



Annals  
Society of the Holy Child Jesus

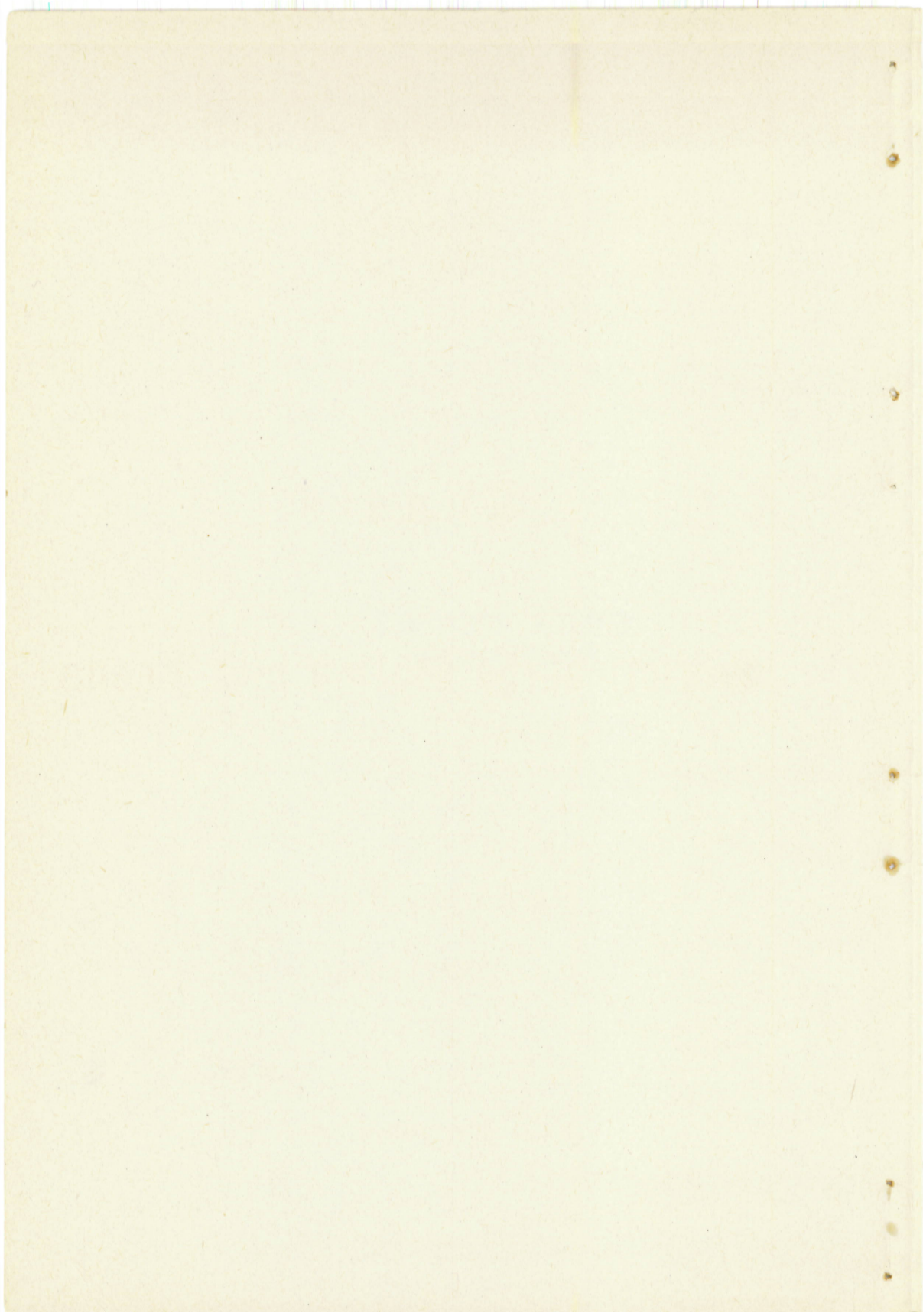
American Province

1862 - 1882

Mother Mary Mildred, S.H.C.J.

S.H.C.J. ARCHIVES  
Rosemont, Pa.

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*Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus  
Rosemont, Pa.*

## PRELIMINARY EVENTS

### CHAPTER I

1853 - 1862

On a memorable day in 1846, Cornelia Connelly, our beloved Mother Foundress, knelt at the feet of the Sovereign Pontiff, Gregory the XVI, and heard him declare that she was called, not to join any existing religious order in the Church but to establish an educational institution in England. She sacrificed her own personal desires and submitted whole-heartedly to his decision. Her beautiful spirit of faith, strengthened in the crucible of suffering, enabled her to accept her burden from the hand of God—and her children know how heroically she carried it. The Holy Father, knowing that her thoughts had turned to her native country as the probable scene of her personal labors, said perhaps in a spirit of prophecy, perhaps to cheer and encourage her, "From England, let your efforts reach America." Consequently, although the first date in the Annals of the S.H.C.J. in America is 1862, we are happy in the knowledge that the desire to have a foundation in her native land was strong in the heart of our Mother from the beginning of her religious life. We are also thankful that the work of the Society was marked out and blessed in its origin by the Vicar of Christ.

Our first Sisters have left on record that through all the joys and sorrows of the early days, our Mother constantly heard these words of Pope Gregory ringing in her heart, and her prayers and aspirations were never satisfied until her children crossed the Atlantic and founded the Society in the United States.

The first record we have of her efforts in that direction, is in letters from her brother, Mr. John Bowen of San Antonio, who offered her three hundred acres in Texas, and from Bishop Odin of Galveston, cordially inviting her to send her daughters to his mission. This was in 1854 and 1855. John Bowen wrote to the Bishop, "It rarely happens that a bare-faced Unitarian offers to cooperate in this way in the sacred work!" Our Mother's extraordinary grasp of business details is evidenced in the questions she put to her brother regarding the site of the proposed convent. In the letter just referred to he answers fourteen such questions. They bear on the location with regard to the sea, mountains and railways, on the healthfulness of the climate, the soil, products, sources of revenue, clientele, etc. Some years later, Mother Foundress, in a letter to Dr. Grant, referred to this offer and that of another American Bishop: "We were invited four or five years ago by two of our American bishops, when my brother offered us 300 acres of land, but we were not then strong enough to undertake more than we had in hand."

An offer from Archbishop Kenrick came in July, 1861, when our Mother's niece, Kate Duval, visited him and told him that she had a deed of land near Baltimore made out to the Society. He replied that already the Visitation nuns were in many places in the archdiocese, and also the Sisters of Charity, and that the condition of the country, owing to the war going on between the States, was such that he did not feel that even the convents already established were sure of survival. He added that if peace should come, there was a good opening at Annapolis where the Redemptorist fathers had a beautiful Church and a noviceship and were desirous of having a good female school. The Archbishop ended his letter graciously by saying that he would welcome the Sisters into any part of his diocese that was not already occupied. The Redemptorists had received the property in Annapolis from Lady Wellesley, the sister of the Duchess of Leeds.

The Duchess of Leeds first met Reverend Mother Foundress when she with her invalid sister, Lady Stafford visited St. Leonard's-on-Sea in 1860. The four Caton heiresses, grand-daughters of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, were remarkable for

their charm and beauty. The three who married English peers were called "The Three Graces," Mary Anne became Marchioness of Wellesley, Elizabeth, Lady Stafford and Louisa, Duchess of Leeds, while Emily married Mr. McTavish and remained in her native land. Almost all the property of these generous women was given, in one form or another, to the Church. Their names were enrolled on the list of benefactors by Jesuits, Redemptorists, Franciscans, Sisters of Charity, priests and bishops. The Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus owe their Mother House in England, as well as the foundation in America, to Louisa, Duchess of Leeds.

During her stay at Hastings, the Duchess became an ardent admirer of Mother Foundress, whose unusual story had interested her from the first. She learned of our Mother's desire for an American foundation and generously offered to contribute land for the purpose. Lady Stafford and the Duchess made a gift of adjoining lots near Baltimore, on the Caton estate, next to the lot given to the Sisters of Charity, and on which St. Agnes' Hospital now stands. This property consisted of twenty acres and is referred to by Bishop Kenrick in the letter quoted above. Later, the Society sold this land, not being able to make a foundation there. Nothing daunted, the Duchess gave the Society two thousand acres in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania. She wrote to Dr. Wood, the Bishop of Philadelphia, acquainting him with the fact, and asking information as to the legal form of such deeds. Lady Stafford had already given to Bishop Wood her share of the Carroll estate in Lycoming County, for the Seminary of Saint Charles Borromeo. Bishop Wood was much interested. He wrote a gracious letter to Mother Connelly, in which he made inquiries regarding her method of conducting training schools for teachers, and offering a house and school for that purpose. Later, he wrote that so unsettled was the state of the country, owing to the war, that the present time was unpropitious for a new foundation.

To this letter Mother Connelly replied in the following characteristic words:

Your present determination is quite what we might have expected; but, at the same time, we are filled with apprehensions the most sad at hearing of your fears for the state of the country. It seems almost impossible to realize this sudden change from prosperity to utter ruin. . . We shall pray more than ever that our Mother Immaculate may make her seat in the very center of the land and bring "peace on earth to men of good will." We shall say our Rosary of the Seven Dolours for your intention daily. We give up all intentions of going to America until the war is over, and then we shall hope that we may labour in your diocese with every prospect of good to souls and increase of faith in the neighborhood that shall be agreeable to you. Existing feeling is, that I being an American, and having devoted myself to works of our vocation in England, America ought to be the desire of our hearts before any other place out of England. The Bishop of Melbourne has asked us to send out a colony to Australia, which now, they fear, must be first..

In the meantime, negotiations were going on, and many letters exchanged between the Duchess and Mr. Ward, her agent in America, between Mr. Ward and Mother Connelly and between Mother Connelly and the Duchess. These letters—they bear dates from July, 1861 to the Spring of 1862—give us the only real data we have for conditions previous to the coming of the Sisters to America. Mr. Ward was living in Towanda, Bradford County, Pennsylvania, and had the management of all the Duchess' estate. From his letters, one gets the impression that he is a gentleman, and a careful steward. In a letter to the Duchess, dated July 18, 1861, Mr. Ward assured her that the house on the property he had selected for a school could easily be renovated and altered, and that much of the work could be done by those indebted to her. After the house had been made ready, he continued it could be presented by her to the "Superior of the Jesuits in the United States, or to the Bishop of Philadelphia, or to the Sisterhood, as Your Grace might think fit."

In a letter to Reverend Mother Foundress, on October third of the same year, Mr. Ward described the house and garden and a barn, and repeated what he had written to the Duchess. He remarked, however, that it would be much better for the Sisters if the Duchess would give all the Bradford property to them, instead of giving them part of it and part of the Lycoming land. His reason was that the Bradford property could be made "immediately productive," it being farm land having plenty of tenants, while the Lycoming lands, not suited for agriculture, depended wholly on contracts for the timber it bore, for although rich in minerals, it would be years before any profit could be gained from them. In the same letter, Mr. Ward cautioned Reverend Mother Foundress not to expect immediate results:

This country, though beautiful, is new, and the people, especially the Catholic portion, are not rich. The beginning of an establishment will require patience and perseverance, and to Sisters accustomed to refinement and luxurious surroundings, there must come privations, very many of them, at the outset. I will render all the aid in my power, and see that any who come shall be comfortably placed when they reach here, and until their own domicile can be made comfortable.

There is no doubt that the Duchess of Leeds promised financial support, as the following extract from Mother Connelly's letter to Mr. Ward will show. In the meantime he had offered to have the house at Towanda prepared for the reception of the Sisters. Our Mother replied as follows:

"I have to thank you for your proposal to have the garden put in good order and planted for kitchen use. Pray have it done. And I also beg of you to have any little repairs that you may find necessary made in the house before the arrival of our Sisters, such as window glass and broken locks, etc., etc. It will not be desirable to have any papering or painting done, as they may require certain alterations or divisions in the rooms which you could not direct. You see, I am accepting your kind offer as soon as it is made!

Will you also have the kindness to order about \$50 worth of timber to be on the premises and dry, so as to be fit for use at the time of the arrival of our Sisters. They will require desks, etc.

I shall be glad to know whether you have received the first 500 pounds on the contract for the Lycoming lands . . ."

In a letter to Dr. Grant, Bishop of Southwark, Mother Connelly said: "The agent in America is having the convent repaired and the first immediate furniture ordered."

The first colony of Sisters set out from England with the expectation thus expressed by our Mother. What they found will be told in its due place.

In these first steps towards the American foundation, we find our Mother had to suffer opposition and delay caused by her religious superiors. Those who are familiar with her life will not be surprised. To her certain conscience and strong will, nothing was more trying than the lack of these qualities in those to whom she owed obedience and fidelity. Her unflinching submission, coupled with frank expression of her views, is an object lesson for her children. Dr. Grant refused a petition made by our Mother when Miss Duval offered to pay all their expenses if two of the Sisters would accompany her to America in order to study the situation both in Baltimore and in Pennsylvania. The war in America came, and with it Dr. Wood's hesitation. And then at the very end when their "boxes were already packed" and they "ready to go at a day's notice", Dr. Grant hesitated to give his permission. He could not take the responsibility of the departure of the Sisters. He required Bishop Wood to sign the following paper found in the Archives:

I cordially consent to a branch of the Mother House of the Sisters of the Holy

Child Jesus at St. Leonard's-on-Sea, being established in my Diocese. And I consent to their accompanying me on their journey provided they have the cordial consent of their Bishop, Dr. Grant.

+ James Wood,  
Bp. of Philada.

St. Leonard's-on-Sea,  
July 22nd, 1862.

Dr. Grant also obliged each Sister who was going to America to sign a statement that she was willing to go and to remain there. If possible parents or guardians were required to do the same.

It is interesting to read the papers written by each of the first band of missionaries.

I desire to go to America and I am quite ready to remain there or to be sent where my superiors shall think proper at future times to send me. I am 34 years of age and quite beyond the control of guardians.

July 28th, 1862.

Eliza Noble (Sister M. Xavier)

I desire to go to America and I am quite ready to remain there or be sent where my superiors shall think proper to send me at future times. I am 24 years of age and quite beyond the control of guardians and my parents have willingly consented to my wishes.

July 28th, 1862

Sr. Lucy Ignatia  
Ellen Newsham

I am very anxious to go to America and I am quite ready to remain there or to be sent where my Superior shall think proper to send me at future times. I am 29 years of age and quite beyond the control of guardians. My parents are in America.

Sister Josephine Mary Kearn  
July 28th, 1862

I am very desirous to go to America, and to remain there or to be sent wherever my superiors may please to send me at future times. I am 27 years of age, my mother is dead, and I have not heard from my father for some years. I know he is willing that I should go to whatever part of the world my superiors think proper to send me.

Sister Agatha Ellen Deacy  
July 28th, 1862

I am very desirous to go to America and I am quite ready to remain there or to be where my superiors shall think proper at any future time to send me. I am 36 years of age. My father is dead and my mother consents to my wishes.

Sister Aloysia M. A. Walker  
July 28th, 1862

Even the postulant who accompanied the Sisters on their journey was required to write a statement.

I wish to go to America with the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. My parents are dead and I have no guardian. My uncle lives in America and I have a sister there. Another aunt lives in England but she has no communication with me and I wish to enter the Order there rather than remain here.

July 28th, 1862

Marion MacKay

Sister Lucy Ignatia' parents gave this statement:

We are quite willing that our daughter, Sr. Lucy Ignatia in religion, should go

with the Community to America as it is her wish to go.

Richard Newsham  
Alice Newsham

July 27th, 1862

In reading these statements, one is surprised at the youthfulness of the members of the party. Three out of five were between twenty-four and twenty-nine, and the Superior, thirty-four. Yet Mother Connelly wrote to the Bishop: "I have chosen the elder among the Sisters who are professed."

A note, characteristic both of Dr. Grant and of our Mother is to be found in the Archives. It was written at the time a later band was leaving for America, in the autumn of 1866.

Oct. 15, 1866

Dear M. Supr.,

All nuns write so much alike that one hand-writing is mistaken for another. Sr. M. Walburga's writing is so like that of another Sister that I am afraid to say that the enclosed is her own. If their letters are written by themselves I bless their voyage.

Yours respectfully  
+ Thomas Grant

On the same page in Mother Foundress' hand-writing is found:  
Returned the writing saying

I certify that this is the writing of the Sister who signed it.

Cornelia Connelly

Thereafter, each Sister's statement was witnessed by the signature of another.

All difficulties being finally overcome, the little band accompanied by Mother Foundress, left St. Leonard's on the Feast of Saint Ignatius, 1862. Mother Agatha's account is best given in her own words.

"We arrived in London about six, where we remained all night in our convent in Harley Street, and started early the next morning for Liverpool accompanied by Rev. Mother General, Mother Theresa, the Superior of the London House and Mother Gertrude of the Convent at Blackpool. Arriving at Liverpool at about two o'clock in the afternoon, we went to the Washington Hotel (as we have no convent in Liverpool) where we remained until the following morning. After hearing Holy Mass at the Church of St. Nicholas and receiving Holy Communion, we left the hotel and went on board the tender which was to convey us some distance down the Mersey where the *Scotia*, a beautiful steamer of the Cunard Lines was riding at anchor. Besides those mentioned above, as accompanying the American-bound Sisters, were Mother Lucy and Mother Alphonsus from the convents of Preston. All went on board the *Scotia*, and took possession of the staterooms. Our beloved Mother, seeing that the hour for saying goodbye had almost come, gave us beautiful advice on many points of great importance. Then having embraced each and whispered words of consolation and encouragement, gave us her blessing and was obliged to leave us. The vessel sailed about eleven o'clock and at twelve we said our Office sitting on deck with our faces turned toward England. Nothing of importance happened until Sunday morning when the *Scotia*, at about eight, entered the harbour of Queenstown, and finding that she must remain there until about four in the afternoon, Mother Mary Xavier decided that we should go ashore for Mass.

The following was sent from Queenstown by Sister Lucy Ignatia:

No. 245 and 246 Cabin, Scotia

Dearest, dearest Reverend Mother,

At last we are in our cabins and almost stupefied at finding ourselves in such excellent spirits. We watched the "tender" as far as possible and then said the Litany and Laudate three times in thanksgiving. Just as we were finishing almost simultaneously we all exclaimed "Now, don't you find yourself ready for work?" We went down stairs, took our seidlitz powders, and as some felt rather squeamish, Mother Mary Xavier told us to lie down. The stewardess, Mrs. Duncan, such a kind, nice woman, came in and said, "Ladies, now mind, whatever you want, ask for, and I will see that you have it." She arranged for us to have our meals as nearly like the convent as possible. Breakfast, 8; dinner, 1; Tea, 6; and reflection at 8. She told us that when last in New York the number of wounded soldiers generally stays 16 or 18 days there and the same in Liverpool. She has been on the sea about twenty years and makes the same reflection every time she returns, that every one ought to be able to love God and admire His wonderful works. We are now passing the north of Wales and the view is perfectly lovely. We have just had luncheon at one and a half. The stewardess says the doctor does not recommend soup when just sailing, but iced water and dry biscuits. It is now quite cold. Everybody is wrapped up and walking about to keep themselves warm.

**2 o'clock.** A Protestant American gentleman has just introduced himself to us from New York and wishes to know if he can be of any service to us. This is his eighteenth voyage. He appears liberal and is a great friend of convents. We did not ask his name. That Dr. Brann who spoke to you on the Tender was a student from the American College and the first ordained. He is going to the next diocese to us, New Jersey, and says that we are starting work together, and he hopes to be of some assistance sometimes. Some large sea gulls have been hovering over the vessel for more than an hour. I hope we are not going to have a storm. The sailors are lowering the sails, as the tide is against us, though the sea is beautifully calm. I feel just as if I were with you, saying this. So little has happened that Sr. Agatha is anxious for us to be sick, and have something to say in her letter. We have just come in to the cabin for dinner.

**..4 o'clock.** Just had dinner; going on deck for spiritual reading. M. M. Xavier is better and coming with us. Lovely view of Holyhead and Menai Mountains, top of Snowdon. Passed the American steamer "Tuscaris"—bells rang, flags were hoisted in Scotia and lowered in other steamer. A gentleman told us that there was a man on board going the sixty-first time! Think of that. We feel already quite at home in the thought of returning and the communications between us so easy.

**1.30 A.M.** Could not sleep, just turned out of my berth to write to you. Last night went on deck to say our Office, and I think I scarcely felt happier in my life. The sea was so calm and we said it aloud. This reminded us rather of the Fathers on their way to Rome reciting their Office, in Mr. Wilberforce's letter. The strangest thing in human reason is to find ourselves happy, without the least fear of death or anything of the kind. . . .

Mother Agatha's letter:

J.M.J.

The Scotia  
Mid Atlantic  
Feast of the Transfiguration

Ever dearest Rev'd. Mother,

The glowing accounts of the state of our health, dispatched from Queenstown, may have prevented some good prayers which under other circumstances would have been poured forth in our behalf—but if you could only have seen us since Sun-

day evening you would indeed have pitied us. Even at this present moment dear Mother Mary Xavier is lying on the couch almost more dead than alive—but now for my journal.

**Sunday.** Beautiful weather—entered the Harbour at about eight o'clock in the morning and were told that we could go ashore before twelve o'clock, which we did in the tender from Queenstown with Dr. Brann—you remember the small priest who spoke to you on board. Of course we found our way to the Church, were taken up into the gallery and shown into a pew just large enough to hold Mother M. Xavier, Sr. L. Ignatia and myself. We had not been there long, when two great big men pushed in between us and took possession of our kneelers without the least ceremony. I have not yet recovered! And to think they were Irishmen. One went out after having been almost pulled out by someone at the back, but the other would not suffer his friend to be forced to quit the field, so he called after him: "John, come here." Thereupon John returned to the attack and remained master of one end of the pew and, during the sermon, of half of Sr. L. Ignatia's lap. I never felt less at home in a Catholic Church before. It was the general feeling with us all. When we returned to the tender at half past one, there was Dr. Wood who could hardly believe his senses. He had seen us in the street, and was told we were Sisters of Mercy. He had no idea we should really come so soon. Then Dr. Purcell came up and gave us his blessing in such a fatherly way. We thought he was Dr. Hughes, and in the afternoon Mth. M. Xavier said. "I wonder when we shall see Dr. Purcell." "You have seen him, I thought you had taken possession of him altogether as your Bishop!" Dr. Wood described Dr. Hughes as follows: "He is something like me but a good deal older and not so handsome." He is so kind and fatherly. Sunday evening about half past six, Mth. Mary Xavier and two or three more of us were on deck with Bishop Wood. He was speaking of a Miss Seton who is on board, the granddaughter of the famous Mrs. Seton who first brought the Sisters of Charity into the United States. Mth. M. Xavier asked where she was. The Bishop looked around the ship a moment and then said: "She is working away with that little officer over there. She has just left a convent in France and does not appear to be overburdened with sense."

Mth. M. Xavier was the first who felt the seasickness. We feel the motion of the vessel more in the berths than in any other part of the ship, and still we have the best part for air and light, the middle part. They have candles burning in the berths all day and the air is quite nasty and bad. Poor M.M.X. was very sick while we were eating our supper, which when finished we all felt the worse for, each of us took to our own berth and began to be sick in good earnest. I was one of the worst, although I tried to keep it quiet, only saying that sailing on the Atlantic was very different from sailing on the English Channel. I shall never boast again of not being sick. Marion was very ill and we were helpless.

**Monday.** Sick still. Dr. Wood came to ask how we were and to see if any of us could go up on deck to see the Great Eastern which was in sight. Sisters Aloysia, Josephine, and myself managed to get out, but Sr. L. Ignatia said she would rather die than go so far. His Lordship brought us glasses to see the Great Eastern through; and while we were looking we shipped a heavy sea, over the bow of the vessel. Everyone began to run, the sailors stooped to let it pass over them, but one poor fellow who was so taken up with the Great Eastern, did not perceive the sea till it was too late and had a complete shower bath, for the water poured down on him till he was thoroughly washed off the steps. I would have enjoyed it another time, but sea-sickness banishes mirth just while it lasts. We only stayed on deck about five minutes and when we came down we were all sick again. I,

without any ceremony, using Marion's basin and then getting into my berth.

**Tuesday.** The same entry as far as sickness is concerned. M.M. Xavier and I are still in the cabin. The others got up today. The two Bishops Wood and Purcell came to sit awhile with M.M.X., so kind and fatherly. We were not undressed. There was no actual storm but we were suffering from the effects of a previous one which had left the waters of the Atlantic very agitated so that the ship dipped furiously and shipped heavy seas without number. M.M. Xavier was rather afraid, I was too sick to care. We said our Office Saturday and Sunday but not since. Dr. Wood says the best prayer is, "Lord, I am glad to be sea-sick." He said he did not feel at all inclined to say his Office, but as he was not sick he was obliged to say it. Dr. McCloskey was very sick and looks as serious as it is possible to look.

**Wednesday.** All much better and able to get on deck except poor M.M. Xavier who has taken possession of the couch in her stateroom where she lives day and night. She is really so weak, Sr. Ignatia got a bottle of wine which she takes at intervals. She is very cheerful and so are we all. What would Mother Ignatia say to being waited on by a steward—who empties the basins, etc. We were only saying this morning how she would exclaim, "My dearest Rev. Mother, only fancy such a thing!" He is so attentive that even after we have made our bed, he will go in and turn the mattresses again. You will remember, dearest Reverend Mother, our staterooms were not together. The Bishop did not like the arrangement, and had Dr. Brann change his stateroom and Sister Aloysia is now there. It is really much more comfortable under the present circumstances. The Bishop, Dr. Wood, gave us each a medal of the martyrs of Japan blessed by the Pope, the likeness of His Holiness and a picture of Our Blessed Lady. He makes very kind inquiries about the Mother's health as he always call M.M. Xavier. He counted up for us ten convents in Philadelphia and said we made the eleventh, so he quite counts upon our staying in Philadelphia. He laughs at Towanda. No one seems to know anything about it. He wants us to hem some handkerchiefs for him when we are quite well, not before, for we should make such big stitches when sick! The handkerchiefs cost him the modest sum of one and a half dollars each, in Paris. Of course he has not made a vow of poverty.

**Thursday.** All as lively as kittens, thanks to our Blessed Lord! M.M. Xavier is much better too. We shall have our breakfast together for the first time since Sunday. M.M. Xavier is laughing at this moment about Mother Agnes saying once, to a gentleman who was passing her the *London News*, "I can't read, but I can look at the pictures." Being dressed as a secular at the time made it more amusing. . . . Two whales were seen this afternoon.

**Friday.** A lovely morning. M.M. Xavier on deck for the first time since Sunday. She is so much better. Dr Wood came to us just when we were quite settled making scapulars and brought us a beautiful medal which had been presented to him by the Pope, representing on one side the Holy Father and on the other St. Paul's in Rome. He also brought his pocket handkerchiefs to be hemmed and marked. He could not decide for a long time as to the marking. However, after various propositions, he fixed on + Wood as we interpreted it, a wooden cross. We sewed on deck until twelve o'clock. Then we went below. Before we left the deck, however, his Lordship told M. M. Xavier that she was to eat meat and any one else who could not eat much was to do the same, without scruple, but as we were quite ready for our dinner, we found it easy to observe the abstinence. We are all so well, thank God, and in good spirits.

**Friday still.** We have just found when we went down to dinner five or six whales were visible. A very disagreeable announcement especially for Sr. L. Ignatia who

has been on the lookout for monsters. However, we have had one little change in the shape of an iceberg which came in sight this evening. A gentleman came down and told us. Sr. Josephine who has been doing her best to eat, on principle, ever since we have been on board put her head out of the cabin and said, "A nice what?" thinking of course it was a nice supper. She says as we have paid so much for our passage, we ought to eat as much as possible in order to be strong when we land. Well, we went on deck and by the time we reached it, Sr. Josephine had formed her opinion that we were going up to see an ice bird, and was looking into the sky to catch a glimpse of the wings. She had never heard of any such thing in her life before. When Bishop Wood asked Marion if she could see the white bear, she answered "yes", although there was no such thing to be seen. His Lordship said, "You can't see the eyes yet, I suppose." Sr. Josephine, I believe would. She has heard of birds and bogs, but what did she know of bergs?

**Saturday.** A regular persecution from Bishop Purcell regarding the singing of Vespers and English hymns to come off tomorrow. Dr. Wood came over to us in the afternoon and said, "I did not know I possessed such a treasure, you are going to sing Mass tomorrow, I hear." Mth. M.X. said, "How like the three black crows, we have only been asked to sing, and we are not going to do so; we are not fond of notoriety." The stewards are so kind to us. We have all that we can want. We have all our meals at different times from the other passengers. The chief steward brought down to us a large plate of grapes the other day and we were so glad for M.M. Xavier really wanted them. We only hope that the other Sisters that may come after us may be as well treated and they will be if they come on board the *Scotia*. I wonder, dearest Reverend Mother, if we shall really see you next year.

**Sunday.** Wet and foggy and as dull as possible. We went on deck notwithstanding the rain. Dr. Wood saw us and came over looking quite quizzical and said, "I remember an old priest who preached a sermon on the Ten Virgins. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened to ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five otherwise!" We told him it would not apply to us because we were six. He stopped then and sat down with us a good while. All day dull.

**Monday.** A lovely day. The waters of the Atlantic like a sheet of glass—not a ripple. We have been up on deck the best part of the day. Dr. Wood was sick in the night. M.M. Xavier is lying down. The rest of us are still on deck. Sr. L. Ignatia is reading to us and the rest making scapulars. We have almost lived on deck. . . . Office, spiritual reading, meditation, all on deck. The moon rose this evening gloriously from the Atlantic. We watched it until after eight o'clock and the waters of the ocean looked like silver in the place immediately under her beams. How like Our Lady it looked, watching over the world and over us in particular! Dr. Hughes had a very nice talk with us just a little while since and during the conversation, sharks and whales without number were to be seen, but as usual we missed them. I hope, dearest Reverend Mother, you will make excuses for the letters at the end of certain words, for it is almost impossible to finish off without a flourish. The ship takes care of that. In many parts I have written *one* where I meant to put *on* and so forth. We have had many a good laugh about our boxes and their contents. Sr. L. Ignatia's clothes, old blankets, old knives and forks, and spoons; Srs. Agatha's and Aloysia's clothes; some altar cloths, old books. If anyone found the foregoing inventory, they would suppose we were about to set up a rag and bone establishment in the New World.

**Tuesday.** Up very early and on deck to see the entrance of New York Harbour. It is quite impossible to write on deck with the wind and spray, so we came below where we had our breakfast in a vapour bath. We have just received an electric shock. All quite silent; "Pop!" went a cannon, and before we could recover

from the first we had to undergo a second and are in readiness now for a third. How glad we shall all be to land. I wish we were settled. M.M. Xavier has of course told you what Dr Hughes says of Towanda so I shall only say the farther north the better if this heat is to go on increasing.

And now, dearest Reverend Mother, as we are just going ashore and there is nothing else to say, I must finish.

With best love to yourself and all the Sisters in England, and begging a frequent blessing,

Your unworthy child,  
Agatha.

The following are extracts from M.M. Xavier's diary on board the Scotia.

"Thursday:—Dr. Wood is very patronizing and kind, but I don't quite know what he meant by saying what he did to Sr. Lucy Ignatia about the Sisters of the Christian Retreat. He said they belonged to the Diocese, were like us, the Bishop was their superior. Sr. L. I. stared at him and he burst out laughing and said no more—trust him for keeping his episcopal authority! Dr. McClosky has been speaking of our system of education (inspite of his sickness, poor man) and nice, dear, old old Bishop Purcell says it will be odd if one sister supercedes the other, meaning of course, you, dear Reverend Mother, and the Sacre Coeur. Dr. Wood in his business-like way looks forward to the competition we shall be the cause of. . . .

"Half-past four Thursday afternoon:—The Sisters going on deck. I will not venture till tomorrow. . . . The weather is beautiful now; we are going, I suppose, about sixteen miles an hour. The next Sisters who come will do well, I think, to secure these berths for the sake of air and light, the most desirable things, but we get more pitching here than nearer the middle of the boat, I think, however, being ill with less air than we had would be unendurable.

Friday afternoon—about three o'clock:—Our time is growing very different from yours. All are getting on well. The weather is beautiful. Here we are scribbling in our cabin with the port-hole open and the sun shining in quite cheerily, after a very good dinner, for poor sinners just risen from sea-sickness. The Bishop made me a heretic saying I must eat meat. Dr. Wood had a nice talk with M.L.I. and me about our proceedings after we land; of course he advises us to go to Towanda, but he wants us to rest in Philadelphia until after Sunday;— Thursday, he says, you will want to go to confession; Friday, the Assumption; Saturday and Sunday rest. Monday, go to Towanda. He seems to want us to go to Towanda first, he thinks the Duchess will be better pleased. When I proposed beginning in Philadelphia, he said in his laughing way, "Better finish there."

I don't know where we shall be lodged at first. He spoke of a nice catholic lady that he knew, who would be glad to receive us, he thought, but her husband is a Protestant. Then he spoke of staying with some community, but we quietly objected—then he mentioned the Hospital, but it is difficult to know sometimes whether he is in earnest. But I think the Hospital would be very nice, certainly infinitely preferable to a community; a room to ourselves we should have, could hear Mass there and be, I suppose, quite private, and we should flatter ourselves we were a little bit more Jesuitical. Our first Communion after landing will be on the Assumption, the day the first six made and renewed their vows at Mont Martre, the day after our clothing day, and Sister Agatha's profession day. We have been well enough to have our first talk today of the future and what we must try to do for the Society. I am sure, Reverend Mother dear, we shall be blessed if we are only faithful to you; and Our Lord, I hope, sees that we are determined to be that. . . . Dr. Wood says he will change our money for us and

that we shall gain by the exchange at the rate of eighteen pounds for every hundred, so for our forty pounds we shall gain seven pounds four shillings. Is that not well to know? Bank of England notes would be of equal worth, but gold is easier to change. He says he will always take care of us and see that we don't starve whilst we remain in his diocese. . . .

**Saturday:**—The Bishop came on deck to find out if we had promised Bishop Purcell that we would sing tomorrow at some kind of service the Catholics are having. No Mass, our things are in the hold and we can't get to them. Of course we had not promised and never intended to sing, but this illustrates Dr. Wood a good deal. . . . "Never commit yourself" might be taken as his motto. I feel that he wishes us to go to Towanda first, that is to settle there first. He is such a cool philosopher—he has weighed his points by now, and come to that conclusion, I feel sure. I am glad of it myself, I feel sure that we can quickly show ourselves at Towanda and then with a good reputation, and a wider opening, begin in Philadelphia or the neighborhood. He has given us a Catholic Register for the Diocese of Philadelphia. Towanda appears to be the only place in Bradford County with a resident priest. Academy of the Sacred Heart, Eden Hall, near Holmesburg, Philadelphia, terms: board and tuition per annum, \$180. Number of religious: 33, pupils: 46, Convent of St. Joseph's, commenced 1858, contains now professed sisters: 12, novices: 6, postulants: 8, pupils: 21. Academy of the Holy Cross, 3 professed sisters and 40 pupils, etc. In the parochial schools are generally 5, 6, 7, and in one, 11 sisters for each school—the old-fashioned Dames, I suppose, with each a class. . . . Dr. Purcell has just been down to see if we can have Mass, tomorrow, but the things are in so many different boxes, I don't think we can. . . .

**Monday morning:**—It is about half-past nine. The sun is shining on the blue sea, and all of us sitting in a cosy corner on deck. Yesterday we were in the Gulf Stream, surrounded by fog, the steam whistling for a warning to any vessels that might be in the way. Good little Dr. Purcell has been chatting with us just now. He is sorry he could not go to St. Leonard's. He wishes us to give you his very kind regards. It is such a comfort to meet anyone who knows you, dearest Reverend Mother. We expect to be in port tomorrow at this time, but we half dread getting there with our fourteen packages, and not knowing where we shall lodge.

**Tuesday morning, about half-past six:** They told us last night we should be THERE by now, but I have not seen land yet. We already feel the heat, although the sea breezes help us to bear it. We had such a nice satisfying talk with Dr. Hughes yesterday. It was such a comfort to hear a decided opinion from one who seems well able to judge. He advises us to settle in Towanda in preference to Philadelphia or any large city. He says there are numbers of children that would come to us. There, we would soon surround ourselves with families, though the place is by no means thinly inhabited, but traveling three hundred miles would be as nothing to send their children to us. I really think we shall go there and be very glad. If you only knew the difficulty under which I am writing, you would perhaps find some excuse for the appearance of this letter. I cannot bear the sight of it. We are in sight of land—we came in on account of the wind blowing the paper, and now are dissolving in the cabin. Dr. Wood is on the whole very fatherly, but he won't give his opinion plainly. If we show ourselves willing to stay in Philadelphia, he seems to shirk that; if we propose going to Towanda, then he does not wish us to hurry from Philadelphia. He has made out where we all come from and considering his own origin, I think he is pretty well satisfied to find two of us from Lancashire. He was talking to us last night about his own family and spoke so very nicely of his mother who lives in Cincinnati, eighty-two years old, a thorough English woman. . . .

Extracts from Mother Lucy Ignatia's diary:

This is Wednesday afternoon and the first time I have been able to sit up since Sunday. . . . the tender conveyed us to Queenstown to hear Mass which began at twelve. Taken up into a gallery in the church and M.M. Xavier, Sr. Agatha and myself placed in a pew with kneeling places at every side but one where there was a bench. In the body of the church there were no benches, but hundreds of poor people round the altar who stared at us with the greatest astonishment for several minutes. . . . Mass lasted till nearly two o'clock and we hurried to the tender which was to leave the harbour at one-thirty. We saw three priests behind us bound for the same place as ourselves. We were on the tender about five minutes when Dr. Wood made his appearance and, looking around quickly, spied us. He immediately came over to us and we got his blessing. Then he returned the mitre into our charge. He said if he had been certain of meeting with us so soon again, he would have left his mitre at St. Leonard's to have saved himself the trouble of carrying it all over Ireland. He had come on deck two hours earlier to see if we were there and to find out if we were comfortably lodged. After admiring the perseverance of the nuns of the H. C. Jesus and condemning the bad judgement of Dr. Grant in parting with us, he introduced us to a great number of his friends, Irish ladies and three priests from Queenstown, but I don't remember their names. Everyone appeared astonished at seeing us so happy on leaving England. When we arrived at the Scotia, Dr. Wood came down to our cabins and you remember one cabin between Sr. Aloysia's and Sr. Agatha's that you thought it better not to take on account of the stairs? This had been occupied by two priests, Dr. Brann and Mgr. Steinger. The Bishop did not like the idea of us being separated at all so he asked the priests to change cabins with us, which they willingly agreed to do. . . . When we were standing in the tender a dear old saintly bishop came over to us and said, "Welcome to America, my children!" We got his blessing, then he chatted for about ten minutes, but the whole time we were under the impression it was Bishop Hughes and did not find out our mistake until late in the evening, that we had been speaking to Bishop Purcell. I assure you, dear Reverend Mother, we might have known him for years, he was so kind and fatherly.

**Sunday evening, 6 o'clock**—Went on deck, but had not been there more than five minutes when Dr. Wood came over to us and told us all about Philadelphia. There are 600,000 inhabitants, of these only 125,000 are Catholics and there are ten religious orders and we make the eleventh. He appears fully determined to have us there but always says, "Go up to Towanda and judge for yourselves," and has a good laugh. Dear Reverend Mother, do you remember Mr. Hilton of Cincinnati? Well, he said often of him, "He had more beard than brains." He is awfully sharp but most interesting and amusing.

**Tuesday morning:** We were all lying in our berths, in our habits, for we never undressed for two nights and three days, because we were up every ten minutes, and so many come to see us. We heard a gentle knock and a voice asking admission. Who should it be but Bishop Purcell. He sat on the couch and laughed and talked for about half an hour and raised our spirits wonderfully. I told him the only thing M.M. Xavier said was, "O who would do this for anybody but God!" And he told a story of a novice in his diocese belonging to the discalced Carmelites who, when she walked down stairs on a cold winter morning with her fingers quite frozen, knocked them against the banisters saying, "I wouldn't do this for anybody but thee, my God!" Among other things he said that good Bishop McClosky had been praising our institute and said that our system of education was far superior to any he had seen in America or any part of Europe. Poor Bishop! We have not exchanged words with him yet, he is so awfully sick, sits on deck amidships and looks neither to right nor left. He told Bishop Purcell how disappointed

you would be not to see him and he said it would have been the greatest pleasure for him, but he really had not time. Last Friday he had been through the training college at Liverpool and appeared highly delighted with the Notre Dame Nuns—but he has an immense number in his diocese. He then gave us his blessing and hoped Our Blessed Lady ad Nives would intercede and do something for us. . . . Dr. Purcell told us that Dr. Wood is quite concerned at the thought of our going so far away from him, and that he particularly wished us in Philadelphia as there was plenty of work for all orders, and nothing like competition for bringing out all the power that lay hidden within. . . . None of the gentlemen on deck call the Bishop “my Lord” but only “Sir”. . . . Dr. Brann came and inquired how “the Mother” was, and afterwards said he hoped not to lose sight of us, and that some day we must come to his mission in New Jersey near New York; . . . Dr. Wood is awfully sharp and advised us when at Towanda to say **nothing**, but **listen**, act **slowly** and **surely** . . . He said, “You need never fear; as long as you are in my diocese and do not run away from me, you shall never starve.” He then asked how much luggage we had and we told him 14 boxes. “Ah, but how do you know the contents of each and which to open?” “They are numbered, my Lord, and we have a list of each.” “Would you mind letting me see the list?” I gave him our book and in one list was mentioned “Things for Philadelphia.” “What, a King for Philadelphia!” It was as legibly written as possible, but he wanted to find out what it meant. . . . We were saying the other day when on deck how much attention and respect God’s servants receive in this world, even from Protestants, for there is not a lady on board has had a quarter of the kindness shown to her that we have experienced. Directly we make our appearance on deck, passengers arise from their seats to make place for us (in fact sometimes it is quite painful) and if anything is visible, telescopes are immediately handed to us. The head steward, Mr. McGovern, sends every day to inquire what we would like for dinner, and it is cooked specially for us at one o’clock, because the other passengers dine at four. Even the officers are astonished at this, as it is a privilege that has never before been granted to anyone. Before the green fruit is sent to the salon he selects some for us and has even brought it himself. It is one of the greatest blessings, though, to have the bishops on board as this makes the people more upon their guard in speaking to us. Still, we have made friends with several. Last evening, Dr. Purcell came and talked to Sister Agatha and some of the other sisters and asked if they knew St. Anthony’s in Liverpool, and where Mr. Newsham, a friend of his, was now living as he had always stayed with him when in England. They told him and then I was introduced and we have been great friends ever since.

**Saturday:** To our great delight we came in sight of land, Cape Race in Newfoundland. We were not a quarter of a mile distant and the only object visible in the way of a building was the telegraph office. The captain threw overboard the dispatches in a round tin can, sealed, with a flag at the top, and the officer from the office in a light skiff with five men rowing, made for the little box which was picked up in about five minutes, and then they all shouted at the top of their voices, “Hurra! hurra! hurra!” waving their caps and this was immediately answered by all the gentlemen on the steamer. It was quite delicious to see some more faces. About twelve o’clock we lost sight of land.

**Evening:** Passed the **City of Baltimore**. Both steamers saluted each other by firing rockets. Do you know, dear Rev. Mother, Dr Wood tries to catch us in every way. He told us we should have to pass the city of Baltimore before we should arrive in New York. Fortunately we knew that the steamer was steering in a northerly direction, and that Baltimore is south of New York, so we were able to give him his answer. This morning he came to me with a very serious face, on deck, and said, “Well, I did not think we should so soon have seen Greenland.” Of course it was Newfoundland, but I answered him quite quietly, that I thought he

had made a mistake in saying one word for another. He then laughed heartily, but he delights in catching people so that it is a perfect strain to talk to him. You are obligated to be all attention and think twice before you answer him. He is a great favorite with the passengers, as he makes himself quite at home . . . we even saw him smoking a cigar with another gentleman last night. No doubt he makes himself all in all to everyone. . . . One thing I must tell you, he does not like Gothic architecture nor Gothic vestments. . . . Dr Hughes came and talked to us about Towanda, as until recently it was in his diocese. Towanda is increasing rapidly, he said, and at first we will get children who call themselves ladies but are rude and untrained. They will be able to pay well and in two years when they leave us, if they are very much improved our school will be crowded. He particularly wished us to stay in New York for a few days in a convent of the Sisters of Mercy, about three minutes walk from the Bishop's Palace and invited Dr. Wood to stay there also. As the latter did not wish it, we thanked Bishop Hughes very much for his kindness, alleging for our excuse that we were anxious to reach our destination. He quite agreed with us, and has promised to come to see us if he is ever in the neighborhood. . . . He also told us the best and cheapest place to get school books and apparatus in New York. In twelve hours we could receive anything from this city. About eight, Dr. Wood came to us on deck and talked until about half-past nine, chiefly about his own family. He appears devoted to them. He has not a single relative a Catholic, and is the only son, and has five married sisters. He and Dr. Purcel visited his mother just before they went to Rome and she amused them with singing that catch, "Hark the Merry Christ Church Belis", although she is eighty-two.

**Tuesday morning:** Nearly broiled with the heat. Sr. Aloysia is packing. We are now in New York Harbour. Dr. Brann is going to mail these letters for us and has promised to say Masses for us. . . . We shall have another budget ready next week. Begging your blessing and prayers for us which I am sure we have already,

Believe me your loving and grateful child.

Lucy Ig.

The following letters describe vividly the arrival of the first band in Jersey City, and their experiences in New York and Philadelphia.

J.M.J.

Philadelphia,  
August 17th, 1862.

Ever dearest Revd. Mother,

I cannot realize the fact that I am writing to you from Philadelphia, but, as it is, M.M. Xavier has told me to describe our arrival. Sr. L. Ignatia is to take another epoch, and M.M. Xavier herself will do the rest.

On Tuesday the 12th, we entered New York, or rather we entered the Bay and were forced to wait till eight and perhaps nine o'clock for a tender to take us to Jersey City. A special boat was brought for the Bishop and when it came alongside, the heads of at least half a dozen priests were visible, one the living image of Miss Smith in an indigo Planter's straw hat. If I could draw you would have a specimen of it. (There are about a dozen little boys at this moment outside the window of the room in which M.M. Xavier and myself are writing, betting a cent that this is a school). Well, we were taken on board the special tender by Bishop Wood in the broiling hot sun with our faces like full moons, as red and hot as they could possibly look and as you will suppose, not very clean, and introduced to priest after priest—but this was only the beginning! In due time we arrived at the landing stage, the sun becoming hotter and hotter, and were conducted by the Bishop (who was as hot as ourselves) to the Customs House—an immense wooden

building, more than twice the size of the School Hall at home, so filthy and smelling so bad that it would have made us all sea-sick if we had not been sea-sick so lately. Then there were all the other passengers from the Scotia waiting for their luggage—and as for ours, it seemed as if it would never come. . . . We remained in this predicament for three hours, first one of our boxes appearing and then another, until the fourteen made their appearance. Every one's luggage was examined except the Bishop's and ours, the Custom House officer granting this privilege to the Bishop. . . . M.M. Xavier's cap and collar were wet through until, without any exaggeration, you would have thought her head had been dipped in a bucket of water. I never saw anything like it before. I was really afraid she might faint, but Our dear Lord sustained her. Only fancy! Three hours standing in such a place! As we missed the half past twelve train for Philadelphia, the Bishop said we had better go over to New York, to the Convent of the Sisters of Charity and rest until the half past five train. You will know, my dearest Reverend Mother, how we relished it untidy as we were. We were all put in a large carriage, something like a bed, and kept sitting with the sunbeams pouring through the windows for about a quarter of an hour, until we almost melted and we might be there now only that M.M. Xavier exerted all her strength, put her head out of the window and announced to the cabman that if he did not drive us away quickly, she would not pay him half his fare. The words had a marvelous effect on the man and after various stops, we arrived at the Convent where the Bishop was ready to receive us. More introductions and of course, owing to our griminess, more humiliations. They came upon us like flocks of snowflakes in winter, only not with the same cooling effect. The Bishop soon left us, saying that the cabs would be there for us a little after five. We went to dinner in the Sister's refectory, after which they took us up to the dormitory where we washed in water and lay down on the bed. I must add that the sticks did not fit the caps and we looked like old Irish women with full borders. M.M. Xavier has the worst—we had no other to change; fortunately I found the night cap she had worn while on board, which if it was not very clean, was at least dry and stickable. She put this on when she got up and took her collar off altogether and put her black silk tie around her neck. If you had only seen us all! The superior took us into the school which was in the basement of the Church and of which I shall say nothing, Sr. Lucy Ignatia having chosen to describe the places of instruction—I can't call them schools. We were just seated at tea when the Bishop was announced—but what a change! His figure was enveloped in a white linen blouse, above which appeared the purple collar so out of keeping with the rest of his apparel. What would M.M. Ignatius have said? Two of the priests were with him, Dr. O'Hara and Dr. Cantwell, the latter looking like Dr. Cooper, both arrayed in white blouses. We arrived at length at the station, each one carrying her own carpet bag, the Bishop and Dr. O'Hara leading the way, until we came to the carriage for Philadelphia. The Bishop went for the tickets himself and to M.M. Xavier's dismay, back with the tickets and an armful of oranges which he divided among us, the carriage being almost full of passengers and it would hold thirty or thirty-six. I feel almost as bad when I write as I did then. I only wonder Mother M. Xavier survived it. We did not know where we were going to stay for the night until we were halfway to Philadelphia, (I have crossed my track!) when Mother M. Xavier said to the Bishop, "My Lord, can you tell us where we are to stay tonight?" "Yes, my child, you shall all take supper at the Bishop's house and then go to the convent which is close to it." What an announcement! We pictured the number of priests at the table to meet His Lordship—the six untidy nuns getting out of the carriage—but enough of this for the present. I must not anticipate. We arrived in Philadelphia at about half-past nine and while crossing the river His Lordship and the priests changed their coats from white to black. We had nothing to change except looks of dismay with each other. Mth. M. Xavier, Sr. Lucy Ignatia, Sr. Aloysia and myself got into

one cab; His Lordship, Sr. Josephine, and Marion in the other. Sr. Josephine said, "I am so glad you have come, my Lord; I was hoping you would." (Only fancy such a speech!) She is quite taken with him. Indeed, he is very kind. The Bishop's cab went a short cut and got home first, with Marion and Sister Josephine. We were grinning to ourselves in the cab. The number of students (from the college) waiting to meet His Lordship were curious to find out who were the six sweeps (for we looked like sweeps by that time!) whom he had brought from Europe. We came to a halt at length and got out of the cab in front of a large house brilliantly illuminated, with six or eight black figures standing in the hall. We ascended the steps, bags in hand, — nobody asked us in, so there we stood in despair saying we should wait until the Bishop came, not knowing that he had arrived before us. At last, one of the priests said, "Will you walk into the room? The Bishop is there," and we did walk into an apartment, nicely furnished, dazzling with light, in which we found His Lordship, five or six gentlemen, and seated in state, Sister Josephine and Marion. I do not know what happened the first few moments. . . . I dared not look at anybody for fear of laughing. I only know that M.M. Xavier sat in mute despair—Sr. L. Ignatia on the brink of laughing—and I must have screamed only that the Bishop's dog came in and sat just in front of me, and notwithstanding my little relish for dogs, I played with it. After a little while, the Bishop went out of the room and sent for the gentlemen, and we were alone but we dared not speak. The Bishop returned in a short time with a bottle of wine, some of which he poured into six glasses, as he said the ice water was too cold for us to drink alone. Supper was yet to come (Oh dear!). It did come or rather we went to it, headed by His Lordship who took the top of the table, Mth. M. Xavier and Sr. L. Ignatia the bottom, and the remainder on either side. He asked us whether we would take ham or chicken or tongue. Most of us took tongue, although it did not succeed in making us talk any more. After a few minutes of silence, a band struck up **Home Sweet Home** to welcome the Bishop. It was not on purpose for this occasion. We all looked so dull the Bishop said he was very sorry they played it as it made the Sisters sad. He little knew that it was the sense of our condition that made us so gloomy. We were tired and sick and some of us tried to talk but it was of no use. Oh! the horrors of that day and night! At last the supper was finished and the Bishop, after securing our luggage, (except the one box we wanted) in his own office, took us to the convent. It must have been eleven o'clock at least. The door was opened by a little nun, Sr M. Ignatius, who had everything ready for us. The Bishop had sent a telegram from New York saying we should arrive in the evening, etc. He is their superior so he gave stirring orders about having everything we might want, hot or cold bath or anything. I suppose he saw we needed it! He might have guessed from his own feelings. Then he gave us his blessing and went home, while we made a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament and retired to our dormitories. I forgot to say that before he went His Lordship asked us at what time we should like to have Mass. He fixed upon half past seven and added, "I shall either send a Priest to hear your confessions or go into the confessional myself at seven." Just what we dreaded. M.M. Xavier said, "My Lord, don't trouble yourself, any priest will do—without your getting up so early." We had a strong hope that he would not come; morning told us a different tale. We had some nice hot water in which we bathed and felt quite refreshed. In the morning we appeared quite different people—new habits, clean caps and collars, in a word, renovated. While we were kneeling in the choir one of the priests came up and said, "The Bishop will be in his confessional in a few moments." We walked down the Church and prepared in good earnest for confession. Presently His Lordship appeared in purple cassock and cape, rochet and cross, and entered the confessional. All hope was gone. I received a message to go in, first, which of course I did. The Bishop said Mass and we all went to Communion for the first time in nearly a fortnight. His Lordship sent for us after breakfast

and spent nearly the whole morning in showing us his house and cathedral. He introduced us to every priest who came to welcome him—we did not care now, because we were clean. The Sisters of Charity were there, and they could not help admiring our dress, even to the Bishop who said, "Yes, these Sisters are satisfied with wearing black veils, not like you who wear so much white about the head." I shall describe in my next letter the Orphanage and the orphans at St. Vincent's Home. It would make this letter too long. I never valued my vocation S.H.C.J. so much as I do now.

Some extracts from M. M. Xavier's letter of the same date are interesting.

"Today, Mother dear, Sr. L. I. and I went in search of Mrs. Montgomery for we knew you would be pleased if we could see her. We found 219 Spruce Street, but no Mrs. Montgomery lived there. We were told that the numbers of the houses had been changed and no one knew which was the house. At last we passed an old book store. I saw a directory, seized upon it, and found a Mrs. Austin Montgomery, 1902 Pine Street. We made for there, and found the house closed and another name on the door. We continued to inquire, and were told at last that a Mrs. Montgomery lived in such a house. For a venture we went there and found a Mrs. James Montgomery lived there. She was delighted to see us, hear all about you, wanted us to stay there and take tea with her, asked us everything about you and seemed delighted to hear us speak of you. It was an equal treat for us to see her, she was the first and only lady we have seen except a friend who came in while we were there. She is really a charming, elegant woman. Mrs. Austin Montgomery is out of town at present, but Mrs. J.M. said she would send your letter to her. Her direction is 719 Spruce Street, not 219.—We went to the house on Friday to see Miss Cotter with whom she boards, but Miss C. was not at home so we could find no particulars to write you except what Mrs. J. Montgomery told us, viz., she is very well, but seems to have lost her memory a good deal, and still mourns for Mr. Montgomery. We have seen Mr. Carter also, who wished us to come over to America some time ago. He said he made inquiries about our Society from Mrs. Montgomery who told him she believed we were **cloistered**, which was not what he wanted. He has altered his opinion by now, or I am mistaken. He has expressed himself plainly, showing that he feels the want of system of education. He admires the simplicity of our habit. This morning the Bishop came in to make arrangements about our journey to Towanda tomorrow. He is really very **kind**. After telling us the route and the line, he asked Sr. L.I. and myself to go to his house where we could speak privately; he told us candidly, for the sake of being **candid and sincere**, not to dismay us, that he had really given his consent for us to come to America in spite of himself on account of the perseverance that was shown, he thought that perhaps it showed the will of God, but he has no opinion of Towanda, he does not trust Mr. Ward and the Lycoming property is only worth price of the timber; but he wishes us to judge and act according to our own judgment. He would like to go with us, but cannot spare the time. He said he would try and get Mr. Carter to go, who is a man of good judgment—Harrisburg is the place the Bishop harps upon as being the best suited for us—a beautiful place, he says, and no one to compete with—but he will make no decision for us of course, we must judge for ourselves. He gave us to understand very kindly and delicately, that if we found that we could not succeed in Towanda we were not to hesitate to acknowledge it and come to him for assistance. "For," he said, "it will not be your fault if you find the place has been misrepresented to you." He evidently doubts Mr. Ward very much. I shall be glad to have Mr. Carter with us; 1st for the benefit of his judgment, 2nd to secure his interest in us which is already quite alive. The Bishop does not wish us in Philadelphia yet, neither do I. From what I can hear, Germantown would be a very good place, but perhaps Harrisburg better. However, as the Bishop constantly says, prayer is the chief thing now. . . .

"Mother Ignatius, the Superioress here, is a very good religious and **extremely kind** and nice to us. She quite longs to see you, Revd. Mother dear. Sr. L. Ignatia will tell you about the schools, I can't. The Bishop has an idea of what a low standard they are. He cannot judge as he has seen no others at work, and he is not a man to be convinced by words, he must see results, which I hope he soon will, in our system. . . ."

Unfortunately, we have not Sr. Lucy Ignatia's letter, with the exception of one page in which she says nothing not found in the two letters quoted.

The hospitality the Sisters of St. Joseph extended to the first band of S.H.C.J. that came to Philadelphia has been a by-word in the Society. Mother Agatha wrote, "So far we have met with very great kindness, but now we are experiencing the essence of this virtue. . . . They are as kind and thoughtful for us as if they were our own sisters. We have two large rooms, with three beds in each, and I need not say that after night prayers and a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament, we are more than glad to retire to rest without being 'rocked in the Cradle of the Deep'."

While M. M. Xavier and Sr. L. Ignatia were looking for Mrs. Montgomery's house, as related in Mother M. Xavier's letter, Father Carter called to see the Sisters and was interviewed by Sr. Agatha. In her graphic way she thus described his visit:

"To say that he asked questions about the Society, its object and aim, in fact its everything, would not be enough. He literally showered us with questions, without any answers seeming to be required. After about an hour's interview, he left saying he would be glad if the Superioress would call to see him the next day at the Church of the Assumption." When Mother Mary Xavier returned and heard all that had taken place in her absence, she said she felt that God had raised up this good priest to be a benefactor to our Society in America, and that instead of waiting until the next day, she would go that afternoon. Sister L. Ignatia and Sr. Agatha accompanied her. It is needless to say the Reverend Father received us most kindly—asked over the same questions he had asked in the morning, and feeling settled on some points, on which he had doubted before, said he would like to show us his Church and school. The Church is a pretty Gothic one. We made our three requests, and said a Memorare before Our Lady's Altar that if it was God's Will, we might be in Philadelphia this day year. From the Church Father Carter took us to the parish school, which from its arrangement appears less important than the English poor schools. There were no children, of course, as this is holiday time. The Sisters of Mercy live in the convent; they are in Retreat but the Superior and one other Sister came down to see the strangers and were very nice to us.

"On the 18th of August, Father Carter accompanied M.M. Xavier and Mother Lucy Ignatia to Towanda, and we are to wait here until we hear from them."

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR CHAPTER I

Life of Mother Cornelia Connelly by M.M. Catherine, 1922

LETTERS or copies of letters:

To Rev. Mother Foundress from:

John Bowen  
Bishop Odin of Galveston  
Bishop Wood of Philadelphia  
Bishop Kenrick of Baltimore

Mr. Ward of Towanda  
The Duchess of Leeds  
The Pioneer band on board the Scotia  
Mother Agatha from Philadelphia

From Rev. Mother Foundress to:

John Bowen  
Bishop Wood  
Bishop Grant of Southwark  
Mr. Ward

From the Duchess to Mr. Ward and from Mr. Ward to the Duchess

Various papers, etc., signed by the Pioneers before leaving England and by Bishop Wood.

Notes by Mother Agatha regarding leaving England.

CHAPTER II  
FIRST YEAR AT TOWANDA

1862 - 1863

We have Mother Agatha's Annals and some notes written by her and Mother Ignatius' notes as our only record of the first days in Towanda\*  
According to Mother Agatha:

On Sunday, the 17th, the Bishop sent for Mother Mary Xavier and Mother Lucy Ignatia and told them he was sorry not to be able to go to Towanda with them, but he had asked Father Carter to go for him as he had great faith in his judgment—then if they found the place unsuited for a convent to return to Philadelphia where he would take care of them himself. This was unthought of and unlooked for kindness. And so they both felt.

On Monday morning after Mass and Holy Communion, and after receiving the Bishop's blessing, the two mothers left Philadelphia on the 7:30 train, accompanied by good Father Carter—the other four sisters remaining with the Sisters of St. Joseph until the place of residence should be decided, and it is needless to say how hard they prayed for God's Will in the matter, and at the same time how lonely they felt. The mothers were received by Mr. Ward who sent his carriage to Troy to meet them, for in those days that was the nearest station to Towanda, being 20 miles from it,—and such a road! Corduroy, it is called, there, because it is so full of ruts and ridges, like that material, though on a large scale. Mr. Ward received Father Carter (whom, by the way he called Doctor) very kindly indeed—his house was like a palace and the grounds laid out with good taste. After breakfast Mr. Ward and Father Carter and our dear mother went to the future convent, and a disheartening place it looked after the residence they had left.

It was a small wooden building, falling into decay, the paper hanging in festoons from the walls, the paint covered with dirt, or else not existing at all—certainly the rats and spiders, not to speak of other inhabitants, had enjoyed themselves there for many a year. There was a pretty little grove at one end of the grounds, and as it was summer, it looked very cool and inviting.

It is needless to say that the mothers did not feel encouraged at the prospect before them, but rather than be a burden to the good Bishop, they determined to settle in Towanda as it belonged to the Society, and remain there until there was an opportunity of going elsewhere. Father Carter agreed to this, for he had it in his mind to bring the Society to Philadelphia as soon as possible. Then after remaining two days there, he returned to Philadelphia on Thursday evening, and came to the Sisters of St. Joseph's Convent to see the four orphans and tell them all about Towanda, when they were to start, etc. He brought with him the following letter from dear Mother Mary Xavier.

Dear Sister Agatha,

"We are agreeably disappointed with our convent here, and have decided to remain. Therefore you and the other sisters must come up as soon as possible, but I fear that Monday will be the earliest you can leave Philadelphia, as it is a two days' journey and Sunday would be an inconvenient day to travel. Father Carter has kindly offered to see you safely from Philadelphia and he will give you any instructions necessary regarding the journey as far as Troy, where you will have to remain for the night. But some one will meet you there and tell you where to go, and how to get there."

"I shall not attempt to describe the place to you in any way, but will leave every-

\*There are letters of Father Carter, and M.M. Xavier which are listed in the Bibliography at end of Chapter.

thing to make its own impression. We have plenty of adventures to recount. I long for us to be altogether again, comparing notes. You must ask the Bishop to be kind enough to consecrate the chalice before you leave, and the paten. The altar stone Father Carter has kindly promised to send by you. Pay all your debts."

"I will write to the Bishop and tell him of our decision, but Father Carter will explain all to him. He has been a true friend to us, thank Our Lord! and his decided opinion is in favor of this place."

"More when I meet you which I hope will be soon. Kindest regards to all the sisters who are, I hope, in good spirits. Remember me most kindly to dear Mother Ignatius and the other sisters and say how grateful we shall always be for their kindness and they must always consider our convents open to them whenever they need a home."

"Pray, pray, pray very much—the work is difficult and we are only beginning."

Your affectionate sister,

M. Xavier.

Convent of the S.H.C.J.

Towanda, Wednesday, Aug. 20th, 1862."

To continue Mother Agatha's narrative:

Father Carter then said he would see the sisters off on Monday morning, which, by the way, they thought would never come, so anxious were they to be with our dear mothers again. It did come at last, and after Mass and Holy Communion, they said goodbye to the dear, kind Sisters of Saint Joseph, and left for the station, Mother Ignatius going with them. The Bishop had given them his blessing the evening before and sent the same to the mothers in the North. Father Carter met the sisters at the train and gave them a large package of peaches which they found very refreshing on the way as it was a remarkably warm day—he also gave \$100 for Mother Mary Xavier, which he said would be useful, and of course it was, as no one will doubt. Then he gave his blessing and sent his kindest regards to M. M. Xavier, and M.L. Ignatia. The sisters said good-bye to dear Mother Ignatius, thanked her again for all her kindness, and the train started. The travellers arrived at Troy, 20 miles from Towanda at about ten o'clock in the evening, where a buggy was waiting to take them to Burlington about 12 miles from Troy. And what they suffered on that awful road after a day of sickness in the train cannot be written—it was worse than the seasickness of the Atlantic Ocean—however, they arrived at Burlington and went to bed although without undressing, as they had to begin their travels again at daylight. They had no breakfast, and arrived at Towanda at 8 o'clock, while our dear mothers were at Mass. The sisters were taken to Mr. Ward's house, where they washed and were ready to meet the mothers—when they came from church,—in the library. Then after the greeting, they went to breakfast with the family. After that they had a good time to talk and tell what had happened on both sides.

Mr. Ward went with them up to the convent! Well! Such a place! But they had come to America, not to enjoy themselves, but to work and there was plenty to do in a material way, before they could do anything in the form of a school. The house must be described just as it presented itself to them on that day—a wooden building consisting of a ground floor, and one story with an attic, of course, the drawing room of the rats and spiders that had held possession for many years and which were now about to be disturbed, as it would have to be turned into a dormitory for the sisters. On the ground floor, was a parlor—behind that a large room which had been used as a kitchen by the former inhabitants. Then a small room which was

to be the refectory for the present. A long passage led to an out house and a stable. Upstairs—and here must be remarked—about 14 steps took one to the first floor where there was a little room in which were two trestle beds with a straw matting on each—this was to be M.M. Xavier's and M.L. Ignatia's cell prepared by them the day before we came to be ready for us to see. Then a room for a chapel, a passage room and a large dormitory. This is called large because it is the only room to hold five beds, the largest room upstairs. In this room were two large bedsteads, having on each a tick filled with straw, and quite round, so that if one turned at night she found herself rolling on the slats of the bedsteads. There was also a kind of sofa on which Sr. M. Cornelia slept, but she could not change her position without rolling on the floor. Behind this room was a little one afterwards used as a community room, and another small one—a dormitory for the children when we had boarders. Up the steps the attic, but stoop or you will break your head, except in the center! This was the Convent of the Holy Child Jesus in Towanda!

The sisters set to work at once to unpack the 14 trunks they had brought with them, and take out the household linen, etc. After a while when they could get iron bedsteads they returned the ticks, etc. they had borrowed from Mr. Ward. Sister Josephine was amazed, for she thought that M.M. Xavier had found them in the house.

All the community was so united that they did not mind the privations of every kind by which they were surrounded, and many and hearty were the laughs afforded by Sister Josephine who lived in a state of wonder from morning till night, at least for the first few months. She never could learn the names of the people she came in contact with, but christened them herself as "that Catholic person," or "that rich person," etc.

Why Mr. Ward's promise to have things in readiness was not kept may be explained by the fact that the sisters, in the end, left England sooner than Mother Connelly had expected, and her letter did not reach him as soon as she thought it would. On the other hand, the Duchess of Leeds, although she had promised to do so, had not made any monetary arrangements for the convent. Dismal indeed must have been the outlook and the prospect of the future convent and school! A small house, in a lot of two and a half acres with the street on two sides within a few feet of the building! Mr. Ward had bought this lot for the Duchess, as it was in the town. The pioneers, however, saw only the Stable of Bethlehem, and with almost superhuman courage refused to be disheartened. Father Carter could not resist their determination, and with words of encouragement rather from the heart than the intellect had bidden them proceed.

Two letters will be of interest. In the first from Bishop Wood, dated August 25, we find these words:

"The result of your visit to Towanda is perfectly satisfactory to me. I am delighted to find you could form so favorable an opinion as to induce you to locate there, and happy to have my unfavorable impression dissipated.

"The good sisters are no doubt by this time with you. May God grant you every blessing and success.

"Rev. Father Leo has just left me and I have given him all the necessary faculties, etc. I am sure you will spare him as much as possible. We give, also, the permissions usual and according to the customs of the Society.

"I have arranged with Fr. Leo to give Confirmation in Towanda on Sunday, September 28th, Feast of the Seven Dolors, so that I will not be long without the pleasure of saluting and blessing you in your new abode.

"In the meantime. I remain

Your sincere friend and servant and father in Christ,

+ James F. Wood,  
Bishop of Philadelphia."

The letter the sisters brought from Father Carter, containing the hundred dollars mentioned above read as follows:

My dear Mother Mary Xavier,

This will be handed you by good Sister Agatha who with the other sisters will, I hope, arrive in good time and safe with all their baggage at Towanda, your new and present home. You will at first no doubt have many difficulties and privations, but you are prepared for them. There is no fear of your ultimate success. He that perseveres to the end will be saved. You will find good friends in Mr. and Mrs. Ward and their amiable daughter, Mrs. Miller. The Bishop is pleased with your prospects of success and will visit you some time in the fall, after you get into operation.

I mentioned today from the Altar, your arrival in the country and your opening an academy in Towanda. It will be mentioned in our daily papers. Send me some of the prospectuses when they are printed. You may expect to find a good friend in me who will not fail to aid you in your most meritorious enterprize. Enclosed you will find 100 Dollars which you will please accept as a little memento from me to assist you in your many expenses to fit up your house, furniture, etc. for which you and your good sisters will remember me sometimes in your good prayers.

"Present me most affectionately to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Miller, and tell them I am delighted with my visit to Towanda and their great kindness to me and yourself. I hope to repeat it in the fall or at the farthest in the spring, if nothing prevents. Do not forget to give my best regards to dear Sister Lucy Ignatia. When I can be of any service to you or your community, let me know without fail, and it will be done with pleasure. With many sincere wishes for the success of your laudable undertaking,

I remain,

Very affectionately yours in Christ,  
C.I.H. Carter

M. M. Xavier,  
Superioress of the Convent  
of the Holy Child Jesus,  
Towanda, Pa."

Full of enthusiasm, the nuns set to work to put their new home in order. The opening of school had to be deferred. Even the path from the door to the gate was overrun with weeds several feet high. The first days were spent in cleaning, scrubbing, removing paint with knives and pumicestone, painting, and furnishing. The first room attacked was the parlor which was made presentable for visitors. Six cane chairs and a round table formed its furniture. The next room prepared was the chapel. The sisters had brought with them from England an altar, tabernacle, and accessories, linens, vestments, etc. When the altar was unpacked, it was found that the wool which had been spread over it for protection had adhered to the paint, and it was necessary to paint it over again, which caused a disappointing delay. Nothing was spared to have the chapel ready for the Bishop's visit.

The other rooms were gradually prepared. In the community room, at first, there were no chairs, those in the parlor being used wherever necessary. A table was improvised of planks, nailed together and resting on a trestle, which frequently

collapsed, bringing everything to the floor, and like the other mishaps common to those days, causing great merriment.

On September first, Mother Mary Xavier wrote to the Bishop:  
"My dear Lord,

"We are pleased at the prospect of your visit to Towanda so soon. May we hope that you will perform the ceremony of clothing our little postulant? Of course, under the circumstances, it will have to be very quiet and homey, but she would be much disappointed to be obliged to wait till your Lordship's next visit to Towanda, which might not be for several months.

"Will your Lordship allow us to put our schools under your patronage? We hope soon to have the prospectuses printed and should wish, of course, if your Lordship will allow it, to say that the schools are under your patronage . . . ."

The Bishop sent a brief note, promising to clothe the postulant when he came for Confirmation. He sent another, on the 19th, very fatherly, with an enclosure, a letter from Mother Foundress, and added:

"Will you have the kindness to notify the Reverend Father Leo that I intend to avail myself of his kind hospitality when in Towanda, and desire him to prepare a bed for me . . . ."

In the meantime, the parish school had opened, and we have Mother Agatha's account of the first days which is interesting as well as amusing. She writes:

"The Parish School was opened about the second week in September. Mr. Ward gave the use of a large room for the purpose, but there was no furniture in it, not even a chair, so after sweeping and cleaning, the children were dismissed until some kind of furniture could be procured. Mother Mary Xavier had a kind of frame gallery erected and on this the children could sit for general lessons. Now, these children were boys from the age of five to fifteen, and girls from five to about eighteen years of age, and the number about eighty in all. So the difficulty of teaching can be understood only by those who have been placed in similar circumstances. At first, the Catechism was taught and the children were absolutely ignorant of everything regarding religion. The Bishop was coming to Towanda at the end of September to administer Confirmation, and the children must be instructed for Confession and Confirmation before that date. And, by the help of the Holy Child they were—for they were docile children. The Bishop came and administered Confirmation to many adults as well as to the children.

"The next morning being the 29th of September, his Lordship said Mass in the little chapel of the convent, and gave the habit to Sr. M. Cornelia. Afterwards he had a long conversation with Mother Mary Xavier, at which Mother Lucy Ignatia and Sister Agatha were both present. This was in reference to their prospects, etc., so far, and although the Bishop did not like the prospects, since they had no other place he was willing they should remain in Towanda for the present. He said the house was fit only for rats and spiders. He did not know that the foundations were unsafe and had to be rebuilt, for they, as well as the middle prop of the house, had given way before we were a week in it. Certainly God took care of us, for the workmen said we had been saved only by a miracle.

"Now that we had the Blessed Sacrament at last, it may be imagined better than written what our joy was—to go to our own little chapel for Adoration instead of down to the church which was a quarter of a mile from the convent. We occasionally had no Mass. The parish priest was a Franciscan from Italy, and, since he did not understand the customs of our English community, many unpleasant events resulted."

In Mother Ignatius' account of Towanda we find some interesting details omitted by Mother Agatha in both her accounts. For instance, speaking of Bishop Wood's

first visit to Towanda, she writes:

"While preparing the Bishop's supper, Mother Xavier began to polish the only teapot they possessed. She was standing in a small pantry off the kitchen, when the door opened and the Bishop appeared. The surprise was mutual. His Lordship told M. M. Xavier he was afraid he was giving a great deal of trouble, and turning to Fr. Leo, he said, "This good sister polishes stones for the heavenly Jerusalem, yet does not disdain to polish a teapot!"

Mother Ignatius also tells us an interesting happening at the first clothing ceremony:

"The postulant received the habit. In those early days the postulants prostrated under the pall during the singing of the Litany, and as this postulant was the chief soprano in a very small choir, the singing of the Litany was quite an undertaking—but she was equal to the occasion—raising her head a little, she helped with the singing. The pall consisted of a black shawl with a white cross sewed on."

In another sketch written by Mother Agatha we find more details about the Parish School:

"The first day was spent in cleaning the room of shavings, planks, carpenter's tools, etc., for it had been used up to that time as carpenter's shop. The second day, some old desks used in a little room by a secular teacher who had taught before we arrived were brought into this new schoolroom, but there were no chairs or benches, so the boys set to work and nailed planks together which made seats and were better than sitting on the floor. Soon after this we had a primitive gallery constructed on which the general lessons were given to some classes, while the others were trying to write—I say trying, for what with the rickety desks and still more rickety benches, a victory over the pen was not so easily obtained. Sister Agatha and Sister Cornelia had charge of the Parish school . . ."

"In the afternoon the girls learned to sew and knit, for which purpose Sister Aloysia came to the school for an hour every afternoon. When the academy was opened Sister Cornelia taught there, and Sister Agatha, too, had to teach in the convent from eight-thirty until ten every day, so Sister Josephine went every morning at nine o'clock to open the door and preside until Sister Agatha made her appearance. While the first class studied and wrote exercises, Sister Josephine heard the lessons in the second department. It was too funny to see her standing in front of the class receiving the lessons repeated by the children in Catechism, Grammar and Geography. (She was so tiny!) . . . God blessed the work certainly, for how we ever got on no one can say, humanly speaking. The children of the first class paid 25 cents per week each, and the others four or five, and this was all we had to support ourselves on, for the pensions of the young ladies had to be spent in paying for the furniture, etc."

Mother Mary Xavier and Mother Lucy Ignatia were busy in the academy. We learn from letters to Mother Foundress many details of these days. They made pillows out of the sheep's wool used in packing. Wool was too expensive to buy—seventy cents for a pound instead of twenty as it was before the War. They were able to buy tow for three or four cents a pound, and made it into top mattresses. The bottom ones were made of straw. The feathers that had been given to them were made into *couvrepieds* for the children's beds. The bedsteads of the sisters who did not sleep in the children's dormitory consisted of trestles they had themselves made and they declared that they were comfortable. "We do not suffer from the War," wrote one, "except with regard to the high prices of everything. Many of the people, however, have loved ones at the front."

Dr. Brann had kindly offered to attend to any business for the sisters in New York. He allowed them to use his name and when they wrote to Appleton's for books, they were given a reduction of nearly one half the cost and unlimited credit. Desks,

also, and iron bedsteads had been ordered and came without delay. A second-hand piano and a melodian were purchased, but a sewing machine was a luxury not to be thought of. Mother Mary Xavier in a letter to Mother Foundress wrote:

"We were fortunate in procuring pretty curtains for the beds. A dealer here sold us two pieces with a pretty design and border, and let us have them for the price they would have sold for before the War—furniture chintz, six cents a yard. We tacked the curtains together to make the dormitory look nice before the Bishop's visit. The bedsteads we ordered from New York are of iron, four dollars each."

In the same letter she gives the horarium of the day which she had made as much like that in England as possible.

#### HORARIUM

5:30 Rise	4:15 Refection
6:00 Meditation	4:30 Recreation
7:00 Mass	5:30 Rosary
8:00 Breakfast	6:00 Adoration
8:30 Spiritual Reading	7:30 Supper
12:15 Examen.	8:45 Prayers
12:30 Dinner	

The Bishop's visit had left the sisters with mixed feelings—gratitude for his paternal kindness, but a vague uneasiness that he did not share their sanguine hopes. Mother Mary Xavier made this clear in a letter to Reverend Mother Foundress on the 30th of the month, in which she tells her all that the Bishop had told her regarding the actions of the Duchess of Leeds, and her gifts to the Jesuits, the sisters and himself. The only conclusion one can reach after reading this letter is that her Grace was a most vacillating character, and was not to be depended upon for any financial help, in spite of the fact that she had promised it in writing. One passage is unmistakable:

"On Sunday afternoon, the Bishop came up and gave me a letter to read from the Duchess to him dated September 8—the very day your letter to us is dated, in which you say she consented to give us the rents. In the letter to the Bishop she says she wishes **all the money due upon her lands by contracts or rents to go to the Jesuit Fathers** and that she intends signing the deed giving it to them in a few days. This, I suppose, unless another equally eccentric fit has seized her vacillating mind, is done before now."

Mr. Ward, no doubt, had reason to know the Dutchess better than Mother Mary Xavier; nevertheless, he lent them money—a great deal—depending on the promise she had given them.

A few words about the Duchess' gifts and promises will not be out of order. In the letter quoted above, the Bishop told Mother Mary Xavier, the Duchess had stipulated in the Deed of Gift of 150 acres in Bradford County that if the sisters did not remain in Towanda the lands would revert to her. In spite of all the contradictory statements made by the Duchess, he advised Mother Mary Xavier "to get all the money out of Mr. Ward she could," because he was sure he was not dealing fairly with her, and would be willing to make up for it. The Bishop promised to be her surety. They knew, for instance, that the lot on which their convent was situated was only two and one-half acres instead of the five acres represented to the Duchess. The other two and one-half acres was the road! Mr. Brady, whom the Bishop sent to advise with the sisters, told Mother Mary Xavier that Mr. Ward was not dishonest, only a practical business man! Mr. Peter Brady, we may note in passing, proved to be a competent and lasting friend to the sisters. Bishop Wood had implicit confidence in him. After his marriage he settled in Easton, Pennsylvania, and his four daughters were educated at Sharon, two, Mary and Nellie becoming Holy Child nuns.

Puzzled by the many complications, Mother Mary Xavier was often at a loss how to act. She was absolutely open with Mother Foundress, telling her every thing that happened. For instance, in the same letter referred to above we find:

"The Bishop left us with the advice to make the place comfortable for the children and ourselves . . . We are going on with the alterations on the strength of the Bishop's advice; we have not a cent of our own as you will see by the enclosed account. We have passed the \$881 we had to begin with. But the Bishop does not speak without reasons. He said he feels sure we will succeed—and he does not say it for the sake of saying it—but he is certain we shall have much to suffer! He thinks Providence will arrange and settle matters so that Mr. Ward will offer to give us five acres of land adjoining ours, and the Bishop's advice is to tear this down and build on that plot! . . .

"Sister Lucy Ignatia will send you plans of the place. You will see how near we are to the road on both sides of the house, which, of course, is a great objection, but we must plant shrubs to screen ourselves. We have decided to build the school hall behind the music rooms, so as to make use of grounds that would be otherwise useless or at least much less valuable than the ground it would have occupied in the other plan we sent you . . . I am so anxious for you to know all. If Sr. L. I. has not finished the plans and the copies of the documents, etc., I will send this without them and you shall have them as soon as possible. To avoid all the expense of a new chapel being built (for which we have permission from the Bishop) we are making the community room into a chapel, and changing the hall door to the east side which will give a much better appearance. Our present chapel is over the parlor but will be too small when the children come."

A pleasant diversion occurred in the form of a letter from Bishop Purcell, of whom all had had happy memories on the Scotia.

Cincinnati, Holy Angels, 1862.

My Dear Sister Superior,

"Your much prized letter of the 24th Ult. is before me. From it I learn with pleasure that you have commenced school for the poor children of your district. This is a good beginning. He who loves the poor will bless your school for those who are not so poor.

"Your good Bishop hardly expected you to be contented up there in the woods. But you find the ignorant to be instructed and souls to be saved and this makes the place as beautiful as London, Philadelphia, or St. Leonards.

"You have by this time opened the boxes which had the honor of bearing the sacred vestments and altar furnishings distributed among them—and I have received from New York the chalice which I had not on board the Scotia, but which reached New York afterwards on the Persia.

"It will be to me a source of satisfaction to visit the desert which I know under your tending is destined to flourish like the rose—but when, I know not. Is there a railway connecting with the place? What distance is it from some chief town of Pennsylvania? Who is your pastor?

"We are in rather an unsettled state here, on the border of Kentucky, where the Federals and Confederates are fighting, and Cincinnati has been rather seriously threatened. It makes us feel we have not an abiding place and that it is considerate and merciful on the part of Our Lord to prepare us for the loss, the burning up of all at the last day, by partial losses and weaning of our affections in this life from all and of all that is not eternal.

"Please to present my respectful and affectionate regards to everyone of your good sisters and let us all pray for one another.

Sincerely yours, dear Mother Mary Xavier, in Xto.,

+ I. B. Percell,

Arbp. of Cincinnati"

The prospectuses were printed and sent out to the Bishop and Father Carter, and to all the families in the neighborhood. The 11th of October was set for the opening of the academy.

Mother Agatha wrote of these days:

"The school was opened, but not a child appeared. The next day, the same result—in fact the whole week passed and they heard of none. The sisters might not be in existence at all. The feast of St. Teresa came, and with it a letter from Father Carter, asking if they thought they would be able to come to Philadelphia in the following summer, and begin a school there. It seemed as though it would be wise to pack up and go the next day, for they had no prospects of surviving! Mother Mary Xavier wrote back to Father Carter and said she hoped to be able to do what he desired, but she must write to Mother General as it would be necessary to have more help from England for with the present community it would be out of the question, especially as Towanda was not a very likely place to get postulants.

"Sunday came and all received Holy Communion, asking Our Lord very earnestly to send children. The sisters used to say the Office of Our Lady on Sundays, for their temporal necessities, and she took care of them. After Office that evening, Mother Mary Xavier went to the community room and said that she felt inspired to say that as the children would not come to the sisters, the sisters must go to them (like Mahomet and the mountain) that unless they saw any objection, she and Mother Lucy Ignatia would go the next day (the feast of St. Peter of Alcantara) and call upon the people, asking them to send their children. Of course all saw one objection. They could not allow her to be subjected to this, so it was settled that Sister Agatha should go with Mother L. Ignatia . . . No one can imagine what it cost the two sisters to go on such an errand, especially as all the rich people in Towanda are Protestants. However, the act of mortification had to be made, and it was blessed, though not at once. For three days, they went from house to house in Towanda and the vicinity, and it would take too long to tell how they crossed the Susquehanna on a raft, and drove over the Narrows in a buggy, etc., etc. At the end of a week there were about ten children—only two came the first day, and when they found what the sisters were like, and that they did not interfere with their religion, they told their companions and friends, so that before Christmas there were 25 children, five of whom were boarders—two Protestants and three Catholics. These paid in kind. The Catholics were nearly as ignorant in religious matters as the Protestants, and a deal more so in other respects. The following are the names of the boarders and as they are the first in America they ought to be recorded: Mary Kelly, Julia Foyle, Nancy Ann McDonough, Fannie D'Estelle, and Frank Peck—the two latter were cousins and Protestants. By degree, others came to live in the house until there were twelve and the sisters could not take any more for want of room. Meanwhile they had many troubles from the outside, but among themselves they were one heart and one soul, and only for the disagreeable things from the outside, it would have been the happiest community in the world. Father Carter came up for the feast of St. Francis Xavier, and said Mass for the sisters and settled some difficulties . . . He stayed at Mr. Ward's while in Towanda. The children acted a little play for him called "The Broken Sword." (Their first attempt had been made before this time in the new refectory—"Antidote" a charade—no one who had been present could ever forget it!) "The Broken Sword" was very good indeed, acted in the new music room which had been built by the sisters."

Father Carter seemed to have been impressed by this play and the general appearance of the children after only a few months with the nuns. It is impossible

to say what pains were taken to make the Catholic children Catholic and the others, Christians! One of these, Maria Parsons Decker, years after her marriage wrote a few words about her memory of the nuns. She was one of those who was, later, a boarder at Sharon:

"My first remembrance or knowledge of convent life or a Sisterhood was presented to my youthful mind when the Sisters of the 'Hold Child' came from the Motherhouse in England and opened their school in Towanda, Pennsylvania, my native town.

"The town was a small picturesque valley nestling between mountains and hills, and quite detached from a city or railway lines, so that the social interests and associations of its people were naturally mutual and dependent on each other.

"The arrival of the sisters created ardent and appealing curiosity, owing to their somber and unusual attire, which had never been seen in the vicinity before.

"The sisters must have been more than equally astonished when they entered the little village, and first viewed the conditions and possibilities awaiting them. The location of the convent (which had been secured by an agency) was remote from the town proper with both grounds and house in a state of extreme dilapidation.

"What stupendous labor, courage and perseverance it must have taken on the part of the sisters to transform it into a livable home, which they did in a few months! The prevailing religion was almost uniformly Protestant, each sect having a modest little church for worship. The Catholics also had a church, quite distant from the others, and included the entire Irish population. Preparations for the opening of school progressed silently and before long, it was organized and open for pupils.

"I think in the beginning there were about fifteen girls, of whom I was one, and we were formed into classes. They were all nice girls from excellent families eager to grasp the advanced and cultured learning introduced by these gifted sisters from England. Their method of teaching was, I think, superior to and more impressive than ours. The English text books they used were new to us, and more interesting. Reading aloud, dictation, explanation and recitation were pleasant ways of imparting knowledge. History and English literature were favorite studies. Little ventures in Dramatic Art were encouraged for entertainment, and some beautiful little plays were creditably acted. Music was an inspiring feature. I used to think that the nuns' sweet voices in chapel must be like the angels in Heaven. Our daily recreations must not be omitted. They were joyful and exhilarating events sponsored by one of the sisters.

"As my mind reverts to those heavenly days passed in a convent, the faces of the nuns illuminate my mind—Mother Mary Xavier, Mother Lucy Ignatia, Mother Agatha (my best beloved) and all the others. It is a treasured blessing to have felt the presence of these holy women, 'saints on earth' doing service for their blessed Lord and Master."

From these lines we easily see the effect produced on the minds of the first children at Towanda. From the beginning, Mother Mary Xavier was determined to adhere to the Society's method of teaching, and although the number of sisters was limited, they succeeded.

In the meantime, the War had caused the price of food to rise to such an extent that the sisters, while they provided as well as they could for the children who were boarders, had to omit vegetables and tea (so necessary) from their own table. Sugar for them was taboo except in the dispensary in cases of necessity. In passing, it may be remarked that the restriction on the use of sugar the sisters observed as a penance until Reverend Mother Foundress' visit in 1867, when she said that Americans need sugar as much, if not more, than other things, they are so

energetic; The nuns tried a "mountain tea" used by their neighbors, but preferred water! Mother Mary Xavier, even then, suffered from intense weakness, and yet she was the first in every work. The sisters managed an occasional cup of tea for her, but had great difficulty in making her take it.

The people of Towanda, although they never dreamed of the extremes to which the sisters were reduced, were always generous to them. Five workmen, for instance, offered their labor free. A mason took up a subscription for them which amounted to two hundred dollars. Several times some boys of the parish school took a wagon around among the farmers, asking for provisions for the sisters. They brought pork, potatoes and corn, as well as corn meal. The sisters never learned to cook this last properly, and consequently did not get the benefit they might have from it. On Sundays, they usually managed to have a little meat. All these privations seemed light to them, for they found joy and contentment in their labors and were closely united with one another. Mother Mary Xavier said one day that Our Lord might send them a really unbearable cross, and it would be the loss of perfect union among them. They assured her that this would never happen, and in after years they always said that they were absolutely united and happy together.

The little community of six was augmented in November by the advent of two postulants sent by Doctor Brann from Morristown, New Jersey, where his parish was situated. They were the first postulants in America, Mary McEvoy and Eliza Smith. Neither persevered, however. Speaking of the Towanda postulants, Mother Agatha wrote:

"Many came and left, some before receiving the habit, and others after, among who were the two mentioned above who left in less than a year. The privations we had to endure frightened them, as well as the amount of work which had to be done by so few. Caroline Thall, a lay sister, was the only postulant received at Towanda that persevered."

Caroline Thall became Sister Joseph and lived a long and useful as well as edifying life, and two postulants came later from Towanda, as we shall note in their places.

In the meantime, the improvements went on slowly. The barn was pulled down and the lumber, which was well-seasoned and better than any they could procure, was used in the new building. Lack of funds, however, threatened to bring the work to a standstill, and Mr. Ward refused to advance any more money on the unreliable promises of the Duchess. The Bishop sent Father Carter to Towanda, as we have noted, to advise the sisters on their financial and other difficulties. His visit was successful in every way, and he was favorably impressed by what he considered the marvelous progress of the schools. He advised Mother Mary Xavier to finish what she had begun but to do no more unless she had the funds in hand. Above all, she was to make no contract with Mr. Ward or anyone else without reference to the Bishop or to himself. He, it will be remembered, was the Vicar General at that time.

In spite of the heavy work of the classroom and house, the sisters found time to embroider a cope hood for Father Carter's Christmas present, and to send a box of things to Reverend Mother Foundress. Early in December, Mother Mary Xavier received a letter from Reverend Mother telling her of boxes she had sent on the Westmoreland for Towanda. There was great delay in receiving these, and Father Carter promised to look them up on his return to Philadelphia. An excerpt from his letter will be of interest:

"I saw the Bishop next morning . . . I explained to him your affairs and he agrees with me that you ought not to incur further expense until you have the means. Finish the small building and stop. Then make up your accounts with Mr.

Ward and let us see them. Write us how you stand with him. Do not fail to do this. This be sure to do and by all means do not go farther into debt. The Bishop will attend to your affairs with pleasure and will probably let Mr. Brady see your lands, etc. . . . The advice I gave you meets with his entire approbation. He says you must have a novitiate near the city and that your lands might be disposed of for this purpose, but your present place be retained for a school. This seems to be the desire of the Duchess of Leeds, which she exposed in a letter written to him which he showed to me. A school only to meet the wants of the people of that section of the country. So I shall be on the lookout for a suitable place near Philadelphia for a novitiate, etc. . . . Do not be in the church at night and deprive yourselves of Mass if the weather is too cold, raining or snowing. Take care of the health of your sisters. See that they have warm shoes. It is easy to catch cold and consumption in this country.

"After being with the Bishop I went in search of Captain Deacon and the ship *Westmoreland* and found him in the office. He received your letter. The ship is being unloaded, and your boxes will be taken this afternoon to the Custom House to be examined and they will be sent to you the next day. I am to call again on Tuesday to see what are the expenses and to see if they are sent. So you may expect them in a week or ten days. . . . I need not tell you how pleased I was with my visit to Towanda and the kind attention of you and all the sisters. You will no doubt do much good in Towanda, but you will have privations and difficulties for a time. You must next year charge at least \$125 a year for board and tuition, with extras for music, etc. You cannot live without it. It will take at least five or six thousand dollars to put your place in order, which must be done by degrees. . . ."

Much of the character of Father Carter is revealed in this letter. He was, as Bishop Wood said of him after his death, just and generous. Peculiarities of character and mannerisms, noted as they appeared, were the inevitable consequences of the circumstances of his life, but they only served to bring out in strong relief the sterling qualities that were at the foundation of his nature.

A characteristic letter from Bishop Wood was received by Mother Mary Xavier while Father Carter was on the visit to Towanda early in December, in which he wrote:

'Auxilium in tempore opportuno' . . . 'help in good time' in good English. This, no doubt, finds you in deep and anxious consultation with Very Reverend Father Carter, who left here this morning—and will give you a good opportunity of placing all your difficulties before him. His sound judgment and mature experience will enable him to give you valuable hints and counsels. We willingly concede the same permissions for Benediction which we have already conceded for Mass and under the same conditions."

The first Christmas in America was a very happy one, in spite of the fact that there was no Midnight Mass. Everyone felt that the Holy Child had made up in a wonderful way—His own way—for all they lacked in the usual festivities of Christmastide. In after years they said it was the happiest Christmas of their lives. No one in Towanda, nor for that matter, anywhere, had the slightest idea of the real privations they suffered, often going to bed hungry, and braving the bitter cold of the early morning to go to Mass in a freezing church. These and other trials seemed only to augment the heroic courage of those early days. The great cross was that often when Father Leo was absent on a mission, they were without Mass for two weeks at a time. When, later, Father Carter found out something of these conditions, he could not believe that he had been deceived by the constant cheerfulness and light-hearted gaiety, and that his frequent gifts of money had gone for absolute necessities.

An eight day retreat preceded the Epiphany, for they had not made their

yearly retreat the preceding summer. The sisters made it without a priest, and renewed their vows in the little chapel without Mass, for Father Leo was off on the missions.

In spite of these deprivations, Sister Aloysia voiced the thought of all when she said that even if the choice were given her to go back to England or to remain in Towanda she would choose the latter.

After Christmas, the really cold season began. "We did not know what cold was until then," Mother Agatha wrote. We quote again from her Annals, written years later:

"The winter of the year 1862 was unusually severe. We were not prepared for it, and consequently suffered a great deal from the cold. One morning the church was so terribly cold that the contents of the chalice froze, and the priest was obliged to go to a fire at the far end of the church to thaw them. Indeed some of us used to cry with the cold, our feet being almost useless to us, and the tears forced from our eyes seemed like globules of ice rolling down our cheeks. The convent was not much more of a protection, for when it snowed, we were obliged to bring our beds down from the attic where we slept because the snowflakes fell in showers on them through the apertures in the roof. We covered ourselves with whatever we could get. One had the poor carpet bought for the parlor, but too common looking to be used there; it did very well as a blanket, as far as weight was concerned, but as it contained more cotton than wool its power of warming was not great. The snow which fell for the first time on January 1st, continued on the ground until the end of April, and it would be impossible to say what we suffered during those months. I shall never forget the acts of resignation and patience witnessed then. No one thought of grumbling and the privation of many things most necessary was the order of the day.

"Father Carter still continued to write about our going to Philadelphia, and Reverend Mother General wrote that she would be able to send about six sisters in the summer. This satisfied him, and in May he invited Mother Mary Xavier to visit Philadelphia and see what she thought of the convent."

In the meantime, a night school had been begun, but the severe cold proved too much for the pupils and it was abandoned.

Father was so pleased with the cope hood the sisters had made for him that he showed it to everyone who came to see him. The sisters had learned gold embroidery in England, and were experts in the art. They heard that the Bishop needed a miter, and embroidered two for him. His letter on reception of this gift is droll!

" . . . They are exceedingly beautiful, fit exactly, and are in excellent taste. I must return you and the sisters my most sincere thanks. A particularly good quality in these mitres is that although all mitres are supposed to pinch, these are so light and fit so easily as to inflict the least possible pain. . . . I will not object to the sisters singing in the church, provided, first that they alone occupy the choir to the exclusion of everyone, even as spectators, unless some of the children under their care could be useful; then, second, that they confine themselves to simple and edifying music. All of which is certainly easy. . . . "

The sisters and children were obliged by Father Leo to go to Holy Communion on Sundays at the eleven o'clock Mass at which the singing was done by them. That was one of the hardships unnoted in the Annals, and found only in Mother Mary Xavier's letter to Mother Connelly. This continued as long as Father Leo remained in Towanda. After Mass, Sister Josephine was accustomed to go home by a short cut over the fields so that she could have the dinner (which was also the breakfast) ready for all. One day, she met the sisters before they reached the convent, and with a very long face, said, "Mother Mary Xavier! a robber has stolen our dinner!" This was indeed a catastrophe of the first order. One incorrigible optimist exclaimed, "Thank God! he left the dishes!" The dinner consisted of what-

ever had been intended for supper, but such was their spirit, that even the boarders treated the affair as a joke—all except Sister Josephine, who “never saw such a country.” This was her favorite comment when anything out of the way occurred.

Father Carter’s letters to Mother Foundress and her letters written in 1863 reveal the eagerness of the former to have the nuns in his school. We shall give extracts. The Bishop’s attitude is also shown in a letter to M. M. Xavier dated January 9, 1863, in which he wrote:

“ . . . I have never for a moment imagined that you would succeed in Towanda, and certainly did not conceal this conviction from you. . . . ”

On January 21, Father Carter wrote to Reverend Mother Foundress. We quote in part:

“With regard to your good sisters at Towanda, they have no doubt many difficulties to encounter, but they deserve great praise for their perseverance and zeal.—It is not the place for them to make permanent establishment. It may do to keep merely as a parish school, and to teach some of the middling classes but not for the higher classes of society which is especially wanting in Philadelphia. . . . I am sorry the sisters in Towanda have become involved in their building—which at best is unsuitable for their purpose; it being an old frame building. Yet, I have been edified by their exertions, sacrifices and arduous labors and the Christian courage with which they have endured them.”

In this same letter he wrote:

“I feel deeply interested in your most excellent community, especially as it has been established for education, so much desired in this city, particularly among the higher classes of society, many of whom are lost to the Church by mixed marriages, associations and otherwise.”

Reverend Mother Foundress in answer to this letter which also contained a whole page of questions regarding the authority of the Bishop in the Society, etc., wrote on February 22, from which we quote:

“ . . . Thanks for the kind expressions used in regard to our sisters in Towanda, and for the frank way you question me on the subject of our Institute, which I truly appreciate and which will at once put our mutual understanding on a clear footing. . . . These are the clearest answers I can give you, dear Reverend Father, but if you want to know more than I have written or understood, pray write again, and I will gladly answer you more fully if I can. But I think you must not fear that the sisters would fail in entering into the wishes of your generous and zealous Bishop as far as he thinks desirable and consistent with their vocation. Still, if I may presume to say so it would be better that you should not engage the Bishop in any fresh foundations but rather wait for a year or two until he sees for himself how the sisters are likely to work their way in Towanda—whether the good among the poor, and also among the upper classes of children is equal to the expectation of his Lordship, and whether the same work would be likely to effect the desired good in Philadelphia. He would thus be enabled to judge of the probable loss or gain in a future foundation on his own judgment of the probabilities of the one or the other. I hope, dear Reverend Father, that you will agree with me in thinking it will be better to let the sisters work their way out of their difficulties at Towanda. I have requested them to dismiss all workmen, and if future building is to be done, it can only be done by contract made in writing and approved by the Bishop. Unfortunately, they took the kindly expression of the good Bishop in a larger sense than he evidently intended, and have no doubt, wasted their money. Poor children! They must purchase their experience before they can have much of it. They thought they were doing the right thing in making the place suitable for future work as the Bishop advised. . . . ”

This characteristic letter of Reverend Mother Foundress delighted the Bishop and Father Carter who recognized her exceptional acumen, and as the latter was

not one to let the grass grow under his feet, we find an immediate reply, dated March 31, 1863. Father Carter took the precaution of securing the Bishop's approval of this letter and sent the approval to Reverend Mother.

From this letter we quote:

"Your kind letter of the 22 ult has been received and submitted to our good Bishop who has with myself been much pleased with its content and the frank and satisfactory manner in which you replied to my questions. His Lordship gives his entire consent and approbation that a school of your sisters should be opened at an early date in Philadelphia and desires me to write to you to that effect. In your letter of the 8th of January, you remarked that you would be most happy to meet our wishes in making an establishment in Philadelphia and that if I would let M. M. Xavier know the prospects and valuation of the property, furniture, etc., no doubt some tangible arrangement could be made. In the first place, the prospects are most favorable. With respect to the property, it cost \$13,500 some ten years ago; its location is most eligible for an academy, situated near the Church of the Assumption, with a large, convenient house, large yard and grounds attached to it, in every way suitable for an academy and if necessary, for half-boarders. The parish school is attached, separated by a brick wall with a gate passing into it. The property belongs to the Church and only a nominal rent of \$600 a year will be asked. With respect to the furniture, including 3 pianos, school desks, chairs, tables, etc., the rent will range, I presume between \$800 and \$1000. In regard to these expenses, etc., there will be no difficulty as they will be met by the revenue arising from the academy. In order, then, that the foundation should be successful, it is most important that you send accomplished and efficient sisters to teach all the highest branches and accomplishments of feminine education—French, Music, etc., etc., in a word, to compete with the best Catholic and Protestant institutions of the country. There should be at least a superior and four sisters for the academy, including one or two brilliant performers on the piano; besides two sisters for the parish school, for which they will receive each \$200 a year. Two house sisters also, nine in all, will be required. It is important that the sisters should be here by the latter end of July or the first of August to make their arrangements to open their schools the first of September, the regular time for opening schools."

Reverend Mother Foundress must have smiled at Father Carter's demands, but she wrote, promising six sisters in July.

Father Carter lost no time in telling the good news to the Sisters in Towanda, who were delighted at the prospect of having a convent in Philadelphia and of having more of their dear sisters from England—not "speculating anxiously," but wondering who they would be!

In March, there occurred, inadvertently, a misunderstanding with the Bishop which caused Mother Mary Xavier great pain and uneasiness. She had, according to custom, received the two postulants sent by Dr. Brann, without reference to the Bishop. When she wrote requesting him to give them the habit or delegate Father Carter to do so, she received a very severe refusal, telling her that she had no right to receive postulants without consulting the Ordinary, and bidding her in one of his favorite phrases *lente festinandum*. Not having a copy of this letter we can only infer its contents, but we know that Mother Mary Xavier immediately wrote a very humble letter of apology and explained in her usual straightforward way that she had followed our custom, and begged pardon for any seeming want of deference. She added that if she were not allowed to receive postulants, we could not remain in America, for England could not possibly supply all the sisters needed. Father Carter, of course, received a letter by the same post and the Bishop, understanding that the mistake was his, sent Father Carter to Towanda as his delegate. This second clothing in America took place at Towanda on the feast of Saint Joseph, 1863. Neither of the postulants, as said before, persevered in the Society.

In April the sisters read in *The Catholic Herald and Visitor*, the Philadelphia Catholic weekly, the notice of the opening of a parochial school and an academy at St. Malachy's Parish by the Sisters of Mercy, "who have hitherto had charge of the Academy at the Assumption." Father Carter had secured secular teachers for his schools and closed the convent.

This notice is so interesting and informing in many ways that we give it in full:

**NEW SCHOOL**—The Sisters of Mercy, who have heretofore had charge of the Academy of the Assumption, 1135 Spring Garden Street, are about to remove to the school building adjoining Saint Malachy's Church, Eleventh Street above Master, where they intend opening an academy and parochial school on Monday, 20th inst. The house has been becomingly fitted up by the Reverend Pastor of St. Malachy's, Father Kelly.

We bespeak for the Sisters deserved success in their new location. Their academy will be open to all who are anxious to receive a sound moral education and who are willing to obey the wholesome rules by which the Sisters govern their institutions. There can be no better nor more successful teachers than those who religiously devote their time, education and talents to the education of the youthful mind. Then, while we recommend to parents this academy we feel that we are but rendering a merited tribute to the ability of the Sisters who preside over it, and know that we are performing our duty towards the parent who wishes to bring up his child in the way he should go.

We refer the reader to the advertisement in another column.

**ACADEMY OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY FOR YOUNG LADIES**

No. 1419 North Eleventh Street, South side of Saint Malachy's Church, Philadelphia.

THE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION IN THIS INSTITUTE will be THOROUGH and SYSTEMATIC. Every endeavor will be made to render the ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE a PLEASANT as well as a USEFUL EMPLOYMENT. Difference of religion will not be regarded in the admission of pupils who are willing to conform to the general Regulations of the Academy.

The Scholastic Year, commencing on the FIRST MONDAY OF SEPTEMBER, is divided into TWO SESSIONS of FIVE MONTHS EACH or FOUR QUARTERS OF ELEVEN WEEKS and closes on THE LAST WEEK IN JUNE.

**TERMS FOR DAY SCHOLARS PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.**

Tuition per Quarter of eleven weeks—	Beginners.....	\$3.00
" " " " "	—Primary .....	\$4.00
" " " " "	—Elementary .....	\$6.00
" " " " "	—Senior .....	\$10.00

**EXTRA CHARGES**

French .....	\$2.50
Fancy Work .....	2.50
Piano, with use of instrument .....	10.00
Singing (in private) .....	5.00
Singing in classes of six, each .....	2.00

For further information inquire of Mother Superior

In May, at Father Carter's request, M. M. Xavier and M. L. Ignatia went to Philadelphia to look over the ground, so as to form an opinion of everything connected with the convent. They were quite satisfied and returned to continue the important labors of the last six weeks of school. The number in the academy had reached 45, and the children's progress was satisfactory. The sisters had decided to have a sale of fancy work, after the distribution, to obtain funds for current needs, as well as for the journeys, and their new venture in Philadelphia. With

the disappearance of the snow, and the increase in registration, some of the worst drawbacks were removed and the busy days proved not too taxing. It must have been about this time that a letter from Mother Connelly was received containing the excerpt so well known to her children which has always been a guide, especially to those working in Parochial schools:

"Try to keep your children up to all the good priests wish and never forget that if your efforts are crowned with success it is always best and safest to let all the glory go to God and His priests rather than to take any to ourselves, and give way in all things regarding the parish to the priests of the parish. That is the way to do the things of God and labor with true merit. I want to hear that the priests and bishop are pleased with your efforts, and then I shall be at ease and know that you are working in docility and obedience under those whom God has placed over us. There is no virtue so necessary to every true religious as humility—true humility—that claims no reward here but gives God all the glory, looking only to His good pleasure and the salvation of souls."

The parish school had succeeded beyond expectations and everyone was full of plans for the coming year. Two plays were being taught in the academy. *Fabiola* for the older girls, and *Cinderella* for the little ones. When the time arrived—June 21 had been chosen for the distribution—the unplastered school hall was decorated with green boughs which effectually hid all deficiencies, and made the room very attractive. Father Carter was delighted with everything and had rosy dreams about the Assumption next year! The sisters experienced the joy of work well done, and everyone was happy.

The bazaar was a success and the proceeds went to the payment of some of the debts contracted by the building. Unfortunately, the people of Towanda, seeing the handsome embroidery, and other articles for sale, thought that the sisters were very well off, and this prevented them from realizing their very real poverty. Some of the articles, and the materials out of which the others were made, had been brought by the nuns from England, and long hours had been spent in preparing for the sale.

Father Carter had secured for the nuns the director for their annual retreat. It was Father di Maria, of the Society of Jesus, one of the exiled Neapolitan Jesuits who were to prove such good friends to the nuns in Philadelphia. All found great joy in this, their first retreat, under the direction of a priest, since coming from England. It was, however, only of six days' duration as the father was not well, and he said that those who lived in the Alleghenies are in a perpetual retreat, and six days was enough for them.

Immediately after retreat, Mothers Mary Xavier and Lucy Ignatia went to New York to meet the sisters from home. True to his word, Father Carter was at the dock, and relieved them of all anxiety regarding their luggage, and the Customs House delays. The nuns went directly to Towanda, not going to Philadelphia as the first party had done. The sisters composing the second party of nuns were six professed nuns and two postulants. Mother Helen Green was to be superior at Towanda with Mother Mary Walburga White assistant. There were two sisters, Mother Stanislaus and Mother Antonia Gray, Sisters Louise Ruthoen and Sebastian Keating, and the postulants Anne Taylor and Margaret Christian, both of whom decided before many months not to enter the novitiate.

Most of the newcomers were to remain at Towanda. Father Carter's request to have the three teaching sisters from Towanda to go to the Assumption had been granted by Mother Connelly, and with two postulants, Sister Josephine, and one of the late arrivals, Mother Antonia, they set out a few days after the coming of the second band of pioneers. The people of Towanda had become attached to the nuns and were grieved at losing so many they knew. The nuns themselves left with mingled feelings, but full of confidence in the Providence of God and with

high hopes for the future. The 25th of July had been set for the departure of the sisters for Philadelphia. Little had they thought the year before when they prayed in the Assumption Church for a convent in Philadelphia that the answer would come so soon and in the very place the prayer was said.

Of the departure of the nuns who were to take up the work of the Assumption schools, we have no record, but we are fortunate in having the description of the feelings of the children, written by Mary Ann Egan, who was one of them, and who years later in an account of Mother Agatha wrote:

"My first impression of dear Mother Agatha was before the school opened in Towanda. I went with a friend to the convent to call upon the nuns. (Two poor, green girls, what must Mother Agatha have thought). We were made very comfortable and went away happy and quite pleased with ourselves!

"All so new to us! We had never heard of the Holy Child in a manger!

"The school building was about ten minutes away from the convent. School opened on the first week in September—full—one large room. The building is standing in its place today, and very good looking, still. Many children came from the near farms, for Towanda is a hill town and nearly all live on farms around the town. About the same time the nuns opened a night school very well patronized.

"Most of the students were splendid girls living in Towanda, employed as domestics. No other employment in sight. This was before the days of the typewriter! One of the employed became the first postulant in America, Caroline Thall (and we heard she was very saintly—Sister Joseph).

"Mother Agatha prepared us for Confirmation, and we were confirmed by the Bishop of Philadelphia. Her instructions were beautiful; she helped us to love God. By that time we were the happiest children in the world and loved Mother Agatha, went home with her, went to meet her, we even went without dinner to be with her. We were faithful lovers!

"At Christmas Eve, we, as we thought, knew so much about the Holy Child. Hymns sung by us were "Heart of the Holy Child, hide me in Thee!" etc., etc. "Our Lady"—I thought when I heard it first that a great lady was coming to see us! We knew only the Mother of God! Soon we found out that it was a new title for the Mother of God! When Christmas came a great treat was in store for us—a Crib at the convent! We were led by Mother Agatha and Sister Cornelia to the Chapel to visit the Crib. What joy for us! We kept the procession up and at last the people of the town began to visit the Crib.

"Mother Agatha loved and enjoyed the children—so innocent we were! One little chap about five years old from a farm would walk with his brother across the fields and spell words his way. She would laugh for ten minutes. He was so tiny and dear. One day Owen and this snappy young brother of his were in class, learning their letters. Owen was somewhat dull, and could not think what to call the letter 'g.' Peter, the younger, spoke out loud, 'Owen, what do you say to the oxen?' Immediately Owen answered, 'Gee! Gee!'

"Our school days were so happy and all through Mother Agatha. She was so pleased to help us, taught us so well, and we were not awfully stupid. Girls, boys, babies, all had a place in her heart. We had a gallery. 'Babies on the gallery were naughty,' she would say smiling.

"Mother's great pleasure was the treat. Three times each week, not the whole year through, but it went on for a long time, Mother Agatha told us a story before the afternoon class. Some of us kept a fast!—no dinner, in order to get a good place on the floor! No chairs—and the story-teller was fascinating. We were like mice. I've forgotten all, nearly all, but our love for her. We believed every word of her tales, which I cannot now remember even by name, except one—'Pork pies and Sausages.' But our love for her I recall after all these years, now in 1931,

and it was then 1862!

"During the summer months, often Mother Agatha would take us to the woods, climbing delightful woods back of the convent. When very tired we sat on the grass for a story . . .

"The boys of the school were devoted to her . . . To prove this devotion several of the boys carried stones, good sized, and placed them near each other—carried them a good quarter of a mile—so muddy, so dirty and so wet the road!—stepping stones for the sisters when they walked to Mass! . . . Only one year and we were deprived of dear Mother Agatha who went to Philadelphia—Father Carter and the Bishop—they were the grabbers! Two of the nuns, Mother Agatha and another, went by stage twenty miles to meet the train for Philadelphia. One boy stole away from home, managed to get a seat in the stage and rode all the way! I don't believe Mother Agatha knew he was playing truant. She gave him his dinner and offered him money to stay all night in the poor inn and also paid for his supper. The boy was Mother St. Michael's brother, John Dunn. The next day he rode to Towanda on the same stage. The family was in an uproar; the river had been dragged! No boy! Such devotion! The boy dared to go all the way to Canton, the name of the town where the train took on passengers for Philadelphia. This, today, would mean nothing, but in the 60's it meant love!"

To Mary Ann Egan the departure of Mother Agatha meant the end of good times. All through life, she kept up intimate relations with the nuns, but Mother Agatha was always her good angel, as it were, and she seemed to have forgotten the second year of the nuns' stay in her native town. Mother Agatha was instrumental in starting Mary Ann Egan on her successful business venture of a fashionable dress-making establishment in Washington, where she amassed a comfortable fortune, enabling her to spend her declining years in doing good by constant charity towards missions and other laudable undertakings. She spent her last years at St. Walburga's, and spared no pains to aid the convent in many ways. She was buried in her beloved Towanda, and the Superior of the convent accompanied by another nun, were there for the Requiem Mass and funeral.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR CHAPTER II

ANNALS by Mother Agatha .  
Notes by Mother Agatha  
Notes by Mother Ignatius Chadaway

#### LETTERS:

from Rev. Mother Foundress to: Father Carter (copies), M. M. Xavier (copies)  
to Rev. Mother Foundress from: Father Carter, M. M. Xavier  
To M. M. Xavier from: Father Carter, Bishop Wood, Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati,  
Father Toner of Towanda  
from M. M. Xavier to: Bishop Wood, Rev. Mother Foundress  
from Maria Decker, nee Parsons of Towanda  
from Mary Ann Egan of Towanda  
Maps, drawings, etc. by M. Lucy Ignatia  
Catholic Herald and Visitor, Summer of 1863

### CHAPTER III

#### SPRING GARDEN STREET, TOWANDA, AND THE FOUNDATION OF SHARON 1863 - 1864

When the Society of the Holy Child Jesus took possession of its first convent in Philadelphia, at Spring Garden Street, in July 1863, the Catholic population of the Diocese was 225,000. The Assumption Church which Father Carter had built and of which he was pastor until his death, was a beautiful stone structure Gothic in architecture with twin towers dominating the neighborhood of Twelfth and Spring Garden Streets. Father Carter was a Kentuckian, a convert, well educated and by habit, courteous, but dominant. Friends and enemies alike respected his sterling, even though sometimes overbearing, character. It was generally believed that when in serious danger on the stormy Atlantic, he had vowed, if he were saved, to build a church in honor of the Mother of God. (1)

Bishop Kendrick, who had ordained him, after a few years, made him pastor of St. Mary's, where he proved fearless of insubordinate trustees and know-nothing rioters, appearing on the streets of Philadelphia wearing the Roman collar and defying the mob to enter his church over his dead body. Bishop Kendrick in 1847 appointed Father Carter to found the Parish of the Assumption. Partly by his own means, and partly by subscription, he built the Church of the Assumption which he had wished to call the Immaculate Conception. The Bishop however, preferred the title of the Assumption. Many wealthy and influential Catholics lived in the vicinity at the time, and they ably seconded Father Carter's desire to have a church worthy of its Patroness.

The story of the twin towers is an interesting one, and gives a side light, as it were, on Father Carter's character. On the occasion of a bazaar given to raise money for the building, a lithograph of the proposed edifice was displayed. Andrew Jackson Reilly, a boy at the time, often repeated the story. Ella Flick, in her article on Father Carter in the *American Catholic Historical Society Records*, thus relates the incident:

"Its beautiful Gothic architecture held his eye. Spellbound, he stood before it thinking many curious thoughts. Father Carter, spying him there, came over, and placing his hand on his shoulder said very kindly: 'Well, my boy, what do you think of that?' 'I think it is very handsome', replied the boy, 'much superior to anything ever attempted on a Catholic Church in Philadelphia.' Then, pausing a moment he went on: 'But are you not very extravagant, Father? Some would be content with one steeple, but you are to have two.' Father Carter's reply is best taken word for word, as Mr. Reilly gives it to us. 'Now, my boy, I will give you a reason, though 'tis not my rule. When Benjamin Franklin went to fly his kite, he living near Second and Race Streets, directed the boy to carry it out the Ridge Road to Pegg's Run, where there was a blacksmith's shop, which still remains. The Great American Philosopher had a workman affix an iron point on the kite, and with the assistance of the boy, he raised it in the air. Having it well steadied, he tied the string to a post under a shed used to tie horses while being shod, operating with the silk cord and key to convey the electric fluid to the Leyden jar, and thus bottled the lightning. The kite hovered immediately over the spot where the church is to be erected, but as no man can say positively the actual spot, I suppose to put up two spires so that we may say somewhere between these two points happened the most heroic act ever performed in the interest of science'."

The Assumption church was dedicated in 1859, and the entire debt liquidated in ten years when it was consecrated, being the third church in the Diocese to have this privilege. So it was comparatively new when our sisters came to the parish. The school was one of the first parochial schools in Philadelphia, for many of the schools attached to the church were still held in church basements or in rented

(1) Interesting life of Fr. Carter by Reuss, in *Cath. Hist. Society*.

houses.

The convent, like hundreds of other buildings in the Quaker City, was of red brick with white stone trimmings, three stories high with an attic. Between the convent and the church was a small garden which the sisters soon made beautiful with flower beds and where for years their recreations were spent. A high wall on Spring Garden Street made it perfectly private.

The school was at the rear of the convent with its front door on Twelfth Street. A large space for the children was divided into what in those days were called the boys' and girls' recreation yards. When the latter school was built, after Father Carter's death, the yards and the garden were smaller.

When our sisters came to the Assumption, the Brothers of the Holy Cross were teaching the boys, but previous to 1863 and after 1864, for some years lay women taught them. The history of the first days of the Assumption school may be found in notices in the *Catholic Herald and Visitor*, the diocesan weekly, and in the *Directories*, published yearly. The Sisters of Notre Dame, whom Father Carter had brought to the diocese in 1857, taught there until 1860, when they opened their Academy in Rittenhouse Square, so well known in the city. The Misses Merino took charge until 1861, when Father Carter introduced the Sisters of Mercy from Manchester, New Hampshire. These sisters, as we have seen, left the Assumption in 1863, and opened an academy where they also taught the parochial school of St. Malachy's. The Sisters of the Holy Child came in July, 1863, and have remained ever since.

At this time, a large public market occupied the middle of Spring Garden, beginning at the square where the church is built and extending for some blocks. This was a source of annoyance in many ways. Noise of trays, milk wagons, etc., woke everyone about three in the morning. At about five, an organ grinder took his stand opposite the convent. The sisters said they were glad when he played lively tunes, as it helped them to dress quickly in time for the six o'clock Mass. They, of course, had to go to Church for Mass, and no one could go in late.

The change from the high altitude and clear air of Towanda to the humidity of Philadelphia was a trial at first, and the heat of that summer was excessive. Their work was of the most fatiguing kind. The convent had been unoccupied for six months and every part of it needed the scrubbing brush. In a way it was worse than Towanda, for the city smoke and dust were harder to remove than the dust of a country lane. All the windows and outside shutters having been closed, bats had made nests therein, and dead or alive as the case might be, had to be removed. At first, some of the sisters went shopping in the middle of the day, until Father Carter warned them of the danger of sunstroke, and taught them to avoid too great heat. Ice was a luxury not to be thought of. Mother Mary Xavier, insisting as usual on doing her share of the hard work, became so weak that they grew alarmed and wrote to Mother Foundress, who advised ice cream and cool drinks! The sisters had never told her of the extent of their poverty, and she only learned later that ice cream was never seen and iced drinks, even in the warmest weather, were unavailable. Sister Agatha told of M. M. Xavier's buying a watermelon because it looked so cool! No one could eat much of it and it was declared to be "a delusion and a snare." One said it tasted like fish. Could it have been so long in the market that it had picked up the taste of fish? Of course they had no way of knowing that a watermelon should be on the ice twenty-four hours before eating.

A room on the second floor was prepared for a chapel. Father Carter said the first Mass for them on the feast of St. Ignatius, and thereafter, adoration in their own chapel and all other privileges were theirs.

The whole of August was taken up with preparing the convent and school for the coming year. Father Carter secured many pupils for the academy. On the 19th, an announcement appeared in the *Catholic Herald and Visitor*. Interesting at

all times as an example of advertisement in the 1860's, we give it in full.  
 CONVENT OF THE HOLY CHILD. The "Sisters of the Holy Child" have opened a school for young ladies at 1135 Spring Garden Street, near the Church of the Assumption. As will be seen in an advertisement in another column, their course of instruction embraces all branches of a sound moral education. The Sisters are ladies of the highest culture, and with the devotional zeal they bring to their important calling they cannot fail to give entire satisfaction to all parents who may care to entrust their daughters to their care. In this connection it is pertinent to say that we are proud to see the rapid increase of institutions for Catholic education in this city. It shows a healthy state of feeling, the effects of which in the next generation will give a practical quietus to the repeated assertion that the masses of Catholics are ignorant.

Among the advertisements beginning in this issue and continuing until the end of the year 1863 appears the following:

CONVENT OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS  
 1135 Spring Garden Street, Philada.

Under the patronage of the Right Reverend Dr. Wood, Bishop of Philadelphia and the Rev. C. I. H. Carter, Pastor of the Church of the Assumption.

The Religious of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus from St. Leonard's on Sea, England, whose institute is devoted to the education of youth have opened a School for Young Ladies at 1135 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia.

The course of education given in the highest schools of the Holy Child Jesus comprises all the usual advantages of a sound English education, in which French, Needlework and the elementary branches of Drawing are included. The whole course of Drawing comprises Flat Model, Geometric, Freehand, Perspective, Model, Landscapes, Heads, Water coloring the Art of Illumination and Oil Painting.

TERMS FOR DAY SCHOLARS PER QUARTER PAYABLE IN ADVANCE

1st and 2nd Classes.....	\$15.00
3rd and 4th Classes.....	12.00
5th and 6th Classes.....	10.00
Children under 7 years of age.....	7.00
Piano with use of instrument.....	12.00
With Vocal Music.....	10.00
Drawing and Water coloring.....	10.00
The Art of Illumination and Oil Painting each.....	10.00
Gold Embroidery .....	10.00
Latin, Italian, Spanish, German, each.....	10.00
Half boarders will be received at \$60 per annum.	

Instruction will be given in any of the above named branches to those who do not wish to attend the school for general education.

The annual vacation commences the last week of June and continues until the first Monday of September.

Any minor details or further particulars that may be required will be supplied by application to the Superioress of the convent or the Very Reverend C. I. H. Carter, Chaplain.

REFERENCES

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Wood, Bishop of Philadelphia, The very Rev. Dr. O'Hara, Pastor of St. Patrick's, the Rev. T. Di Maria, S.J., St. Joseph's, The Rev. A. J. McConomy, Chancellor of the Cathedral, The Rev. G. Strobel, Pastor of St. Mary's.

A few days after this advertisement had appeared, Mother Lucy Ignatia met Father Carter in the garden. He looked troubled and after a few minutes said, "Precisely, child, what can you teach?" She laughed mischievously and said, "Well,

Father, I can teach Reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic." "Yes, yes, child, but people who send their children to the academy will want something more—they will want accomplishments!" Just then they heard strains of piano music. M. M. Xavier was an accomplished musician and she was playing the accompaniment to a hymn and the novice who had a beautiful, well trained voice was singing. Father Carter listened for a few moments and said, apparently much relieved, "You'll do!", and went into the Church.

The schools opened on the first Monday of September. The Girls' Parish School numbered 26, and the Academy, 18, on the first day. A few nights later, the sisters opened the night school which proved successful.

Sister Antonia taught the parish school with the help of a secular teacher until more sisters should come.

The Bishop called after a few days, and expressed himself well pleased with the work and said (for the first time) that he hoped we would increase in his Diocese.

Correspondence between Reverend Mother Foundress and Father Carter at this time is interesting in the extreme. In August we find in one of the Reverend Mother's letters:

"It is a great pleasure to know that you are pleased to have our sisters so soon at work in your schools, and I thank God with all my heart that we have been able to meet your views in sending them . . .

"It may be better to exchange Towanda convent for another more desirable position, but the Duchess would not listen to such a change—and for the perseverance of carrying out what has once been begun, I would rather keep it up with the hope of one conversion during the year among the Protestant children, than to exchange it or give up what was begun with the full approbation and consent of Dr. Wood. I have great faith in this, and when a work is afloat on lawful authority we can go on with spirit and untiring determination . . . We shall pray very much for the prosperity of the first foundation in America and hope never to part with it. Your first sisters are now with you in Philadelphia where you will always have a right to the best and most zealous to train others to the same devotion to labor and hard work. How much we all thank you for giving us the chance of working for our dear Lord and for you in your schools! and we pray daily for you and for Dr. Wood, our first American Bishop, God bless him! . . ."

In the meantime, the schools at the Assumption were steadily growing in numbers. Mother Mary Xavier made every effort to carry on the schools as our sisters did in England. At Christmas, the children produced *Fabiola*, and the Bishop and many priests who were present at the performance considered it very creditable. We notice that this was a favorite play with the S.H.C.J. at this time, no doubt on account of Cardinal Wiseman's long association with the Society and their appreciation of his kindness.

Bishop Wood had by this time made up his mind about the nuns and their work. At Reverend Mother Foundress' request, he sent her a letter to be presented at Rome, and it was a great consolation to her to know that after little more than a year's acquaintance, he could speak so favorably of her daughters. We are fortunate in possessing a copy of this letter which we now give:

Cathedral, Philadelphia.

Dec. 14th, 1863.

"The Bishop of Philadelphia having understood that the religious ladies of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus intend to apply to Rome for the approbation of their Institute, desires to give his earnest and cordial suffrage in favor of such approbation. He has two communities now in his diocese, and from his own personal observation and most reliable information from others, he feels convinced that their services will largely advance the interests of our Holy Religion, especially in the

thoroughly Catholic education of youth, both in the humble and the most elevated classes of society. He, therefore, hopes that this memorial will meet with a most favorable reception from the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, and that His Holiness will, in his unbounded and paternal affection, give his apostolic approbation to their Constitutions and Rules.

Given at Philadelphia this 14th day of December, 1863.

—|— James Wood,  
Bishop of Philadelphia.”

At Towanda, at this time, things were not so happy. The numbers were good, and Father Patrick Toner who was sent there in November when the Diocese had taken over the parish from the Franciscans, was a friend in every sense of the word as we shall see later. To offset these gains, however, the financial condition became critical. If the people of Towanda had had an inkling of the privations the sisters suffered, they would have come to their aid. They thought, seeing the new building, seeing the exquisite embroidery sold at the bazaar in June, etc., that the nuns were well off. Father Toner, himself, did not suspect the extent of their poverty or the struggles they had to make to provide the necessities of life. We wonder how they managed to live through the winter.

To add to the trials at Towanda, one of the newcomers, Mother Mary Stanislaus Gray, always delicate, and whose petition to go to the American Mission Mother Connelly had accepted in the hope that the change of climate might benefit her, succumbed to the rigors of the Towanda winter. She was declared to be in the last stages of consumption, and no hope was given by the doctor. Mother Mary Xavier wrote for her to come immediately with Mother Mary Walburga to Philadelphia. Her sister, Mother Antonia, was sent to take her place in the classroom. Father Carter placed an advertisement in the *Catholic Herald and Visitor* for the issue of December 8, 1863, for “two competent teachers for the Assumption School.”

After a month of heroic suffering, Mother Mary Stanislaus died on January First, 1864. The Bishop had visited her almost every day, giving her his blessing. Father Carter was kindness itself.

Thus was the year 1864 marked at its opening with the Cross. This first death was a sad one for all but the sufferer. We had no cemetery, and the Bishop kindly gave a grave where, later, Sister's body was interred in the Cathedral Cemetery. At the time, however, the ground was so frozen that it was impossible to dig a grave and the precious remains were placed in a vault. The nuns lamented the fact that their dear one had to be consigned “to a borrowed grave.”

Mary and Margaret Gray had been educated by the Bar Convent Nuns, founded by Mary Ward. They were also called “Ladies of the Institute of Mary” and in Ireland, “Loretto Nuns.” When Margaret was a student in the Holy Child Training College at St. Leonard's, Mother Mary Stanislaus was already professed and teaching at the college. Margaret became Sister Antonia and the sisters came to America with the second set of nuns, leaving the very day after profession. Even as a student, Mary Gray had been admired by her companions for the thoughtful responsibility of her character, the steadiness of her principles and her spirit of self-sacrifice. She entered the Society in 1856. Her profession was delayed on account of illness, and she was, naturally, anxious. One night, in a vivid dream, the Holy Child appeared to her and placed a ring on her finger, after which she felt no undue worry. It is not too much to say that for her whole religious life of eight years she had to carry the cross of ill health, but so cheerfully that everyone was convinced that she had the grace to value this trial as a means of sanctification. She seemed to realize that work done under the shadow of the cross is doubly dear to God, and it was hard to get her to spare herself either in teaching or in manual work. While she was teaching at St. Leonard's, she was loved and respected by the children, and as econome, she edified by her courage the novices who were sent

to help her, for she would continue to work until so exhausted that she had to lean against the wall for support. After a brief rest, she would resume the work with a bright smile. Her generous spirit of self-sacrifice led her to desire to labor for the Holy Child in the American Mission. God, however, was ready to take her to Himself. She had run a long course in a short time and was found ready when He came.

In the meantime, the school's work went on, as usual. The Term Examinations at the end of January were satisfactory. All three schools continued to grow in numbers. By Easter, Father Carter boasted that the Academy numbered 40, which he considered remarkable under the circumstances.

It had been arranged in September that the nuns should pay Father Carter \$600 per annum for the rooms used for the Academy. At each quarter, Mother Mary Xavier gave the rent to him, and he returned it saying, "Wait, child, until you get on your feet." He almost always returned the entire amount; sometimes he would keep part of it. This was his constant practice. He was always fatherly and kind and generous to a fault, although he had a brusque way, at times, when things did not go the way he preferred. Our nuns appreciated his good qualities and made allowance in a remarkable way for the less attractive ones, as is shown by the fact that their mutual regard was lifelong.

The nuns needed every cent they could get, for what were necessities to many, were luxuries to them. One remarked that their habits looked like Joseph's coat, and all ingenuity possible was used to hide the worst patches.

Meanwhile, three postulants were clothed in March, on the feast of St. Joseph. This was the first clothing in Philadelphia, and the first American postulants who persevered. They were Sister Joseph (Caroline Thall from Towanda), Mary Bracken, Sister Berchmans, and Sister Teresa Kelly, from Philadelphia. The two choir postulants who had come with Mother Mary Walburga's party in 1863, never received the habit. Anne Taylor went to relatives in the States, and Margaret Christian married Dr. Harry Weston, a dentist. They were married in the sacristy of the Assumption Church, in the spring of 1864, and Mother Mary Xavier gave them a wedding breakfast in the convent parlor, for Margaret had no friends in Philadelphia. Close friendship between Mrs. Weston and the nuns continued all during her life. Her three daughters were educated at Sharon, and one of them, Lucy Ignatia, became a Sister of the Holy Child Jesus in 1892.

The first Children of Mary were received into the Sodality by Father Carter in March. They were Lily Hollahan, Mary Hughes, Mary Stuart and Annie Waters. The first two became Holy Child nuns, and Annie Waters was a postulant for a while, but did not receive the veil.

The convent was considered too small, and in April 1864, Father Carter began extensive additions which he described in a letter to Mother Foundress to be given later. At this time, too, on Good Friday, Mothers Mary Xavier and Lucy Ignatia went to Towanda to announce to the community that Mother Connelly had relieved Mother Helen of the superiorship there and had appointed Mother Mary Walburga in her place. Mother Helen went to Spring Garden Street, where she taught music, and with her went Mother Sebastian to take Mother Mary Walburga's place in the school there.

It will be remembered that as far back as December, 1862, Father Carter had suggested in a letter to Mother Mary Xavier the desirability of a place in the suburbs of Philadelphia for a novitiate and boarding school. Mother Mary Stanislaus' death had made him insistent on this as a necessary thing for ill nuns. He left no stone unturned until he achieved his purpose.

Excerpts from the correspondence that took place between him and Reverend Mother Foundress during these months will show better than any comments just

what happened in regard to closing Towanda, never the wish of Reverend Mother Foundress. Father Carter's letter, dated January 31, 1864, is worthy of being quoted in full:

"After wishing you and all the good Sisters at St. Leonard's a very happy New Year and many happy returns, I must in a very special manner wish **you all**, all the happiness of enjoying the blessings bestowed by our Divine Lord when He said, 'Blessed are they who have not seen and have believed.' People residing in England all their lives, or for the most part, are sometimes in the habit of looking at and considering persons and things in other countries as they regard them in their own, thereby coming to false conclusions. Such I am rather disposed to think is the case at St. Leonard's with regard to the Duchess of Leeds' donation of some lands in Lycoming and Bradford Counties and a lot in Towanda. In my last letter, I delicately alluded to those lands and the little benefit they had been to the Sisters there. You have been in Italy and have probably travelled over the mountains of Switzerland, and if not, in your younger days in this country you went West and again East over the Allegheny Mountains, which will give you some idea of the lands in Lycoming and Bradford Counties. It is true Mr. Ward sold the timber on some of these lands, but not to my knowledge have the Sisters received one dollar, but only the rickety shanty in Towanda. Nor is there any probability at present of anything being realized from those lands. The Bishop will sell his at the first opportunity, and Mr. Brady advises that by all means you do the same. There are continual expenses for taxes and agencies, and no revenue coming in from them or likely to come in for years. With respect to the 'mansion and lot' which Mr. Ward was pleased to call it, it is nothing more than a miserable shanty, far inferior to your stables and cow-houses in England. And even now, after the sufferings and deprivations and the expenditure of more than \$3000, it is still a miserable shanty which with the lot could not be sold for the amount expended by the sisters. The donation of her Grace, the Duchess of Leeds, to the Sisters of the H.C.J. no doubt was made with the best intentions, and for the benefit of our holy Religion in this country, but to render that donation timely, and meritoriously acceptable to God and to enable the sisters to carry out her laudable intentions, **her Grace should send them a draft of at least 2000 Pounds**, and this act of hers may be the brightest jewel in the crown of glory that God may bestow upon her in reward of her many charities.

"I am clearly of the opinion that had the sisters come to this country with a few months notice, unhampered by her Grace's donation of land, etc., they would at this day be more flourishing in their schools and more comfortable in a pecuniary point of view, so that the only thing for the Duchess to do to render her charity available is to comply with my suggestion. This will reimburse the sisters for the expense incurred and enable them to furnish the contemplated novitiate and boarding school, and you to send at least eight efficient sisters for the purpose of carrying on the good work. This you will please communicate to her Grace, the Duchess of Leeds, with my very respectful compliments (with whom I have not the pleasure of being acquainted.) Yet, I knew well her good sister, Lady Stafford, and still know many of her kind and charitable friends in Baltimore. Otherwise, I see not the least prospect of carrying on the good work for years and years to come.

"With regard to Towanda, during last winter and a part of this, **God alone knows** the suffering and deprivations of your good sisters, well worthy of the Christians in the early ages of the Church, which they have borne with patience and resignation. And tho' I know them as well or better than any other clergyman, never did I hear the least complaint, but they always carried a cheerful and smiling countenance when I saw them on my four or five visits to that place. I knew they could not be very flush with means, and for that reason I gave or sent to them occasionally some little assistance, but it has been only within some few weeks

that I began to suspect that they were deficient in some necessary matters. When I inquired and ascertained (not from the sisters) that at Towanda some mornings they did not know when they got up where their breakfast would come from, and with regard to their bedding, they had to use their habits, cloaks, old pieces of carpet, etc. It is a wonder they did not catch their death from cold and exposure! And even since, when I put the plain question to the sisters upon the subject, I got smiling, evasive answers, but I got sufficient, which determined me what course to pursue, and acted accordingly.

“So much for the past. Now, for the present, which I deem it my duty before God—a duty I owe to you, to the sisters here and to myself—to inform you that the number of sisters here is by no means adequate to the duties and labors they have to perform. It may be the same in Towanda. The health of the sisters is failing, and when they are sick, which is not infrequent, then double duty is to be done, or classes be neglected. Two more sisters at least are needed here, and I should think at Towanda. When I speak of sisters, I mean choir sisters or teachers. As to the probability of novices in this country, I laid clearly before you in my last letter to which I refer you and you will find from experience the truth of my opinion, there fully expressed. There is, I fear, a great deal of incredulity at St. Leonard’s as to matters, etc., in this country, which I could hope you had not imbibed, though you made your religious vows on the feast of St. Thomas, to whom Our Divine Lord said: “Blessed are they who have not seen, and have believed.” If so, come and see, then, instead of your visit being a disadvantage to your soul, you may have reason to rejoice and thank God when He will take you to Himself and say: ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many. Enter into the joy of the Lord.’ If, after all this you still decline, send one of your assistants invested with power and authority to act on the premises, and I have no doubt that if you lay the matter before your pious Bishop, his Lordship will agree with me in the matter in question, especially as you can make your visit and return if necessary in six or eight weeks. We are all surrounded on all sides with difficulties, trials and temptations, and especially one in your responsible situation. Then you should not permit any influence to be brought either inside or without, that might deter you from the early fulfillment of a duty you owe to God, to yourself, and to your community.

“What I have said, you will, dear Reverend Mother, consider seriously and dispassionately before God, since it comes from a candid and impartial friend, one who feels a deep and lively interest in the success and welfare of your good and edifying community in this country. I trust that you will take such a favorable and speedy action as to determine your early visit and send two or three sisters to save the health of your good children here and enable them to carry on successfully the laudable work in which they are engaged for the salvation of souls. You will please also, as I have said before, lay the matter clearly and forcibly before the Duchess (that which relates to her) and tell her Grace that I am not personally interested in the matter in question, except in so far as to do justice to your good sisters and for the good of our holy Religion in this country—which of course her Grace must have greatly at heart, it being that of her nativity . . .”

We have no copy of Reverend Mother Foundress’ reply to this lengthy and extraordinary letter which must have cheered and amused her. Much, however, may be assumed by reading Father Carter’s letter of April 8, 1864:

“Your kind letter received and I have delayed answering until I should go and return from Towanda, as it might be necessary to write you relative to matters at that place. Mother Mary Xavier has been quite indisposed since her return, with a very severe cold, rheumatism, etc., tho’ I hope it will pass away in a few days . . . The sisters in that place seem to be in good health, tho’ the school is small, about twenty, including day scholars and boarders. This arises in some measure from

the inclement season and the bad roads in winter, as the convent is a considerable distance from the town.

"I consider that the greatest difficulties have been overcome, still the work is by no means accomplished. The carpenter work and painting of the school hall are finished or nearly so, and upon consultation with Mother Mary Xavier, we made a contract for the plastering. Otherwise, the building would be of little or no use for school purposes. So we expect to have it all finished by the first of June. It would not be advisable as you suggested to close the Young Ladies' School, so long as the sisters can receive a support, as only \$200 per annum is received from the Parish School, which would not support the sisters. They will be more comfortable in both spiritual and temporal point of view, as the sisters are now attended by a good and zealous priest who will do all in his power to co-operate with them in their meritorious work."

"Still, after all, I do not consider the residence of the Sisters at Towanda by any means permanent, since it depends on the circumstances and fluctuations of a Protestant community which is a very poor consolation for either you or your sisters. The Catholic population there is too small and too poor to support even a small community—even three sisters.

"I cannot, dear Mother General, refrain from saying that you were most fortunate in your first selection of sisters which you sent out. Mother Xavier, Sister Ignatia and Sister Agatha are real missionaries. They have laboured zealously, courageously and successfully, without any or but little worldly means—they have never been discouraged, they have always put their hands to the plough and never looked back. In a word, they are the right sisters in the right place. God has blessed their labours and undoubtedly they will ultimately be crowned with success. The other sisters may be equally good, zealous, etc., but the first band I have known since their arrival in the country, and still better since their residence in Philadelphia, and it is such sisters as these we hope and expect you to send in the month of May so as to be climated and see how things are in this country, to commence their labours at the commencement of the scholastic year. Three at least you should send, and perhaps you will bring them and I will meet you with great pleasure in New York. That number is necessary unless you wish to see this mission fail and the sisters all go to Heaven. But let those who come not be discouraged, but look forward and be disposed with the Grace of God to surmount every difficulty—the road to Heaven from here is as short as it is from England.

"The schools in Philadelphia are succeeding better than I anticipated for the first year. The Sisters came here strangers—had to become known—to make friends and contend with religious institutions already established; viz., the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of St. Joseph—all of whom have their warm friends and patrons, and still there is no doubt of the success of the S.H.C.J.; but it will take time and much skill. There must be between forty and fifty in the Young Ladies' School; four new scholars have been received this week. As I have become an honorary member of this Society, and have taken the Sisters under my very special care, we must go ahead, and no doubt success shall crown our exertions. We are now digging the foundations for an additional building to the convent and the school, to serve as refectory, kitchen and laundry on the first floor, as school room in the second, and chapel in the third—which we expect to have finished by the first of August, and the Sisters will not only have more room, but be more comfortable. As to the War, we are affected by high prices of everything and sincerely wish it were ended . . ."

About this time Father Carter's desire to have a place for the Society in the country near Philadelphia began to become almost an obsession. Bringing a buggy, he would carry off M. M. Xavier and Sister Lucy Ignatia to see a new place he had found for sale. These excursions were the source of merriment in the recrea-

tions, for Father Carter was so original that a few hours in his company furnished amusement not only for the time, but even more in retrospect.. A country school and a novitiate—this was the unending theme—and of course, the Sisters were as eager as he, only they could not visualize the end without the means to secure it. They also knew that one reason for these jaunts was to give Mother Mary Xavier some fresh air, which she sorely needed.

Hearing of Father Carter's interest, Reverend Mother Foundress wrote:

"Would not Germantown or Manyunk be a beautiful locality for a boarding school and novitiate? It would have been in my young days, and when I last visited Philadelphia. There was an excellent country house that belonged to my brother just at the back of Manayunk and about a mile from Germantown, with fifty acres of land running down to Wissahickon Creek, which he sold for about \$12,000 or \$15,000, if my memory serves me right. It would do beautifully, if it could be purchased now. The place was called 'Shumack Park.' I must add that I feel sure that all will be right that you advise with Mother Xavier to do . . ."

This property was at once visited, but was found not to be for sale, nor likely to be. At the end of May, another lengthy epistle was dispatched to Reverend Mother Foundress by Father Carter:

" . . . Mother Mary Xavier wrote you two or three weeks since to inform you that I am negotiating for a country place suitable for a novitiate, school, etc. To-day I have consummated the matter for which I am to pay \$18,000. The possession I am to get about the 10th or 15th of July, the time the deeds, etc., will be executed and the money paid. Of course the sisters at Towanda will give up that place, as they were only located there till a suitable place could be obtained. In fact, the Bishop has always been opposed to their being there, and only consented that they should remain there until a more suitable place could be obtained. They have done little or no good from a religious point of view, and have no consolations. As regards myself, I saw no other place when they first came, and expected them to remain only temporarily. Consequently, you should not hesitate a moment in giving your **unqualified approbation** to abandon Towanda and take possession of Sharon (the new place) about 6 or 7 miles from Philadelphia. It is both the wish and desire of the Bishop and of myself. It is no doubt the most beautiful and desirable place about Philadelphia, and the most eligible of any Catholic institution in the Diocese of Philadelphia. It will take a considerable amount of money to furnish it, etc., etc., which I will borrow besides giving them my assistance, etc. The Bishop and myself advise you by all means to sell the place at Towanda if a purchaser can be obtained for anything like the amount paid for it. It is not necessary to say anything to the Duchess on the subject. Besides another very important matter, with regard to temporal affairs in this country, you should give full authority to M. M. Xavier to act and make such arrangements and changes, etc., as she and myself may deem necessary for the good of the Society with approbation of the Bishop. This is most important, viz., as in the case of the purchase I have just made, and had I not availed myself of it, I might not in 20 years have found so suitable a place . . . It is difficult for you in England to know all the circumstances pro and con in business matters . . . I do not renew my invitation to you to visit this country, as I have pressed you so often, but at least, once for all, you will send out three efficient Sisters in July or the 1st of August to work in the house in Philadelphia, as may be required, and all will go well . . ."

On June 22nd, immediately on receipt of this letter, Reverend Mother Foundress wrote from Blackpool:

"Very dear and Reverend Father in Christ:

"Your most kind letter bearing the news of your magnificent purchase of Sharon House reached me on my journey to the convents in the North of England, and I am almost afraid this will be too late for tomorrow's mail, which must, if possible, take our best and most grateful acknowledgments to you. I need not say that no

effort on my part shall fail in sending you three or four sisters to assist in carrying on the work in the most efficient way. I have already told Mother Mary Xavier that she should close the house at Towanda to meet your views if Sharon House should be purchased, so that I hope she shall be in no doubt herself and that you will be immediately released from any anxiety on that point. The Bishop's wish would have been enough even if you had not purchased Sharon House.

I have only again to thank you and to wish every return of blessings and gratitude for your most generous efforts for our dear sisters in all you are doing for the Holy Child through them. But this conveys nothing of what we feel for you and the good Bishop. God will reward you in the only way you want, and you will have the prayers of the innocent and the humble.

"Begging your blessing and prayers,

"I am yours faithfully in Christ,

Cornelia Connelly."

Mother Mary Xavier's letter telling the nuns to close the school and leave Towanda caused great pain to them and to Father Toner, who appreciated their work and had hoped that in time they would be able to conquer all obstacles. The people who knew the sisters, and the children whom they taught were much grieved. The loyalty of these children seemed to have been of lasting quality. We shall see this in future events.

The day for the commencement in Towanda was set for the 26th of June, and after it was over, Mother Mary Walburga sent all the sisters except Sister Antonia to Philadelphia. These two faced the ordeal of closing the house, which was not as simple as might be supposed. All the altar furnishings were sent to Sharon, and also whatever things could be shipped. Many things, however, had to be disposed of. The value was determined by someone capable of judging, and everything sold at auction. The articles auctioned ranged from school desks to a cow and some chickens. Naturally the process of sorting, packing, selling, etc., took weeks. During this time, as they had scarcely money enough for their journey to Philadelphia—for they paid all current debts—there was not much to eat in the house. Father Toner found this out, and had their meals sent to them every day until they left. Father Toner, in fact, was a perfect friend. The creditors for the building operations dunned for their money and even threatened the sisters with imprisonment. Father Toner assumed responsibility for the debts. One night, a burglar nearly succeeded in getting into the convent, though he must have known there was little enough to steal. The faithful convent dog chased him away. When Father Toner heard of this, he insisted that the nuns sleep in his house, while he stayed in the convent at nights until their departure.

A letter written by Father Toner to Mother Mary Xavier when he heard the news of the giving up of the Towanda school shows his feelings and his appreciation of the nuns:

"Dear Mother Mary Xavier,

Towanda, June 22nd, 1864.

"I am very sorry to learn we are about to lose all our good sisters. I hope, however, that it will be all for the best, and I know that the whole affair has been duly considered. But it seems to me that a great good—yes, an immense good—might be done in and around Towanda. If it were possible, Mother Mary Xavier, that you could permit some few to remain another year. I would consider it to myself a great personal favor, and still more, a great benefit to our holy Religion. Their services to me I'll not forget. They have been invaluable, for which from my heart I thank them. Owing to the many calling demands for one thing and another, in fact, for everything, I could not, as I would wish, make any adequate recompense for their persevering labours, but I hope after some time please God, to make it all right. I hope you will have every blessing in your new home and that you will find a more grateful people than in Towanda. However I am declined to believe that what they did and threatened to do were the result more of ignorance

and misrepresentation than malice. They are just now beginning to appreciate the great blessings they received in being instructed and edified by the good sisters. They seem now all very sorry that they are going, especially those in the country. Last Sunday I took Mother Mary Walburga and Sister Antonia to Ridgburg, and the people were delighted beyond all bounds to see them. They say I will have their prayers for more than a thousand years for bringing them the nuns. I wish you could all make it possible to come and spend your vacation with us. Even during that time you could do much good by visiting those poor ignorant people in the country, but if you cannot come, for goodness sake, don't take any more from us until September. I expected to see you and Father Carter here. Do try to come, and remain over for a short time. Perhaps God seeing in it a few just, might spare Towanda. I hope and pray it won't lose the Faith, and you will please repeat the prayer often.

"Once more, Mother Mary Xavier, I thank all the good sisters from my heart, and may God be with you all! I recommend myself to your prayers, and those of all your dear community, to whom you will please remember me in the warmest manner.

"Your sincere and devoted friend,  
"Patrick Toner,  
"To Rev. M. M. Xavier, S.H.C.J."

There is no doubt that Mother Mary Xavier herself and the sisters who with her had opened the school at Towanda felt the giving up of the mission. They had hoped against hope and prayed for the success of the Towanda venture, but with Reverend Mother, they felt that the Bishop's wishes must be respected. It was characteristic of these pioneers, as it had been of their Foundress, to take the brunt of the decision and not to put the blame for the affair on the shoulders of others.

Father Toner, when the day of departure came, drove the sisters to the station of Troy. Standing at the window of their coach and unable to speak for emotion, he dropped a well filled purse into Mother Mary Walburga's hand, as a farewell gift. He never lost sight of the nuns, and his interest in the Society continued until his death. Frequent visits to the convents and generous benefactions kept the nuns in mind of him. Father Patrick Toner had been ordained at the Assumption Church in June, 1859, with Father Jeremiah Shanahan, afterwards Bishop of Harrisburg, and three others. He was a curate at the Assumption, and pastor at Lancaster before going to Towanda. He was made domestic prelate by Leo XIII on the occasion of his jubilee. In 1896, Monsignor Toner was named by the Secretary of the Navy, Missionary chaplain with power to board any United States man-of-war for the spiritual benefit of any Catholic on board.

The summer of 1864 was an eventful one in the annals of the Society in America. Sharon was given to us by Father Carter to be a novitiate and boarding school, and became the Motherhouse of the Society in America.

The annual retreat was made at Spring Garden Street Convent and was attended by all the sisters except those who were closing the house in Towanda. They made theirs privately at Sharon later in the month. Father Cicaterri, S.J., gave the retreat. He became a great spiritual benefactor, and for years, by his advice, aided superiors in their arduous duties. Although the nuns and some of the students visited Sharon on July 5th, formal possession was not taken until the 16th, after the retreat.

Full of zeal, the nuns began preparation for the opening of the schools in September, some at Sharon and some at "1135." In the former place there was the usual prelude, it seemed, to all new ventures in America—the broom and scrubbing brush—and in the latter, more or less the same, since the "additions" Father Carter had made were still under way and entailed a great deal of "dust and disorder." The new rooms, however, would mean an extraordinary increase of space and convenience, to say nothing of a new chapel to be prepared with loving care.

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CHAPTER IV  
SHARON AND SPRING GARDEN STREET  
1864 - 1867

The property chosen by Father Carter had been, previously, a Quaker Academy of some repute, at Sharon, an estate of 30 acres in Delaware County, about six miles from Philadelphia. Darby was the nearest town and Sharon was in that Township. About thirty years before the nuns came to Sharon, that is in 1835, the school had been established by John Jackson, whom Ashmead in his *History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania*, calls "a noted public Friend of Darby." He had recently married "Rachel C. Tyson, a highly educated and accomplished woman," and the school opened on the family estate at Sharon. Under Jackson's able direction—he "was not only an excellent teacher," wrote the author of *Smith's History of Delaware County*, "but a noted Quaker."—it soon acquired the enviable reputation of being "the most important female academy in the Middle States."

After the death of the founder in 1855, his widow kept up the school for two years, and in 1858, Israel and Jane Graham took up the work and carried on for several years, when it was permanently closed and the property put up for sale.

The day the nuns took formal possession was July 16, the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, called "Sharon's birthday," and for years kept as such.

A lively account of a visit made by the girls from Spring Garden Street was written years later by one of them, Mary Hughes, and incidentally gives a glimpse of the very tender affection the first girls cherished for the nuns.

She wrote:

"Mother Mary Xavier, Mother Lucy Ignatia and Sister Aloysia went to Sharon for the first time July 5th, and stayed all night. About one in the afternoon, Mother Agatha also went, taking with her Lily, Nan, Mary Hollahan and myself. It was intensely warm. No one knew exactly how to get there. The only way was by the old horse cars. Horses were changed at 29th and Woodland Avenue. It took nearly two hours to get to Darby. It was a most unusual thing, in those days, to see a nun on the street. The conductor of the car never having seen one, asked Lily Hollahan if she wanted to pay for her grandmother, which amused us all, no one more than Mother Agatha herself. Reaching Darby, we found we had to walk to Sharon, in the broiling sun. We children, however, enjoyed the novelty. At last the toll gate was reached and we turned from Chester Pike into Hook Road and were soon under the lovely shade trees of Sharon. The dear old school we remember was very unlike it is today. It was an old fashioned three-story stone building. The French roof was added afterwards. An old negress caretaker gave us a warm welcome, in good old darky style, in the form of glasses of milk and cookies.

"After refreshing ourselves, we roamed over the house and grounds—there were thirty acres. What a rambling house it was! We named the different rooms and were right in the choice of a chapel and school hall. These two rooms remained unchanged for many happy years. In the dear little chapel, with many additions and improvements, many of us were made Children of Mary, received the postulant's hood, were clothed and made our vows.

"The first Children of Mary were received on Mother Foundress' feast, December 21st. Bishop Wood had come to Sharon for a profession, and performed the ceremony of reception into the Sodality. The seven received were: Adele Hirst, Mary Hollahan, Annie Hughes, Lydia Naulty, Vallie Verier and Tonie Verier. (Note: These names have been corrected from the Sacristy register at Sharon). ..

"The houses were badly heated, and during the winter Mother Mary Xavier and Mother Lucy Ignatia would come the last thing at night to see if we were warm and bring us cups of gruel. Those were happy, devoted days. One never heard a

child grumble because she had not some of the things she had been accustomed to have. We found out that Mother Agatha swept the school hall after we were in bed, and we used to steal down and do it while she was at prayers."

When the nuns went to Sharon, it had been vacant for several years except for two negro women caretakers who seemed to think that their only business was to reside on the premises.

Mother Agatha's account of the first days gives a good idea of conditions:

"How dirty the house was can be better imagined than described. The grounds were overgrown with weeds so that the beautiful avenue which now exists could not be traced. The weeds there were more than three feet high and the whole place must have been something like London after the plague. The Sisters set to work, of course, inside and outside, but the small amount they could get through in a day was most discouraging.

"Sharon was certainly founded in humiliation, for we had to go out and beg the money to buy what was absolutely necessary to furnish the rooms for school. Father Carter had already received contributions for this effect, and our good, kind Bishop had given \$1,000 towards the good work. The alms given to the Sisters did not amount to much, but the mortification practised on the occasion must have brought a blessing. Mother Lucy Ignatia and Mother Mary Walburga were absolutely refused by a banker, one of the wealthiest men in the city. If we had been begging for an orphanage, or any charitable object, we should have done well, but to be asking alms for an academy was quite another affair.

"We began school, however, in September, and were almost as badly off for food as we had been in Towanda. Of course, we did not let the children want for anything, but the community suffered a great deal." (Notes from a very small book, "Historical Notes," by M. Agatha).

The house was a three-story stone building, very solidly built. On the roof was a bell tower, and also the top of a rotating observatory, for John Jackson had been an eminent astronomer. The front entrance faced north-northeast, so that every room in the house had the sun at some time during the day. Along the east side for the entire length was a piazza, roomy and shady, with double doors leading to a passage meeting the one from the front door at right angles. There have been many and constant changes in the rooms, but in 1864, the vestibule and parlor were as they are now. A long room next to the parlor was used as the children's refectory. This, later, was the workroom, and part of it was made a passage to the new school. St. Teresa's parlor was the first temporary chapel. The altar from Towanda was used. It was liturgical, and a picture, preserved, shows the entire tabernacle covered by a veil, heavily embroidered. Soon, however, a room on the third floor running the whole length of the building on the west side was made the chapel, and there until Father Carter built the exquisite Gothic chapel, called **Father Carter's Chapel**, in 1877, all religious services took place. The roof was sloping, until the Mansard roof was added, giving a fourth story. All the rooms were large and had many windows. School hall and library and music room on the east side of the first floor were later combined into the nuns' community room. The sisters' refectory for many years was in the cellar, the middle portion of which was floored. Later, this room became the storeroom.

The sisters who came from Towanda after the retreat brought several children who wished to continue their education with the nuns. We have the names of two of these, Alice Ransom, and Maria Parsons, both Protestants. Alice was received into the church as we shall see, and had the happiness of seeing all her family embrace the Faith. Maria was taken from school soon after Alice's baptism, but always remembered the days at Sharon with affectionate gratitude.

All the schools opened the first week in September. There were eighteen in the Sharon school, all boarders, and sixteen in the Spring Garden Street Academy.

Some of the children from the latter place had gone as boarders to Sharon, and before Christmas Sharon had twenty-four boarders and the Spring Garden Academy was full.

The community at Sharon consisted of Mothers M. Xavier, Lucy Ignatia, Helen, Sisters Louise, M. Cornelia, Aloysia and novices and postulants. The others, with Mother Mary Walburga as superior, were at Spring Garden Street. There were not nearly enough for the work, and some from Spring Garden went on weekends to help out at Sharon.

At first the nuns had to go to Kellyville, three miles away, for Mass. Thanks to Father Carter's efforts, a new parish was established at Paschallville, with Father Andrew Gallagher as pastor. He acted as chaplain and gave the community Mass whenever possible. The new parish at St. Clement's, Paschallville, founded in 1864, gives a vivid picture of the phenomenal growth of the Church in Philadelphia. There were sixteen parishioners, and the parish embraced "not only all the southern part of the city west of the Schuylkill that did not belong to St. James', but also the adjoining part of Delaware County." (2) Numerous parishes with large numbers of parishioners now occupy this space.

There was no railroad station near Sharon. The journey from Spring Garden Street had to be made in a carriage or on the horse cars as far as Darby. From there the Chester Pike, then a mud road, had to be travelled with more or less speed according to the amount of luggage carried. It took from two to three hours to accomplish the journey. At Paschallville, the cars passed Summit House, a hospital for wounded veterans of the Civil War. Father Gallagher resided there until he built a residence. For many years this building has been part of the Hospital for Women, run by the Sisters of Charity.

The spirit of the first girls at Sharon was of the character that produces traditions in one generation. Unless we had the written testimonial of one of their number, which has been given above, we might be tempted to believe that the sisters in speaking of these days exaggerated this loyalty.

In October, a third party of nuns arrived from England, and relieved the stress of work in both convents. Reverend Mother Foundress had wished to send them in time for the opening of school, but it had been impossible. The party arrived in New York in October and went immediately to Spring Garden Street. They were Mother Mary Agnese Ingram, Sister Blandina Beardsall, two novices, Sisters St. John Hagan and Edward Clack, and Harriet Dring, a postulant. Sister Blandina and one novice remained at Spring Garden Street and the others went to Sharon.

The Bishop clothed two postulants at Spring Garden Street on November 5, 1864, Sister (Harriet Dring), M. Xavier, and Sister (Ann Kelly) Teresa. Both persevered in the Society.

The sisters lately come from England did not have to wait long to find out the poverty of the American sisters. Sister Blandina was possessed of a new serge petticoat and an apron of the same material. They were immediately confiscated by the Mistress of the wardrobe and converted into needed capes for the sisters.

Two letters written to Reverend Mother Foundress at the end of the year give pictures of the two convents.

The Convent H. C. Jesus  
Phila., Dec. 26th, 1864.

"Dieu Seul!  
My own dearest Reverend Mother,  
"Christmas Day is over and not even a word from our dear Mother, but we pricked

(2) Historical Sketches of the Catholic Churches and Institutions of Philadelphia (to 1895.) Daniel Mahony.

the Rule Book.

"Dear Sister Teresa! O, I am sure she is in heaven for the feast. How beautiful the Epiphany will be there... We shall not be able to have our retreat, at least not in full, as our school is obliged to begin on the 2nd, but at Sharon they can have it in full and some of us can go there for it, but not all. We who are in school must keep it in the afternoon. Sister Xavier and Sister St. John went to Sharon to be with the other novices for their holidays. Father Carter wore his stole yesterday and his point lace surplice. He looked very grand.

"I suppose we shall never have Midnight Mass again. Our first Mass was at five and the last one at 10:30. We each heard three Masses, then came in and had our breakfast, drew practises and got ready for the high Mass.

"I have not told you that we did not all spend the day together. Mother Mary Xavier thought that as all could not come it would be better for each community to spend it at home. But we shall renew our vows together, I hope . . .

"We had our images of the Holy Child mended. We hope that M. M. Ignatius will send us a nice long letter telling us all about the 21st, and Christmas, Epiphany, etc.

"Dearest Reverend Mother, are you really coming out in the spring? Do—if you only knew how we long to see you. Letters are such poor substitutes for speaking. I fancy if you just asked the Holy Child what to do, and **nobody** else, He would whisper, 'Go to the American Mission!'

"Our dear Sister Mary Stanislaus will be dead a year next Sunday.

"I hope you, dear Reverend Mother, are quite rested and strong. Do take care of yourself. Goodbye, my dearest Reverend Mother,

Bless and pray for

Your loving child in J. C.,

M. Walb., S.H.C.J.

"We did not get a mortuary card for dear Sister Teresa, and do not know her years in religion."

Mother Lucy Ignatia wrote from Sharon on the feast of the Holy Innocents. She was Assistant Prefect and Mistress of Novices.

"J. M. J.

"My dearest Reverend Mother,

"We all wish you a very, very happy New Year and hope the Holy Child will give you everything you want. We have had a very cold Christmas, but today all the snow has disappeared and it is just like spring. The five children who are staying for the holidays are making such a noise, begging to have a ride in the carriage, but as they are dressed like nuns, I am afraid they will be disappointed.

"We were all so much astonished to hear of poor Sister Claver's death, but were much consoled and edified with the account you so kindly sent. Masses have been said for both our dear Sisters and the Office for the Dead directly we heard, and now we are offering Our Lady's Office for them. I am sure Sister Teresa is in heaven, for I have been wanting something for a long time, and about two weeks ago, I got it and never felt so certain before that someone in heaven had prayed for me. When I come to England, I will tell you, but it is too far to write it. The novices from Philadelphia have been here since Xmas day, and we had three grand recreation days. The novices are going into retreat for New Year's Day.

"We shall all think of you, dearest Reverend Mother, on the last day of the old year, when we are hoping for Exposition of the B. Sacrament in our little chapel. It is always a great consolation on those days to think that perhaps you are remembering us to our Dear Lord, while we are doing the same here for you. We have a nice little crib under the altar, with the Holy Child you painted when we first came out. We had no Midnight Mass, but stayed up until 12, when the sisters sang

'Adeste Fideles' and we all made our requests and offerings, and then went to bed. The next morning, we had Mass at 5 o'clock, the only one we heard, as Father Gallagher had to say two Masses for his congregation.

"We have had a very quiet Christmas, nice reading and work, and all the Sisters, Novices and Professed, at Office.

"I don't know, my dearest Reverend Mother, whether you have heard that Dr. Brann, the priest who came over with us from the Roman College, has written a nice little play expressly for our children. It is called St. Cecilia, and there are 14 characters besides wedding guests, officers, citizens, etc. In one place, he mentions Sharon. I will copy it for you.

Cecilia—Father, I am Another's spouse.

Quintillian—Another's spouse! What mean you, child? Speak, child, dared you wed a Nazarene?

Cecilia—No, Father, no!

The Rose of Sharon, He whose thorn-crowned Head  
Was bowed with weight of Love on Calvary's Tree  
Whose Sacred Heart was pierced and whose delight  
Is ever with the sons of men to be,  
Can I forget my troth to such a Spouse as He?

Some parts are very pretty. M. M. Xavier is going to send it to you as soon as it is printed, which we hope will be in a few days.

"Mother Helen is very much better, and busy binding and mending books for the school. All the other sisters are well, I think. Our holidays are spent, during mealtime, particularly, in wondering what you are doing, and hearing news still from the last comers, and what their impressions are.

"Is the Duchess at St. Leonard's? for we have heard nothing about her for so long.

"Tomorrow, Father Carter is coming out with a lady, and we are expecting a new child. Then we shall have 24. They are all still very good, and write such nice examinations that their parents are delighted with them. Almost all have merited excellent for application in their Christmas bulletins.

"We are hoping to have a Jesuit Father for the Epiphany Retreat, or at least for confessions.

"Are you thinking of coming to America next year? I really do hope so, for I am sure Our Lord will take great care of you, and now I scarcely know how to write, as we never know what you really know, and what to write to you. You cannot imagine, dear Reverend Mother, what everything is like unless you come over once. It would undoubtedly be for the glory of God. I know it would be such a pleasure to you to see our children and both houses.

"On Christmas night, we had a teetotum and each of us twisted it in turns to see what virtue we should aim at particularly this year, and we got for you, 'calm of soul'. We generally draw a saint to take care of you on your journey to New York from Liverpool, but they have done nothing yet . . .

"It will be dear Sr. M. Stanislaus' anniversary the 1st of the month, and we are having Mass over the very spot where she died . . ."

The play referred to in this letter was given in February. The Bishop, Father Carter and other priests were present, among whom Dr. Brann, author of the play, was conspicuous. All pronounced it excellent.

During this first year, and for many years after, Bishop Wood was a constant visitor at Sharon. He went informally, accompanied by one or more priests or bishops. We are inclined to think that his Lordship was desirous of making the English sisters and their manner of teaching and training known to the priests of

his large and rapidly growing Diocese. Over and over we read in the chronicle that the Bishop spent some time with the children, playing croquet or ball. The children seemed perfectly at ease with the visitors, and frequently secured the promise of a holiday. Medals were often given by Dr. Wood to those who had beaten him in the game. We find among these visitors those who were afterwards associated with the growth and development of the Diocese and with the Province of Philadelphia. For instance, Father Shanahan, afterwards first Bishop of Harrisburg; Dr. O'Hara, later Bishop of Scranton; Dr. Fitzmaurice, later Bishop of Erie; Dr. O'Connor, later Bishop of Omaha; Fathers O'Reilly, Filan, Sheehan and Jesuits who were exceptionally helpful to the nuns in spiritual lines, Fathers Cicaterri, Di Maria, McElroy, Barbelin and others.

This year at Spring Garden Street was passed as usual. The nuns had lost some of their boarders, but others had taken their places, and everything had prospered.

In April, after the death of Lincoln had thrown the country in mourning, Philadelphia was not a quiet place. One day, two of the nuns were in the heart of the city on a shopping tour. Two officers walked behind them, and speaking in a loud tone, one of them said, "I hope the sisters will soon have a draped flag hanging from the window, before the roughs break all their windows, if not worse." They then passed the nuns and saluted. Sister Blandina acknowledged the warning with a low "thank you." As soon as possible, a flag was in place, a nun's veil being used for the mourning symbol.

It was at this time that Father Carter began sending women converts to the nuns for instruction. This added to their overfilled schedules, but was performed as a work of love and mercy, and many of these converts became lifelong friends of the Society.

The first school year at Sharon closed with a distribution. The musical and dramatic talent of the children was greatly praised by the Bishop, priests and parents.

During the summer, the nuns closed Spring Garden Street and lived at Sharon until the fifteenth of August, when they returned to prepare for school. The only event of importance chronicled for the remainder of the year is the profession of Sisters Cornelia McKay and St. Edward Clack, both of whom had been received in England. This was the first profession in America, and took place at Sharon on December 21, 1865.

The year 1866 from the beginning saw the foundation of many of Sharon's enduring customs. When the children returned after the holidays, they were amazed to hear that Mary Hughes was to receive the hood on Epiphany. The reactions of the children were as varied as their characters. This was the first time one of them had left the ranks for the convent. Some laughed, some cried, some "wouldn't believe," some "couldn't believe."

They had scarcely recovered from this shock when an announcement was made by Alice Ransom, a non-Catholic from Towanda, that her father had given his consent for her to become a Catholic. The children all asked to go to the chapel to make acts of thanksgiving. Maria Parsons, a younger child who had come from Towanda with Alice, showed her disapproval by "speaking in a disrespectful way of religion in general." It was noted, however, that later she asked for and obtained leave to join the children's retreat given by Father McElroy, S.J., in April. Alice's Baptism was a great event. She had spent the day before in retreat. Father Carter baptized her in the little chapel at half-past five, before Benediction. All the sisters and children were present. "The ceremony," according to the School Journal for January 18, 1866, "was very solemn. Father Carter addressed a few words to Alice on Baptism, and after she had been baptized gave us Benediction. She took the name of Alice Mary Ignatia. Fr. McElroy, S.J., kindly sent a beautiful pair of scapulars for her to be invested in on the day of her First Communion.

Father Carter made her a present of *The Glories of Mary*, a rosary and two pictures."

Another entry in the Journal, that of Jan. 19 is of interest:

"This morning Alice Ransom made her First Communion and after Mass was invested with Mary Bowen in the scapular of O.L. of Mt. Carmel. The children decorated the refectory and, during breakfast, all the Catholic children made Alice a present of pictures, books, etc. After breakfast, Mother M. Xavier gave the first class leave to go to the city for a holiday with Alice and to buy a present for Mother Mary Agnese. They bought a lovely picture of the Angel Guardian, framed, for \$15.00, and several books and pictures for M. M. Xavier. They are very generous children."

Alice had the happiness of seeing her entire family embrace the Faith, and before she died, at the age of 97, saw one of her grand-nieces at Rosemont College. Maria Parsons, before the close of school, was withdrawn with a promise of returning, but no doubt her making the retreat was too much for the family. She became Mrs. Decker, and always loved Sharon and the nuns.

During January, 1866, the *Apostleship of Prayer* was established at Sharon. Almost the same day, the Charter was obtained from the State Legislature. It was given to *The Sharon Female Academy*. The Corporation, as mentioned in the Charter consisted of Elizabeth Noble, Ellen Newsham, Mary T. White, Monica Ingram and Ellen Dacey (Note—Incorrect spelling for Deacy). The last paragraph is interesting:

"Section 5. That the said Academy shall have power to confer such literary degrees and academic honors as are usually granted by colleges upon such pupils as have completed in a satisfactory manner the prescribed course of studies."

A novel custom, one which did not last long, was introduced at this time at the earnest request of the children. It was that they be allowed to chant the Office of the Blessed Virgin with the nuns on Saturdays. We find that for some years this privilege was granted to the Children of Mary on their great feasts. Beginning with the feast of Saint Agnes this year, the children sang the Vespers on Sundays in the chapel, with a priest presiding. This was continued until 1893, when, unfortunately, it was abandoned, it being impossible to find a priest who had time for the ceremony.

For mutual gain, the Sodalities of Spring Garden Street and Sharon were combined, and at the first meeting at Sharon on the feast of the Purification, officers were elected as follows: President, Adele Hirst; Assistant, Mary Bowen; Secretary, Vallie Verier; Sacristan, Mary Holahan; Reader, Tonie Verier. These names are of interest. Adele Hirst led the class that "finished" in June, 1866, and was always active in Alumnae affairs. Mary Bowen, one of Mother Foundress' nieces who were at Sharon at the time, was valedictorian in the class of 1867. Valentina Verier was valedictorian in the class with Adele Hirst, and Mary Holahan became Mother Angela of the S.H.C.J.

Another event of this time was the erection of the Stations of the Cross, in Lent, and the Journal remarks:

"Feb. 16, 1866. The children all love them so much and some were so affected when the words, *Oh come and mourn* were dictated to them as to cry. They have all petitioned to go up to the chapel after supper every evening during Lent.

The Easter Concert, called by the children, the grand concert, became an annual occurrence. The sisters from Spring Garden Street came in for the "trial concert," as they called it, in which the prepared pieces were rehearsed, and a selection made for the final programme. This was the custom for some years. Usually the Bishop, Father Carter and many priests attended. Their appreciation of good music was evident. As for minor plays and concerts, there seems never to have been any lack.

One day in May, for instance, the children produced a play written and coached by one of their number, Nina Nathan. Thus was initiative encouraged. On each sister's feast, her class had a holiday, and an entertainment was in order.

The generosity of the children at this time was extraordinary. Spontaneously they sought out the needs of the school, and tried to supply them. Buying framed pictures to adorn the bare walls (not in style in those days!) was almost a habit.

Mary Hughes' clothing, April 23rd, 1866, was at Sharon. The children had the chapel richly adorned with most beautiful flowers, setting an example for all future clothings and professions. Father Carter was the Bishop's delegate, Sister Mary Stanislaus, first Sharon novice, was clothed before the Mass, which was at half past seven. Annie Hughes was cross bearer, Lena and Julia Verier, Fanny Hughes, Gertrude Ewing and Tessie Hughes strewed flowers on the pall. As the day was rainy, the children (for of course it was a holiday) passed the time in indoor games, and in the evening presented a farce, "Used Up," which "did credit to all the actors, especially Annie Hughes and Alice Ransom."

The next day, Sister Lucy Ignatia took Alice Ransom, Lena and Julia Verier to Philadelphia, where Bishop Wood confirmed them in his private chapel.

The names of Mary, Cornelia and Isabella Bowen, three nieces of Reverend Mother Foundress, occur frequently in the *Sharon Journal* for 1866. They had come to Sharon in the fall of 1865, and Mary's letters home show her great attachment for Sharon. Entries in the *Journal* such as, "Mary and Cornelia Bowen received dear little letters from Reverend Mother," "Madame Peacock is in the city; Mary, Cornelia and Bella Bowen and Mary McKenna went to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, 1625 Walnut Street, to see her," occur several times.

It may be said that at this time the sisters at Spring Garden Street and Sharon had brought their methods of education to the standard of the English schools, and a resume of this method is not uninteresting. We have spoken of the use of the drama and of music and will not repeat. We are struck, at first, with the number of holidays, as well as the manner of utilizing them. If we recall, however, that the school opened the first week of September and lasted till the end of June, we see that with the long school year came the need as well as the possibility of holidays. Oral examinations were frequent. The sisters were present, and sometimes Father Carter was an interested spectator. One entry in the *Journal* notes:

"The children had their oral examination today. Father Carter and the sisters were present. The First Class passed a good examination in Latin, the second in Roman History, the Third in the Catechism of Peresverence, and the Fourth in Tables."

We may note in passing that in the *Book of Studies* of Mother Foundress, the First Class is the highest and each Class is divided into First and Second Parts, taking two years. There were six classes in the years required, and no doubt there was more elasticity in promotions, etc., for the classes were small, giving the opportunity for the most advantage to be shown each pupil. Written examinations were held at the end of each term. Those in the June of the year 1866 lasted from the 11th until the 18th inclusive. The periods were from 9 to 12, and from 2 to 5. On the Sunday intervening, there were reading examinations in French and English. To decide the prize for French the best in each class had French conversation as a test. When the papers were "all over," the children busied themselves with their illuminations and needlework, and we may imagine that the sisters corrected papers! Another practice which was invaluable to the children was that of "French days." On these days no child might speak a word of English without special permission from the sisters. If one had not spoken one word of English in the morning six points were added to the French point for the recitation of lessons. Six points were also given for not speaking in the cloister. It is easy to see the value of this in more ways than one.

The Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament and retreat of the month were always on the First Friday in those days, and indeed until the beginning of the new century. The *School Journal* tells us that the mornings were spent by the children in Map drawing, dictation, or study for the oral examinations to be held in the evenings.

An example of the habit Bishop Wood had of playing games with the children while his companions were talking with the nuns is found in the entry in the *School Journal* for June 18, 1866.

"In the afternoon, the Bishop drove out with Bishop McGill, Dr. O'Hara and Father Carter. After partaking of a slight refection, the Bishop came out on the grounds and played ball with the children for about an hour. They were delighted and enjoyed themselves very much."

Another note on the feast of St. Aloysius:

"Father Gallagher said Mass and afterwards breakfasted with the children—They have paid for the papering of the school hall, and bought six beautiful framed pictures and a nice clock. The day was spent in games and in the afternoon, the votes were taken for the ribbons—in the evening the children acted "Sudden Thoughts," and "Contab."

The distribution of 1866 was the first of what we now call a graduation. The girls in those days were content to say they had "finished." There has been a dispute regarding the names of the first graduates, but it is clear from the current edition of the *Catholic Standard*, from the *Journal*, and from the valedictory still preserved in a "Recitation Book" that they were the following:

Adele Hirst, First Honors;

Valentina Verier, Valedictorian;

Alice Ransom, "who carried off most of the prizes."

Those who at one time or another were considered the first, were in the class below, Mary Bowen, Valedictorian; Fannie Hughes and Tonie Verier. This valedictory is also preserved.

Eleven children remained at Sharon during the holidays that summer. Their mornings were spent in reading, drawing, and in walks, and the afternoons chiefly in outdoor sports, or in playing *Bezique*, a game Reverend Mother Foundress had sent over that summer from England. The girls liked it and often played it among themselves and with the nuns. *Cache-cache* was also a favorite game. The sisters spent the summer in improving and beautifying Sharon.

As usual the Spring Garden Street community was domiciled at Sharon for the summer. This year a burglar got into the convent in their absence and ransacked the sacristy. Fortunately nothing was lost, as the sacred vessels had been left with Father Carter. Thereafter, he always walked through the convent at night when the nuns were away, and also provided a watchdog which slept in the convent at nights.

In September, the schools began as usual, and with increased numbers.

At Sharon it had already become a custom to celebrate Father Carter's birthday, the 24th of September, by inviting him to a concert or play, or both. This year the children had embroidered for him a pair of slippers and presented these with a "hatrack containing a very pretty tinted drawing by Mary Bowen, and a box of candies, given by J. Peterson." The next day, Father asked for a holiday for them, and drove the whole first class to Darby where he left them and returned to the city. Mother Agatha often told a story of one 24th when the date had been forgotten, and suddenly Father appeared in the evening. The children, at least the tiny tots were already in bed, but rather than disappoint Father, the nuns got them up, and so great was their proficiency that he never suspected that the entertain-

ment was an impromptu one. Mary Weston was one of the tots and loved to tell how she was awakened with the salutation, "Get up quickly, you have to be an angel."

An incident occurred this month which showed that Mother Mary Xavier could combine mercy with justice. Frances Gatzmer, from Philadelphia, ran away while the nuns and children were at Mass. She walked home. When she returned Monday morning, no doubt accompanied by her parents, and begged to be taken back, Mother Mary Xavier agreed provided she promised not to repeat the act.

On November 5th, the sisters whose arrival had been eagerly looked forward to, arrived. Reverend Mother Foundress had not been able to go to the boat to wish them Godspeed, as had been her custom, and sent a beautiful letter of which, unfortunately we have only these few words:

"Our Lord be with you on this journey you are making for His most holy Will, and your angels guide and keep you . . . I am more sorry not to see you till the last moment than you can be . . . I put the Life of Saint Gertrude for you to read on the way . . . May the Lord comfort and console you in sickness and health."

The sisters who came in this, the sixth band, were Sisters Walburga Moore and de Borgia Jones. Miss Woerle accompanied them. We read in the *Sharon School Journal* that they arrived there on the 6th, and on the 7th, "In the afternoon, the children acted "Ticklish Times" again for the sisters and sang some choruses, Red Cross Knight, Distant Chimes."

The arrival of reinforcements made changes. Mother Mary Walburga was called to Sharon to be novice mistress, to relieve Mother Lucy Ignatia from that office and also to be econome. Mother Mary Agnese was appointed superior at Spring Garden Street, and Mother Walburga Moore accompanied her there.

On November 12, the oft-quoted *Journal* notes:

"The second class had Mother Mary Walburga for the first time . . . To the astonishment of the children, Mary Holahan received the hood. There was no more recreation that evening—all were full of their own thoughts."

Mary Holahan became Sister Angela when she received the veil. On the feast of St. Stanislaus, the children acted "The Dream of Gerontius" for the novices.

The Thanksgiving holidays, at Sharon, were spent with Sister Agatha in finishing an alb for Father Gallagher for the feast of Saint Andrew. Very friendly relations always existed between the children at Sharon and Father Gallagher. During May, for some years, two of them went with a Sister to dress Our Lady's altar in the Paschallville Church.

A few days before the feast of St. Francis Xavier, Mother Mary Xavier went to Spring Garden Street, while surprises were prepared for her feast. There were new candlesticks for the chapel, and other gifts for the chapel in the way of "work", which meant embroidery in some form or other. Tableaux from "Laurentia" were given in the school hall when Mother Mary Xavier arrived the afternoon before the feast with Father Carter, and then all "went to the chapel to see all the work, after which Father Carter spoke a few words and we had Benediction." The children seemed to have taken a big share in all this, which suggests that their "work" was in evidence. The next day Father Carter said Mass and all the children went to Holy Communion. The note in the *Journal* for the rest of the day is suggestive:

"In the morning, the children went for a long walk to Mount Moriah Cemetery with Sister St. John and Sister Mary Stanislaus, returning in time for dinner at 2 o'clock. In the afternoon, they played all kinds of games and begged to be left alone, so that all the sisters might be together in the evening."

It was the custom to have a concert on the 21st of December, and this year

Mother Mary Agnese, Sisters de Borgia and Walburga (Moore) came from the city for it. The music was declared excellent. Mary Bowen and Anna Seron played the harp and the "glees and choruses were much appreciated."

Christmas Eve was memorable for the Baptism of Alice Cantrell who had come, a Protestant, from Virginia two years before. Father Cicaterri, S.J., baptized her just before Midnight Mass, and she received her first Holy Communion during the Mass. Alice added the names of Lucy Ignatia to her own. She had been in retreat two days.

The year 1867, famous for the visit Reverend Mother Foundress made to her American children, began auspiciously for all. Spring Garden Street opened with 28 in the academy, 80 in the parish school, 30 in the night school. At Sharon, too, everything was flourishing. The excessive bad weather prevented many of the Sharon boarders coming on time, but Mother Agatha enlivened the others by giving them parts in the new play, and adding new names to the cast. Many names on the registers in each academy are those of future members of the Society.

Sister Walburga Moore was privately Confirmed in his chapel by Bishop Wood on the 12th of January.

On the feast of St. Francis de Sales, a long and varied program was enacted at Sharon. On the evening before, the processional Cross and pall had been borrowed from the Assumption. This was a regular occurrence until Sharon had her own. The Bishop, Fathers Carter, O'Connor and McConomy came on the eve of the feast. In the morning, Father Carter said Mass for the community at 6, and all except those to be professed or clothed, received Holy Communion at this Mass. The other priests read their Masses immediately after. Before the Bishop's Mass at 8 o'clock, Fanny King and Alice Cantrell were confirmed, and Eva de la Forest, Carrie Murtland, and Fanny Hirst were made Children of Mary.

The Sisters who made their vows were Sr. St. John Hagan, who had come a novice from England; Sister Joseph Thall, from Towanda; Sisters Berchmans Bracken, Joseph Kane, and Teresa Kelly. Those who received the habit were Mary Holahan, Sister Angela and Justine Woerle, Sister St. Francis who had come with the nuns from England. She did not persevere. Nan Halahan was cross bearer, Lena Verier, Katy Wetman and Ella Buggy were angels to the bride. The Bishop, priests and friends of the new sisters breakfasted in the school hall. The Bishop promised the children to return for the play to be given before Lent. This was LAURENTIA, which had been dramatized by Mother Lucy Ignatia. This profession is especially interesting as it was that of the first postulants to be received in America, four sisters who were always shining examples of the virtues that adorn their vocation, and who were especially beloved by nuns and children.

Another clothing took place on May 25, that of Sister Gabriel Fasy and Celestine Cannon. The ceremony took place in the chapel at Spring Garden Street.

The next day at the Assumption, 28 girls received their First Communion and 37 were invested in Our Lady's Scapular.

The play *Laurentia*, a story of the Japanese martyrs, was given on February 26. It was prepared for with unusual care, and enlisted the aid of all. The children helped in making the costumes; parents contributed fringes, laces, 2 dozen yards of artificial ermine, etc.; old girls gave dresses. Finally, Sister St. Edward painted scenery for the stage. The musical talent was called on for the interludes. Mary Bowen, Tonie Verier and Anna Seron played the harp.

The Bishop and many priests were present, and Dr. Horstmann gave medals blessed by the Pope to the two best actors, Annie Hughes and Helena Verier. After a collation all the guests left except Father Carter, who gave them Benediction at a quarter to eight.

It was remarked that before the play, Mother Agatha read to the children the

history of Japan to give them a background for the play.

In April, Mother Lucy Ignatia accompanied by Mary Bowen, went to Spring Garden Street to present to Father Carter a beautiful benediction veil which the nuns had embroidered for him. He was so pleased that he insisted on giving \$150 for the materials and work. The children had been allowed to help in the work which would seem to indicate a certain amount of proficiency on their part. It was often noted in the Spring Garden Street Journal, that Father Carter "returned the money for the rent, God bless him!"

Bishop Wood went to Rome in May, taking Father Carter with him. The latter promised to stop at Mayfield both going to Rome and on his return. His Lordship visited Sharon previous to his departure for the purpose of giving his blessing to nuns and children. It was the 15th of May. The children had prepared what they called the great concert, because it was always the concert of the year. The address to the Bishop by one of the children was a combination of formality and simple affection, but it is too long for insertion here. To Father Carter they entrusted the sum of \$40 they had collected for the Pope. The Spring Garden Academy girls had collected \$37 for the same intention.

In the midst of the June examinations at Sharon, an unusual entertainment was afforded the girls. Just as they had finished a paper, they suddenly heard the sound of martial music, and running to the windows saw, headed by Fathers Gallagher, DiMaria, Welsh, Filan, and Sheehan with two Christian Brothers a band of little boys in uniform. They proved to be from St. Michael's parish. They posted themselves on the piazza and played beautifully for at least an hour and a half. They were generously entertained and returned to the city. Father Welsh was the hero of the hour for many a day.

The distribution was as usual, a great success. In the absence of the Bishop and Father Carter, Dr. O'Hara presided. Mary Bowen, as was said above, read the valedictory. It was in the style of the time, and very well read. All the children's addresses of the first few years were preserved and may be read in a book in the Sharon Archives. They are typical of the times.

Reverend Mother Foundress had wished to see Mother Mary Xavier, and had planned for her and whomever she should bring as companion to travel with Father Carter. Mother Mary Xavier, however, was teaching both French and music and could not possibly leave before the distribution. The retreat had been scheduled to begin on July 9, and immediately on its ending, she with M. Lucy Ignatia left for England. They sailed on the Russia.

The convent at Spring Garden Street was not closed that summer, and during the retreat at Sharon a novice and two children were left in charge of the convent.

In Reverend Mother Foundress' letter to M. M. Xavier before she went to England, she wrote, "Your journals are delightful. I have read them at two recreations and not finished yet." Unfortunately we do not have these journals.

Father Carter's visit to the nuns in England is described in Reverend Mother's letters. In July she wrote from St. Leonard's:

As we are hoping to see Mother Mary Xavier and one of you with her in a few days, I must send you a few lines to say that Father Carter left us yesterday morning to visit Mayfield, with two of the sisters, Sister M. Veronica and Sr. Francis Xavier. He wanted very much to take Sr. F. X. with him and offered to pay her passage out and back if she were not happy there. Mother M. Ignatius will tell you how delighted everyone was with his visit, and with all he had to say about you together and in particular, but as I am expecting M. M. Xavier, it will be more satisfactory to hear it from her. He wants the pick and choice of the Society to be sent out at once, so that we may not think of England and of what may be required here, if only Sharon may be set up for a model house! I have promised to go out next Spring and take two with me if I can—if I am

in the world, understand. Ghosts do not cross the water they say! We are all watching the post as well as the time of the arrival of replies. This is being written in the garden under the trees where we sat and talked with Father Carter. You must ask him to tell you what he did and said here. The children acted the Christy Minstrels with black crepe over their foreheads, old dog Tray, and a Farce, Taming A Tiger, and we all laughed heartily. Father Carter sang Old Grimes for us under the trees and we had quite a jubilee of his visit. No one had time to write except Sr. M. Veronica, besides as we are expecting M. M. Xavier it would have been useless. I hope you will enjoy his visit and make much of it. He showed me such a nice letter from Miss Higgs, his housekeeper, of whom he thinks the world and all. She told him all he could want to know in his absence. Have everybody receive him and kneel down to get his first blessing. He values gratitude and justly expects to be loved and valued and respected for all he has done for us in America. We could not make enough of him, and he sounded your praises to everyone.

In another letter dated about the time, she wrote:

Father Carter arrived on Sunday at 121 Harley Street and came to St. Leonard's at 8 o'clock Monday. We are all delighted with him. The morning he came we gave him luncheon, (chops, etc.) with coffee at the end, which he could not drink, for to our horror it had salt in it! Only accidentally discovered by Mother Teresa after he had gone down to the presbytery to scrub off the railway dust. They kept him waiting in Harley Street for Mass as he arrived at six o'clock, in the morning! But everything was soon ready, and on the whole, there was mutual satisfaction. On Monday he dined at six o'clock, and as the salted coffee had not been drunk, the health was not injured. After dinner we had a nice evening with the Duchess and two Fathers, Carter and Donnelly. Tuesday we were with Father Carter all day and made the most of the time, listening to all he had to tell us . . . I have a better idea of your position in every respect than I could possibly have had by letter in half a century. I did not know that you were about a mile and a half from the Delaware and that you had walked over the Schuylkill (I have forgotten the spelling of it). I have so much regretted your not having come with Father Carter. You might have made the voyage with the Bishops . . . and you would have had at least one to go back with you. I have promised Father Carter to go next Spring with two novices if he can get the consent of Dr. Grant, which he is sure to do. The first thing I have to say is that Father Carter is very well satisfied and I have told him I would tell you so . . . I think he is the greatest friend we have ever had, and I should set an immense store by the experience of such a thorough business man, if I could find him. We have never found anyone in England to help us with their knowledge and money as he helps you and keeps you up . . . I thank God from my inmost heart that you have such a true friend. . .

After Father Carter left St. Leonard's he wrote to Reverend Mother Foundress from Liverpool, on July 12th:

Dear Rev. Mother General,

As I take my departure on the broad Atlantic for "Home, sweet Home," I should do great injustice to my feelings and my heart did I not make my sincere acknowledgments to you and your good Sisters at St. Leonard's nay all the Sisters of the H. C. Jesus of England for your kind reception, attention and the great pleasure I experienced in visiting your schools, orphanages, etc., etc., and may you all be long spared to labor in the glorious cause of God and His Church. Yet the only thing I have to regret is that the field in England is not sufficiently large for the zeal, the piety and the talents of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. Besides why is so much zeal, piety and talents confined to a few of the household of the Faith in the small kingdom of England, when there is such an extensive field in America, not of the Household of the Faith only, but of no Faith, hope or religion who by their zealous labors might be brought to the one fold and one Shepherd? However, I have very frankly laid the matter before you and if your Sisters and schools under their direction in Philadelphia are not successful and flourishing in eminent degree I will be blamed before God or man. But send at least two professed such as I prescribed and do it this fall after your vacation and the one you propose for superior—let her be free for 4 or 6 months to see, examine, and understand matters before she enters on the duties of her office. I will willingly pay their expenses

myself, send you a draft to that effect. This I do for the cause of God, His Church and your Society. Send such as Mother Catherine, she is all heart and soul in her good work. Sister Francis Xavier, Sister Veronica, Mother Angela—she is good for the noviceship—Sister Aloysia. I like the zeal of Sister Theophila. And here, permit me to say that I greatly fear that the location of St. Leonard's is not favorable to those who have delicate constitutions and are predisposed to consumption. The air is too keen, too pure. I know the physicians in Philadelphia, New York, etc., never recommend such to go to the seashore, but to the country in the summer. Besides I know from my own experience that the keen and pure air would soon knock me up. I urge the above for the safety and success of your Society and schools. If you accede to my wishes, I will continue my labours and means for their permanent establishment, otherwise I feel that my labours and means are thrown away. You must regard all I have said and written as perfectly confidential. I entertain the kindest feelings toward the Sisters in America and should be very sorry if anything should be said or written that would give them any pain. They are most excellent religious, and many most zealous and talented. I hope Sr. Francis Xavier and Sr. Veronica arrived safe at St. Leonard's after the visit to the orphanage and Mayfield, all of which I was exceedingly pleased with. No doubt they gave you my message to send them along today to Liverpool to go with me to America. That would be the real missionary spirit, and I would not only be a good friend but would give them all the necessary means of conveyance. I shall look for them by the train this evening. Tomorrow (Sat.) at 3 o'clock we sail.

Should any letters come to St. Leonard's for me, please open them and if there be any money or drafts please enclose them to me; otherwise destroy them unless they be of importance.

Kindest respects to all the good Sisters at St. Leonard's and particularly to those who have a vocation to the American missions, and recommending myself to your and their good prayers, I remain,

Yours affectionately in Xto,  
C. I. H. Carter.

Rev. Mother General  
Convent of the H. C. Jesus,  
St. Leonard's-on-Sea,  
England.

P. S.—Kindest respects also to the Novices, Postulants, young ladies and children of the schools, and ask them to pray for me. Please tell her Grace, the Duchess of Leeds, that I was very much pleased with the two new orphanages. With my kindest and most respectful regards.

These letters enable us to picture without effort the delightful hours at St. Leonard's, but they show much more—the appreciation on Reverend Mother's part of Father Carter's business acumen and her readiness to use the aid he offered. In fact, his virile qualities were always on the alert, although he was kindness itself to the suffering and weak, and always loved the society of children. His hint about the St. Leonard's climate no doubt influenced Reverend Mother in the removal of the novices to Mayfield, even before it was made the Motherhouse. He also, apparently, influenced the Duchess for we find the following from Reverend Mother to M. M. Agnese dated July 11, 1867:

. . . I send these few lines to you as I do not know who will be left in charge in M. X.'s absence. Fr. Carter does not think she will come, but I told him I said she was to come if possible. So I shall hope to see her before Dr. Wood's arrival. Perhaps she will cross Fr. Carter in the Channel—I never so much longed to see you all as now. I have given Fr. Carter the deed to record—But nothing can be sold or signed without leave from the Society, whether I am living or not, as the names put into the Sharon Corporation are for the Society and held as such without any personal power. Fr. C. told me that he has \$6000 of yours invested in U. S. Bonds. I thought it was \$2000 only. He told me also of your saving \$500 to invest—and with great satisfaction in your good management. He also spoke of inviting the Bishop to make a visitation. I told him we never did. If the Bishop chooses to make a visitation, he is always welcome. He also said his

Lordship ought to see the accounts. I said the Bishop was not answerable for your expenses and that if you got into difficulties you would come to us and I should soon settle matters. This finished the question. . . .

Enclosed in the same letter was the following memorandum:

1. The Deed making over the property in Towanda, Bradford and Lycoming is signed and given to Fr. Carter to have recorded immediately and given to you. It makes the property over to "The Sharon Female Academy Corporation," which Father Carter tells me is not tied to any property, but that it is perfectly independent of any property.

2. I explained to Father Carter that in making over this property to the Corporation, the Duchess and myself have no intention to allow it to be sold for any local purpose or to be used by anyone save as a loan for immediate wants, and that the loan, if taken, is to bear interest until the whole is paid to the Society for future foundations. The gift of the property was made by the Duchess of Leeds not only for one foundation, but for the establishment of the Order of the Holy Child Jesus wherever desired throughout the United States, to be paid back by each convent, yearly interest and capital during as short a period of time as the success of the establishment will allow and then to pass into another diocese, or if there is no desirable opening in the United States it is to be paid to the Mother General for future foundations wherever they may be desired and made. I will send you the sort of agreement you should sign and hand over to the Order, and also the substance of what is necessary in the loan and in requiring security which I will have done by our solicitor.

When Father Carter returned on the 24th of July, he was warmly welcomed. The children of the Assumption parish sang High Mass on the 28th, ending with the *Te Deum*. He did not go to Sharon until the 8th of August.

The summer had been spent at Sharon in painting the house from top to bottom. Mother Mary Walburga was, as one remarked, "the soul of the community" in this work, and nothing was spared to make everything as perfect as possible before the superior returned. The *Aleppo* bearing the travellers, Mothers Mary Walburga and Agnese and all came to Spring Garden Street at 8:30 P. M. The next day all went to Sharon, where the first of many happy home-comings, and typical of them, took place. When the carriage was sighted at the toll gate, the convent bell announced the arrival, and everyone hastened to the front door with words of welcome. The sisters from the city came in time for dinner, which was served under the trees, for in those days it was quite private there. The path leading to what is now the Dolor Chapel was bordered with grape arbors and there was no "back road." Seats along the sides of the path made this an ideal outdoor community room.

Fortified with the encouragement resulting from M. M. Xavier's contact with Reverend Mother Foundress, the whole community in America felt ready for anything that might be asked of them.

In September all the schools reopened. At Spring Garden, there were 38 on the first day, and by the 17th, 48, "the largest number ever registered." There were 120 in the Parochial school and 16 in the night school. At Sharon, too, the registration by the 10th was "50, our highest number of pupils."

While, to all appearances, everything was going well, there was a serious misunderstanding with Father Carter at this time. There is no record of just what it was, but it was serious enough for Mother Mary Xavier to send a "telegram by the cable" to Reverend Mother on October the second, which made her anticipate the time of her visit scheduled for the spring.

On October 3rd, Bishop Wood visited Sharon, and distributed to all medals blessed by the Holy Father. This time he asked for two holidays for the children. On the 10th he spent an hour with the nuns at Spring Garden Street.

Reverend Mother Foundress was to have been in New York on the 16th, when the *Persia* arrived. Mothers Mary Xavier and Lucy Ignatia met the boat, but were disappointed to find she had not come. Finally, on October 28th she arrived, ac-

accompanied by Mother Mary Ignatius Bridges and Sister Francis Xavier Cusack. They went to Spring Garden Street for the night.

October 29th is famous in American Annals as the date of the first and only visit Reverend Mother Foundress made to Sharon. Everything had been done to make Sharon look festive. The grounds had been greatly improved, and many glorious old trees, now gone from the scene, made the house more secluded than it later became. For instance, in front of the main door, on the avenue was the "island," a vertiable grove and a delightful place on a sunny day. It was described at a later day by "an islander":

The Island, which according to geographical definition, is no island at all, but a raised mound of grass, crowned with pine trees and surrounded by a gravel road. (Althea, December, 1903).

The Sharon Chronicle thus describes Reverend Mother Foundress' arrival at Sharon:

"Busy all morning preparing for Reverend Mother's coming. The carriage arrived at Sharon about 11½ with dear Reverend Mother, M. M. Xavier, Mother Mary Ignatius and M. M. Agnese. When the doorbell rang, there was a general rush to the hall door, and shouts of welcome and ringing of all the bells in the house. Dear Reverend Mother seemed so much exhausted and worn out, owing to the long voyage, so she rested until dinner. In the evening, the children gave her a little entertainment with which she was very much pleased. Addresses were read in English by Annie Hughes and in French by Eve de la Forest."

Reverend Mother spoke to the children for ten minutes and told them she would see them again before leaving. During the concert, Sister Aloysia, who had been Reverend Mother's first postulant in England, managed to get a seat where she could see the face of her beloved Mother. Sister Aloysia was growing old, but until the day of her death, she was indefatigable in working for the Society. They said there was nothing in the line of needlework that she could not do.

From brief entries in the journals of both convents, we find that Reverend Mother Foundress' time was spent between the two houses. On November 1st "all the professed went to Sharon." This meant a real feast day, and one never to be repeated. To Spring Garden on different days came "visitors for dearest Reverend Mother." She went to see the Bishop, and discussed business with Father Carter and the superiors at both convents. On November 5th Mary Bowen received a telegram calling her to the bedside of her dying father. This was Reverend Mother's dearly loved brother Ralph, who had become John Bowen, as has been said above. Mary left the next day. It was decided that Cornelia and Bella Bowen should return with Reverend Mother and finish their education at St. Leonard's. The feast of Saint Stanislaus Reverend Mother devoted to the novices at Sharon. They sat around her on the floor as she told of their sisters across the Atlantic, and urged them to pray for an increase in their numbers. She insisted that the only way of being sure of having their prayer answered was that they themselves should become such virtuous and generous souls that God would wish to have many more like them to work for souls.

The older girls of both schools begged for private "talks," which all remembered as minutes of grace. Nine of these girls became Sisters of the Holy Child, and always spoke of themselves as "Reverend Mother Foundress' novices."

All the nuns marveled at her spirit of detachment. The brief period of one hour was spent with her sister, Mother Peacock, at the Sacred Heart Convent. She did not visit any of the places or persons she loved. She received all who came with her usual courtesy, but she sought out no one.

One thing she spoke of very strongly was the love of labor, and said that a nun ought to be ashamed to go to bed not worn out! The more tired they were, the

more they should thank God for letting them labor for His sake.

It seems strange, but Father Carter had not yet given the deed for the property to Mother Mary Xavier, and she wrote to him while Reverend Mother was here, asking him for the deed and for the assurance that Sharon was the property of the Society. On November 16, 1867, he wrote sending the deed to M. M. Xavier and sending also the perpetual insurance on the house, receipted tax bills, etc. Before this, Reverend Mother Foundress, thinking that the Society should have some property of its own in the Diocese, had purchased two houses in course of construction at the corner of 39th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. These houses were to be finished in December, and the nuns were to open a new school there, calling it St. Leonard's House, in memory of St. Leonard's on Sea. Father Carter had become genuinely alarmed lest the nuns give up Sharon for the new convent. This, no doubt, induced him to answer Mother Mary Xavier's appeal so readily.

Before Reverend Mother returned to England, Sister Xavier Dring, who had come to America a novice, was professed, on November 21st. Reverend Mother's last visit to Sharon was on the 23rd, when she said farewell to the community, and returned to Spring Garden Street with the Bowens.

The exact date of Reverend Mother's departure is not known. On the 27th, Mother Mary Agnese and Sister Francis Xavier Cusack, who had been in Canada in quest of novices, returned to Spring Garden Street, and on the First day of December "letter forwarded to dearest Reverend Mother" is the entry for the day.

To Reverend Mother, the visit to America had been full of consolation. She found there the same fidelity to Rule and love of labor and religious observance that she saw among her English daughters, and found that those in America were scrupulously anxious to retain all the traditions she had labored so hard to found. Distance had only accentuated this love of tradition so important in a young order. Mother Mary Walburga, who had acted as infirmarian to her, was chosen by Reverend Mother to be her secretary and accompanied her on each trip to and from the city. Reverend Mother called her a little sunbeam.

One result of Mother Connelly's visit was to stimulate the nuns in learning to master the American pronunciation of geographical names. All spent their free time for three weeks in this study and Mother Mary Xavier examined them!

Reverend Mother had settled that Mother Mary Xavier should be superior of the new convent in the city, while still remaining vicarress. Mother Mary Walburga was appointed superior at Sharon and Mother Mary Agnese remained at Spring Garden Street. The motherhouse was at St. Leonard's House.

On the feast of Saint Francis Xavier, Father Carter said Mass at Sharon and in the afternoon, after benediction, the children presented two plays, "The Faithless Page, or Innocence Protected," by Reverend P. Donelan, and a farce, "Domestic Economy."

The usual concert was given on the feast of Saint Thomas and:

After the concert, the children presented Mother Mary Xavier with an image of the Sacred Heart and one of our Blessed Mother, as well as some smaller things for the new chapel in West Philadelphia.

The last part of the year was spent in getting ready for the coming changes. All the sisters except Sr. Joseph and Miss Doerflinger came to Sharon for the Christmas triduum. Father Cicaterri, S. J., gave this triduum. He had given several retreats to the community since the first one in 1864, and continued during his lifetime to be a true friend and adviser to nuns and children. That year he was changed to Georgetown. "All during this retreat, as the nuns felt a cloud of separation over them, he dwelt on the spirit of unity, urging all to make it a strong point for the future." The nuns did not feel any necessity for this effort.

One strong feature in these first laborers in the vineyard was a devoted interest in one another's work. The different convents were continually helped by mutual co-operation and exchange of labor. Over and over again we read the words: "All who could went to St. Leonard's for the concert . . . It was grand"; "M. M. Xavier came for the trial concert . . . the music was chosen for the day" . . . "Spent the day at St. Leonard's, all who could from Sharon and here . . . so enjoyed being together, etc., etc." Later sorrows, as we shall see, knit even closer these bonds of sisterly affection.

With the purchase of St. Leonard's House and the establishment of a school there, the end of the pioneer days of the Society may be said to have come. It now had property of its own, three academies and a parochial school, and a growing clientele which secured its future. From then on, while the history is interesting, there is no longer a spirit of uncertain struggling, but one of progress in the real sense of the word.

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CHAPTER V  
THE FOUNDATION OF ST. LEONARD'S HOUSE—PHILADELPHIA

1868 - 1876

The New Year of 1868 dawned on a lively scene of preparation for the opening of the new convent. Joyous anticipations of "having a convent of our own" mingled with regret at the thought of partings to come. Children vied with the nuns in providing for the new school. When the goods prepared for St. Leonard's House were assembled, it was found that two wagons were needed for transporting them. One of the Sharon girls gave, as a surprise, a basket of china—everything needed for the children's refectory. During the holidays, the children of the two academies had collected among themselves, the sum of one hundred and ten dollars for the altar plate.

News of the foundation of St. Leonard's had spread. Sister Julie of Notre Dame called at Spring Garden Street and offered an altar for St. Leonard's. Father Toner came from Towanda with a donation for the chapel.

The community as far as we can ascertain consisted of Mother M. Xavier, superior and still head of the Mission, M. Lucy Ignatia, assistant and prefect. Sisters Blandina, St. John and others. They left Sharon for their new abode on the feast of St. Agnes, January 21. Delays in the finishing of the buildings caused the opening of St. Leonard's to be postponed.

Boarders as well as day scholars made up the school, and many of the Sharon boarders at the request of their parents, because they would thus be nearer home, accompanied the nuns. St. Leonard's was, at that time, almost in the country. We read in the Spring Garden Street Journal "some of the nuns went today to St. Leonard's for a breath of fresh air."

West Philadelphia was like a suburb of the city. On all sides, large stone buildings might be seen, surrounded by well kept lawns. No shops of any kind were allowed in the neighborhood. St. James Church on 38th and Chestnut streets was prominent among the buildings of West Philadelphia. In 1852, it had been consecrated by Bishop Neuman. The parish had been organized in the vast area in the County west of the Schuylkill. It numbered forty parishsoners, adult, married or single. The present church replaced it in 1887. When our nuns opened the academy at St. Leonard's, the parish school of St. James had not been opened, and they hoped to be allowed to teach it. Mother Lucy Ignatia was especially anxious for this work.

St. Leonard's was fortunate in having for the beginning of the school some of our own children from Sharon and some also from Spring Garden Street, and everything was soon in full swing according to S.H.C.J. form. The concert in March, attended by the Bishop and many priests, gave universal satisfaction.

Mother Mary Walburga was superior at Sharon. Mother Agatha was there, and the novices helped with the teaching. This at first caused some dissatisfaction. Mr. James Willcox, whose three daughters (two of whom became Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus) were enrolled at the school, asked if it were a training school for novices. He did not however, remove his daughters, and soon all were convinced that their anxiety was unfounded. Mother Mary Walburga was a brilliant teacher and she had the exceptional power of training others to equal perfection. The Willcoxes were among the few Catholics of Revolutionary times in Philadelphia. At their home, Ivy Mills, Mass was offered for years in the very teeth of non-Catholic laws.

The relations between the three convents of the Holy Child were of the closest. Mother Mary Walburga frequently sent to the city houses, especially St. Leonard's, fresh eggs and vegetables which were a welcome gift. Mother Lucy Ignatia often exclaimed, "What would we do without Mother Mary Walburga? Mother Mary

Xavier, while at Sharon, had laid the foundation of a model country house. There was a dairy with a spring house, and the cows going to and from the pasture were a daily source of amusement to the children. The bake house was large and the girls never tired of boasting of the wonderful buns, rolls, and cakes of all kinds that the sisters made. The barnyard was large and fenced off from the rest of the grounds. It contained a duck pond, as well as a stable and chicken-house. Modern improvements have done away with all these things, but they were invaluable at a time when markets were distant and transportation poor. To pupils of those days, they afforded a richness of background which is lacking in the well kept lawns of today.

Many small happenings, interesting in themselves or because of their significance to other things, are recorded of the spring of 1868. One great event at Sharon was the reception into the Church of Mary Allen, a pupil from nearby Lansdowne, who was baptized by Father Carter in the Sharon chapel on the feast of the Annunciation. Her parents and family were opposed, but she persevered and we may look into the future and see that she died in 1946 at Alden, "one of the oldest inhabitants." Her mother was a first cousin of John Jackson who opened the Quaker Academy at Sharon. Mary Allen became Mrs. James Dougherty and lived to the age of 94, leaving sons and grandsons to do her honor.

Postage from England to America was reduced from 24 to 12 cents. Another great event at Sharon was permission to have a Repository. There had always been a low Mass on Holy Thursday, but no Sepulchre. For many years until the Holy Week Services were introduced at Sharon, Father Gallagher allowed the Repository to be in the Novices' Oratory.

The summer of 1868 and many succeeding summers saw the sisters and novices working in the garden and field. Many of the professed began at five and worked until six, the hour for meditation. Mother Mary Walburga, with several, was often in the garden at four, and worked for two hours, being always in her place in chapel for the Angelus. The evening recreations were spent by both professed and novices in weeding and watering the garden. During the hay-making time, all were employed in tossing and raking the hay. "It was a graceful sight," wrote Mother Agatha, "to see them working with the hay." A gay time they made of their occupation, and it was no doubt conducive to health, for Mother M. Walburga was always careful of the physical as well as the spiritual needs of her community. There were only two men employed on the place. Hired labor was four or five dollars a day, which meant, as we know, three or four times that today, money being of much more real value then than it is now. And the sisters were poor.

Over this peaceful scene, the shadow of death made its appearance. Sister Xavier, a promising young nun at Spring Garden Street, who had been ill for some weeks with what the doctor diagnosed as "nervous fever," was found to have typhoid. A letter from Mother Agnese to Reverend Mother Foundress on June fifth described the illness of Sister, delirium and fever, but the doctor was not alarmed as she was receiving every care. She died, however, on the sixth of July and the following letter from Mother Mary Xavier to Reverend Mother Foundress tells the story:

The Convent H. C. Jesus  
1135 Spring Garden Street  
July 9th, '68.

J. M. J.

My dear Reverend Mother,

The enclosed will tell you the sad news, at least for us; poor little Sister, we have lost a faithful, devoted worker, but she was so pleasing I am sure to our dear Lord that He wished she should quickly have her reward . . . The doctor had no idea

how near death she was; the Bishop was with her when she died. He came in just in time to say some prayers before she died and prayed for her soul when she was gone. Father Carter had given her Extreme Unction. She had the last blessing (a plenary indulgence) . . . I asked the Bishop if he would allow her to be buried at Sharon, but he objected, said we had no one buried there, etc. I said the grave is not ours in which Sister Mary Stanislaus is buried, so what were we to do? He asked if we should like to buy a lot. I did not hear him. He then said she had better be put into a vault (a general vault) for a few weeks, and went his way. Poor little Sister! We tried to comfort ourselves by thinking she was more like Our Lord, not even a place to be buried in . . . We went over to see Father Carter to see what arrangements we could make with him. . . He arranged there should be a singing Mass in the church at 8 o'clock on Wednesday morning. He would preach and then we would go to the cemetery and she should be buried with Sister Mary Stanislaus, so the poor little thing is there now. Perhaps if Sister Ignatius dies at Sharon we may be allowed to bury her there and remove the other two if the weather is cold enough.

In September, the schools opened with good prospects. Sharon, depleted in January by the exodus to Saint Leonard's House, had a good enrollment, and the Academy at Spring Garden Street numbered fifty by November. In the parish school there, a circulating library was installed. The children, among other things enjoyed a novelty in the form of a visit to the Assembly Buildings to see a panorama, "Tour through Italy." A Mr. McDonald, the owner, had given complimentary tickets. About this time, Pere Pichad wrote from Montreal promising to send some young ladies for the noviceship. This was, no doubt, the fruit of the visit made to Canada by Mothers Mary Xavier Cusack and M. Agnese when Reverend Mother Foundress was in America.

At Sharon, Sister Mary Stanislaus was professed on November 14, and on the 20th, all the members of the S.H.C.J. were enrolled in the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart.

In the meantime, the shadow of the greatest cross the little band of nuns in America had yet been called upon to bear was looming on the horizon. A simple entry in the Spring Garden Street Journal was not alarming, but like the first distant cloud before a hurricane, it was to grow large enough to overshadow their whole little world, even though the silver lining of Faith was never absent. "Oct. 19; Heard that Mother Lucy Ignatia is not well."

Day by day the beloved sister who had worn herself out by laboring for others, grew weaker, and the dread disease—consumption—gained control. Mothers Mary Walburga and Mary Agnese went almost daily from their respective convents to St. Leonard's to aid M. M. Xavier, who could not be coaxed from the sick room. The schools, however, had to go on, Sister Agatha was brought from Sharon to take M. Lucy Ignatia's class and Sister Cornelia, from Spring Garden Street to teach M. Mary Xavier's music lessons and French. From about the middle of December, M. M. Walburga remained all the time at St. Leonard's. On December 20, Mother Lucy Ignatia was anointed, and afterwards became so much better that all hoped for a cure. Prayers and novenas of Masses were uninterrupted. The nuns to the very end hoped for a miracle. Life without Mother Lucy Ignatia was just unimaginable. On the 28th. Sister Agatha wrote to Reverend Mother Foundress, from St. Leonard's:

My dearest Reverend Mother,

M. M. Xavier has asked me to write and let you know that our dear Mother Lucy Ignatia is only just alive. You have heard that she was anointed on the 20th of this month, and that for two or three days after she seemed much better again, so that we had great hopes that she would be with us two or three months longer, but Our Dear Lord is taking her to Himself sooner. No one can say how many

days she may linger yet, the priest and doctor say each time they leave that they don't expect to find her alive at the next visit. I have never seen anything like her deathbed—she is as peaceful and calm as a little baby, trusting in God and making such beautiful acts of love and confidence.

I need not tell you how thoughtful she is for all around her, so afraid of anyone's being tired or weary. Last night she asked to have some singing, so we sang the *Adeste* and two or three other hymns, and then she said she must have that sweet little hymn to St. Joseph, "Sweet spouse of the Virgin Mother." She has had the Holy Viaticum again today, and the last blessing, and while I am writing, the sisters are singing, at her request, hymns to St. Joseph and St. Francis Xavier. My dear Reverend Mother, it is not like death at all. Indeed I envy her and would be too glad to change places with her. I do not know what we shall do without her. She will be missed at every turn. It is hard to say, "Thy Will Be Done!" Father Carter has just been to see her. He seems very sad about her and says she may go at any minute, because she is so low and weak. You know she cannot be left a moment alone. Indeed, dearest Reverend Mother, I am very sorry to write you such bad news, especially at Christmas time. God must love us very much, if sending crosses is a sign of it. Fancy, two deaths in less than six months!

Mother Mary Walburga has been here since Christmas Day. She came in just as Mother Lucy Ignatia was having a dreadful hemorrhage, which was the beginning of the terrible change which has come over her. Mother Mary Walburga says she would have written to you, dear Reverend Mother, only that she cannot leave M. L. Ignatia for a moment.

Now, dearest Reverend Mother, asking a blessing and a little prayer,

I am always your grateful child,

Agatha, S.H.C.J.

P.S.—Dear Reverend Mother, M. M. Xavier has just told me to add a postscript. She says she even yet hopes against hope that Our Lord will work a miracle, as Mother Lucy Ignatia has eaten a good deal today and yesterday, too. It is very strange, but God knows best. Humanly speaking, she cannot live

Owing to conditions, the sisters made only a two days' retreat. Each day several nuns from the other houses went to see the dear invalid. On New Year's Day, a novena to the Sacred Heart was begun for Mother's recovery.

Father Carter, remembering the sadness of the last funeral, persuaded the Bishop to allow him to dedicate a part of the Sharon grounds as a cemetery. The event is thus recorded by Mother Ignatius Chadaway:

"Our friend and benefactor, Father Carter, obtained permission from the Bishop to have a portion of ground set apart and consecrated as a cemetery at Sharon. This was done during the first week of January, 1869, and the little God's acre was railed off and a cross planted in the center. On the 8th of January, Father Carter went to the Old Cathedral Cemetery and superintended the removing of our dear dead Sisters Mary Stanislaus and Xavier to Sharon. About 4:30 P. M., the hearse arrived and was met by the sisters with lighted candles and followed by them to the cemetery. Father said the usual prayers at the graves, and the sisters returned to the chapel, where Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given, and fervent acts of thanksgiving offered that our dear sisters were with us. Reverend Mother Mary Walburga who had come for the ceremony, returned the next morning to St. Leonard's. Dear Mother Lucy Ignatia was grateful that she would lie amongst the sisters at Sharon.

The Sharon Journal adds to this:

After the usual prayers and ceremonies, the sisters returned singing the *Miserere*. Patrick filled up the grave with so much reverence that it made quite an impression on the sisters. Father Carter gave Benediction in the evening. How

happy the sisters feel to have our dear departed ones so near us. It seems as if they had been given back to us. M. M. Xavier had to go back to the city as dear Mother Lucy Ignatia is very ill. God grant she may soon be better! Fiat!

Everyone said that Mother's sickroom was like that of a saint, and each one felt that the dear one was giving her life for the Society. On one occasion when she told Father Martin, pastor of St. James, who often administered the Sacraments to her, that she thought perhaps she was not conscious enough to make the right preparation for Holy Communion, he said: "Sister, have confidence in Our Lord's merits, and do not fear anything!" She said, very softly, "Father, I have confidence—I would be ashamed to be afraid." Her love of poverty was singularly shown all during her sickness. Reverend Mother Foundress had sent her a little picture of the Holy Child a dove in His Hands and a little lamb at His Feet. She remarked that it was the kind of picture Reverend Mother would like. It was pinned on the bed curtain where she could see it. She said, when she noticed that the heat of the room was causing it to curl up, "Please take it down. It ought to be cared for." The wondrous charm of her personality remained to the end. The intensity of her sufferings could not lessen her solicitude for others, and her smile seemed to grow sweeter and more otherworldly. It is hard to believe that one so young—thirty-one—at the time of her death—could be so mature in judgment as she had been. No doubt, Reverend Mother hoped she would live for many years to carry on her marvellous work for souls among the nuns and children in America. Father Carter said, "She is such a simple little soul, and yet so highly gifted." This summed up her character very comprehensively.

On January 17th, that year the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, Mother was unconscious all day. While the nuns hoped against hope, they were obliged to send for Father Martin at nine o'clock in the evening. He gave the last absolution and blessing. After his departure, all the nuns assembled and said the prayers for the dying. They had often been said during the past three weeks. Mother Agatha records:

"When the prayers were concluded, the Messenger came—the dove was freed from the net and the happy soul entered into the Kingdom prepared for her from all eternity. This death was an awful blow to our dear Mother Mary Xavier, who knew so well the value of the one who had been her comfort and stay for the weary years of struggle and privations of every kind which attended the first foundations in a strange land. But God knows what is best, and He wanted her for Himself. . . . ours was the loss, her's the gain . . . On the 21st, the feast of dear St. Agnes, just one year after she had gone to St. Leonard's House, she was brought out of it never more to return, and laid in our dear little cemetery, making the third mound in that peaceful spot. Dear Mother Mary Walburga had been all devotedness to our dear Mother Mary Xavier, doing all that her great heart suggested to make the trial as light as possible. Indeed, all were full of love and obedience, ready to sacrifice their own wishes in every way."

The first funeral to take place from our own chapel was that of Mother Lucy Ignatia. In some ways it differed from our way of conducting funerals today, and the entire account from the Sharon Journal, written in Mother Agatha's handwriting, will be of interest to all:

"Jan. 20th, '69. The morning was spent in getting the school hall ready to remove the Blessed Sacrament from the chapel, as the requiem Mass was to be there. All was ready by three o'clock in the afternoon. The altar was dressed in white and silver. The statues of Our Lady and St. Joseph were both brought down. The bier was black and white, looped with flowers, the candlesticks covered with white—all looked quiet and peaceful. About half-past three the sisters assembled in the vestibule with lighted candles and six of the professed carried in the coffin which contained the remains of one dearly loved by all, and placed it on the

catafalque prepared. The children were assembled in the chapel—candles lighted. The coffin lid was unscrewed. After a little while, some prayers were said for the repose of the soul of our dear sister. Then the children retired and the sisters took the lid off and placed flowers, sent by the children and many kind friends, round dear Mother Lucy Ignatia. There was no hurry nor bustle, all seemed done in quiet and peace. In fact, Sister herself, looked as if she brought peace with her in death as she always did when alive. The children all came to look at their dear mistress once more, and I am sure their prayers for her came from their hearts, for she was loved by all. Father Carter came too, and he seemed touched by all he saw.

“The sisters watched in turns by the remains of our dear Sister all night, praying for her and begging her to pray for us. The Reverend Father James Fitzmaurice came next morning about half-past six and said the first Mass, at which all the sisters communicated. Then all was got ready for the requiem Mass which was said by the Revd. C. I. H. Carter. The sisters sang the usual Mass which was very sweet and solemn. All the children she had taught who could possibly come from both schools were present; also many seculars. After Mass and the usual prayers, Father Carter said a few words, relating to our loss—very kind ones but still far short of what she really was; indeed, as he said, we knew the worth and virtue of our dear Sister more than he did. But God’s Will be done! We all envy her, and hope she has received the crown so well earned. We had only to look at the smile which lit up her face even after death for consolation and hope. After all was over, the sisters put on the lid which hid from their sight a truly loved companion and Sister, and six of the professed carried her to her grave, which thank God! is near us! God alone knows the hearts and feelings of the whole community, as they stood around that grave. They are too sacred to even attempt to describe.”

It is a tradition that the catafalque, on which Mother Lucy Ignatia’s body rested stood just inside the folding doors of the community room, which was then the schoolhall, although no mention is made of this in any of the notes.

Mother Agatha’s notes quoted below, give us a few details about the changes caused by Mother Lucy Ignatia’s death. She writes:

“Mother Mary Agnese was removed from her office at Spring Garden Street, and took the place of dear Mother Lucy Ignatia as assistant and perfect in the school at St. Leonard’s House, while Sister Agatha was sent to Spring Garden Street in charge of the convent and school, subject to M. M. Xavier. How long it was before we could realize that the one on whom we had leaned for support and consolation in troubles had really gone home, and had left us still to struggle! Mother Mary Xavier never thoroughly recovered from the shock she received in that death. Her whole life was a longing after Heaven until God in His infinite Mercy took her but seven years later.”

This is easy to understand when we recall that during the first seven years of the American foundation when M. M. Xavier had been superior, quietly and unobtrusively by her side, Mother Lucy Ignatia had been a trusted adviser and co-worker. So loyal was she that whenever we have any data of those days we find them acting as one. In every trial, on all occasions of business, the two names occur as one. Mother Lucy Ignatia had a wonderful power of self-effacement, asking no consideration, no privilege except to bear her part of the burden—an angel of sweetness to each and every sister, so that when she “had gone home” her loss was a personal grief to everyone. The lesson of detachment was one that the whole Mission learned, each in her own way. To M. M. Xavier this was especially true. Worn out by hard labor, never robust, often ill of malaria or rheumatism, but with dauntless spirit, she had found in Mother Lucy Ignatia a noble, staunch lieutenant on whom she unconsciously leaned. How often it is the

unsuspected person who is really the strong force in communities! At the time of Mother Lucy Ignatia's death, the disease of which M. M. Xavier died a few years later began to show itself. It was a sore on her forehead, just above the eyes. Doctors failed to diagnose this, and found that when it was treated and made to close the pain was unbearable, and if left open, necessitated the wearing of a linen bandage across the forehead. Many times, for hours she was compelled to sit like one dead to all around, while the compassionate nuns could do nothing to relieve her. She insisted on tending to this wound unaided. This was the beginning of her real *Via Dolorosa* and it lasted for seven years. Mother Mary Agnese, her assistant, and Mother Mary Walburga, who came at least twice a week, often every day, stood by her valiantly. To the latter, especially, who was not only superior at Sharon, but Novice Mistress, and taught in the school each day, this was a severe physical test, and the sisters were uneasy about her. We often read in the *Journals*, words like these:

Mother Mary Walburga ill again; she has too much to do!

It is interesting to note the absence of old and experienced nuns. The oldest nun in America was Sister Aloysia, 43. Then in order, Mother M. Xavier, 42; M. Agatha, 34; Mother M. Walburga, 32; Mother M. Agnese, 31, and Mother Antonia 27.

At the time of their bereavement, Bishop Wood was most fatherly, calling at each convent and condoling with the sisters for a loss he could fully appreciate. At Sharon, he visited the cemetery and blessed each grave. Father Carter, who felt Mother's death as a personal loss, frequently offered the Holy Sacrifice for her soul, especially at Sharon, where as many as could assembled in the morning. Father Toner came from Towanda. Friends from that place often came to visit her grave, and friends from Philadelphia, who never tired of singing the praises of one they loved and admired. Like the Bishop's words: "She was a devoted and perfect religious," all they said might be added up to just that encomium. The children kept flowers on her grave, and made offerings for Masses for her soul. One of the older ones remarked that her memory was like a sweet perfume, pervading the cloisters. Mrs. Weston wrote, telling of an almost miraculous answer to prayers for a financial settlement long delayed, and coming soon after Mother's death.

Meanwhile, in all the schools the usual round of concerts, examinations, retreats for children went on. This year we find Bishop Wood at concerts and at the distributions at all three academies. He always expressed approval of the children's efforts. At St. Leonard's, he remarked that they played like professionals. This was no small praise from him, and consequently greatly encouraging to the nuns.

This year at Sharon, we find the first mention of St. Walburga's feast being kept in the house. For thirty-four years this was the great feast during the school year, there. The fact that St. Walburga was a special patroness of the Society increased interest in the feast. Among the nuns, there was a great devotion to this saint. People often came for the oil of St. Walburga for their sick. We read for instance, in the *Spring Garden Street Journal* about this time:

"Two blind girls sent by Father O'Reilly, came to ask for some oil of St. Walburga."

A sister at St. Leonard's on Sea had been formerly miraculously cured by this Saint, and Mother Mary Walburga had been given the name because she had been cured of a throat ailment during a novena to her while Mother was a postulant.

An idea of the manner of celebrating the feast may be derived by reading a quotation from the *Sharon Journal* for April 30th. 1869.

"All was ready for the feast by four o'clock, and at five, M. M. Xavier and M. M. Walburga returned from West Philadelphia. They all went to the different rooms where new things had been put up (blinds, etc.). Then the children presented, in a

Tableau, the rest of the things—a new tabernacle (the old one let in insects) old embroidery put on new materials for tabernacle veils; corporals, vases, couvrepieds, etc., with two cushions for clothings.

“May 1. The sisters came out from St. Leonard’s and Spring Garden Street for the day. For the evening the children acted “Ici on parle Francais” and “A Quiet Family”—They were excellently done. After refection, the sisters returned home. The children had a very merry evening.”

In April, 1869, Father Carter made out the following report of the Convents of the Holy Child Jesus in Philadelphia.

Number in Community .....	9
Number in Day School .....	55
Number in Poor School .....	200
Prepared for Baptism .....	2
Prepared for first Confession .....	377
Prepared for first Communion .....	123
Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Sharon	
Number in Community, 14 Novices .....	5
Number in Boarding School .....	34
Prepared for Baptism .....	8
Prepared for first Confession .....	18
Prepared for first Communion .....	14
Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, St. Leonard’s House	
Number in Community .....	11
Number in Boarding School .....	23
Number in Day School .....	24
Prepared for Baptism .....	1
Prepared for first Confession .....	7
Prepared for first Communion .....	3

I have known the Sisters of the Holy Child since they came to Philadelphia in 1863. Their qualifications, training, labours in the cause of education have met with the entire approbation of the Bishop of the Diocese of Philadelphia, as also of the Reverend Clergy, in whose congregations they have schools. The Right Reverend Doctor Wood not being at home, I sign the above in his behalf.

C. I. H. Carter,  
for the Rt. Rev. J. F. Wood,  
Bishop of Philadelphia.

At St. Leonard’s the nuns were at first entirely dependent on Father Martin, pastor of St. James Church, for daily Mass, and that, of course, depended on the stress of his own work. Father Carter was appointed in the spring of this year extraordinary confessor for all three convents. His efforts to obtain the services of a regular chaplain for St. Leonard’s were successful, and on May 12, Father O’Brien became chaplain. Father Carter was also interested in obtaining a charter for St. Leonard’s. In the Spring Garden Street Journal for May 16, we find the words: “Sister Agatha has just finished copying the Charter for St. Leonard’s for Father Carter.”

Other events chronicled for May were the customary May Processions at Sharon and especially the one on the last day when the letters to Our Lady were burned before Our Lady’s statue on the front lawn. On the 19th a very welcome letter from England told the nuns that Dr. Grant had at last given permission for Reverend Mother Foundress to go to Rome on the business of the approbation of the Rule. Mothers M. Veronica Frondutti and M. Theophila Laprimaudaye were to accompany her. In July they were to hear that news about the Rule was good. They rejoiced, not knowing of the disappointment that lay ahead.

The retreat this year was at St. Leonard's. It was given by Father Cicaterri, S.J., and ended on July 29. Spring Garden Street Convent was closed, and the nuns went from Sharon except Mother Blandina, Sisters Berchmans and Lucy. Several boarders from St. Leonard's spent the days of retreat at Sharon.

The heat was unusually severe, often 104 in the shade, which however, did not prevent extensive painting and white-washing at Sharon by the indefatigable nuns.

The Church of St. Clements at Paschallville was formally opened on the Feast of the Assumption, 1869. The parish, as noted before, had been founded in September, 1865. The pastor, Father Andrew Gallagher, was still the chaplain at Sharon. In the afternoon of the Feast, the Bishop with Fathers Carter, McConomy, Mulholland and Dr. O'Hara called at Sharon at about half-past three and remained until seven. They had supper on the island, and seemed to enjoy themselves.

Sharon's Journal for August 30, notes the arrival of the second novice from Towanda. "Ellen Dunn came to school today." When she was seventeen, she entered the novitiate, and later became one of the pillars of the Society.

Schools reopened in September, but owing to the excessive heat few children appeared for weeks—many being at the shore—. About this time, Father Carter intercepted a child with her father, on Chestnut Street. They were en route to another school, but he induced the father to take her to Sharon instead. He was always ready to grasp any opportunity to increase the registration of the Holy Child schools, often, as in this case, to the embarrassment of the nuns.

Events followed one another rapidly this fall. On the 23 of September, the Bishop called at St. Leonard's to give his blessing before going to Rome. Mother Mary Xavier gave him the children's offerings for the Holy Father. After dinner, he went to Sharon with Fathers Carter and O'Neill and Doctor O'Connor. The children there acted *Monsieur Tonsor*. M. M. Xavier and several sisters who had come were all well pleased with the way the children acted their parts. The Bishop and clergy stayed for supper, leaving about eight in the evening. Bishop Wood also called at the convent, Spring Garden Street, to give his blessing before going to Rome.

The same day, Mother M. Agnese and Sister M. Bernard went to Montreal in order to escort two postulants to Sharon.

On the 29th, Emma Hughes from Philadelphia received the hood. Mother M. Agnese returned on the 2nd of October with the two young ladies from Montreal. One of these went with Mother to Sharon two days later, and the JOURNAL remarks, "She is young and looks very nice." A new postulant arrived on the 5th, "fresh from Ireland." It looked as if the novitiate was becoming cosmopolitan.

The Bishop sailed for Rome on the 25th, leaving Father Carter administrator.

Good news came on the 29th, "Heard we are to have a house in France" was the Journal entry.

The feast of St. Charles was a memorable one at Sharon this year. To quote the chronicle:

"The feast of St. Charles is here at last. Sisters Angela, Celestine, Gabriel, Austin and Clare made their vows, and Annie Coady, Annie McGeady and Mary McElwee were clothed, receiving the names of Cecily, Agnes and Charles. The ceremonies were very imposing. The novices read their vows very clearly and with the heart. This made a deep impression on some of the children, who seemed to be still more impressed with the value and perfection of the religious life, D. G. The singing was simple but very nice. Sister Mary Bernard having lost her voice, the treble was sustained by one of the children (M. Kelly) who did both herself and her teacher credit. The children from St. Leonard's came for the ceremony,

and returned before dinner. The 1st and 2nd classes went to the woods for green to decorate the stage. They were very edifying. In the afternoon, Father McConomy came and stayed for the play. The sisters from Spring Garden Street also were here. The children acquitted themselves very well. Father McConomy said he would write and tell the Bishop what pleasure he had missed. The entertainment consisted of "King Rene's Daughter," "Antidote," and a tableau of the death of St. Charles.

Three brief entries in the Spring Garden Street Journal at this time are thought provoking:

Nov. 15—Mr. and Mrs. Harry Connelly called today. Father Carter asked for the Rules.

Nov. 19—Note from M. M. Xavier about the Rules. No doubt M. M. Xavier refused to give Father Carter the Rules. One wonders if he had been hearing rumors from Rome about Father Anselmo's work on our Rule.

This year the children produced their first French play for M. M. Xavier's feast. As she had to be at St. Leonard's for the feast, she came to Sharon on the first of December. "Scenes from Athalia" was the title of the play. Mother brought with her Mademoiselle Levecque ("One of the ladies from Canada") who praised the accent and style of the young actors. The children's offerings were a beautiful lace alb, an altar cloth, coverings for the communion rails and vases for St. Leonard's.

The next day, "the willows and poplars were planted near the cemetery which, by this time, looks beautiful."

Before Christmas, the numbers in the academy at Spring Garden Street reached 68, the highest number yet registered.

The custom of sending letters to Mother Foundress for the feast of Saint Thomas, her patron, was continued until her death. This year they were sent on the 11th, allowing two weeks for the transit. Reverend Mother was then at Hyeres, and on the 21st, the first Mass was said at the convent there. Father Fenton, afterwards Bishop of Amyela, was their voluntary chaplain at the time. He had been cured the year before by using the oil of St. Walburga and by Reverend Mother's prayers. He called himself "Reverend Mother's spoilt child." As a gift for the Epiphany, Mother Mary Xavier sent Reverend Mother, in the name of the American Mission, six copies of the Roman Martyrology, photographs of the sisters, and six volumes that would be of interest to Reverend Mother.

We find on the last page of the *Sharon Journal*, for 1869, a prophetic paragraph:

"All preparing for New Year's Day. What will the old year tell of the past? Many trials, many crosses, and God grant that they may have been borne with the proper spirit and gained for us all many blessings. God bless us all and give us strength and grace for the coming year!"

In the light of what we know today, this prayer was sorely needed. The years from the March of 1870 until 1879, when the prohibition of final vows was revoked, were dark days for the Society, and the American Vicariate, so far away from the Motherhouse, had its own peculiar trials. Having no record of these, we can only piece together the fragments we have, with what we find in the life of Reverend Mother published in 1922.

When Mother Mary Xavier received the amended Rule made under the direction of Father Anselmo, under Propaganda, she did not give it to the sisters. She considered that it did not apply outside of England, and as far as we can ascertain, if she told Mother Mary Walburga and some of the older nuns about this rule, she did not allow them to speak of it to the others. Neither did the Bishop know of it. Clothings and professions went on as usual, although Bishop Grant's prohibition of final vows weighed heavily on all. The names of the novices of

those days were worthy of being recorded. They had much to bear in the ways of delays that could not be explained to them, for Dr. Grant often deferred the professions, for reasons known only to himself! He knew of the general unrest occasioned by the Rule's not yet being approved by Rome. The fidelity of those much tried novices prevented any gap in the line of the professed during the years of trial. More than one had been seriously warned by well meaning priests that the future of the Society was insecure. From 1869 until 1876, there were only 19 novices professed. In the year 1870, no one was professed, and in 1874, only nine were professed.

The following is the list:

In 1871, Anne Doerflinger, a child from Spring Garden Street Academy, whose religious name was Sr. M. Bernard, with Sisters Eligius Keyes, and Lucy Laine, made their vows. In 1872, Sisters St. Anthony and St. Rita Hughes were professed. In 1873, Sisters Annunziata Levecque, Imelda Cahill, Agnes McGaedy and St. Charles McElwee made their vows. In 1874, Sisters Gertrude Tobin, St. Paul Contrell, St. Michael Dunn, Elizabeth Hayes and Barbara Fitzpatrick; in 1875, Sisters Realino Murray, Scholastica Quinn, Mary Aloysia Hughes, St. Thomas Picot, St. Augustine Nearn and Hilda Lynch were professed.

Some of these had been novices four years! Bishop Wood, too, was chary of allowing the novices to be professed, although he did not know the troubles as the nuns knew them. With two exceptions, those of Sisters St. Paul and St. Augustine, all persevered in religion and lived until old age, edifying their sisters and others. Their names will recur on these pages.

During these trying days, the schools continued to flourish. In February (3) 1870, St. James Parochial School was opened by our sisters. Mother Lucy Ignatia had always been anxious to have this school, which was in preparation when St. Leonard's was opened. Mother Mary Agnese, Sisters Angela and Gabriel were the first nuns there. They lived at St. Leonard's House, only a block away. The task was difficult, for the children had been trained in the public school, and there was much to be desired in their behaviour in many ways. In a short time, however, the nuns were consoled to find that they responded to the constant efforts and the prayers of their teachers. Here, as in all the schools when we were free to choose, the Society syllabus and methods were applied.

By this time our nuns were becoming known. An extract from *The Sunday Mercury*, for Feb. 13, 1870, will interest many:

"Hundreds of parents are entirely unaware of the exceeding educational advantages extended to young ladies by the academies of various religious orders of the Catholic Church. We were never more forcibly impressed with the excellence of these seminaries than when last week visiting the Convent School of St. Leonard's, 39th and Chestnut Streets. The sisters here are natives of England. Each has charge of a special branch of education, and in music, drawing, painting, and Belles lettres they are as successful as in laying the solid foundation on which these accomplishments form the graceful superstructure. The sisters take day pupils as well as boarders. We strongly recommend to our readers having daughters to educate to send them to this seminary. Many people withhold their daughters from the society of Catholic ladies from the nervous fear lest they should ultimately embrace the Catholic Faith. Of this there is nothing said except to those whose parents desire it. There are numerous Protestants among the resident pupils of the school, and the sweet and holy peace that pervades the very atmosphere of the place is enjoyed alike by all. One thing we will guarantee, that though a girl may lack the capacity to become erudite, she will inevitably graduate a lady—

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(3) See St. Leonard's Journal February 1, 1907.

pure and good."

This excerpt is in keeping with the style of the time, and needs no comment.

In the meantime, it would almost seem that each time the Society opened a new school, it was a signal for the death of one of its members, the opening of Sharon being the exception. Sister St. Edward Clack had been a child at school at St. Leonard's on Sea when Mother Lucy Ignatia was prefect, and had imbibed many sterling characteristics from her saintly example. She had an older sister in the Society in England, and when she came to America, a novice, she found the same gentle, but firm influence, for Mother Lucy Ignatia was then mistress of novices at Sharon. When Mother Lucy Ignatia died of consumption, already the first signs of the dread disease were apparent in Sister St. Edward. For nearly two years, she suffered with edifying patience and courage. It was remarkable that she was able until the last week of her life to teach drawing and fancy needlework, although she was not able to teach in the classroom. She was actually on an embroidered tabernacle veil when the call came. She had been at Mass nearly every day, and was anointed and received the Holy Viaticum only a quarter of an hour before she breathed her last. Only 21 years of age, she left behind her the memory of a life devoted to duty, and a special love for Holy Poverty. She was laid to rest at Sharon, making the fourth mound in the cemetery. December 18th the feast of Our Lady's Expectation, was the date of her death.

In the summer of 1871, Mother Mary Walburga, with the advice and financial assistance of Father Carter, was able to make a much needed addition to the Sharon Convent. A mansard roof was built on the house, giving a fourth story, large and airy. The wing, 20 by 20 feet, was extended thirty-seven feet, and the Mansard roof built over the whole structure. The rooms added gave a laundry on the first floor, with men's quarters cut off and having a separate entrance; a community room, on the second floor, also cut off to give a men's sleeping room; and novices' quarters on the third and fourth floor. The new story in the old convent allowed the classrooms and children's quarters to be together.

While the work on the new building was in progress, the entire roof, through some stupidity on the part of the builders, was removed, and the summer rains, falling as they often did at night, flooded the whole house and water poured down the stairs. The community rose, night after night, to fight the flood and save what they could from the ravages of the water. Armed with brushes, brooms, even dustpans, they swept up the water, swept some of it down the stairs and out of doors. All this had to be done by the light of lanterns or candles, and occasionally, by the flashes of lightning that were frequent accompaniments of the storm. Mother Mary Walburga was the first one up and the last one to leave the scene of wreckage. Her greatest anxiety was for the safety of the Blessed Sacrament. The chapel had been moved into Saint Teresa's parlor. One night it seemed as if all her prayers had been in vain, for a leak appeared on the chapel ceiling. By covering the altar with cloths, and holding open umbrellas over the tabernacle, the nuns succeeded in keeping it dry. One of them said that the sisters had never seen Mother Mary Walburga so distressed. She prayed, with tears streaming down her face, that they might not be deprived of their Treasure by damage to the altar. During the summertime, after night recreation, she would often lead the community to the room of the new story still under construction, and they would sing the Magnificat in thanksgiving for the protection of that night. The nuns always blamed the exposure of those nights for the death of Mother Mary Sebastian. She contracted a heavy cold which could not be cured, and consumption developed. She died on July 16, 1871, at the age of 36. Mother had come to America with the second set of nuns and had been a quiet, but successful teacher. When it was found that her illness was incurable, she was taken to St. Leonard's House where she could be near the doctor. Mother Agatha wrote:

"Our dear Sister breathed her last in great peace, and was laid to rest in the peaceful cemetery at Sharon, and the fifth grave with its white wooden cross appeared in that holy spot.

Another account tells that Mother Mary Sebastian died after saying: "How sweet it is to die!"

Loss of the house and school journals between 1869 and 1876 (except one brief one for Sharon for the year 1873 and a few months of 1874) makes us dependent on the Sacristy Registers, the Sharon School Register and Mother Foundress' Life for any details of these years.

We find that four children were confirmed by Bishop Wood in the Sharon chapel. For many years he followed the custom of confirming in the chapel. The first confirmation class in 1865 consisted of two, and in 1866 he confirmed four in his own chapel in Philadelphia. There were two in each of the following years, while in 1869, there were 18, nine of whom came from St. Leonard's.

At Sharon, in the September of 1873, we find the McMaster girls. Helen had come in 1871, at the age of 9, and had made her first Communion on June 12, 1873. Mr. McMaster and the two older sisters, Mary and Gertrude, came for the occasion and received Holy Communion with her. Mr. James A. McMaster was the pioneer Catholic journalist of the United States. As editor of the *Freeman's Journal* he was a noted protagonist for the Faith, and admired or feared as the case might be, he was one to be coped with. He was a devoted father and to the children—three girls and a boy, he strove to be both father and mother after their saintly mother died. Mary and Gertrude were on the roll at Sharon in the September of 1873, as we have noted. All three finished at Sharon. Mary, or Mollie, became our Mother St. John, and Helen and Gertrude both entered Carmel. Mother Mary Walburga, like Reverend Mother Foundress, while she was devotedly attached to these motherless children, bade them Godspeed in their chosen vocation. Her attitude won the unstinted praise of Mr. McMaster, expressed in a letter to the Prioress of Carmel.

Probably Msgr. Brann made Mr. McMaster acquainted with Sharon, although Elizabeth Fetterman (probably a niece of Mrs. McMaster) had been at Sharon before the McMaster children. Mr. McMaster was always a loyal friend of Sharon, and we find a long line of New Yorkers coming at this time to Sharon, many of whom entered the Society. When asked by a friend in New York what he thought of the school at Sharon, he said: "Do you think it is for nothing that I send my beloved daughter a hundred miles from home?" He always insisted that the training and teaching of the Holy Child nuns were superior to anything else among English speaking schools.

An amusing episode is recounted for the 22nd of March of this year. The men's old house had been sold and was being drawn away by eight horses, a sight to delight the eyes of the boarders. On the eighth of April the *Journal* entry had these words:

"The Men's old house, which was sold and stuck in the mud in the middle of the Avenue on March 22, was removed today!"

In May, we find that our man of all work, Michael by name, had converted a whole family. The father, Enoch, who worked on the place, and his wife (both English) were baptized with their three little children on May 4, 1874. Michael acted as sponsor.

Meanwhile, the trouble concerning the Rule continued. It was augmented in the summer of 1874 when Bishop Danell, who had succeeded Bishop Grant, presented the assembled delegates to the general chapter with an entirely new Rule, drawn up and written under his direction by a Father Bosio, without consultation with a single member of the Society. It was diametrically opposed to their Rule in word and spirit. This was the first general chapter of the Society, and the members

were obliged to accept the new Rule for three years. Bishop Danell realized that the new Rule was unacceptable to the vast majority of the nuns, but he insisted on its being tried for three years. At the end of this time they could return and represent to him their views. To this chapter Mother Mary Walburga White, Mother Helen Green and Mother Walburga Moore were sent as delegates. The Vicarress, at that time, did not have the right to go in her own person, and whether she refused election or on account of her health was not voted for, is not known. Reverend Mother Foundress was almost unanimously elected General, and Mother Helen, one of the four assistants.

The nuns, Reverend Mother Foundress leading, had to submit to the authority of their Bishop, but did not do so without dignified protest. Only the almost miraculous fidelity of the great majority of the nuns at this crisis prevented a schism in the Society. Reverend Mother Foundress, as we know, did not live to see the restoration of our Rule, but she said with finality suggestive of prophecy, that we should have our Rule restored in its entirety. In the meantime, she counselled, and most of the nuns obeyed her, that all should obey the letter of the new rule but try to preserve the spirit of their own, and in good time appeal to Rome. No one suffered more than the Foundress who, by the new rule, was deprived of all real authority, and lived in the Motherhouse almost as a subject. It was part of the cross she bore so lovingly and perseveringly.

When the two delegates returned, Mother Mary Xavier was persuaded that Bishop Danell had no authority to impose this rule outside his diocese. In this had she known it, Bishop Wood and several English bishops concurred. The bishops especially resented the words in Dr. Danell's rule, naming him "Bishop Superior of the Institute." Mother Mary Xavier made the great mistake of her life when she suppressed the Rule. The severity of her illness is the only excuse. Had she been open with Bishop Wood (who became Archbishop of the new Province of Philadelphia in February, 1875) much suffering to herself and others would have been prevented. To her, as to many, fidelity to the rule she had promised at profession to obey seemed to demand a refusal to accept a new one at the dictate of any bishop. On the other hand, had she not been worn out by illness and constant pain which obscured her usually clear judgment, she would have realized that her duty lay in submission, as Reverend Mother counselled.

The crisis came when Bishop Danell sent to Archbishop Wood, in 1875, without letter or comment, a copy of his rule. Thinking that Reverend Mother had been guilty of this discourtesy, the Archbishop was, of course, indignant and expressed his indignation in no sweet words. When he ascertained the true state of affairs, he declined to acknowledge the rule, refused to admit novices to profession, or postulants to the habit, until the affair should be settled by Rome. Many bishops and priests, friends of the nuns, suggested that they break off from England and become diocesan, but they were splendidly loyal.

Mother Connelly was unable to come to America and sent two delegates, Mother Agnes Orr and Mother Aloysia Frankish to take her place. Their visit brought consolation, while they had really not much consolation to offer, and it pleased the Archbishop who always appreciated respect for his office.

The Archbishop took affairs into his own hands with regard to the Society in his diocese, and, to quote from Reverend Mother's life, by Mother Mary Catherine:

"He declared Mother Mary Xavier incapacitated by illness for her office, and requested that she be recalled to England. At the same time, he named Mother Mary Walburga White Superior of the American houses. He wrote to Mother Connelly (June 8, 1876):

"All this we do in virtue of our authority as Ordinary over these good sisters, who are most of them our own children, without intending to forestall or prejudge

any decision of the Holy See on the subject of your Rules and Constitutions.”

The delegates, in the meantime, were charmed and edified by all they witnessed in America—Mother Mary Walburga’s influence, so obvious everywhere, the union among themselves under Mother Mary Xavier’s motherly rule, and the happy religious demeanor of all the nuns. Mother Agnes Orr told the nuns more than once how blessed they were to have Mother Mary Walburga as their Vicaress. She said that Mother Connelly had absolute confidence in her discretion and loyalty to the Society. Mother’s deference to superiors was evident to everyone, and to this she added a quality that endeared her to all—a thoughtfulness and true motherly solicitude for their well-being. In Philadelphia the heat of 1876 was proverbial. It was the great Centennial year, and thousands of visitors from all over the country crowded the historic city. The English nuns had come quite unprepared for the intense heat. One morning, on rising, they were surprised to find, on a chair beside the bed, an entirely new outfit ready to be donned. It was of the lighter material the American nuns had been forced to substitute for the heavy English merino worn by our nuns across the ocean. “No one but Mother Mary Walburga could have done it” was their verdict.

Mother Mary Xavier had one great consolation before her departure. The Archbishop revoked his decision, and allowed the waiting postulants to be clothed. On the first of May, Helena Verrier, Sister Francis Regis and Sisters St. John Kainross, Anastasia Fitzpatrick, and Margaret Callahan received the habit from the hands of the Archbishop. Mother Mary Walburga presented the candidates and Mother Mary Xavier witnessed the happy event.

On May 13, the two English visitors, Mothers Mary Xavier, Mary Walburga, and Mary Agnese went to New York. It was a sad farewell, heartbreaking to many, for Mother Mary Xavier was loved by all the nuns and, naturally, they had hoped to be able to care for her until the end. In England, her health at first seemed to improve and she was able to give music lessons at Mark Cross. The children, seeing her in the cloister and chapel, called her “the saint.” Suddenly, on December 20, all alone, she died. She was buried at Mayfield, where the nuns often visited her grave on their different journeys as delegates. Her recall and death caused great suffering to the American nuns. True to her usual loyalty, Mother Foundress had never told them of the Archbishop’s ultimatum, and took the entire responsibility of her recall upon herself. There were, no doubt, some who resented the seemingly hard sentence imposed on one who had borne the heat and burden of the day. Mother Mary Walburga considered these days the hardest of her life, and could never speak of them without pain even twenty-five years later, when the nuns wished to celebrate the silver jubilee of her superiorship at Sharon as head of the American Mission.

With the year 1876 ends an important chapter in the annals of the Society in America, and marks the beginning of a new development of the Society in several ways. Mother Mary Walburga was to be the leading spirit of the development and growth of that body in America until her death, twenty-seven years later, in 1903. As we have seen, her loyal support of Mother Mary Xavier during the trying years before her recall to England had fitted her for the burden to be placed on her young shoulders. She was thirty-nine years of age, having been a superior since her twenty-seventh year. The whole history of the Society in America is intimately bound up with the life of Mother Mary Walburga White.

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CHAPTER VI  
GROWTH OF THE SOCIETY

1876 - 1883

The period from 1876 until 1883 was an important one in the history of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus in America. It corresponds to the time when the Society was undergoing an intensive training in humiliation and sufferings, culminating in the death, in 1879, of Mother Connelly who was heroically endeavoring to save for her children the Rule embodying her high ideals for them.

The death of Pierce Connelly in 1881, and that of Bishop Danell in 1883, removed the last obstacles to the attainment of her desires. Her unshakable hope for the triumph of the Rule was realized a few years later.

During this period, the Society in America, small as the proverbial mustard seed, was growing in inward vigor and preparing to expand into three western States, and to open several parochial schools in the Philadelphia Archdiocese. Thirty-one novices were received during these seven years. Most of them were from our own schools.

The gentle and firm hand of Mother Mary Walburga White guided the American Mission, and afterwards the Province, until her death in 1903. Her loyalty during recent trials had proved that the confidence placed in her by Mother Connelly was fully justified. When left in charge of the Mission she had suffered poignantly, not only on account of Mother Mary Xavier's illness and removal from office, but because of the circumstances accompanying the latter. The nuns, as we know, had never been told that the Archbishop had insisted on Mother Mary Xavier's recall—only the older ones knew—and there must have been some who blamed Mother Mary Walburga.

One is amazed at the amount of work Mother Mary Walburga accomplished. She was an excellent teacher and for years taught in the Sharon school, until the accumulation of duties obliged her to relinquish classroom routine. Even then, she supervised the teaching of the nuns. Many times each year we find her visiting one or another of the city schools, both academies and parochial schools, especially for the examinations. Frequently she and Mother Mary Agnese, together with Mother Agatha, the Superior of the Assumption, were present at the oral examinations.

The priests of the parish were present at the religious examinations, which were formal and comprehensive, Father Carter always presiding at those of Sharon and the two city academies. Other priests often accompanied him, and expressed surprise and pleasure at the extent of the children's knowledge and the poise they displayed.

There were also every year, at least three concerts in each school, and to these as well as to the "trial concerts" that preceded them, came the three superiors to encourage and criticise. As many of the community as could do so attended these concerts, and the Bishop never missed one if he could help it.

St. Teresa's was kept at Sharon by the combined communities, and to this and the different superior's feasts, the journal notes that "as many as could possibly go were present." In all these activities, Mother Mary Walburga was always to be found, encouraging by her generous praise, and keeping alive the "Cor unum et anima una" so dear to Mother Foundress' heart.

As the years passed and the work of the schools increased, Mother Mary Walburga was obliged to delegate to one of the older nuns the work of supervising, but she never lost interest in the work of the schools and of the individual nuns. She was gifted in many ways, not the least being her ability to inspire in all of her spiritual children a confidence in her personal interest in each one's concerns.

Her rare power of remembering the different family circumstances of each one was fraught with great opportunities for helping individual souls, and she never made the mistake of placing anything above the good of souls. Devotedly attached to Mother Foundress, she was untiring in her efforts to keep alive, in every department, all the teachings that our Mother gave her children. In the chapel and sacristy, particularly, all the notes of Mother Foundress were scrupulously enforced and loved by those privileged to have the care of the "Lord's House." Our beautiful Gothic chapel at Sharon is a lasting memorial of Mother Mary Walburga's perfect taste and true devotion.

As the history of the Society in America progresses, we shall notice the influence of Mother Mary Walburga and her strong personality. Her policy was conservative, but not narrow, and this allowed her to lay a solid foundation for the expansion of later years.

The first event of Mother Mary Walburga's administration, after the reception of novices recorded above, was the distribution of prizes which took place on June 22nd. The Archbishop, accompanied by Bishop Quinlan of Mobile, Father Carter and other priests, presided, and the *Journal* thus records the accompanying circumstances, not without interest to us:

"The children were arranged in the avenue and the sisters in the vestibule to receive the Archbishop's blessing. As he drove up the avenue, the tower bell was rung for the first time on such an occasion. It had been rung, however, the evening he came for the clothing on the 31st of May. The distribution began at about half-past five o'clock and the music was very beautiful. The Archbishop seemed very much pleased and spoke nicely to the children. The Archbishop and priests took supper in Saint Joseph's room, after which they left for the city. The children were all in good dispositions, and most left that evening."

A word may be said here about Bishop Wood's invariable conduct towards Mother Mary Walburga. His confidence in her was manifest from the beginning. After she was appointed, at his request, Vicarress of the American Mission, he was unstinting in marks of encouragement and unflinching kindness. Repeatedly we read of his visits. At one time, he would bring a visiting bishop, as Bishop Quinlan of Mobile or Bishop O'Connor of Omaha, or another visitor of note; at other times priests of his own diocese would be his companions. Invariably we read in the *Journal* sentences like these: "The Archbishop could not have been more kind, or "He was kindness itself," or "The Archbishop seemed to like being with the nuns." Until old age and increasing infirmities prevented, he was present at the distributions at Sharon and St. Leonard's and appeared to enjoy the music immensely. The standard set by Mother Mary Xavier was a high one, and every effort was made to uphold the reputation made by her.

After the distribution, life in the convents had been going on as usual. On July 3, a touching entry in the *Journal* reveals a little of the heartache all tried so bravely to hide. It referred to the voyagers on the *Scythia*:

"Letter from Mother Aloysia—voyage as far as Queenstown good—M. M. Xavier best of the three."

Daily routine in the summer holidays was very much the same in the 1870's as it was in later years. After the retreat given by Father Magliari, S. J., the summer schedule was followed. It reveals the same desire for study that we have today, with a more leisurely tempo. The stress laid on the study of English and drawing was characteristic of Mother Foundress' desire for real culture.

#### SUMMER HOURS

9-10 .....	French Class	3:30 .....	Spiritual Reading
10-12 .....	English and drawing	4-6 .....	Refection, reading, sewing

The two hours' afternoon reading was a time that all looked forward to, as some very interesting book and a good reader were chosen.

The **Journal** makes a note that "most of the nuns were saying the Dolor Rosary and Fifteen mysteries for the schools."

Mother Agatha was keeping the **Journal** at this time. No one has excelled her in graphic description and the minute detail of interesting facts. She wrote feelingly at this time:

"The summer holidays are just what we need for soul and body".

This type of summer hours continued for more than forty years. In the beginning and for many years the sisters went to Sharon for the holidays. Later, classes were arranged in one or other of the city convents, and those who remained at home pursued their studies in private. The teachers of the summer schools were usually the older nuns, but frequently secular teachers were employed for special subjects, such as physical geography or geometry. Sometimes the younger nuns went by street cars to Darby and returned home for dinner, walking from Darby to the convent, as there were no buses. Another necessary concomitant of the summer vacation was the sprucing up of the schools, which involved cleaning, painting, varnishing, etc., of almost the whole house. This took place between the summer school and the opening of schools. This year, the Spring Garden Street Convent was "done up from attic to cellar" by Father Carter. He had painters and plasterers at work all summer. On the 9th of August, the nuns had a house warming at the Assumption Convent, and all went to it. There are no details of the celebration, but a very informing note in the **Sharon Journal** explains to us why the nuns were called sometimes **Mother** and sometimes **Sister** in the chronicles. After speaking of going to the house warming, Sister adds:

"Sister Antonia and Sister Ignatius received the title of Mother, the one at Spring Garden Street in charge, and the other at St. Leonard's House."

In this same August, Mother Foundress sent a box with stocks for the Archbishop and presents for Father Carter. On the same day, the 22, "Mr. Yearley called to see the corporation about selling the Baltimore lands." It will be recalled that the Duchess of Leeds and her sister, Lady Stafford, had given to Reverend Mother Foundress lots near Baltimore. As the lots could not be used, they were finally sold.

We find also in August, the first mention of a chapel to be built at Sharon. Up to this time, the chapel had been in a room on the third floor, later converted into a clothing room and several cells. In the passage, on the wall may still be seen (1950) the place where the holy water font was hung. The new chapel was always called "Father Carter's chapel," because it was his gift to the nuns. The **Journal** reveals that both Mother Mary Walburga and Father Carter were scrupulous to have everything done in a most business like manner, the "Corporation" meeting frequently to discuss details and to act, according to state law, as a body. The names of M. Antonia and M. Ignatius had been added to the names of the first three members of the Corporation—M. M. Walburga, M. Agatha and M. M. Agnese. They met formally with Father Carter, on the 22nd and the 29th of August, and thereafter every week for some time.

Father Carter was constantly at Sharon, and as Mother Agatha wrote, "full of the new chapel." He was never one to let the grass grow under his feet. He bore most of the expense although he allowed others to contribute. For instance, we read that "Mrs. Mansfield called and promised to give one of the \$200 windows." Others gave money or furniture, wishing to have a little share in the great gift. St. Leonard's had a four-day fair for the chapel fund.

Sharon school had begun in September with only 19 pupils. Novenas, rosaries, penances were the order of the day to obtain an increase in registration. The prominent note was cheerfulness. Sister Agatha's indomitable optimism influenced all and her sense of humor enlivens every page of the journal. Her appreciation of Father Carter's generosity and greatness of soul did not blind her to his idiosyncrasies. On one occasion she writes:

"Father Carter came and stayed all night—full of the chapel—He gave us benediction, and a sermon to the children . . . and also to the nuns!"

The journal entries for the remainder of the year 1876 are so full of information and their mere enumeration so interesting that an interpretation of them would fall short. Besides the entries we shall quote, it may be noted that Father Carter almost every week spent a day and night at Sharon, discussing plans for the chapel. He usually said Mass before leaving, and gave benediction in the evening, hearing confessions of any who wished to go, and giving the children informal conferences. In the days when St. Clement's had no curate, the pastor was not able to give benediction to the nuns and children as often as he wished. To quote:

"September 24th, 1876 Feast of Our Lady of Mercy. Father Carter came and the children had prepared for him a little entertainment, in the way of music, vocal and instrumental. They sang *A Tribute of Thanks and Praise*, etc., after which they presented a very pretty vase, silver and glass, filled with rare flowers, which he afterwards gave to the chapel.

"October 4. Father Carter came with an architect to settle about building a chapel and school hall.

"Oct. 7. The parish school children from Spring Garden Street and the children of the Angels' Sodality from St. James' West Philadelphia came out to the woods for a picnic—invited by Mother Mary Walburga—the children were delighted.

"Oct. 14. The sisters came from the city to pass the day. We kept the feast of St. Teresa—A beautiful day inside and out. The sisters all bright and cheerful.

"Oct. 20. Mother Mary Walburga received a letter today from Reverend Mother—telling of the journey to Rome of two of the assistants—asking for the numbers in the schools, etc., telling of having written to the Archbishop.

"Oct. 21. Mother Mary Walburga wrote to the Archbishop today, asking to be allowed to receive postulants.

"Oct. 23. The Archbishop with Fr. O'Neill of St. James' drove out here this afternoon at about quarter to 5 o'clock. The Archbishop very kind, gave permission to receive postulants, D. G., promising to come next month to confirm some of the children. He will write to Rome. He gave his blessing to the children and asked for a holiday for them—only stayed a short time. Told us of the illness of Mother Ignatius of the Hospital. (Note—M. Ignatius was one who had been so kind to the first nuns who came in 1862).

"Oct. 26. Father Spaulding, nephew of Father Carter, came and dined here with Father Carter, who remained all night. Heard yesterday of the death of Mother Ignatius.

"Oct. 27. Mother Mary Walburga received a letter today saying we have sold the house in Toul and have bought one in Paris.

"October 28. Mother Mary Walburga went to the city today for the monthly examination of Spring Garden Street.

"Nov. 1. The Mothers and some of the sisters from the city houses came for the concert. The day was lovely, just like spring.

"Nov. 3. Exposition and retreat of the month. Father Carter came in the

afternoon and the children acted a farce for him—Apartments for Rent. (Note—St. Charles was Fr. Carter's feast day.)

"Nov. 4. St. Charles Feast. Fr. Carter said Mass and gave us benediction at about eleven o'clock. Four children were received into the Angels' Sodality and Augusta Gottschalk was received as a Child of Mary. Father Carter left after dinner.

"Nov. 6. Mother Mary Walburga received a letter from Mother Agnes saying that she and Mother Angelica were on the point of going to Rome. Mother Mary Xavier is better and at the Orphanage where she teaches music.

"Nov. 13. Saint Stanislaus. The novices sang the Mass. They had breakfast in the noviceship with Mother Mary Walburga and Mother Mary Agnese. After breakfast we had benediction.

"The shed for the poor coming for meals is being built near the kitchen—the roof already existed and the sides and end only had to be built—alms have been solicited for this end.

"Nov. 16. A letter from Mother Agnes to Mother Mary Walburga. She is at St. Leonard's waiting for Mother Angelica to go to Rome.

"Nov. 23. Father Carter said Mass in the Noviceship. We are expecting the Archbishop at three o'clock. The Archbishop came at about quarter to four with Father Elcock and the two Fathers O'Neill. The tower bell rang and all the sisters were in the vestibule and the children in the school hall with the folding doors open, to receive his blessing as he passed in. All went to the chapel where the Sacrament of Confirmation was given. The Archbishop said a few words, very nice words, before the ceremony and made a short address after, and then gave benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. His Grace took supper in the parlor with Father Carter and the other priests, after which he went to the school hall where he gave the children his blessing, and granted the indulgence of 40 days to anyone who says seven Paters and Aves and Glorias in the chapel of Our Lady of Dolors, also the same indulgence granted by Bishop Grant to the Children of Mary who sign E. de M. at the end of their letters. Then he gave the children a holiday, first referring to Mother Mary Walburga. After this he gave his blessing and a little picture to each sister. He had given the children each a picture in the school hall. Then he left. He told Mother Mary Walburga he had written to Rev. Mother and had enclosed a letter for Cardinal Franchi that the sisters would take to Rome. Everything was as nice as it could be the whole afternoon. His Grace could not have been kinder than he was.

"Nov. 27. Mother Mary Walburga received a letter from England asking for the notes on the Rule to be recopied and sent to Rome to Mothers Agnes and Angelica who are there at the English Hotel.

"Nov. 28. The above notes were sent this morning. The general examination of the school took place today.

"Nov. 29. Mrs. Mansfield came and promised to give one of the \$200 windows to the new chapel. The Archbishop came with Father Keiran at about half-past two o'clock; quite unexpectedly he asked for some dinner—was very kind and gracious. Mother Antonia was here. The Archbishop went down to the little chapel of Our Lady of Dolors and was much pleased with it. He went to the school hall at about half-past three and gave the children his blessing. Some of the children have gone home for Thanksgiving—a beautiful day.

"Dec. 8. Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Three children were received into the Sodality of the Children of Mary. All the old children of Philadelphia were invited and Mother Antonia brought the seven from St. Leonard's. They had a nice day together.

"Dec. 13. St. Lucy. The children were examined in Christian Doctrine, Fathers

Carter and Wagner being present. Mothers Antonia and Ignatius also were here.

Dec. 19. Mother Mary Walburga, Mother Mary Agnese, and Sister Agatha went to Spring Garden Street for the Christmas concert. Everything was very nice indeed—great improvement has been made in the music and singing since the beginning of September. Father Carter, Father Spaulding and Father Wagner were present. The guests took dinner after in the little parlor. Then M. M. Walburga, with two sisters from Spring Garden Street, went to St. Leonard's House for the concert there, which was very nice, too. Fr. O'Neill and Fr. Daily were there. The sisters returned in the wagon at five o'clock.

"Dec. 20. Father Villager, the Extraordinary, came at 11 o'clock, and Father Carter at one. The concert began at about four o'clock and the music, singing, and recitations were all that could be wished. Father Carter gave us Benediction immediately afterwards.

"Dec. 21. Dear Reverend Mother's feast. Mother Antonia with four sisters came from St. Leonard's and two sisters came from Spring Garden Street. We spent a lovely day—all so united and cheerful.

"Dec. 25. Christmas Day. How happy and cheerful we all were. A little postal card from Reverend Mother from France. Love and blessings and wishes for a merry Christmas. We had only one Mass but hope for better next year.

"Dec. 27. Feast of St. John Ev. All the sisters from the other houses with a few exceptions, came for the retreat. Father di Augustinis came from Woodstock to give the triduum which began this evening.

"Dec. 31. The triduum which was very beautiful and practical ended this morning, and we are having Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and very quiet recreation until after four. Father O'Neill gave us Benediction as the father who gave the retreat went away after breakfast. The sisters, most of them at least, returned to the city and the little children who had been at St. Leonard's House during the retreat came back."

Thus ends the chronicle for 1876. Reverend Mother Foundress wrote to the American nuns for Christmas, but her letter did not reach them in time. It is so beautiful that we give it in full:

Dec. 15, 1876.

For the Professed Sisters at Sharon, St. Leonard's House and Spring Garden Street.

My dearest Sisters,

Your dear letters deserve my most sincere thanks, and many fervent prayers in return for the consolation you have given me. This morning's post brought me so large a package that I must content myself by writing to all in one, as it would be impossible to write to each, though my heart says each one must have a letter. So I shall picture to myself each one while writing, and later keep my promise to each. At present we are in Paris and though we have been very much occupied in looking for a proper house, and I have had many business letters to write, still we have had time for our reading as well as all our spiritual duties, and there is so much to be edified by in the French clergy that our stay has been very full of interest. We have taken Rohrbacher's *Histoire de L'Eglise* for our reading and in his life, which is a sort of introduction to his great work, there is, on the first and second pages so beautiful a practice which he wrote out for himself that I can recommend it as a model for all. I think you have the twelve volumes at Sharon, and you will get it on the first page. Tell me what you think of it or what you can add to it for your own perfection.

We shall never fully understand the value of blessings of our life till we get to Heaven. For every act of religion is made of inestimable value by the Vows. In this life we learn to value suffering because we find its reward in the possession of that peace which passes all understanding, and

this brings us a sensible reward, but the acts of religion are of a value beyond our comprehension, which God alone estimates.

Ah! what grateful hearts must we prove to Our Lord, not only for ourselves, but for all others who we know are striving to know, love and serve Him more and more daily. This is now my duty for you in whom I see so sweet and gratefully loving a spirit, and this I must again ask you to help me to prove to our good Master and Lord by being faithful to all the graces you ask for me, and through your prayers I hope for blessings on the works of all, and on my humble efforts to serve Him. May He bless you all and give you a holy and merry Christmas, and grant all your requests, especially for our dear Father Carter's intentions, and for the kind Archbishop.

Pray much, my dear ones, for the Church of Christ, and for our Holy Father the Pope, and the Cardinal. Ah! may the Holy Child watch over all and hear your prayers.

Ever, my dear ones,

Your loving mother and Servant in J. C.,  
C. C.

The new chapel was the keynote of all the activities of 1877, but a subject of minor, if intense, interest was brought up on New Year's Day by Father Carter. Anyone doubting the love the nuns still cherished for Towanda would be convinced by reading the simple entries in the **House Journal**:

"Jan. 1. Mother Mary Walburga went with Mother Mary Agnese and some more of the Sisters to St. Leonard's. She saw Father Carter who told her that Fr. Kelly of Towanda had called on him (not having time to come to Sharon) to ask him if he thought that the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus would come to Towanda again. The Congregation purchased Mr. Ward's house and are anxious to have the Sisters back again. Nothing can be done until midsummer. All the sisters are glad to hear about this prospect.

"Jan. 6 . . . Mother Mary Walburga wrote to Father Kelly, Towanda . . .

"Jan. 18. A letter from Fr. Kelly of Towanda saying how anxious he is to have us in Towanda to take possession of Mr. Ward's house, which is to be turned into a convent. He wants sisters in the summer and asks Mother Mary Walburga to make a novena to the Sacred Heart for the Will of God in this affair. He is afraid the Bishop of Scranton will not want us as he does not seem to like us very much. God will do His own Will. We began the novena today.

Feb. 18. A letter from Mother Antonia. She has seen Mrs. Miller (Mr. Ward's sister) who says that Fr. Kelly of Towanda is determined to have us there, and has got the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese—Dr. O'Hara. The people are very anxious to have us, too—some promises about helping to pay the rent, etc. Fr. Kelly has not written yet to Mother Mary Walburga about it.

Mar. 17. Mother Ignatius came. Father Carter sent word to Mother Mary Walburga by Mother Ignatius that Bishop O'Hara of Scranton had been to see him and said that Fr. Kelly of Towanda would be out to see her in reference to our going to Towanda, on Holy Thursday. The whole affair is in Saint Joseph's hands.

Mar. 21. Father Carter came—full now of Towanda as well as the church. He gave us Benediction and stayed all night.

Mar. 26. A letter from Fr. Kelly who is going to see the Bishop of Scranton. He asks for prayers.

"Mar. 28. A telegram from Fr. Kelly. Says he has seen the Bishop and all is satisfactory. He will be down next week.

Apr. 4 . . . Fr. Kelly of Towanda came to see Mother Mary Walburga. He is very anxious to have the sisters, but there is some difficulty about the mortgage on the house which will have to be settled before Mother Mary Walburga decides. She gave Fr. Kelly hopes, and good ones, but this must be arranged. Father John

Dunn has promised \$500 to help the sisters if we go, and we are praying for the Will of God. Mother Mary Walburga received a letter this morning from dear Reverend Mother saying she would like the sisters to go to Towanda, but she can't give any help. Mother Mary Walburga will have to find the community herself. God will provide, if He wants us to go.

"Apr. 10. The Archbishop came about four in the afternoon. Mother Mary Walburga came back (she had been in the city) before his Grace left. He gave us some illuminations, also a large picture of St. Patrick—very kind indeed—he does not wish us to go to Towanda—he gave his blessing to the children and a holiday, of course." Thus far the *Journal*.

This expression of the Archbishop's wishes, of course, was the death blow to all the hopes of going back to Towanda, and prepared the nuns for Mother Connelly's letter received on April 30. In the *Journal* for that day we find:

"A letter from dear Reverend Mother today . . . She says, "Don't think of Towanda, please. If we go anywhere it ought to be to New York."

To return to the beginning of 1877, we find the entry for the Epiphany interesting:

"The Feast of the Epiphany. We spent a very bright day—Mother Ignatius came from the city in the afternoon, with Katie McGrath, who received the hood as a school sister. In the evening Miss Gottschalk brought Altagratio Leveque to school. She cannot speak a word of English. She makes the 42nd boarder. In the evening we had the reading of the requests in presence of the Queen (Sr. Annunziata) and then a dance."

The Epiphany party was a specially joyous one. Mother Foundress and the nuns who had imbibed her spirit loved the simplicity of these parties, relics of medieval Christianity. There were many reasons for this. The simplicity and youthfulness of a young religious society no doubt lend themselves to simple enjoyment, and, besides, the whole life in those days was more leisurely. The parties could be, and usually were, opportunities of refined entertainment and self-denying efforts to give pleasure to others.

Following soon on the feast of the Epiphany came the sad and unexpected news of the sudden death of Mother Mary Xavier which was a painful shock to all. Although she died on December 20, the news of her death did not reach Sharon until January 8. Mother Foundress' absence from St. Leonard's as the letter just given recalls, was no doubt the reason the news was long in reaching America. News of Mother's improvement that had reached them from time to time made the sudden tidings deeply felt. On January 12, a simple entry in the *Journal* reads:

"Had consoling news about dear Mother Mary Xavier's death."

The few months that Mother Mary Xavier had spent in England, at Mark Cross, had given such edification to the children there that they called her "the saint." She died alone in the night, and was buried at Mayfield, not far from the spot where Mother Connelly's body rested until it was removed to the crypt in the chapel.

The events of 1877 at Sharon would require a volume to enumerate. On the first of February, Father Carter received into the Church, at St. Leonard's House, Ellen and Ida Darlington, two young ladies who had attended school there. Mother Mary Walburga and Mothers Ignatius, Walburga Moore and Agatha were also at St. Leonard's for the ceremony, as well as the Children of Mary of the school and from Sharon. Mollie McMaster was Ellen's godmother, and Gertrude McMaster, Ida's. Both girls took the name Mary in addition to their own, at Baptism, and both eventually entered the Society. In fact all four girls became nuns, Mollie McMaster at Sharon and Gertrude at Carmel.

In the school at Sharon, the play *The Youthful Martyrs*, arranged by the nuns from *Fabiola*, was unusually successful. Lalitte Willcox and Tessie Hughes, alumnae, came

to play the role of Fabiola and Agnes respectively. The day after the play, with her usual practical wisdom, Mother Agatha utilized the holiday by taking the children to Kellyville to visit a cotton factory, owned by a Mr. Grady, and the gas works attached to it.

Sharon was becoming known, by this time. On February 16, Father Granger wrote, asking for "some notice of the S. H. C. J. for the Ave Maria."

In February, also, Father Carter asked for sisters to teach the smaller boys at the Assumption, to replace the secular teachers. Mother Mary Walburga was unwilling to do this, but was prevailed on to do so in September. The Christian Brothers continued to teach the older boys for some years.

The new Dolor Chapel was blessed by Father Carter on March 22, with due ceremony. The next day was the feast of the Seven Dolours.

From that day, everything centered in the new chapel. On April 9, the digging of the foundations began. This had been deferred on account of the weather. Mother Agatha had written, "It is the coldest day in February for 20 years."

Clothings and professions were always red-letter days at Sharon. The ever fresh delight of the community in having new members to swell its ranks, not to speak of the radiant joy of the recruits, makes these events stand out in the Annals in bold relief. On April 27, a double ceremony took place, Father Carter being the Archbishop's representative—although one never thinks of him as considering himself in that light! The S. H. C. J. were always his children! Sisters Theophila O'Leary, Baptista Maher, and Flavia Rowan made their first vows, and Sisters M. Sebastian Leveque and M. Catherine McGrath were clothed. The priests present, with the exception of Father Carter, had never seen our ceremonies, and they expressed pleasure and surprise as they were the first they had seen that conformed to the Pontificale Romanum.

From now on, events moved quickly. Mother Mary Walburga's feast was kept on the 28th of April. The children, instead of feast work, gave an offering of \$100 for the chapel fund. In those days, that meant much more than it would today. They had collected \$90 and Father Carter made up the \$100. He seemed to know everything, being in the children's confidence. All gifts from the other convents were for the chapel. We read:

Apr. 27. The presents from St. Leonard's House were: A beautiful black silk cope with a velvet hood and orphrey worked beautifully in white silk, silver and chenile, a beautiful silver and glass lamp, a prayer for the priests before Mass, illuminated, for the sacristy of the new chapel. Two pretty cards for the chapel of dolours and two rustic baskets filled with flowers for the outside. From Spring Garden Street, a very pretty bourse for benediction, a Mass book for the dead with a cover to suit the cope, five shawls for the sisters who need to wear hoods, several pairs of stockings, flowers and an ordo, besides an orphrey for the curtains behind the altar, and a book of freehand for the parlour. The children here printed a set of authors for a game, four historical charts and one very fine historical atlas. Besides these presents, Miss A. Gottschalk gave a beautiful Dictionary (Webster) and from another source we had three volumes of Bible Encyclopedia, very useful, and I forgot to mention some beautiful views from Spring Garden Street.

"28. The next morning we had Mass and singing again. Then Father Carter left after breakfast and we had a glorious day—all the school sisters came from the city houses, and as it was raining, we had to stay in and had reading and played bezique—all so happy and united.

"29. The children had a concert in honor of Mother Mary Walburga at about three in the afternoon—two poems for the feast, one of the cure of the baron's daughter worked by Saint Walburga, and related in her life, said by the little children, and one in honor of the saint, thanking Mother Mary Walburga for all

her goodness to them this last year said by Gertrude McMaster."

The laying of the corner stone took place on May 15, and we give the account found in the *Journal*:

"The cornerstone of the new chapel and school hall was laid today. Father Carter came at about eleven o'clock on the train with Mothers Antonia and Ignatius, and Sisters Cornelia and St. Ambrose. At about three o'clock Father O'Connor and Doctor Corcoran from the Seminary, and Fathers O'Neill, Fitzmaurice, Spaulding and McDevitt arrived and at about half past three the procession began. The children walked first, Mollie McMaster carrying the Cross and Gertrude McMaster and Mary Willcox, the lighted candles. The sisters followed, then the priests in surplice, and Father Carter in alb and cope. It was extremely hot, the sun pouring its rays on our heads, but (and this is a new feature in a procession) we had umbrellas and so had the priests! A wooden cross had been erected in the chapel where the *Quam dilecta* was said by the priests. Then they went to the place where the corner-stone was to be laid, said the Litany of the Saints, etc. They walked in procession round the building on the inside, saying the psalm *Fundamenta* three times. There was more ceremony at the corner-stone, and the procession returned to the house. In the corner-stone is placed a glass bottle containing photographs of Pius IX, Archbishop Wood, Father Carter, Reverend Mother General, Mother Lucy Ignatia, a written paper asking graces and blessings, *A Freeman's Journal* and *A Catholic Standard*."

At about five o'clock, the clergy had supper. As the Archbishop was in Rome, Father Carter, as the Diocesan administrator, was in his glory. The supper was a great success. A homelike touch is noticed in the entry:—

"Two dear little lambs were killed for the occasion. Their names were Snowdrop and Joe, both born at Sharon this spring. At about six, all the priests left with the exception of Father Carter. Then we had supper, and finished the lambs. The day ended with benediction at half past seven."

A new note is added in the *Journal* for May 17:

"A letter from Reverend Mother General, inviting the superiors to a council to be held on August 2, 1877, at St. Leonard's on Sea."

The next day came a letter from Mother Agnes Orr, one of the assistants, saying that Mother Mary Walburga and one companion would go to the council.

No doubt, according to Dr. Danell's Rule, the manner of electing the deputy was different from what it now is. At Spring Garden Street and Sharon (according to *Minute book and Journal*) the Bishop was supposed to preside at each house at the election of the superior's companion to the chapter at Sharon which was to elect the second delegate. Father Carter presided at Sharon and Mother Agatha was elected. The chapter election is not recorded, but on May 31 Mother Mary Walburga telegraphed to England to know which of the two, Mother M. Agnese or Mother Antonia would go to England, implying that there had been a tie in the votes. Reverend Mother Foundress telegraphed on June 2, that they were to draw lots to see which would come. And the lot fell on Mother Mary Agnese. The delegates left New York on the *Algeria*, Cunard Line, on the 28th of June.

In the meantime, events were happening at Sharon. The 17th of May witnessed the first Communion of three children, two destined to be Sisters of the Holy Child, Daisy Magee, afterwards M. M. Emmanuel, Cornelia Grant, a niece of Mother Connelly's to be M. M. Mildred, and "little Mary Small."

Then came the distribution. The children had asked that, this year, no money be expended on prizes, but that it be given to the chapel fund instead. The only prizes given were those for Christian Doctrine. Gertrude McMaster merited a gold

medal, and Mollie, a silver one, as did also Mary Willcox (afterwards M. M. Eulalia).

The summer began with the departure of M. M. Walburga and Mother Mary Agnese. Father Carter, and Mothers Ignatius and Antonia went with them to the boat. Father O'Connor was at the pier, and Augusta Gottschalk had secured deck chairs for them. Father O'Connor paid the carfare home for the sisters returning to Sharon. Mother Antonia was left in charge at Sharon.

Many sisters from the city convents spent the summer at Sharon. Fr. di Augustinis, S. J. gave the retreat, beginning July 5. Fifty sisters including novices made the retreat, and 42 renewed their vows at the end. This was also an innovation of Dr. Danell's Rule.

The study hours were much the same as last year. High lights during the vacation were letters from England. Fr. O'Connor very kindly let the nuns know by telegram when the Algeria, bearing the nuns, had arrived at Queenstown. On July 19, letters from the nuns from Queenstown were joyfully received. Father Carter called on the 26th to tell them that the Archbishop had written that he had called at St. Leonard's.

The nuns had placed hope in the chapter for the restoration of their dearly loved Rule. A hint of the disappointment in store for them is noted in the entry for July 30.

"A letter from dear Mother Mary Walburga. She asked Mother Antonia to tell all the sisters to be ready for changes—asks prayers for the chapter and that all may be willing to sacrifice self for the glory of God."

The next day there were Mass and Holy Communion for "the intentions". This was the feast of Saint Ignatius which the nuns in the old days kept as a big feast. Farther Carter gave \$5.00 for ice cream for the nuns. He came himself about eleven to announce a visit from his Grace. The *Journal* has this:—

His grace came at about quarter to six. The tower bell was ringing as he came up the avenue, and the children here for the holidays were outside to get his blessing, while the sisters formed in two lines from the front door all the way through. His Grace told us of his visit to St. Leonard's and how pleased he was with the way he was received by dear Reverend Mother and all the dear sisters. Then he had supper and sat afterwards on the piazza until a quarter to eight, when he left with reluctance. All the sisters looked so very bright and happy that he seemed quite at home and was not at all anxious to go. Father Carter remained the night and said Mass for us the next day.

The Chapter began on the 3rd of August, and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament all day gave the nuns opportunities of frequent and earnest prayer for its success. Subsequent mention of letters from England was without comment, and we can only surmise uneasiness from our present knowledge. On the 22nd, the good news that Reverend Mother Foundress had been re-elected came, and a letter from Mother Mary Walburga saying they would sail on the 18th. At last, on the 28th, the travellers arrived in New York, and spent the night in Mr. McMaster's house in Brooklyn. Mothers Ignatius and Antonia had met them at the pier and the four nuns were royally entertained at the McMasters for we had no convent in New York.

Again we quote from the *Journal*:—

Our Mothers came to Philadelphia at about half past one and drove to Sharon at about six. They received a very hearty welcome. In the evening the piazza, island and the drapery were lighted up by lanterns—Chinese presented by Miss Gottschalk. The scene was like fairyland. The nuns had made a good deal of altar linen and many articles for the new chapel to offer dear Reverend Mother Walburga who was much surprised and delighted. Our dear Mother General sent some handsome books for the library, a grand cope for the Archbishop and some presents for Father Carter. Many remembrances were sent to us all by our dear sisters in England.

So far the *Journal*. Father Carter came to Sharon the same day, and remained the night. The next day, there were "a very pretty singing Mass and Benediction in the evening."

Several changes had been made this year in the community. The title of "Mother" had already been assumed in England and France—after the famous chapter of 1874—by all the professed choir sisters, but Mother Mary Xavier had not allowed it except by the superiors and the novice mistress. This summer all choir sisters under perpetual vows were called "Mother", as they are today. The great result of the chapter of 1877 was that, in spite of Bishop Danell's insistence that we keep his Rule for three more years, (against the unanimous vote of the delegates) the members of the Society were drawn even more closely together. They had also been able to have restored to them the entire ascetical part of the old Rule which they loved so dearly and which had been suppressed by Bishop Danell in 1874. A full account of the trials regarding the Rule may be found in *Mother Connelly's Life* (1922), and we find no mention of it in the *Journal*.

Several names occur in the *Journal* during these years, names of those who were to become intimately connected with the Society. For instance, "Lucy Ignatia Weston came today." She was five years old, the second daughter of Margaret Christian Weston. Mary Weston, her oldest sister, was at the time a child at Sharon where all three Weston girls were educated. Lucy came to school at the age of seven, and later became Mother Mary Magdalen. She often told the nuns that when a babe in arms she had been put through the small window in the vestibule outside St. Teresa's parlor.

Another entry:—"Mr. Harper wrote about his daughter's vocation," seems rather premature as Mary Harper, Mother Mary Gonzaga to be, was then only twelve years of age. She had been in the school a few years. In September, we read, "Judge Wheaton came bringing his daughter Louise to school." This was our Mother St. Ignatius. Mrs. Wheaton proved to be one of our greatest benefactors, and her name will recur again in that guise.

During this summer for the first time, headstones were erected over the graves in the little cemetery. It was a welcome gift by a friend of the nuns.

The schools reopened in September, with the addition of the small boy's school at the Assumption, and classes opened for the first time for small boys at both Spring Garden Street Academy and St. Leonard's. Sharon school had only 24 children on the opening day. The sisters were long in learning that, when September was very warm, Philadelphians remained at the shore, and did not appear for class until the hot weather eased up a bit. Seven among the pupils at Sharon, besides Mary Harper, were to become nuns there:—Daisy Magee, the future Mother Mary Emmanuel, Altagratio Leveque, Sister Dolores, (who did not persevere) Cora Wilcox, M. St. Gertrude, Cornelia Grant (a niece of Mother Connelly's), M.M. Mildred, Maggie Milligan, M. M. Perpetua, Sally Kane, M. St. Raphael and Veronica Maguire, Mother Mechtilde.

The new chapel still stands out in strong relief in Sharon's *Journal*. On September 23rd, "The Archbishop called on his way to Chester with Father Brennan. He wanted to see the new chapel and find out if the foundation for the altar was safe. Father Carter came at six o'clock. We wished him a happy birthday, etc, etc." On the first of October,— "The new altar was brought out and is being erected today. Father Carter came." The white marble of this altar is still preserved in the altar of the Sharon chapel built in 1898.

In the meantime, on the 29th of September, three postulants were received, Mollie McMaster, Sallie Williams, and Ellen Darlington. The last mentioned went to St. Leonard's House for her postulanship.

We may follow the *Journal* these days with interest:

Oct 5.—The windows were all put in the church today.

Oct. 6.—Men came today to prepare the chapel walls for frescoing.

Oct. 12.—The Archbishop came today and brought Monsignor Chautard, Rector of the American College in Rome, to see the chapel. Monsignor liked the chapel very much. All the sisters were introduced to him.

Oct. 16.—Mother Mary Walburga and Mother Mary Agnese went to the city today, to buy the carpet for the new sanctuary.

Oct. 24.—At three o'clock we had the blessing of the new bell by Father Carter. Those present were Reverend Mother, Mother Mary Agnese, Mother Agatha and Mother St. Thomas. The bell is called Saint Raphael.

At last came the day for the opening of the chapel. The *Journal* is very complete in describing all the events connected with this, and nothing could improve upon it.

Nov. 3. Mass is to be said tomorrow in the chapel of Saint Charles by the Very Reverend C. I. Carter, our benefactor. He came this afternoon on the 3½ train and had to meet a disappointment, namely, the gas fixtures are not put up in the new chapel owing to an escape of gas—therefore we shall have to use candles and lamps to light the chapel for the ceremony of this evening. At seven o'clock the sisters and children were all in the chapel. The crayon picture of Father Carter was illuminated in the lower part of the chapel by Augusta Gottschalk and Gertrude McMaster. The sisters in the choir were ready to sing the *Lauda Jerusalem*, at a given signal, which was the opening of Father Carter's door. He walked up the staircase, followed by Reverend Mother, and Mother Agatha and Mother Antonia then entered the chapel and walked up the aisle and took his place in a chair prepared for him just inside the sanctuary rails. When the *Lauda* was finished, Mary Harper who was to make an address composed for the occasion, took her place in the middle of the aisle near enough to Father Carter to be heard by him, and said the verses, then presented him with a copy of them and a bouquet. In the bouquet were two letters, one from Mother Mary Walburga, thanking him for all his kindness and goodness to our Society, and one from the novices to the same effect, and of course wishing him a happy feast, etc. It also contained an envelope with \$75, an offering from the children towards the new carpet for the sanctuary. Father Carter was quite touched, and when he could speak, said some very nice words in return. All this took about half an hour.

"Nov. 4. Father Carter blessed the new chapel at about a quarter to seven, and said Mass at seven, the choir singing. This is the most devotional Mass we have had in any of our houses here. All, both sisters and children, received Holy Communion for good Father Carter. In the afternoon, at about half-past three, Father Carter sang Vespers with us and then gave us benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. We had a very nice devotional day, indeed.

"Nov. 5. Father Carter said Mass for all our dear departed sisters and then left for the city.

"Nov. 6. Mother Ignatius came at about one o'clock to say that his Grace would come on the next day and remain all night, although he had arranged to drive out in the morning. This was quite unexpected. Reverend Mother's room had to be prepared for him and the room next for the priest who shall come with him.

"Nov. 7. His Grace arrived in the evening at about half-past seven accompanied by Father Brennan. His Grace went up to the chapel to see if all was ready for the ceremony the next day, then took supper with Father Carter, and after this went to his room which he seemed to enjoy very much—it certainly was cosy and warm.

"Nov. 8. Father Carter said Mass in the old chapel (he had said Mass, the first in it, about thirteen years before, and now he said the last). Then the ceremony of the consecration of the altar and dedication of the church began. It required from eight o'clock until half-past ten when his Grace said a low Mass. He was assisted during the ceremony by Fr. Carter, Fr. Brennan, Fr. Francis O'Neill, and Fr. Otis.

The other priests did not get here until the eleven o'clock train. Dinner was served in grand style in the new school hall. We had the room decorated. Six colored waiters were here from the city, and the sisters did not have to appear in the dining room at all. At about half-past two, all went to the chapel for the Papal benediction, which was followed by benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, His Grace was assisted in this as in the morning by Fathers Brennan, O'Neill and Otis. By half-past three all had gone except Father Carter who remained all night. The ceremonies of today were beautiful and impressive, never to be forgotten by those who were privileged to witness them. Beautiful articles about the ceremonies appeared in *The Freeman's Journal*, New York and *The Catholic Standard* of Philadelphia.

"Dec. 20. Father Carter erected the Stations of the Cross today. The stations were painted in oils by an aunt of Mother Mary Bernard Doerflinger, who was a Dominican nun in Germany. Shortly after she finished painting them she died, R.I.P. Mr. Doerflinger, Mother M. Bernard's father, framed them for the chapel. The ceremony was impressive and devotional. In the evening, the children gave a very good Christmas concert."

This chapel was designed by Father Carter to last for twenty years, for by then he thought it would be too small. It was stuccoed, Gothic in style, without pillars, and strongly buttressed on the outside. The walls were beautifully frescoed even when it was torn down in 1898. It was built directly behind the south wall of the main building, running north to south. Between the main body of the chapel and the convent was a staircase extending from the ground floor three stories, and surmounted by the bell tower, which was outside the chapel. Doors on three landings connected the convent with the chapel stairs, one opening from St. Joseph's room, one from the ante-chapel, outside Reverend Mother's cell, and the third, from a third story room, a kind of "work-sacristy," where lamps were kept in the cupboards built in the walls, and much sacristy cleaning such as the washing of lamps, took place. The children's rank to chapel passed through the ante-chapel, and by Reverend Mother's cell door. A small altar was in the corner of the room, on which was a statue of Saint Joseph. Numerous lamps burned on this altar, especially during March. The alumnae and children of the school donated most of the lamps, for the devotion to this great saint was unusual. The chapel is further described by one who remembered it:—

"The sanctuary was fairly large. The altar was of white marble, having a brass tabernacle door. Behind the altar, hung a handsome curtain, the orphreys of which were hand-embroidered, and changed with the feast or season. The floor of the sanctuary was richly carpeted.

"A large statue of Our Lady was in a niche at one side of the sanctuary, and in a similar niche on the other side, a large statue of the Sacred Heart, later replaced by one of Saint Joseph, as is common in all our chapels. Silver lamps hung from the ceiling in front of these statues.

"The windows were beautiful-Munich but were not all put in at first."

On the first Christmas after the new chapel was erected, Dr. O'Connor from the Seminary, sang the Midnight Mass, and read two Masses in the morning. This was the first time in eight years that three Masses had been celebrated at Sharon on Christmas. The next day, Father Carter brought a beautiful new ciborium and monstrance and a silver-gilt chalice. Fr. di Augustinis again gave the triduum.

The year 1878 began with a clothing and profession on the 2nd of January. Sisters Marion and Cicely made their vows and Sister Alphonse was clothed. This day was noted for one of Father Carter's acts of generosity. Having \$900 left from the sum he had set aside for the chapel, he presented it to Mother Mary Walburga.

Because of ill health, Mother Antonia was relieved of the office of superior at St. Leonard's and Mother Mary Agnese was appointed to take her place. Mother Anto-

nia came to Sharon where she was given charge of the Novices.

This year, Mother Foundress' health began to decline seriously. We notice that no letter came from her at Christmas time, nor during the holidays. On January 10, the *Journal* records:—

“A letter from Reverend Mother General—She is still in her room—not able to go to the sisters on her feast nor even on Christmas day.”

Father Carter, also, was beginning to fail. He was at St. Joseph's Hospital on the 12th, and all were pessimistic about his recovery. Beginning with a heavy cold, he developed a heart condition. Every day some of the sisters visited him. One day he “was much better,” and another he was “being anointed.” On the 22nd we find a double entry:—

“Father Carter much better. Reverend Mother General still unable to leave her room.”

On February 19th, Father Carter rallied and he was able to visit the sisters at Sharon, accompanied by Mother Ignatius and two sisters of Charity. He went to the chapel to thank God for his recovery, and after a rest, returned to the hospital.

News from England still made the nuns uneasy. At last, on February 3rd, Mother Mary Walburga sent a telegram, “How is Mother?,” and on the 5th, came an answer from Mother Angelica, “Reverend Mother rather better.” This somewhat cheered the nuns. Death seemed to be in the air, however, for on the 7th we read, “It is rumored that the Holy Father is dead,” and on the 8th, “We have heard today that it is certain that the Holy Father is dead.” There were series of all kinds of prayers for the many intentions, for the ill, and for the dead. Father Carter continued to have ups and downs, and begged to see some of the nuns every day. Letters came from England telling how weak Mother Foundress was. By March, however, she was much better, and “hoping to go to Mayfield yet.” On the 18th of the month, there was great rejoicing over the receipt of a letter from her. There was news also of the favorable settlement of the ‘will case’ which in England had threatened much undesirable notoriety. Father Carter was delighted at both pieces of news, when, in the afternoon, Mother Ignatius and Mother Agnese called at the hospital to tell him. While they were there, the Archbishop came to Father Carter's room and rejoiced with them. He said they must drink to the health of the nuns, and ordered champagne of which all present had to drink. The next day Father Carter was able to go to Sharon where he would remain until after the profession and clothing ceremony on the feast of the Annunciation. On this day, he was able to give the habit to three postulants, “my children”, Mary McMaster, Sister St. John, Sallie Williams, Sister Mary Josephine, and Ellen Darlington Sister Francis Xavier. On account of Father Carter's weak state of health, the ceremony was to be in the afternoon. Mother Mary Walburga never liked this arrangement, and when Mr. McMaster whose devotion to the Mass was very great, complained brokenheartedly, she arranged with Father Carter to have another priest say the Mass at ten o'clock, so that Father could perform the ceremony after having breakfasted. This was the first ceremony in the new chapel, and is enthusiastically chronicled in the *Journal*:

“Mar. 25, 1878. Father Carter said Mass at 7 o'clock, and at ten, the ceremony took place, the clothing of the three postulants mentioned and the profession of Sister Mary Francis O'Hare. Dr. O'Connor from the Seminary said the Mass, and Fathers Wagner, Fitzmaurice, and Daily assisted at the ceremony. This has been our grandest clothing in America, because we have had plenty of room, and being a day of obligation, all of the school sisters, with the exception of three, were able to attend. Many secular friends of the postulants were there. The priests and fathers of the postulants had dinner in the new school hall, while ladies dined in

the library. Everything was as nice as possible, and nothing occurred to mar the happiness of all."

Father Carter remained until the 29th, and on the 28th, he said Mass in the novices' oratory and gave them "a little lecture" (to quote), and the next day, he was ill again and returned to the hospital. In the afternoon, His Grace called to see Father and was disappointed to find him gone.

April seemed to have been a busy month, certainly there was no monotony. M. M. Walburga went to Spring Garden Street for examinations. Mr. McMaster sent palm for Easter Sunday, which was something new at Sharon, where they, like many of the churches, used a substitute in the form of other green. Easter eggs, exquisitely painted, were sent to the Archbishop and to Father Carter and other priests. These were real works of art. The eggs were "blown" and the shells painted by members of the community who were artists, ornamented with ribbon and some verses or other Easter greetings. The children wrote their Doctrine examinations on Palm Sunday. M. M. Walburga spent Easter week at St. Leonard's House, visiting both schools, while Sharon prepared for her feast. The Easter concert at St. Leonard's was considered very fine.

On the eve of the day selected to keep the feast, all went to the chapel to see the presents. They were mostly for the use of the altar, and many are still in use (1950). To quote from the *Journal*:

"An image of the Immaculate Conception from the children, a throne for the Blessed Sacrament from the children of Mary who have left school, two lamps from Miss Gottschalk and two others to match from the bazaar, also four covers for prie-dieux for clothings, from the bazaar; then a carpet for the top of the chapel and extending all the way to the door from Mother Mary Agnese—very handsome—a statue of the Holy Child for the outside and one for the crib, both from Mother Ignatius. In the community room, a new cupboard for books, eleven volumes bound for the library, and several smaller presents. There was a new altar cloth, embroidered by the children.

The community had supper in the community room."

On the 27th, the feast proper, the novices sang the Mass. It was a lovely day, and all the new things, lamps, etc. were used. Nearly all the nuns from the city came, and the new school hall was used for the community room. The real community room was the refectory for the day. Father Carter drove out to wish Reverend Mother a happy feast, and as it rained nearly all the time he was there, Reverend Mother sent Andrew in the next day to see if he had caught cold, and was happy to find that he was quite well.

May First was the Archbishop's feast, and M. M. Walburga sent him a basket of fruit from the nuns.

In spite of his rapidly failing health, Father Carter continued to be an active benefactor. He blessed the new statue of Our Lady in May, and gave Mother M. Agnese \$25 towards a fair to be held by the children in September and \$25 towards paying the bill for the new walk.

Mr. Milligan, father of Margaret who was in the school and who later became Mother M. Perpetua, obtained for the nuns a pass on the P.R.R. for two, to and from Philadelphia. This was an inestimable benefit, and was in use for many years, until the railroad withdrew all passes for those not employees. This pass was later extended to any part of the State, and was used as far as Pittsburgh in journeys to the western convents.

On the 17th of June, we read in the *Journal*:—

"A postal card from dear Reverend Mother General in which she says the Dr. has given her permission to go to Mayfield. He says it will set her up for the winter."

This year's distribution was overshadowed by Father Carter's absence. He had not missed a distribution at Sharon since 1867 when he was in England. Father O'Neill presided and the special address prepared for Father Carter and the lovely basket of flowers were sent to him in the hospital. Not to be outdone, he sent M. M. Agnese \$500 for the greenhouse in prospect.

Soon came the retreat with Father D. Pantanella from Woodstock as master. During nearly all the week, the heat was 100 degrees, and as the father was not well at the end of the retreat the vows were said by all in unison.

The summer passed as usual. Reverend Mother Foundress became ill again. This time it was reported as rheumatism in the muscles of her right side. Father Carter, after a stay at the seashore where he improved, was again sick in the hospital. However, two house sisters were professed by him on the 22nd of August, Sisters Anastasia and Margaret.

School at Sharon began again with small numbers on September first, a very warm day. Isabelle Shea, daughter of John Gilmary Shea, entered the school. She was "very backward in her studies". Others gradually came, Kitty Emmet of whom we shall hear later, Minnie Doyle from Chicago, brought by Mr. Hirst, but even in February the numbers were small—only thirty. Of this small number, many were to be future Sisters of the Holy Child, and many others had younger sisters who were to swell its ranks within a few years.

On the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, the clothing of four postulants took place—Sisters Marie Claire Darlington, St. Raphael Kane, Mary Veronica Williams and Mary Vincent Jensen. Two of the new novices had sisters in the novitiate. Sallie Kane was a child of the Sharon school and Sarah Jensen was the daughter of an artist of some note, and was herself, very gifted. She was to spend nearly her whole life at St. Leonard's where under her guidance the studio was one of high standing. She was one whose pupils even to old age remembered her teaching and herself with singular affection. At the reunion of the "old boys" at St. Leonard's on the golden jubilee of her profession, two of the number claimed to be the "oldest boy". The decision was given in favor of Clinton Sinnott whose father's estate later became Rosemont College.

It is interesting to read a letter written by Archbishop Wood to Mother Aloysia Ryan on September 18, 1878:—

Mother M. Aloysia;

My dear child,

Your sad letter of 24 ult. bringing news of the most serious illness of Revd. Mother Superior reached me when I was ill, suffering from a severe attack. Thank God! I am now better and able to walk a little. All Mother Superior's wishes and desires shall be fulfilled as long as God spares me to watch over the Sisters.

I am happy to hear that Revd. Mother is rallying, God grant her a speedy convalescence. "Benedictio Dei Omnipotentis". You would scarcely expect a long letter from one so recently recovering.

Very Sincerely in Domino,

+J. F. W., Abp. Phila.

In October, a letter from Reverend Mother Foundress was received. The *Journal* remarks:—

It was all about business, but the writing is as steady and firm as ten years ago.

On December 24, the name of Father Hermann Heuser appears for the first time in the *Journal*. He sang—  
Midnight Mass and read two Masses in the morning. For many years with a few exceptions, he came to Sharon for the three Christmas Masses.

Another letter from Reverend Mother Foundress rejoiced the nuns on the 27, for "she is so much better."

The year ended with Fr. di Augustinis' triduum at which nearly all the nuns were present.

The year 1879, during which we were to lose our dear Mother Foundress, opened with renewed hope for her recovery. Letters from England fostered these hopes. Indeed, she ought naturally to have lived much longer, but she was utterly worn out with years of unparalleled sufferings, and was ripe for Heaven. On January 28, however, she wrote asking Mother Mary Walburga if she would be ready to open a house in New York next year, promising to send five choir sisters from England to help out. The subject of a New York convent and school was always interesting. This was the last letter received from Mother Connelly.

On April 15, Mary McConnell was clothed, receiving the name of Margaret Mary. She was the last American novice clothed during Mother Foundress' life-time.

The cable, announcing that "Mother died today," received on April 18, was a distinct shock to all, as there had been no warning and the last news had been hopeful. Letters written April 24, telling of her illness and anointing and one telling that the Bishop had sent to the Holy Father for the last blessing, came later. It must have seemed like the end of the world to those who had loved her so dearly and who had been accustomed to rely so entirely on her love and wisdom. Father Carter came out to arrange for a grand requiem on the 22nd.

The chapel was draped in black and remained so for a month. The catafalque is described in the **Journal**:

April 21. In the center just outside the altar rails, is the catafalque covered with a white velvet pall, relieved with black. On it, on the end facing the door is the Society motto on a white of a different shade from the pall, the letters formed by black chenille. On the top is a cross formed of the same material as the motto. The catafalque is surrounded by 33 lovely lilies, one for each year of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Everything breathes peace and holiness.

Apr. 22. Mass began at eight or rather at seven-thirty. The school sisters, with one or two exceptions, and some of the lay sisters from the other houses were here in turn. Mother Mary Agnese and Mother Ignatius had come yesterday. Many of the children of Mary had come from the other convents. The Mass was very solemn. At the end Father Carter said some nice words about our dear Reverend Mother General.

On May 3rd came the news that Reverend Mother had been buried at Mayfield, and that for the present Mother Angelica Croft was Vicarress General. Letters came from England giving inspiring and comforting accounts of Reverend Mother Foundress' last hours, and of her wish to be buried at Mayfield among the Saxon saints she loved.

On the 18th of May there was a month's mind Mass for Reverend Mother Foundress, and there were, of course almost daily Masses for the repose of her soul, even though the nuns who knew her saintly life felt impelled to pray to her in secret, while not neglecting to pray for her soul. The children asked that the prize money that year might be given for Masses for the repose of her soul.

This year the Archbishop could not come to the distribution, for he had promised to attend the commencement at Villanova, which was on the same day. He sent his regrets and a picture for each of the children, with his blessing.

Father di Augustinis again gave the retreat. In July the subject of a foundation in New York came up again. John Gilmary Shea wrote on the subject to Mother Mary Walburga.

The **Journal** for July 19 has this:

"He mentioned an old priest who has means and whose acquaintance he wants us to make, especially as he stands well with the Cardinal and could help us materially in the event of our going to New York. We are all praying for the Will of God. The letter is at Saint Joseph's feet."

We find for October 8, the following:

"Doctor Spencer brought Father Young of the Paulists to see us. Dr. Spencer is anxious for us to open a house next year in the parish of the above Fathers. Whether we can is another thing. We hope to go to New York, of course, but there is nothing certain. Fr. Young gave us Benediction. He saw all the house and grounds."

Nothing came of these hopes, and we shall find other efforts as useless, until the right time came, in 1904.

On the feast of Saint Ignatius, his Grace received the vows of Sisters Mary Sebastian and Catherine, and gave the habit to Sisters Mechtilde Maguire, Ste. Genevieve Lavoie, and Augusta McDowell, whose name is not recorded and who did not persevere.

It is noted in the Journal that His Grace came alone the evening before and was joined by Father Kieran in the morning and that after the ceremony he went, at Reverend Mother's request, to the novitiate where he blessed the novices, and to the school, where he did the same for the children. "He was full of fun and seemed to enjoy himself." Father Carter, recuperating at Atlantic City, was perforce absent. He continued to be very weak, and in September, was again anointed.

Father Carter's health was always a source of anxiety to the nuns who were truly devoted to him. Mother Mary Walburga, with Mother Mary Agnese, visited him often and the nuns at Spring Garden Street were devoted. His death was hastened by an accident. The curtains of his bed took fire during the night, and although the fire was quickly extinguished by the curates, the excitement brought on another severe heart attack, which in a few days resulted in his death. When Mother Mary Walburga returned to Sharon after seeing him on September 16, she brought word that the doctor thought he would rally as he had seen him much worse at other times. That evening about eight thirty Mother Ignatius was with him, and she asked him to bless all the sisters. She helped him to make the sign of the Cross. Mother then returned to the convent, expecting him to be better in the morning. The Franciscan Sister who was nursing him noticed a great change about three-thirty, and summoned the priests. They said the Litany for the Dying, and gave the last blessing. He died while they were praying around him, September 17, 1879.

Archbishop Wood saw Mother Mary Walburga in the Spring Garden Street Convent the next morning, and arranged for the funeral. Father Carter had built his own tomb in the Sharon cemetery with a beautiful Carara marble statue of the Immaculate Conception made in Italy, over it.

**The Sharon Journal records:**

Sept. 18th. Every arrangement had been made by dear Father Carter, and left in writing so as to save all confusion—so nothing remains to be done but carry out his wishes. Reverend Mother telegraphed at once to England and had many letters written to get Masses for him. Mother Ignatius and the nuns draped his room, and they have kept watch by the coffin, two by two all day; they will do the same tomorrow, and then on Friday, the Requiem Mass will be sung by His Grace, and Bishop O'Hara will be present. We expect the funeral about two in the afternoon.

19th. Father O'Neill said Mass for dear Father Carter today and the whole community and all the Catholic children went to Holy Communion for the same intention. Reverend Mother made arrangements for the dinner for the priests when she was in the city yesterday but as it is Friday, there can be no meat. Still everything will be as nice as possible to do honor to our dear Father and benefactor. At about half-past two, the Archbishop drove up and about three-quarters of an hour later, the funeral arrived at the gate. We all went in procession with His Grace to meet the hearse and then went slowly to the cemetery, the children first, then the nuns, the priests, the Archbishop and the coffin. It was a lovely and solemn

scene never to be forgotten. The Archbishop chanted the Litany of the Saints, and we all responded. Then the priests chanted the Miserere and Benedictus. By this time we had arrived at the cemetery, and after the absolution, the coffin was lowered into its last resting place. All the sisters returned to the chapel.

The Archbishop and priests took dinner in the school hall. This dinner had been provided by Father Carter almost two years ago. He then gave Reverend Mother \$500 so that she would have no expense at the time of his death. The Archbishop remained until about seven in the evening. He seemed to want to talk about Father Carter.

Archbishop Wood fully appreciated Father Carter, and his respect for his qualities of mind and heart was shown by having him for so many years his Vicar General. His words, often quoted, "Father Carter is just as well as generous," are an encomium for anyone, especially coming from His Grace.

In September of this year little of interest took place. A mild sensation among the children was caused by the advent of the five Coudert children, ranging in age from Aimee, 14, to Constance, 5. Constance's French nurse was a novelty. Mr. Charles Coudert was in the diplomatic service and being obliged by ill health to travel for a year, Mrs. Coudert entrusted the whole family of little ones to the nuns. Later, she gave to Sharon the beautiful Thirteenth Century sanctuary lamp, ever since one of Sharon's prides.

In October, his Grace confirmed several of the children at Sharon. On the occasion, he spent the entire afternoon with the children. He sang "When Good King Arthur Ruled the Land," and was altogether fatherly and gracious. Sisters Mary Edward Roberts and St. Stanislaus McNamee were clothed during October, at St. Leonard's.

On Reverend Mother Foundress' feast, December 21, a crayon picture of her, very lifelike, enlarged from a photograph, was hung in the community for the day, and adorned with flowers. "It made the nuns happy" notes the *Journal*, "to have her among us." The picture was hung in the ante-chapel the next day. On this day, also, came the figures for the Crib. They are still in use at Sharon. The Crib, built in the ante-chapel, was blessed by Father di Augustinis before the Midnight Mass. He said the chapel was "like a bit of heaven" with which all agreed. It is interesting to note that the antechapel was afterwards Reverend Mother Provincial's office before New Sharon was opened.

The triduum this year was given by Father Pantanella S. J. Father Stiffini came with him in the afternoon for a visit.

The year 1880 began quietly with 29 boarders and two day scholars at Sharon. On January 21, the almost sudden death of Sister Theresa, after the doctor saying there was nothing serious in her condition, was a shock to all. All felt that she was specially prepared for death, for a few minutes before she died, she spoke of the Mercy of God, and how we ought to trust Him. She was seated quietly, when, as Reverend Mother was entering the room she was seized with a convulsion which caused her death. Father Fitzmaurice said the Requiem Mass and the coffin was carried to the cemetery by Reverend Mother Mary Walburga, Mothers M. Agnese, M. Blandina, St. Michael, Sisters Marion and Joseph. The custom of the nuns acting as pall-bearers was continued for many years and to be one was considered as an honor. Sister Theresa had been clothed with Sister Joseph Thall at Spring Garden Street, in 1864, and was a devoted worker, loved by all. Hers was the fourth death at Sharon, and her grave with Father Carter's made eight in the little cemetery.

In February a letter from Reverend Mother Vicaress announced that the chapter would be held in the summer and on March 16, the Archbishop presided at the election of a delegate to accompany Mother Mary Walburga. Mother Agatha was elected.

The profession of Sisters St. John McMaster, Mary Josephine Williams, Francis Xavier Darlington, and Alphonse McGlone and the clothing of Sister Mary Cecilia took place on April 5th. The Archbishop came the evening before with Father Brennan.

Again, on May 5th, the question of a house in New York was agitated.

From the Journal of that date we have:

"Mother Mary Agnese and Mother Antonia went to New York to see if Cardinal McCloskey would have us in his Diocese. They looked at St. Louis College on 42nd Street which would suit us exactly, if we could only get it. They saw the Cardinal on Saturday, but he refused to let us go to New York, as he said he is too old to take on himself any more responsibility."

Once more the "Fiat" was said and the New York foundation relegated to the future.

On June 3rd and 4th, the Forty Hours' Devotion with adoration all night, was celebrated at Sharon. As this was the first time the Forty Hours' was celebrated in a convent of the Holy Child in America, all looked on it as an occasion of special grace and made the most of it. The 4th was the feast of the Sacred Heart that year and benediction at 7:30 closed the Quarant Ore.

The Sharon Journal has no record for July and August, Mother Agatha, the faithful annalist, being in England with Mother Mary Walburga at the chapter. The results of this chapter may be found in Reverend Mother Foundress' Life, and need not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that Mother Connelly's choice of a successor was confirmed by the votes of the chapter, and Mother Angelica Croft was elected General. Mother Mary Walburga was reelected superior of the American Mission, and the American superiors were Mother Antonia at St. Leonard's and Mother Agatha at Spring Garden Street. This last election was a great loss to the American Annals, for no one equaled Mother Agatha in graphic and faithful recording of events. Mother Mary Agnese was again mistress of novices, with Mother Mary Bernard Doerfinger assistant.

In the September of this year, the school at Kellyville, where Father McEnroe was pastor, is mentioned for the first time in the Journal. It is noted that there were 202 enrolled. Father McEnroe said afterwards that he would never forget Mother Agatha's efforts to secure for his school the Sisters of the Holy Child. It was a small school, and the nuns loved it. It was given up in 1885, when the pastor wanted a resident community there, and we had not the nuns for it. Doctor W. P. Grady, who was in the school when the nuns left there, says that for a while lay teachers taught, and his sisters went to the Academy at Spring Garden Street. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart undertook the teaching of the Kellyville School, and have remained there. The name of Kellyville has been changed to Oak View.

The profession of four novices—Sisters Mary Claire, St. Raphael, Mary Veronica and Vincent—and the reception of Miss Brent took place on September 29th. The Archbishop being unable to be present, the Vicar General officiated.

We note that many Masses for the dead are recorded, especially for Reverend Mother Foundress, Father Carter and Mother Mary Xavier. The school at Sharon continued to be small, but the teaching was as strenuous as ever. Names of many future S.H.C.J. nuns are found on the register.

In December, the children presented Reverend Mother with clothes for the poor which they had made in honor of the Holy Child. This was for years the custom at Sharon. These clothes were given to the Maternity Hospital in Paschallville.

The name of the Father who gave the triduum is not mentioned, and the beginning of the year 1881 was uneventful.

In February, the night school at Spring Garden Street was closed for lack of numbers. In March, Sisters F. Regis O'Neill and Mary Agatha Kelly, a child

from St. Leonard's, were clothed at St. Leonard's. Sister Francis Regis was a sister of the two Fathers O'Neill, whose names occur frequently in the Annals—Fathers Joseph and Francis.

This year, for the first time, the sisters had a regular chaplain. He was the curate of St. Clement's, Paschallville, and now their anxiety about missing Mass, when a funeral Mass had to be said at the church was at an end. At Sharon, the benediction after Vespers, which was at five o'clock and at which the priest officiated, was long a custom. It was noted, too, that for the first time, ashes were blessed in the chapel. Until this time, they were brought from the church and distributed in the evening.

A great sorrow came to the Society in America when, on July 2nd, a cablegram came recalling Mother Mary Agnese to England to take the place on the General Council of Mother Mary Aloysia Frankish, who had died after eighteen hours' illness. Mother Aloysia had been First Assistant and Mistress of Novices. All the sisters were grieved, and united in preparing for the departure of one whom they had expected to remain with them until her death. Sister Margaret, a lay sister who had come from England, accompanied Mother Mary Agnese and remained in England. They sailed on the 12th in the Wyoming. Mother Mary Bernard was appointed mistress of novices, with Mother St. John McMaster as assistant.

The mid-summer retreat given by Father Polina, S. J., ended on the 16th, and again the sisters renewed their vows on that day.

A beautiful window depicting Saint Walburga going over the water to Germany was put in the chapel on the 30th of July. The feast of Saint Ignatius was always a high festival to the nuns who had lived with Mother Foundress and this year was no exception. According to the Journal:

"The feast of St. Ignatius was a grand holiday. The novices sang a lovely Mass. The chapel looked beautiful. The young professed got up a musical entertainment."

In September, we find many children from the South at Sharon. Mr. McMaster brought "the Honorable T. J. Semmes of New Orleans, with his daughter Cora. Major Semple, of Alabama, brought his daughter, Irene. Florence and Mary Troy from the same State are on the roll. Mary and a younger sister Eliza became Holy Child nuns. Their father, Colonel Troy, had become a Catholic while being cared for by the Sisters of Charity during the War between the States. There was a non-Catholic, Mabel Clarke, from Alabama, no doubt a friend of one or other of the Southerners. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Brady, of Easton came to see about entering their daughter at Sharon. All four of the Bradys were educated at Sharon, and Mary and Nellie became Holy Child nuns. Mr. Peter Brady had befriended the nuns at Towanda.

This year Mother Mary Aloysia was made prefect at Sharon with Mother Mary Ethelburga (lately come from England) as second prefect.

On September 3rd, at St. Leonard's, Sister Mechtilde Maguire was professed and Sister M. Dolores Leveque was clothed.

A new school was opened in Philadelphia this September, that of the Visitation. Father Barry, a zealous priest whose parish embraced what later became three parishes, had secured the nuns for his school. Our sisters taught the girls and the small boys, and the Christian Brothers taught the older boys. The registration the first year was 600. In 1908, it was 1300. The opening was presided over by Rev. Mother Agatha, as the nuns who were to teach there were to live at Spring Garden Street, where Mother was superior. Mother Gabriel and four sisters taught the first year.

All during the fall of this year, Rev. Mother Mary Antonia was in such poor health that the physician insisted she should be relieved of all the responsibilities of office, as she was threatened with "brain fever." She came to Sharon for a rest

and change, and Mother Mary Walburga sent a letter to England, stating the doctor's opinion. With characteristic faith, she had the community make a novena and at the end Mother Antonia was so much better that Mother Mary Walburga took her back to St. Leonard's. She was relieved of one of her responsibilities, that of being one of the Provincial assistants, and Mother St. Anthony was appointed in her place.

This was a jubilee year, and all the nuns and children fasted (black fast) one day. There was a general Communion to gain the Jubilee Indulgence.

An interesting entry on the feast of the Immaculate Conception:

"Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Singing at Mass. The chapel was very lovely. Rev. Mother's retreat ended. After breakfast, we showed Reverend Mother the classrooms and community room, which were our surprise for her. The Children of Mary had a grand holiday. Lalitte Willcox (Mrs. Leslie) brought her daughter (not 2 years old) as the youngest Child of Mary. She had been consecrated to her when a few months old."

This was Sharon's first grandchild, and she was received with enthusiasm at the meeting.

During this fall, many changes were made in the convent and school. A summary of these was made at the end of the *Journal* for the year. We quote in full:

"Supplementary Note—Since September the laundry, at the end of which are the men's rooms, was built at the end of the bricks. The old laundry and men's sitting room was turned into the refectory. The community room has been enlarged by having the wall between it and the men's bedroom taken down. The old refectory has been converted into a study-room for the sisters. All these improvements were most necessary. All the classrooms are now on the same floor, which is a great advantage in keeping the children in one part of the house. The new gasoline machine was put in in August."

On the 15th of December, Father O'Neill blessed the laundry, then called **Bethany**. For some time this name was used in the *Journal*, but, for some reason, it never became attached. The building was converted into a postulants' house, which was called St. Josephs.

The end of the year was much as usual. The Crib was put up in one of the music rooms at the end of the old school hall (later the community room). The Christmas Masses were celebrated by Father di Augustinis, who also gave the Triduum.

The events of 1882 may be briefly chronicled. The most important events were professions and clothings. On January 28th, Sisters Philomena Brannon and Benedicta Donohue were clothed. On March 25th Sister St. Ignatius Wheaton received the habit. Father Thomas O'Neill officiated and Dr. McSweeney of New York preached the sermon. Agnes Wheaton was cross-bearer. Their mother, father, and brother Ike all received Holy Communion at the Mass. Sister was the first Sharon girl to be clothed for some time, and it was a great day for all. The fact that Judge Wheaton was a convert was also interesting. Many non-Catholic relatives of the family were present. In October, Sister Rose Christian was clothed, and in November, another Sharon girl, Mary Henwood a ward of Mr. Patrick Farrelly received the habit. She became Sister Mary Andrea. The only profession this year was that of Sister Mary Cecilia Coleman, on May 24th. She was a gifted musician, and for years the organist and choir mistress at Sharon. The novices at this time were small in numbers—about eight for several years. Dr. Walsh, the Vicar General, officiated.

The number of students on the register between the years 1873 and this time fluctuated between thirty-three and forty-five, rising in 1876 to fifty.

In February, the cachet system was introduced, which we are told "both nuns

and children like."

On Pentecost Sunday, a new work was begun in the form of instructions to some children from Darby and the vicinity. This class in Christian Doctrine lasted from eleven to twelve-thirty and was taught by Sister Margaret Mary. This was to continue until the school at St. Clements, Paschallville, should be opened.

An entry in the *Journal* for May 5th, reminds us of Mother Mary Walburga's extraordinary kindness to the sick. Sister Mary Josephine, a young nun, was ill, and Reverend Mother had her brought down to her cell where every care was lavished upon her. Sister was then sent to St. Leonard's where she could be near the doctor. Here she remained until entirely recovered.

The chapel was renovated during this spring. Benches were made for our chapel by the lay brothers at Woodstock. They were handsome, of solid mahogany, with hand-carved ends, and when the present chapel was built, they were used in various of our convents. \$310 had been collected in gifts for these benches and presented at the feast of St. Walburga. Other gifts were:

A handsome pair of crimson rail covers from St. Leonard's; new sets of altar covers embroidered in applique; two oil paintings; a carpet for St. Joseph's room; many small painted pictures, Agnus Dei, etc.

This summer for the first time there were two retreats at Sharon. The first one, July 7-16, was given by Father Denny, S. J., who was to become a great friend of the Society. The retreat delighted him, especially as he was an Englishman, and many little English tendencies at Sharon made him feel at home from the beginning. He was a very versatile character. He delighted to talk to the children during the retreat. There were a number this year, and they had been relegated to Bethany, much to the joy of the nuns who could have the sleeping quarters in peace! Father Denny often sat on the piazza with the children, playing a literary game, or talking. He also played croquet with them. He was taken for rides in Marie Laine's phaeton, the children taking turns driving him around the neighborhood. At the end of the retreat he gave the nuns a lesson in "Tonic solfa", a system new to them, and the lesson was enjoyed very much.

This year again after retreat the nuns renewed their vows. At breakfast—in those days, we talked at breakfast after the long retreat)—Mother Mary Walburga told the nuns that Helen McMaster was entering Carmel. Helen had been on several visits to Sharon during the year, and had taken part in the play, *King Alfred*, for Reverend Mother's feast, and the nuns had hoped that she would follow her sister into the Society. Mother Mary Walburga, who loved her devotedly, said, as she afterwards said when Gertrude McMaster became a Carmelite, "God gives vocations," and she made the nuns see that her going to Carmel was the only thing for her to do since it was God's call. Like Mother Foundress, Mother Mary Walburga rejoiced to see one of our children enter Our Lady's Order.

The 16th being the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, there was general recreation all day, and a long walk in the wood. On the 18th, regular summer hours began. The horarium is interesting:

#### HORARIUM

6:00 Rising  
7:00 Holy Mass  
8:30 Office  
9:00 Spiritual Reading  
9:30 Class  
12:30 Office  
12:45 Examen  
1:00 Dinner  
Free until

3:00 Reading and recreation under the trees  
5:30 Short Walk  
6:00 Matins and Lauds  
6:30 Supper  
7:00 Adoration  
7:30 Litanies followed by Night Recreation.  
Examen and points as usual.

The chapel though very beautiful, was extremely warm in summer, and the nuns found that adoration at seven instead of fifty-thirty was conducive to prayer.

An interesting note is found in the supplementary page for July:

"The large classroom opposite the noviceship has been divided into two rooms, one used as a cell and the other community clothing room. The former clothing room was turned into a classroom for the VI Form, so removing them from the studio."

This large classroom was the old chapel on the third floor.

With the year 1882 ended an epoch in the history of the Society in America. Up to this time, our work had been confined to the Archdiocese under the benign influence of Archbishop Wood. Our efforts to expand in the direction of New York having failed, many thought the West offered great opportunities. Among these was Mr. McMaster, and other friends strongly advised this step. In the meantime, offers had come from many sides—for instance from far away Demarara, from Canton, near Boston, from Talona in the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, from West Union, Iowa and finally, from Bishop Ireland of St. Paul, Minnesota. The journalist, noting these, remarks:

"Our system of teaching and its results have been highly recommended by his Grace, the Archbishop, and many of the clergy."

From July on, the *Journal* notes letters from Bishop Ireland regarding a foundation at Avoca, Minnesota, then in his diocese. The nuns had developed a missionary spirit of high order, and were wondering who the chosen ones would be, for Mother Mary Walburga had said that only the generous would be asked to go so far! In September Reverend Mother General gave permission to open the convent at Avoca, and suggested that a "reconnoitering visit" be made by the nuns. Accordingly, in October, Mother Mary Walburga and Mother Agatha set out for Avoca. Eagerly looked for post cards came from Harrisburg, Chicago, St. Paul, and finally Avoca. A letter soon came from the last place telling the day of their return. The reconnoitering visit had been satisfactory and a letter was despatched to Reverend Mother General. Bishop Ireland was sanguine and persuading. Two letters from his Grace, one dated August 12, and the other, December 21, are worth being incorporated in this chapter:

St. Paul, Minn., Aug. 12, 1882.

Reverend and dear Sister,

As Father Kent has written to you, I would be pleased to see a branch of your valuable community established in Avoca—provided of course, that

Avoca meets your expectations—

It is a small village, a railroad station, in southwestern Minnesota. It is not likely to grow very fast, if it is at all destined to grow. It is the heart, however of a very flourishing Catholic settlement, and not distant from several other Catholic settlements of farmers. The prospects of farmers in Minnesota are very good. There is no religious community within 80 miles of Avoca, so that whatever girls of all southwestern Minnesota who would wish to go to a boarding school would patronize Avoca. It is difficult to ascertain how many pupils you would have the first year; eventually I am sure you could build up a first class institution. You would not have many day scholars, as in a farming community the families do not live in numbers near the village. The country is new, but rapidly filling up—the sisters would have to live for some time as pioneers.

Ground is not of much consequence in Avoca; you can have a good place of it. When the colony of Avoca was opened for settlement, nearly three years ago, I put up a very fine building with the intention that it would serve at first as a hotel, and afterwards as a school. The building is as fresh as when new, nicely situated, adapted for a convent school. It is my intention that the community going to Avoca would purchase this building. It can be had on time, reasonable rate of interest, and in a few years the sisters can collect from the settlers enough to pay for it. The building can

be turned over to the community at any time. Father Kent and myself would do our best to facilitate collections by the sisters for the purpose of paying gradually for it.

The sisters should not come penniless; they ought to have enough to furnish the house, buy a piano, and support themselves for a few months.

It is a serious matter to make a new foundation, and it would be well for your own sake to see the country before coming to a final decision. I would wish to know all the difficulties, so that you could not afterwards blame me.

My own cooperation, as far as it can go, will be most cheerfully given.

Please send me a copy of your rules and let me know soon what you would be likely to do.

Very sincerely,

J. Ireland.

Sister Mary Walburga.

The letter of December 21 will be inserted here, because they are well studied together.

Cathedral of St. Paul

St. Paul, Minn., Dec. 21, 1882.

Rev. and dear Sister,

I assure you I am much gratified to receive the news that your sisters are decidedly coming to Avoca. I pray that God may reward your undertaking with a due share of success, so that you may never have reason to regret having come to Minnesota. It will be always a great pleasure for me to cooperate as far as the occasion will allow, with the sisters, and to render them all the assistance that may be in my power.

The new convent will be the crowning of the colonization work in Murray County. I feel most grateful to Providence for having inspired you to look at the West. The building is no longer occupied as a hotel. Mr. Leary's family will remain in it until your coming. This present arrangement will prevent any further wear and tear.

There will be no difficulty in your borrowing \$2500 in Minnesota. I will arrange the matter for you one way or another next April, when you will be, as you say, prepared to make a payment, and to receive a deed. The deed of course, will be made out to the Sharon Hill Corporation. I have every reason to believe from what I hear that you will have a good number of pupils next September. Your coming months beforehand will be your best advertisement as people will be sure that the school will be and will be making their preparations accordingly.

I will be glad to hear of your opening a house in Lincoln. I think it is a good point, and the distance between Lincoln and Avoca will permit frequent communication between the two communities. There is a direct R. R. between the two places.

I will, of course, be notified in due time of the coming of the sisters so that I may secure passes from Chicago.

Recommending myself to the prayers of your community, I remain,

Rev. dear Sister,

Very sincerely,

J. Ireland.

Rev. Sister Walburga.

In the meantime, events were moving rapidly. In November, the Bishop of Omaha whom the nuns had known as Dr. James O'Connor when he was rector of St. Charles Seminary, came to Sharon, asking for nuns to open a Convent in Lincoln, Nebraska, then in his diocese. He did not think a reconnoitering visit necessary. He said there was no other Catholic school in the city. On December 1st a letter followed this visit. From Reverend Mother General, on December 3rd, came permission to open Avoca. Thus was laid the foundation of a new expansion which developed within the next decade, as we shall see, and we shall also find that many parochial schools in the Archdiocese were accepted by our nuns.

This year also marked the ending of a gentle, yet potent influence on the life of Sharon. Archbishop Wood whose truly fatherly interest and sincere encouragement never wavered was visibly failing. We miss in the Journal the frequent mention of his visits and the enjoyment children and nuns found in them. In April we read

on the 4th, 'A kind letter from his Grace, on the 25th Silver Jubilee of the Archbishop.' It had been noted on the 23rd, that Reverend Mother had shown the nuns at recreation the present for the Archbishop's silver jubilee, but what the present was is left to our conjecture.

The last recorded visit of Archbishop Wood to his beloved Sharon was on July 6. To quote the **Journal**:

His Grace the Archbishop, accompanied by the Reverend Fathers Elcock and Sinnott, drove out quite unexpectedly about 20 to 4 and stayed until a quarter past five. His Grace was very lame and feeble, but very bright, and kinder than ever. The professed sisters and novices went in to get his blessing. His Grace said many kind things and spoke particularly of our work in America. It was one of the nicest visits we have ever had. His Grace was able to go and look at the new school hall, to which the Blessed Sacrament has been removed, and liked it.

Both nuns and children were exceedingly happy whenever Archbishop Wood called, and were sincerely attached to him. They did not, however, realize until after his death in the June of 1883, that he was an unique character—loyal, genuine, and faithful, withal learned and simple.

On December 15 the simple entry "The Archbishop is very ill" gives a hint that he is declining, and on the 26th, we find:

"The Archbishop, though very ill, wrote an extremely kind letter to Reverend Mother granting her requests and sending a thousand blessings. He wrote "Many thanks! A thousand blessings! All the joys of Xmas!

J. F. Wood."

At the end of the page for the last of the year these words from his Grace's letter are preserved in the original, clearly his writing, although very shaky in appearance.

During the last weeks of the year, the notes are brief, but interesting. For example, "On the prefect's feast the children presented a ciborium for Avoca also a sanctuary lamp and bell. On the 20th, the Christmas concert was good, the first blue was awarded to Agnes Long, the second blue to Marie Laine, Minnie Doyle and M. Lynch." Agnes Long was to become Mother Mary Christina. Marie Laine, under Mother Mary Theresa Villier's able direction, was then engaged illuminating altar cards for the Sharon chapel. These were exceedingly beautiful, and were meant to be a goodbye present, as she was returning home to Cuba at the end of the year.

"Dec. 24. Clock striking the hours for Christmas. Agnes Long received the hood before Midnight Mass. Father Heuser from the Seminary for Mass.

"Dec. 25. A beautiful sanctuary lamp from Mrs. Wheaton which was put up at once and the small silver one put aside for Avoca."

This lamp was used until Mrs. Charles Coudert presented the thirteenth century brass lamp, which is one of Sharon's prides.

The entry for the 25th adds:

We talked at breakfast and Reverend Mother told us how privileged Father Heuser considers himself at being asked to say Midnight Mass and that other priests would be delighted also, and consider it a privilege . . . This morning's post brought a most kind and flattering letter from the Rt. Rev. Dr. Ireland.

Dec. 28. The children dressed up as nuns. Some of the nuns came this morning and the last detachment from Spring Garden Street came on the same train as Father di Augustinis. The nuns, of course, stood back on seeing the carriage, for they knew for whom it had been sent. He, however quickly placed his bag in the carriage and sent it back for the nuns. Poor Mother Maria Rita was one of the privileged carriage persons, but she was longing to get out, dreading lest Reverend Mother and the nuns should be at the door to meet them. A great load she said was lifted from her heart when there was no one at the door.

Thus ended the year 1882, full of hopes for the future and expectations of what it would bring to each and all.

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