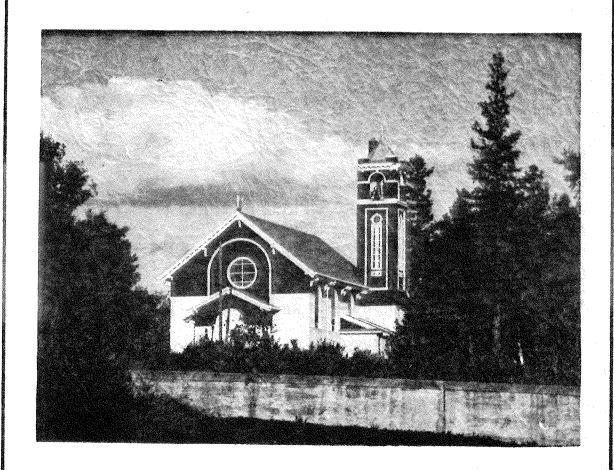
HISTORY OF ANNUNCIATION CHURCH

OF
HAZELWOOD, MINNESOTA



BY MSGR. ARTHUR H. DURAND, PASTOR

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By Msgr. Arthur H. Durand S.T.B.

- 1. The First Settler in Rice County, Minnesota
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SOURCES AND REFERENCES

- 1. Notes of Father Russell and John King
- 2. Minutes of Parish Meetings and Reports by Father Russell
- 3. Parish Records; Baptism and Marriage Books
- 4. The 1949 Territorial Edition of the Faribault Daily News
- 5. History of Minnesota and Rice County by Rev. Neal
- 6. St. Dominic's Centennial Booklet
- 7. Sacred Heart Centennial Booklet
- 8. Oral Accounts of Old-Timers



fields in background,

with parish house, cemetery, and

HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF HAZELWOOD WEBSTER TOWNSHIP, COUNTY OF RICE, MINNESOTA

3

The Origin of Hazelwood Church

In 1972 the parish of the Annunciation of Hazelwood celebrated the 110th anniversary of the building of the first church on its present location. In the autumn of 1861 the newly arrived settlers met to formulate plans to obtain property and to build a church for Catholic worship. The meeting had taken place in the log cabin of John McCabe located on the then recently built Dodd Military Road in Section 12 of Webster township. Most accounts state that McCabe donated twenty acres of his land, a strip about 300 feet in width along the entire south boundary of his quarter-section. Already that winter a selected site was cleared of timber and brush; trees were felled and hewed with broad-axes into sills, joists. beams and frames for the new church.

CHAPTER 1

The First Settlers' Family Background

Since the church was, in fact, in the County of Rice, it seems fitting to devote a chapter of our history to something of the family background, the life and influence of the first white man to settle in Rice County. He was Alexander Faribault, an intrepid French Canadian trapper, trader, and settler. As a young man in his middle twenties, he came under the auspices of his pioneer father, Jean Baptist Faribault, who had established the original trading post (later taken over by General Sibley) on the heights across the river from Fort Snelling, at Mendota. Alexander came to open up the fur trade among the Sioux Indians in the Cannon River Valley and its tributary, the Straight River, about a mile south of the junction of the Cannon and Straight Rivers. Here he later established the settlement that happily took his name and also became the County seat.

Jean Baptist, the Fur Trader

Jean Baptist's first assignment in 1791 was to a post on the upper Des Moines River (River of the Monks) in northwestern Iowa. Some years later, in about 1800, he was promoted to a very important post, a military fort, Prairie du Chien (Prairie of the Dog) on the Mississippi at the mouth of the Wisconsin River. Here young Alexander was born and the church records of Dubuque attest that, on June 22nd, 1806, a priest visited the Faribault family at the post and baptized their son. Alexander even remembered the occasion which would seem to indicate that he was probably born about 1801. Already at this time and certainly before 1806, Jean Baptist knew the Mississippi as far north as the junction of the St. Peter, or Mlinnesota River. He had even established an auxiliary fur trading post on the heights south of river – at that time Zabulon Pike - in 1805; had explored this area for the U. S. Government looking for a good location at which to build a fort to keep out the British. He selected the high bluff north of the junction. It is to the credit of Faribault, that, in the war of 1812, the English did everything except attack Jean Baptist's post at Prairie du Chien to get him to surrender the fort to them, but this noble frontiersman remained loyal to his newly adopted country even at the risk of losing his English Company's fur-trading license in the Canadian Fur Company.

Faribault Establishes the First Permanent Fur Trading Post on the St. Peter River at Mendota

In the year 1819, shortly after the establishment of Fort Snelling, Jean Baptist quit the Northwest Company and established his own trading post at Mendota across from the Fort. He contracted with the American Fur Company of John Jacob Astor, holding the first post on the St. Peter River (later renamed the Minnesota). He carried on a thriving trade with the Sioux Indians, who came to his post from far and near out of respect for him as an honest man and friend. He spoke their language fluently and often acted as peacemaker not only in their grievances with the whites, but even when there was trouble among themselves so highly did they regard his judgment and sense of fairness. Moreover, his wife was an Indian woman, and they felt that he was their brother because he greatly respected his wife and her children. He refused to deal in liquor or to sell it to the Indians.

As three of his oldest sons grew to manhood and were alrready well initiated in the fur trade through their work with their father, being expert trappers and woodsmen, Jean Baptist established them each in a trading post of their own. David opened up a post at Chaska and Oliver where Shakopee stands today, both on the Minnesota River. The youngest, Alexander, was sent to establish a post among a friendly tribe, who also traded at the Mendota Post. There were also Sioux Indians called the Wapakootas (leaf shooters), whose village was located at the end of Lake Tetonkatonah (sometimes also given the name Me-da-te-pa-ton-ka, which means the Lake of the Village) now

known as Cannon Lake. The village was located in a nook, or loop in the river, where it leaves the lake at its northeast extremity and before it widens into another small body of water later called Bully Wells (after an early settler).

Alexander in the Cannon River Valley

Alexander arrived in the late summer of 1826 and, like his brothers, he came with a good supply from his father's Post at Mendota. He brought mostly things that were useful and practical for the Indians, such as knives, hatchets, axes, traps, blankets, pots and pans, fire flints, some cloth for the Indian women, mirrors, combs, braid, trinkets, etc. They came to trade, bringing pelts of all kinds - beaver, mink, otter martin, fox, muskrat, weasel, even deer, raccoon, skunk, bear and buffalo.

The Cannon River originates from a small lake, now called Elysian, flowing from it in a general northeasterly direction through a series of lakes until it is joined with its tributary, the Straight River, just north of Faribault. Upon leaving Lake Elysian, some five or six miles further on, it flows into two larger lakes, known as Lower and Upper Sakatah Lakes; then, continuing generally eastward and into a serpentine southerly direction, it forms a large loop where the present Village of Morristown is located. It continues again northeast some five miles and flows into the lower end of Cannon Lake, set in a beautiful valley. Cannon Lake is about one mile wide and six in length. The river leaves the Lake at its northeast corner and forms a small loop for a mile or so, then widens into a small body of water that carne to be known as Bully Wells Lake, then out again running east and somewhat north about five miles to where it is joined by the Straight (or Owatonna) River, then turns sharply north, following the sandstone bluff that blocks its eatstern direction. Records do not always give the Indian names for these lakes but this was "The Highway" for this band of Sioux who welcomed young Alexander Faribault. The Straight River, as noted above, was called the Owatonna by the Indians, and Cannon Lake was called the Lake of the Big Village, on which their tepees were located near the northeast outlet. Along all this waterway every fall and winter until spring, Faribault and his friendly Indians harvested thousands of rich pelts, which they carried on their backs in a caravan, and later by oxen, to Jean Baptist's central post at Mendota. On the return trip, after weeks of trading, they came with an abundant supply of new merchandise - hunting and fishing equipment and trinkets.

In the earlier years Alexander spent a good part of each summer at his father's Post. He became acquainted with the daughter of Captain Duncan Graham, Commandant at Fort Snelling. He married her the autumn before he first went to the Cannon Valley, on November 1, 1825. That fall he built a small log cabin at Lake Elysian and in the spring of 1826, when he returned with the fur harvest, she returned with him and they began a small farm at this spot. The next year, 1828-29, we find him relocated on the river just between the two Sakatah Lakes, where the town of Waterville now stands. Again, in 1829-30, he moved to a new location on the Big Loop in the river where the village of Morristown was located. Their, for several years, he established his post in the vicinity of the Big Village at the east end of Cannon Lake

Faribault Seeks a Permanent Location for His Post

Records reveal no other move on his part until 1834. All this time Alexander had studied the area for a location that would be permanent. He became very much attached to a fine level stretch of wooded land along the west side of the Owatonna River, about a mile before it empties into the Cannon. In late 1833 or early 1834 he built a modest log cabin on the east bank of the river, just across from the level wooded stretch. and in 1834 he persuaded the entire band of Sioux from the Big Village to relocate in the wooded area some forty tepees strong, along a line which would roughly correspond with what is Central Avenue in Faribault today.

During these years, while his growing family of children was yet small, he kept them and his beloved wife near his father's trading post, and during the summer months, when the fur is of poor quality, he spent as much time as possible with his family. His first log cabin in Faribault was located on the east bank of the river, just north of what is now Division Street. Within a year or two, and possibly with the intention of bringing his family to live here, he built a second but much larger log cabin, neatly finished and quite comfortably furnished, on the west side of the Straight River and a little to the southeast of the new Indian Village. It was in this home that, in 1848, the famous Father Ravoux, the only priest in this vast area (between 1844 and 1851), came to visit and offer the first Sacrifice of the Mass in Rice County. During his countless scouting expeditions, Faribault discovered an extensive grove of sugar maples on an Indian trail leading to the northeast towards what later became Cannon City. Here, only a mile or two from his log home, he built several small log

cabins to serve as shelter for himself and his Indian friends who helped him with the maple syrup and sugar cane harvest, as this was an important item in the Sioux food supply.

Great Historical Events Bring Changes

Great events began to happen that intruded upon this peaceful, simple life of the fur trader and his loyal Sioux friends. In 1849 Minnesota became a Territory of the U. S. and, at the time, included most of the northern part of the Louisiana Territory to the Missouri on the west. Immediately more and more adventurers, trappers, and many even with the intent of cultivating the soil and establishing homes, moved in. The matter of securing arid owning land legally was realized in 1851 by the signing of two very important treaties between the U. S. Government and the Sioux of southern and western Minnesota. The first of these treaties was signed with the western tribes at Traverse des Sioux, on the Minnesota River, only a mile or so north of St. Peter, in the month of July. The second treaty was signed just south of Mendota in August of the same year. Although great promises were made by the Government representatives - of annual funds and goods which the Indians would receive and the alleged consideration that would be given to their fishing and hunting rights - the poor Indians had little choice, and as history proves, fared miserably. As a result, over 45,000 square miles of Sioux Indian lands, costing the Government a paltry ten cents per acre, were opened to new settlers, giving them preemption rights for the trifling sum of \$1.25 per acre!

At once countless settlers as well as land speculators from the east and from a dozen countries of Europe, all seeking freedom and the right to own land of their own, began to pour in. Faribault soon had several men working for him, both in the fur trade and in his rnaple sugar industry. Now he definitely decided to bring his family to live in the settlement permanently. In 1852 he began construction on a huge thirteenroom frame house, and for some nine months he had six or seven carpenters working on the project. The cost was enormous for those days, amounting to some \$4,000. The sawed lumber had to be hauled by oxen or horses from St.Paul where saw mills were located. This remarkable building still stands as a well preserved historical site and museum, as the first frame house in Faribault, and no doubt in all of Rice County. It is located on First Avenue East, between Division Street and First Street. Pine, oak and walnut were used arid some interior walls have excellent paneling. Wood-burning stoves were used to heat the house, several of them both upstairs and downstairs. Providing wood for the stoves also provided work for his Indian friends, who never ceased to regard him as a trusted friend, advisor, protector, and "medicine man". Later a number of them accepted the Catholic Faith, either through intermarriage or instruction, and greatly influenced by the virtue and faith of this remarkable man.

Frontier Growth and the First Church

Alexander Faribault moved his family into the new home when it was completed and, according to a statement by Luke Hulett, the whites living in Faribault in the winter of 1853 were the families of Alexander and Fredrick Faribault, James (Bully) Wells, Edward Krump, Peter Bush, a Mr. Sprague and a Mr. Springer, as well as nine young unmarried men. So rapidly did the settlement grow that four years later, that is, in 1857, there were already 250 white people in the village which now boasted a number of small stores, shops, and business places. About the year 1854, Alexander brought his aging father and mother, Jean Baptist Faribault and wife, to live with him. The mother died in the later brick resident Alexander had built on the bluff southeast of the town, and the father also died in Faribault, at the home of a daughter, Mrs. Fowler. Both are buried in a family plot in Calvary Cemetery west of town, which was just another of the parcels of land Alexander donated to the church.

As stated before, Holy Mass had been said in the Faribault log home by Father Ravoux in 1848 and the majority of the early settlers were Roman Catholic. So, in 1855, steps were taken to build a church, Alexander gave about a square block of land on the hill where the Immaculate Conception Church is located today. He also gave \$1,000, which was about one-fifth of the entire cost of construction. It was completed in 1856, and opened for services, but it burned to the ground the following year. All signs pointed to the fire as the work of an arsonist, for these years were the beginning of the infamous Know-Nothing movement. At any rate, the people were undaunted. They promptly cleared the debris and began reconstruction, but this time in native stone. Again, Mr. Faribault donated \$1,000. He was, in fact, regarded as a principal leader and founder of the parish, and also the founder of the then growing city. He had at this time very extensive holdings within the

city and its subdivisions, and was considered a wealthy man. He likewise owned land on the bluff east of the town both to the north and to the south, where he built a spacious brick home in 1857 and lived with his family and parents until he sold it to the State as a School for Sight-Saving, in 1873.

All this time his friends, the faithful Sioux, remained with him and, under his urging for greater privacy from the whites, they moved to an area, much of it belonging to Faribault, where tire State School and Hospital are located today. They remained there, under his assured guardianship, even after the Sioux Minnesota Massacre of 1862 - in which they refused to take part, out of deference no doubt, to their trusted friend. They trusted him to the point of turning over to him the gold paid them by the Government because, not knowing the true value of money, they sought his council as to how to spend it and what to expect in return for themselves and their families. This kindly nature and trust he extended to all men, so that, all too often, they took advantage of this trust. His generous nature led him to confide in men too much, and too far, and sometimes being unbusinesslike in his dealings, lending them money, backing their loans, selling property without contract or down payment, or on a mere promise to pay, or again on a sob story about their supposed needs, he being absolutely honest himself and having never had his Indian friends fail him or renege on a promise.

Spiritual Treasures He Accumulated Outweigh the Temporal

On the other hand, when we consider the greater value of his spontaneous generosity and love for fellowman. his great zeal and desire to help form a successful and happy community for all who came to establish a home here, his real charity for the poor and for his friends the Indians, his gifts on behalf of the Faith which he possessed so strongly - his deeds shine brightly before God and men, indeed far greater than the gold or power he could have seized and hoarded for himself by shrewd bargaining and worldly cleverness. Over and above the \$1,000 he gave on two occasions to help build the first church and the land therefore, he again gave a generous sum for the new parish and church of the Sacred Heart, which were authorized for the French-speaking and Belgians in 1879. He donated a vast acreage for the original layout of Faribault and also donated the site for Bishop Whipple's Episcopalian Cathedral, as well as a ten-acre tract for the site of Shattuck School and parade ground. The list does not end there, for he also donated his log cabins and small parcels of land to this and that poor family, besides investing in several projects and schemes which subsequently failed, especially a proposed stone flour mill at the north end of town, on 2nd Avenue North, near the river, where he lost very heavily, but which remained as a landmark into the 1950's.

The Best Years of a Noble Citizen

His happiest years as a father of ten children with a devoted and loving wife were spent in the brick home on the east side, between the years 1857 and 1873. Here he harbored his own dear father and mother in their late years; his own children grew and married, or drifted to other parts, while he himself lived in peace and comfort also attending to the regular practice of his faith and devotion to his church on Sundays and Holydays.

Feast days, like Christmas and New Year's were an occasion of joy. Friends, both white and Indian came to consult with him. He was an honored man. Here, too, in later years his beloved wife died, as had several of their infant children. His own parents were also laid to rest and, when he turned his home over to the State, he purchased a modest home near the center of the town he so loved, and, rather than waste his time on self-pity, found consolation in prayer and in visits with old friends and new. In the Sacred Heart Church, to which he had given to the limits of his now diminished fortune, he could be seen Sunday after Sunday, finding consolation in prayer and in the Mass itself as well as in the French sermons given in his own native tongue. Here he was seen and admired by my own grandparents, the Durand family, newly arrived, in 1880, from St. Gabriel, Canada, a noble featured, unpretentious old gentleman, humbly kneeling in one of the rear pews absorbed in prayer or listening to the French sermon. During the last few years of his life, members of the city's leading citizenry as well as his many friends in the two parishes he had helped found, out of sincere appreciation for all that he had done to help build one of the most beautiful and happy communities in southern Minnesota, secretly provided for his frugal needs till his death in 1882. He was honored and loved by all indeed.

CHAPTER II

The Faith Came To Webster Township with the First Pioneers

Minnesota became a Territory of the United States in 1849. It embraced all of the vast area west of the St. Croix River, which formed the boundary with Wisconsin, and extended west to the Missouri River. The southern boundary was the Territory of Iowa: the northern boundary was the boundary between the United States and Canada. Only later, when Minnesota became a State, in 1858, were the Dakotas born and Minnesota's western boundary fixed at the Red River of the North, and in a general line south to the Iowa border. As indicated in our first chapter, the two Indian treaties of 1851 legally opened up the territory for settlement. Preemption claims could be purchased from National Land Offices, like the one at Hastings, and a quarter section of land of 160 acres was obtainable for less than \$200 A veritable army of pioneers began at once to pour in, from eastern States, all of them eager to obtain land so cheaply, There also came thousands of immigrants from foreign shores. They searched for freedom, for a large acreage of their own of virgin soil, for freedom from tyranny, from religious oppression, from overcrowded populations and congested cities.

Shortly after the establishment of Minnesota as a Territory, Government surveyors delineated the counties and townships and special Government lands for school purposes, etc. Some records suggest that it may have been the surveyors who first gave this location the name "Hazelwood". Whether this is true or not, or whether perhaps there were originally abundant Hazelnut bustles in the area, the fact remains that the name held.

Another important action by the Government was the formation of a military road, known as the Dodd Road, built in 1853-54, from the city of St. Paul, with easy access to Fort Snelling by riverboat, extending in a general south and westerly direction and bisecting our Township north to south through Section 1-12, 13, and 24, at which point it veered off more to the west and south towards St. Peter, Minnesota, ending at Fort Ridgley to the west.

The first permanent settler of our Township of Webster, was Martin Taylor, a Catholic from Ireland, who took his claim in Section 21. He cleared and plowed some land in November of 1855, and, anxious to plant some wheat in the spring and there being no roads, he guided his ox team through the woods to the settlement of Northfield, returning with the sacks of wheat athwart the yoke of' his oxen. Later that same year, the second permanent settler, Ferris Webster, after whom the Township took its name, also took a claim in Section 36 on Union Lake. A careful study of all sources available lists the following newcomers and their year of arrival: Arriving in 1855 were Harry Humphrey in Section 36; S. J. and Chalmer Webster, sons of Ferris, in Section 35 and 28. For the year 1856 we find Thomas Keegan arriving in May, in Section 17; James McCabe, in Section 12, whose quarter-section claim was intersected by the Dodd road and who built his somewhat pretentious log cabin just west of the road at the north line of his claim. Jacob Camp settled in Section 27 and 34; William Sabry in Section 21; John Gleason came in July in Section I]; John and Ephraim Dilly in Section 36; Billing Benton at Union Lake; John Kiley in Section 10; John McGuire, whose son John Jr. was the first white child born in Webster the following year, March 18, 1857, were all arrivals in 1856.

We might mention here that Jacob Camp, listed above, was in need of a stove for his cabin. Because of the absence of roads, after the first snowfall he dragged his homemade sled to Northfield through the woods and used it on his return to transport his new stove. Ranson and Oscar Ferris also arrived in Section 26, in 1856, as well as Michael O'Mara and George Carpenter, Widow Matter, James Keegan, who later married Miss Carroll, Michael King and his son John King. We must note that Michael, quite aged, died the year before the church was built and the cemetery plotted so he was buried at New Market. The Kings came from New Jersey. James Kenney settled in Section 12 and opened the first school in Webster, in his own home, also J. W. Doyle, who opened the first Post Office, with the mail coming from Northfield once a month. After a few years he turned the mail over to James McCabe, who opened a little general store that grew to a substantial business with a sizeable warehouse and even a bar - although, after some years and during a Confirmation visit by Archbishop Ireland, the bar was quietly closed. The story went around that McCabe tried to reason with the Archbishop to the effect that, having a large family and needing a new house, he required the extra cash. It is believed the Archbishop lent him the money on easy terms, so that he would close this place of frequent grief and sorrow. In 1857 the flow of settlers was slower, but we find Thomas Skeffington, near the present Little Chicago, and John Hennessy. North of Hazelwood we have Peter Maas and Timothy Gleason, and John Mulloy from New York State. Besides these pioneers in Webster Township, we must mention a number of settlers who established themselves to the east in Dakota County. Among those who arrived were Jacob and Joseph Winter, who were Germans, John and Jacob Simon, and Dominic and Francis Blesener, who, like the Simons, were Luxembergers, followed in a year or so by James Finn and Michael Hendricks. Another Irishman, John Eylward, arrived in Webster in 1858, James Leahy in 1859. Leahy had left Ireland at 17 and had gone to New Orleans. He came up by river boat to Dakota County but finally settled in Webster. Finally, we have Martin Welsh, who sold one of his precious cows to help build the church.

Between the years 1860 and 1870, the influx continued. In 1860 E. C. Knowles came into Section 29; Pat Hendricks, Daniel Hogan, Anthony Cosgrave, Patrick Hennessy, Thomas Reynolds and Patrick Crosby in the middle and late sixties. In 1862 a good number of Norwegians settled in two localities - one of them about one and one-half miles north of Hazelwood on the Dodd Road. Among them were Ola Elstad, in Section 1; Hoagenson, Larson, Christopherson, Christenson, while another group settled at Eiswold, 3 miles to the north. Arthur Kinsella arrived in 1862, Thomas Lynch arrived in 1863 in Section 32; Thomas Gleason in 1864 in Section 12; William Carroll in 1865: Robert Campbell in 1866; Dennis Quilligan and John Graves and J. G. Walden in 1867; Daniel Wall in 1868; also Joseph Gear and Thomas Barrett in 1868, and, by the year 1870. we find - though without the exact date of their arrival - newcomers like Walter Shea, John Scollar, Timothy Ryan (Greenwald area), James Mahoney and Patrick Mulligan.

Finally, between 1870 and 1875, on the best information available, came Michael Kennedy, Thomas Film, Thomas Kenny, father of the future Father Patrick Kenny; James Armstrong, Martin Fox, John Broderick, Patrick Tierney, James Rowan, Peter McLaughlin, James Wilby, Dennis Murphy, James Kennedy, Peter Stanton, Patrick Hendricks, Martin Duffy, Frank Gleason, and possibly others.

With such an influx of new settlers, most of them of the Catholic Faith, it is easy to see that very early there arose the question of erecting a place of worship not only to thank God for their new-found freedom and homes and abundant crops, but also to fulfill their duty of rendering proper worship both morning and night, and to satisfy the need they felt for a place to offer the greatest prayer of all, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and Holy Communion, food of their souls. They were strengthened in their resolve by the visit and Mass of Father Oster, in 1858.

CHAPTER III

Hazelwood Pioneers Build the First Catholic Church

Fortunately for the Parish of the Annunciation of Hazelwood, a young man by the name of John King, son of one of the pioneer settlers, Michael, kept some valuable notes and records referring to the origin and early history of this historic settlement. After the Indian treaties of 1851 and the construction tion of the Dodd Military Road in 1853-4 a growing number of settlers, most of them of Irish blood, began to take up claims in Webster Township. Most of these, either from the eastern states or from Ireland itself, came by way of river boats down the Ohio or from New Orleans to St. Louis, then up the Mississippi to Hastings' Landing, or to St. Paul. Skimping and scraping to provide themselves with the bare necessities of life and even a few tools, some who could afford it purchased an oxcart and followed the narrow overland trails from Hastings, or traveled the Dodd Road from St. Paul, then staked out their claims and selected the best possible site on which to build their log cabins - their first homes.

It is hard for us to visualize the hardships they went through or grasp the burning fire in their hearts for freedom, their eager hopes for a better life - all of which drove them to such daring undertakings. We can and do admire them nonetheless, and we are proud of these pioneers, to whom we owe so very much.

Some half-dozen settlers arrived during the year 1855, as noted in our preceding chapter, and this number increased to nearly twenty-five new families in 1856, and twelve more in the year thereafter. From then on, some three or four additional families arrived each year, settling in Webster Township or in the area to the east, in Dakota County, but close to Hazelwood. The number of Catholic families by the fall of 1861, when the historic meeting was held in James McCabe's log home (the largest in the area), was close to fifty families. Not only did these pioneers continue the traditions of the Faith which they had brought here - such as the practice of morning and night prayers, the Angelus and the Rosary - but they began to meet more and more regularly, especially on Sundays, for religious services together. Prayer meetings were held, making the rounds beginning at the home of Timothy Gleason, John Gleason, and Peter Maas to the north along Chub Creek, and also at McCabe, near the center of the settlement, and with Michael King and his son John, James Finn, all south of Hazelwood, and at Simon's, Blesener's, Winter's and Michael Hendricks' to the southeast. The favorite

leader of these devotions was a deeply religious man who recited the prayers or Rosary with simplicity, fervor and dignity. This was John Gleason, often referred to as "Father John". At the Winter's home, the Rosary was recited in German, while the other prayers sometimes even the Epistle and Gospel of the day - were read in English from a book.

These services, conducted by the ever increasing number of new families, gave to everyone a sense of strength and fraternal unity and cordiality. They also generated a sense of urgent need for a central place of worship to which - so all hoped a priest might somehow find his way and offer the Holy Sacrifice together with the Bread of Life for them. The meeting at McCabe's cabin was enthusiastic and joyful. The question of the acquisition of land for the proposed church was quickly settled by McCabe, who promptly donated twenty acres along the southern line of his quarter section, a strip about 300 feet wide and 1700 feet or more in length, in Section 12. The site selected for the future church was on a knoll, the highest point on the new property just east of the Dodd Road that bisected the strip.

One very enthusiastic member of this meeting was the old gentleman, Michael King, but unfortunately he died that very winter and, since no cemetery had as yet been laid out, his interment took place at New Market. Another death also took place later that winter of 1862 - James Finn's wife, Ellen (nee O'Rouke) - died before the church was finished and the cemetery plotted. She was temporarily buried on a little knoll on their claim off the Dodd Road, on the Waterford Road, now 320th Street. Three months later, after an area had been cleared for burial east of the new Church location, her body was disinterred and reburied in the new cemetery. The first, however, to be buried in Annunciation Cemetery was Margaret Gleason, who died that spring. A small area was cleared for her grave behind the church as the start of the new cemetery. Her grave stone still stands.

One very important event had occurred that may also have intensified the desire for a church. This was the visit of Father Anatole Oster, from Mendota, to the home of Timothy Gleason. He offered the first Sacrifice of the Mass in Webster Township, and on that occasion also baptized the four-month-old son of Timothy Gleason, William, on November 25, 1858. There are no records to indicate that the idea of a church was discussed by the priest or the people, but no doubt the visit helped prompt a more urgent sense of its need.

Work began with determination that fall and winter of 1861-62. The selected area was cleared of brush and the trees were cut down. Trees of the right kind were cut into proper lengths and squared off with broadaxes to form sills, joists, beams, etc., for the new church. A deep trench was dug for the foundation which was slowly built with native rock and cement. During the winter, when work was slow and sledding good those who had oxen or horses hauled the sawed lumber, roof rafters, windows, shingles, etc., for the building from the nearest saw mills at Hastings and St. Paul. In the spring the actual construction began in earnest. The first section to be built was rectangular, some forty by sixty feet. Father Keller, who had been at Faribault since 1858 gave the parishioners good practical advice and encouragement. The church was most simple and unfinished inside, until later in the sixties, while the debt was being paid off. Plank benches served as pews, with homemade kneelers. The simple altar at the east end stood on a raised platform, and a few small statues stood on brackets to the right and left of the altar. The windows were clear glass; a little area in the back was reserved for the choir, headed by Jacob Winter, who had a fine voice and formed a good group in liturgical singing. The main entrance was to the west and without embellishment. The building was heated by wood stoves at the rear and front. Special collections, and various parish activities, over and above the regular pew rent and Sunday collections, finally cleared the parish uf its original debt, so that, by 1874, when the church became too small, twenty feet were added to the building to the east, as a sanctuary, and, off from this on the south, an area was also added to serve as a sacristy, with cupboards for the priest's vestments, storage for candles, books, etc. A more elaborate altar was built to replace the first one, and more benches added where the altar platform had been. Other improvements and appointments were made and the church interior was finished, lathed and plastered.

An added improvement was made in 1884, which gave the building the appearance of a real church. A fine square tower was built at the west entrance surmounted by a belfry towering over the country side, and a fine large bell blessed and hung to ring out "The Voice of God", and the "Angelus of Our Lady", to the delight and edification of the people. No records explain how this bell came to Hazelwood, but it is indeed dear to the people. For when this church burned, in 1913, the same bell was promptly replaced in the tower of the new church.

We cannot but be impressed by what these pioneers did with the little they had during these first twenty years of their parish. For it does prove the depth of their faith when they scraped together their hard-earned cash to buy what they themselves could not build and to pour out so lavishly their donated labor, or whatever scant possessions they had, in order to benefit the church. We can best illustrate this enthusiasm and

faith by the incident of Martin Welsh. Having determined to build the church, the question arose as to how to get money to buy materials. Pledges were readily made and Martin pledged \$25, a huge sum not only for those days, but especially for Martin, who was quite poor. The question was asked of him as to how he ever would raise \$25, and he promptly replied - in his Irish brogue, as he had just recently arrived from Ireland, with no tools other than an ax and not even a grindstone to sharpen it - "Well, I have three cows I will sell one of them and give the money to the church!" The story goes that, ever after, Martin never was in want or went to bed hungry.

The faithful had to wait, however, until the year following the completion of the first section of their church for Father Bayer of New Trier to come and offer Holy Mass for the first time and bless the new building. On this occasion, June 14, 1863, he also performed the first baptism in the new church, baptizing Daniel Eylward. After this date, the same Father Bayer, Benedictine, came as regularly as the weather and frontier roads permitted him -- once each month, for Sunday Mass. He also heard confessions, baptized new babies and gave solid catechism instruction to the children, which the parents continued at home.

Things continued in this fashion until the year 1903. -There was just a beginning of some prosperity in the area. Many of the old log houses were gradually enlarged by adding a section of frame construction. Better plows were being used - many now had horses instead of oxen; much land had been cleared of timber and brush, so the harvests were more abundant and better equipment was being used. Father Kenny, pastor at this time, wisely urged the people to make a major improvement to the "House of God", and they responded with a will. In the year 1903, a new floor was laid, new pews set up, the church was completely replastered and redecorated, new altars purchased, statues, stained-glass windows installed, a new furnace installed in the basement, with prior excavation of a basement furnace room: also a new vestment case for the sacristy, with new funeral candle-sticks, a marble holy water font at the entrance of the church, a new confessional and a Communion rail - all at the formidable price (in those days) of \$1,910.17. Yet, so well did the subscriptions come in that, when the work was completed and proceeds from a parish picnic, socials, and donated labor credits were added, the entire project was paid off at completion, with \$53.63 remaining in the treasury.

A copy of the financial report covering these improvements is reproduced here as a fascinating study of the values attaching to labor and merchandise at the turn of the century.

Financial Report of Improvement in Annunciation Church in 1903

Names of members who gave labor:

Wm. Walsh - 4 loads of sand and lumber \$ 5.00
Pat Cummings - 1 load brick - 2 of sand 3.00
Geo. Kinsella 1 1/2 days with team and lumber 5.00
Pat Kenedy $-1/2$ load of kneelers
John Ryan - 1 load laths
John Hennessy - I load plaster
Thos. Crosby - 6 loads and 2 days labor 14.00
M. J. Toohey - 3 loads plaster and lumber 6.00
John King - 2 loads lime and lumber
James Crosby 3 loads and 1 man and
James Finn - 2 loads sand
Pat Walsh - I load of lath
Frank Rush - 2 loads lumber and pews 4.00
Luke Rowan 1 load of pews
Peter Rowan - 1 load of plant
TOTAL VALUE OF LABOR DONATED: \$69.00
Total Cash Received and Labor\$1963.84

Money Expended - August, 1903 December 31, 1904:		
John LaBarre - lathing church \$		
J. Gregg - plastering and chimney	110.00	
Martin Walsh 5 days labor	7.50	
A. Lindberg - hauling water to plaster	8.00	
Geo. Hennessy - 8 days labor	18.00	
Oak floor for Church	48.80	
Freight on flooring from Mpls	7.49	
One order book	1.35	
Northfield Furnace Co resetting	17.40	
Oil for Church floor	1.40	
Freight on pews from Mpls	. 13.11	
Freight on vestment case	1.89	
T. H. Scheuer - decorating church and altars		
355 bricks		
John King – carpenter work for 5 months		
Mpls. Office and Furniture - pews		
Martin Roscoe - setting pews	6.37	
Reilly & Lathrop - lumber and plaster	. 193.38	
West Side Hardware - nails and screws	7.25	
Bierman Bros zinc and stove pipe	2.65	
W.J. Broderick 12 days labor; 2 loads	22.99	
Thomas Crosby - labor	4 00	
Johnson & Riddell - window work	27.85	
Forman & Ford - stained glass windows	332.57	
Freight on windows from Mpls	4 28	
Setting up of pews.	28.75	
Benziger Bros., Chicago - marble font	15.25	
6 funeral candlesticks and freight	15.00	
6 large funeral wax candles	4.50	
1 pair candelabra and freight.	19.25	
Hans Benson - labor for 1 1/2 days	3.00	
T. Crosby - hauling confessional	2.00	
Freight on confessional.	1.25	
Mpls. Furniture Co confessional	35.00	
Forman & Ford - balance on windows	34.83	
Reilly & Lathrop - lumber and windows	13.80	
Altar cards	1.00	
Crucifix for sacristy	1.25	
Drapes for confessional	4.60	
Drupos for comessional	4.00	
Rosary Society – sanctuary	13.00	
Cash value of labor donated	69.00	
Vestment case		
Communion rail.		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES\$	1010 17	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		
Balance on hand January 1, 1905.		
Data 100 of fland Janually 1, 1905	ψ.ε.ς φ.	

This balance was turned over to the church treasury, Jan.1, 1905

Current Wages in 1903

Salary of pastors in 1903 was \$300 per year and raised to \$400 in 1905. In 1903 janitors received \$30 per year; organist, \$45 and, in 1905, the janitors received \$50 and the organist \$74 per year.

Early Priests at Hazelwood

The names of the early priests who influenced the early development of Annunciation parish were Father Anatole Oster of Mendota, who said the first Mass in Webster in 1858; Father Keller of Faribault, who advised and guided them during the original construction; and Father Bayer, to whom the parish is so indebted for his extraordinary efforts to render service when he already had several stations to attend. He came once a month, barring weather and impassable roads, visited the sick, buried the dead, preached, instructed the children, etc., from 1863, when he said the first Mass in the newly-built church, until 1872. That year Father Hasse was appointed first resident pastor of Northfield. He came to Hazelwood as often as possible on alternate Sundays, to offer the Mass, give instructions, baptize, etc. When no priest came, the people reverted to the practice of early days: usually John Gleason ("Fr. John") read the Epistle and Gospel, led the Rosary and other prayers. Mention must be made also of the zeal of Joseph Winter in leading the drives to collect money for the original structure and also for the future improvements of 1874 and 1884, while his brother Jacob directed a very successful parish choir.

Father Hasse stayed in Northfield only a short time. He was succeeded by Father James McGone who, like Father Hasse and subsequent priests, alternated the Sunday Mass between Northfield and Hazelwood. Father McGone served from 1872 to 1875 and was in turn followed by Father Pavlin who remained twelve years; 1875 to 1887. Father Gleason arrived in 1887 and had charge of both parishes until 1894; then Father Kenny, who had been born in Hazelwood, became pastor from 1894 until 1910. We must note that during Father Kenny's pastorate, Archbishop Ireland sent the first assistant priest, Fr. Owen Rowan, to Northfield. The understanding was that the assistant, while making his residence in Northfield, was to be in charge of Hazelwood - which thereby became a Mission of St. Dominic of Northfield - with the duty of offering weekly Sunday Mass, instructing the young, administering the sacraments, etc. This brought on a very unusual and curious situation. Annunciation of Hazelwood had a church five years before Northfield, with Holy Mass and even a cemetery. In fact, some from Northfield were buried in Hazelwood, as Northfield did not as yet have a cemetery. So we may justly say that Hazelwood is the mother church of Northfield, but now being relegated to a Mission of Northfield; Northfield in reality became the foster mother of Hazelwood!

The new pastor of Northfield was Father Peter Mead, one of whose sisters had married a son of James McCabe. Father Mead was, as everyone recognized, a real man of God. He remained from 1910 until 1940 when he was transferred to St. Vincent's Church in St. Paul. He was somewhat retiring in his ways, not overly eloquent, but simple and solid and truly spiritual in his sermons and instructions. He edified everyone and ruled with a firm hand. He had great respect for the contributions of his hard-working people and never spent money foolishly. He spent hours and hours in prayer before the Most Blessed Sacrament, even founding a weekly, and later a Perpetual Adoration Society, and stressing love and devotion to our Eucharistic Lord and frequent reception of Holy Communion. With the growth of his own parish at Northfield, he undertook the building of a larger, more beautiful church. But an added burden fell upon him. In July, 1913, during a severe thunderstorm, lightning struck the Hazelwood church and it quickly burned to the ground. It was of wood and water was scarce. So by the time the parishioners could gather, the tire was beyond control and the only object saved was the precious bell, which suffered no apparent damage.

Plans Laid for New Church

A meeting was called and Father Mead encouraged the people to plan at once the construction of a new church. He engaged Mr. John Wheeler of St. Paul, who had designed the church then being built at Northfield, and also made the plans which were accepted by the people. Bids were called for. Joseph Kump of Northfield turned in the lowest bid of three for the general construction for \$6995. When all the accessories were added - pews, altars, statues, windows, furniture, etc. - the total came to \$12,000. The parishioners within three years and by dint of subscriptions, picnics and other activities, plus some small outside gifts, paid off the debt. By the end of 1914, Christmas Day to he exact, the beautiful new church of Romanesque style - with a graceful tower in which the precious bell was again hung and enhanced by elaborate woodwork and trim around the cornice, eves, windows and base as well as by the striking contrast of color of pure white for the walls and window frames, with dark-brown stained shingles above the cornice line and tower - was complete. It was and still is most attractive. Every year travelers up and down the highway detour back and come up the service road to visit and take pictures.

Fortunately, during the time the new church was under construction, religious services could be held in the parish hall across the road, which was also church property. According to reliable sources, the people of the parish, encouraged by Father Owen Rowan, the assistant at Northfield from 1905 to 1908, and by Father Kenny, the pastor, cleared about two acres of brush, thinned out the trees, leveled the ground, and built a substantial hall - about

30 x 60 feet - for parish activities. The work of building the hall can be placed at about 1907, from the fact that it got around that the next assistant, who had other ideas, expressed the wish that the hall did not exist as he considered it a nuisance, and he arrived in 1908, when the hall was already completed.

At any rate, it was thus fortunate that Sunday Mass was not interrupted, for the carpenters and men of the parish simply erected a platform in the hall with an altar and plank benches and kneelers. Mr. Winter arranged to obtain a small organ for his choir and, for a time, the hall was a blessing during that year of 1913. Also on this clearing, a small barn with hay loft had been built to provide for the priest's horse when the priest came on Sundays in winter or when the weather was poor. They also built a long extended shelter, or open shed, roofed over and divided off and boarded up on the north, east and west, but open to the south in such a way that people could drive their horse under this shelter in bad weather without unhitching it from their buggy. The horse was tied to a bar at the far end near the back or north wall. There were eight or ten of these stalls under this same roof; very practical.

The hall building was never finished on the inside - i.e., all the roof joists and boards as well as the cross braces were exposed -yet it served the very worthwhile purpose both of affording a wide variety of activities of interest to the parish, and, during the emergency when the original church was destroyed, it was a definite blessing.

Already in the year in which the temporary hall was built, the people used the area under the trees for the parish picnics and celebrations. They continued to do so until 1917. Then, after the new church was ready, the improvised pews, etc., were dismantled and the hall was again used for many kinds of activities popular at the time. There were card parties, basket social parties, dances, Scanlon Bros. Shows, and even "Chautauguas" with fasttalking salesmen offering patent medicine for man and beast, merchandise, house utensils, etc. Between each new sales pitch, there would be a show, a magician, portable organ, or some other entertainment. The entire community gathered here for special events such as the Webster Creamery picnic and especially for the Fourth of July, with a ball game, of course, a tug of war, and even a horse race from the McCabe place to the property line on the road. Some of the goings-on did not always have the approval of good Father Mead, who at times wished the hall were dismantled or sold. It actually was sold for the lumber, to Frank J.D. Malecha, but some say that, being a man of prayer, the good Lord took things in hand and the hall was destroyed by a fire of unknown origin in 1917, before Malecha could dismantle it. Next, the little barn became useless when the assistant at Northfield got an auto, so it was sold to John Broderick, for the lumber, for the sum of \$15 in 1925. In the meantime, and for the same reason, the horse shelter had lost its usefulness and had disappeared. Now a second growth of brush and young trees covered the area, except for the deep cut of the abandoned roadway dividing it east and west. Financially, and without a resident leader, the parish struggled along, barely staying above water during these years, especially during the Depression, when, for example, a two-hundred-pound hog sold for \$8! The first and largest single donation to the parish in those days came from Mrs. Margaret Mulloy, a former parishioner, who left \$300 in her will in 1934, which paid off in full the dues to the priest and to the Chancery.

As stated elsewhere, at least the spiritual life of the parish was well kept up by the assistant priests who came from St. Dominic's Church from 1905 until Father Russell arrived in 1940. They not only offered Holy Mass each Sunday and Holydays, but came on occasion during the week, as in later years - with the encouragement of Father Mead -- for First Friday Devotions. They taught catechism -- usually after Mass - with the help of some volunteer teachers, and prepared the children for First Holy Communion and Confirmation, and in some instances they even had a summer session for the children. The priests who came were: Fathers Owen Rowan, 1905-1908; C.J. Normoyle, 1908-1914; William Luby, 1914-1917; George Carroll, 1918-1919; John O'Donnell, 1919-1925; Denis Buckley, 1925-1933; Michael Lawler, 1933-1934; Maurice Keller, 1935-1936; James Ward, 1936-1938; William Marks, 1938-1940. In August, 1940, Archbishop Murray appointed Fr. Robert Russell as pastor at Hazelwood, thereby eliminating the need of an assistant at Northfield and making Hazelwood a parish in its own right.

The Cemetery of Hazelwood

The Angel of Death brought the beginnings of a Cemetery at Hazelwood, for while all were preoccupied with building the church, came the death of Michael King early in the winter of 1862. As there was as yet no area cleared of trees and brush for a burial, he was buried, as noted, at New Market. Then, too, during the early winter of 1862, the wife of James Finn, to the southeast of the newly proposed church, also died, and James, foreseeing a new cemetery as well as a new church, buried his wife (Ellen O'Rourke) on a little knoll near his log home. Some three months later, in early spring, when a small clearing had been made for the cemetery and where Margaret Gleason, the beloved wife of Timothy Gleason, who had died after a hard childbirth, was buried, Ellen Finn, 36, also was laid to rest. In the following year the infant son of Margaret Gleason also died and was buried with his mother. His older

brother, William, was the child of Timothy and Margaret, whom Father Oster had baptized on the occasion of the First Mass, Nov. 25, 1858.

Some attempts were made in the early days, as more deaths followed, to mark off the cemetery area, east of and behind the church, into rows of lots and graves. However, it was only in 1925 that a systematic effort was made to survey the entire area, and divide it into lots, most of them of four graves, and to lay out aisles and pathways. But first the entire area was cleared of brush and unwanted trees, low spots were filled, stumps and rocks were carted away and steel posts set at the corner of all lots to identify them. Also a good map was made by the surveyor and was duly registered. The cost of the entire project was \$1283, most of which was the surveyor's fees.

Lots of four graves sold for \$30 and single graves for \$10.00 There were a few six and eight-grave lots. The entire area surveyed in this project was divided into three sections; A, B, and C. Today, after 110 years since the first interment, markers and monuments still stand, indicating the resting place of the pioneers and their descendants. To this day, the living of- the parish, as well as former parishioners or descendants of those buried here visit the cemetery to say a prayer for some dear one and roam about reading the faded inscriptions on the old marble slabs (poor markers in a climate where frost eats away such monuments and granite would be called for).

In 1970 the south slope of the hillside bordering the original cemetery was surveyed at the direction of the new pastor, Msgr. Durand, the parish Trustees and the Cemetery Board consisting of James Leahy, Peter Blesener, Mrs. Thomas Budin and Lawrence Valek. The new area was plotted into lots of eight graves, which are easily divided into two lots of four graves each. A map was made and recorded. A few graves, unfortunately, sold by Father Renz, blocked the south road or driveway into the cemetery. Two large monuments and one body buried there were removed and relocated with the consent of the families involved. Other lots which Father Renz had sold and roughly measured out before the survey were incorporated into the new map without too much trouble. Thus the entrance way into the cemetery from the south was reopened. The men of the parish now set to work gathering two-pound coffee cans, filling them with cement to form corner posts for every lot. Eugene Malecha, who was putting in a cement floor in his new barn, donated the cement to fill the cans. A work bee was organized and, by stretching building wire across the entire field, the lots were perfectly squared off, corner posts put in, evergreen trees planted along the roadway, and one row of larger trees across the middle of the hillside. Then the new area was formally opened.

Hazelwood Supports the New Parochial School at Northfield

When Father Mead made plans for a new Catholic parish school at St. Dominic's in Northfield, he received splendid encouragement from most of the families of Hazelwood, especially those with children. They understood his exhortations that the Catholic school was intended to infuse in their children a deeper, firmer, more enlightened knowledge of their faith. He was assured that the Notre Dame Sisters from Mankato would staff the school, who at that time were among the most respected and highly regarded Sisters from the viewpoint of Catholic orthodoxy and personal dedication. Times have changed. At any rate, the people were glad to make the necessary sacrifices, despite the distance separating their children from the new school, to send their children to it regardless of cost and the problem of transportation. The new building was dedicated by Archbishop Dowling on August 7, 1927. In September, seven Sisters came to teach. The parish of the Annunciation contributed \$13,775 towards St. Dominic School - both by the original building assessment and annual support, but apart from the additional fees for books, tuition, board (in the early years) between 1927 and 1956, when Father Renz discontinued the annual contribution since no debt existed on the school. The Sisters operated a small boarding home for students who could not commute every day, but this was discontinued in 1947 when the project was closed.

Unfortunately, since Vatican II, all too many of the school Sisters of Notre Dame, along with many others, have changed their point of interest in the religious phase of education. In more recent years their aversion to the Baltimore Catechism and any form of solid memory work for the children, the poor methods adopted, the falling-off of prayer in the school curriculum, the texts used, if any, - all has brought about a sad deterioration in the religious aspect of the Catholic education. Consequently, parents were placed in a strange dilemma, having, to choose between sending their children to the "free" public schools, with their materialistic and naturalistic orientation, -- i.e., the stress placed on materialistic evolution, as if it were a science, and the raw teaching of sex to mixed classes, with all its graphic details and aberrations --- or, on the other hand, pay for tuition, transportation and books in a Catholic school that is lacking, all too often, in solid spiritual fare of orthodox faith and morals.

Significant Dates and Events in Rice County and Webster Township

- 1826 Alexander Faribault came to the Cannon River Valley and later founded Faribault.
- 1834 Alexander Faribault persuades the Sioux Village of the Lake to relocate on the west bank of the Owatonna River across from his first log cabin in what is now Faribault.
- 1848 Rev. Augustine Ravoux, the only priest (1844 to 1851) in the whole Minnesota region, offers Holy Mass for the first time in Rice County in Faribault's log cabin.
- 1849 Minnesota is established as a Territory.
- 1851 The Indian treaty of July at Treverse des Sioux and the August treaty at Mendota purchased by the U. S. Government, 45,000 square miles of fertile southern Minnesota lands.
- 1852 The ratification of these treaties by Congress, and, Rice and other surrounding counties are created by the Minnesota Legislature and opened to settlement.
- 1853 Alexander Faribault builds the first frame house in Faribault and Rice County, now a Historical Monument and Museum.
- 1855 St. Anne Catholic Church (first church in Rice County) is built on land donated by Mr. Faribault. It was burned by arson in 1857 and rebuilt of stone on same location.
- 1855 Martin Taylor, an Irish Catholic, establishes a claim in Webster township and is the first resident settler in the Township.
- 1856 1857 See a real flood of new settlers in Webster Township.
- 1857 First Catholic religious Sunday service (of prayer) offered at Thomas Gleason's log cabin led by the deeply religious and respected John Gleason ("Fr. John").
- 1857 First white child, John McGuire, Jr., son of John McGuire is born in Webster, March 18.
- 1858 First Mass offered by Rev. Father Anatole Oster of St. Paul in the log cabin of James McCabe. On this occasion the first child was baptized by the priest.
- 1861 In the fall of this year a meeting was held to discuss the building of a church in the home of James McCabe, who also donated twenty acres from his quarter section for the site.
- 1862 First death among the new settlers, Michael King, an elderly man, father of John King. As no cemetery had yet been laid out, the burial was at New Market.
- 1862 The first Catholic Church is built, a rectangular wooden building with raised platform for the simple altar, benches for pews and the simplest furniture, Father Keller, advisor.
- 1862 Again death strikes the community. A young mother, Margaret Gleason, dies and is the first to he buried in the new cemetery. The following year, the new baby follows her to the grave.
- 1874 A twenty foot addition made on the east end of the church for the sanctuary and a side room for the sacristy.
- 1863 Father Bayer of New Trier says the first Mass in the new church, preaches and baptizes.
- 1884 A bell tower is added at the west end to serve also as main entrance and a fine bell is blessed and hung in the tower and rung (as the Voice of God) for the first time.
- 1903 Complete remodeling; new pews, windows, stations, altar, vestments, and statues (\$1950.00).
- 1913 Lightning strikes the church in July; it burns to the ground and nothing is saved but the bell.
- 1913 Parish hall across the road was used as a temporary church and the new church built under the guidance of Father Peter Mead of Northfield, of which Hazelwood was a mission. New church cost \$12,000.00 and was completely furnished and paid for in four years.
- 1914 Servicemen leave for First World War.
- 1923 to 1940, Hazelwood parishioners give \$13,000.00 towards construction and support of Catholic school at St. Dominic's, Northfield.
- 1940 In August, Father Robert Russell is appointed resident pastor a full-fledged parish at last.
- 1946 New Lyndale Highway bisects church land east of the cemetery (Hwy.65).
- 1953 Father Carl Renz arrives, remaining until his death in May, 1969.
- 1964 New Highway 35W crosses church land west of the church Parish received \$2200.00 for the right of way.
- 1970 January 24, Msgr. Arthur H. Durand is appointed pastor.

CHAPTER IV

Pastorate of Father Russell

Great joy made the rounds of the families of Annunciation parish when it was rumored that Archbishop Murray had decided to give the parish a resident pastor of its own. Father Robert Russell was appointed on October 30, 1940, and took possession on All Saints Day, November 1, 1940. His arrival injected new life and enthusiasm into the parish. Father Russell was by nature a very active, zealous man. He was in the prime of life and loved the simple trust and devotion of his new people. He immediately called a meeting of the parish, and report of the financial affairs showed unpaid bills in the amount of \$347. However, such was the enthusiasm generated by the new pastor that before the end of that same year not only was the deficit wiped out, but a host of new improvements came into being. For instance, at a cost of \$980 a much needed new furnace and oil burner were purchased, along with a 2000 gallon fuel tank obtained second-hand from Lakeville. Nevertheless, the year ended with a \$1300 surplus in the treasury. Meanwhile, the ladies and Rosary Society also took on new life and made plans to help share the financial burden of the parish.

The church had stood all these years without a home for a priest. So, for the time being, Father Russell lived with the Joseph Smisek family in Webster, from November 1, 1940 until August 2. 1942, when he moved to the home of Frank Valek, north of the Hazelwood store, this being so much more convenient for him especially when plans began to take form to build a new rectory. In fact, the residence of Father Russell in Webster, then a very lively and thriving village with a famous creamery and powdered milk plant and sales and repair shops and an expanding population, prompted a new idea in the priest's head. He approached the people of Hazelwood with the idea of transferring the entire parish plant, that is, the church and the newly proposed parish house, to Webster.

He met with respectful but strong resistance. They pointed out to him the historic importance of this spot, so very, dear to them; and the fact that their loved ones had been buried here for 90 tears, "and you just don't move a cemetery!" The chief spokesman was Michael Stanton, who summed up the personal feelings of all present. Father Russell had the good sense and the good grace to bow to their arguments and the matter was dropped, and fortunately so.

At the second parish meeting, on December 15, 1940, the first trustees for Hazelwood were elected and soon approved by Archbishop Murray. They were Thomas Malecha and John P. Broderick. A finance committee was also elected to assist the pastor and trustees and aid in the financial programs planned for the future. These were John McFadden, Felix Blesener, and William Stanton. During the year 1941, the pastor made the rounds of his entire parish, blessed the homes and took the census. He found sixty-two families actively supporting the parish. He also visited and encouraged several fallen-away families with some success. That year, too, every effort was made to increase the resources of the parish and cope with the problem of building a new parish house. A parish picnic was held in late summer at Union Lake, with all kinds of amusements, a big drawing, and an exquisite dinner. A huge crowd came and enjoyed themselves and the proceeds amounted to nearly \$2,200. Then, in early winter, a bazaar was held and added social events extended into the following year.

The 1941 World Eucharistic Congress

In June, 1941, a worldwide event of Catholic life took place in the Archdiocese of St. Paul, Archbishop John Gregory Murray, a truly apostolic, spiritual shepherd, had offered the facilities of the Archdiocese of Paul to the international Eucharistic Committee for the 1941 World Eucharistic Congress. His offer was accepted and set in motion. The news was received with enthusiasm not only by the Catholic community and merchants and businessmen of St. Paul and Minneapolis, but even with some measure of enthusiasm and respect by non-Catholics. The date of the historic event was June 24, 25, 26, 1941. The main events of the three days, in anticipation of the hundreds of thousands of participants, took place at the State Fair Grounds. A high platform was built for greater visibility. On it was erected a huge altar with a glass-enclosed baldachin as a protection both from the elements and mosquitoes during the sacred services. The archdiocesan preparations included countless Holy Masses, Communions, prayers in every parish, and even regional Eucharist devotions, processions, Holy Hours, rehearsals of Eucharistic songs (under the direction of Father Missia of the St. Paul Seminary) to enable all to sing at the great opening procession from Como Park to the Fair Grounds on the first day, as wellas at any of the ceremonies during the day or at night which people of the entire archdiocese might attend. Under the enthusiastic leadership of Father Russell, Annunciation parish was duly instructed, prepared and active, and the majority of the sixty-five families enrolled in the parish attended one or more functions at the fair Grounds and participated in the preparatory services

held in their parish church and in the Regional Eucharistic procession at Faribault. Some fifty-five members of the parish marched in the grand opening procession of the opening day, as can be seen in a picture taken on that occasion. Also a panorama of the scene during one of the morning Masses has been preserved.

Plans Laid for New Parish Rectory

More direct steps toward securing a new rectory for Annunciation church took place in early 1942. First a small wedge of land, .27 of an acre, was purchased from Miss Margaret Gear, to square off the cemetery property. Miss Gear also held a Contract for Deed on 39.73 acres of the Lindberg property south of the church property line. Father Russell, with due authorization from Archbishop Murray, bought this Contract for Deed for \$682 and then offered to buy a piece of the Lindberg property, i.e., an area 200 by 225 feet just south of the church property between the old Dodd Road and to a line 225 feet to the east for the price of the Contract for Deed. The exchange was made and thus land was secured for the location of the rectory. On August 2, 1942, after having requested it, Father also received from the Archbishop both a description of the boundaries of his new parish and a map indicating the boundaries. In consideration of this, a number of additional families came to Hazelwood, realizing that this was now a full-fledged parish, and during the course of his pastorate the list grew to seventy-five families.

At a meeting on March 31, 1942, the question of building a parish house came up, was discussed, voted on, and passed. A rough estimate of \$10,000 was given, of which the parish would raise \$5,000 and borrow the other \$5,000. Parish activities were rapidly increasing and hence the hope of raising \$5,000 from the parish before the building would be finished, was unrealistic. The Archbishop authorized the project and also the proposed loan. A well was contracted for and completed on April 7, 1942. On April 9, the War Emergency Freeze Order was declared on all construction where part of the footings had not been-poured. Hopes fell, but fortunately, about two weeks later, the ruling was relaxed to include cases where water supplies and well casings had been installed. Already in March, Father Russell had spoken to the people at Westerman Lumber Company of Montgomery, who foresaw the possible restrictions on plumbing and wiring material and urged Father to order all these things immediately, which he did, including the heating material, all of which was and stored.

One Sunday, June 22, 1942, the trustees and committee came and staked out the exact location for the house so that the well would be within the future garage, and on Monday morning the Mohn Company came and excavated the basement area. The general contract for construction was signed with the Westerman on July 15, for \$11,471.50 and after all changes and alterations had been added, the final cost was \$14,635.00. It was a two-story house with full basement and garage to the east under the sun room or lounge. It had three bedrooms and a store room upstairs, a spacious attic, one room was a guest room with its own bath. Downstairs was an office, a large parlor with fireplace, a dining room, kitchen, half bath and a lounge room or den. In the basement, a section was set off for a winter chapel, also a laundry room, furnace room, vegetable room and store room. Then, on August 2nd of that year, Father moved to the home of Frank Valek in order to be near the site of the new building, and construction began through the fall and winter. Once enclosed and with some heat, the finishing work progressed well. So much so, Father Russell got two rooms almost completely finished and moved in three months before the house was finally completed. The official opening was April 4, 1943, at the close of an inspiring Mission preached by Father Torisky, a Passionist priest from Chicago.

In the meantime, another novel idea had seized Father Russell. Inspired by someone interested in selling him a bowling alley (two lanes) as a further means of making money, he thought it might be installed in a tunnel between the house and the church basement and serve both as a passage way in bad weather and as a recreation area. A number of parishioners worked hard for several weeks excavating the heavy moist clay with scrapers, teams of horses and shovels. But finally better judgment prevailed and the project was abandoned because of the moisture conditions and the doubt of financial success. The two alleys, which for a number of weeks had been stored on edge, one along each outside wall of the church, were at last removed and attention again turned to the rectory.

During the summer and fall of 1943, the parishioners hauled in ninety-five loads of fill dirt to properly landscape the parish house and helped build the drain field to the southwest. The financial statement of December 31, 1943, showed the total debt on the new rectory to be only \$4,000, which was completely paid off within two years thanks to the untiring efforts of the pastor and the wholehearted cooperation of almost every one of his parishioners. He required great sacrifices of them but never spared himself either, even doing minor tasks along with the people. They now had a full-fledged parish, with a beautiful devotional church an elegant parish house, and a devoted shepherd who, despite his many activities, generously gave his time, along with the help of several lay teachers, to the religious education of the children. He visited his parishioners, especially the sick and the indigent, gave instructions and preached inspired sermons with genuine priestly zeal.

Already in the board meetings of 1943, he had discussed with the members the idea of excavating the area under the church, as the only space open was a little area where the furnace was located, which was accessible by an outside stairs built by Father Mead some ten years before. The work was initiated during the winter of 1943-44, beginning with the furnace area. Another door was cut through the north wall and a slanted surface cut to the ground level to the north of the church. Through this door the dirt was removed somewhat more easily. Then the work was extended to the area under the main body of the church. For this, two doors had to be cut through the thick cross wall of 14 inches. Power hammers, bars, picks, sledgehammers were used and the openings completed; then dirt from the entire area was wheeled out on wheelbarrows. Even a mule and scraper were used for a time to slush the dirt out through the north door of the basement. Finally, this done, the area under the sanctuary was excavated, all walls were re-enforced and a cement floor put over the entire area, with necessary electric outlets, floor drains, connections for a kitchen sink, and a toilet off to the north area. Father Russell recorded these costs: Mason and some material (Oliver Kron), \$762.85; other material, lumber, etc., \$193.00; 2648 hours a day labor @ .35 per hour, \$962.80; Walter Giertson Co., \$1,080; power hammer rental, \$383.25; gravel, \$50 - to which must be added the floor, cement work, plumbing, drainage, etc., totaling, \$3,331.93. Great credit must be given to a small band of five or six men of the parish who doggedly stuck to this back-breaking job. We would not have the fine kitchen and hall today except for these loyal followers of Father Russell.

On June 22 of that same year, 1944, the community was struck by a cyclone. It originated in the area of Credit River, moving east through New Market, Webster, and then passing on between the church and the store and on toward Castle Rock. Pastor and people were grateful to God that their beloved church and new rectory were spared. The only damage was a few trees and some shingles on the church and the sacristy, both of which had been reshingled the year before. Some 35 barns were leveled, a number of homes damaged, some seriously, and the hail that followed destroyed most of the spring crops, but no lives were lost. Also, in 1944, the basement chapel in the rectory was finished and furnished for winter weekday Mass and First Friday services, at a total cost of \$777 while \$590 was spent to redecorate the church statues and Stations of the Cross.

In early 1945, the State of Minnesota was surveying for a new Highway to pass east of the cemetery in the valley below the hill, and bisecting the church property. The State wanted 2.8 acres of church land for the new road. All this was discussed at a board meeting in October, 1946. Father Russell suggested that, if it was agreeable to the board, instead of accepting money for the right-of-way, the State be requested to provide the church with an east entrance in the form of a ramp from the highway and rising in a curve some 30 feet above the new highway to the level of the church land south of the rectory. It would connect with the parking area to the west of the ramp with tarvia to the top of the grade. This was acceptable to the board and to the State engineers, and to this day it is in excellent condition and most convenient, thanks to Father's foresight.

Another excellent improvement initiated by Father Russell was the beginning of a system of Perpetual Care, for the maintenance of cemetery lots, in place of the annual piecemeal payment of \$2 per year. The first to accept the idea was Mrs. Peter Hendricks, in the summer of 1943. The idea was well received by the parish for most people preferred a once-for-all payment rather than an annual fee. The new funds were put at interest and only the interest could be used for improvements and the principal formed a foundation fund. Three more paid Perpetual Care in 1944, namely: Frank and James Kennedy, Dennis McFadden and Jake Nerud; eight more followed in 1945 and twenty-six in 1946. When Father Russell left Hazelwood August 14, 1953, there was \$2,265 in the Perpetual Fund - which Father Renz later increased to \$9,700 during his tenure ending in May, 1969. This included the accumulated principal, as the general cemetery funds were sufficient for the current expenditures of this period.

In 1948 the church ceiling was properly insulated by material blown in under air pressure. This was immediately noticed in the saving of fuel the following winter. During the fall, under Father's tireless guidance, the men of the parish cleared the ravine to the east of the cemetery, as Father dreamed of establishing there, in the shaded ravine, a shrine to Our Lady of Fatima, to whom he had great devotion. He often appealed to her when time and again his nerves gave way or he was compelled to leave for a few weeks to rest and receive medical care. A fine grotto was erected in the form of a shell surrounded by huge boulders in an arc around the pedestal where fine white cement, five-foot statue of Our Lady of Fatima was erected and paid for by contributions of the past few years. On a beautiful October Sunday afternoon the shrine was dedicated, with an impressive procession from the church and prayerful singing by the Congregation and choir. Auxiliary Bishop James J. Byrne preached an eloquent sermon and blessed the shrine. The services ended with Benediction in the parish church.

During the year 1950 the pastor, the trustees and finance committee felt the need for a major repair of the church roof, for there were not only leaks in places, but the shingles, rusted gutters, etc., needed renewing. A new asbestos shingle roof was put on the church, the two dormers on each slant of the roof were removed as a main cause of the leaks, the lightning rods were removed, new gutters were installed, a complete paint job was done on the church and the shingles re-stained - all of which was completed by July 1 at a cost of \$1,742. During the following

year, the parish extended the tarvia from the top of the ramp south of the rectory and brought it past the front of the garage to meet the parking lot northwest of the rectory at a cost of \$750.

Convinced of the old saying that a stitch in time saves nine, Father Russell turned his attention to the interior of the church and initiated a complete painting and decorating job. Also the communion rail was set back and the first row of pews (never popular anyway) was removed for that purpose, and a double gate came into being instead of a single one, which added some length to the reset communion rail. The sidewalk in front of the church was repaired and extended, and a new cement walk was added running parallel with the church on the south side, for convenient access to the side door from the street. Iron guard rails were installed on the steps at the entrance. Other improvements included painting of the lower church basement rooms, repairing the ceiling in the furnace room and west room; some furniture, wiring, electrical fixtures, and also graveling the parking lot, all at a total cost of \$6,000, of which almost \$2,000 was paid and a loan obtained for the remainder of the project.

On August 9, 1953, while working with a crew of men to improve the cemetery, Father Russell received an unexpected call from Archbishop Murray. His Excellency visited the remodeled church and parish house. He congratulated Father Russell on the tremendous effort he had made and the outstanding results of his building and improvement programs, but also, and equally well, on the spiritual care he had given to his flock, both young and old. He then told Father Russell of the very special and urgent need he had of him to solve a situation at Norwood, and asked him to resign his pastorate at Hazelwood and be appointed pastor of Norwood instead. It is to be credited to Father Russell's priestly sense of obedience and detachment and his loyalty to the Archbishop that he accepted, on the spot, to leave this beautiful parish, its devoted people, the comfortable rectory he had so recently completed and paid for, and the staunch parishioners who, together with him, had accomplished so much, and left this "Little Switzerland" of Hazelwood, as he had fondly called it, for another pastorate.

CHAPTER V

The Pastorate of Father Carl Renz, 1953 to 1969

With the departure of Father Russell, Father Carl Renz left New Market and was appointed pastor of Hazelwood. Father Renz was born in St. Paul and made his studies at St. Thomas College and St. Paul Seminary. He was ordained in June 1919. He served as assistant at Sleepy Eye and several other places and was then made Pastor of Mahtomedi. It was here, while playing ball with the young men of the parish, that he fell and broke his hip. It did not heal properly, and hence it was two years before he could again take a parish. He was appointed pastor of New Market; where he was stationed for a number of years before coming to Hazelwood.

It is well to note at this point in our history that a slow but sure gradual change took place in Annunciation parish since its founding, when all but seven or eight families of the fifty families who built the first church, were of Irish extraction.

This situation prevailed for some fifty years, when the first Bohemian families began to come into the parish. The first or record was Jake Skluzacek, who in 1910-71 bought the farm where Arnold Malecha is today. The following year two more Bohemian families bought farms; first Michael Mach at Union hake and then Wenceslaus Tupa, where Louis Tupa, a grandson, is today In 1913 Frank Malecha, whose large family also included seven sons, bought a farm half a mile north of Little Chicago. Four of his sons later came to Hazelwood.

At first these newcomers, because of the language problem, continued to go to Lonsdale or Veseli to church, which was quite understandable. The younger generation, however, upon reaching adulthood or striking out on their own, came to Annunciation church. One exception, William Pelant, who right from the start came to Annunciation parish, bought a farm about a mile west of the store, where he and his wife still live. He has been a parish member here for fifty-three years.

In the years that followed, more Bohemian families moved in, among them the Valeks, the Sireks and the Rezacs, but these all came to Hazelwood right from the beginning. Thus we see that there was a slow but gradual exodus of Irish families who were attracted to the cities by the high paying jobs, more modern living, Catholic school advantages for their children, and what they considered other advantages compared with the long hours and greater risks of farm like.

To the great credit of the newly-arrived Bohemian families, they at once became staunch and interested supporters of Annunciation church and worked in truly Catholic harmony with the other nationalities within the parish. Many it is true - and this too is to their credit - kept their mother tongue, so that even the majority of the present generation still understand and speak the language of their ancestors, particularly at family gatherings such as weddings, baptisms, etc. And this is as it should be with all nationalities, for every nation and people has certain customs, traditions, and languages which is unique and beautiful and very worthy of being preserved.

In the last few years of Father Russell's pastorate, the church had been remodeled and redecorated both inside and out. The new rectory was in excellent condition so that for a number of years no special expenses or projects were necessary. The debt contracted by Father Russell for these improvements was paid and savings began to accumulate both in the cemetery Perpetual Care Fund and the parish account. Father Renz preached excellent and instructive - though at times somewhat lengthy - sermons, for he was an avid reader. Even so, his style was simple and practical. He organized Catechism classes for the children and C.C.D. classes for the older boys and girls, even holding vacation school instructions during the summer, conducted by the Sisters, until he found them becoming too "updated", when he engaged lay teachers instead. He personally supervised the choice of books and materials used for these instructions to assure orthodoxy and thoroughness of doctrine and provide a solid basis in prayer. He also continued to pay \$1000 per year school support to St. Dominic, until 1960. Parents who continued to send their children to St. Dominic's were, of course, expected to pay the required tuition.

One of Father Renz's practical projects was to have a special lean-to built on the south side of the church to serve as shelter to the side entrance to the church, as well as a cover for the outside stairs going into the basement. By an ingenious design, the roof was built in two sections on each side of the large church window, with a section of flat roof between so as not to interfere with the light from the window. There was also a door both for the basement stairs and one for the church side entrance. Another improvement which he directed was to completely rebuild the approach and front steps at the main entrance to- the church. It provided a large platform area at the door, level with the church doorway, thereby doing away with a dangerous step. and also new concrete steps down to the ground level. Sturdy iron railings were installed on each side of the steps and on both sides of the top platform. In 1963, the DeNardo brothers were engaged to completely repair the eve gutters, the windows and the foundation, and repaint the church exterior as well as the rectory.

In the early 1960's preparations were underway for the proposed new Highway 35 and here again Father Renz proved himself to be a shrewd business man. For the story was that the Highway Department made him an offer of a mere \$800 to cut across the church land west of the old Dodd Road. Father Renz protested, arguing that, since our present cemetery was almost all used up, he was thinking of opening a new section across the road - which, of course, would have blocked any highway coming through. Shortly thereafter the offer for the land, amounting to 3.8 acres, was raised to \$2100, and Father Renz accepted it. This money he invested in chemical shares of stock, which brought the parish \$4300 when sold in 1971.

In 1966, Father Renz moved the Cemetery Cross which Father Russell had erected at the east end of the cemetery on the brow of the hill above Highway 46 (Lyndale). At the top of the cross was a large electric light which shone for miles around at night and was a landmark. However, by this time the wood at the base of the cross had rotted and the cross was in danger of falling. Secondly, Father Renz with his bad hip, found it very difficult to hobble that far for the various occasions. He therefore had the cross removed and re-erected with a new cross in its present place just north of the cemetery line between the church and the rectory. A tarvia area was built around the front of the cross and two new statues were purchased, one of the Sorrowful Mother and the other of St. John.

Also, because of his difficulty in walking over rough terrain, he had the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima removed from the ravine shrine, and re-erected on a low foundation in the center of the cedar grove between the church and the rectory. The total cost of these improvements was \$2,106. The work was done by DeNardo Company.

Father Renz was a graduate of St. Thomas College in 1913 and always had a warm spot for his Alma Mater. An opportunity came for him to leave a testimony of this devotion when, in 1967, a new building was to be dedicated. He offered to purchase and to donate to the College a carillon of bells, which gift was warmly accepted. The carillon consisted of thirty-seven bells and the dedication arranged for by Msgr. Terrance Murphy, President of the College, for September 17, 1967, with Father Renz as Guest of Honor. Mr. John Harvey, Professor of music at the University of Wisconsin, and one of the world's leading carilloneurs, gave the recital. The carillon consists of thirty-seven tiny dual bell-tone hammers of bronze bell metal, with the richness and the depth of cast bell carillons. For instance, the Bourbon Bell of middle C in the carillon is equal to the tone of a bell weighing two and one-half tons. The carillon may be played from its console or programmed automatically to sound a variety of musical selections.

One thing the parishioners missed during the pastorate of Father Renz was that, throughout his seventeen years as pastor, he did not encourage or organize any parish social activity. He did not believe in parish picnics or card parties or socials of any kind. He took the view that these should not be necessary for the support of the parish and that Catholics should not expect such amusement or reward for fulfilling their duty of church support. He evidently overlooked the fact that such activities are not intended solely for financial benefit, but also that the parishioners, by meeting and gathering and working or recreating together, develop a sense of fraternity and derive an outlet for wholesome fun for young as well as old.

Be this as it may, the people understood and appreciated both his physical handicap and poor health, both of which combined to lessen his interest in such activities yet did not prevent him from discharging his other pastoral duties, including the excellent religious training of the children.

The health of Father Renz took a serious turn for the worse late in 1968 and into 1969. The winter was very hard on him, and he suffered a slight stroke. Although he recovered again after some time in the Northfield hospital, during March and April his condition deteriorated. In May he was again taken to the hospital and towards the end of the month, after having received the Last Sacraments, he died peacefully in the presence of his two sisters who had come from California to be near him and who later helped to close his estate.

At the time of his death, the finances of the parish were in good condition, both as to the checking account and the invested funds, 33 shares of chemical stock, with a market value of \$4300. He had also built up the Perpetual Care Fund, initiated by Father Russell, from \$2500 to \$9500. Father Renz had served the parish seventeen years. He had been a priest just one month short of fifty years. The people of Annunciation honored him by an all-night vigil of prayer in church, with the body present before the Blessed Sacrament, followed the next morning by a Solemn High Requiem Mass. He was buried in Resurrection Cemetery in St. Paul.

With his demise in late May, the parish was without an appointed pastor, as there was already a shortage of priests in the archdiocese. For the time being a priest was sent by the Chancery for Sunday services whenever possible. Nevertheless, on some Sundays there was no priest and no Mass, to the great disappointment of these devout people. For these reasons it is to the great credit of Father Holl, pastor at New Market at the time, that on his own accord he began to come here for one Mass each Sunday. The Archbishop then appointed Father Holl Administrator of Hazelwood, in addition to his pastoral work at New Market, and he carried on with true priestly generosity and zeal.

On October 1, 1969, Father Raymond Reed was appointed pastor at New Market, in place of Father Holl who was given a larger parish in St. Paul. Father Reed was a likeable priest in his mid-fifties, a good speaker, and active despite the fact that he was a very sick man and under constant heavy sedation. Once in coming to Hazelwood he went off the ramp coming up the curve of the hill and his car slid all the way down into the ditch next to the road below. How he did this without tipping over, no one could understand. He calmly got out and asked the men who had gathered to get his car out. He then walked up the ramp to the church so as not to delay the Mass.

But despite his courage and persistence to carry on, he began to show signs of strain. Sad to say, the end came quickly and tragically. For some reason unknown to anyone, one extremely cold night in late January of 1970, he went out to his garage dressed in light house clothes and either suffered a stroke or gravely injured himself. At any rate, the next morning he was found frozen to death, lying just behind his car. The parishioners were shocked and saddened by this tragedy. The funeral was to be on Monday morning. On Sunday, all afternoon and late into the evening, great numbers of priests, relatives and friends from all over, especially from the Twin Cities where he was well known, came to pay their respects and pray for the repose of his soul. On Monday, the Archbishop said the Mass and the body was brought to Resurrection Cemetery for burial.

CHAPTER VI

Pastorate of Msgr. Arthur H. Durand

Hazelwood had been eight months without a resident pastor. The fine parish house was vacant, therefore, and it was remarkable that no damage occurred either to the church or to the rectory in that period. On January 1, 1970, Msgr. Durand made an afternoon visit to see the church he had asked for of the Archbishop. George Valek and Ed Tuma showed him around and hopefully wondered if this unexpected visit might indicate the appointment of a new pastor.

Msgr. Durand was born and raised on a farm on Highway 60, some two-and-one-half miles east of Faribault. After studying Latin and advanced grammar with Father Domestici, pastor of the Sacred Heart Church of Faribault, and also with Miss Brigid Coughlin, a high school English teacher - (over and above his farm work for four years), - he left for France to continue his preparation for the Seminary. He was then a young man of 21. He made his philosophy in the Major Seminary of Nantes, France, and returned after three-and-one-half years to enter four years of Theology at the St. Paul Seminary, where he was ordained on June $\}0$, 1928.

He was appointed assistant to Father Domestici, in his own native parish, which was most unusual, but the reason was that Archbishop Dowling had no other young priest who could preach in French, since at that time sermons were given in both languages. Although he had some 150 relatives in Sacred Heart parish, he was edified to find faith stronger than family ties, so that never once did a problem come up on that score. He served twelve years as assistant there and, in June, 1940 was appointed pastor of St. John the Evangelist Church of Little Canada, some six miles north of St. Paul, to replace Father Combettes, who was retiring at the age of eighty two. This grand old priest despite the best of intentions was simply not up to the task. Consequently the church and rectory were in bad need of repair, parish finances were unorganized, with no savings account and a mere \$75 in the checking account. Moreover, there was a strong trace of Trusteeism, with one of the gentlemen, who had been a trustee for 27 years, acting as general fac totum of the parish.

The new pastor, Fr. Durand, explained the needs frankly to the people and encouraged them by the confidence he showed in their ability and good faith, to meet the problems of the fast-growing suburban population. The response was wonderful. Within ten years a new seventeen-room school was built, the parish grew from 250 to 500 families by 1955, and a new church - seating 800 people upstairs and 600 downstairs - was erected in 1957 followed by a new rectory in 1963. In the meantime, a nice stucco frame home had been built for the Sisters teaching in the school. The over-all building cost was \$900,000 and, by the time Msgr. Durand left in Jan. 1970, \$700,000 of this debt had been paid off, with the balance well within the means of the 575 families to handle.

There was no assistant priest at Little Canada, except for week-end help. After the strain of an ever-growing parish and the heavy building program, nature began to give the old pastor of seventy-two warning that he was overdoing it, so he asked for a small parish. He asked for Hazelwood, this being so near the scene of his birthplace, which Archbishop Byrne graciously granted. His first parish Mass at Annunciation was on Sunday, January 25th, and Hazelwood rejoiced because it again had its own pastor. The Trustees appointed by Father Renz were asked to stay on, and, in a matter of a couple of weeks, all exchanges of vestments, sacred vessels, financial accounts, etc., made by Father Reed with St. Nicholas at New Market, were straightened out. The new pastor found

parish finances in good condition, with some \$2000 in the checking account, some \$4300 in chemical shares, and about \$1800 in savings, while the Perpetual Care Fund was in the neighborhood of \$9500.

A number of people had received the impression from Father Renz that soon small parishes like Hazelwood would be suppressed. At any rate, a number of little things had been left undone, like repairing the ceiling in the bell tower. The church organ, too, needed overhauling badly, and the Leonard Company in Minneapolis rebuilt it completely for \$250, which was little enough compared with the purchase even of a small electronic organ at about \$1800. Next, Leo Keilen of Faribault did a good job of overhauling the furnaces, both in the church and in the rectory, and later, in the spring of 1970, padded kneelers were installed in the church and also in front of the communion rail, for the pastor felt the reverent, traditional way of kneeling was the most fitting in which to receive the King of kings.

There had been, as we said elsewhere, no parish activities or festivals in the parish for the seventeen years of the former pastor's tenure. Fr. Renz had been of the opinion that Catholics should support their parish without looking for this kind of fun in the process. The present pastor's experience, of thirty years at Little Canada, convinced him that a balanced program of parish activities creates social good feelings, enthusiasm and "esprit de corps", that is, a spirit of unity, valuable for young and old. During the month of June, in view of the projected parish picnic on the last Sunday of the month, both the men and the women initiated a series of work bees and cleaned, painted, and decorated our downstairs rooms and kitchen. The first picnic was a fine success and the proceeds were used to install new equipment for subsequent events. A large new range was purchased, a serving and warming table and utensils, and also a fine large cooler, towards which three parishioners donated one-third the cost.

In 1971 more improvements were made. A water line was laid eight feet down, to bring water from the pressure tank in the garage adjoining the rectory into the church kitchen and bathroom off the kitchen. A surveyor was hired to plot the south hillside of our cemetery into lots and to arrange proper space for aisles. A crew of volunteers made cement corner posts for the lots - by filling two-pound coffee cans with fresh cement. Eugene Malecha, who at the time was pouring a cement floor in his model barn, gave us the needed fresh cement, ready mixed. The men squared off the lots according to the blueprint, and did a fine job. They also planted a row of evergreen trees along the drive at the foot of the hill, and another row across the middle.

The cemetery Board was also in favor of building a too: house in which to store the mower and tools used in the cemetery, so a frame structure 12 x 16 feet was erected. Jim Leahy supervised the foundation, aided by Felix Blesener, Ed Tuma, and Lawrence Valek with his big tractor, while the main carpenters who put up the frame and siding were Tom Pumper and Bob Sirek, with some help from several more. The following week the roof shingles were installed, by an eighty-two-year-old ex-carpenter and the seventy-three-year-old pastor, who enjoyed doing their bit.

In the spring of 1972, the entire parking area was graveled four inches deep because of an unusual spring thaw which resulted in twelve-inch-deep ruts. Also, the church kitchen ceiling had never been finished. The joists were still exposed, causing a fire hazard. The ceiling was lowered to ten feet and finished with sheet rock. In the same fall, the men of the parish came and filled some of the low spots in the old section of the cemetery, leveled some stones that had tilted or fallen, and trimmed the bushes grown wild.

During the summer, on Sunday July 25 to be exact, the big dairy barn of Joseph Malecha caught fire (by spontaneous combustion) while he and his wife were in Mankato visiting their daughter, a Sister of Notre Dame. The neighbors and the Northfield Fire Department worked hard to save the nearby buildings, including the home, for the heat was terrific. Fortunately the dairy herd was out to pasture, so that only two animals perished in the blaze. The following morning Arnold Malecha, a son, got worried about his hay, as he had put up some in the same condition. He went to the hayloft of his barn, and high time it was, for when he raised a forkful of hay, flames began to shoot out. The alarm was sounded and once again neighbors and relatives rallied and pitched out the smoldering hay while the Northfield fire rig stood by, ready to douse the flames if they got out of hand. After almost two hours of frantic work in terrible heat, the hay with fire bursting out from almost every forkful was hauled into an open field where it continued to burn all the rest of the day and most of the following night. The pastor said a Mass of thanksgiving that one barn had been saved, no persons were injured, and two herds of cows had escaped.

There were also a number of great sorrows in Hazelwood during these years, including three tragic deaths of our young people. Just three months before the arrival of Msgr. Durand, the car of Christine Koktavy, daughter of Ludwig and Viola Koktavy, collided with a train at a blind crossing a little west of Castle Rock. She was driving her younger sister, Theresa, to Northfield when it happened. Christine was killed instantly. Theresa suffered a serious leg injury, and the car was entirely demolished. Then on October 23, 1970, Thomas Berres, son of John and Cecile Berres, was returning home from the direction of Webster, between 9 and 10 in the evening, when a car driven by a young man under the influence of liquor swung into the wrong lane. Although Thomas went as far out as he could on the shoulder of the road, the collision was head-on and both boys were killed outright. Finally, on January 1,

1974, at 12:50 A.M. of the New Year, Eugene Sirek, son of Robert and Elsie Sirek of Webster, was riding with another boy on his way to Dundas to pick up Eugene's car, which had been left there for some repairs. They collided with a car coming southward, at a point about two miles south of Northfield, and Eugene was killed. The family, and indeed the entire parish with them, were plunged in sorrow on that mournful New Year's Day.

Apart from these three accidental deaths, only three actual members of the parish died in adulthood between 1969 and 1975. They were Philip Maher, Theophile Pumper, and Albert Tupy.

Early in 1973, big improvements were made to beautify the church and sanctuary. The platform with the three high steps were removed from the sanctuary, and the altar front was divided from the Rehrados or decorative back of the altar and tabernacle. Thus the entire sanctuary was put on one level and, with a space of about four feet separating the back of the altar and tabernacle from the altar table proper, it was now possible for the celebrant to say Mass either facing the tabernacle, or facing the people. This practice is alternated every two weeks. All the altars as well as the statues and Stations of the Cross were repainted. The ladies of the parish organized a big work bee, first removing all the old varnish from the floors under the pews and then revarnishing all the floors, the pews, the communion table, wood trim and furniture, so that the church looked like new. A generous benefactor, Mr. Lucius Smith of Faribault, offered to leave some memorial for Miss Mary Wall, who had worked for him in his law office for twenty-five years and had died of cancer and was buried here in Hazelwood. A fine wood carving from Italy was erected on a bracket near the Blessed Virgin's altar, and the traditional statue of the Sacred Heart was set up on St. Joseph's side.

The next project was to carpet the entire sanctuary and church, which together with the repainting and varnishing, gave Annunciation all the brightness of a new church. In the meantime, Mr. Fritz Malecha, a first-class handy-man, built an excellent array of cupboards, cabinets and storage space in our downstairs church kitchen, complete with a new sink, drain boards, and hot water heater. During the summer the men again arranged several work bees. They erected a shelter for the north basement entrance, sixteen by twenty four feet, so that it also serves as storage space for our activities equipment, which, prior to this, we had to haul back and forth some four miles to a farmer's shed each time we had a parish doings. More than twenty men turned out to excavate and lay the foundation, erect the frame and put on the roof and siding.

Our history would not be properly brought up to date if we neglected to state the excellent organization that has been built up for the instruction and catechizing of our boys and girls. Eight dedicated people help Msgr. Durand in this work. This allows for small and efficient classes in the Baltimore Catechism, the Bible History and advanced social and practical questions for the high school grades. The illustrated Catholic Catechism, translated by Msgr. Durand from a beautiful French text, is the center around which Catholic Doctrine is explained.

Our loyal little choir, under the direction of Mrs. Eunice Lynch and Mrs. Leona Tupa, our organists, give us a sung Latin Mass on the first Sunday of each month, with the Latin Kyrie, Gloria, and Agnus Dei, as well as Latin Benedictions for the May, June, and October devotions.

The schedule outlined for our parish during this Holy Year includes a special visiting confessor on the last Saturday of the month, a parish Holy Hour of Reparation on the third Sunday of each month, Stations of the Cross at both morning and evening devotions for First Fridays, as well as each day during Lent, and finally a joint parish pilgrimage by bus to the St. Paul Cathedral and to the Basilica of Minneapolis. The aim of the pastor and people of Annunciation, who are so attached to God's "Castle on the Hill", is to glorify Christ in His Church and in their daily lives under the patronage of His Saints, especially Our Lady of the Annunciation and Her spouse St. Joseph.

Our Lady of the Annunciation, protect and guard our parish.!

CHAPTER VII

Reminiscences of Abbie Blesener Plus Some Other Information

Besides the references I have given for the material found in this sketch of the History of Hazelwood and of Annunciation parish, I had the invaluable help of Mrs. Dominic (Abbie) Blesener, now ninety-five years of age, born and raised in this parish and still gifted with a mind of wonderful clarity and accurate memory from whom I have gleaned much of the following bits of family history and unusual events not already recorded in my story, plus hits of history gleaned here and there from parishioners and interested parties.

Some Brief Notes on Some Old Families

Patrick Hennessy, one of the early settlers, had a claim in the area where William Dupay lives today. Dominic and Francis Blesener, also among the earliest settlers, took claims where Abbie lives today, while Francis was located where Edwin Budin now lives. Like the Simons, they were Luxemburgers. Jacob and John Simon, who were so helpful with their singing and choir work in early days, located where Felix Blesener is today. Catherine, the daughter of Jacob Simon, married Charles Blesener and had eight children, one of whom, Felix, still lives on the original claim and has a preemption claim for the property. It is signed by Abraham Lincoln!

Peter Stanton was the pioneer father of Michael and John Stanton. John never married and was a very religious man. The priest at Lonsdale made the statement that John never came to the village without making a prolonged visit to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Peter Stanton and wife Mary (Shea) kept Peter's invalid sister, Brigid Stanton, in their home for many years. It was this Miss Brigid Stanton who donated the beautiful Sacred Heart statue that now adorns the front of our church. After her death, Peter and Mary Stanton adopted Philip Maher, as his mother had lost her husband before coming to America and the family was large. He lived with them and carried on most of the farm work until Peter and Mary died. He then took over the farm and his sister Ruth came to keep house for him. Later Philip sold this farm and bought another east of Hazelwood, where Ruth and Ambrose, another brother, still live. Philip died in 1972.

Patrick Mulligan came from Ireland in the late 1860's and took a homestead where his grandson, Mozart, now lives. His wife was a Duffy, also newcomers with a large family. James Finn settled on the Waterford Road to the west of Dominic Blesener. However, his wife, Ellen, died early in 1862. She was the second one to die in the settlement, for Michael King had died in late 1861 and, as there was as yet neither church nor cemetery, he was buried in New Market. As plans to build a church and open a cemetery at Hazelwood were now definite, James buried his beloved wife, Ellen, on a little mound near his log home until spring when her body was exhumed and reburied in the new cemetery. A small area had now been cleared east of the proposed new church for this purpose, and Margaret Gleason, wife of Timothy Gleason, had died and was the first to be buried in the new resting place. Ellen Finn's body was the second burial in Annunciation cemetery, even though she had died three months earlier. Thomas Finn, the grandfather of Abbie, arrived in 1864 and preempted his claim for the price of \$1.25 per acre. Richard McAndrews arrived about 1866 with his bachelor brother Patrick. Thomas Gleason arrived about the same He had a large family and acquired land about a mile west of McCabe's place, where Ludwig Valek lived until 1972. James Wilby came in the late 1860's and married one of McCabe's daughters. He acquired a farm in Lonsdale and made a fortune when the railroad came through and purchased most of his farm. He became postmaster in Lonsdale but his wife developed a superiority complex and the money melted away.

Thomas Skiffington arrived about the year 1858 and bought land in the area of the present Little Chicago. He married Margaret Kenny, daughter of Patrick Kenny (the father of Father Kenny). Thomas Skiffington's claim adjoined the Kenny claim. The Maher family arrived in the 1860's. She was a widow with four boys and two girls, and settled just north of McCabe's place, on land she purchased, and Philip went to live with Peter Stanton and wife. Martin and Thomas Fox came in the middle sixties. Martin had no family but Thomas had several children and lived where John Berres is today. James Armstrong came from St. Paul in the middle eighties. He had previously owned a farm in the area of Lake Elmo in St. Paul and the rumor was that he had been offered \$200,000 for his holdings. He bought a farm in the Castle Rock area. Although he was a gentleman farmer, he and his wife and children were nonetheless hard-working people and fine neighbors.

John Dweyer probably came in the middle 1860's. He was the brother of Mrs. John and Thomas Crosby. Thomas Crosby lived a good mile east of Hazelwood. He was the faithful church caretaker who, for forty years, during the cold weather would plow through the snow on foot and by the light of his lantern before dawn, start up the wood stoves, bringing his own kindling and a flask of kerosene to start the fire. One large stove was located in the body of the church on the south side and another in the sacristy. This procedure continued until the major remodeling job in 1903, when a basement furnace was installed and the caretaker's job went to other hands. In his will, Thomas Crosby left \$600 for the church, the largest legacy this parish received.

Thomas Finn left Ireland in 1835, when he was twenty years old and came to Minnesota and settled in Greenvale Township. However, he lived for a time with a relative, William Finn, who had a farm on the Mississippi west of early St. Paul. This is the farm later purchased by Archbishop Ireland, and James J. Hill built the buildings of the St. Paul Seminary on this property, donating the entire project to the Archdiocese of St. Paul for the education of priests. Few know that Mr. Hill's reason for doing this, he himself not being a Catholic, was in gratitude for what Father Calley, a humble early French priest in old St. Mary's in St. Paul, had done to advise Mr. Hill, a man of high standing and dignity, when the latter told him that he wanted to marry an Irish girl of very modest background and means. Following Fr. Caillet's advice, Mr. Hill had the girl enrolled in the Sister's Convent School in Quebec to

learn French and to acquire an education consistent with that of people of his standing. Mrs. Hill turned out to be an esteemed and loving person. So, in gratitude, James Hill built the seminary for Archbishop Ireland and, in the presence of a great delegation of both civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries, he publicly announced that he was making this contribution in honor of a simple, humble, but very esteemed priest, Father Calley. The papers of early St. Paul of that date recorded the event.

To return to Thomas Finn; he married Catherine O'Brien and came to this area about 1859 when he took the claim across the road from Dominic Blesener, where Abbie Blesener lives today on her father's homestead. Blesener had five boys and seven girls, of whom Abbie was the youngest. She grew to womanhood and married Dominic Blesener, Jr.

Michael Gleason settled on the Waterford Road not far from Dominic Blesener's place. He built a log house and had lived in it only a year when his wife took seriously sick. Thomas Skiffington, who lived where Frank Malecha now lives, went on horseback to New Trier to get Father Pius Bayer to administer the Sacraments to the dying woman. The priest followed him back along the narrow trails in his sleigh, across open country and through the woods. He prepared her for death with great kindness and priestly tenderness. In a few days she died and, after a short stay, Michael Gleason moved away from the scene of his great sorrow.

John King, the son of Michael King who died in 1861 and was buried at New Market, took over the claim of his father who was already old when he arrived. His log house was on the Dodd Road, a trifle south of where Arnold Malecha's home now stands. In those days the Dodd Road followed the line straight south, along the ridge and trees which still can be recognized, past where the old school house once stood, then turning gradually more to the west and south, now followed by the old Lyndale or County Road 46. His first wife was Katherine Keilen, from the Webster area where Lawrence Rezac now lives. When she died he married Mary Gleason and they had four children. He lived to be ninety. Thanks to the notes which he kept of the early events of this area, Father Russell was able to get at least a good sketch of the main historical data of the founding of the parish and the building of the first church.

John Gavin came in 1858 and established himself on a farm west of Hazelwood. He was married and had two daughters. One very dry fall, a field fire broke out on his farm and he made such great efforts to stop the spread of the fire that he overexerted himself and died not too long afterwards. His wife remarried some years later. John Brodrick had land a little west of Little Chicago, where he lived with his wife and three children. His wife died and he married again to Brigid Finn, and they had three daughters and a son. The son was William who is the father of Lee who farmed the old place until 1972. Dominic Blesener (mentioned before) had six sons and two daughters. The youngest son, Dominic, Jr., married Abbie Finn, our honored historian. One of the girls, Margaret, never married. She was a musician and played the organ in our church for over 25 years.

James Leahy came in the late 1860's. He was single and lived and worked for a time with the Hogan family as a farm hand. He married one of the Hogan girls and they had five boys and three girls. He met with a tragic death on his way home from Christmas morning Mass. One son was Joseph, grandfather of James and Joseph Leahy of this parish.

Pat Tierney was a veteran of the Civil War and fought in many important engagements of the war but returned safely to Hazelwood. He lived the rest of his life in the parish and when he died he was buried with honor. A memorial flag is placed on his grave, along with the rest of our veterans, each Memorial Day.

Walter Shea settled in the area of Little Chicago. He had a fine family of fourteen children. They were very nice people. Michael Hendricks arrived about 1858 and settled about two miles east - south of Hazelwood. They had ten children. His wife's maiden name was Margaret Rowan. Andrew Keegan came in the early 1 860s and married Michael Hendricks' widow and they had one daughter. Later they moved to Menomonee, Wise. Another widow, Mrs. Brenden, came from Ireland and settled in Greenvale to the east of Hazelwood. She had two sons and four daughters and all did well and married locally. They were fine people. One daughter married one of the Shea's, who lived west of Little Chicago.

Joseph and Margaret Gear arrived in 1868. They had two sons and a daughter named Anna, who went to work in St. Paul. The sons were Bernard and Joseph. Joseph married Anna Moran and had only one daughter, Margaret, who later married John Ryan. They were the parents of three brother priests and one Sister. The family lived where John Stanton lives today. When the children were young the family moved to St. Paul and settled in St. Vincent's parish. The father obtained a good job in a lumber and coal yard and was able to send his children to a Catholic school, which in those days were so very fine and orthodox and the Sisters most self-sacrificing. This, no doubt, had much to do with encouraging four members of the Ryan family to dedicate themselves to God.

Patrick Hendricks, son of Michael Hendricks, probably arrived at the same time as his father, about 1858. His oldest son married Catherine Cosgrove, whose parents lived where William Tuma lives today. One of the daughters became a Dominican Sister. The Hendricks had seven children. A grandson, Philip, who finally acquired

the farm, had previously come into a substantial amount of money from an accident he had suffered on the railroad when he lost part of one hand. Together with his inherited property, he left a will of \$125,000 in favor of St. Dominic's parish, but strangely enough seemed to have forgotten his own parish of the Annunciation.

James Rowan had gone to California during the gold rush. He came back with a modest fortune and settled where John, a grandson, is today. He married and his children were William, James, John, Dominic, George, Catherine and Sarah. Fr. Gerald Rowan was a grandson of William Rowan.

William Carroll came about 1860 and settled near the line of Cedar Avenue, at the edge of the parish. Several of his sons were educated as engineers. They were a good family. Dennis Quilligan also came in the early sixties and lived on land now owned by Ray Stanton. They were very poor and the father and several of the children were not in good health. The father and two sons died. The brave mother worked hard, took in washing to earn money and went as far as Hastings to wash and iron to make ends meet. Finally the mother moved to St. Paul. One girl went to school and became a teacher; the other got a good job with a firm who employed her for forty years. So things improved. However, one of the boys bade his mother and sisters goodbye and promised not to return until he had accumulated \$1000. He never returned, nor did they ever receive word from him.

Daniel Wall came in the late 1860's and married the widow of Patrick Crosby. She died and he again married and had children by his second wife. They have a family lot in our cemetery.

Patrick Crosby and wife Catherine came in 1864 and settled where Don Lynch is today. They took in the baby boy of Edward Lynch when Mrs. Lynch died. Then the father, Edward Lynch, Sr., took his two little girls and moved to Wisconsin. The baby boy, Edward, grew up and married and is the father of Donald Lynch of our parish, who lives on the original Crosby claim.

Peter Stanton (1835-1912), as already mentioned, came in the 1860's. He married a Shea girl, the sister of Walter Shea, Sr. They had four children. One of these, Mary, became Mrs. Pat Maher. Another son, Michael, had a daughter who became a Sister of Notre Dame.

Pat Hennessy also came in the sixties. He lived from 1822-1895. He and his wife Anna settled not far from the Brodricks. They had three children.

James Maloney also settled near the Brodricks, south of DuPays Corner. He had three sons.

Patrick Mulligan came from Ireland in the late 1860's and settled in the east end of the parish. He married an Armstrong girl; they had seven sons and two daughters. His claim was the farm tilled today by his son, Mozart. Mozart was the twin of Milton, who went to Alaska. Another of the sons, who died later, was the father of Thomas Mulligan of the parish. Thomas Reynolds and wife also took a claim in the sixties. One of their sons died of scarlet fever as a full-grown young man.

James Kiley arrived in 1856 and settled about two miles west of Hazelwood, near where Lawrence Rezac is today.

Martin Duffy and wife arrived from Ireland in the middle sixties and opened up a claim on the land owned today by George Valek. He had some money and was one of the promoters of the Webster Bank - which, unfortunately, after a very fine start, went under because of the dishonesty of its head officials.

James McCabe; Benefactor of Annunciation Parish

James McCabe, who, at the famous fall meeting in 1861, donated 20 acres of his claim, 300 ft. wide and 1,728 ft. long along the entire south line of his quarter section, had received some formal education. He had attended Holy Cross College in Boston before coming west. He married Mary Malrose, who was teaching school in the Shieldsville area. His original log house, of larger size than ordinary, stood just to the west of the Dodd Military Road near the north central end of his claim. He later built a store to the north of his house, nearer to the corner. As time went on, his business grew and, besides groceries and dry goods, he began to sell tools, garden equipment, cultivators, then plows and horse drawn equipment and farm machinery. He had ten children and raised a well disciplined family. One of his sons, Tom, later married a Mead girl, a sister of Father Mead.

After building a new and substantial warehouse for his merchandise, he felt the need, because of his growing family, to build a nice large frame house. To increase his income for this purpose, he opened a liquor store in his place of business and did very well. However, about this time Archbishop Ireland came to Hazelwood for Confirmation. Hearing of the liquor store and being himself a strong promoter of temperance, he visited James, who frankly told him that he had made this move because of his family need of a larger house, and not because of any hunger for money. The rumor made the rounds that the Archbishop told McCabe he would arrange for a loan at reasonable terms and to go ahead and build the house. McCabe agreed and closed the liquor store, which he admitted was too often a source of grief and bad example. Later in life, when most of his family were grown and scattered, the fine frame house burned to the ground and was never rebuilt. McCabe and his wife did some

remodeling in the abandoned frame skimmery building across the road and moved into it. Here he spent his last days. He died respected by all. His widow went to live with a daughter in Lonsdale but, at her death, her body was brought back to Annunciation Church for the funeral Mass and she was buried next to her devoted husband.

The Hazelwood Blacksmith Shop

All through the eighties and well into the 1900's, blacksmiths were in very great demand. There were horses to be shod, wagon wheel tires to be set, plow points to be rebuilt and sharpened, chains to be repaired or made for stump pullers, and countless other things depended on the blacksmith's forge, bellows, and sturdy arms. Hazelwood, for many years in the eighties and nineties, had a blacksmith shop directly east of Hazelwood, less than half a mile from the corner. He was a Norwegian, with a strong brogue but a pleasant and accommodating man. He had an excellent trade right up to the time of his old age and retirement. Then the shop was closed and no successor came. Fortunately, there was another one in Webster Village.

Little Chicago

The original owner of the land where Little Chicago is located was a settler by the name of Berg. In the 1880's he opened a little general store, just off the road crossing his farm - which made it handy for the settlers of the area. Some years later Barney Hanson opened a blacksmith shop south of the road, and, around the turn of the century, a skimmery was built as a branch milk plant for the Webster Creamery. There was also a little implement and tool shop. All this time the locality had the name of Berg, adopted from the original owner. However, the Bergs sold out and moved away. An enterprising individual by the name of Martin Elyward built a saloon and operated a wide-open liquor business.

The live spot was Elyward's saloon and it was at first jokingly stated that just as the "Big Chicago" was wild, windy and wide open, so too Martin was running his saloon. The nickname "Little Chicago" began to be attached to the place and Berg was forgotten.

"Little Chicago" stuck, and even though it was some years until Elyward sold out and moved out West, the name remained ever since. With the coming of better roads and the big boom in Lonsdale after the coming of the railroad early in 1900 - as well as the coming of the automobile, which made the trip to Lonsdale and Northfield easy - business melted away and "Little Chicago" receded. One little general store, with a bar, continues to operate at "Little Chicago," but it seldom gets wild.

Webster Village and Webster Bank

About the year 1870 a settler by the name of Butzke opened up a U.S. Post Office in his log cabin situated one mile west and one mile south of where Webster stands today. This would be at the T in the road to the east of the Emil Smisek Garage today. The only big thing in what is now Webster was Magnus Olson's pig farm. He had hundreds of pigs, with huge pens both on the north and on the south side of the road. His house, barn, corncribs, etc., were on the north side of the road. He owned -more than a section of land and was considered wealthy. The only other house was on a little rise on the south side of the road, to the west of Olson's property. The owner opened a small general store, where the settlers came to buy and trade. They began to identify the place as Pig Town and because of Olson's big business, there was not much reason to call it anything else. It is possible, too, that the odor thereabouts had something to do with the name.

Between the years 1888 and 1890, the farmers of the area got together to form a Co-Op and build a creamery. They obtained the land across from the store and west of Olson's homestead, on a nice rise with good drainage. The creamery was a success from the start and grew steadily. We could mention here what a sharp-eyed practical man Olson, the Pig Man, was. The creamery had large amounts of buttermilk to dispose of. He got it very cheap. Then he got the creamery to install a pipe from the churn room of the creamery to his pig pen, where the buttermilk flowed into a large tank from which he fed his hogs. It would not have been beyond him to have continued the pipe under the road to feed his pigs penned south of the road.

Shortly after 1890, when Webster had a store and a creamery, the Post Office was moved from Butzke's cabin to the grocery store across from the creamery. This building burned down in 1896. It was rebuilt into a larger building of brick, where the present grocery store stands today.

With the coming of a U.S. Post Office of their own, the settlers felt that a more dignified name was needed for their community. At a meeting called for this purpose, they selected the name of Webster, both because of Ferris Webster the second settler of Webster Township, near Union Lake, and also because the Township was so named. In

the meantime, Olson disposed of his property south of the road and other small businesses began to go up. The big event that brought the area into a village was the coming of the Chicago-Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad in 1900. At once the place boomed. Lots were sold, several streets were laid out and the creamery expanded tremendously. Several sub-stations or skimmeries were established, where the milk was skimmed or separated. Much of the skim milk was brought back to the farm to feed the calves and hogs and also to make cottage cheese. The rest, together with the cream, was hauled to Webster. With the coming of the railroad, the creamery could now ship regularly to the Twin Cities and even to Milwaukee and Chicago. Skimmeries were established at Tronjen, Hazelwood, Greenvale, Little Chicago, and Eiswold.

Other businesses opened up in the thriving community and soon we find a blacksmith shop or two, a machine and implement shop, a barber shop, a saloon, and a hardware stare. Also Adams Lumber Company, where Mr. Henry Schultz, an old native of Webster - from wham most of this history comes - was employed as manager for many years. Of course at times his memory was refreshed by Mrs. Schultz, a granddaughter of the pioneer Butzke, the postman. A large number of new homes were built and the community prospered due in large part to the creamery and a large crew of drivers which became the most important in Rice County and among the best in Southern Minnesota. The village never incorporated. With the coming of better roads and truck service, business on the railroad died down, demand dropped off, the Depression came, the bank went broke and Webster suffered, as so many other local communities, but it always remained a friendly, cooperative, spirited town, and still satisfies local needs with a number of good business enterprises operating successfully even after the loss of the creamery.

The Webster Bank

In 1913, when Webster was still booming; two men from Northfield, both active in the First National Bank of Northfield, decided to open a bank in Webster. People were enthusiastic and cooperative. They bought a vacant space between two other buildings, the hardware store on the east and the grocery store on the west, so that no new walls were necessary, They simply bridged the roof between the two buildings, built the necessary rear and front walls, plastered the walls, dropped the ceiling, and furnished the bank. The Bank of Webster prospered and did much far the entire farming community and village.

Somewhere around 1920, Pie and Netling, who had organized the bank, sold their interests to other investors. A man by the name of Luzinger, who already had banking interests in Minneapolis and Forest Lake, came to Webster and became head Cashier. He hired Olaf Docken as assistant and a man by the name of Alvin Grieger as Secretary. Others who worked in the bank were Alvin Jacobson and Harry Snesrud.

For many years all went well and the community was proud of its bank. Even as the hard days of the Depression began, people never lost confidence in their bank. However, in the late twenties, the temptation to make extra quick money grew on Lunzinger and Docken and they began to play the grain market with depositors' money. When deposits were made, especially larger ones, they did not turn the money into the regular banking channels. No doubt at first they did not intend to steal, but simply to make extra profit both for the bank and for themselves. Unfortunately they persuaded the Secretary to go along with them and keep the operation secret. When they knew the bank examiners were about due, they would forge notes and loans with depositors' names to cover the money they were keeping out of the bank operation. As the Depression continued, their scheme failed and money was lost.

Late in 1929, the examiners became suspicious and so, late in January 1930, when examiners are seldom expected, they suddenly dropped in and demanded to see the books. The outstanding money was not covered and was also seriously short. The bank immediately closed and Luzinger, although no-longer in Webster, was nevertheless proved to be an accomplice and originator of the scheme. Along with Docken and Grieger, he was given a prison term. Dick Jacobson and Harry Snesrud were declared innocent of wrong-doing. People for some time had felt uneasy about the bank and its officers. The brother of Olaf Docken operated the elevator and became suspicious when day after day his brother Olaf came to check on the grain market and appeared tense and nervous. Bankruptcy was declared and the bank closed just at the time of year, especially with the Depression, when people wanted to draw from their savings to pay their property taxes and auto licenses. Suffering was great and many injustices occurred, for example the case of Michael Stanton, who had borrowed money to build a new barn. When the loan came due, he went to the bank and paid his loan but the money, instead of going into bank channels, was used to play the market. Then, when accounts were audited, he, like many others, had nothing to show that he had paid his loan so they all had to pay a second time. Many months went by before depositors began to be paid a mere 55% of their savings. The harm was felt all through those bitter Depression years. Today, however, only a very few old-timers, like Mr. and Mrs. Schultz, remember the origins of Webster and the bank.

The Hazelwood Creamery or Skimmery

Early creameries were special places where the whole milk was brought for separating the cream from it. Most of the skim milk was fed to the hogs, though some was processed as dried milk, as was some of the whole milk. The smaller skimmeries would then send the cream to larger creameries where it was churned into butter, or again the milk skimmed or whole was processed into cheese, or powdered milk. One such very successful creamery was that at Webster, which at one time employed a good number of workers. The first skimmery in Hazelwood, built of wood, was just across from McCabe's place. Later it was enlarged and rebuilt of brick. When James McCabe's frame house burned, he remodeled the first frame skimmery into a satisfactory home for his wife and himself, as his children were now grown and gone, it was here that he died. His wife then moved to Lonsdale where she lived with a daughter. The brick skimmery developed into a substantial business. A high brick smokestack was built, which stood long after the skimmery was abandoned. In 1965, it was torn down and the brick building now standing "kitty-corner" from the McCabe place, is today used as a garage.

The Triple Death by Lightning

Lawrence McLoughlin owned no land but hired out to the neighboring farms for a living. His log house stood on the curve west of Joseph Stanton's place where Hanson is today. In 1885, during a fierce thunderstorm, Mrs. McLoughlin was seated before the cast iron stove and its open oven, holding her baby in her arms. Her husband sat on a chair beside the stove, smoking his pipe, and two young sons were resting on a blanket in a corner of the cabin. Lightning struck the chimney and followed the metal stove pipe through the stove and out of the oven door, striking the mother and killing her instantly. The baby was burned and stunned, but not killed. Mr. McLoughlin yelled, "I'm kilt!" His pipe had been knocked out of his mouth, but he was unhurt. But the two little boys in the corner of the room had also been struck and killed. The baby was retarded from then on and could never learn to read, though he was quite sturdy and of good disposition. When Father Kenny became pastor of Northfield, he came to see the family. He arranged to have the boy come to Northfield on foot for a series of lessons which Father gave him by rote. Satisfied that the now twelve-year-old boy knew the essentials, he had him make his First Holy Communion. The boy grew up but never married. He remained shy and retiring and whenever there was a thunderstorm, he would cringe and hide. However, he was a good workman and of gentle disposition.

James Leahy's Tragic Death

The day before Christmas, in 1899, Mr. and Mrs. James Leahy took their children to Confession in preparation for the Feast. The weather was cold but, since there was practically no snow on the ground, no sleighs could be used. So, on Christmas morning the children came in the family buggy pulled by a trusty horse driven by one of the older boys. As there was insufficient room in the buggy for the whole family, the father and mother came in a two-wheel sulky, driving a young and very spirited horse before them. Other horses were tied to trees or under the horse shelter in the clearing across the road from the church, while the people were attending Mass. As was customary after Mass, the parishioners visited at the church door and exchanged Christmas greetings. Then, as some people gradually left for home, the young horse, seeing other horses and vehicles leaving, became very nervous and high strung. Mr. Leahy barely succeeded in untying him and getting into the sulky next to his wife. Then the horse made a lunge forward, took the bit in his teeth and streaked down the road at an alarming speed. All the driver's efforts to slow him were of no avail. They suddenly came up behind another vehicle and the young horse, determined to pass it, swung to the edge of the narrow road. Immediately the outside wheel of the cart went into the ditch, the sulky tipped over and the riders were thrown out. Mr. Leahy was thrown out, but did not suffer serious injury.

Parishioners brought Mr. Leahy to his home where his grandson, Joseph Leahy, lives today, but he never regained consciousness. It was very sad for the family and for the entire parish, for he was held in high esteem. He was buried in the parish cemetery after the funeral Mass sung by Father Kenny. That same winter his oldest son, Daniel, had gone to the lumber camps of Wisconsin to earn some money and help his family. Every effort was made to notify him of his father's death. Telephones did not exist and the telegraph service was very limited, but still he got the terrible news and rushed home without even changing his lumberjack clothes He arrived during the funeral Mass and not having had a chance to see his father in the coffin, he told Father Kenny. Father Kenny after Mass directed the undertaker to open the coffin in the church. The poor boy broke down at the sight of his father and wept

aloud without shame. Then, bending over the coffin, he kissed him on the forehead. The entire congregation was moved to tears. It was strong proof of the esteem in which this father was held not only by his immediate family, but by the entire community. One daughter, Mrs. Gruber, still lives in a nursing home in Faribault and a grandson, Joseph, lives on the homestead.

Lightning Strikes the Hazelwood Church

About mid-July, about 3 P.M. in the afternoon, lightning struck the old church during a fierce thunderstorm. The church had been built entirely of wood, so the fire spread very rapidly. There was no water near the church, as it was built on a high hill; the nearest supply was some 600 feet away, in the Linberg creek. By the time the farmers came from their homes and provided themselves with buckets and finally water, the flames were so widespread that it was beyond control. The church burned to the ground. The only object saved was the bell in the tower that somehow had escaped any damage either from the crashing of the tower or even the flames. Fortunately the parish had a recreation hall across the road where Divine Services were held for almost a year during the construction of the new church.

Patrick Mahoney's Funeral

One of the strange events that took place at Hazelwood was the supposed funeral of Pat Mahoney, a resident who had been working on construction in the Cities. He was reported to have fallen from a high scaffold and to have been killed. The authorities were notified by the contractor and the supposed body of Pat Mahoney was duty embalmed. The relatives in Hazelwood were notified and the body was transferred to Hazelwood to the Mahoney's residence and preparations made for the wake. People began to arrive and offer their condolences and pray beside the coffin and mourn his sad death. Then an eccentric old lady -- whom everyone nicknamed "four-eyes" because of the heavy, glasses she wore on the end of her nose - also came up and, after an intense scrutiny of Pat's face, she exclaimed, "That ain't Pat Mahoney!" Everybody laughed and poked fun at her and her "storm windows". The next morning the funeral Mass was said followed by burial with prayers at the grave side.

Three days later word came that the man was not Mahoney, but a man from Wisconsin! The contractor had given the officials the wrong name, so convinced was he that the man who had fallen was indeed Pat Mahoney. The body was exhumed and the coffin opened and the relatives of the man from Wisconsin positively identified him as their relative, so they took the body to Wisconsin and the empty grave was refilled. It so happened that on the very day of the supposed funeral, a man from this area who also knew Pat very well, happened to see Pat on a streetcar in St. Paul and said to him, "Don't you know that you're supposed to be at your own funeral today in Hazelwood?" Pat thought this was a pretty strong practical joke, so the next day he made the trip down to Hazelwood to see what this was all about and to prove to his relatives and friends that he was still very much alive!

Hazelwood, Origin of Religious Family

The present farm on which John Stanton lives had originally belonged to Joseph Gear and then to his son, Bernard Gear. One of Bernard's daughters fell in love with a young mar, named John Ryan, front Lakeville, who worked for them as a farm hand. The couple continued to stay with the Gears, who were getting along in Nears, and operated the farm for them for a reasonable compensation until Mr. and Mrs. Gear passed away and they inherited the farm. The Ryans had quite a large family and he evidently felt that he could support them better with, a good job offered him in St. Paul in a lumber and coal yard. It may be, too, that being religious-minded they hoped to give their children a Catholic school education. At any rate, he sold his farm and moved into St. Vincent's parish in St. Paul, where there was a good Catholic school with Sisters who, in those days, were the epitome of orthodoxy and dedication.

Two of the sons became priests of the Archdiocese of St. Paul. Father George, after years of parish experience as assistant and pastor, was honored by being named rector of the St. Paul Cathedral. He proved to be an excellent organizer, financier, and superintendent of the Cathedral School. He also helped design and arrange for the superb candelabra hanging from the very center of the dome and lighting the main body of the huge church. His brother, John Ryan, likewise after pastoral experience, was entrusted with the delicate and difficult task of organizing the new parish of St. Pascal, near east 3rd Street and White Bear Avenue. He began by having Holy Mass in a Quonset hut, which he later remodeled into a Sisters' Convent while building the school. The parish grew rapidly and, after building a large basement church which was used for some years in place of a school auditorium,

he completed and enlarged the school, built the sisters' home and a suitable rectory. He died not too many years after the beautiful buildings were dedicated.

Another brother, Michael Emmet, between Msgr., George and Father John, also decided to dedicate his life to God. After completing his studies he joined the Diocese of Great Falls, Montana. He had attended Nazareth Hall and the St. Paul Seminary, and then continued his studies at the Seminary in Denver. He was ordained by the Bishop of Great Falls. He was an assistant in Sidney and later appointed pastor at Malta, Montana, for many years. He was not a healthy man and, while on a visit to his sister in the mid-west, he died of a heart attack at the age of 46.

The oldest member of this wonderful family, a girl, joined the Sisters of Mercy in Aurora, Illinois, in 1935, as a hospital aide. She served in this capacity most of her religious life and died in 1963.

Another Priest from Hazelwood and Annunciation Parish

Father Patrick Kenny's parents were among the early pioneers of this parish. Their claim was on the road between the present Robert Brodrick place and Hwy. 19 to the west of Little Chicago. After studying at the then new St. Thomas College and the recently dedicated St. Paul Seminary, he was ordained by Archbishop Ireland. He served for a number of years as assistant in several parishes of the Archdiocese and finally was named pastor of St. Dominic's in Northfield, where he did excellent work from 1894 until 1910.

On one occasion, when Archbishop Ireland was giving Confirmation in Hazelwood, the Archbishop asked if there had ever been a priest from Annunciation parish. Father Kenny, who was in the sanctuary, raised his hand. The Archbishop paid him a compliment by remarking that, since Annunciation had furnished such a fine priest, no doubt it would be a long time before it could provide another. Well, he was only partly right, for later on our parish could truthfully say that the Ryan brothers, the priests, as well as a Sister, got their start in this parish.

Sisters from Annunciation Parish

Among the fine group of Sisters who came from Annunciation parish, we can mention the daughter of John Ryan who was born and raised here up to the time the family moved to St. Paul. She became a Sister of St. Joseph, for they had been her teachers at St. Vincent's and they were most edifying in those days.

Another girl, Johanna Taylor, the daughter of Martin, was born in Section 21 a little east of the north end of Union Lake, and the very first permanent settler in Webster Township. She was, therefore, the first vocation from our parish. She had been a school teacher for a number of years and came in contact with the Dominican Sisters who had recently begun teaching in Faribault. So she joined them and made her novitiate at Sinsinawa, Wisconsin, the Mother House.

Alice Hendricks, the daughter of Patrick Hendricks (who lived where William Tuma lives today), also entered the convent and was a faithful, devoted religious.

Alice Finn, the daughter of James Finn, who lived on the Waterford Road, also joined the Sisters.

Bertha McCabe, one of the daughters of James McCabe, our great benefactor, was one of the earliest vocations from our parish after Miss Taylor. For some years she had been organist in our parish. She was the youngest daughter of Mr. McCabe. When she was 40, and not having married, she decided to enter the convent. She joined the Servites of Mary at Ladysmith, Wisconsin, since they readily made exceptions to age.

Sister Jacob was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Nerud, early pioneers who had their claim north of where John Rowan is today. Miss Nerud lived on the farm with her parents until she decided to become a Sister and joined the Dominicans of Sinsinawa, Wisconsin.

Nearer our present time is Madonna Stanton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Stanton. She took the name of Sister Loriann, whom we have the pleasure to see on her home visits.

Likewise, Sister Francette, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Malecha, joined the Sisters of Notre Dame of Mankato and edifies the congregation on her home visits by faithfully wearing the Habit.

And, finally, another older Sister, likewise faithful to the Religious Habit, is Sister Leanore, daughter of Michael and Mrs. Stanton and sister of William and John Stanton of our parish.

Considering its size, and no doubt due to the prayerful habits of these staunch Catholic families, God has indeed blessed Annunciation parish with a generous number of vocations to the Sisterhood. In fact, not one Sister from this parish has left her calling in spite of the turmoil and confusion since Vatican II and the number of Sisters from their own Orders who have returned to the world.

War Veterans of Annunciation Parish

Patrick Tierney was a veteran of the Civil War, 1861-64. He joined the Minnesota Regiment at Fort Snelling when Lincoln called for volunteers and served on many battlefields and endured many hardships before returning home safely. He spent the rest of his life in this area and when he died received the honors of a Solemn Requiem Mass and Military Burial in our cemetery. Each Decoration Day his grave, together with all the other veterans, is decorated with the Flag. Other Civil War veterans from Hazelwood were: Patrick Kennedy, Thomas Walsh, John Simon, Jacob Simon, Thomas Rush, and Morris Tracy.

William Finn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Finn, was a veteran of the Spanish-American War, in 1898. Not long after his safe return he moved to Seattle, Washington.

The Veterans of World War I, 1914-1918 were Thomas and Fred Hennessy, Frank and Steve Gleason, Frank Maguire, Daniel Brodrick and George Leahy. George Leahy contracted pneumonia during the crossing to England where he died. He was buried there and his body was shipped back after the war for re-burial in the family lot. Also the three Mulligan brothers, Earl, Bloss and Emmit, were all in the Army.

The Veterans of World War II, 1941-1945 were Dominic Blesener, Albert Lewandowski, Francis Brodrick, Louis Berry, William Pelant, Donald Docken, Luke Rowan, and the three Tupy brothers, Henry, Milo and Ray. All served in the army. In the Navy were the three Skluzacek brothers, William, Jake and Daniel, as well as Frank Rezac. The only one badly wounded was Francis Brodrick, who received a severe facial wound. It healed but left a permanent scar.

The Veterans of the Korean War, 1950-1953 were Eugene Malecha, Darrell Oppegard, Robert Valek, Ernest Valek (Navy), Francis Cihak, and William Tuma, Jr. These servicemen all returned home safely but about a year later, on Oct. 25, 1954, Darrell Oppegard met with a tragic death in a car accident. He was the son of the present Mrs. William Dupay, Sr., by a previous marriage.

The only veteran on record for the Vietnam War, 1966-1972 was Joseph Stanton, son of John Stanton now living near his father's farm. One other boy went in for a time but upon returning home on furlough, went A.W.O.L., despite his excellent upbringing.

It is evident from this imposing list of servicemen from this small parish that the love of God and Country is strong here. We are, and will continue to be, exceedingly proud of them - both the living and the dead!

The Great Wall of Hazelwood

In the early 1920s, the head of the Department of Highways in Minnesota was a Mr. Babcock. He took tremendous interest in improving the roads of Minnesota, for even then the automobile as an assured means of travel was an established fact. He dreamed of developing an extensive system of Trunk Highways to every section of the State. To help finance this gigantic project - for this meant improving miles and miles of roads, some of which in those days, were hardly passable - he got the State Legislature and the Governor to pass the first gasoline tax to augment State Highway funds.

One of the longest and most important of Mr. Babcock's Trunk Highways was Highway 65, also known as Lyndale, extending from near the Canadian Border to the northwest of Hibbing, and down through Cambridge, Minneapolis, south to Faribault and down to the Iowa border. Through Webster Township, Highway 65 followed the old Dodd Road, passing just in front of our church. Close observation shows that the high elevation in front the church originally extended straight across into the woods. This meant that, in the old days, there was a very steep drop in the old road - from the north line of our church property - to the Linberg land below, and the bridge crossing Chub Creek.

A deep cut was made for the new improved road at this point, i.e., as much as 20 feet at the deepest. This made the grade from top to bottom very manageable for the automobiles even of the 1920's, but to avoid a land slide from the bank in front of the church, a huge concrete retaining wall was built, almost 150 feet long and 12 feet high. It was slightly bowed and deeply anchored. The cut had been made with a steam shovel and horse-drawn scrapers and wagons, not to mention a great deal of hand-shoveling. Although built in 1923, the old wall still stands without a crack. It enables us to have a nice level parking area in front of the church right up to the wall, or rather to the row of huge bridlewreath bushes that grow along the top of the "Great Wall of Hazelwood."

The Sunday There Was a Priest But No Mass!

One Saturday in the spring of 1933, Father Mead, pastor of Northfield, telephoned Father Domestici, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Faribault, to ask if his assistant, Father Durand could come and offer Holy Mass at Hazelwood, as his own assistant, Father Lawler, was ill. Father Durand would say the early Sunday Mass at Faribault, and still have plenty of time to drive to Hazelwood and say a second Mass at 10:00 A.M. Promptly, therefore, Father Durand left Faribault with an altar boy, about 9:00 A.M., arriving at Annunciation church about 9:30. He met a gentleman who unlocked the church, and going into the sacristy he looked about for the things he would need, i.e., vestments, linens, candles, etc., for the Mass. But search as he might, he found no wine nor altar breads. He inquired from the janitor where the priest kept these things. The answer was that the priest who came from Northfield always brought them along and they were never left at Hazelwood.

Father Mead had never mentioned anything that the visiting priest was to take along, and this was Father Durand's first experience saying Mass in a Mission Church, as he had been ordained only a few years before. There was only one thing to do, and that was to send the Janitor to Northfield for the wine and altar breads. Father Durand explained that he had a good half-hour to get to Northfield and back but that in order to give him more time; he would give his sermon at the beginning of Mass, which would mean about fifteen minutes extra. Obviously disturbed, the poor man left. Father Durand had the altar boy ring the bell at 10:00and went into tile sanctuary to explain what had happened though feeling sure that after the sermon the required elements would be available. He even prolonged his sermon several minutes more, but still heard no one coming into the sacristy. He therefore announced that there evidently was some delay, so he would lead the people in the recitation of the Rosary. All five decades were recited without haste, and yet no janitor and no altar breads. So the priest did the only thing left to do. He announced that, since they had come with the intention of assisting at Holy Mass and as no Mass was possible, they had fulfilled their duty and could return home with a clear conscience. Then, while removing his vestments in the sacristy, the janitor arrived shamefaced and confused. "Father," he said, "when I got to the church, Father Mead was already saying his Mass and I could not find the housekeeper, so I knelt in the doorway of the sacristy and waited and waited until I knew it was far too late to have Mass here, so I left and came home." "You did your best," Father Durand told him, "and the people did their duty."

Little did the young priest imagine that just forty years later he would be the pastor of Hazelwood and would offer Holy Mass here each day!

