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A GLIMPSE OF THE OHIO VALLEY

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Translated for the Society by the late Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Hakel

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Letter 4 - The Indians of the Old Northwest
(part 1)

My very good Patron:

The meritorious work of France for our religion and civilization in the West, which even today the kind Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Lyons does not let us forget, will ever shine in the annals of the Church in America. France helped a great deal precisely at the time when it was doing the least for religion at home and indeed was trying to smother and wipe out religion in the blood of its best priests with greater cruelty than the Indians.

Even Lafayette involuntarily (it was guidance from on high) showed a way to the nobler priests who preferred the things of God and exile to taking the Oath of Loyalty to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy which was being demanded by those committing crimes against religion.

Just then the Declaration of Independence of the Atlantic Colonies from the domination of the British simultaneously broke the bonds which had checked religious tyranny in Maryland, where the poor Catholics after they, like William Penn, had good-heartedly opened their colony as a refuge for the persecuted Episcopalians and Puritans, were repaid by the English Church with

oppression and punitive laws like those which they imposed on Ireland and under which it still suffers to some extent today. Even so Very Reverend John Carroll, Vicar General since 1786, was appointed Bishop of the entire United States by the Holy See at the earnest request of all the clergy and was consecrated Bishop on August 15, 1790, in England at Lulworth Castle, the residence of Sir Thomas Weld. The new bishop returned to America with the title of Bishop of Baltimore and summoned all priests of his immense diocese to assemble at a Diocesan Council¹, which was attended by 24 priests. However, this pious, active young band was soon assisted by the men who fled to America to escape the guillotine. Unforgettable are the names of Cheverus², Dubourg and Flaget as well as many other deserving men especially those from the Society of St. Sulpice, men nearly all of whom have now "fought the good fight, and have run their course and have kept the faith."

With this prospect, the good bishop frequently turned his gaze to the Far West; for this far reaching part at the end of the early half-civilized American world was given over and entrusted to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Quebec as his spiritual charge. Yet who could approach that bloody ground? The Peace of Paris of February 10, 1763, ratified by the Great Powers, England, France, and Spain, by which France had to give up Canada and Louisiana, naturally had no

influence on the savage tribes who were not consulted about it. This peace rightly seemed offensive to the Indians, for experience had taught them to see no difference between ruthless domination over and actual seizure of a territory which to them was their native land and the hereditary possession of their forefathers.

The fortifications, restored everywhere by the English colonists, naturally strengthened the aborigines all the more in their conviction that there was nothing left for them but to choose between being pushed back into the inhospitable and chilly northern regions or fighting for the land of their fathers with the tomahawk in their hands.

They chose the latter. Their iron ax attacked first the English fur traders and then scattered the recently arrived inhabitants³ from their new settlements in the eastern part of the valley between the Ohio River and the Allegheny mountains, settlements which they could not defend with their flintlocks and fortifications. In this area alone in what is now the state of Kentucky (as also farther south) it is said that over 1,500 persons were killed or captured and abducted by the savages within seven years (from 1783 to 1790). I do not care to describe such scenes of horror. An eyewitness from those days says that "it was a slaughter such as human nature manifests in its most brutal state as if the cunning of the fox were united to the ferocity of the tiger. We read the history of this protracted chaos with the feelings of profoundest abhorrence."⁴ Mind you this savagery was practiced not only by the Indians against the white men but the white men themselves, like so many Janissaries, also made attacks on the Indians all along the Ohio River and in Virginia and Kentucky.⁵ "After they had lost so many relatives at the hands of the Indians and had suffered all sorts of crimes of murder and robbery, they burned with a thirst for vengeance against all Indians without distinction. They

were determined to take the offensive and to kill every Indian be he friend or foe."⁶

This systematic killing now befell even really innocent, peaceful and Christian tribes. In the southern valley, for instance, killing forays were organized out of Kentucky into Illinois against Catholic missions and in the northern part of the valley out of Virginia against settlements of the Moravian missionaries, and all this on the pretext that these places were merely half-way houses and robbers' lairs for the conveniences of the enemy. Kaskaskia and Vincennes suffered more perhaps than before from alien hordes on the grounds that they retained remnants of the Catholic religion and that the Indians always had a special liking for the French colonists.⁷ "The Jesuits," they said, "incite the savage against us."⁸

But who would be surprised at this when one is familiar with the blind and enduring passion of the fanatics? For even in recent times the bloody penal code of the English Church prevailed in some southern states as also the Blue Laws farther north under the Puritans, which ordered Quakers and Jesuits to be seized at once and hanged from the nearest tree, while several old women (especially in Boston) were denounced as witches and burned. This attitude, which erupts now and then even today in spite of the Constitution⁹ which tolerates and protects all religions, was naturally transplanted earlier by the Anglo-Americans into the more distant valley and was used pretty much the same way in that long war with the Indians.

The Moravian Brethren indeed tried to instill gentler feelings in the hardened hearts of these bloodthirsty warriors. Their villages along the Tuscarawas and Sandusky Rivers (in the northern part of the present state of Ohio), whither they were followed by the Delaware tribe, fared no better than the more notable Jesuit conquests for the Faith south of there. A roving band of Indians originating far from Sandusky

killed a settler named W. Wallace, his wife, and six children. On their raid the murderers stopped at the village of the innocent Indians of the Moravian Brethren who were totally unaware of the murders. This brought suspicion on them especially since already their village had been alleged to be dangerous hideouts. Suddenly men appeared among them seeking revenge for the murders. They had come all the way from Virginia. They took prisoner all the innocent inhabitants, who showed not the least resistance. Colonel Williamson summoned his companions and set up a military court. He commanded all his men to stand in a line and said, "Shall the Moravian Indian prisoners be sent to Pittsburgh for further orders or be tried here at once? Whoever votes to spare their lives, step forward from the ranks and form a second line." Out of 80 or 90 men only 16 stepped forward to the line of mercy. The prisoners' short life span was decided and their doom sealed. Zeisberg led the condemned, 90 in number, of every age and sex, into two log chapels where they begged forgiveness of God and of their fellow sufferers amid fervent tears. They embraced each other and prayed until the voice of the Commandment rang out, "Are you ready to die?" They answered: "We have commended our souls to God and we are ready." In an instant all were clubbed to death and lay in their blood. Thus they became Christians in the fullest sense of the word. To this very hour this place is called "Gnadenhutten"¹⁰ in memory of their martyrdom. From then on the Moravian missions declined, at least north of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, although here as in other places communities of these Brethren are still living in quiet separation from all other sects and are still devoted to their German language.

These random sketches taken from that long Revolutionary War of the Republicans against the British, show how much was done for civilization by the British and the Anglo-Americans after the abolition of French

domination in the Far West. "The English made many Indian tribes their allies without restraining them from their horrible butchery. In fact the Commanders at the outposts along the frontier paid the Indians for scalps¹¹ of those captured and killed. Thus the scalp of a white man or woman served as cash in the hands of the savages who then exchanged them for weapons and munitions to carry on their barbarous conduct or for articles of clothing to cover their half naked bodies. Was this not 'blood money'?"¹² Peace did not return to the west, particularly to the Ohio Valley, until the American Generals St. Clair and Wayne marched against the Indians with regular troops from Fort Washington (where Cincinnati now flourishes) and totally defeated them at the Maumee River in Ohio and forced them to conclude a peace (1795).

This was the general situation in the immense West at the end of the 18th century when some of the Indian tribes were retreating across the Mississippi and behind the wooded areas of the northern plains. Only the Shawnees, Delawares, Senecas, Wyandottes, Miamis, Ottawas, etc., remained in Michigan and the northern frontiers of Indiana and Ohio on Reservations. In later years, they voluntarily sold their Reservations to Congress, which usually paid them the stipulated sum in yearly installments. They gave up their war and hunting expeditions reluctantly and accustomed themselves with difficulty to the plow which they often abandoned again and sold for bows and arrows.

What is the reason for this? Why was there so little success in civilizing them? They come into our towns, they are amazed at our houses, they praise our furniture, but why do they usually ask only for whiskey¹³, childish gifts, or metal murder weapons?¹⁴ This is what the renowned Dr. Drake of Cincinnati asks regretfully.¹⁵ He finds the reason for this failure in the fact that the Indians were forced too quickly from one extreme, namely hunting, to the direct opposite one of

farming without training them gradually through a transitional occupation such as cattle herding. As right and good as this remark seems, still I would [not] hesitate to recommend other remedies such as those of the Jesuits even if they had the help of only a small part of those enormous sums of money that were so enthusiastically squandered everywhere for tracts and Bibles¹⁶ and even if I could surely foresee in the near future a Paraguay in North America. In the entire history of civilization, religion is the only restorer of fallen mankind, religion, I say, that is not merely read silently in books but preached aloud by inspired men.

(Letter 2 will be concluded in a future issue.)

NOTES

- (1) Reverendissimus Episcopus Baltimori per literas ad suum clerum directas die 27ma Octobris 1791, significant sibi statutum esse, Synodum Dioccesanum celebrare in Ecclesia Baltimorensi die 7ma Novembris eiusdem anni, omnesque suae Dioceseos sacerdotes, qui animarum saluti et sacris ministeriis legitime vacabant, ad hanc Synodum invitavit. - Statuta Synodi Baltimorensis, I, 1791.
- (2) Cheverus, first Bishop of Boston and now Archbishop of Bordeaux; Dubourg, first Bishop of St. Louis and New Orleans, then Bishop of Montauban in France. He died as Archbishop of Besaucon a few years ago. [Cheverus was made a Cardinal in 1836.] [Dubourg was Bishop of Upper and Lower Louisiana i.e. St. Louis and New Orleans.]
- (3) Holmes' Chronicle asserts that in 1775 within six weeks over 300 families fled over the Allegheny and down the Ohio River as far as the Mississippi River.
- (4) Dr. Dodrick's Notes on the settlement and Indian wars of the western parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania from the year of 1763 until 1783. A rare little book.
- (5) Dr. Dodrick's notes.
- (6) Dr. Dodrick's Notes. Crawford's Campaign, chapter 32.
- (7) The influence of the French upon the neighboring savages is clearly shown by the following true story. Hardly had the colonists rebelled against England in the American Revolution when the savages joined them because they were told that "their old Father, the King of France, had arisen from the dead and was angry with them because they had fought for the British. So if they did not want to see their land running with blood from the war, they had better make peace with the Americans." They immediately laid down their weapons and became friends of Congress.
- (8) "The English historians attribute this terrible war to the influence of the French Jesuits over the Indians, but whether with much truth and candor is to say the least extremely doubtful." Dodrick's War of 1763-1768. Should we not prefer the account of an American Protestant eyewitness to the lying propaganda of the British?
- (9) The Constitution reads thus: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of Religion; or prohibiting the exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition with Government for a redress of grievances." Amendment to the Constitution Article 1. By virtue of existing articles in the state constitutions of New Jersey and North Carolina, no Catholic can hold any office. However, Jews and Atheists are not barred because of religious belief. In this way the above article is violated in practice. Nevertheless they still do not have the courage to repeal this article from the statute book like other states did. (Perhaps they are ashamed to speak openly in the assembly at this time about such a shameful thing.)
- (10) Because of poor pronunciation of English this place is called Konothan today. It is only ten miles from New Philadelphia in Tuscarawas County, Ohio.
- (11) It was the custom of many North American Indians when they killed or captured anyone to

cut off the skin above the eyes and ears in a circle and rip it off the skull together with the hair. This was called scalping.

(12) Dodrick's Notes.

(13) [Whiskey] A distilled liquor made of Indian corn, i.e., maize.

(14) Delegates of the Indian tribes appeared annually in Washington and Canada to collect the gifts that the English government promised them earlier in the war, for their services. Some came to Washington to see the President, "the Great White Father," as these sons of nature called him, to recover back payments of the money owed them for land they gave up.

(15) Discourse to the Union Literary Society of Miami University by Daniel Drake, M.D.

(16) Attempts have been made to reckon as exactly as possible how much the annual receipts of the various Protestant missionary Bible and Tract Societies amounted to in America. The result was a total of about two million Austrian Gulden without mentioning the many very generous private donations. This effort of the American Protestants is really extraordinary and reaches out not only to America but also to Asia and even Europe. Large sums of money pour into attempts to convert France and Greece particularly into building a college there. Let Europe decide how far their efforts will succeed. Western Africa is not forgotten. On the occasion of a Farewell Missionary Meeting in Baltimore on October 15, 1832, Mr. Spaulding and Mr. Wright and their wives received 1,200 Kronenthaler and that from members of the audience on that one evening only. But where do we find the results? Where is the country, where are the people who owe their conversion, their Christianity to Protestantism? Noteworthy is the book of Father Wiseman, Rector of the English College in Rome concerning the failure of the Protestant missions recently translated from Italian, Augsburg, the Kollmann Bookshop.

**Abstracts from
The Catholic Telegraph**
(Continued, from Vol. XXV, No. 7)

November 22, 1849

Subscription: J. Ryan, Circleville, O.

(Rev. Cor. Daly of Chapel Hill, Perry County, O., has consented to act as agent for the *Catholic Telegraph & Advocate*.)

November 27, 1849

(Note of the death of Rev. P. M. O'Mealy, November 26, aged 26 years.)

December 6, 1849

Rev. Mr. Laurence, of Parkersburgh, Va., with the permission of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Whelan, Bishop of Richmond, has kindly consented to visit the Catholics of Marietta on the first Sunday of every month, and the congregation of St. James, Meig's Creek, the week following. They will be visited at stated intervals, until supplied with a pastor, by Rev. Mr. Koch, of Pomeroy.

KENTON.-- In this place, also on the same [rail]road, a lot for a church has been obtained. -- The Catholics of the neighborhood are now visited by the priests of Tiffin and Thompson, Seneca county.

January 5, 1850

We are happy to learn that Rev. C. H. Borgess of Columbus has obtained a suitable lot for a Church, in Delaware, on which he hopes to erect a small church in the Spring.

January 19, 1850

Subscriptions: Rev. C. Kroemar, Malaga, O.; Jacob Snyder, Rehoboth, O.; L. A. Zimmer, Portsmouth, O.; James Gallagher, Washington, O.; Daniel Coakly, Zanesville, O.; Christopher Garraghty, Lancaster, O.; Peter Deges, Gallipolis, O.



Janury 26, 1850

...there have been...several persons in this city begging for churches and other purposes...in violation of our express prohibition. In one instance we are assured that the beggars for a German church, not of this diocese, said, that an authorization to Mr. Goldcamp, then in the city, begging for the destitute church of St. Laurence, at the Scioto Furnaces, was meant for them, and received the money which husbands...gave their wives...to present, when called for, for the church of St. Laurence. The other beggars were from Ireland. ...

February 2, 1850

Subscription: Louis A. Zimmer, Portsmouth, O.

February 9, 1850

Subscriptions: New Lexington, O.: Denis McCormack; Steubenville, O.: Robert McForstle, Val Owsney, James McGinnis, John Brady.

February 16, 1850

Subscriptions: Mt. Vernon: Ralph Payne, Wm. Brophy; Rehoboth, O.: Mr. O'Rourke.

(Article on the death of Bishop Flaget.)

February 23, 1850

Subscriptions: Columbus, O.: Rev. Caspar Borgess, Fallin and Early, J. Kronenbitter. Lancaster, O: Rev. J. M. Young, Thomas Cooney. Chillicothe, O.: W. M. Anderson, Dennis McConnell, Ed. Carrille [sic, correctly Carville], Philip Dunn, John Cull, Roger Cull, Michael Rigney, Father D'Hope. Somerset, O.: Martin Scott.

(Sketch of Bishop Flaget's life.)

March 2, 1850

Subscriptions: Somerset, O.: Jacob Costigan, Peter Dittoe, A. J. Delong. Steubenville, O.: Val. Owsney, Rev. T. O. Farrell.

(Rev. Charles P. Montgomery, O.S.D., of Zanesville, has been appointed Bishop of Monterey, Upper California.)

DIED on Thursday morning, February the 14th, at the residence of her brother, Rev. Thomas Boulger, Danville, Knox county, Ohio, Miss MARY BOULGER, in the 26th year of her age. May she rest in peace.

March 16, 1850

Subscriptions: Malaga, O.: F. Bidenharn. Somerset, O.: Jacob Costigan, Maul. Crossen, William J. Clark.

March 23, 1850

Subscriptions: Portsmouth, O.: John C. Meyer. Pomeroy, O.: Henry Gibbons, Rev. Mr. Krapf. Danville, O.: Rev. Mr. Boulger, Mr. McNamara, Benedict Magers. Mt. Vernon, O.: K. P. Warden, Benjamin Magers. Amity, O.: Samuel Durbin. Homer, O.: J. Postlewaite. Johnston, O.: J. Garret.

We regret to learn that the continued, and even aggravated, indisposition of Rev. C. P. Montgomery, especially bronchitis, will, probably, impose on the Holy See the necessity of providing another incumbent for the See of Monterey.

March 30, 1850

Subscriptions: Marietta, O.: Martin Stafford. Temperanceville, O.: Ed. Gallagher, John Gallagher, Chris. Gallagher, Robert Gallagher. Bellair, O.: Mary B. Reed.

April 6, 1850

[Rev. F. X. Weninger, S.J.] will proceed immediately after Easter to preach a mission in Marietta, St. Michael's and St. John's churches, Monroe Co., and in the German congregation of Zanesville.

(To be continued)

**St. John the Evangelist Church,
Zanesville: Baptisms, 1828-1842**
(Continued, from Vol. XXV, No. 7)

1838, continued

same day [August 31] Teresa, daughter of Patrick McMannus and Ann Gold[page torn]; spon. John Martin and Catherine Coughlin.

same day Catherine, daughter of John Martin and Bridget McFarlin; spon. Patrick McMannus and Mary McFarlin. Fr. Wilson

Sept. 2 Ann, daughter of John Tool and Catherine Cun[nin]gham [page torn]; spon. Daniel Coackley and Ann Lynch.

same day Frances, daughter of Silas Montgomery and Mary Whit[page torn]; spon. James O'Neil and Hanna McCormick. Fr. A. J. Wilson, O...

Sept. 16 Daniel Joseph, son of Patrick Callon and Hanna Gallagher; spon. Ann Manor. AJW

Sept. 21 John, son of James Murphy and Mary Cassey; spon. Francis Shiels and Mary Bile.

same day Elizabeth, daughter of Patrick Colman and Mary Kelly; spon. James and Mary Adams. AJW

Sept. 23 Bridget, daughter of Michael Kilbride and Bridget Samon; spon. Peter McGuire and Ann Riley.

same day James, son of Thomas Cassidy and Catherine Fa_han; spon. John Ginder and wife. AJW

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Oct. 4 Joseph, son of Joseph Brother and Elizabeth Gust; spon. John Herner and wife. AJW

Oct. 7 John, son of Joseph Keenan and Catherine; spon. John Peter Reck [Beck?] and Mary Reck. AJW

Oct. 12 George, son of George Brother and Maria Josepha Koose; spon. Eugene Koose and Elizabeth Koose.

same day William, son of Felix Smith and Juliana Hulden; spon. Jacob Wolensnider and Mariann Hoofmire.

same day Thomas, son of Edmund Hale and Ann Caffrey; spon. Edmund Sheken and Bridget Masterson. Fr. A. J. Wilson, O.S.D.

Oct. 21 George, son of Florence Trost and Mary Barbara Tentle; spon. George Clouse and Magdalen Fisher.

same day Jane, daughter of Henry Musselman and Lydia Mart; spon. John Peter Bertier and Ann Musselman. AJW

Nov. 7 John Simon, son of Lewis H. Dugan and Sarah Culbertson; spon. Mary Harkins. AJW

Nov. 11 Bridget, daughter of Owen FitzPatrick and Bridget Shanon; spon. James Berrly and Margaret Handling. AJW

same day James, son of Hugh FitzPatrick and Margaret Brady; spon. James Kinsly and Honora his wife. AJW

Nov. 12 William, of Thomas Daurby and Catherine Reyney; spon. Thomas Colopy and Mary Halliery.

same day Paul, son of Patrick Crawly and Mary Mannion; spon. John Hallecy and Catherine Hallecy.

same day Mary Ann, daughter of John Hallecy

and Catherine Crawly; spon. Thomas Downly and Margaret Bowlman.

Nov. 18 Joseph, son of Ignatius Groff and Bridget Friel; spon. James and Ellen Friel.

same day Elizabeth Virginia, daughter of George Ratcliff and Sarah Syms; spon. Sarah Marshal. AJW

Dec. 2 Isabel Teresa, daughter of William Maluy and Mary Brennan; spon. Edward Jordan and wife Julia. AJW

Dec. 9 Mary Ann, daughter of Michael O'Connor and Ann Crofferd; spon. Denis Crawly and Bridget Griffen. AJW

Dec. 16 Barbara, daughter of Timothy Orock [overwritten O'Rourke] and Mary Riley; spon. Peter Rogers and Catherine Durbin. AJW

Dec. 28 Bernard, son of Bernard McGery and Catherine Mullen; spon. Catherine McDermot.

1839

Feb. 3 Paul, son of Charles Murphy and Ann Campbell; spon. Patrick Donehough and Maragret Carragan. Fr. A. J. Wilson, O.S.D.

Feb. 10 Francis, son of John O'Connor and Catherine Farry; spon. George McKenna and Hanna Connor.

same day Margaret, daughter of John Redmond and Bridget Jordan; spon. Ann Redmond. C. P. Montgomery, O.S.D.

Feb. 24 Ellen, daughter of James Kinsella and Catherine Shearlock; spon. John and Ann Cassilly.

same day Mary Ann, daughter of Nicholas Brady and Ann Butler; spon. Martin and Ann Muligan. AJW

Feb. 11 John, son of Hugh Donley and Ellen Diffley [Duffy?]; spon. Peter McGuire and Ann Ward. AJW

Mar. 16 John, son of Patrick Brennan and Catherine Magher, born in February; spon. Timothy and Mary Orock [O'Rourke]. AJW

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Mar. 31 Michael Joseph, son of Michael J. Milligan; spon. William Braseland and Susan Mullen.

same day Thomas, son of Peter Donohough and Margaret McCady; spon. John Lynch and Ann Campble.

same day Charles, son of William Conway and Martha Man; spon. Sarah Silvers. AJW

Apr. 3 John Thomas, son of William Cunningham and Margaret Callahan; spon. Margaret Fullerton. AJW

Apr. 17 Patrick, son of Denis Geani [McGarry?] and Ellen Silone; spon. Darby Herington and Catherine Malley. AJW

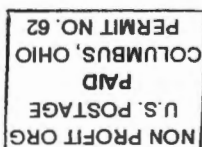
(To be continued)

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