ST. JAMES, THE DURBIN CHURCH
WILKESVILLE TOWNSHIP, VINTON COUNTY
1858-1883

Wilkesville township, Vinton county, Ohio, the location of two churches, St. Mary's, Minerton, (A) and St. James, the "Durbin Church" (B).

St. James church, erected in the southeast corner of the northeast quarter of section 11 of Wilkesville township, Vinton county, Ohio, was known as "the Durbin church." It was so-called from the name of the man on whose farm it was built, and who urged and led in the labor of its erection. His name was James Durbin, who lived there with his wife, Mary.

James Durbin was born in Maryland in 1791, and was married Nov. 2, 1812, in Allegany county of that state, to Mary Majors, also a Maryland native. The couple moved to Ohio and settled first in Muskingum township of Muskingum county, in the 1830's. This was the township in which the Mattingly family were already settling, and where a church was to be built in 1856.

The Federal Census of 1840 shows that James Durbin and his wife were in Muskingum township with a son over 20 years of age and two younger daughters. Also there at the time was Peter Majors with his wife and seven children. Peter was a native of Maryland, and likely his wife was also. That the two families were related is evident from the fact that Mrs. Durbin's maiden name was Mary Majors.
Ten years later, in 1850, the Peter Majors family was gone from Muskingum county. They had gone to Vinton county. James Durbin was still in Muskingum, but was soon to follow Majors. Durbin was now 59 and his wife, 53. Their children were no longer with them, but one boy, James McMeehan, age 10, lived with them.

In 1860 both the James Durbin and Peter Majors families were in Wilkesville township of Vinton county. It is not known why they left Muskingum where both families had relatives in the Mattingly family. The wife of John Mattingly on whose farm the "Mattingly Church" was built, was Anne Majors. Their son, Nathan, was married to Mary Durbin. A number of other Durbin-Mattingly marriages were to follow.

In 1860 there was in Wilkesville township of Vinton county what was known as Quinn's Settlement. It received its name from a man of that name in Cincinnati who was promoting development of land in the township. He placed an advertisement in the "Catholic Telegraph" of Cincinnati announcing the advantages of the Vinton county land. As a result there were many Irish miners and farmers living there. It is not known whether or not the Durbin and Majors families had heard of the advertisement and the Quinn Settlement.

At any rate both families were there in 1860 when the Federal Census gave James Durbin as 69 and his wife as 63. Apparently he was in the 60's during the building of the "Durbin Church." His relative, Peter Majors, was then 55, and Sarah, evidently his second wife, was 43, and a native of Virginia. They had two children with them, Sarah M., 14, and Rosella, 10.

The parcel of land on which the church was located was sold to Archbishop Purcell by Durbin for $600, according to a Deed dated January 8, 1859 (1). It included 35 acres, thus providing for a church and a cemetery.

The Durbin and Majors families were close farm neighbors in Wilkesville township. There were a number of other Catholic farmers and miners in the neighborhood. It appears that Mr. Durbin was looked upon as the leader; it was he who asked Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati for permission to build a church. The permission was granted sometime during the year 1858. Accordingly, Durbin and his neighbors began the task of building the church themselves on his farm. In the fall of that year the cornerstone was laid by Rt. Rev. Bishop Rosecrans, auxiliary bishop of Cincinnati, and later the first bishop of the diocese of Columbus which included Vinton county. Bishop Rosecrans gave the new church the title of St. James.

It took time for the church to be finished. In a letter of March 20, 1860, Father Timothy Tierney wrote to Archbishop Purcell that "Mr. and Mrs. Derbin are in the enjoyment of Good health. I said Mass in his house last Tuesday morning. The new church takes up all his time and attention" (2). Later, when the church was finished, Father Ahern (3) celebrated Mass in it one Sunday each month. Since attendance did not increase as expected, Mass was suspended. Father Ahern had to be elsewhere.

Mrs. Durbin died July 1, 1864, and her husband a few years later, March 20, 1869. Tombstones in the little cemetery give the dates of their deaths and their ages. Mr. Durbin was 77 years, three months and twenty days of age at the time of his death. His was was 69 years, three months and twelve days of age. After their death the church property was neglected, and gradually the building was in ruins. Father Grimmer (4) who was then in charge of St. Mary's, Minerton, thought it best to sell the property. This was done and the money realized was appropriated to the benefit of the mother church to pay a balance due on its debt.
Records of the church property include the following: On April 9, 1869, Archbishop Purcell transferred the whole of the 35 acres to Bishop Rosecrans, the new bishop of Columbus. On April 7, 1875, Bishop Rosecrans sold to Nicholas Fagan the whole of the land excepting therefrom in the deed "two acres of a church lot." On April 12, 1882, Nicholas Fagan sold the property to Jared S. Chapman, again excepting in the deed "two acres of a church lot." Chapman sold the land on April 1, 1885, to John Moore again "reserving and excepting, however, out of said premises the two acre church lot."

The two-acre parcel would necessarily be transferred by the deed by Trustees under the Will of Bishop Rosecrans to Bishop Watterson. And thus for succeeding bishops of the diocese. But the "Durbin Church" as such was no more after 1883.

(1) Vinton county Deed Books, Vol. 6, p. 582.
(2) Letter of Father Tierney to Archbishop Purcell, March 20, 1860, Cincinnati Archdiocese Archives.
(4) Rev. Charles Louis Grimmer (1844-1902), served Minerton until 1891.

SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER MISSION
ROSS COUNTY, OHIO
ca. 1834-1883

The location of some of the early rural missions of the Church in Ohio was given as on some creek or river, such as St. Elizabeth's, Killbuck creek, in Coshocton county, or St. Joseph's, Mohican river, Holmes county. Other missions were designated by the nearest town which was sometimes some miles distant. Such was the case with St. Francis Xavier mission near the southern border of Ross county, which was given as at Piketown [Piketon], a town located several miles south in Pike county.

Little is known of St. Francis Xavier's early history — and not much of its later history. It originated in the 1830's, being one of the earliest missions in the state. Tradition indicates that among the priests to visit the Catholic families who settled in the southern Ross and northern Pike counties was a Father Elet. He was a member of the Society of Jesus, born in Belgium in 1802 (1), and ordained in Cincinnati, September 23, 1827. He was just a young priest if he visited "Piketown" in the 1830's. He died in Florissant, Missouri, October 2, 1851.

Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati included "Piketown" among the parishes and missions about which he wrote to the Propagation of the Faith in Lyons, France, in the late 1830's. Father Henni, future first bishop of Milwaukee, included "Piketown" among the places he visited for Bishop Purcell in 1835.

The settlement had acquired the status of a mission station by 1838, for it was listed for the first time in the Catholic Directory of 1839 as being attended by Father H. D. Juncker, who also cared for Delaware and Portsmouth. He was apparently at Chillicothe. The entry noted that there was no church at Piketon. Two years later, in 1841, the mission was given as "rarely" attended by Father Juncker of Chillicothe. However, Father A. Rappe, future first bishop of Cleve-
land, baptized there in 1840 and 1841. The Directory of 1842 states that there were no churches at Delaware, Portsmouth and Piketon, the latter being attended "occasionally" by Father Juncker of Chillicothe. The entry adds that Rev. A. Rappe "is at present zealously engaged on all these missions."

Piketon was not listed in the Directory again until 1850. Meanwhile the mission had grown strong enough to warrant the buying of property on which to build a church. On September 3, 1849, Mr. and Mrs. Cadwallater Wallace sold to Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati for $120 a piece of property lying on the waters of Indian creek in Ross county, and along the turnpike road from Chillicothe to Portsmouth (2). The parcel contained "by estimation forty acres."

The little mission became known as St. Xavier's, Massieville, a town about eight miles south of Chillicothe, and very likely named after Nathanile Massie, a well-known surveyor of the early days. He surveyed much in the Northwest Territory and marked off what is now U.S. 22, from Zanesville to Cincinnati.

In 1853 and 1854 the Directory listed Piketon as being attended by Rev. M. Forde of Circleville. In the latter year he also took care of St. Mary's, Chillicothe. (3) In 1855 it was cared for by Rev. J.N. Thisse (4) who was at Circleville. Thereafter Piketon was not listed, but it seems to have been the charge of Rev. Edward Lieb, O.S.F., of St. Peter's, Chillicothe (5). Further, the register of baptisms for the mission, now preserved at St. Peter's, begin in 1851 and end in 1883. A note in the front of the registers states that the mission was under St. Peter's. In 1883 the little church was abandoned, and is now completely gone. There remains the cemetery, however, which is still used by St. Mary's parish, Waverly, which seems to be the successor of St. Francis Xavier mission. It is located just a few miles south of the Ross county border and the mission site.

(2) Ross County Deed Books, Vol. 49, p. 182.
(3) Rev. Michael Forde was ordained Nov. 21, 1851. Little other information is available.
(4) Rev. John N. Thisse (1824-1873) was at St. Mary's Chillicothe until 1860. He died at Springfield, Ohio.
(5) Rev. Edward Francis Lieb, O.S.F. (1802-1889), remained in Chillicothe until his death in 1889.

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Register of Baptisms, 1851-1883.

1851
Jan. 26: Helen, b. 15 Nov. 1850, dau. Michael Churchman and Helen Wunderly. Spr: Margaret Wunderly. P. TSCHIEDER, SJ.
Feb. 23: Andrew, b. 22 Jan. 1851, son John Baptist Rose and Mary Ann Mechler. Sprs: Michael & Helen Churchman. P. TSCHIEDER, SJ.
Jan. 28: Margaret Henry, b. 15 Jan., dau. Louis Roth and Regina Henzelmann. Spr: Margaret Streitenberger. P. TSCHIEDER, SJ.
Baptisms (continued)

1851 (cont.)


1852

March 15: Charles Nicholas, b. 17 Feb., son John Streitenberger & Margaret Linzell. Spr: John Charles Streitenberger. EDWARD LIEB

March 19: Theresa Aloysia, b. 9(?) March, dau. John Adam Streitenberger and Margaret Schoffer. Spr: Theresa Hendselmann. EDWARD LIEB.

Nov. 7: Mary, b. 6 August, dau. Erfunt Riesve(?) & Monica Streitenberg. Spr: Mary Genz. Aloysius Pin(?)

Nov. 7: John Joseph, b. 3 Oct., son John Streitenberg and Emilia Ressve. Spr: Peter Streitenberg.

1853

Sept. 19: John Charles, b. 21 August, son Peter Schro & Regina Handschelmann. Spr: John Charles Streitenberger. EDW. FR. LIEB

Nov. 7; Eva, b. 7 Nov., dau. Anthony Wunderle & Margaret Hunds. Sprs: Nicholas Lump and wife, Anna Mary. EDW. FR. LIEB

1854


April 2: John Adam, son Adam Streitenberger & Margaret Streitenberger. Spr: John Streitenberger. I.N.THISSE

April 2: Leonidas, son John Streitenberger and Margaret Streitenberger. Spr: Peter Streitenberger. I.N.THISSE

May 7: Thomas, son Thomas and Catharine Delong. Spr: Anna Morgan. I.N.THISSE

Nov. 6: Chrissima, b. 11 April, dau. Frederick Gwindel & Chrissima Schweininger. Spr: Chrissima Schweininger

Nov. 6: Helen, b. 8 Oct., dau. John Gang & A. Mary Rohrbacher. Spr; Cecilia Gang. EDW. FR. LIEB

1855

April 10: George, b. 20 March, son Philip Hunt & Mary Jane Engel(?). Sprs: Anthony Wendell and wife, Margaret. EDW. FR. LIEB

April 10: Margaret, b. 4 Feb., dau. Peter Schro & Regina Hendselman. Spr: Margaret Streitenberg. EDW. FR. LIEB


Nov. 5: Margaret, b. 27 Sept., dau. Joseph Hunst & A. Mary König. Sprs: Adam Streitenberger and wife, Margaret. EDW.FR.LIEB

Nov. 5: Mary Mathilda, b. 19 Oct., dau. Adam Streitenberger and Margaret Schoffer. Spr: Mathilda Von Fran. EDW.FR.LIEB

Nov. 5: Peter, b. 7 Sept., son Peter Hinsch & Josephine Bonez. Sprs: John Pfeifer and wife, Clare. EDW.FR.LIEB

Dec. 3: John, b. 24 March 1854, son Andrew Klein & Adilhaida Rank. Sprs: John Gang and wife, Mary. EDW.FR.LIEB

1856

March 3: George Charles, b. 23 Jan., son John Gang and A. Mary Rohrbacher. Sprs: Charles Streitenberger and wife, M. Anna. EDW.FR.LIEB
Baptisms (continued)

1856 (cont.)
March 3: Mary Theresa, b. 5 Jan., dau. John Streitenberger and Margaret Lintz. Spr: Theresa Hanzelman.

July 14: Elizabeth Helen, dau. Alfred & Barbara Ridgway. Sprs: Michael & Margaret Streitenberger. I.N.THISSE
July 14: Mary Mathilda, dau. Peter & Regina -----. Spr: Mathilda Knap(?). I.N.THISSE

1858
June 8: John, b. 29 March, son Peter Schroh & Regina Hanzelman. Sprs: John Streitenberger and Margaret Lintzel, his wife. Sergius de Stchoulepnikooff

1860
Aug. 30: Margaret Elizabeth, b. 13 Aug., dau. Blase Kentz & Mary Galla (?) Seiter. Sprs: ——Schmitt * Margaret, his wife. EDW.FR.LIEB

1861
April 8: Jerome, son John Streitenberger and Margaret Linzel.
May 7: George, b. 2 Feb., son Christopher Delong and Sarah Moots. Sprs: William Delong and Catharine Delong. MICH, KENNEDY
Aug. 12: Michael, b. 6 March, son Michael Streitenberger & Barbara Storro(?). Sprs: Adam Hendel(?) & Anna Helen Smith. FR, HERM VOHN
Nov. 4: Helen, b. 7 Sept., dau. James Lennox & Elizabeth Hunt. Sprs: Laurence & Mary Anna Lennox. MICH.KENNEDY

1862
April 7: Charles, b. 7 Oct. 1861, son Matthew Klausmann & Frances Graier. Sprs: Charles Graier & Frances Huber. EDW.FR.LIEB
May 5: Francis, b. 6 months, son Andrew Evenhuh(?) & wife, Mary. Sprs: Thomas Lennox and Frances Reily. MICH.KENNEDY
May 5: Emeritta, b. 17 onths, dau. George Delong & Mary. Sprs: Laurence Lennox and Catharine Delong. MICH.KENNEDY
May 5: Mary D----, b. 11 months, dau. William Windle and Sarah Jane, his wife. Sprs: George Delong & Elizabeth Lennox. MICH.KENNEDY
May 5: Asilina [Aselm?], b. 3 months, son Xavier Kestler and Cecilia, his wife. Spr: Mary Reily. MICH. KENNEDY

1863
April 15: Anselm, b. 16 Aug. 1861, son John Wild & Euphrasia Heile. Sprs: Xavier Kesseler and Mary Anna Ebenback. EDW.FR.LIEB
April 15: Margaret, b. 27 Dec. 1862, dau. John Pfeifer & Catharine Kosse. Sprs: Adam Streitenberger and Margaret, his wife. EDW.FR.LIEB
April 15: Barbara Helen, b. 8 Feb., dau. Michael Streitenberger & Barbara Helen Star. Sprs: Michael Kaine and wife. EDW.FR.LIEB
Baptisms (continued)

1863 (cOnt.)
April 15: Adam, b. 15 Feb., son of Alphnedi Richeve(?) & Monica Streitenberg. Sprs: Adam Heibel and wife, Helen.   EDW.F.R.LIEB
June 30: Margaret, b. 7 May, dau. Adam Shabel and Anna Helen Schmith. Sprs: John Streitenberger and wife, Margaret.   EDW.F.R.LIEB

1864
Oct. 17: John Adam, b. 16 Sept., son Gabriel Knapp & Mathilda Von Frau. Sprs: Adam Streitenberger and Margaret, his wife.   E.F.LIEB
Oct. 17: Andrew, b. 7 June, son Matthew Claussmann & Frances Krayter. Sprs: Charles Kayes and Frances Riely.   E.F.LIEB

1865

1876
June 6: Mary Ann, b. 24 April, dau. Caspar Schupp and Mary Berts. Sprs: Joseph Karles and Josepha Schupp. EDW. LIEB
June 6: George Alphred, b. 24 Sept. 1875, son Alphred Muts and Mary Ritswe. Sprs: John and Georgia Streitenberger. EDW. LIEB

1877
April 9: Herman Frederick, b. 24 May 1876, son Jerome Streitenberger and -----Betel. Sprs: John Streitenberger and Margaret.  
April 9: Margaret, b. 10 July 1876, dau. Charles Streitenberger and Anna Wuts. Sprs: John Streitenberger and Margaret.  
April 9: Anna Wilhelmina Mary Helen & Cath. Hendel, b. 14 April 1876. (?) Anna Helen Hensel and -----.

1882
April 19: Louise Catharine, dau. --- Kong and Margaret ----- Sprs: John Streitenberger and Margaret Linzel. ERNST WINDTHORST
Oct. 9: Mary Eva, dau. Henry Laufershermer and Clara Lump. E. WINDTHORST

1883
April 16: Dorothy, dau. John Streitenberger -----.

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Tombstone Inscriptions, St. Francis Xavier Cemetery, Massieville, Ohio.

4. DELONG, Margaret M., dau. T. & C. July 22, 1852. Aged 10M 15D.
5. DELONG, Cecisely, dau. T. & C. Died March 9, 1851. Aged 6Y.
6. GEYGAN, Dan, 1864–. Katie, his wife, 1875–1906.
10. GILDON, George W., son of G.W. & M.A. Died Jan. 24, 1875. Aged 1M 5D.
11. LENNOX, William L., son of T. & C.M. Died March 19, 1879. Aged 5M.

-215-
Tombstone Inscriptions (continued)

14. N.E.W.
16. ACORD, Floyd, son of J.W. & H. Died July 17, 1897. Aged 18D.
17. HEIBEL, Adam, Oct. 20, 1826-Feb. 12, 1872. Anna H., his wife, Dec. 4, 1829-
   May 17, 1901.
18. CARNEY, Michael, 1806-1895. Bridget, his wife, 1814-1903.
19. HOUGH, Mary Carney, 1854-1891.
22. LUMP, Alois, Aug. 18, 1841.
23. FREEMAN, Lizzie, wife of J.D. Died April 16, 1878. Aged 26Y 3M 11D.
24. FREEMAN, Ida B., dau. of J.D. & E.A. Died Sept. 8, 1887. Aged 18Y 6M.
25. [No name] June 7, 1867. Aged 69Y.
26. STRIEITENBERGER, John. Feb. 28, 1892. Aged 76Y 4M 9D.
28. HUMMEL, Walpurga. March 5, 1816-Nov. 19, 1893.
30. LUMP, Alois, died Feb. 1889. Aged 84Y.
32. HAAS, Katharina, dau. of F. & T. Died Nov. 9, 1884. Aged 1Y 2M 19D.
35. HAAS, Frederick, Oct. 16, 1850-April 4, 1928. Aged 77Y 5M 18D.
37. HOUGH, Iris.
38. Mccorrny, Infant dau. of George & Rosa, Sept. 6, 1890.
39. DELONG, James S., son of T. & C. Died Nov. 20, 1865. Aged 25Y 4M 6D.
40. DELONG, Catharine, wife of Thomas. Died Feb. 20, 1884. Aged 71Y 7M 11D.

(To be continued)

A New Publication

Donald M. Schlegel, charter member of the Catholic Record Society, announces
the publication of The Columbus Catholic Cemetery: History and Records, 1846-1874.
The book contains: A complete history of the first Catholic cemetery in Columbus,
Ohio, from its foundation in 1846. Further burials were forbidden in 1874; tomb-
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from 1860 to 1870; burial records from St. Patrick's parish in Columbus from 1859
to 1863, all that exist, with some gaps.

All told, some 1,474 burials in the old cemetery are listed, which represents
about 60 per cent of all burials there. The book is illustrated, has a surname
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