

St. Patrick's Cemetery, April 1861

By Peggy Calvey Patton

The first shot of the Civil War was fired at Fort Sumter in Charlotte, South Carolina on April 12th, 1861. Charles Dickens finished "Great Expectations" that same month, and in the little Township of Rockport, Ohio, St. Patrick's Graveyard was established. It began with the internment of Elizabeth Adams and Daniel Doyle. Daniel, a blacksmith, was born in 1793, and he and his wife were founding members of St. Patrick's Parish. His actual date of burial is unknown, but records show that Elizabeth was buried on April 25, 1861, two weeks after the start of the Civil War.

Abraham Lincoln was President, women wore long dresses with bustles, and men wore whiskers and beards and dressed in long black overcoats. Police and Fire Departments did not exist, and it was the beginning of public transportation with horse drawn streetcars. Woolens Mills were started in Cleveland that year by the German immigrants, and Rockport Township was farmland.

St. Patrick's Cemetery is not owned by the Catholic Diocese, it belongs to the parish. It has 210 graves that are filled and one grave is waiting for an occupant. She is Mary Campbell, the wife of George Campbell who passed away in 1986. Mary is 92 years old and lives in South Carolina, but will be buried next to her husband at St. Pat's. There are two graves already in the graveyard with the names of Mary Campbell. Mary B. and Mary E.

There is a grave simply marked "Aunt Mary" and two families claim her, the Keanes and the Waddups. There is a man with the name of Peter Meter and there is also a John Kennedy.

There are three captains buried in the Cemetery. Capt. Edward Mooney, a Captain on the Great Lakes, Capt. John Holzworth, an Army Captain in World War 1 and Capt. Charles Anderson . The graveyard has numerous veterans of World War 1 buried there also.

Two men had their mother's bodies moved to St. Patrick's so they would be together, Katherine Rusch, mother of John was transferred in 1811 and Morgan Waters' mother Catherine was re-interred in 1818.

The cemetery grew around the first small frame church and the first school. After they were razed around the turn of the century, that area was added to the cemetery.

In 1918 the parish of St. Patrick's petitioned the diocese to expand the cemetery, but was refused. The Cemetery Board felt that Calvary Cemetery on the east side had become more accessible to west siders due to the opening of the Harvard-Denison Bridge.

Permission was again denied in 1922 when the Norton Family wanted to build a family mausoleum.

In 1927, the city of Cleveland wanted to acquire 10 feet of the cemetery to widen Puritas Avenue. The city planned to move the affected graves to St. Mary's of the Assumption Cemetery on Brookpark Road.

After four years of negotiations, in 1931, the parish and the diocese agreed to the move, and the families of the deceased were contacted for their permission. One woman adamantly refused and the cemetery stayed as it was.

In 1949, Fr. Thorpe made another attempt to move St. Patrick's Cemetery to a section in the new Holy Cross Cemetery, but the consensus of the parishioners was that the cemetery should remain on parish grounds.

The last burials in the cemetery were Bill and Maureen Malone in the front row facing Rocky River Drive. Their daughter, Maureen Mountcastle was a secretary in the parish rectory. Bill died on March 10, 2004, just three months after the death of his wife Maureen Campbell Malone in the previous December of 2003. Because the ground was frozen, her burial could not take place until the spring thaw. When Bill Malone died unexpectedly, family members requested a double urn for them so they would be together. The Malones had made arrangements years before to be buried with her deceased infant brother, Theodore Campbell who passed away in 1927. Their son-in-law Bill Mountcastle and grandson, also Bill Mountcastle, dug the grave and placed the cremated remains in the grave on March 19th, 2004.

The Campbells have a long history in St. Patrick's parish. Their family plot has 16 graves. Other large family plots are the Hogans with 11 graves, the McMahons with 11, and the Mooneys with 10 graves. Plots are marked by a small marble square with the family initial on it.

Bridget Norton was born in 1816 in Ireland and married John Campbell in 1851 in Rockport, and both are buried in our cemetery in an unmarked grave in the family plot near the tall Campbell sphere. John Campbell died in 1884 and Bridget Norton Campbell died in 1886. They were founding members and owned farmland acreage on Rocky River Drive between Fairville and Ferncliff Avenues. They are Maureen Mountcastle's great, great, grandparents.

Their oldest son, Terrence Campbell, married Augusta Emmel in 1888 in Cincinnati, Ohio, and they settled in Rockport. Terrence, along with other parishioners, used his horse and wagon to haul sand stone to the grounds

from the Berea Quarries for a new stone church. It was dedicated at the 10:30 A.M. Mass on Christmas Day, 1898.

James Polk was president, gold was discovered in California and the United States ended the war with Mexico that year.

Terrence and Augusta's family home was on the east side of Rocky River Drive at the corner of Valleyview Avenue. He owned one of the houses and his brother owned the other house that now comprises Marten's Funeral Home. The Campbell Building at 4150 Rocky River Drive is named for the Campbell Family.

Terrence donated the land to the City for the future Valleyview Elementary School. At that time the streets were named for his two daughters, Edna and Pearlie. Pearlie became Pearldale, but Edna was changed to Valleyview when Valleyview Avenue was extended to the school. Terrence and Augusta are buried at St. Pat's in the family plot.

Terrence and Augusta's second son Raymond Campbell married Irene Hoertz, a Lutheran, in St. Patrick's Rectory in December, 1910. She later converted to the Catholic Faith, and their five children were raised Catholic. They are buried in Alger Cemetery because there were no plots left at St. Pat's. They are Maureen's grandparents.

Raymond and Irene's second child Maureen married William Malone in St. Patrick's Church on June 29, 1940. They are Maureen's parents and became the last burial in the Cemetery.

Recently, the back part of the cemetery was enhanced by a lovely white marble angel sculpture holding a small urn. It is on the grave of Kate Campbell Welsh who died of cancer at age of fifty two in 1997. She loved angels and when her sister who lives in a southern state saw the statue at a garage sale, she knew it would be a perfect headstone for Kate. She inquired

about the price and was told that it would be free if she hauled it away. She made arrangements to have it shipped and placed on her sister's grave at St. Pat's. It is a lovely tribute of a sister's love.

The Code Family Plot has a sad history. William was the parish sexton and sacristan and lived on the site of the community center before the turn of the century. He and his wife Martha had six children.

Their first daughter Mary Ann died at seven months in 1871, and their second daughter Julia was five years old when she died in 1878. There are no birth or death records for their third daughter Martha, who was named after her mother, and only her name is legible on the small white gravestone. Samuel who died at eighteen in 1885 is in the grave next to her. The graves are in a row of four small mismatched headstones by the walkway next to the church. The years have taken their toll, and the graves stones are tilted.

The last two children, boys Thomas, eight and Francis, six, both died in 1888. Their matching flat granite markers are in the next row beside their parent's broken tall monument. None of the six Code children lived to adulthood, and all of them died in a span of seventeen years.

Father William died at 77 and Mother Martha lived to 99 years of age. She was buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery in 1941, 53 years after the death of her last child.

Theft and vandalism have taken a toll on the cemetery. Several years ago, a passerby came into the rectory to report that a man was carrying a huge metal urn to his pick-up truck parked in the back lot. He was driving away when they reached the area. They determined that he removed three urns from the cemetery that day. Other artifacts have gone missing over the years.

The wrought iron fence was replaced many years ago by the chain link fence in place today. The wrought iron fence became too costly to replace due to car accidents, but this fence has had its share of accidents also. It was hit six times in the last 2 ½ years and the average cost of repairs is approx. \$1,600.00.

Councilman Martin Keane noted that the south west corner of the cemetery was especially venerable due to traffic making turns unto Rocky River Drive. He had seen a large boulder at a city facility and thought it would help prevent damage to the fence. He arranged for city crews to place it there and it is a welcome addition to the cemetery.

The first man buried St. Patrick's Cemetery; Daniel Doyle, was born in 1793, two hundred and sixteen years ago. George Washington was President, French King Louis XVI was sentenced to death, Fr. Stephen Badin was the first priest ordained in the United States. The first newspaper was established, and the first state road was authorized in 1793.

In 1931, one woman saved St. Patrick's Cemetery because she objected to the removal of a relative's grave and St. Pat's own Maureen Mountcastle, who has 16 relatives in the graveyard, vows that she will be the one woman that will stop the closing of St. Pat's Cemetery in this century.

We should not neglect our ties to the past and this historical cemetery should be protected and venerated. The beautiful little burial ground in the heart of the city is one of a kind. What will happen to it if St. Patrick's Church closes?

Presented online by the Irish American Archives Society, November 12, 2010. IAAS, P.O. Box 91756, Cleveland OH 44101-3756 or iaasadmin@gmail.com.