

stretching away in every direction."

Three massive oak doors provided the entrance from Ninth Avenue, along which the trolley cars ran. The massive brick structure, built on Anamosa limestone (from which city the limestone was taken, so far they had to go for the best rock), was built on two levels. St. Edward's Chapel was on the basement floor, with a furnace and storage area in the back. It was common practice back then to have "winter chapels" — and the lower floor provided that area. Entrance inside the building to the main body of the church on the upper level was by a left and right stairway to a vestibule — which steps are easier nowadays by an elevator put in a number of years ago for the elderly and handicapped. The woodwork dividing the vestibule from the interior church is done in massive "quarter-sawed" red oak panels with accompanying doors. The portions of the woodwork and doors are "generous". Nothing was spared in expense. The church interior is massive, with good vaulting design and no interior pillars to hold up the high ceiling. This interior is 60 feet by 100 feet in size, with the ceiling at over 46 feet high. There were put in six rows of pews (which still remain), being 185 in number, with a seating capacity of 1000 people. Back then, the pastor felt another 1000 could be packed into the church although nowadays the present pastor will admit only 886 people can fit in. The pews are made of oak, with cherry ends. There are also numerous stained glassed windows, starting with the big window on the south end of the church, being both painted and of actual sainted glass. The figures are mainly of Bible characters and to the initiated, the interior plays of sunlight was back then impressive. Woodwork along the sides of the interior room is excellent yet, it having been highly polished long ago, with wainscoting of hard pine and oak. The vestry in the back is 20 by 24 feet in size. There is a matching vestry on the northwest side for altar boys, although there is another vestry at present in the basement area for clergy. There used to be a beautiful oak (hardwood) communion railing across the sanctuary

with matching altars. Within the sanctuary area itself, there remains the vaulting arching of the ceiling, 46 feet distant. In the construction of these arches there were used 16 barrels of stucco, 28 barrels of lime, and 65 barrels of water. Seventy-five barrels of stucco was necessary to do all the stucco work. The work itself, done by skilled men, was performed by a gentleman of Chicago and J. Q. Jefferies and Patrick Williams of Clinton. The Clinton Herald called this work a "lasting monument to their skill."

For the ceiling work itself in the main body of church, the construction of it required 80,000 feet of lumber, with the scaffolding in place for two years in supporting tire roof. The huge trusses were made of inch-boards 16 inches wide, strongly bolted together, and which rested on the foundation. The Herald stated that the trusses connected at the top and were "believed to be strong enough to support a locomotive at any place on the roof, although an engine will not be put there as a test!" At the time of the dedication, at the top-most of the scaffold, one could touch the panels of the ceiling with the hand, these panels to be finished with a hard surface and frescoed with attractive figures and beautiful liturgical designs. Of course, that was back then in the usual decorative ceiling and wall painting. Now it's all white-washed over, plain to behold. The same destruction has happened to the winter chapel, then 55 feet by 60 feet in size, with a 14-foot ceiling. Back then it had three altars, the ceiling of the room finished off in hard pine, supported by six iron columns 1200 pounds each in weight. Also back then there was a furnace and a steam generator in the basement, for heating the church by steam radiators. In the northwest corner of the basement was a vault prepared for the remains of E. J.'s older brother, P. V., which until 1888 laid under the old St. Mary's Church floor.

For the immediate architect on the spot, L. J. Carter of Denison, Iowa, he was considered to have great skill and extended experience, having just finished a church at Center Grove and six other prominent edifices in

the states. After St. Mary's, he had plans to leave Clinton to begin another church at Marshalltown in the summer of 1888. For the total brick work, he estimated 800,000 bricks would be required. As of mid-March 1888, only 3300 were left, broken pieces and all. The HERALD added: "His other estimates and calculations have been as flattering to his skill, and the parishioners here seem not capable of expressing their appreciation of his work for them."

As for smaller matters in the building, the gas and water fittings were furnished and put in place by George Kendall and Co., of Clinton. Everyone was satisfied with their work. Much of the fine woodwork and all of it that was made out of the building was constructed by Curtis Brothers and Company of Clinton, one of the more prominent lumber barons. The cost of the overall work, some \$60,000. For the stained-glass windows, the number came 105 with a few plain. That combined with the cost of the frescoing cost nearly \$5000, on contract with the St. Louis French Silvering and Ornamental Glass Company. One kind of the stained glass cost some 50 cents a pound and the cost was sometimes doubled by about half of the glass with the waste in cutting. The cutter was represented in Clinton by the firm of Charles F. Petherick who personally supervised the work. The windows, as usual in that time, were donated by parishioners with their name inscribed in the bottom pane of each window. For those poorer people who could not afford to give money to this monumental project, these were the actual workers on the big building. And there were a lot of these people. This in turn presented another problem in the actual construction of the building. Namely: the work was never completed.

With a church 78 feet wide and 167 deep it had to have a high belfry and steeple. The latter was never completed. The belfry remains today with only a modern cross atop it, braced against the wind. The stone in the belfry is of molded concrete blocks (as also) the former chimney in the back of the church). The height of the belfry is about 90 feet...and today it looks

truncated. The story of the missing spire is due to the Bishop of Dubuque's usual erratic actions in regards to certain parishes in the Diocese. Hennessy, just when the bulk of the work should have been completed, split the parish, saying it was too big, too many parishioners. In 1889 he started a second parish in the then-northern section of Clinton, calling it St. Patrick's (which will be the final story in this series). The people in that section town wanted to stay with St. Mary's, with a new

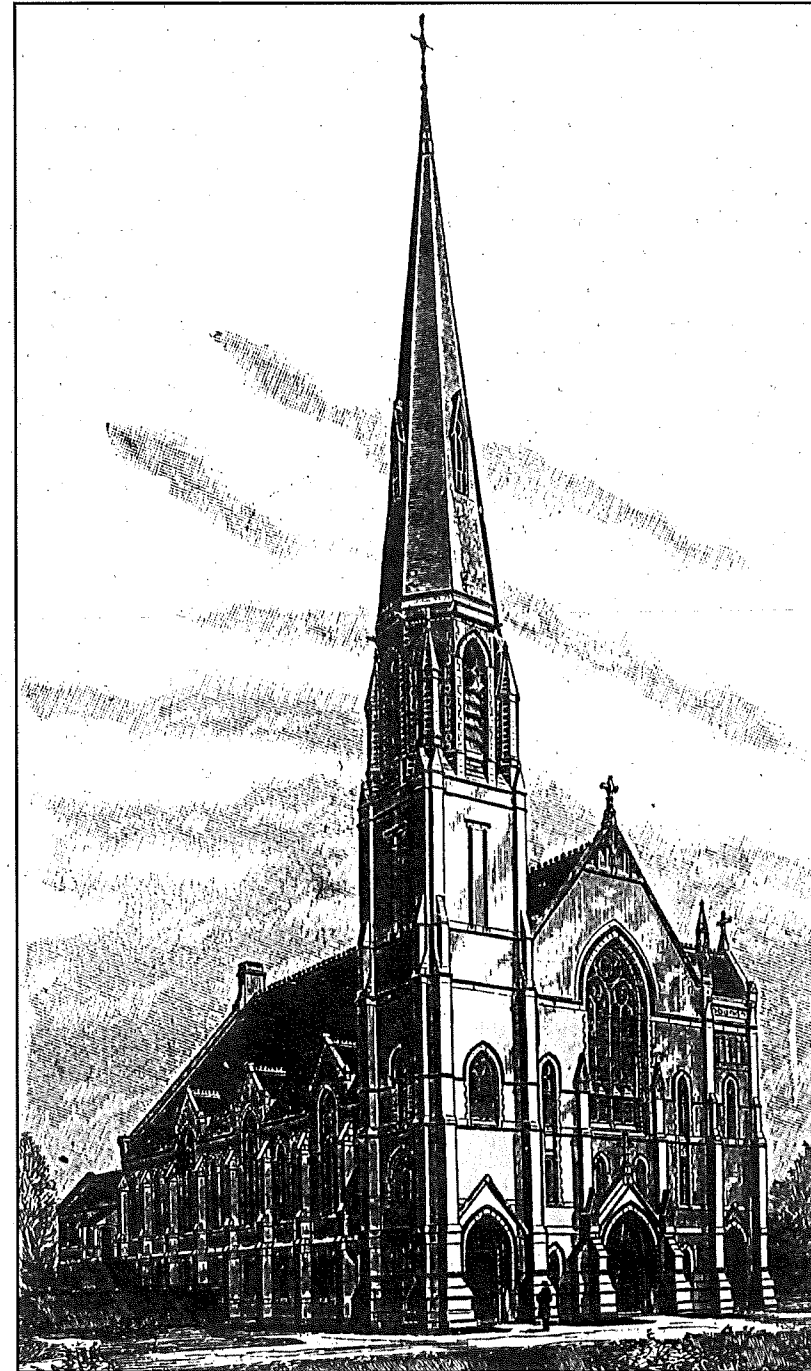
building they had just worked very hard on. The Bishop insisted on a second parish in Clinton. That set finally in motion, when the people were forced to agree with his decision, the exodus of much needed manpower and money to complete the final finishing details of St. Mary's building. Even worse, the next year, the German Catholics in the parish decided they too wanted their own parish, no longer interested in belonging to just an Irish Church. Thus, Sacred Heart Parish was dedi-

cated in 1891, in the original location of the first St. Mary's, then called Holy Family. In short, Fr. McLaughlin lost half of his parishioners and his church was never completed: there was no one left to finish the steeple.

However, within the building, work was completed and some of the most magnificent liturgical ceremonies were held over the coming decades — impressive ceremonies which fit with the inner construction of the church. Then came Vatican II...and the interior was unwisely renovated. The high altars were ripped out, St. Edward's Chapel equally destroyed — all the old liturgical furniture was removed. The lower chapel 30 years ago was made into "corn crib" Twenty years ago the beautiful wooden doors were replaced for glass doors. Then an interior elevator was installed while fortunately the beautiful wide wooden staircases were left alone. A small handicapped ramp was also installed through a small side door, so the front of the church was not further disturbed. As for regular maintenance improvements, these were the usual: window covers were replaced 10 years ago. The new roof of asphalt done five years ago. Tuck pointing 10 years ago. Electricity and new wiring was completely redone when it was noticed that the old lights were defective about 1986. The heating unit was transferred to the old grade school, so that the former furnace room is now storage with an added classroom for lectures. As for the rectory, since it was built about the time of the church, it has been preserved and restored properly, although all the old antique furniture was sold off 20 years ago.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

While the pastor of St. Mary's, the Rev. E. J. McLaughlin (later Monsignor) was a prominent churchman in the State of Iowa — and hence his parish was only second in importance after the cathedral of the diocese — his domination of Clinton Catholic life had a dark side. This is the historical significance of what the man



*This is how the original brick church of St. Mary's, then labeled "cathedral", was to look with the completed tall spire.
Print Courtesy Clinton Cty. Historical Society*

put into the building and which remains today.

The troubles began with his older brother, the Rev. P. V. McLaughlin, who was sent to Clinton as the new pastor of Holy Family (which the pioneer priest, Father F. C. Jean founded in 1865). When P. V. arrived in 1867, he did not get along with the older French priest who lived in the North End, then called Lyons. The problem was that the older French clergy, brought in under the Frenchman, Bishop Matthias Loras before the Civil War and continued by his successor, Bishop Smyth, were to be replaced now by Irish clergy, the new Bishop of Dubuque's "mafia". Jean would soon fall victim to a conspiracy headed by Bishop John Hennessey and which McLaughlin would take part in, to the extent that when Jean was removed in the spring of 1872, P. V. would become temporary pastor of St. Irenaeus until another Irish priest, W. W. Dunn would be sent in to take full control.

The consequences of such high-handed methods of removal of a popular pastor of many years, in fact, the pioneer priest, were tragic for the entire parish life in Clinton — and eventually to the Midwestern United States. Before Jean was forcibly ousted from his church by mid-spring of 1872, he did a "cursing" from the pulpit upon the people in the parish and elsewhere who conspired against him. This included priests whom he pronounced would soon die tragic deaths (as also laymen) in God's retribution for the injustices done. The Rev. P. V. McLaughlin would soon fall victim to Jean's curse (as some would see it).

While St. Mary's people and pastor sought to dominate parish life in Clinton (over and above St. Irenaeus in Lyons — which rivalry continues today), in 1879 P. V. took a little vacation to California on the new trans-continental railroad. On his way home, he became very ill, presumably with pneumonia, and died in agony. To protest Jean's cursing, the St. Mary's people retaliated by proclaiming P. V. a holy priest indeed and buried him in the second frame church (built by him) which was a few blocks south of the first frame church Jean

built for them.

Hennessey, in retaliation to Jean's continuing vendetta (of prayers and preaching) then sent P. V.'s younger brother (and close friend to the bishop, also a native of Dubuque) the Rev. E. J. McLaughlin to take the deceased brother's place. The feud continued between St. Irenaeus and St. Mary's — Jean's versus McLaughlin's territory. And the whole town looked on. By 1887 McLaughlin, after nearing the completion of the building of the third St. Mary's, got involved in local politics. But then, Jean, too, didn't remain silent either.

The issue was over the rights of the working men to form unions and to have higher wages and better working conditions. Many of these men joined a labor federation called the Knights of Labor. McLaughlin, ever class conscious in being with the moneyed people, opposed the Knights of Labor (even though the Church the United States supported the rights of the working people, etc.). Father Jean was on the opposite side, often attending the meetings of the Knights in Lyons, sympathetic with their grievances — and even to that extent of attending Oddfellow meetings — wherever workingmen gathered.

Among the people in town who knew of Father Jean's various positions, let alone his legal disputes with the Bishop of Dubuque was a local Freemason and lawyer, Henry F. Bowers. He was also a firm supporter of the Knights of Labor. While the Clinton Herald and other newspapers railed against the Knights and their leaders as being anarchists and socialists, the major of Clinton, Arnold Walliker, was a member of the Knights of Labor. And Henry Bowers was his close associate. Because of the prominence of the lumber mills in Clinton at that time (owned by what were called the "lumber barons"), there was an abundance of working men and they created a good seat of power for the Knights of Labor to rely upon. Henry Bowers just wasn't an associate of Walliker; he was also a very good and close friend.

Two nights before the election, on Saturday evening, March 5, 1887,

there was a meeting of working men at the German Hall, one block north of the Universalist Church (called "Murray Church" — which would soon be a meeting place for the followers of Bowers in his newly-created American Protective Association). With Walliker running for mayor again, Bowers gave the introductory speech. For him to show his support of the working man, he walked on the podium in a white shirt, that is without a coat, to the jeers or cheers of the people gathered. Then Walliker spoke, in which the Clinton Herald the next day called "That Speech". It was an all-out drive to win.

But there was an opposition and not just in the newspapers. The pastor of St. Mary's Church the next morning from the pulpit gave a stinging denunciation of the Knights of Labor — and hence of Walliker. Enough people read it as a vote against Walliker in that Catholic part of Clinton. And Walliker lost the election, with Bowers extremely angry at McLaughlin's religiosity interfering with city politics. Bowers based his reaction on the loss of votes in the fourth ward which was in the St. Mary's area of town.

To repeat: the irreparable damage of McLaughlin against Major Walliker was irrefutable and from a historical standpoint, wrong — especially since one month before the Clinton election, Pope Leo XIII in Rome had spoken favorably on the Knights of Labor in the United States. Furthermore, this was considerable prestige for James Cardinal Gibbons, head churchmen in the United States, who had favored the Knights all along — and his influence was vast.

With the accompanying loss of votes on the following Monday after that fiery Sunday sermon, other supporters of Walliker also viewed McLaughlin's denunciation as "undue influence" on electoral politics. But humanly speaking they must have also felt a stinging act of betrayal by the Catholic Church upon the laboring man. The defeat must have been especially humiliating to a man as righteous as Henry Bowers, who undoubtedly now knew how Father Jean felt about the

CHAPTER III

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Clinton, Iowa Clinton County

ARCHITECTURAL

There were two previous churches to the present brick structure of St. Mary's near downtown Clinton. Started in 1865, the first building, built by Father F. C. Jean, pastor of St. Irenaeus Church in north Clinton (then called Lyons) was a frame structure, on Fourth and Fourth Streets. In a few years a new pastor was sent to Clinton, and he erected a larger frame structure a few blocks to the south. The original name of St. Mary's was Holy Family. The first resident pastor, the Rev. P. V. McLaughlin, named his new wooden Church St. Mary's.

By 1884, the building was inadequate for the needs of a fast-growing parish, even though the structure held about 1000 people. The city was growing, thanks to the lumber mills, plus there was growing wealth in the city, which required a more substantial building. A hilltop several blocks to the southwest was chosen by the successor of P. V. McLaughlin, his younger brother, the Rev. E. J. McLaughlin. The older brother died in 1879 — and as noteworthy as St. Mary's Parish was to the Bishop of Dubuque, an exceptionable pastor was sent to carry on the work of better organizing the parish.

In fact, E. J. McLaughlin became so well known around the state of Iowa that when the building project began in 1884, he chose "Chicago's Best Architect": J. J. Egan, who became quickly one of the best church builders in the United States. Egan had just achieved renown in San Francisco for building the great cathedral of St. Mary's. Having just returned to the Midwest, McLaughlin hired him for his church in Clinton. Egan had a style all his own in building, especially large, cathedral-like structures — especially in topping

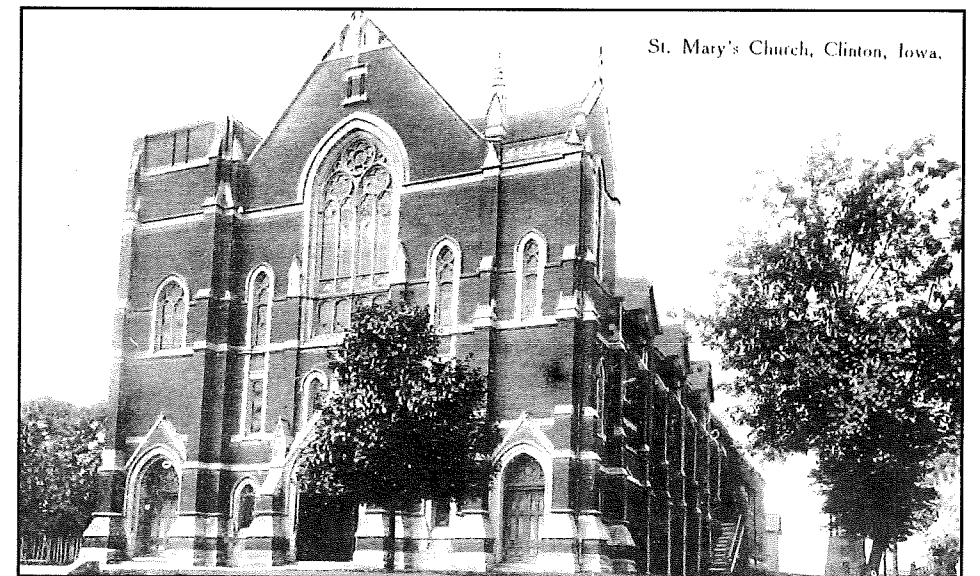
them off with a unique form of a very tall spire. Present-day examples are still seen in the cathedral he built for the Diocese of Davenport, Sacred Heart — and with Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago. Unfortunately, his best building, St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco burned down three decades ago, to the anguish not just of the Catholic world but of the architectural world in the United States. Egan also built several other churches in Iowa as St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines, St. Paul's in Burlington, and St. Francis de Sales in Keokuk. The increasing tragedy of Egan's churches is that his three remaining churches in Iowa all face demolition in one way or another.

The laying of the cornerstone for St. Mary's in mid-August 1884 was a major event in the city and people with clergy came in from all over, as well as the Bishop from Dubuque. The stone laid was a plane block, about two feet square by two and a half feet long. In a hole cut in the center of the stone were deposited copies of the city papers, a brief description of accompanying ceremonies, a

short history of the church, and other papers.

Fittingly, all the materials put into the cornerstone were laid inside a copper box. The Bishop, fully vested, used a small steel trowel set in ebony handle, spread a portion of the mortar, and then anointed the stone with Holy Water, as was the usual custom of blessing such, a stone. It then fit snugly in the place hollowed in the center of the stone for its reception.

The work then began in earnest on the massive brick structure soon to be called "A Grand Edifice" by the Clinton Herald four years later. While J. J. Egan was the main architect, the secondary architect was L. J. Carter of Denison, Iowa, who was well known in the state for a number of other churches built. Helping him with the fundamental work was J. E. Mooney of the firm Scanlan and Mooney. As the Clinton Herald said: "One cannot help admiring the taste shown by those who selected the site, for there the structure stands, an imposing pile of masonry, on a rock foundation, elevated so that, while on the ground, the city can be seen



From a postcard picture of St. Mary's, about 1910. Photo Courtesy Clinton Cty. Historical Society

maining Irish friends for reinterment in St. Irenaeus' Cemetery. The location has since remained secret. The A.P.A. got into the act as well by interfering with St. Boniface parish life by going after Father Schulte with a vengeance for having dared to say the funeral Mass. Soon accounts also surfaced of Jean's body having been dug up by the A.P.A. at the German cemetery in order to destroy it, leaving only the outer coffin in the ground (which the Irish later dug up for St. Irenaeus Cemetery).

While Father Jean had been controversial in life, even more heated were arguments over him in death. By 1897, John Lee's old blacksmith shop on the north side of Pearl Street was transferred to the south side, caddy-corner St. Boniface's block. John wanted it next to his house. After a few years, he wanted to retire and sold the property to John Tancik, an Austrian immigrant in St. Boniface Parish. Tancik wanted to build a house on the new double lot. When the shop was being torn down, Tancik and Lee found Jean's old ledgers with writings in them plus other papers. Lee later took them over to the new pastor of St. Boniface, Fr.

Joseph Tritz. Now a new German priest knew the tragic story of Jean's life.

Lee died in 1904 — and Father Tritz kept Jean's secrets for another 20 years until a budding diocesan priest-historian showed up to research the A.P.A. in town. This was Father Griffith of St. Ambrose College in Davenport, for by now Clinton County had been transferred from the Archdiocese of Dubuque to the Diocese of Davenport. Griffith cared for the Jean papers over the next 50 years, though some of the documents and ledgers were eventually lost in the shuffle. One ledger and Griffith's personal notes from Tritz were finally given to the new pastor of St. Irenaeus about 1970, Father Bill O'Connor, who told this writer of them. Jean's story was now back in Lyons, with what papers remained.

The St. Boniface part of Jean's legacy was that those good Germans were there when Jean needed help — and Henry Bowers founder of the A.P.A. in 1887, respected them because unlike the Irish they stayed out of politics. While the present edifice of St. Boniface is beyond Jean's living years, the memories of German priests and people who helped this

Frenchman across the block are there: the pulpit Father Schulte preached Jean's funeral oration from is still inside the "new" St. Boniface, with all its ornate wood carvings of the Four Evangelists on preaching the Gospels. There are the Stations of the Cross which witnessed Jean's priestly crucifixion. And there is above all the memory of the priest who preserved Jean's personal papers: Joseph Tritz, the builder of the "new" St. Boniface — and in him Jean's presence is as much in this 1908 structure as in St. Irenaeus' original stones. And in death, they are together, for they are buried next to each other out at St. Boniface Cemetery.

Within these two buildings of St. Irenaeus and St. Boniface of Clinton County I hope to have effectively narrated the sacred legacy of Father Jean's contribution to being another "Christus" — and a hero to his people, as that of one who triumphed over everything even after the end came. His spirit lives on. And to this, not just St. Boniface Church but the parish remains a faithful witness — as the Psalm 88 says — like the moon forever in the sky.

McLaughlin's and St. Mary's domination attempts over the town. For vindication upon the fourth ward, the fall election of 1887 would bring Walliker and Bowers out of seclusion, speaking once again to the working men and by the March election of 1890, the voting strength of their new organization, the A.P.A. (organized on March 13, 1887) would be felt in Clinton. The candidate put forth in their ward won.

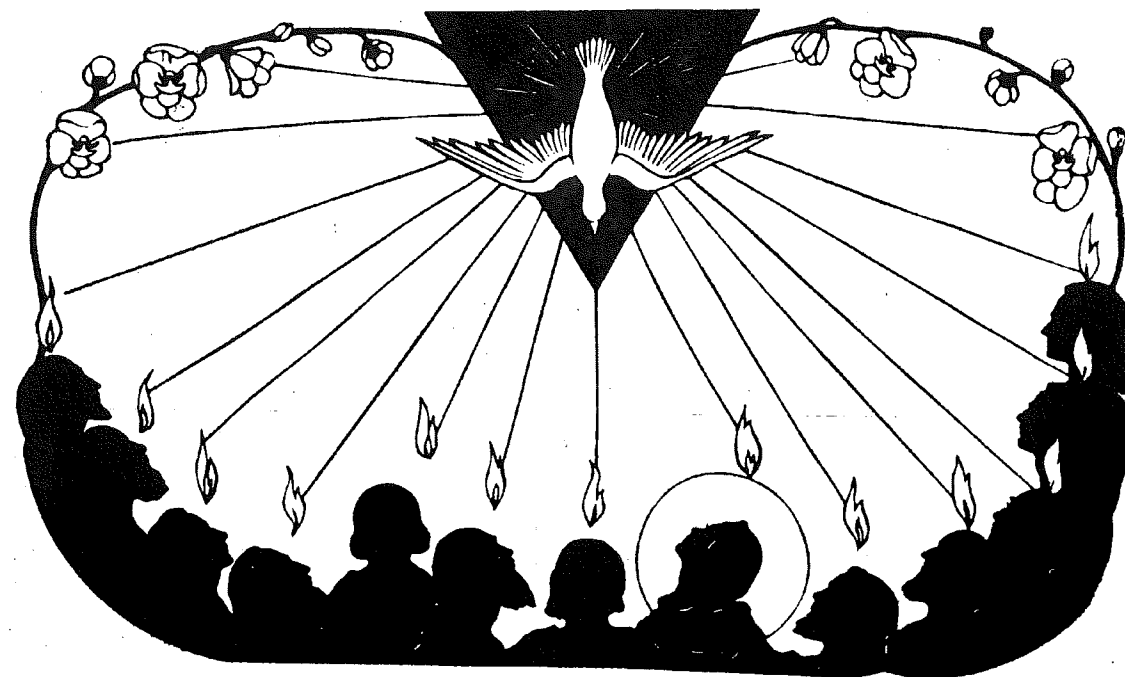
As the old Archbishop Beckman said in the later decades when head of the Dubuque Archdiocese, anticlericalism was caused by "bad" clerics. If Father Jean was viewed by some as "bad", McLaughlin was "worse". Thus Bowers felt he had to act promptly after that lost election and within a week organized his American Protective Association with

seven other men to put Catholic power in its place...that is, Irish Catholic power. The German Catholics he left alone in town.

The new St. Mary's was magnificent by the 1888 dedication when Bishop Hennessey showed up in all his glory — but perhaps another kind of justice was served in the next year when some of the wealthiest families in this Irish parish were forced by Hennessey into a second Irish parish in North Clinton, next to the up and coming new courthouse. The spire on the splendid structure of the architect Egan's other churches would never be completed on the one in Clinton. The shortened belfry would stand out against the city's skyline, a bit ungainly, as if something were wrong — that Jean's 1872 cursing would extend even into St.

Mary's bricks and mortar. And so it remains today, a short-shifted church.

Perhaps Henry Bowers rightly saw a mere facade of religion at St. Mary's — but Jean would see death in a few more years because of what McLaughlin brought on in that pulpit against the working man. In short, the real story of St. Mary's isn't really about architecture per se. It's about the consequences of such a building. McLaughlin had in fact turned against those men who carried his 800,000 bricks — but how much longer will this spireless church remain a testament of such upper-class strategies and decisions?



IN MEMORIUM

Msgr. Edward F. Jackson

1884 - 1960



(FOR SUCH A PRIEST AT ST. IRENAEUS)

The groves were God's first temples,
Ere man learned
To hew the shaft and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them —
ere He framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems — in the darkling wood,
Admist the cool and silence, he knelt down
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
And supplication.

hung down from the ceiling by a long line. It cost \$200 back then, a gift of the school children, who also gave another \$100 to the church back then. The lamp has since been relegated to the side of the sanctuary wall. Fortunately, it is still usable, at least as a decoration. Unlike many modernized Catholic Churches, St. Boniface still has its original communion rail in place, with the two center doors stored in the basement. The railing is marble-topped and in beautiful condition yet.

The only item destroyed in this old church are the two front gothic wooden doors and overhead placement. The pastor of a decade ago, who also threatened the existence of St. Irenaeus, removed the two front doors, saying they were rotten — put in new glass doors, to the dismay of the parishioners. The old doors are believed to have been burned.

The formal dedication of St. Boniface Church took place on November 27, 1908 — and frankly, when one steps into that church today, it's like walking into the past — especially in seeing the totally preserved great high altar, which remains untouched. That was installed on September 18, 1910, and is carved in typical high German Gothic fashion. The total height of the altar is 34 feet, the width is 16 feet. It is an original in detail, unlike other high altars around Dubuque's German churches. It is light in tint, finished and ornamented in dull and burnished gold ornamentation (which has never been painted over to this day). It has a revolving exposition tabernacle above the regular tabernacle. In the alcove above the tabernacle is a statue of the Sacred Heart pleading, with statues of Sts. Peter and Paul on either side. Above the apostles are two angels with trumpets, while high over all is the statue of the church's patron, St. Boniface. On either side of the altar are large adoring angels with candelabra (as two such larger angels with candelabra also flank the communion railing). There is also an angel on either side of the tabernacle. Below the statues of the apostles are receptacles for the relics, which are provided with curtains which hide them from view when the rubrics

require no relics to be exposed on the altar. The mensa, or altar table, is 10 feet in length. Below in the front of the altar is a full relief of "The Last Supper," by DaVinci. On either side appear the "Sacrifice of Abraham" and "Melchisedech." The six large candlesticks and crucifix to match, are of onyx and gold-plated. In addition there are 75 frosted incandescent lights (since replaced by new bulbs) that give a rich and beautiful effect to the altar (since Father Tritz was fascinated by electricity). The altar is the workmanship of B. Ferring, Chicago, who has over the years exhibited great skill in the art of altar building. He personally conducted the installing. The electric wires of the altar, as also of the entire church, back then were laid in conduit, as a safeguard against fire from defective wires. All wiring has since been modernized for further safety.

Over the years very few modifications have taken place inside or outside St. Boniface Church. Apart from the unfortunate front glass doors (which can be replaced), the church looks so historic it could speak. And it also believed to have been built as a direct rival to the architectural beauty of St. Irenaeus, the Irish church, just up the hill. A good rivalry remains between the churches today, as to which building is most beautiful and appropriate as a Temple of God and as a part of a true Sacred Heritage. St. Boniface Church is also eligible (D.O.E.) for the National Register of Historic Places.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

As noted previously in this narrative, the story of St. Boniface is tied in significantly with that of St. Irenaeus, its mother church — the connecting link being the French pioneer priest, Father F.C. Jean.

Since Jean spoke several languages, he cared for all the nationalities of Lyons and Clinton until the Germans in 1861 wanted their own traditional church. By 1890, it would be these German Catholics, who would come to the rescue of Father Jean's soul via their pastor and parish — and lastly, in their cemetery.

Because of his Austrian mother,

who gave Jean his first name (the germanic "Frederic") although he was born in a French farmhouse of a Napoleonic war veteran, Jean got along well with the Germans even though they quit on him when he wanted their manpower to build the new St. Irenaeus limestone church. Nonetheless, some of the Germans in the "new" St. Boniface Church did continue to contribute money and effort to St. Irenaeus' building as one good fellow, who donated the funds for the Holy Family circular window high up on St. Irenaeus' east facade.

But on Jean's conflict with Bishop Hennessey which continued throughout the 1870s and 1880s, some of Jean's Irish friends could no longer tolerate the Bishop's stooges in St. Irenaeus who controlled everything. Consequently, they transferred (even though Anglos) into the German parish. One family man was John Lee with his wife and seven sons. He was a blacksmith and horseman. Jean loved horses, too, and spent some of his time at Lee's blacksmith shop, since he could have been labeled a "worker priest" — being also a supporter of the Knights of Labor. While living in the Doe House, one block from St. Boniface, Lee's shop was right across the street. For the time Jean spent there, he kept a diary in a big ledger, in fact several ledgers — which were stored away in the loft.

When Father Jean died April 12, 1890 supposedly at the behest of the A.P.A., a commotion was aroused as to where the funeral would be held. Hennessey's Irish contingent at St. Irenaeus refused the body. Once again, Jean's German friends at St. Boniface Parish stepped in. Father Schulte, pastor, was then acting as a secret intermediary between Jean and Hennessey in the reconciliation — and he knew whence to act, for knowing the full story. He thus offered to say the funeral Mass. Jean's friends packed the church, after which service while the hearst was on the way to the church cemetery, St. Irenaeus' bell tolled. Another secret friend was at work.

Of course, the Germans had to bury Jean as well — though later accounts tell of Jean's remaining coffin having been stolen by a few re-

On March 19, 1908 at 3:30 p.m., the pastor turned the first official shovelful of earth in the excavation, and the work was begun and steadily continued to completion which was on the site of the old parochial school, south of the "old" brick church. Sand and gravel replaced the sawdust piles nearby, with the parishioners hauling materials from a pit opened in the rear of the old church. Over 1500 wagon loads were hauled by these people, mostly farmers of the congregation, thus giving proof of the interest taken in the work. By June 5, 1907, the feast day of St. Boniface, it was possible to lay the cornerstone, accompanied by a long liturgical ceremony. On October 19, 1908 the Archbishop returned to the completed church for the dedication of the big bells to be erected in the twin towers. The four bells comprised the "West-minister Peal," the largest weighing 2600 pounds, in E. flat; the second, 1500 pounds, in B flat; the third, 750 pounds, in A flat; the fourth, 550 pounds, in D. The bells as they stood upon the ground, mounted on the hangers, were rung after the ceremonies and proved remarkably sweet-toned (as they still are today) and on November 7, 1908, they were all placed in the south tower of the church.

On November 21, 1908, the last time services were conducted in the old church. Notably, items which were of historical significance were carefully transferred to the new church: the stations, one part of the old high altar, the hand-carved pulpit, and organ. As the CLINTON ADVERTISER stated: "Completed now stands the imposing structure at the corner of Pearl and Seventh Streets. Where once was a low, swampy slough, there now has grown one of the most beautiful and attractive corners in Lyons-Clinton, a church that may well be compared to any in the state...." Old Father Tritz deserved all credit given.



An early formal portrait of Father Joseph Tritz, taken about 1900 — builder of the "new" St. Boniface Church.
M. Eckelberg Files

For dimensions, the building was 56 x 116 feet with side walls 26 feet high, with majestic and well-balanced twin towers, each 124 feet high. The building blocks were beautiful red brick, carefully mortared. Two main entrances led to the spacious vestibule. Above the main entrance stands a life-size statue of bronze effect of St. Boniface in an alcove. From the vestibule to the main body of the church four double acting doors open. The interior consists of a main and two side naves; over the vestibule is a spacious choir loft. The sanctuary was 24 x 24 feet, with a sacristy on both sides, and a chapel 6 x 24 in the rear connecting both sacristies. Twelve pillars carry the arched ceiling of the church. Four rows of solid wood pews provide a seating capacity of 550 to 600 persons. The foundation is of reinforced concrete. The exterior is of dark pressed brick, trimmed in blue Bedford stone. The roof of the main building, as also the towers, are covered with peach bottom slate. The basement which remains unfinished contains the steam heating plant by which the church and chapel are heated.

In the north tower is the baptistry, and in the south tower a small library with restroom, as also the stairs lead-

ing to the gallery. On the north side in the vestibule, back of a grating is a beautiful grotto of, Our Lady of Lourdes built in the wall. Glowing electric lights and flowing water over the rocks gave it then a wonderful natural effect; on the opposite side on a pedestal rests the statue of the Sorrowful Mother with the dead Savior. Since Father Tritz's day, the church has since been dedicated as a shrine for the Novena of the Sorrowful mother.

The frescoing remains in the church in a simple light blending of colors, with sketch work — and the designs and liturgical symbols in harmony with the rest of the church. All is very pleasing and tastefully wrought by succeeding generations in the repainting jobs by chosen skillful artists. The fourteen statuary-grouped stations, artistically painted in natural colors, resting on consoles, adorn the side walls — with the accompanying pictures of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Mother. In the south transept the double confessional in gothic style is stationed, with the new reconciliation room in the north tower where the cry room used to be. In the north transept, where the Pieta statue once stood, there is now the handicapped entrance, with ramp leading up the northwest side of the church. The pillars in the church used to be unique with each pillar attached of four statues of the apostles or saints, each resting on brackets. About 1958, after a repainting job, the statues were removed over the protests of the people. However, all the larger statues with accompanying relics remain in the church.

Noteworthy among the memorials are the beautiful art glass windows. They are made of imported colored glass and represent religious scenes from the life of Christ and His saints after some of the greatest painters, and they remind one of the grand windows in European cathedrals. The windows were furnished by the Munich Studio, Chicago.

The only item in the church which has effectively been moved to another location, thus affecting over all impression of balance, is the old gold-plated sanctuary lamp, which once

CHAPTER IV

Sacred Heart Church, Clinton, Iowa

Clinton County

ARCHITECTURAL

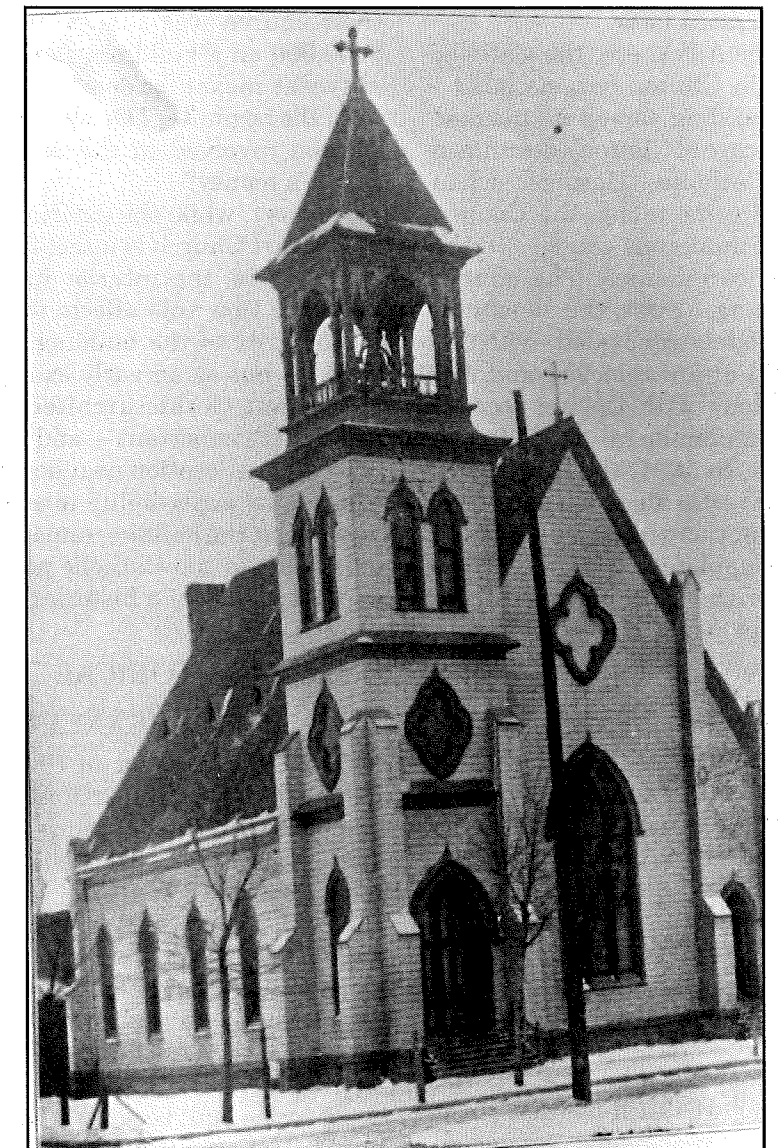
The spring of 1870 was notable in the city of Clinton for a lot of building, one being the plans to build a Universalist Church near the downtown area. This was called a "notable public improvement of Clinton...." The size of the lot upon which the new church was built was 100 by 100 feet. The church was 42 x 80. Because of the flooding at times from the river on the flat lands, the building had a high stone basement, in which at that time all the heating apparatus, fuel, etc., were placed. The walls above the basement were 20 feet in height. The design was Gothic revival, with the design kept intact throughout the building, in forming the dove, windows, scats, etc.. At that time, no furnace or smoke pipes appeared in the audience-room, lending graciously to the church's appearance. The ceiling was multi-vaulted, with beautiful work done and which is retained until today. The arches and braces were then as now in accordance with the main Gothic design. The window-sashes were filled with beautiful stained glass which were put together in sections, and held with metal fastenings of some flexibility, so that if one section breaks, the pane can be repaired at a trifling expense compared to the cost of a whole pane. At that time over a century ago, the church was gas lighted throughout.

The woodwork inside the church was "grained throughout in a most beautiful and workmanlike manner, by Henry Eyles, grainer, who was in the employ of Messrs. Howard and Broenall. The architect and builder of the then frame building was a local citizen, Mr. Walter Pashley, who designed it and superintended it throughout. Its harmonious proportions and excellent workmanship displayed upon the structure showed the man was proficient in his profession.

The cost of the building was about \$8,000 and it was dedicated a year after the work commenced. Later work added several thousand dollars to the overall cost. Little else is known of this Universalist Church except that it passed into other Protestant hands as the years went by, the sect being too small in Clinton to sustain their new church. Then, in 1891, the German Catholics who

broke away from the main Catholic Church in Clinton (that of St. Mary's) bought the building which was then called "Murray Church" and did a renovation of the structure. By 1892, the new church was ready for dedication. But it was a different looking building.

First, a small steeple had been added to the bell tower. The frame siding was covered over with brick.



This photo was taken of Sacred Heart Church about 1900, some changes having been made on the belfry after it was a Protestant Church for many years. This was also the meeting place for the notorious American Protective Association from 1887 until 1890 when the German Catholics of St. Mary's bought it.
Photo from Eckelberg Files

New stained glass windows (some sections hand painted) were installed, with images of the Saints and Holy Family. A new entrance was made beneath the original east facade's big sainted glass gothic window. The old side entrance on the northeast corner was left in place. In later years, the roof windows were also removed as new roofing was put on. Of course, there were sanctuary changes and different pews with kneelers installed. Then, the name change: Sacred Heart. Its purpose was also different. Formerly, Murray Church had been the headquarters of the notorious anti-Catholic sect, the American Protective Association. Yet, the group was not so violent that they couldn't deal with German Catholics buying their building. That will be narrated later.

After the A.P.A. era, the Catholic situation in Clinton became quiet - and the building served its purpose for taking care of Clinton's downtown German Catholics. However, when Vatican II came along, the Council mandated numerous changes in the liturgical ceremonies. The church had to change. First, the sanctuary was completely renovated, with the all the old altars removed and discarded, along with the old statues and the communion railing. This was after 1966. In 1991, the new pastor had newer tastes about what the Second Vatican Council wanted and did another complete renovation of the interior of the building. All of the newer front pews were removed, in favor of kneeler chairs. The sanctuary was extended into the "round" with the tabernacle installed behind a screen in the back of the sanctuary. The new sacristy was put in the back, with a restroom. And of course, there was a new pastel paint job. Most notable was a handicapped ramp installed on the south side of the church, with a new door punched through the south wall. The overall cost of this renovation was \$100,000 or so.

For recent maintenance repairs, the building was tuck-pointed about 20 years ago, with a new roof added. There was also wood siding laid over the 1891 bricks outside the back of the upper sanctuary area. A complete

new electrical job was also done two decades ago. For the heating system, when the new school was built about 1963, the heating plant in that building (with air conditioning) was extended over to the church.

Like the other four churches in Clinton, this church of Sacred Heart, despite its history, was set for demolition. To show the point, when the five parishes were consolidated into one parish called Prince of Peace, the rectory for Sacred Heart which lay to the west was torn down. This happened in 1990. A few years later, St. becoming rectory in the north end of Clinton was torn down. And people were becoming alarmed. But when the expensive second renovation of Sacred Heart took place in late 1991 and extended in 1992, they thought their church was safe. Why spend \$100,000 on a building which in reality was meant for demolition right from the beginning? Or was there deception involved in the use of the people's money?

In short, while the exterior of Sacred Heart Church is intact from the early 1890s, the interior has been changed. How this affects the overall integrity of the building, I don't know - but as an early example of Protestant Gothic architecture in Clinton, it's important - and because of its central location near downtown Clinton, its accessibility to everyone passing by, the building remains very important to the Catholic people - and not just from a historical standpoint.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The old church lot in Clinton at Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue is one of the ironies of history - how stories can be labeled "believe it or not". Just after the Civil War, the Clinton County pioneer priest from near Lyons, France, Father Frederic Cyrille Jean, bought that lot near downtown Clinton in order to erect on it the first Catholic Church in the city. This would be one of several churches he built because of the original St. Irenaeus Church in Lyons.

The new sect in town called the Universalists, wanted some property.

The "old" Clinton Catholic Church building was available, those people having built a newer frame structure a few blocks away on Fourth Avenue and Sixth Street. The Catholics wanted \$6,000 for the property, which of course was subject to the ratification of the Bishop of Dubuque, who was then in Rome. And the deal did go through. Several weeks later the work began on tearing down the old frame building and putting up a better structure. The first irony was completed, for a church soon to be called "Murray Church".

Five years later, in 1876, the property was acquired by the Apolistic Church of God which had strong anti-Catholic leanings. Since the Universalists could not make a go of it, this sect sought the building, and did fairly well. Then in 1887, after the American Protective Association was formed by a local Mason and lawyer, Henry Bowers, on March 13, this new sect began meeting in the building, probably by invitation. While this was a violence-prone group and specialized in social and political harassment of Catholics in countering "political Romanism", the A.P.A.'s worked under a series of veils and names, as they got more organized.

Father Jean, original owner of that now-Protestant property, was known to be a friend of Henry Bowers and in curiosity did attend a few meetings inside the church to find out what the group was about. Later, the two men became enemies. But it wasn't until after Father Jean was murdered that people began talking about the "Amoreans" - and their racketeering around town - how some more radical A.P.A.'s forced merchants to pay "protection" money. They just weren't anti-Catholics but even anti-American, advocating "world rule" in a pre-fascist fashion. Father Jean apparently found out these things early inside "Murray Church" and sought to stop it, though acknowledging much anti-Catholicism is caused by the wrongful actions of clerics. Being his case in point for a 17-year battle with the Bishop of Dubuque, Hennessy, who succeeded Smyth in 1866. Bowers being a lawyer knew well of Jean's many lawsuits against Hennessy and his

CHAPTER II

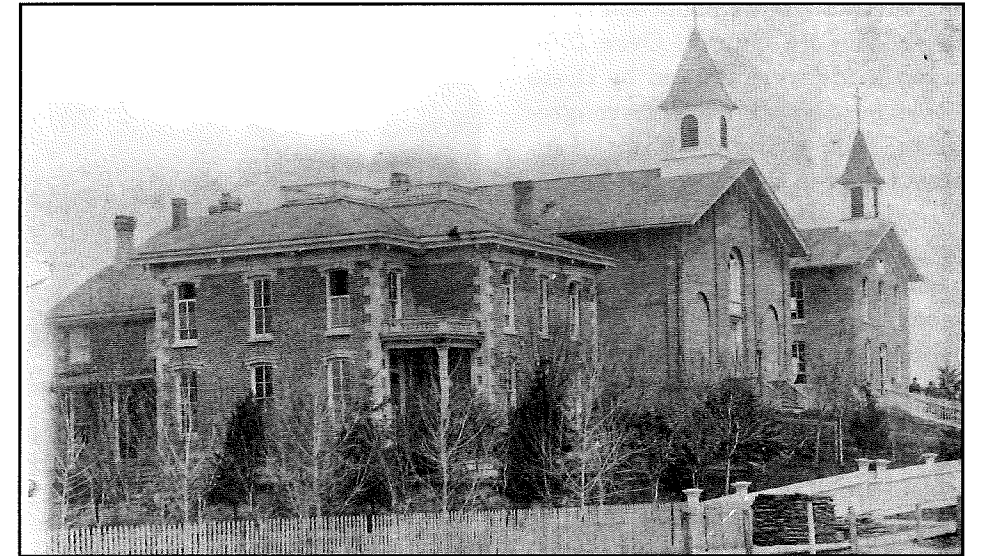
St. Boniface Church, Clinton, Iowa Clinton County

ARCHITECTURAL

With the founding of St. Irenaeus Church a few blocks to the northeast of St. Boniface Church, in a mother-daughter relationship, the building of the two structures with their history have been intertwined. In 1851, with the founding of the "Irish" Church in Lyons under the pioneer priest, the Rev. F.C. Jean, the German Catholics of the town with those of other nationalities were united at St. Irenaeus Church.

However, when the plans were being laid for a new limestone Gothic structure up the hill on Buell's Addition, the Germans decided they wanted their own new church, too - as they wanted services in their language and their own customs respected. Although the pastor was half German (Jean's mother being Austrian), he couldn't hold onto the Germans. And he needed them badly for the new construction of St. Irenaeus. With inevitable disagreements, some of the Germans went to see Bishop Smyth in 1861 and with enough money raised, the Bishop gave his permission for a new German Catholic Church in Lyons. The next question was, where the new church was to be located. In Stammbaugh's's addition, two lots were offered as a donation, but the site was not favorable at the time. Also, the Presbyterian brick church was proposed for sale. In the meeting of late November 1861, it was decided to acquire the property of the Presbyterians, consisting of a plain brick church 56 x 35 feet, and three lots. The church of the new parish was then consecrated under the patronage, of St. Boniface, the Apostle of the Germans.

As the population of Lyons grew, the old brick church became too small. Also a more appropriate building was wanted by the pastor and some parishioners which fit the Ger-

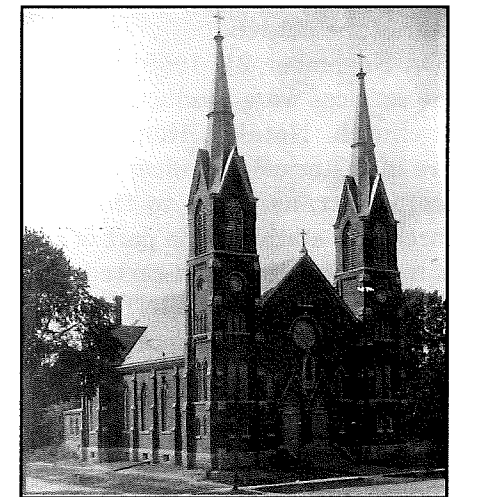


*This is the original St. Boniface Church with school and rectory - where Father Jean's funeral Mass was held mid-April 1890.
M. Eckelberg Files*

man image of a Gothic structure to worship in. The Archbishop of Dubuque in March 1907 gave good approval to continue with the new plans. The then pastor, Rev. Joseph M. Tritz, an artist in his own right, designed and sketched the building. These plans were then carefully worked out and elaborated by the noted church-architect, Martin Heer of Dubuque. Heer a Swiss-German, built many churches around Dubuque. His most notable achievement was the great Basilica at Dyersville, St. Francis Xavier. On the 15th of November 1907, the contract for the construction was let to Anton Zwack of Dubuque, who was rated as a careful and competent builder.

The resulting building from that era of the second Gothic revival was a German "jewel" in the tradition of excellent church buildings in the Archdiocese of Dubuque. Everything was balanced into proportions which rivalled any buildings built in the west area of Dubuque and on out to Dyersville's St. Francis Xavier Basilica. It was called a "Cinderella"

Church - a "wedding cake" - a delight especially to school children who loved the many statues of saints adorning the interior pillars. It was pure Father Tritz at work.



*This charming photograph was taken of St. Boniface Church just after it was built, circa 1908. Notice the unpaved streets of Pershing and Pearl. The picket fence at the bottom of the picture shows the yard of the old John Lee Blacksmith Shop which has just been torn down but with the fence left in place. It was in this building, on this ground, that the Jean Memoirs were found and turned over to the builder of St. Boniface, Fr. Tritz by John Lee himself who was a member of the parish, even though he was Irish.
Photo from Eckelberg Files*

way — and according to old accounts, the A.P.A. poisoned him in the George Doe House where Jean boarded — three blocks south of his beloved church. Bowers, however, was not believed to have been involved in this action to silence Jean, who knew too much about everything going on.

St. Irenaeus, however, because of the public controversy by still-recalcitrant parishioners, refused to allow Jean's funeral inside the structure he helped build after the Civil War. The funeral instead was held at the daughter church of St. Boniface, one block west of the Doe House. Jean was then also interred in St. Boniface Cemetery. But the story doesn't end there — and in fact, is still going on with reinterpretations of Jean's legacy and what remains troublesome to the Diocese of Davenport and its officials. Which means, St. Irenaeus' structure is still a problem, too, in church minds.

All documentation for this story has come from the microfilm of old newspapers at the Clinton Public Library, interviews with old timers, plus Jean's personal papers, and Henry Bowers' personal papers. The historical significance of St. Irenaeus Church is: without Father Jean, there would have been no such monument to Faith — and without the church, there would have been no A.P.A. created a decade later in Clinton (as Clinton's other Catholic churches also tie in with this story). Henry Bowers would have been just another decorated veteran of the

Civil War' happily practicing law in Clinton, and politely observing his beloved Masonic Brotherhood.

To this, stones are a witness — in such a 19th century web of life. The differing ways Fathers Jean showed his Faith, in the essence of his actions, are a testament to his powerful legacy over the community — for by stones of St. Irenaeus he will be forever known. However, a bit of legend needs to be touched upon here. Father Jean was no mere priest, especially in the last years of his life. One story has it that after Pope Leo XIII was elected in 1878, he wanted to make Father Jean a Bishop. Because of the dangers the deposed priest faced, he replied: "No, they'll kill me. Give me an unlisted designation" — by which he meant, a rank equivalent to that of the powers and jurisdiction of a Bishop. Officially, he was then made a Prelate (P.A.), unofficially he was a secret Bishop. This he stated openly in the CLINTON DAILY HERALD November 20, 1879, under a letter to the editor entitled "Jean's Jurisdiction": "...and I dare say in the whole Diocese of Dubuque...knows well that I do officiate as a Catholic priest, and every one knows, or should know, that my Jurisdiction in that regard is not confined to Lyons, but that it extends all over the State of Iowa, being commensurate with that of a bishop."

Certainly, if Father Jean hadn't been murdered in 1890 by the conspirators of the A.P.A., he would have been made an official Bishop — but

testament to Pope Leo's trust in him' along with other "friendly prelates", after he died, in his room was found several items of episcopal jewelry, as pectoral crosses and rings. But it was known what these meant, for he openly wore the episcopal ring. Of this testament, the parishioners of St. Irenaeus Church should be proud — for a continuing part of Father Jean's legend is that while the A.P.A. destroyed one of Jean's chalices in the burning of his body out at St. Boniface Cemetery, the other chalice he had was rescued by a friend and sent to Rome, a gift returned to His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII — whom Jean served faithfully to the end with his life.

And so, Father Jean's battle goes on in this century to save his church, as its people seek to achieve its proper recognition to the history of the State of Iowa, and now hopefully in the public eye of the nation via the National Registry of Historic Places, for which in the spring of 1997, it became eligible under the designation D.O.E.. May it become a National Historic Landmark as well.

Final note: For the extravagance that went into St. Irenaeus over the years, it should be noted that when the twin uneven towers were completed in 1889 (according to the original design of architects W.W. Waldron and W.W. Sandborn), the shingles were of wood with gold leaf design. One of these shingles still exists today in the Clinton County Historical Society.

corruption. One could say Jean was a leading cause of Bowers' justified hatred of Catholicism; more so, the open corruption of Bishop Hennessy.

Yet, Bowers got along with the German Catholics, while hating the Irish Catholics whom he felt used improper methods for achieving political power, let alone violating the basic laws of Moses and of Christ when it came to simple honesty via methods of "Jesuitism" (the power of the "white lie").

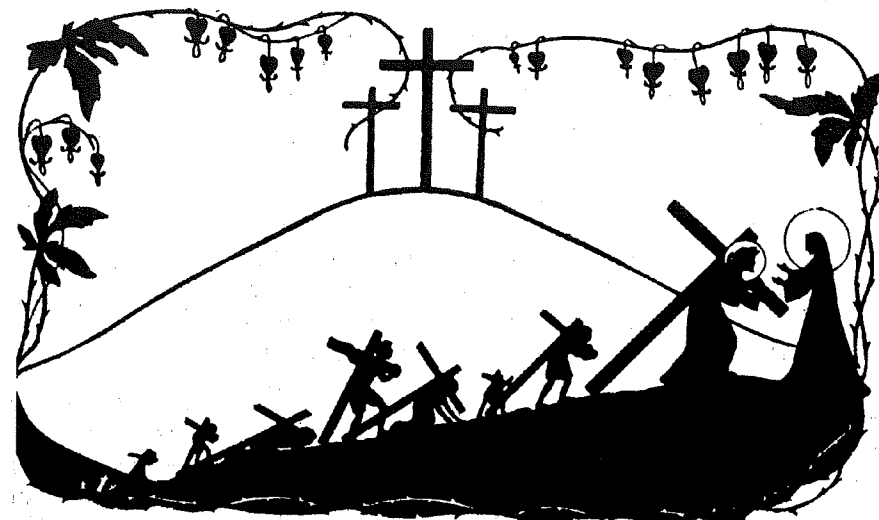
While Bowers didn't have much money for the organization of the A.P.A. in the early days (as in its latter days as well), the financial support of "Murray Church" declined to the point that a mortgage on the building and surrounding lots was foreclosed in 1890. A year later, the

German Catholics got the building, having been inspired by the building of the new St. Mary's a few years before to now have their own national church (which was to be apart from the Irish). With the help of the German Catholic Church in Lyons, the Clinton German Catholics got a strong hand, with the Lyons' priestly support.

Thus began the third irony: this property was now back in Catholic hands. In the year of his death, Father Jean's lot from after the Civil War, now engaged in a local civil war — which his spirit, in death, would win. Meanwhile Henry Bowers' group switched for their larger meetings to the German Hall a block north of "Murray Church" — having used it previously for the overflow crowds.

Again, he stayed with his beloved Germans, he himself having been born German in Maryland long before, but later changed his name to the Anglo-Saxon spelling.

While Bowers' labor sympathies would extend into encounters with English and then German Socialism, anti-Catholicism remained his trademark even into old age. One wonders however it just wasn't a front, considering all his German Catholic contacts. Because even after the German Catholics bought "Murray Church", he continued to associate with the building by attending social fairs and events — even donating his crochet word to benefits for the profit of the German Catholic Church. That's the fourth irony of this building and property.



IN MEMORIUM

Msgr. Ambrose J. Burke, Ph.D.
November 27, 1895 - October 6, 1998



IN MEMORY OF MSGR. AMBROSE J. BURKE "1895 - 1998"

It was Nov. 27th, 1895, and Pope Leo XIII was on the throne,
A lad born in Sigorney, Iowa, much future success would be shown,
Ordained in 1921, Baltimore, Maryland was the place,
Then on to Oxford and Yale, obtaining a Ph.D. with excellence and heavenly grace.

He was President and Professor at St. Ambrose, a great orator in every way,
And in Bishop Sheen's "Catholic Hour" he made you think and laugh and pray,
He guided the students in St. Mary's with finesse and loving care,
He said daily mass at Mercy Hospital, anxious parishioners would always be there.

We look back today across the valley of time,
And the Greatness of Monsignor Burke, a prelate so sublime,
And we gathered Oct. 12 at St. Ambrose amid the buildings you designed, to wish you eternal rest.
You are truly a man of God to that we can all attest.

From all of us who loved you.

stronger welds, the cross was replaced with an interior steel beam added. Another storm hit the church a decade later, ripping off glass coverings of a few church windows, especially of the big west window. Later, plexiglass was installed over these west windows. There was some roofing damage which was fixed on the west end, plus replacement strips on the south spire. To further protect the bell towers, vinyl siding was added to them about 1982, since that wood was rotting. There was a recent roof leak by a north tower which the parish council finally fixed, but the entire roof needs to be replaced.

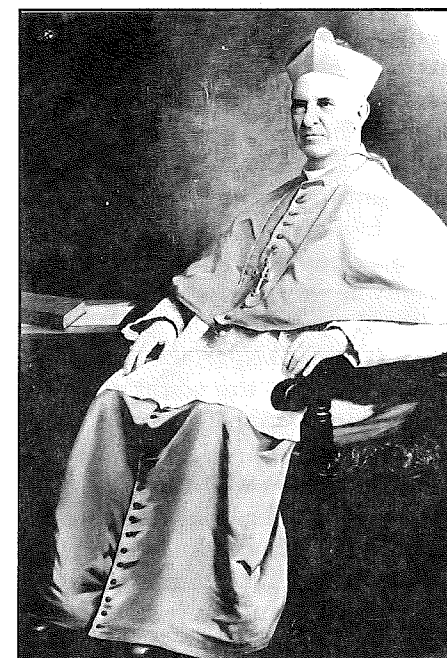
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The "crown Jewel" of this church in the then-Diocese of Dubuque was also a crowning headache. After the spring of 1872, St. Irenaeus' history became troublesome until 1890, when its founding pastor, Father F.C. Jean died under mysterious circumstances. Some said it was at the hands of the American Protective Association (which was founded in Clinton in 1887).

Such a magnificent limestone Gothic structure did arouse the passions and some jealousies with accompanying hatred against its French pastor by especially Irish clergy who were moving into the area during the episcopal reign of Bishop John Hennessey of Dubuque. There was open cultural prejudices, as soon religious prejudice was raised by Protestants who saw this religious and clerical infighting over a building — let alone openly observing the differing life-styles of Bishop Hennessey versus the pastor, Father Jean.

St. Irenaeus Church was named after its Mother Church in Lyons, France (the Great Cathedral of the original St. Irenaeus — bishop and martyr about 200 a.d., who also wrote the great treatise "Against Heresies" while opposing the Emperor) Father Jean names his new church after this Doctor of the Church, as a protest against the new gnosticism its pastor saw coming into the region especially in secret societies before and after the Civil War. Their legacy from

the Know-Nothings would culminate in the founding of the A.P.A., as national historians have acknowledged. But what brought on the infighting amongst, the Catholics in Lyons, Iowa? First, the great cost of the building of St. Irenaeus; second, the new, ambitious Irish Bishop of Dubuque, John Hennessey out of St. Louis (who didn't know the territory); and third, the strong character of Father Jean, who was empowered with a sense of Napoleonic honor to defend himself against the Bishop's charges of misconduct.

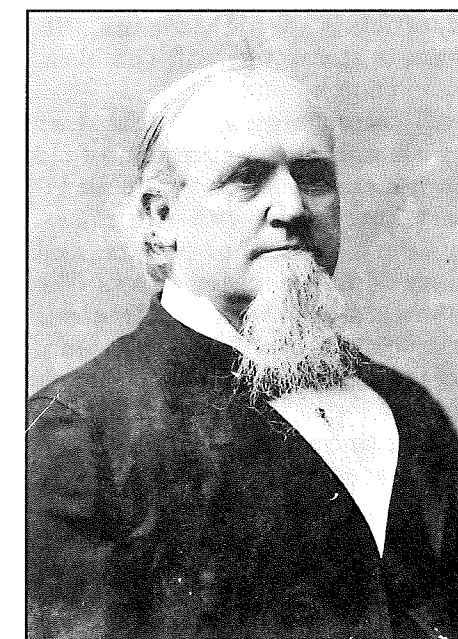


*A painting done of Bishop John Hennessey on a visit to St. Louis, which city and diocese he came from before becoming the third Bishop of Dubuque.
Photo Courtesy of the old St. Louis Cathedral Museum*

In late spring of 1872, Bishop Hennessey removed Jean as pastor of St. Irenaeus. Jean promptly went to Rome to present his case against the injustices of one he considered a crafty, deceiving superior. By 1874 when he returned, his ride through Lyons was triumphant — though he lost the first round with the Bishop. He countered in another year by becoming a secret agent for the Pope in Rome by keeping an eye on Church corruption, while pursuing a series of lawsuits against Hennessey over the next decade. The latter affair was a public battle, while Jean sought to regain control of St. Irenaeus or at least get his money back from it. Mean-

while, construction of the church's towers were halted until the late 1880s when people started donating enough money again to the church, with some reconciling having taken place with a charitable pastor finally installed.

But damage to the reputation of Catholic religiosity was considerable. Henry Bowers, a friend of Father Jean and a lawyer (as also a 32nd Degree Mason) knew the whole story, especially of Jean's enemies. In March 1887, Bowers started the A.P.A. in Clinton when the Rev. E.M. McLaughlin, Jean's nemesis at St. Mary's, got too involved in city politics. Bowers now carried on Jean's battle, in a sense, in the secular field — though soon they would become foes.

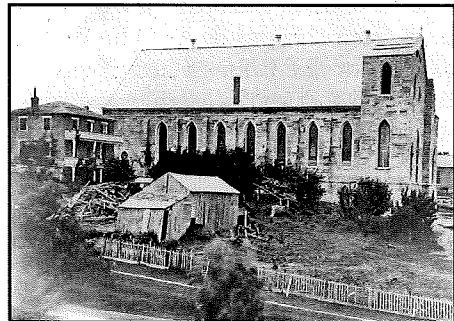


*Portrait of Henry Bowers, founder of the American Protective Association in Clinton, 1887.
Photo Courtesy of Bowers Family Descendents*

By early spring of 1890, tensions rose to a fever pitched, with the lumber barons of Clinton backing Bowers in organizing the A.P.A., though a few in Lyons remained friendly with Father Jean. It was then described that "outsiders" came into the city to reorganize the A.P.A. on a national basis. But they also ran into Father Jean who had his own European contacts — and who had since reconciled his differences with a now-repentant Bishop Hennessey.

In short, Father Jean was in the

the Church — and were donated by societies or individuals in the parish. The large set of triple windows overshadowing the west sanctuary was the crucifixion scene while over the east entrance was a rounded window of the Holy Family. The windows were painted by Mr. P.F. McMahan of Chicago and were of Munich Glass. They were called by the media “finely executed, the figures life-like, and the combination of colors in the filling up artistically done.”



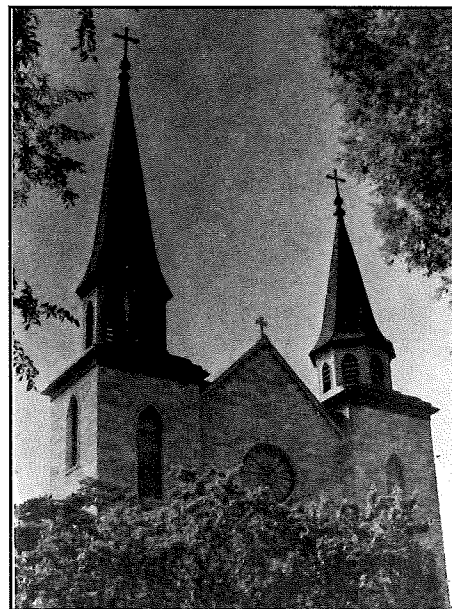
St. Irenaeus in the final building stage, spring 1869, with the original rectory of Father Jean's which stood until Father Comerford built the new rectory at the turn of the century.
J. Jackson Collection

The four-foot thick stone walls (in the lower portions) were plastered over on the inside, then frescoed in white, with gilt block lines, heavy cornice shaded down to the delicate brown fresco of the ceiling which was plainly but richly laid off in panels at the end with two circular centerpieces. The interior of the church was finished in walnut and oak, and while simple in design, was rich in its finish, and the whole edifice “massive, beautiful, and impressive.”

The crowning of this cathedral-edifice occurred when Father Jean returned from France in 1870 with a beautiful golden replica of the crown of France. It was in the form of a crystal sanctuary lamp which was to be hung from the ceiling over the sanctuary area. It fit in with what was called the “sacred geometry” of the overall lines of the interior of the church. It was a special prize in that it was a gift of the Bonaparte family, whom Father Jean knew. This relic still hangs in the church, though unlit.

In 1906, the interior of the church went through its first major renovation. While the great high altars were

installed at the time of the completion of the twin uneven towers (which were according to the original blueprints), the then pastor, Fr. James Comerford, wanted to reverse the interior. There were complaints that with the parishioners of the pioneer era aging and many deaths occurring, it was too much anymore to carry up the coffins on the 21 steps leading to the great entrance on the east facade. Fr. Comerford, over numerous protests, also felt that the west end of the building was more suited for the main entrance since North Second Street was then running trolley lines along it. Therefore, the great high altars were moved from the west end to the east end of the church, plus the old choir loft, the statues, and pews (which were reversed). Only a few steps thus remained from the west entrance for people to climb.



A calendar shot of St. Irenaeus from the post-War years under Msgr. Jackson.
Photo from Eckelberg Files

The second renovation of the building came just after World War II when the then pastor, a greatly loved priest, Msgr. Edward Jackson, remodeled the interior, coating the walls with simulated stone to match the beautiful exterior. Plaque-like stations of neutral color replaced the old paintings of the Stations of the Cross. And the entire lighting system was replaced by five-foot Gothic chandeliers of copper and bronze. These fixtures contained amplifiers for the public address system. All of the stat-

ues from Father Jean's era were re-decorated, a cork-stone floor laid, and the kneelers padded with foam rubber. A mother's room, for the convenience of mothers with infants, was furnished in the rear of the church. The ceiling was also decorated with simulated wooden beams, and eight plaques were placed on the walls of the sanctuary.

The present interior of the church remains about the same. The old high altars from 1889 are still intact, although Msgr. Jackson had them cut down a few feet. The crystal sanctuary lamp remains. After Vatican II Council which mandated certain sanctuary changes, only the communion railing was taken out with a small but beautiful Novus Ordo altar placed in the sanctuary, in front of the high altar. About 1982, the old confessionals were replaced by the new “reconciliation room” and a “cry room” for babies — but this did not alter the interior. Fortunately, when the decision was made to demolish St. Irenaeus for a new mega church on the west edge of Clinton (along with the other four churches in the city), the parish council scrapped a third renovation plan which would have gutted the interior completely.

Over the years for the few modifications which have taken place in St. Irenaeus Church, the pastors of those times have respected the building enough to keep the changes minor. However, in case of storm damage or rotting beams, some good changes have taken place to preserve the building more.

About 1960, the building was tuck-pointed. In 1969, new west entrance doors installed. In 1970, it was discovered that the wooden floor beams were rotting on the southwest corner of the building. Iron beams were installed throughout the entire basement area, with remodeling then in the basement, plus a new area expanded for parish offices on the west side of the old basement area. A lot of new ground was dug out, with a north basement entrance and enclosure added. But again, the integrity of the building was respected.

In 1973 a small tornado struck the church, knocking off the north spire cross. A year later, with new and

CHAPTER V

St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Clinton, Iowa Clinton County

ARCHITECTURAL

St. Patrick's Church, corner of Elm and Third Streets in Clinton is the youngest Catholic Church in the city — and a parish which did not want to exist and probably should have never been built. But the Bishop of Dubuque ordered it. And so it happened, the decision was made on Thanksgiving Day 1889. The priest sent who determined the architecture was the Rev. J. A. Murray, a good man, who met for the first time the reluctant people who were to be his future flock. That date was December 1, 1889. The new boundaries for the parish were to be Lyons on the north to the alley between Fourth and Fifth avenues. At that time, the area was called North Clinton. Accordingly, the “grievances” of the people were aired. They did not want any new priest. They didn't want a new church. They said, “We have a priest (Fr. McLaughlin) and a new church and a new altar.” This was in reference to the big building of St. Mary's having just been erected. “It is the apple of our eye.” And they talked of the cruelty involved in the forced transfer of those hard-working peoples who had just carried the bricks of St. Mary's to carrying more bricks for a new St. Patrick's. The people refused to cooperate further. But the bishop prevailed and the first frame building was erected, by January of 1890. On March 17 it was dedicated. And more money was put out by the poor people than can be imagined. By December 1891, the new pastor found the parish insolvent and his parish bankrupt.

In ten years however, the debt was paid off, then the people were forced to start all over again to raise money for a substantial brick structure. This building still stands today, intended to last “for all times”. The building

plans were announced in the fall of 1904 and by March of 1905 a new church with a handsome matching rectory in Romanesque style was started. The cost was initially \$40,000, half of which was the sum in the treasury of the parish. Unlike all the other church buildings in town which were Catholic, the pastor chose a different style. No one knows why. But the effect upon those who would eventually enter it was pleasing, for its uniqueness and balance.

The ground space of the new building was 126 feet by 26 feet. The edifice itself is 66 feet in width; by one hundred and 26 feet in depth. The size and shape of the building remains unaltered. It has a basement still usable which is 11 feet in the clear with a winter chapel inside the west wing of the church building. The rectory itself was commodious and in use (recently by the local nuns) being a two-story building 56 by 39 feet. It is a companion building in every respect to the church, even with a matching cupola on the roof. As with the rectory in materials, the church

stands on a basement of sawed Bedford stone, high enough to be above the frequent floods then in downtown Clinton (since it is on flat land). The water tables and trim are portage entry red sandstone. The facing brick is the Gladbrook red pressed brick. Back then the original roof and towers were of unfading Black Bangor slates.

While the architects are believed to have been “Boman and Roth” of Andura, no more is known of them. However, the building committee was listed and has been remembered over the years: Trustees—W.A. Cooper, Dominick Hook. The actual Building Committee members were M. A. Walsh, P. H. Kelly, T. E. Moran, T. R. Murray, W. A. Cooper, Dominick Hook, Ed Breen. Introduction Committee -T. H. Gavin, J. A. O'Neil, John Bennett, P. F. Hallinan, James McGonegal, Frank Walen. The ordinary people of course did the bulk of the work and in excellent fashion, for the bricks and overall construction has never faded nor been tampered with. The building, except for a little



A postcard shot of the new St. Patrick's Church with rectory, taken about 1910.
Photo Courtesy Clinton Cty. Historical Society

brick wearing on the northwest corner of the winter chapel, looks new to this day — and yet, it has never been tuck pointed. Fortunately, too, the original high altar and side altar remain.

The church was opened for service for the first time on Christmas morning 1905, and has been in use until recently. But how long in the future it will stand is questionable as it, too, as the other two Catholic Churches in Clinton, has been set for sale now but how soon demolition? That such a superb example of Romanesque work should be considered a pile of bricks by the chancery in Davenport is unthinkable, one questions how hard must people work to preserve their buildings. The interior of the building, so well proportioned, is in excellent condition — as the old pastors over the years took excellent care of the building. For the church having finally paid all its bills, what happened in the ensuing years after 1905, North Clinton grew wealthier and many good Irish families went into the parish, adding also a good school system. In fact, some of the most prominent Irish families in Clinton soon belonged to the parish.

For improvements over the years, there have been some recent innovations because of the dictates of Vatican II in remodeling all churches to fit the new liturgy. While there is no new handicap ramp or entrance (because the building is so high to the main level), there was a complete church redecoration about 1976. While at the time of its building, it was the only church with interior pillars (in good Romanesque fashion), everything was painted in a light color. By 1978, new pews were installed with carpeting. Also in that year, the wooden doors back and front were replaced by glass doors. New storm windows were put on about the time of the new asphalt roof, 1992-1993. The winter chapel is still intact in the north wing. In the basement is the heating unit, with kitchen and hall.

The stained glass windows remain in excellent shape — and allow a great deal of light into the interior, like a soft-effect the other churches don't have. Again, there is an overall

balance in proportions, a gentleness felt within the building — a sense that there is a presence of those gone-by and of the Almighty Himself. Perhaps this is due to the lay out of the ley lines and the old work of the masons themselves who really cared in their work. Amen.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The importance of St. Patrick's early history is in regard to the different kinds of protests which took place about the erection of the parish. Both Catholics and non-Catholics objected.

In the early meeting which was called to be in St. Mary's basement at 2:30 p.m. On December 1, 1889 — mind you, a Sunday, of all days — Father Murray met a "perfectly organized meeting of strenuous resisters". John Shephard was spokesman for the "grievances" of the North Side Irish.

"...We do not want any new priest; we have a priest, and a church and an altar. We have watched stone rise upon stone in the New St. Mary's. It is the apple of our eye—We denied ourselves the luxuries and some of the necessities of life, to raise its roof tree aloft. In it are treasured the tenderest associations of our life. There we were married, there our children were regenerated, and there our dear ones were borne on their way to the grave, that the Requiem might be chanted over their mortal remains. To leave were cruel, and we, and all within US, refuse to comply." Then came the threat which soon all in Clinton would know about; "Nor was (he) satisfied with 'moral suasion' but with master hand, cut off all the sources of supply, declaring...we refused to acknowledge any responsibility for this unhappy move on the part of the Bishop, and we plainly proclaim here once and for all that we shall neither advance, nor borrow money, nor sustain any action that may make for the establishment of a church within the lines of the so called new parish."

Shepherd went on, citing three causes for the problems the poor

people faced: The fewness of the people in the district, the poverty of their resources, and the forbidding aspect of the field. Fr. Murray replied that parishes are not made by people but by Church authorities. But the impasse remained. The dictatorial Hennessey at Dubuque did proceed with his plan for a new parish in North Clinton. And why? Because he considered St. Mary's, the Irish Church in town, too big. It had to be split. But there was another meeting on December 19, the people however still refusing to cooperate. But one by one, they came to give in...and money was collected. But times were still rough. In the fall of 1904, more money had to be spent, this time on a substantial building made of brick, to "last for all times" — as the pastor then had his "vision" of the future. Social events had to be held, cake sales and fairs — every attempt possible made to raise...money. Missions were also held, as in that fall of 1904 to continue convincing the people through the gospel to keep giving, even if it hurt. As one Clinton Herald article reported in the official announcement of December 17, 1904, the new church was to be "a thing of beauty and a joy forever".

With the ground-breaking starting in March 1905, the cornerstone was to be laid on July 2 of that year. But Bishop Keane, the new Bishop of Dubuque, didn't attend.

Archbishop Keane was in Rome, so his vicar general came with a "venerable prelate" Right Reverend Matthias C. Linehan, Bishop of Great Falls, Montana, who formerly was the pastor of the Catholic Congregation at Marshalltown. Of course, other clergy came in from all over the state. The ceremonies were to be imposing, with [first an open-air Mass. The cornerstone itself stood above the foundation at the southwest corner of the building, properly inscribed and containing a cavity prepared for the reception of a tin box containing relics to be sealed within it. A roll of parchment had been prepared for the occasion, and was sealed with other articles in the stone. It bore the following inscription:

"July 2, 1905. Pius X, Pope. James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of

CHAPTER I

St. Irenaeus Church, Clinton (Lyons), Iowa

Clinton County

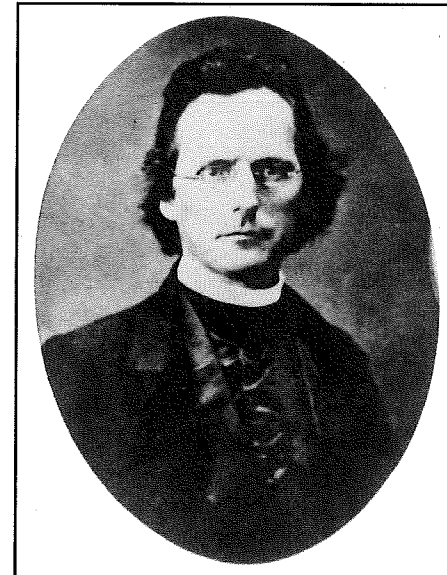
ARCHITECTURAL

St. Irenaeus Church over the past century has been called the Jewel" of the Diocese of Davenport. Described as a "classic" in mid-19th century Gothic architecture in stone, the blue prints for it were started in 1861 by the pastor, a French pioneer priest, Rev. Frederic Cyrille Jean. St. Irenaeus Church is the oldest in Clinton County and the second oldest church in the Diocese — and is possibly set for demolition despite its unique and worthy history throughout all of eastern Iowa. And it is the story of saints and sinners, of good versus evil.

In the autumn of the year 1848, when the little town of Lyons was only 13 years old, Bishop Matthew Loras, of Dubuque, first bishop of Iowa, visited the community and offered Mass in the log home of Michael Daley, at the corner of Ninth and Railroad Streets. This marked the humble beginning of St. Irenaeus Church. The visits of the clergy were soon a regular occurrence, with the most notable of these being Father Samuel Mazzuchelli, the great pioneer priest of the upper Midwest. Later, Father Palmourges, who was the founder of the first parish in Davenport (St. Anthony's) said Mass in Lyons — then came in 1852, Father Jean, to become the first resident pastor of St. Irenaeus. He began immediate work on the first church, called St. James, a small brick structure, then built a school, with the little parish growing rapidly. In four more years a larger wood structure was built on what was to be called Buell's Addition, a donation of land freely from the Lyons city founder.

In late spring 1864, Bishop Smyth of Dubuque laid the cornerstone for the present Gothic building which was called then a Cathedral, modeled

after its "mother church" in Lyons, France — which region Father Jean came from. All of the work of construction was done by the members of the parish. The native sandstone was hewn from the bluffs and other quarries north of the city, and hauled to the site of the church in horse-drawn carts. Some stones came from as far north as Galena, having been floated down the river on rafts. The pastor, Father Jean, engaged in physical labor with the parishioners,



Believed to be a formal portrait of the Rev. F.C. Jean, pioneer priest of Clinton County and builder of St. Irenaeus Parish - photo dated during the Civil War era.

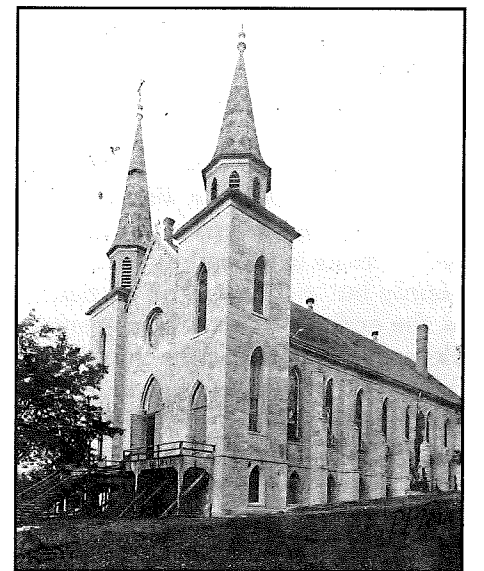
Photo Courtesy Iowa State Historical Society

whom they loved and admired throughout the long project of building. In 1871, most of the building was completed at a cost of \$45,000, about half of the funds having been supplied by Father Jean himself (who came from a wealthy family in the South of France). While the church was dedicated in the spring of 1869, the work on the spires was not completed until 1889.

One of the marvels of the building is the fact that not one pillar or brace of any kind is seen to support the huge single vaulted ceiling. The but-

tress type of brace is used on the outside of the church to support the massive stone walls. However, the secrets used in the bracing work were kept from the public and the media, except for the information given out that the "lightest" possible materials were used to support such a massive ceiling.

The building was 130 by 60 feet, only slightly smaller than the cathedral in Dubuque. The basement was 12 feet high, 50 feet deep and 60 feet wide, with a furnace room in the rear. The inner ceiling at the top curve was about 53 feet high and the walls over



St. Irenaeus as it looked with the east entrance and steps about 1900.

J. Jackson Collection

the water-table 30 feet. The principal entrance was at that time on Fifth Street (now called Roosevelt Street) and was 24 feet high and 12 feet wide, with moulded jambs in the form of clustered columns. There were also two side entrances 7 feet wide.

The side windows were fourteen in number, 23 feet high, and 4 1/2 wide, and two end windows, which were stained rather than painted. Each was a separate design, being figures of the most celebrated saints in

Acknowledgements

This booklet which you, the reader, will be enjoying is a result of a year's worth of work for the National Register of Historic Places for the five Catholic Churches in the City of Clinton. In the spring of 1996 most of the research and documentation was done. Although only two churches in the North End of Clinton actually received the distinguished honor of being received at the second highest level of the National Register (as D.O.E.), the question was raised of what to do with the other pages written on the remaining three churches.

I want to thank Bob Soesbe for his original idea of having all the materials published in book form. With his great help in editing and lay-out, it is now possible for the citizens of this city and state to read the whole story. I also want to thank the Clinton County Historical Society for providing some of the photos and research materials. In particular, I am grateful to the members of the Clinton Historic Preservation Commission for encouraging the reasearch on the five churches, let alone advice and help given.

Last of all, I accept the blessing of the main sponsor of this publishing venture, Father Charles Shepler, Chairman of the Catholic Heritage Association of Clinton. And I appreciate most of all the dozen or so good elders of our community who provided me with many happy hours in the interviews—this going back almost 20 years when I first began the research on the story of St. Irenaeus and its founding father, the Rev. Cyrille Jean.

May the journey continue.

Mary Ellen Eckelberg

Baltiremo; John Joseph Keane, Archbishop of Dubuque; James A. Murray, rector of the parish; Theodore Roosevelt, president of the United States; Albert B. Cummins, governor of the state of Iowa; James Peterson, mayor of the city of Clinton, etc..” In the cavity were placed copies of the Clinton Herald and the Clinton Advertiser of the issue of July 1st; also of the Irish World of Hew York, and the Iowa Catholic Messenger of Davenport. A penny, five and ten cent piece, a quarter, and a dollar of the mint of 1905 were placed in the box, also a coin of the mint of 1889, the year the parish was founded.

All well and good the remainder of the ceremony. By Christmas Day, 1905, the church was ready for services, and in the usual fashion on the times, the sermon by a proud Fr. Murray, who overcame so much opposition, managed to be most eloquent. And there was printed again in the Herald the picture of the new church and rectory, which was really a reprint from a year before when the picture was released by the architects in their official sketch of it. The construction was faithful to every detail, even the cupolas on top of the bell towers were in copper. But one interesting thing remains: Murray never got along with McLaughlin, remaining opposing priests in the two Irish parishes: St. Patrick's versus St. Mary's. McLaughlin isn't mentioned in any of the Herald articles as being in attendance at the various ceremonies — although one would have expected him to be there out of courtesy. But did others notice this, too — about the great McLaughlin? Just where was he?

Then it happened: another kind of protest to St. Patrick's presence in the Clinton community. Others had been watching all along...as seemingly Fr. Murray carried on the deceased Father Jean's struggle with the aging McLaughlin. Sometime in the night of January 21, a Sunday p.m. going into a Monday a.m., some rogues broke into the new St. Patrick's Church. How they got inside the building, no one knows, but the main altar was desecrated, with the tabernacle broken into. The Blessed Sacrament meant, that is, the ciborium

with the hosts in it, was stolen....

Who would do such a thing? Rumors spread quickly, that the A.P.A. was busy again, in another Irish protest....against the new church and those who attended it. For any theft of hosts throughout the centuries of Catholic history has been considered the ultimate attack upon Catholic dogma and belief. But the high altar itself, which is still in the church today, itself was desecrated. There was a double intention at stake. According to the Clinton Herald front-page story, the police believed the burglars had a key. But where did they get it? From an angry Catholic? Certainly there was no door damage. For the sacred vessel stolen, it was of gold and worth about \$40 total of money then). As for the condition of the altar, the white-painted altar was defaced, that is actually damaged, by the thieves who apparently used a chisel roughly in forcing open the tabernacle door, thus badly marring the door and sides of the tabernacle. As the Herald continued: “This is the first desecration and robbery of the kind which has occurred in Clinton in many years, and there is an angry sentiment against its perpetrators, who if brought to justice will be severely dealt with.”

The only real Catholic response could be, apart from anger, was an official “atonement” service. Archbishop Keane announced from Dubuque that he would visit the church for such a liturgy on Sunday, February 4, 1906. It would be “observed in reparation for the sacrilege committed in the Elm street church in the desecration of the altar and the stealing of the chalice containing the Blessed Sacrament,” as the Herald printed on January 27, 1906. There was to be a solemn high mass, with the Blessed Sacrament exposed for adoration during the day, and then at night a solemn benediction at which Keane would also officiate. When the day came, the parishioners nearly all received Holy Communion, a rarity in those days.

The church was also packed that Sunday. While the Archbishop spoke about his sorrow over the separation of the Church of England from the Church of Rome, he also spoke about

the rights of the working man to form unions — the latter topic in regards to another kind of thievery versus the thievery which the church had experienced. Keane did mention “the abomination of desolation”, though one wonders how close he came to expressing what some felt the A.P.A. was, for it was rumored about Clinton that Black Masses by the rougher elements of the A.P.A. had been celebrated. The Catholic hosts would have had only one purpose: further desecration at their occultic liturgies. But once again, Fr. McLaughlin did not attend the services, instead sending his associate pastor, Fr. Flynn. However, Keane did stay over at St. Mary's rectory, a guest of McLaughlin, who was then a monsignor.

Strange behavior. Actions have consequences. Where was Henry Bowers? While he was supposed to be in control of the A.P.A., at least in Clinton, there were those who believed outside factors really dominated his organization — that he was just a lackey, left paying the bills after “they” dumped the group back into his hands after the turn of the century. Someone might feel that the A.P.A. was propelled by its own demonic forces. Bowers only had to sit back as it ran itself into oblivion.

However, one thing is certain, no more desecrations took place in Clinton after the St. Patrick's incident. Bowers was getting old and during the first week of November, 1911, Bowers suddenly took sick. It was a surprise what happened next: he died just as suddenly, as the Herald reported on November 9 — that he passed away on that Thursday morning about 2:30 a.m.. The A.P.A. was officially ended. But there was a paranoia about the death bed, as if his friends feared “outside” factors coming in again to disturb the colonel or to speed up the process? The coroner was notified but decided against an inquest. But one strange event was reported in two visitors who came to him: they were two Irishmen, believed to be from St. Mary's Parish. They were allowed in the room, though what was said was never reported. But did Bowers make his peace with the Irish before the

end? No one knows.

One thing was certain: there were no more problems for the Catholic Churches in town — and a new legend began, in remembering the legacy of the A.P.A., though the secret name of it “The Amoreans” would live on into the 1920s, when they ran ads in the newspapers and journals around the country. It is known, however, that a number of old A.P.A.’s looking for new anti-Catholic “action” joined the up-and-coming Ku Klux Klan after World War I. But the rough-and-tumble era of an occultic anti-Catholicism was over with. One must assume that Bowers carried it with him into the grave, though interestingly enough, he was buried on a hillside in the city cemetery which overlooked, one of Father Murray’s

projects: Mount St. Clare Academy and Convent of Franciscan Nuns, who had a new soul to pray for, into whatever region he was sent after crossing the veil.

The overall significance of the story of the five Catholic Churches in Clinton in its struggles with the A.P.A. is this: was Henry Bowers so bad a man in wanting to destroy them (at least the Irish parishes) when the pastor (with the bishop’s approval) was intent on the same thing, but on an even grander scale?

In the 1890s, St. Patrick’s was the “reluctant” parish. It didn’t want to be built — and some rogues’ reaction proclaimed that in their desecration with further suspected use of the hosts for a local Black Mass. If what shouldn’t have been built back then

would have been observed (that is, the true wishes of the people versus “priest craft” domination), St. Patrick’s wouldn’t be facing oblivion today with all the accompanying pain — and Bowers’ people would have remained quiet, too. Now the noise goes (with the suffering) the other way: to preserve...for these churches can never be rebuilt. And surely, too, as the legacies of Father Jean and Henry Bowers are considered, we are also dealing with the “fruits” of Vatican II — which has been even more iconoclast than Bowers’ anti-Catholicism ever was.

THE HISTORY OF THE FIVE CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN CLINTON, IOWA

by
M.E. Eckelberg

Dedicated To

the pioneers of our Catholic Heritage who in the autumn of 1848 had the first Mass celebrated in our city, the North End called Lyons, by Bishop Matthias Loras of Dubuque. This booklet is done in commemoration of this sesquicentennial event of St. Irenaeus, which church is the oldest in Clinton County and is now celebrating this year its 151st anniversary.



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