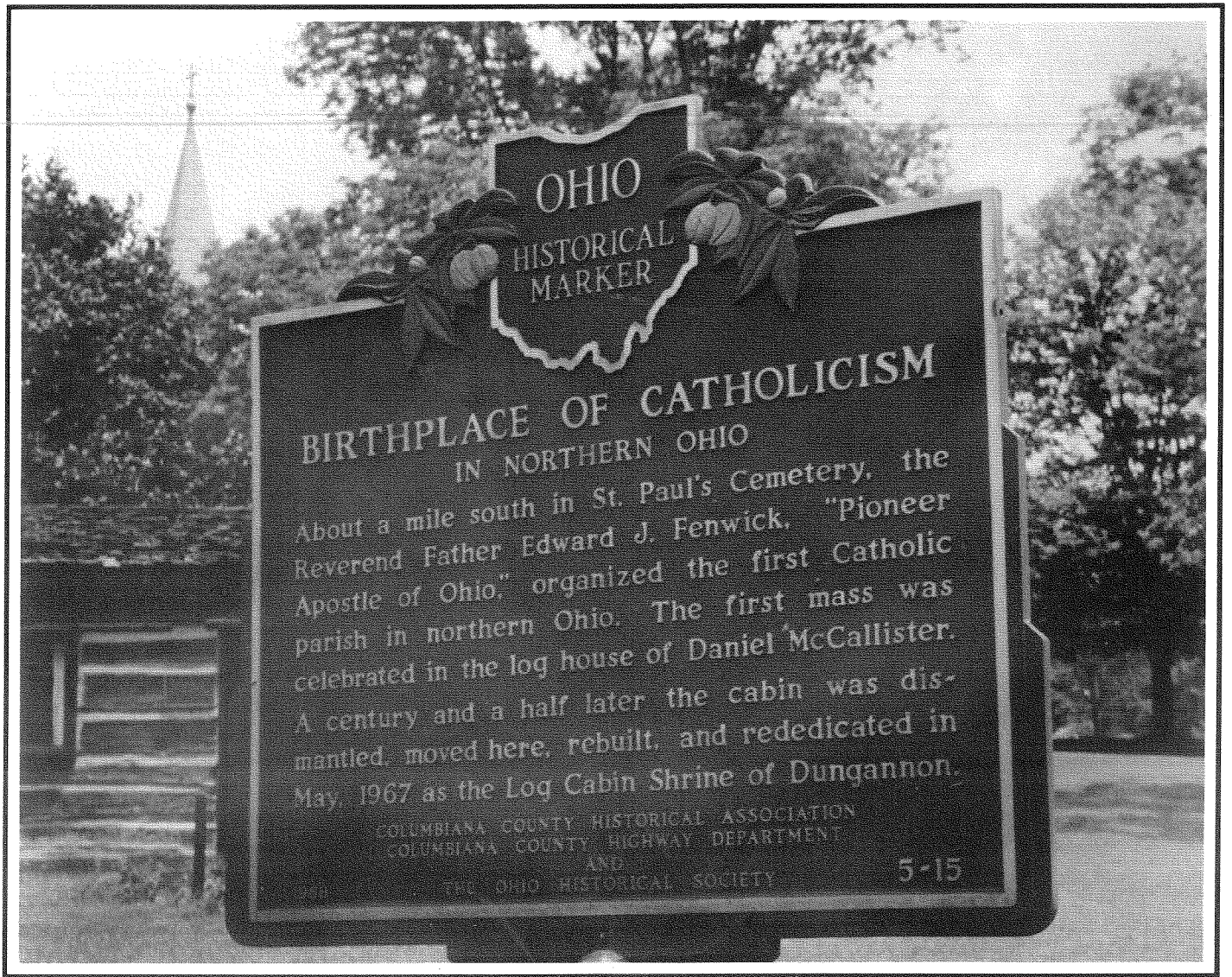


FIG. 4. HISTORIC MARKER, DUNGANNON, OHIO

District of New York Port of New York

I, Francis Diller do solemnly and sincerely swear that the following list of subscribers (with my name and name addressed by me to the collector of the Customs) contains to the best of my knowledge and belief, a just and true account of all onboard the Ship Braganza, which came from Liverpool.

Sworn to this Dec 1824

D. Ketchum

Before me this Dec 1824

List of all manifest of all the Passengers taken onboard the Ship Braganza
 its Master from Liverpool *Plutcher Frenchman* and *Sixty Nine* Passengers

Names	Age		Sex	Occupation	The country to which the they really belong	The country to which they intend to come
	Y	M				
Carolina Fenwick	55		Male		America	America
George Dutton	26		"		"	"
Matilda Lawanson	78		Female	Lady	England	"
Margaret Lawanson	15		"	"	America	"
Charles H. Drumby	34		Male	None	Germany	"
Carolina Webster	14		"	Painter	England	"
John Miller	24		"	Clerk	"	"
Andrew Kuslop	28		"	Caravan	"	"
Andrew Bronen	22		"	Farmer	St. Britain	"
Catharine Bronen	14		Female	None	"	"
Nary Bronen	4		"	"	"	"
George Miller	24		Male	Weaver	"	"
Matthew Miller	50		Female	None	"	"
Joseph Miller	18		Male	Lawyer	"	"

FIG. 5. PASSENGER LIST OF THE SHIP BRAGANZA, DECEMBER 1, 1824
 — from United States National Archives



FIG. 6. LOCATION OF TRIBES SERVED BY BISHOP FENWICK AND PRIESTS OF THE DIOCESE OF CINCINNATI



FIG. 7. CHIPPEWA MODE OF TRAVEL IN WINTER

— From the collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin



FIG. 8. MENOMINEE WIGWAMS IN THE TERRITORY OF MICHIGAN
— From the collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

VI BISHOP OF FOREST AND WILDERNESS

On June 19, 1821, the new diocese of Cincinnati was formed by the Holy See with Edward Dominic Fenwick as its bishop. By late 1821 Fenwick received the news that was gravely disconcerting to him, but no doubt pleasing to Wilson and the Dominicans who feared the appointment of a French bishop. It took strong exhortation from Wilson as his provincial to convince Fenwick to accept the office; repeatedly Fenwick offered his resignation but his voice was not heard.

Despite Fenwick's protestations of unworthiness and incapacity for the office of bishop, he gave his consent, although he was never convinced that he had the qualifications for such an exalted position. Accordingly, at St. Rose, Kentucky, Bishop Flaget, assisted by Wilson and Hill, consecrated Fenwick on January 13, 1822. A short time later Fenwick expressed his formal gratitude to the Pope for "this exceptional favor" bestowed on him, the "least worthy of men." He realized that this unusual promotion meant much to the entire Dominican family and in particular "my Kentucky Brothers."⁶³

In a long postscript of that letter to the Pope, Fenwick informed him that his diocese extended 240 miles in length and 280 miles in width, that its inhabitants were industrious and eager for religious instruction. Besides Ohio, he said he was responsible for the vast Territory of Michigan, embracing three of the Great Lakes: Huron, Superior, and Michigan. Its inhabitants were migrant fur

traders and thousands of Indians, some converted long before by the Jesuits, who now had no priests to serve them. It must have been difficult for the Pope to visualize an area hundreds of square miles in extent, mostly forest and wilderness, inhabited by such a small number of Catholics.

The New Bishop Arrives in Cincinnati

Fenwick knew the responsibilities he had to face in his diocese, so he wasted no time in gathering the few friars who would travel with him to Cincinnati. The party included his Vicar, Samuel Wilson, John Hill, and the newly-ordained Hynes and Raymaecker. It was March of 1822.

What a contrast these five travellers presented as they faced the rawness of elements. Samuel Thomas Wilson, already over sixty years old, though he appeared strong because of his stocky build, yet was so rheumatic that he never could ride to distant missions from St. Rose. Hill, the ex-military man, stood trim and comely at forty-two, only a few months removed from the comparative comforts of Rome. Raymaecker and Hynes, though young men, were no more accustomed to riding through the forested semi-wilderness than Wilson or Hill. Bishop Fenwick was the only one who was simply doing what he had done for the past fourteen years, enduring the wind and rain and battling the wilderness.

Raymaecker recounted some of the hardships of that trip north in the month of March. The five men travelled in a "Tilbury", a two-wheeled carriage without a top, that broke often, as they rode over log roads or mired down in "bad roads, not long cut out." They had to swim the Kentucky river, whose current was strong because of heavy rains; the weather was cold and rainy, and they became frightened when told by villagers that a carriage ahead of them had been swept downstream and only the

driver was saved.⁶⁴

Finally on March 23, 1822, the weary party arrived in the “Queen City of the West” after a wet and muddy journey. In Cincinnati they found no house prepared for them so they slept in one large room resting on straw mats on the floor. In a short time they had a house of their own.⁶⁵

Cincinnati in 1822

One of the ubiquitous British tourists, Harriet Martineau, depicted with enthusiasm the spirit of this Ohio city that became the hub of the life of its first Roman Catholic bishop, Edward Fenwick:

Cincinnati is a glorious place, few things can be conceived finer than the situation of this magnificent city, and the beauty by which she is surrounded. She is enthroned upon a high platform, one of the rich bottoms occurring on the Ohio. Behind her are hills, opening and closing... At the foot of these hills runs the river, broad and full, busy with the commerce of the wide West.

Martineau praised Cincinnati for fine, level turnpike roads, for its wide streets and vineyards, its schools, museums and conservatories. She claimed that Cincinnati published four daily and five or six weekly newspapers, and commended its incredible commerce in pork, and its wealth and prospects. Most remarkable of all was the fact that the population of the city “contains contributions of almost every element that goes to constitute society...”⁶⁶ If the foreign traveller saw the city in this regard, it was likely the bishop’s party would look forward to living in that prosperous place.

Cincinnati surpassed in importance all other settlements in the state of Ohio. Its position on the Ohio river attracted a diversity of economic interests including trade, navigation, and manufacturing. Established in 1788, the city had grown rapidly as it evolved from a small frontier

settlement to a prosperous river city that attracted migrating Americans as well as Europeans, principally German and Irish. Many New Englanders had sought their fortunes there after the War of 1812. By 1830 its population had grown to 25,000 people, outstripping in growth even Pittsburgh, its nearest large city upstream.

Although Cincinnati was a thriving city on the Ohio river, there were difficulties of a social and religious nature. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, immigrants settling in Cincinnati could not expect to escape a strong bias against foreigners. Many Germans and Irish were Catholics, so the prejudice included their religion. Many New Englanders migrating to Cincinnati carried with them the seeds of anti-Catholic bigotry.

Difficulties

Fenwick’s lack of confidence in his own ability and worthiness grew as he considered the enormity of the tasks that faced him. The poverty of the Catholic Church in Ohio, the shortage of priests, and the varying quality of their ministry, were matters of constant concern during Fenwick’s episcopacy.

The early bishops had to be alert to the danger of accepting impostors for priestly service. Carroll insisted that men who presented themselves as priests to serve Catholics in the United States give written proof of valid ordination. Even individuals validly ordained did not always serve well.

Fenwick himself upheld high standards for the priests who served under him. He often said he would prefer to have no priests or seminarians if they were not pious and compassionate. “Tepid or incapable religious would be extremely obnoxious to me,” he wrote to Tommaso Ancarani, the Dominican Master General.⁶⁷ He wanted only “men who solicit nothing, whom a straw bed, food and garments of the coarsest kind quite satisfy, ready to

attend the sick by night and day, who have no fear of danger nor fatigue.”⁶⁸

A Bishop in Poverty

Bishop Fenwick endured poverty that authorities in Rome never fully comprehended. As the son of a wealthy land owner, Edward Fenwick experienced by contrast the personal poverty chosen by a Dominican missionary. He now came to know the anxieties and impotence of a Church leader with no funds for the broad ministry of the Diocese of Cincinnati. Although the city was thriving, the wealthy belonged to the Protestant denominations. In letters to Rome Fenwick sounded uncharacteristically depressed as he referred to his “wretched condition” and his earnest wish to resign.

In more concrete terms, Fenwick explained that as bishop he was no longer considered a member of the Dominican Order, with a right to its support. Yet he was given no financial assistance from the officials who appointed him. To Benedict Viviani, the head of the Dominican Order in Rome, he wrote, in 1823:

I was forced to contract for a house and to buy a piece of property for the location of my cathedral, if the chapel may be called such, constructed as it is of wood. The whole arrangement which has come about for my Cathedral site has arisen from my request...made after mass on Sundays to the amount of 2 or 3 dollars each week. With this modest sum I am forced to manage a household...of 7 persons with 2 horses.⁶⁹

The condition of Fenwick’s cathedral gave rise to a story that illustrated not only the fragility of the structure as it was being moved to a new location, but also the bias against Catholics.

The pro-Cathedral was drawn by oxen to its

new site amid shouts of derision and hatred. On the following Sunday during the Holy Sacrifice, the building began to sway. Mr. Michael Scott jumped over his pew and ran out followed by another member of the congregation. Mr. Scott crept under the building and supported it until props were replaced.⁷⁰

Fenwick in Europe

Fenwick was a typical American, a man of action. He knew he would have little relief from poverty and lack of personnel unless he went to Rome to describe his situation in person to those in Europe who had the means to assist him. Plans for such a journey began early in 1823, and Fenwick sailed on May 30, 1823. After a year as bishop he knew what he could expect, the needs of the immigrant peoples, and the kinds of institutions required to serve Catholics on the frontier. Fenwick wasted no time in writing to Stephen Badin in Paris, knowing that Badin would send all news items to the press in London and Paris.

When Fenwick arrived in Bordeaux, he wrote to Badin, and true to form, the French missionary sent the most attractive excerpts from Fenwick’s three letters to the Catholic press. Fenwick told how happy he was to be able to borrow, interest free, the money necessary for the voyage. His objective in coming to Europe, and especially to Rome, was to resign his bishopric. If refused, he intended to make a number of requests, namely, a theologian for Ohio (Wilson was needed at St. Rose), a new diocese for Detroit, and for himself a coadjutor, an assistant bishop who would later be his successor. He hoped to recruit seminarians and priests for his German and Irish immigrants, to obtain permission for a proper division of Dominican resources centralized at St. Rose in Kentucky, and to beg from many sources the funds needed to build a cathedral, a seminary, and a decent priests’ dwelling. In his

letters Fenwick praised the goodness of the Ohio people: "they have always afforded me consolation, pleasure and almost sanity."⁷¹

The journey from Bordeaux to Rome took sixteen days. From northern Italy Fenwick was already writing Church officials requesting them to accept his resignation because of "incapacity and ignorance."

Leo XII Receives Fenwick

Arrival in the Eternal City only meant more waiting. There was no pope. Pius VII had died and no successor had yet been elected, so Fenwick had a few weeks to get acquainted with the city and learn proper procedures to be followed at the Vatican. The newly elected pope, Leo XII, assumed office on October 5 and received Fenwick on October 6. Although the pope was gracious in receiving Fenwick on his first official day of work, he denied the bishop's request to resign. Leo was touched by Fenwick's account of his poverty, his need for personnel, and his feelings of inadequacy. He gave Fenwick \$1200 and many articles needed in the new diocese.⁷²

Encouraged by this good beginning Fenwick proceeded to contact influential persons in the Church offices and at the world headquarters of the Dominican Order in Rome. He discovered that one of his previous letters had brought some results. The provincial Samuel Thomas Wilson in Kentucky was told to "send to the Bishop [of Cincinnati] a sufficient number of subjects and to provide in a stable manner for their temporal needs." The writer continued, "the Bishop...paints a most mournful picture of the anxieties in which he finds himself from lack of workers."⁷³ This gesture proved useful for Fenwick's morale but little else. Within the year, Wilson died suddenly and the mandate was not carried forward.

Kentucky, his need for a theologian for the diocese, and two or three priests, one of whom could instruct the German immigrants. He urged that a new diocese be formed in Michigan to lighten his load, and that he should have a coadjutor. However, Rome denied Fenwick a coadjutor and delayed creating a diocese for Detroit until after his death.

VII

NEW MISSIONARIES AND SUPPORT

In January of 1824, Fenwick left Rome accompanied by Frederic Rese, a German priest who had volunteered to serve German immigrants in the Cincinnati diocese. He acted as Fenwick's secretary and learned about the diocese as they travelled westward across Europe. When Fenwick and Rese reached Lyons, France, the bishop laid his financial problems before the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. This was a new lay organization for raising and distributing monies to aid missionaries abroad. Fenwick's affability and modest demeanor favorably impressed the founders who awarded him eight thousand francs and promised that he would receive an annual donation.⁷⁴

In Paris, Stephen Badin embraced the bishop and introduced him to many Parisian Catholic authorities so that he could make an appeal to the French people. Fenwick must have been pleased with the results of his plea to the Catholics of France. He expressed his gratitude when he wrote to Badin, knowing that his letter would be published: "Present my most grateful and affectionate compliments and thanks to all the amiable, polite and generous families you so kindly introduced me to."⁷⁵

It was from Paris that Fenwick sent ahead to the United States several volunteers from France: two priests, Jean Bellamy and Pierre Déjean, and Sister St. Paul, a Sister of Mercy. Rese accompanied them on this trip.

Homeward Bound

Fenwick ended his stay in Europe with a final stop in

England. There he greeted many of his old friends of the Order, friars of the English province, to which he had belonged for more than ten years before founding the Kentucky province. With assurances of their friendship, Fenwick sailed from Liverpool toward the end of October.

On the sea voyage to the United States Fenwick had time to reflect on the objectives he had had in going to Europe. He counted as disappointments the fact that the Pope had refused to accept his resignation; that he did not obtain a theologian for Ohio; that there was no new diocese of Michigan to diminish the vast area of his responsibility; and that he would have no coadjutor. On the positive side, the bishop took delight in the four priests and one religious sister who had volunteered for his diocese, and in the generosity of so many Europeans to the Church in Ohio. He was happy with the cordiality of his contacts in Europe, and the financial help amounting to over three thousand pounds safely deposited in London.⁷⁶ Over and above the funds, pastors from various churches had donated at least ten trunks of ecclesiastical articles. However, Fenwick knew little of the changes in his own diocese that had occurred since his departure seventeen months earlier.

Fenwick's ship arrived in New York on December 1, 1824, after "a boisterous, rough and dangerous voyage of forty days."⁷⁷ He did not travel immediately to Cincinnati. Instead he visited his Dominican friend and fellow-bishop, John Connolly of New York. In his usual generous and sympathetic way Fenwick gave the bishop urgently needed help, as he wrote to Badin: "Bishop Connolly was distressed because two of his best assistants had died within the last ten days. He drudges night and day to the sick... Last night I turned out for him, for I will not allow him to get up at night as long as I can stay here."⁷⁸ Fenwick could not know that his friend Connolly would die within the next two months. Nor could he know how narrow

would be his own escape from death on his return home.

Because bishops at home were always eager to hear news from abroad, and winter was not a good time to travel across the mountains, Fenwick chose to share his Roman experiences with Archbishop Ambrose Maréchal in Baltimore before returning to Ohio. He also had time to visit his own relatives who lived in Maryland and the District of Columbia. By the month of March he was prepared to return to Cincinnati.

Nicholas Dominic Young, Fenwick's Dominican nephew, arranged the transportation for the return trip to Ohio. He asked John Dugan of Zanesville, a businessman and a good friend of Fenwick, to drive his coach from Baltimore to Ohio. Gabriel Richard, the priest Congressman from Michigan, came from Washington, D.C. to join the group. Near Cumberland, Maryland, on March 11, the horses bolted and ran away. The occupants were thrown out of the coach and the baggage scattered. The only person seriously injured was the driver, John Dugan. A few hours after the accident he died in the arms of Bishop Fenwick—a tragic event on the way to what was to be a happy homecoming.⁷⁹

By the end of March, 1825, Fenwick reached Cincinnati to survey the changes and surprises that awaited him. He would certainly miss conferring with his friend and co-worker, the provincial Samuel Thomas Wilson, who had died in May of 1824. To his surprise, William Tuite, the eldest friar, had declared himself the new provincial. Another cause for shock was the existence of a new bishop's house. In his absence, John Augustine Hill had arranged for the building of a three-story brick residence without consulting anyone. This pretentious house stood in great contrast to the humble little frame church that served as the cathedral, and was encumbered with a debt of \$4000 for the episcopal residence.⁸⁰

The New Cathedral of St. Peter

The cathedral for which Fenwick had begged during his European tour monopolized his time after his return. Within a month the bishop purchased for \$1200 a lot on which he planned to build the cathedral for his diocese. A local architect, Michael Scott, drew up the plans for a building that would be a large edifice for this area of the country.⁸¹

By August the walls of the structure were nearly finished. Work progressed rapidly so that in the unfinished building the first Mass was celebrated on June 29, 1825. The bishop dedicated the new cathedral to St. Peter, and on December 17 of the same year, it was officially opened with the celebration and rejoicing of two thousand persons in attendance.⁸² The *U.S. Catholic Miscellany* carried this description of the edifice:

The Cathedral is a neat and elegant building of about one hundred feet by fifty, distinguished on the outside only by the regularity of the brick work, fine Gothic windows, a large cross formed by the pilasters, in front, and a small spire, not yet finished, designed to support a clock; a handsome iron gate and railing separate it from the street. The interior is remarkable for grand simplicity and chasteness of design, finished in the Gothic order. The altar, pulpit, and Bishop's chair are handsomely finished and richly decorated. The effect produced by the splendid bronze tabernacle, surmounted by a beautiful crucifix in the midst of ten superb candlesticks of the same material is truly imposing. There is nothing light, frivolous or gaudy to be seen; dignity is sustained throughout, and imparts solemnity to the performance of divine service.⁸³

Fenwick himself found great happiness in presiding at ceremonies in the beautiful cathedral that he had dreamed about for so long. But he could no longer remain absorbed

in the affairs of Cincinnati; the outreaches of his diocese called for his attention.

Growth of the Mission Stations

With the completion of the cathedral, Fenwick could give more attention to obtaining priests for the many mission stations in Ohio and Michigan. He was gratified in 1825 to rely on Frederic Rese and John Raymaecker to minister to the German-speaking Catholics, but all other groups begged for priests.

Through the decade of the 1820s, if Fenwick himself did not establish parishes, his fellow Dominicans did. The historic event of the ground-breaking for the Ohio Canal in Cleveland, July 4, 1825, brought many Irish laborers. It was to them in 1826 that the first priest came in Cleveland, the Dominican Thomas Martin, then residing at Somerset. According to the press, "He had heard that quite a colony of Catholics were employed on the canal building between Cleveland and Akron, and made it his business to attend to their spiritual wants."⁸⁴

Thus, with new help from diocesan priests, the Dominicans continued their pioneer work in the rapidly-growing state, going where needs dictated.

The rapid growth and spread of new parishes sharpened the hope of Bishop Fenwick for a coadjutor to lighten his load. But such was not to be. Fenwick took on an additional burden in 1828 when Dominican superiors in Rome decided that he should be head of the one Dominican province in the United States. The title of Commissary General was added to that of Bishop. He now had divided loyalties. Would his actions as bishop jeopardize the welfare of the friars? Would his encouragement to establish parishes with properties in the name of the friars prove detrimental to the growth of the diocese?

It was an unusual situation in the Church even in a

missionary country for a bishop to be head of a province of men religious. He wrote often to the prior at St. Rose in Kentucky urging confidence in God. On one occasion he wrote, "If I can lighten any burden or afford any comfort whatever I will do it as far as in my power consistent with justice and other duties."

Seeking Women Religious

Fenwick's attempts to obtain women religious to open and teach in schools and share his missionary labors produced mixed results. On his trip abroad in search of funds, he elicited the services of a French Sister of Mercy, a novice at the time, Sister St. Paul, who arrived with Rese in Cincinnati in 1824. She conducted a school there with one assistant, Eliza Rose Powell. Fenwick had planned to have Sister St. Paul head a religious community in Cincinnati and asked the Superior of the French Sisters of Mercy to send two or three Sisters to establish a house in his diocese. He wrote that Sister St. Paul was "a gift from heaven."⁸⁵ The untimely death of this pioneer Sister in Cincinnati in 1827 was a severe blow to the bishop.

Already in 1825 Fenwick had requested Mother Seton's Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg to take charge of an orphanage and a school in Cincinnati. Conditions for receiving the sisters and assuring their support precluded their coming until 1829, when Fenwick was able to promise "rent free housing and an annual stipend." He concluded his letter, suggesting they start out in time "to descend the river before it becomes too low for boating."⁸⁶ These first women of Elizabeth Ann Seton's congregation included Sisters Francis Xavier, Victoria, Beatrice and Albina.⁸⁷ Their school flourished from the start and their numbers increased. This congregation still staffs many schools in the Cincinnati area and engages in charitable works throughout the country.

A few months after the arrival of the Sisters of Charity,

Fenwick brought four Dominican Sisters from Kentucky to share the mission of the friars at Somerset, Ohio. They arrived early in 1830 and opened a school shortly after. Sisters Emily Elder, Agnes Harbin, Catherine Mudd, and Benvin Sansbury, sister of Angela Sansbury, constituted this first group at Somerset. These women conducted schools not only in Somerset but also in Canton and Zanesville. Fenwick proudly announced to the Dominican Vicar General in Rome:

We have called to the Diocese of Ohio four Sisters of St. Dominic from Kentucky giving them an establishment here: they already have a large number of scholars and are prospering. And we have sent other maidens, good young women, to the Kentucky Mother House to make their novitiate and then to be recalled here.... They play the office of missionary among us.⁸⁸

The Dominican sisters, now of Columbus, still serve in central Ohio and also in other areas of the country and in the mission fields abroad.

Relationship With Fellow Bishops

During the ten years that Fenwick struggled with problems of personnel, he had cordial relations with his associate bishops and close ties with a few. Fenwick treasured John Connolly, O P., the bishop of New York, as a friend and brother Dominican, but Edward Fenwick had barely begun his episcopacy when Connolly died in 1825. When he needed advice, he invariably wrote to Ambrose Maréchal of Baltimore until the latter's death in 1828; and to Louis Dubourg of New Orleans. Often Fenwick consulted them both on the same problems, hoping thereby to have a choice of options. The bishop closest in distance and of longest acquaintance was Flaget of Bardstown. Though Flaget and Fenwick sometimes differed on diocesan matters, their personal relations remained cordial.

First Council of Baltimore

All the bishops in the emerging nation faced similar personnel and financial problems but were able to put aside concerns for their individual dioceses to meet and legislate for the general good of all in the first Council of Baltimore in 1829. Archbishop Whitfield took the initiative late in 1828 to invite the bishops' reactions to his calling a Council to be held in Baltimore in October of 1829. Agenda items for the meeting were elicited from the bishops from various dioceses. Fenwick's response was affirmative for the Council and its date. The topics he suggested related to the proper comportment of priests when administering matrimony to a party of Catholic and Protestant, that is, how to be garbed, and the blessing to be given. He was also concerned about publishing banns for matrimony, about baptism of children when non-Catholic parents requested it, and the "propriety of tolerating the stores & shops of Catholics to be open & attended to on holy days, draymen & wagoners to be carrying and driving on those days."⁸⁹

The Council opened on October 1, 1829. In general the decrees of the Council dealt with uniformity of religious practices, the problems of trusteeism and unqualified clergymen. By sharing views collegially and resolving differences of opinion, the prelates sent a message to Catholics as well as the general public of their desire to establish as much uniformity of practice as differing locales would permit.

Fenwick shared his impressions with his Jesuit friend John McElroy:

Our Council closed yesterday after fifteen days' steady session. Our meeting and proceedings throughout were cordial, harmonious and consoling to all and each of us. Much good, we trust, will be effected, many salutary regulations adopted, abuses corrected

and uniformity adopted. We are to go to-morrow to see and dine with the venerable Mr. Carroll [Charles].⁹⁰

Because of urgent business in Cincinnati, Fenwick returned shortly after the meeting, stopping at Somerset and other parishes on his way. He not only faced the usual diocesan duties in Cincinnati but was burdened by his nagging concern for the Indians of the vast territories under his care.

VIII

MISSION TO INDIGENOUS TRIBES

Throughout his years as bishop, Edward Fenwick found joy and inspiration in ministering to the native Americans in his diocese. The plight of these people was his unfailing concern in all the Michigan Territory, the vast area that included the present state of Michigan and Wisconsin.

Through the expanding policy of "Indian Removal" the United States Government over the years pushed the native Americans farther and farther westward. As white settlers through the late 18th and early 19th centuries encroached upon tribal lands, no government action prevented the grabbing of tribal territory. By Fenwick's time, various migrant tribes had become identified with certain locations. The Ottawas occupied lands on the eastern shores of Lake Michigan centered in Arbre Croche. The Chippewas or Objibwas settled near the junction of Lakes Huron and Michigan, while the Menominees remained around Green Bay, near the northwestern shores of Lake Michigan. The Winnebagos fanned westward from the center of the present state of Wisconsin. Nearer the southwestern shores of Lake Michigan the Pottawatomies lived at River St. Joseph. The bishop hoped to send missionaries to all these tribes.

Because of his early associations and continuing friendship with the Jesuits, he was especially aware of how long it had been since these native peoples enjoyed the ministrations of their "blackrobes," since the Society of

Jesus had been suppressed in 1773, and thus forced to withdraw their French missionries from North America. Fenwick's objective was to convert the Indians and bring fur traders back to the Church.

Although seldom physically present to the tribes he kept their needs close to his thoughts. Early in August of 1823, shortly after his arrival in Europe, he wrote to Stephen Badin in Paris,

I intend, . . . to have two missionaries travelling continually from place to place, especially devoting their labors and services to the Indians. For that purpose, it is necessary I should have a fund or fixed pension for such laborious and useful men. . . .⁹¹

Even in northern Ohio, he told Badin, two thousand tribesmen lived, some of whom were Catholics who had to cross Lake Erie to Canada to have their marriages celebrated and children baptized by a Catholic priest.

Volunteers for the Missions

When in Rome in 1823, Fenwick had begged for the needs of his Indians, for priests and lay helpers, "youths zealous, courageous and in good health."⁹² Of the four individuals who volunteered their services, the two French diocesan priests, Jean Bellamy and Pierre Déjean, had offered to work in Michigan, especially with the native Americans. Bellamy and Déjean, would bring both joy and sorrow to Fenwick. They had to contend with loneliness, the harsh climate, much physical exertion and notable cultural differences. Only later could Fenwick know how the two men would react to these circumstances.

Francis Badin, Fenwick's Envoy

The Indians knew of Fenwick's dedication to them. In 1825 the bishop had sent another missionary to visit the various tribes in Michigan; Francis Vincent Badin, younger brother of Stephen, veteran missionary of Kentucky.

Francis Badin's main purpose was to visit all the stations where tribes were known to live in Michigan Territory. He wrote a lengthy letter to his brother Stephen, still in Paris, detailing his experiences. He spoke of meeting Catholics at Green Bay where there had been no regular priest for fifty years. The French speaking inhabitants at the Bay, and especially the Menominees received him with much joy. He stayed two months teaching catechism, holding special religious ceremonies and administering the sacraments. In this short space of time he even built a small wooden chapel dedicated to St. Vincent de Paul. He felt he had made some progress but realized he needed a long time among the people to have a lasting influence.⁹³

Francis Badin left Green Bay with much regret as he travelled north to Mackinac Island, a trip that took thirty-eight hours. He felt fortunate to find there some poignant reminders of the Jesuit missions: twelve church vestments, many still in good condition, four beautiful silver candlesticks, and a crucifix that was somewhat deteriorated. He could not stay at Mackinac long because of the "pressing solicitations of the Ottawa people at Arbre Croche who were begging with great insistence."⁹⁴

The Ottawa chief and his people gave Badin every demonstration of welcome and respect. At the Mass, Badin remarked how impressed he was by the contemplative attitude and modesty they exhibited during the ceremony and the beauty of the singing in their own language. He praised the tribe for their resemblance to the early Christians who were of one heart and one mind. As a touching climax to his visit, Badin placed around the neck of the chief a silver medal. On one side was the inscription: "I know that my Redeemer lives;" on the other side the words "Let the little children come to me."

Badin then returned to his base at Mackinac Island from which he embarked for Detroit at the beginning of

November. He had spent almost eight months bringing hope to settlers and happiness to the Indians who appreciated the ministrations of a priest.

The Bishop Visits the Indian Missions

After hearing Francis Badin's account of his trip, it was with a sense of expectation and excitement that Fenwick finally found time to go to the remote areas under his administration. He especially wanted to gain a first-hand knowledge of tribal life. He took James Mullon, a young diocesan priest, as his companion. They left Cincinnati on the 12th of May, 1829, and went directly to Green Bay. Mullon in his detailed account of this three-month trip noted that they arrived at the Bay on May 27. On the following day the congregation assembled at the chapel, celebrated Mass with the bishop and listened to his words.⁹⁵

Warm Reception by the Ottawas

They next visited the hundreds of Ottawas at Arbre Croche, where Pierre D jean was happily settled as pastor. Fenwick could not have anticipated the reception he received, as told by Mullon:

Near the place of our destination, we perceived the Indians directing themselves toward the point where we were about to disembark. As we approached the shore, we saw a procession that descended on a winding path coming to receive us. The deputation was about fifty people. The Chief as well as all the members of the greeting party knelt to receive the blessing of the Prelate.⁹⁶

As they climbed the bank Fenwick and Mullon caught their first glimpse of the chapel that had been recently built. There the Chief led the prayers in the Ottawa tongue before all retired for the night.

On the following morning at Angelus time many

Ottawas gathered at the chapel, where "the bishop began by hearing confessions by means of two interpreters who had been designated, one man for the men and one woman for the women."

Only after administration of Baptism, Confirmation and Matrimony, did the bishop have something to eat at two pm. This meal was taken sitting Indian fashion on mats surrounded by three chiefs. Mullon and Fenwick were impressed with the Ottawas for their dignity, their superior manner of life and their cultivation of beautiful fields of wheat. Over a hundred of the Ottawas formed a society to discourage the use of strong liquor.⁹⁷

Fenwick seemed to be very relaxed when he visited the native tribes; he no longer mentioned resigning, as he often did when confronted with diocesan problems, especially of finance. When presiding in his modest manner, he lived among them in a tent put up on sand and ate the regular fare the people offered, whether it was the plentiful fish, or deer, or bear meat. The tribal people expressed their own joy at his coming because they knew he cared about them and would send missionaries to visit them and whenever possible supply a resident priest.

Ministry to Fur Traders

After the pleasant sojourn at Arbre Croche, Fenwick and Mullon returned to Mackinac, where the majority of Catholics were French Canadian fur traders. In early June these traders and the Indian trappers assembled on the island to sell the pelts they had harvested in the winter season. The visitors took advantage of this yearly event to remain three weeks taking care of the spiritual needs of the people. On June 18, 1829, the two left for Detroit and cities in Ohio, ending their trip in Cincinnati. "We were convinced," wrote Mullon, "of the good dispositions of the Indians for Christianity."⁹⁸

Indian Youths to Ohio

Although Mullon gave many details of their visit to the North, he did not mention the fact that Fenwick brought back to Ohio two fifteen-year old Ottawa youths from Arbre Croche, William Maccatebinessi and Augustine Hamelin. In Cincinnati they enrolled in English classes in the fall of 1829. The bishop further proposed that if they should have a vocation to the priesthood, he would send them to Rome to study.⁹⁹

In October of 1829, Fenwick participated with his fellow bishops in the Council of Baltimore and stayed in the East until March of 1830. At home too many responsibilities presented themselves for his attention so the bishop sent Frederic Rese to visit the Indians in 1830.

Samuel Mazzuchelli

Among the bishop's duties of a happy nature was the ordination of a young Milanese Dominican, Samuel Mazzuchelli, in September of 1830. Through the solicitation of the bishop and Rese, Mazzuchelli was sent to Cincinnati by the Master of the Order in 1828. During the two years before ordination, he studied English and the courses necessary for the priesthood. After ordination the bishop sent this twenty-four-year old priest to Mackinac Island.

This assignment meant travelling 600 miles from Cincinnati to a land of wilderness, extreme cold in winter, loneliness, and a medley of tribes, traders, trappers and French-Indian families. Equally challenging for this young priest, accustomed to living in Catholic Italy, was the activity of Protestant sects in this frontier land. From Mackinac, the bishop expected Mazzuchelli to serve as pastor for all of Upper Michigan and the land comprising the present state of Wisconsin.¹⁰⁰ That first winter, 1830-31, must have been a severe test of Father Samuel's faith in

God and his physical endurance.

Mazzuchelli Missions

Samuel Mazzuchelli held a special place in the affections of Fenwick. The bishop placed much trust in the young priest, gave him many responsibilities, and was never disappointed. By the time of Fenwick's 1831 visit, there was at Mackinac "a neat and commodious chapel with an adjoining baptistry, and an exemplary congregation of Americans, Canadians, and Indian Catholics, under the charge of Rev. Mr. Mazzuchelli, of the Order of St. Dominic." The bishop wrote, "the unwearied zeal and successful labors of this gentleman have contributed much towards the restoration of piety and vital religion among the Indians and other Catholics of these quarters."¹⁰¹

In June of 1831, at Green Bay, 200 miles southwest from Mackinac Island, the bishop established a school for Menominees to be directed by Samuel Mazzuchelli. The teachers were two women of French and Indian descent, Rosalie Dousman and Elizabeth Grignon.¹⁰²

Fenwick's Second Journey to the North

With the coming of spring in 1831, Fenwick longed to be on the road visiting the people of the North, who looked forward to his presence and ministrations. He anticipated this journey with some apprehension. He would be happy to see young Mazzuchelli again but reports of missionary Déjean disturbed him. Disappointments concerning missionaries, Fenwick had experienced before. In 1827, he had suffered a double loss. Jean Bellamy departed from the Detroit area after deciding to serve as missionary in China. The French Sister Mary St. Paul, on whose efforts the bishop depended for education of children in the Cincinnati area became ill and died. A third setback came in 1831 with the request of Pierre Déjean to return to France. The request was quickly granted because Déjean, despite his many labors and obvious

zeal for the Ottawas there, had for some time been engaging in un priestly conduct at Arbre Croche. Perhaps he could no longer tolerate the lack of companionship in this wilderness area, or further endure the long, harsh winters.

Frederic Baraga, Missionary to the Ottawas

Good news came for Fenwick in the person of a young Slovenian priest named Frederick Baraga who arrived in Cincinnati from Austria in January of 1831. In a letter to his older sister Amalia, Baraga described his first few months in the episcopal city.

I first looked for my saintly chief pastor, the Right Reverend Edward Fenwick. I always had a high idea of the piety, amiability and humility of this bishop, but the gratification of his presence soon convinced me how weak were my ideas of his virtues... The Bishop's kind reception and promise to send me to the Indians cheered me very extraordinarily.¹⁰³

Baraga spent his first months in Cincinnati learning English and being tutored by one of the Ottawa students in the Ottawa language. This Slovenian priest would be the replacement for Déjean at the Ottawa mission at Arbre Croche.

Fenwick was delighted to escort Baraga to his new mission. Personally, this visit would prove to be the bishop's most productive for the native Americans. The two left from Dayton, Ohio, on May 12, 1831, and arrived a few days later at Detroit, where they sailed for Mackinac Island and then to Arbre Croche where the people warmly received them.

In preparation for welcoming ceremonies, the Indians covered a path with mats extending through the entire length of the village. Fenwick described his visit:

We had a procession of the Blessed Sacrament on that day after Mass, with much order and decency. I believe

that there was more piety, faith and veneration as have ever been seen in similar cases among American Catholics... I can say that was the most beautiful day, the most filled with consolation, that I have experienced since I have been a Bishop. I would gladly exchange my home in Cincinnati and all my honors, etc. for a cabin to aid these good Indians.¹⁰⁴

Baraga was so pleased that he said he never wanted to leave the place. Fenwick stayed on for seven days with the Ottawas whose piety consoled and edified him.¹⁰⁵ Before leaving the area, the bishop again wrote to his Vicar, "I placed 3 Indian boys to trades at Mackinac—one with the blacksmith, two with the carpenters under M. Mazzuchelli. A female school is to be established under M. Mazzuchelli."¹⁰⁶

At Mission St. Joseph

On his long trip home, Fenwick proceeded to the Pottawatomie mission of St. Joseph on the southeastern shores of Lake Michigan. There he greeted his former adversary in Kentucky, but now long-time friend, Stephen Badin. Badin, senior, as they called him, returned in 1828 from spending almost ten years in his native France. He offered his services to Fenwick who asked him to work with the Indians at Mission St. Joseph.¹⁰⁷ Despite his advanced age of almost seventy years, Badin consented to serve the Pottawatomies there. A newspaper reporter wrote of Fenwick's visit:

As soon as the Bishop arrived, the chief and his family very kindly requested him to partake of their hospitality, which was cordially accepted, and the party consisting of the chief, his squaw, the Rev. Mr. Badin and the Bishop sat down to eat with more good feeling than good fare. It had at least the merit of being presented with sincere and unaffected kindness.¹⁰⁸

First Candidate, Somerset Dominican Sisters

Fenwick's journey home was made more pleasant by the company of Samuel Mazzuchelli as far as Detroit, and of one of Father Samuel's parishioners, Ursula Grignon, the daughter of a French Canadian fur trader and a Menominee Indian wife, all the way to Ohio.

In addition to her Menominee language, Grignon spoke and wrote in French and indicated her desire to join the group of Dominican Sisters at Somerset, Ohio. Mazzuchelli had described their life and work to her. Escorted to Ohio by her bishop, Grignon became the first young woman to join these sisters whom Bishop Fenwick had called from Kentucky to Somerset in February of 1830. She wrote her father about her trip to Ohio.

The passengers were all very polite towards me, not forgetting my dear Bishop... a father could not have taken greater care of his child than he and Mr. Mazzuchelli. I do not know how I would have spent my time without them."^{109, 110}

Appeal to the U.S. Government

When the bishop stopped at Green Bay during the summer of 1831 he met the government agent who promised "to cooperate with us in getting up a school for Indians and give to it a share of public money at his [the agent's] disposal."¹¹¹

Fenwick did not allow the matter of U.S. Government aid for the Indians to rest with the agent. He wrote to Louis Cass, one-time governor of Michigan, ... and now U.S. Secretary of War, the office in whose jurisdiction Indian affairs rested. In November of 1831 he reminded Cass of the conversation they had had earlier in Washington when the Secretary indicated there were funds at his disposal for tribal relief. So that Cass could properly estimate the amount of the grant, Fenwick item-

ized the contributions that he had already made. The bishop concluded in his letter, "I would respectfully suggest that *three thousand* dollars would be advantageously applied to those objects were reference made to the respective Indian Agents in these districts."¹¹²

When the reply came from Cass the bishop was obviously disappointed. He thanked the Secretary for the minimal grant of \$1000 for the three schools combined, at Arbre Croche, Green Bay and St. Joseph; then he repeated the locations and enrollment figures of the three settlements as contrasted to the small amount granted by the government. Indicating the discrepancy he noted, "I beg of you, Sir, not to think me importuning. I am actuated alone by motives which I feel and know you appreciate and feel a deep interest in."¹¹³ Fenwick remained a few months longer in Washington. Illness and bad weather prevented his return to Cincinnati until March of 1832.

The bishop was scarcely home from Washington when he received good news from Pope Gregory XVI. The two Ottawa youths whom he had referred to the College of the Propaganda in Rome were accepted there. This was probably the first time any native American candidates for the priesthood would travel to Rome for that purpose. The following month, Fenwick's Vicar, Rese, notified Church officials that he would accompany the two candidates to New York to "see them off on the boat for Marseilles."¹¹⁴

Dangerous Journey to the North

On the night of June 13, 1832, Fenwick, accompanied by August Jeanjean, a priest of the New Orleans diocese, began his last trip to the North. They reached Michigan only in early July because they visited mission stations in Ohio before boarding the boat at Cleveland for Detroit. At this point the dread cholera appeared. Fenwick wrote to Rese from Mackinac:

We experienced great anxiety and annoyance between Detroit and here. Before reaching Fort Gratiot a soldier died of cholera and was thrown into the water. Three others were stricken with the same malady the following day... They were carried ashore and buried with eight others.¹¹⁵

Fenwick and Jeanjean reached Mackinac on July 17, where the bishop became ill. He was able only to visit his beloved Ottawas and their pastor, Frederic Baraga at Arbre Croche. He had to forego the trip to Green Bay; he was too ill, and was to die two months later.

Fenwick's Unrecognized Contributions

Fenwick's contributions to the tribes of Michigan have not always been recognized, partially because he was not a person who tried to impress others with his accomplishments. Rather he tended to minimize them. He not only paid personal visits to the Indians but adapted himself to their customs and ways of living. He persisted in sending priests to work among them and chose priests and lay teachers who conducted schools for them. He helped their youth learn trades useful to the tribes, even educating several in Cincinnati. He arranged for Ursula Grignon to join the Dominican Sisters at Somerset so that she might return to teach her own people; and to encourage a native clergy, he sponsored two young men to study for the priesthood. His personal contacts were limited, yet his care, concern, and efforts on behalf of native Americans knew no limitation.

IX

A Man of Ideas and Ideals

Edward Dominic Fenwick presents a picture of contrasts in his life and work. He dreamed of setting up in his native land a province of his religious order; he fulfilled that dream, then hastened to request the appointment of his confrere, Samuel Thomas Wilson as its first provincial. Although a bishop, he continued to be itinerant; although itinerant he remained in Cincinnati long enough to establish all institutions required of a new diocese, and some not yet required in a frontier diocese. He somehow persisted in securing teachers to start schools not only in Ohio but in remote parishes where Indians predominated. The reference by Flaget to missionary Fenwick as "easy," perhaps meaning easy-going, was put to rest during his days as bishop. His fixed demand that priests in his diocese be only the most exemplary, never weakened. In his first Pastoral Letter of 1827, he strongly exhorted Catholics of Ohio and Michigan to observe the laws of fasting that he delineated. Strict by modern standards, these regulations included eating meat only on four days a week, one full meal a day with only one small collation either morning or night, but not both. Some mitigation of these regulations he accorded to "laboring persons," women and travelers.¹¹⁶

A Man of Action

His health was precarious at best, yet he never allowed this condition to impede his work to establish St. Rose in the early years. Nor did he allow illness to excuse him from supervising work on diocesan buildings in

Cincinnati. He insisted on travelling north to the Indians, and south to the nation's capital to beg for funds for their schools.

A person of weaker will could have become apathetic and uncaring or could have insisted upon resigning in the face of unanswered requests for a coadjutor and a separate diocese for Detroit. Yet Fenwick remained active and effective. His attitude appears in contrast to that of the friars from the English Province who came with him to begin the American province. These three English-born friars somehow never became sufficiently adapted to frontier life and parish ministry. Robert Angier suffered a physical and mental breakdown in Kentucky and, in 1815, returned to England. Samuel Thomas Wilson was successful in the classroom but declined to preach, a role for which he was eminently well-prepared. William Raymond Tuite lived principally at St. Rose in the role of teacher, but was a troubled and hypercritical man who suffered from alcoholism. The good will of the English friars brought them to the missions, but not to the full effectiveness of Fenwick's ministry.

Affability and Integrity

Despite the many problems he faced, Fenwick never let them interfere with his affable inclination to make and keep friends. From his earliest years he treasured the friendships he made with the Jesuit priests in Maryland. On many occasions when travelling to Baltimore on business he stayed at the residence of John McElroy, S.J. in Frederick, Maryland. His letters attest to the warmth and depth of their friendship. On one occasion the bishop thanked McElroy for the loan of his gig;¹¹⁷ on another he asked his friend to advance money for priest James Mullan to accompany the Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg to Cincinnati.¹¹⁸

The esteem in which others held Fenwick was illus-

trated in a letter sent to him in 1825 by John Dubois, future bishop of New York. Fenwick had requested that the Emmitsburg Sisters of Charity send a few members to Cincinnati to care for orphans. Dubois, who handled negotiations for the Sisters, asked the bishop to give him some assurance that the finances for these women would be forthcoming. He ended his letter saying, "As long as you live, your word... would be sufficient—but we are all mortal..."¹¹⁹

Preoccupied as the bishop was with financial and personnel problems, he remained thoughtful of others. While he was finishing his visitation in Michigan in 1831, he informed Rese in Cincinnati that Frederic Baraga had lost his watch. "I promised to send him one... you will give him [the missionary going to Michigan] the watch left to me by Rev. Mr. Clicteur which you may find in my bureau—for Mr. Baraga."¹²⁰

Reporters for the *Catholic Telegraph*, the diocesan paper in Cincinnati that Fenwick began, referred to the bishop as "received everywhere with that affectionate regard, to which he exhibits such irresistible claims by his amiable and paternal deportment."¹²¹

Frances Trollope, the English traveler and writer, gave a favorable impression of Fenwick that hardly concealed her bias toward American clergymen:

I had the pleasure of being introduced to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cincinnati and have never known in any country a priest of a character and bearing more truly apostolic. He was an American but I should never have discovered it from his pronunciation or manner. He received his education partly in England and partly in France. His manners were highly polished; his piety active and sincere and infinitely more mild and tolerant than that of the factious sectarians who form the great majority of the American

priesthood.¹²²

Diocesan Institutions and Newspaper

Although he accomplished much in ten short years as bishop, his contributions have been obscured by time. Appropriate diocesan institutions challenged his energies and finances. The first of the diocesan buildings to be erected in Cincinnati was certainly not Fenwick's choice. He never wanted his own comfort to be his first concern, as the new Bishop's residence built in his absence by John Hill might suggest. To build a fitting cathedral was his first priority.

When within months of Fenwick's return from the begging tour in Europe, St. Peter Cathedral was opened for the first services to be offered there, even the public newspapers "lauded our zeal and enthusiasm, quite unknown before this."¹²³

To open a seminary, an institution essential to raising a native priesthood in America, became another primary objective of Fenwick. He explained that without a seminary, he could obtain priests from Europe from time to time; but they would always be too few in number. "If I have a seminary, I shall be able to form a native clergy brought up according to the habits of the country, accustomed to rough roads, acquainted with the language, etc."¹²⁴ After repeated requests to Europe for a theologian to strengthen the faculty of the seminary, none was forthcoming. Undaunted by the refusals, the bishop built a seminary adjacent to the cathedral and enlisted the best staff possible from his own diocesan clergy. This seminary, dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, opened in Cincinnati on May 11, 1829.

The last of the diocesan institutions that the bishop dreamed of was a college. It was certainly an ambitious project and beyond the ordinary responsibility of a bishop on the frontier. But it had been his first purpose in coming

to the United States, left unfulfilled when Bishop John Carroll sent the founding fathers to the Kentucky mission. The Athenaeum, as the college was called, opened in October, 1831 with Fenwick as its president. The bishop hastened to write to his friend, the English Dominican Potier, "I informed you of my College, but forgot totally to add that I had not a proper President to govern it - being obliged to perform that duty myself." He proceeded then to ask Potier to accept that position or if that was not possible to suggest any other Father of the Order qualified for it.¹²⁵ Fenwick died before this request could be implemented.

Using the press as an essential tool for communicating to his people, answering unjust accusations, and educating readers in the Catholic faith, he founded a diocesan newspaper. The first issue of the *Catholic Telegraph* appeared on October 22, 1831, the first diocesan paper west of the Appalachians.

Some Cincinnati newspapers were published by partisans of various religious groups to educate their own congregations. But often they derided others, especially Roman Catholics. Even Fenwick suffered an attack. *The Western Observer* claimed that he was guilty of treason because he accepted funds and corresponded with the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in France. James Mullon, commenting to a well-wisher who deplored the accusation, pointed out that the bishop was too well known as a patriot to be treated in this way, that Fenwick's own father served in the Revolutionary War as a Colonel and that his brother and cousins had joined the armed forces.¹²⁶

Premonitions of Death

References in the letters of Fenwick and others reveal that he continued to live a full and active life in spite of many infirmities. Apparently he suffered from a polypus

that caused frequent fevers. Fenwick even sought relief from Europe in 1827 when Rese was there on business. Rese sent him a prescription from the doctor of the Bavarian King which “positively cures any polypus whatsoever.”¹²⁷ The “sure cure” did not work. Fenwick gave many indications of his declining health. In 1830 he revealed to Bishop Joseph Rosati of St. Louis his awareness of this condition, “My health & strength fail daily. I fear this Diocese will be without a Bishop—indeed it may be said so now, for I am of no use to it.”¹²⁸ It should be expected that anyone as active as the Bishop of Cincinnati was for many years, would be weary from incessant labor and constant exposure even if he had enjoyed robust health.

About a month before his death he expressed to a friend in Rome his physical and mental concerns, “I feel myself sinking under the weight of solicitude and infirmity. Arrived at my 64th year of age but I cannot add with confidence that there remains for me a crown of justice because man knows not if he is worthy of love or hatred.” Then to indicate an even greater problem than his own health and the state of his diocese, he continued, “I am sorry to say our little Province [of Dominican friars] does not flourish. It is poor in purse and spirit, is destitute of an able and active head to animate and promote its success.”¹²⁹

Fenwick’s good friend and protege, Samuel Mazzuchelli, was well aware of the Bishop’s declining faculties. As early as 1829 he wrote, “He is old and not in good health; his journeys weaken him more and more and he very often forgets things of the greatest importance.”¹³⁰

At Mackinac in 1832, because of his illness, Fenwick had the consolation of a lengthy visit with his young Dominican brother, Mazzuchelli. Despite the difference in their ages, the two priests had a relationship of mutual love and respect. Fenwick’s illness gave rise in him to a deep

sense of sadness, and the prospect of death haunted him. Mazzuchelli wrote in his Memoirs that it pained him to see the grief the good man suffered. The young priest tried to comfort him, by pointing out all the good Fenwick had done, but the bishop “blamed himself for having accepted the episcopacy of which he was unworthy and incapable of carrying the burden. He declared he had governed his diocese badly and that he knew not how to answer before the supreme Judge.”¹³¹

Father Samuel tried to console the bishop, reminding him that he had tried to resign his office many times and that his “upright intentions” would be seen by a just and merciful Judge. Mazzuchelli was the last Dominican that Fenwick saw before his death. When he was again able to travel, the bishop set out for home by way of Detroit but never reached Cincinnati.

To the Pope, Mazzuchelli wrote from Mackinac Island, after the bishop had started for home,

He was ill for ten days in my house incapable of travelling any further...The Bishop is old, infirm and incapable of visiting his entire diocese. He tells me that it is the last time that he will come to visit me. It would seem as if his last days have arrived, a fact that afflicts me very much because I love him as my most affectionate father.¹³²

Death at Wooster, Ohio

The outbreak of cholera only heightened Fenwick’s premonitions of approaching death. He himself, weakened from years of exhausting travel, was a prime subject for contracting cholera. He had reached Canton, Ohio on his return journey from Michigan before he felt the full impact of the disease. There he visited John Henni, the pastor of St. John’s, and Eliza Rose Powell, one of his converts from Kentucky and a long-time friend and teacher in the parish.

When Miss Powell noticed the deterioration in the bishop's health, she determined to travel with him to Cincinnati in the coach. Because of darkness, they could go no farther than Wooster, Ohio. There Fenwick died in an inn on September 26, 1832 attended by doctors but with only one person he knew, Eliza Rose Powell. It was Eliza who gave the diocese an account of the bishop's last hours.

In her poignant letter to Frederic Rese, Miss Powell wrote that she and the bishop left Canton about noon on the 25th of September. During the 60 mile ride to Wooster, Fenwick had to stand several times to relieve the cramps in his legs. At sunset, the coach arrived in Wooster where Fenwick stopped at the Colter Inn. Eliza recounted that the bishop took a cup of tea and went to bed. His condition continued to deteriorate to the degree that doctors who arrived at 11 pm despaired of his life. At that time Fenwick asked Eliza to send a messenger to Father Henni to "bring the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Oils, for I may be dead before he arrives." The physicians remained throughout the night. The next morning after the physicians had left, Eliza wrote,

I am quite alone with him this morning. When I asked him if he knew me, he said, No. I told him who I was as he leaned against me. While I prayed and strove to make him sensible by reciting the Litany or some words of the Psalms, he reached his arms and said, 'Come, let us go to Calvary!' This is all he has said since sunrise... He breathes easy but has neither sense nor feeling. It pierced my soul, when the landlady came in and said, 'Yes, he has administered to many, but there is no one to administer to him now.'¹³³

Fenwick died about noon without an attending priest.

Because of fear of the spread of cholera, the bishop was buried that same day in Wooster. Twice after that his

body was transferred and now rests in a mausoleum at St. Joseph Cemetery in Price Hill, Cincinnati.¹³⁴ After his death, three men assumed the responsibilities that had been his. His successor as Bishop of Cincinnati was John Baptist Purcell. His vicar, Frederic Rese, became Bishop of Detroit, now fully detached from the Diocese of Cincinnati. His Dominican nephew, Nicholas Dominic Young, was named Provincial of the friars in the United States.

Mazzuchelli reminisced in his Memoirs in 1844, "His memory is still in benediction among the faithful; his spirit of prayer, poverty, humility, and other virtues accompanied by affability, gentleness, and noble bearing can never be forgotten by one who had the good fortune to know him."¹³⁵

But one of the enigmas of history is the fact that Fenwick's memory has not been preserved. Practically nothing has been written of his accomplishments in the past seventy years. The Cathedral and Seminary now function in newer buildings. The Athenaeum as a tertiary institution continues as Xavier University under the auspices of the Society of Jesus. The diocesan newspaper, the *Catholic Telegraph*, remains the official archdiocesan publication. It would be characteristic of Fenwick to prefer to remain personally unremembered; but his exertions on behalf of native Americans, of his Dominican family and of the first diocese in the state of Ohio ought to be remembered and continued.

NOTES

CH. I GROWING UP ON A PLANTATION

- 1 . . . Victor O'Daniel, "A Maryland Geneological Study," *Dominicana* XXIX, 1, 8
- 2 . . . *Maryland Historical Magazine* I, 363-364. Cited in O'Daniel, *The Right Rev. Edward Fenwick O.P.* (New York: Pustet, 1940), 7.
- 3 . . . O'Daniel, Fenwick, 15,

CH. II STUDENT, FRIAR, AND PRISONER

- 4 . . . John Ceslas Fenwick to Ignatius Fenwick, May 16, 1785, collection of Charles Edward Fenwick, Leonardtown, MD
- 5 . . . Edward Fenwick to Luke Concanen, Carshalton, March 15, 1803, AGOP XIII, 03150, 63.
- 6 . . . O'Daniel, Fenwick, 42.
- 7 . . . Dominican Fathers, *The English Dominican Province* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1921) 244.

CH. III DREAMS OF AN AMERICAN PROVINCE

- 8 . . . In the Order of Preachers, since the time of St. Dominic, the superior general has been called the Master of the Order. The title connotes the teaching role of one who is first among equals.
- 9 . . . Fenwick to Concanen, 63.
- 10 . . . Concanen to Fenwick, Rome, Nov 19, 1803, EDP. The Vicar General, Joseph Gaddi, was then the constituted authority of the Order.
- 11 . . . Concanen to John Carroll, Dec 20, 1803. AAB 2 W 2.
- 12 . . . Dominican Fathers, 246. Even as late as 1822 there were only fourteen English Dominican friars, of whom eight were sixty-two years old or older. See Ambrose Woods to Francis O'Finan, Hinckley, June 19, 1822, EDP.
- 13 . . . Fenwick to Carroll, St Georges, MD, Nov 29, 1804, AAB 3 R 3.
- 14 . . . In a letter to Luke Concanen, Fenwick indicated that

although his brother was "so negligent as never yet to have given me any account" his patrimony included about 1200 acres of land and several houses, as well as some capital. Carshalton, March 15, 1803. AGOP XIII, 03150, 63.

- 15 . . . Fenwick to Carroll, Washington, DC, Dec 15, 1804, AAB 3 R 4.
 - 16 . . . Stephen T. Badin to Carroll, Danville, KY, Dec 6, 1804, *Records*, ACHS, V. 23, 157.
 - 17 . . . Ben J. Webb, *The Centenary of Catholicity in Kentucky* (Louisville: Charles A. Rogers, 1884) 17.
 - 18 . . . Cf. Ramona Mattingly, *The Catholic Church on the Kentucky Frontier* (Washington, DC: the Catholic University of America, 1936) 17ff.
 - 19 . . . Badin to Carroll, Kentucky, May 15, 1805, AAB 1 G 9.
 - 20 . . . Fenwick to Concanen, Piscataway, MD, Aug 1, 1805, AGOP XIII, 03150, 73.
 - 21 . . . Concanen to Fenwick, Rome, June 22, 1805, AAB 3 R 5
 - 22 . . . Though Fenwick had a vow of poverty, by which all goods of the Order are held in common, he could get permission to use his patrimony for the good of the Order and its mission.
 - 23 . . . Fenwick to Concanen, Piscataway, MD, Aug 1, 1805, AGOP XIII, 03150, 73.
 - 24 . . . Badin to Carroll, Kentucky, Oct 5, 1805, AAB 1 G 10.
 - 25 . . . Samuel T. Wilson, Georgetown, MD to Concanen, Oct 14, 1805, AGOP XIII, 03150, 74.
 - 26 . . . O'Daniel, *Light of the Church in Kentucky*, (Washington, DC: *The Dominicana*, 1932) 106.
- ### CH. IV ON THE KENTUCKY FRONTIER
- 27 . . . Badin to Romualdo Braschi, Bardstown, KY, June 7, 1805. APF III, 291r-294v. UND. Cf. John Boles, *Religion in Antebellum Kentucky* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1976).
 - 28 . . . Fenwick to Concanen, Springfield, KY, March 3, 1807,

- AGOP XIII, 03150,77.
- 29 . . . Deed, John Waller to Fenwick, Washington Co. KY Deed Book, C 254,255, Dec 1,1806.
- 30 . . . Rose was born in Lima,Peru in 1586. At the age of 20 she became a lay Dominican who manifested a special concern for the poor and the sick. She died in 1617 and was canonized in 1671.
- 31 . . . Fenwick to Carroll, Zacchia, MD, Oct 10, 1805, AAB 3 R 5
- 32 . . . Fenwick to Concanen, Springfield, KY, Sept 25, 1806, AGOP XIII, 03150, 75.
- 33 . . . O'Daniel, *Light*, 134.
- 34 . . . Wilson to Carroll, St.Rose, KY, Aug 25, 1806, AAB 8 B L 6.
- 35 . . . Fenwick to Carroll, Scott Co. KY, Winter, 1808, AAB 3 R 12.
- 36 . . . Badin to Carroll, Bardstown, KY, Aug 29 & 31, 1808, AAB 1 I 10.
- 37 . . . John LaFarge, "Survival of the Catholic Faith in Southern Maryland," CHR XXI, Cited in Mattingly, 135.
- 38 . . . Mattingly, 135-136.
- 39 . . . Wilson to Carroll, St.Rose, KY, Oct 14, 1807, AAB 8 B L 7.
- 40 . . . Fenwick to Concanen, Lexington, KY, July 10, 1808, AGOP XIII, 03150, 79.
- 41 . . . William Jurgens, *A History of the Diocese of Cleveland* (Youngstown, OH: Catholic Publishing, 1980) 75.
- 42 . . . John B. David to Simon Brute, Bardstown, KY, June 4, 1811, UND II-3-n.
- 43 . . . Badin to Carroll, Bardstown, KY, Nov 4, 1808, AAB 1 I 2.
- 44 . . . Anthony Kohlmann to Carroll, New York, Oct 12, 1810, AAB 4 M 5.
- 45 . . . Palmer Extracts, ms. c.1832,4, EDP.

46 . . . Fenwick to Concanen, Springfield, KY March 3, 1807, AGOP XIII, 03150, 77.

47 . . . O'Daniel, *Light*, 248.

CH. V PREACHER ON HORSEBACK

48 . . . See John Lamott, *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati:Pustet,1921) 25,n.41.

49 . . . Jacob Dittoe to Carroll, Baltimore, Jan 5, 1805, AAB 3 D 7.

50 . . . Fenwick to a Catholic Gentleman of London, St.Rose, KY, Nov 8, 1818, *Diario di Roma*, no.7, Jan 23,1819. SJP.

51 . . . Donald Schlegel, *Barquilla de la Santa Maria*, vol.X, no.11, Nov 1985, 81.

52 . . . Schlegel, 84.

53 . . . Robert E.Brennan O.P. *Cradle of the Faith in Ohio* (Columbus, OH, 1968) 10.

54 . . . Fenwick to John Hill, Georgetown, MD, June 1, 1820, APF IV, 610r-611r.

55 . . . Wilson to Hill, St.Rose, KY, July 23, 1820, APF IV, 611r-614r.

56 . . . Benedict Flaget to Marechal, Bardstown, KY, March 16, 1820. UND.

57 . . . J. Herman Schauinger, *Stephen T.Badin* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1956) 183-184.

58 . . . The English Dominican chronicler wrote that the fortune of Mrs. Hill was a sad episode in the story of Hill. The merchant who held her money declared bankruptcy and the woman was destitute and close to insanity. A group of nuns took her in and freely supported her for the rest of her life. Palmer Extracts, ms. 1822, 8, EDP.

59 . . . Cardinal Howard refounded the English Dominican Province in the 17th century and was responsible for setting up the college at Bornhem attended by John and Edward Fenwick.

60 . . . Palmer Extracts, ms.1822, 8-9. SJP

61 . . . Hill knew nothing of trusteeism in either Cincinnati or

Canton, OH.

62 . . . Hill to B. Olivieri O.P., New York, Aug 11, 1821, APF
Scritt. V.927, 490rv-494r.

CH. VI BISHOP OF FOREST AND WILDERNESS

63 . . . Fenwick to Propaganda Fide, St. Rose, KY, Jan 25, 1822,
APF VII, 143rv, UND.

64 . . . J.B. Raymaecker, "Creation of the First Episcopal Seat of
the City of Cincinnati in Ohio State," ms.c.1848, SJP.

65 . . . Ibid.

66 . . . Harriet Martineau, *Society in America* (Paris, A. and
W. Galignani, 1837) 96ff.

67 . . . Fenwick to T. Ancarani, Cincinnati, Dec 20, 1829, AGOP
XIII, 03150, 139.

68 . . . *Catholic Miscellany*, vol. III, no. 33, 1824, 431.

69 . . . Fenwick to Viviani, Rome, 1823, APF IX, 117rv-118r.

70 . . . M. Agnes McCann, *History of Mother Seton's Daughters*
(New York: Longmans, Green, 1917) I, 159.

71 . . . *The Catholic Spectator*, 350ff.

72 . . . Secretary, Propaganda Fide, to Fenwick, Rome, Jan 12,
1824, UND II-4-d.

73 . . . Pietro Caprano to Viviani, Rome, Aug 9, 1823, AGOP
XIII, 03150, 89.

CH. VII NEW MISSIONARIES AND SUPPORT

74 . . . *Annales*, 1826 "Mission de L'Ohio," II, 94.

75 . . . *Catholic Miscellany*, IV, 1824, 201.

76 . . . William Poynter to Fenwick, London, Dec 14, 1824,
UND II-4-d.

77 . . . Fenwick to Badin, New York, Dec 5, 1824, *Catholic
Miscellany* IV, 1824, 201.

78 . . . Ibid.

79 . . . Frederic Rese to Students of Propaganda College in Rome,

Cincinnati, May 5, 1825, APF VIII, 432r.

80 . . . Samuel L. Montgomery to Francis O'Finan, St. Rose, KY,
Aug 16, 1832. SCA.

81 . . . Fenwick to Badin, Cincinnati, April 16, 1825, SJP

82 . . . *Catholic Miscellany*, Feb 24, 1827, 246.

83 . . . *U.S. Catholic Miscellany*, May 3, 1828, 343.

84 . . . *Records*, ACHS, III, 1888-91, 1.

85 . . . Fenwick to French Sisters of Mercy, Cincinnati, July 8,
1825, SJP

86 . . . Fenwick to Superior, Daughters of Charity, Cincinnati,
May 9, 1829, Archives, Daughters of Charity,
Emmitsburg, MD.

87 . . . Lamott, 64.

88 . . . Fenwick to T. Ancarani, Cincinnati, April 15, 1830,
AGOP XIII, 03150, 140.

89 . . . Fenwick to James Whitfield, Cincinnati, Feb 18, 1829,
AAB 23 H 5.

90 . . . Fenwick to John McElroy, Baltimore, Oct 19, 1829, SJP.

CH. VIII MISSION TO INDIGENOUS TRIBES

91 . . . Fenwick to Badin, Bordeaux, Aug 8, 1823, *Catholic
Spectator*, I, 350.

92 . . . Fenwick to Propaganda Fide, Fall, 1823, APF VIII, 93r-
96r.

93 . . . Francis Vincent Badin to Stephen Theodore Badin,
Annales, II, 121.

94 . . . Same to same, 123.

95 . . . James Mullon to readers, *Annales*, IV, 486.

96 . . . Ibid, 487.

97 . . . Dejean to "M", *Annales*, IV, 492.

98 . . . Mullon to readers, *Annales* IV, 490.

99 . . . Fenwick to M.R., *Annales* IV, 521.

- 100 .. Samuel Mazzuchelli *Memoirs* (Chicago: Priory Press, 1967 reprint), vii.
- 101 .. *Catholic Telegraph* I, 1,6.
- 102 .. Fenwick, "School Regulations," WHC XIV, 184.
- 103 .. Frederic Baraga to Amelia Grassel, Cincinnati, Jan 21, 1831, *Baraga Bulletin* XI, 5, March, 1957.
- 104 .. Fenwick to Rese, Mackinac Island, June 3, 1831, BBC XIV-VI-MF 662, 101,104.
- 105 .. Ibid.
- 106 .. Fenwick to Rese, Detroit, July 10, 1831, LS XIV/VI/105
- 107 .. This mission was on the St. Joseph River. Badin's cabin stood on the present site of the University of Notre Dame.
- 108 .. *Catholic Telegraph* I, 2, 14.
- 109 .. Ursula Grignon to Louis Grignon, Mackinac, July 2, 1831. SHSW XII, 18, IIa.
- 110 .. In O'Daniel, *Fenwick*, p.396, the writer states that an Indian girl was entrusted by Fenwick to the Sisters of Charity in Cincinnati. There is no mention of this in the documents cited by O'Daniel, nor in the archives of the Sisters of Charity in Cincinnati or Emmitsburg. Perhaps the reference was to Ursula Grignon, whom he brought to Somerset.
- 111 .. Fenwick to Rese, Green Bay, June 11, 1831, LS 662.
- 112 .. Fenwick to Lewis Cass, Cincinnati, Nov 30, 1831, SJP.
- 113 .. Fenwick to Cass, Washington DC, Jan 20, 1832, USNA.
- 114 .. Rese to Propaganda Fide, Cincinnati, May 15, 1832, SJP
- 115 .. Fenwick to Rese, Mackinac, July 18, 1832, UND.
- CH. IX A MAN OF IDEAS AND IDEALS
- 116 .. Fenwick, "An Early Pastoral Letter," 1827, CHR I, 1915-16, 65ff.
- 117 .. A light two-wheeled, roofless vehicle drawn by one horse; usually built for two persons.
- 118 .. Fenwick to John McElroy, Baltimore, Oct 5, 1829, SJM.
- 119 .. John Dubois to Fenwick in McCann, *Sisters of Charity* I, 156.
- 120 .. Fenwick to Rese, Detroit, July 10, 1831, LS XIV/VI 105
- 121 .. *Catholic Telegraph*, April 7, 1832, 1,25, 100.
- 122 .. Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (New York: Dodd, Mead, reprint 1927), 99.
- 123 .. Fenwick to Propaganda Fide, Cincinnati, Jan 12, 1827, APF IX, 191 rv.
- 124 .. *Annales* IV, 502ff.
- 125 .. Fenwick to Pius Potier, Washington, D.C., Feb 1, 1832. EDP.
- 126 .. Mullon to J.Timon, Cincinnati, Aug 13, 1830. UND, IV-3-1.
- 127 .. Rese to Fenwick, Vienna, Dec 10, 1828.
- 128 .. Fenwick to Joseph Rosati, Cincinnati, April 9, 1830, SL.
- 129 .. Fenwick to Francis O'Finan, Detroit, Aug 13, 1832, SJP.
- 130 .. Mazzuchelli to T.Ancarani, Cincinnati, March 28, 1829., AGOP XIII, 03150, 3.
- 131 .. Mazzuchelli, *Memoirs*, 68.
- 132 .. Mazzuchelli to Gregory XVI, Mackinac, Aug 12, 1832, APF X, 734rv-735r.
- 133 .. Eliza Powell to Rese, *Catholic Telegraph*, Oct 6, 1832, I, 406.
- 134 .. Courtesy of Don Buske, Archivist of the Historical Archives, Chancery, Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Fenwick's body was moved to St. Joseph Cemetery from the Cathedral in 1916.
- 135 .. Mazzuchelli, *Memoirs*, 68.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAB	Archives, Archdiocese of Baltimore
ACHS	American Catholic Historical Society, Records
AGOP	Archives General, Order of Preachers, Rome
ANNALES	Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi, Lyons
APF	Archives, Propaganda Fide (now, Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples), Vatican
BBC	Bishop Baraga Collection, Marquette, MI
CHR	The Catholic Historical Review
EDP	English Dominican Province Archives, Edinburgh
LS	Leopoldine Society Archives, Vienna
SCA	San Clemente Archives, Rome
SHSW	State Historical Society of Wisconsin
SJM	Archives, Maryland Province of Society of Jesus, Georgetown University
SJP	Archives, Dominican Province of St. Joseph, Providence RI
UND	University of Notre Dame Archives
USNA	U. S. National Archives
WHC	Wisconsin Historical Collections