The Game of the Century
by Msgr. Michael A. Nugent,
as told to James M. Logsdon

Friday, November 1st, 1935 was a day to remember for the students and faculty of St. Charles College Seminary in Columbus. On that day the football team representing the University of Notre Dame arrived to stay on our campus for their first meeting with Ohio State University, scheduled for the next day, November 2nd. At that time I was a twenty year old college student at St. Charles.

When the St. Charles community learned that the Notre Dame University football team was to stay there, the students, and especially the boarders, were ecstatic. The team arrived in Columbus by train and were brought to St. Charles by autos, eight or ten carloads. Among those who drove them to East Broad Street were Jack Cannon, the former great Notre Dame player, and others such as Ray Eichenlaub, and their families. As they came up the driveway about 9:00 that morning, all of the students were there, cheering them on. The rector, Msgr. Joseph Weigand, and Father Herman Mattingly were there to greet them and brought them inside.

After breakfast they were assigned rooms and unpacked and rested until noon. They were given the boarders' rooms on the third floor, and we boarders went down to the dormitories for the night. After lunch was served to the squad, they began warming up on our football field. They ran through a short practice session directed by the Notre Dame coach, Elmer Layden, who had been a member of that famous backfield of a few years earlier that Grantland Rice had called the "Four Horsemen."

Some of us had a chance to chat with a number of the players during breaks in the practice. That Notre Dame squad included the likes of Shakespeare, Pilney, Carideo, Fromhart, and Mike Layden, a younger brother of the coach. I recall Andy Pilney saying, "You know, I haven't had much of a chance this year, but I think I'm really ready." Notre Dame was undefeated going into the game, as was the Ohio State team that was lead by Merle Wendt, their outstanding end, and Gomer Jones, center, both of whom were All Americans. The rest of the Notre Dame squad agreed that Ohio State had a fine team and that the game would be tough and probably very close.

When the practice concluded and they had showered the team was served a fine meal in the St. Charles Refectory. After dinner a number of us visited with some of the players and discussed the up-coming game. The Notre Dame team went to their assigned rooms and retired early.

The next morning the whole squad with their coaches attended Mass along with the college students in the college chapel (the original, Holy
Angels chapel on the second floor). After breakfast the feeling of excitement grew as the team prepared to depart for Ohio Stadium. Just before 10:00 that morning, November 2nd, I received a call that a visitor was awaiting me in the visitors' room. I hurried down the hall and was delighted to be greeted by my father, Larry Nugent, who had driven in that morning from Cambridge. He informed me that he would take me to the game if I could obtain a couple of tickets. I quickly hurried down to the room where the Notre Dame team was assembling for the ride to the stadium. I was able to purchase the tickets from one of the players whom I had met the evening before.

So a couple of hours later I was driving with my father to witness a game that the famous radio announcer, Ted Husing, later characterized as one of the greatest collegiate games of the first fifty years of this century. Officially it was announced that 81,000 were in attendance but by game time almost 90,000 were in the stands and standing around the running track that surrounded the playing field. My father and I found that our seats were located in the open end of the horseshoe about twenty rows back of the south goal posts. We had a great view of the whole field and as it later turned out, two of the best seats in the stadium.  

The Game

In the first half, Ohio State dominated the game with the hard running of Heekin, Boucher, and Kabealo. They also scored by reason of an interception and a long run by one of the Ohio State defensive backs. The half ended with Notre Dame on the short end of a 13 to 0 score.

Notre Dame came out for the second half and really began to move the ball with the Notre Dame quarterback, Wally Fromhart, directing the attack. Still, the third quarter ended with Ohio State leading 13 to 0. It looked like a great victory for the Buckeye team. So much so that the Columbus sports writer, Lou Byers, got out an Extra with the headline, "Ohio State downs Notre Dame." I saw one of those papers as I was leaving the game. But the game was far from over and I was told later that the St. Charles students who had not attended the game were sending small prayer groups to the chapel to pray for Notre Dame, each one taking its turn, as the rest listened to Ted Husing as he announced the game on the radio.

Just after the fourth quarter began, Notre Dame scored their first touchdown but missed the point and the score was Ohio 13, Notre Dame 6. Through most of the final quarter the team played on even terms with neither able to score. Then with just over a minute to play Notre Dame scored again but again missed the extra point. Ohio State, still lead 13-12 and was receiving with just a little less than a minute to play. Notre Dame kicked off, a rather short kick, and Ohio State had the ball on its own 45 yard line. On the first running play from scrimmage Ohio State fumbled and the Notre Dame center, Poyman, recovered. The Irish had the ball with just about 50 seconds left to play. On a draw play, Andy Pilney broke off-center and with a tremendous piece of open field running moved the ball to the Ohio State 18 yard line. Pilney was stopped by a crushing tackle against the left side line and had to be taken out of the game.

With just a few seconds to go Notre Dame lined up without a huddle. The Notre Dame half-back Shakespeare faded back almost to the thirty-five yard line and arched a high and long pass to the right corner of the end zone. Wayne Millner, the Notre Dame end, leaped high in the air over the Ohio State defenders and came down with the ball -- touchdown! The gun sounded, the game was over, Notre Dame won, 18 to 13.

Just as I had indicated earlier, my father and I had two of the best seats in the stadium, for all of
Notre Dame's touchdowns had been scored at our end of the field.

The Notre Dame fans were ecstatic. Even the Notre Dame coach, Elmer Layden, ordinarily a rather reserved man, ran out onto the field, and took the baton from the Drum Major and led the Notre Dame band down the field as they played the Notre Dame Victory March. It had been a truly great game, an outstanding victory for the Fighting Irish and a heart-breaker for a splendid Ohio State team.

Aftermath

After the game, we welcomed the team back to St. Charles and put on a really nice dinner for them in the cafeteria. We, the college Freshmen bearders, waited on them. One of the guys gave Duffy a $5 tip, which was a lot of money in 1935. Duff said to me afterwards, "Hey, Nuge', let's go down and see a picture show tonight." Of course we were never supposed to leave the campus. If they had ever known that I had left the campus they would have kicked me out, but I said, "Okay, fine." So about 9:00 or so, after night prayers and after the lights were supposed to be out, we went down and got the owl car on Oak Street and went downtown to the Ohio Theatre and saw the 10:00 show.

Well, we came out about midnight and saw three guys walking, two great big guys and one short and stocky and I said, "What time is it?" They said, "Nighttime, buddy," and I said, "Very clever." They ran over and I saw them open their coats and they had three big Os on. They were on the Ohio State football team and a couple of them must have been tackles and the short guy I recognized as Jumpin' Joe Williams who was their scat-back. They saw that Duffy had on a Notre Dame pennant on and one of them reached over and tore it off and one of them took a swing at me, because I was the instigator. I decided it was no use staying there and I took off, running, and this Jumpin' Joe Williams, who was supposed to be their scat-back, I left him like he was standing still. I went around the corner, circled around State Street, and came back up and he left me go because I was out-running him. When I came back they had left Duffy, because they thought he was an innocent by-stander. Then we had to walk home, all the way out East Broad Street, because the owl car wasn't running any more. We came in about 1:30 a.m.

When Notre Dame won, Ted Husing, the announcer, got so excited that he knocked the microphone over, I think, and Ohio State accused him of favoritism and they would not allow him to announce any more games there.

The game, though a victory, was rough on Notre Dame. Ohio State really beat them up and they lost the next game and finished the season with one loss and one tie. But the game they had won at Ohio Stadium was "the game of the century", and was "officially recognized" as such in 1970.

NOTE
1) Contrary to a statement in the September, 1995 Columbus Monthly, there were stands at the open end of the horseshoe that year. This is verified by a photograph that appeared in the November 3, 1935 Columbus Dispatch.

+++ Abstracts from The Catholic Telegraph +++
(Continued, from Vol. XX, No.9)

March 20, 1835
[The Catholics of Portsmouth, Piketon, Frankfort, Chillicothe, Columbus, Springfield, and Dayton will be visited during Lent by Rev. Mr. Henni of Cincinnati, who speaks English, German, and French.]

April 27, 1835
[Account of Bishop Purcell's visit to German
June 19, 1835
Ordination.--On Thursday, 4th of June, Rt. Rev. Bishop Purcell conferred the order of Sub-deacon on Mr. Mathias Wurtz; on the following Tuesday, the same gentleman was ordained Deacon; on Saturday, 13th instant, Mr. Francis Paul O'Loghlen and Mr. William Phillips were tonsured; Mr. Basil Shorb received the tonsure and minor orders; and Rev. Mr. Wurtz was raised to the Holy order of Priest.

July 24, 1835
Rt. Rev. Bishop Purcell departed on the annual visitation of his diocese last Tuesday. He will be accompanied as far as Steubenville by Rt. Rev. Dr. Bruté. For the information of friends and correspondents abroad, we think proper to state that the return of the Bishop of Cincinnati may not be expected until the 10th of September next.

August 14, 1835
Wellsville, August 1st, 1835
EPISCOPAL VISITATION
On Sunday, 26th July, the Bishop of this diocese, assisted by the very Rev. Mr. Badin and Rev. Mr. Conlan, solemnly blessed the new Catholic church of Steubenville. The building is small, 45 by 30 feet, and was founded in 1832, by the Rev. Mr. M'Grady, on a lot presented to the late Bishop Fenwick by Mr. Ross of Pittsburg. Notwithstanding that the catholics are few in number, their Rev. Pastor, Mr. Conlan, has succeeded in raising sufficient means, within the last five months, to defray the expense of laying a new sanctuary floor, erecting an altar, and glazing the windows, making pews, painting doors, enclosing the lot with a handsome paling, &c. &c. A few weeks before his arrival, a zealous convert had the entire church plastered at his own expense. Such instances are rare and worth recording as affording edification and needful encouragement to our Catholic friends in places destitute of churches. There were only nine persons confirmed, of whom three were converts.

Many of the citizens of Steubenville having been unable to obtain seats in the church, on Sunday morning, requested that the Bishop would preach in the Court-House in the evening. He complied, and again addressed a crowded audience in the same place on Monday. Being earnestly solicited to gratify the citizens with another discourse on Friday evening, on his return from Pittsburg, he made the appointment, which, however, in consequence of detention by the heavy rains that fell during that day, he was unable to keep. In no town of the State, or Union have we been more edified than at Steubenville, by the rational, high-minded and christian principles, whose influence pervades the entire community and whose existence was lately evinced in the disgust and marked disapprobation expressed for the harangues of a notorious Presbyterian fanatic from Philadelphia. Whoever would win proselytes to his own opinions or convictions among the people of Steubenville must reach their minds and hearts by the avenues of reason and charity alone.

During his stay in Pittsburg, the Bishop administered the holy sacrament, by way of Viaticum, to a pious Catholic lady, Mrs. Fleming, lately from Detroit and Pittsburg.

September 4, 1835
[Advertisement:]
ST. MARY'S SEMINARY, SOMERSET, PERRY COUNTY, OHIO.
The Ladies of this Institution have experienced with feelings of gratitude, the liberal assistance of a great number of citizens of this State; they feel happy in giving expression to these sentiments by a redoubled zeal and ardour, which they hope will answer the confidence with which they have been favoured by a generous public.
This Institution combines in its plan of education, together with the benefit of Christian instruction, every advantage that can be derived from a punctual and conscientious care, bestowed on the pupils in every branch of science, suitable to their sex; and from the uninterrupted attention which is given to the neatness, politeness, correct manners, and moral principles of the young ladies.

The Seminary is situated upon an eminence, within a short distance of the town of Somerset, the air is most salubrious, the play grounds and garden are well laid out, and afford every facility for amusement.

The object kept in view by the ladies of this establishment, is, the adorning of the minds of their pupils with knowledge; and the forming of their hearts to virtue. They are never suffered to go beyond the reach of a watchful, but maternal superintendence, whose vigilance secures the preservation of morals, and the willing observance of the rules. The health of the scholars, is another object of uninterrupted solicitude of the ladies, who are peculiarly attentive to the food given the pupils, and are careful that they be abundantly supplied with such only, as is wholesome. The hours of relaxation are so distributed throughout the day, that neither the mind nor the body of the students can suffer from their application.

This Institution is under the immediate inspection of the Very Rev. N. D. Young, and the Rev. A. D. Fahy, who occasionally examine the pupils, and encourage their progress. To reward merit and excite emulation, medals are monthly distributed. On the last of July, a general examination is held, and the month of August, annually observed as vacation.

The ladies who govern the Seminary, have consecrated themselves to the service of God, and the instruction of female youth. The religion professed by these, is the Catholic. Parents, however, need not apprehend, that any solicitations will be used to induce children of a different persuasion to embrace the Catholic; they can appeal to those Protestant families, who have favoured the institute during the last five years, for a confirmation of what is here asserted. Pupils of all denominations are received, from the age of 6 to 16. They will only be required to submit to the general regulations of the Seminary, viz: to attend morning and evening prayer, and divine service on Sundays and holy days; this being a necessary regulation of the observance of discipline. [There follow the "system of education," the terms for boarding and tuition, and the "necessary regulations for entrance into the seminary.

(To be continued)

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Father Caspar Wiese's Marriage Register
Delaware St. Mary Church, 1857-1860

Very few marriage registers in the Diocese of Columbus as early as the 1850s were kept by priests who were conscientious enough to record the names of the parents of the bridal couple. One exception was Rev. Caspar Wiese, who was sent by Archbishop Purcell to be the first resident pastor at Delaware at the end of 1856. The parish at that time included all of Delaware, Morrow, and Union counties. The little, frame church in Delaware was built in 1854, on the south side of University Avenue, about 200 yards from Sandusky Street.

Father Wiese, according to Lamott's History of the Archdioces of Cincinnati, was born in Germany on June 9, 1801 and was ordained on March 11, 1830. He came to the Archdiocese in 1856, at the age of 54, and was sent immediately to Delaware. He remained there until 1860 and then moved to Holy Cross parish in Columbus for a short time. In the mid-1870s, he served as chaplain at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Covington,
Kentucky. He returned to his native land, where he died, at Arnsberg, on July 1, 1881.

Inside the cover of the first parish sacramental register, Father Wiese wrote, in Latin, English, and German, "This book is bought for 30 cents in Cincinnati on the 20th of March 1857 for the use of the church at St. Mary at Delaware Delaware County Ohio." There followed, in English, Latin, and German, "O for the Choctaw of the above."

All of the following marriages were performed by Father Wiese, at St. Mary Church.

Maurice Connell, son of Michael Connell and Brigid, born in Ireland, age 40; to Catherine Moynahan, daughter of Edmund Moynahan and Julia, widow, age 30; witnesses John Leary and Honora Brosnaha. February 5, 1857

Michael McDonnell, son of Michael McDonnell and Catherine Whalen, born in Ireland, age 20; to Ellen Kaley, daughter of Edmund Kaley [Kealy at May 20, below] and Honora Herington, born in Ireland, age 23; witnesses Daniel Tierney and Brigid Keefe. Feb. 12, 1857

John Wixted, son of Javan Wixted and A. Mary Murphy, widower, age about 30; to Honora Connor, daughter of Thomas Connor and Joanna Hunt, widow, age 35; witnesses Michael Custolow and Catherine Douta(?). February 19, 1857

Michael Cronin, son of Jeremy Cronin and Maryann Connors, age 35; to Joanna Fogarty, daughter of Michael Fogarty and Elizabeth Splahan, widow of Thomas Fogarty, age 30; witnesses John Kerny and Abigail Fogarty. February 27, 1857

Maurice Hannan, son of William Hannan and Mary Flanning, age 25; to Catherine Lynch, daughter of [blank] Lynch and [blank] Collins, age 20; witnesses Daniel Davine and Julia Lynch. March 23, 1857

John C. Schmid, widower, age 49, born in Ireland; to Joanna Lachey, widow, age 39, born in Ireland; witnesses John Patton and wife. April 29, 1857

John Schrönker, son of Adam Schränker and Margaret Dettermann, born in Germany, age 27; to Anna Margaret Deinhardt, daughter of John Deinhardt and Anna Neubauer, born in Germany, age 25; witnesses George Deinhardt and wife Maria. May 24, 1857

John Kealy, son of Edmund Kealy and Honora Herington, born in Ireland, age 25; to Bridget Keefe, daughter of John Keefe and Mary Connell, born in Ireland, age 22; [no witnesses listed]. May 20, 1857

Thomas Pepper, born in Ireland, widower, age 49; to Jane Laughler, born in Ireland, age 30; [no witnesses listed]. October 25, 1857

Charles Miller, born in Germany, convert, age 28; to Honora Shanahan, born in Ireland, age 24; witnesses Patrick Shanahan and wife. December 10, 1857

John Kaap, son of John Adam Kaap and Margaret Emfalden, age 25, born in Germany, Lutheran; to Theresia Himmelbach, daughter of Alexander Himmelbach and Crescentia Schmuck, age 22, born in Elsass, France; witnesses Ignatius Keffler and Werner Marquet. December 17, 1857

Patrick Flavahan, son of Michael Flavahan and Catherine Allen, age 22, born in Ireland; to Joanna Moran, daughter of John Moran and Mary Lawan(?), age 23, born in Ireland;
witnesses Edward Moran and his wife Mary. January 16, 1858

Matthew Kennedy, son of Patrick Kennedy and Honora Collins, born in Ireland, age 23; to Ann St. John, daughter of John St. John and Ann Ryan, 22 years, born in Ireland; witnesses Bernard Hynes and Mary Daly. February 2, 1858 (Marysville, erased)

John Ferris, son of Patrick Ferris and Catherine Paryman, age 26, born in Ireland; to Ellen Parker, daughter of Thomas Parker and Mary Pendy, age 20, born in Ireland; witnesses Patrick and Joanna Ferris. February 13, 1858

Patrick Cavin, son of Timothy Cavin and Joanna Houran, age 23, born in Ireland; to Mary Moynahan, daughter of Jeremiah Moynahan and Mary Ryan, age 24, born in Ireland; witnesses John Murphy, Catherine Moynahan, and Margaret Sullivan. February 16, 1858

Philip Fogarty, son of Philip Fogarty and Mary Caveneugh, age 22, born in Ireland; to Mary Patton, daughter of John Patton and Ann Dougherty, age 20, born in America; witnesses John Patton and Catherine Patton. April 8, 1858

John Kily, son of Patrick Kily and Bridget Quirk, age 25, born in Ireland; to Catherine O'Day, daughter of James O'Day and Honora Ferrell, age 22, born in Ireland; witnesses Michael Cody and Mary O'Day. May 6, 1858

Bryan Molony, son of John Molony and Mary Fahon, born in Ireland, age 23; to Margaret Dean, daughter of John Dean and Joanna Greaeany, age 18, born in Ireland; witnesses James Ross and Julia Molony. July 30, 1858

John Henry Call, son of Caspar Call and Sibilla Meisterin, born in Lohwiesen, Bavaria, Dec. 23, 1823, Lutheran; to Anna Brenner, daughter of Joseph Brenner and Margareit Linze, born Naeresheim, Wurtenberg, Aug. 15, 1840, Catholic; witnesses John Getreu and John Krack. September 26, 1858

Henry Patton, son of John and Anna Patton, age 23, born in Ohio; to Catherine Moynahan, daughter of Cornelius Moynahan and Joanna Scholar, age 23, born in Ireland; witnesses William and Catherine Patton. December 30, 1858

Edward Jennings, son of James Jennings and Bridget Dellon, age 22, born in Ireland; to Joanna Lyons, daughter of John Lyons and Mary Scholar, age 19, born in Ireland; witnesses Mathew Shanly and Margaret Ryan. February 5, 1859

Michael Cody, son of John Cody and Margaret Croak, born in Ireland in 1834; to Anna Powers, daughter of John Powers and Catherine Connor, born in Ireland, age 14; witnesses Thomas Croak and Joanna Connors, wife of Thomas Gull [Gall]. Feb. 19, 1859

James Patton, son of John Patton and Catherine Gallon, born in Stark County, Ohio in 1833; to Bridget King, daughter of John King and Mary Gaven, age 21, born in Ireland; witnesses James Lane and Catherine Patton, wife of Lane. May 28, 1859

John McLin, son of Patrick McLin and Sara McCann, age 33, born in Ireland; to Ellen Quincy, daughter of Cornelius Quincy and Julia Goalovhir [Gallagher?], age 28, born in Ireland; witnesses Edward Moran and Catherine Broderic. June 4, 1859

Thomas Riordan, son of John Riordan and Mary Creagh, age 40, born in Ireland; to widow Abigail Foley, daughter of Jeremy Foley and Honora Lynch, and widow of John
Sullivan and afterwards of Thomas Sullivan, age 32, born in Ireland; witnesses Michael Fox and Catherine Ladin. July 2, 1859

Louis Leonard, son of Louis Leonard and Molly Bertrand, age 24, born in Canada; to Ellen Sullivan, daughter of Maurice Sullivan and Margaret Dea, age 22, born in Ireland; witnesses William Sullivan and Margaret Ryan. October 30, 1859

John Griffin, son of Thomas Griffin and Brigid Brasil, age 26, born in Ireland; to Joanna Donahoe, daughter of Patrick Donahoe and Catherine Valetter, age 22, born in Ireland; witnesses Jeremy McCarty and Mary Griffin. January 14, 1860

Walter Blansfield, son of Oliver Blansfield and Mary Sanders, age 31, born in Ireland; to Joanna Dunphy, daughter of Nicholas Dunphy and Mary Dunphy, age 34, born in Ireland; witnesses James Burns and Mary Blansfield. February 10, 1860

Daniel Doolin, son of Patrick Doolin and Anna Whalan, age 26, born in Ireland; to Joanna Kelly, daughter of Daniel Kelly and Mary Donivan, age 16, born in Ireland; witnesses David McGrath and Catherine Kelly. February 11, 1860

Florence Scannell, son of Darby Scannell and Joanna Cronin, age 40, born in Ireland; to Catherine Burke, daughter of Patrick Burke and Margaret Ragin, age 30, born in Ireland; witnesses John Ryan and Ellen O'Donnell. February 12, 1860

Michael O'Meara, son of John O'Meara and Ann Tierney, age 40, born in Ireland; to Margaret Costelow, daughter of John Costelow and Margaret Kelly, age 29, born in Ireland; witnesses Michael Flanahan and Catherine Connors. February 14, 1860

Daniel Ryan, son of Cornelius Ryan and Honora Hicky, age 26, born in Ireland; to Catherine Sullivan, daughter of John Sullivan and Elizabeth Brick, age 23, born in Ireland; witnesses John Ryan and Ellen Sullivan. February 18, 1860

John Toomy, son of Martin Toomy and Joanna Hays, age about 22, born in Ireland; to Honora Hays, daughter of Thomas Hays and Ellen Burke, age about 23, born in Ireland; witnesses [blank] Toomy and Anna Shea. April 21, 1860

Michael McNamara, son of Thomas McNamara and Ellen O'Bryon, age 25, born in Ireland; to Alice Downey, daughter of Timothy Downey and Ellen Shanahun, age 20, born in Ireland; witnesses Patrick Hunt and Ellen Griffen. August 15, 1860

Orlando Milton Gilbert; to Mary Ann Kelley; witnesses Thomas McDonnell and his sisters Catherine and Ally McDonnell. October 11, 1860