

History of St. George's R.C. Church in Jeffersonville

Refugee Priests of the Franciscan Order in Germany Solved the Early Church Problem Here—Beginning of St. Joseph's Seminary at Callicoon.

By Charles S. Hick
Town Historian.

(Continued from last week)

The change that had taken place in the community resulted in large numbers of people moving elsewhere, particularly to the cities, to find work. The late 1880s found hard times among the people of Western Sullivan, and it was difficult for these parishes to support a priest.

In the meantime events were happening in Germany that was to provide a solution for the local situation. Germany under Bismark was promoting its Kultur Kampf. This resulted in the notorious May laws that banished religious orders. The Franciscans had large communities in Germany. These now became refugees, many coming to the United States. Throughout its history the Franciscan order had made poverty its main virtue. The refugees from Germany were even less choosy than the order as a whole, and when the archbishop of New York offered them the churches in Western Sullivan to take under their care it seemed to them an act of providence, for it afforded them a place where they could find shelter and they needed no longer to depend upon some generous host.

From 1892 the Franciscan order has been in charge of spiritual interests of St. George's and other Western Sullivan parishes. Father Fidelis Kircher was the first pastor provided by that order. He was located at Oberburg, where the house was enlarged and a school started for boys aspiring to the priesthood. This was really the beginning of St. Joseph's Scraptic Seminary at Callicoon. Other Franciscan priests that followed were: 1895 Eusebius Kircher; 1895 Gabriel Kaline; 1896 Pius Manz; 1897, Bernardine Bidding; 1899, Hyacinth Renberg; 1900-1905, Damien Kehr; 1905-1911, Dominic Sonnabend; 1911-1914, Ephrem Snyder; 1914-1918, Bernard Spiegelberg; 1918-1921, Severin Beukert; 1921-1926, Edwin Garrity; 1926-1928, Louis Farrell; 1928-1931, Gilbert Monroe; 1931-1932, Norbert Carroll; 1932-1940, Harold Blake; 1940-1943, Leonard Perotti.

In 1909 a movement began at Youngsville for a Catholic church in that village. Osmer Inderlied, a non-Catholic, contributed a site. Nearly every one in the community contributed money and otherwise helped to bring the church of St. Francis of Assisi into existence. This parish had previously been a part of St. George's parish. On the south a part of the parish is now attached to the Lake Huntington Catholic church, while at North Branch a summer chapel has been erected by Patrick Divers of New York, now deceased, who married Miss Dycker, a North Branch girl.

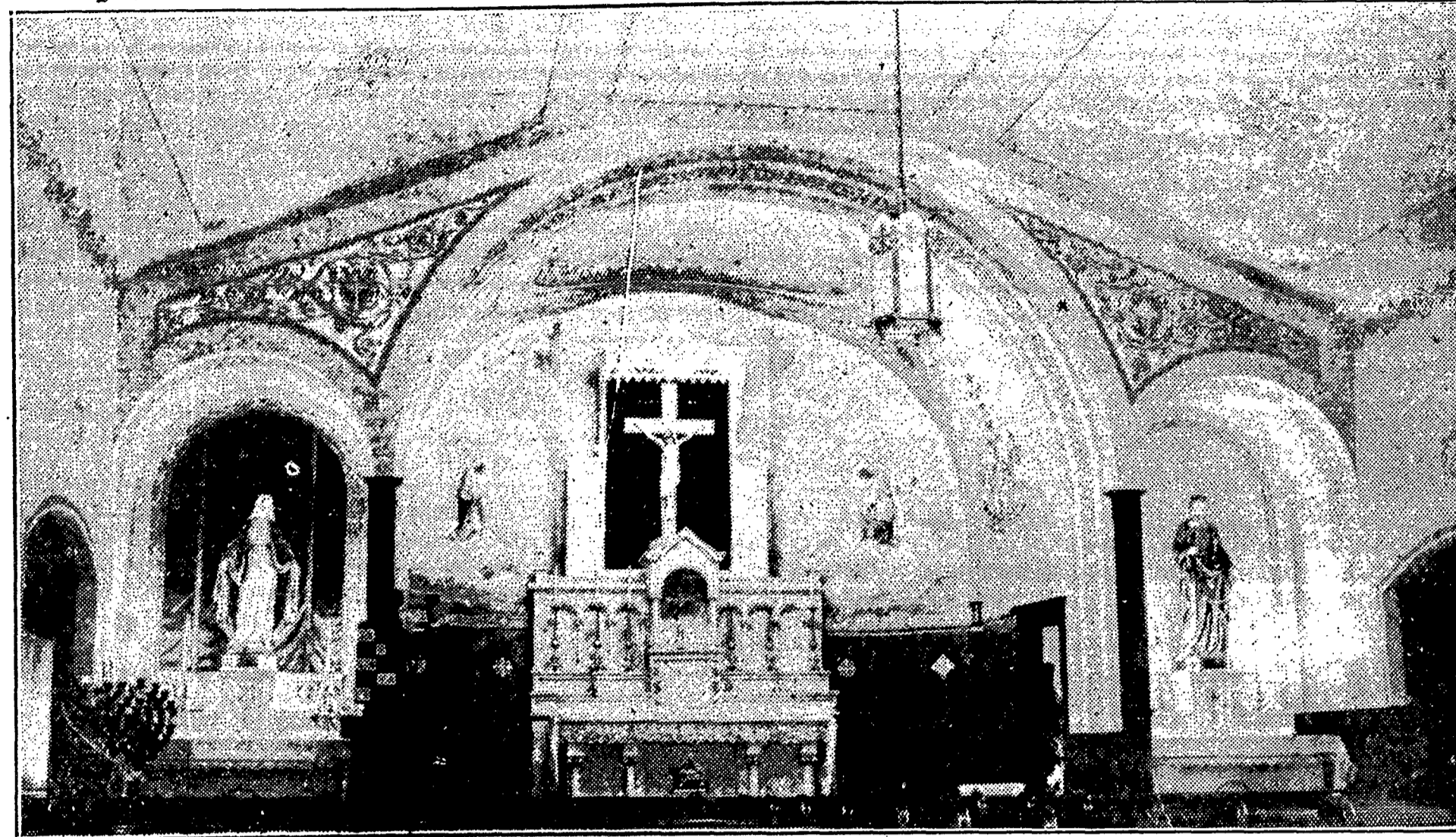
In 1914 Fr. Ephrem Snyder re-

placed the old church built in 1860 with the one there today, a wooden frame building of Romanesque architecture. The building stands on the hillside; the front has been regraded to remove the dugway road and in its place are two long terraces. The interior of the church is beautifully finished in woodwork of rare chestnut, stained dark. The sides are panelled, the pews modern, and the altar is of enameled wood. A pulpit was added five years ago and a pipe organ installed.

that they or their families had a part in its illustrious past.

If you sit in the breeze you are pretty apt to sneeze.

Winking Frogs
Frogs wink by moving their lower eyelids upwards, which is just the opposite of human beings, who wink with the upper eyelids moving downwards.



Interior of St. George's R.C. Church

Record Photo

MORE ABOUT CALLICOON CENTER'S EARLY HISTORY AND PERSONNEL

William Kastner of Sea Cliff, Long Island, writes as follows concerning some early Callicoon Center history:

Dear Mr. Hick:

Referring to your article in Sullivan County Record, I well remember Mr. Gumbert, as he was a near neighbor of ours. He came often to our home, as he was a particular friend of my Grandfather Kastner. Gumbert had a sawmill nearly opposite his home on the Callicoon brook. His son Godfried had a saw mill run by a turbine on the Bettelheim brook. The Wenzel mills were run by overshot wheels. Father and I often went to Gumbert's to get saw dust for our ice house. Our farm adjoined Henry Wenzel's and when going to the village we took the foot path along the line fence where his garden was. The people who lived as far as Stump Pond used the path through our farm and Wilfert's as a short cut to the village. In winter the road always was drifted and the short cut through the fields was used. John Dietz, his father, also father of Jacob Bardenstein, Henry Reinheimer, Ben Frey and Matt Krum all used to walk through our farm when going to the village. Joe Conklin used to take his scoops to Harding's to exchange them for groceries. Later father bought the Wilfert farm and added to his. When Grandfather Kastner went to the village he often would take me and on the way home would stop in at Henry Wenzel's. Grandfather Kastner built for Wenzel a half circular wall against his house and which he had filled in for a flower garden, so he could step into the garden from his upper porch. I well remember the border of old-fashioned pink and the grape arbor against the house. After some time Mr. Wenzel found the garden

darkened and kept the house damp. He wanted grandfather to tear down the wall, but grandfather would not pull down a wall he had taken so much care to build. Mr. Wenzel left the wall, but later his widow had it removed.

Mr. Wenzel, being very stout, did not like the benches in the church when he attended service; so he had a chair made which was set in the aisle for him. There is a possibility the chair is yet in the tower room of the church.

After the great flood that did considerable damage to the cemetery, working big holes, the association decided to build a wall around the cemetery. My uncle John Wilfert had the contract. Father and grandfather built most of the wall. The stones mostly were quarried in Wilfert's pasture lot behind Wenzel's garden. In Mr. Harding's tour through "Germany," Castle Souden was, I think, the Godfried Gumbert place. The man Wolf mentioned may have been "Property" Wolf, who used to speak of his farm as "my property," and so became known as "Property Wolf."

The soldier may have been Urban, as I think he lived on the Bettelheim road. "Red Beard" was Philip Gross, a cooper by trade; he worked for many years in the tannery and lived on their property at the foot of Probst Hill, right across from our home. After the tannery closed he bought land on the upper end of Low Pond. Mr. Harding must have come across the field to the Zohricks and then down the road to his home. I have an inventory of John Zahorick's personal property, dated Oct. 25, 1890,

made by Geo. H. Neumann and W. J. Harding, which shows cash in the Dry Dock Savings Bank, Citizens Savings Bank, \$830.98; Bowery Savings Bank, \$623.28, and many notes and mortgages; also an inventory by Harding of the Peter Wagner estate Jan. 28, 1870, and copy of will of John Weyrauch signed by him and witnessed by Frank Harding and Andrew Yager.

I think you had the Wm. Hessinger farm as being Purdy Williams's; it was Henry Williams. Other farms were Andrew Kastner's, Wm. Hessinger's, our farm, Purdy Williams's, John Wilfert's, Christopher Kastner's, and Alfred Kastner's. When we lived on our upper farm I well remember Dr. Bennett coming to pull teeth for my mother; also Dr. Schonger and Dr. Brand, whose horse used to be tied to the post of Wenzel's gate when we went home from school. Andrew Yager's first shop was just south of the school grounds. The tannery office was about opposite Hessinger's store. Sanford was clerk; Bottsford, outside superintendent, and Peck inside superintendent. It seems as if I knew most of the people you mentioned in Jeffersonville, Youngsville and Callicoon Center.

Wm. Kastner,

Sea Cliff, N. Y., Oct. 4.

Another Drive For Money.

A general subscription campaign to solicit \$35,000, as part of a national quota of \$125,000,000, for the benefit of the Orange-Sullivan Council, Boy Scouts of America, and 17 national organizations, will be started on October 25 in Sullivan county, Bernard Wiess of Monticello, chairman of the newly-organized Sullivan County Chest of the National War Fund, announced this week. The campaign will be carried on through 15 town chairmen and local committees and solicitation will be personal. Among the township chairmen are Frederick W. V. Schadt, for Callicoon; Geo. H. Raum, Delaware; Stephen Wormuth, Cocheton; Mrs. Anna K. Voight, Fremont.

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St. George's R.C. Church, with Lady of Our Lourdes Shrine in Fore ground.

Photo by Schwalbe

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