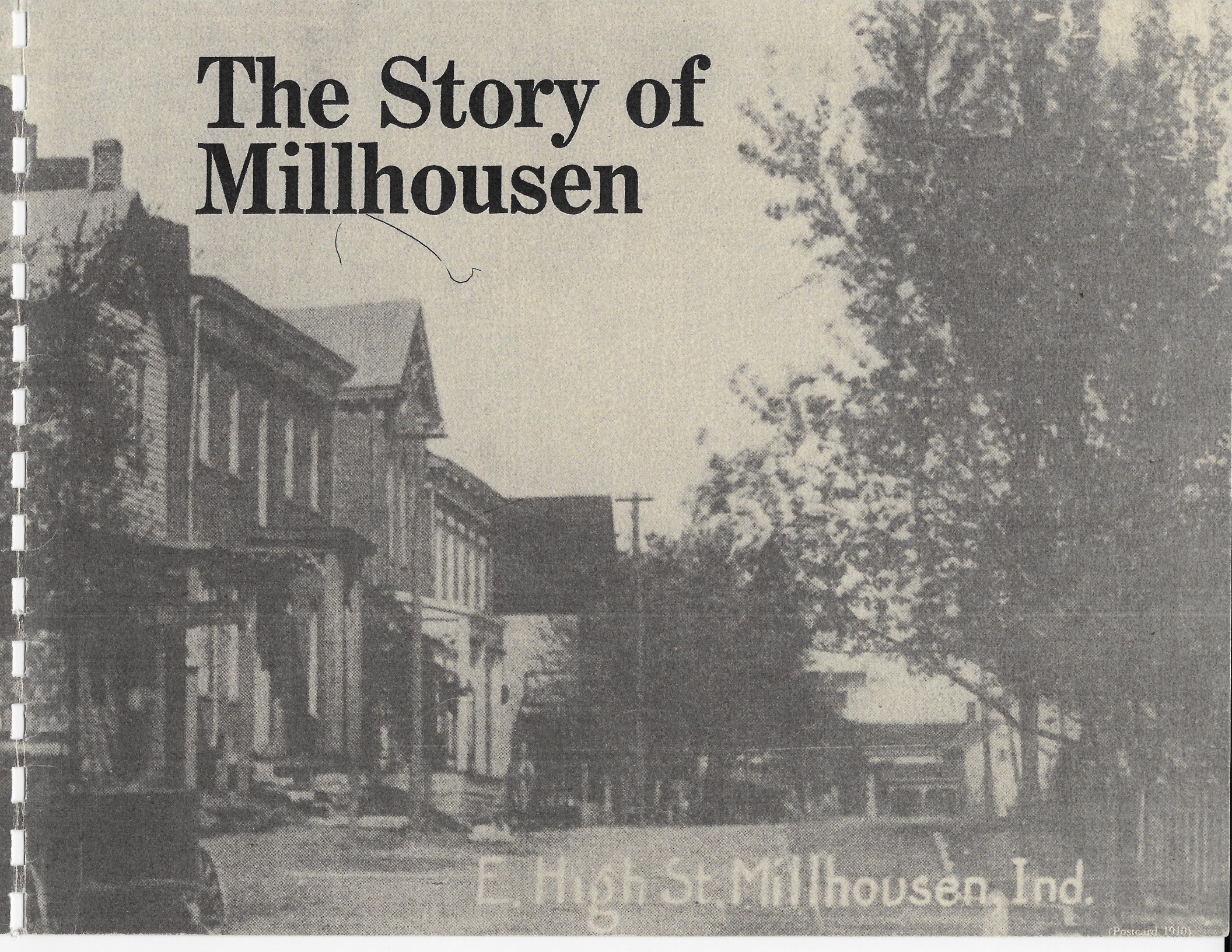
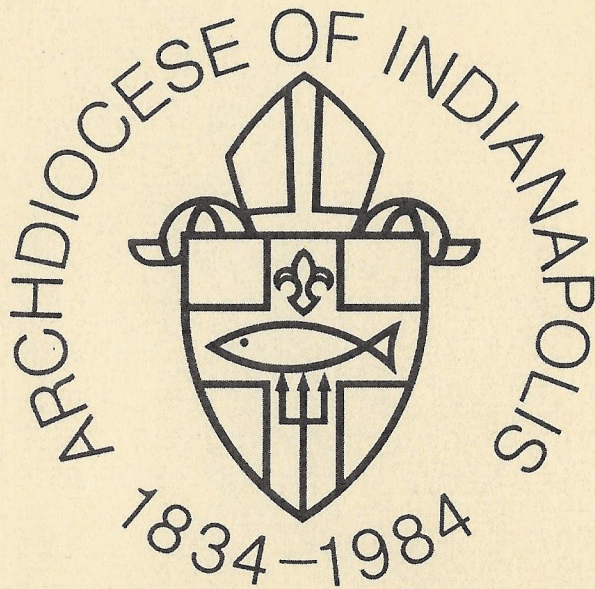


The Story of Millhousen

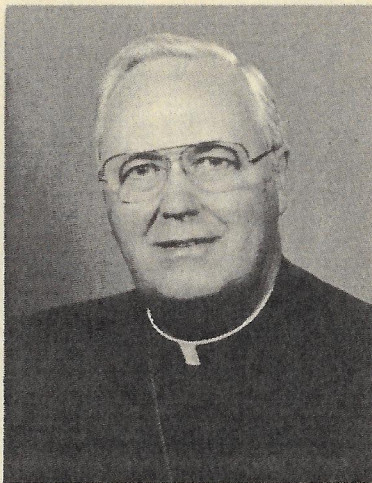


E. High St. Millhousen, Ind.

Celebrating a Double Sesquicentennial



On A Journey Of Faith



Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara



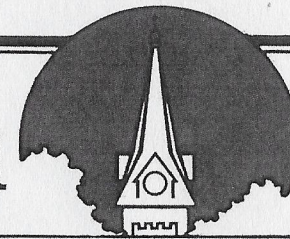
Reprinted for

Celebrating 175 Years
1834 - 2009

Immaculate Conception Church
Millhousen, Indiana



The Story of Millhousen



We, the People of Immaculate Conception Parish, Millhousen, Indiana, have a story to tell.

According to popular legend—and all great cities like Rome had legendary beginnings—our story began one-hundred and fifty years ago, give or take a month or two. It was 1834, the same year the Diocese of Vincennes was created and the first bishop of Indiana, Simon Brute, was appointed. The Diocese of Vincennes then included the whole State of Indiana and the eastern half of the State of Illinois.

The tiny village of Chicago was part of our diocese then. Bishop Brute visited this outskirt of his territory and found the villagers very optimistic. They bragged to the bishop that Chicago would soon be the Cincinnati of the west. Of the West, mind you.

Cincinnati, Ohio—that's where our forefathers and mothers came from. There in that Rhineland of America, which reminded them of the fatherland in Germany they had left forever, they planned a new Catholic Settlement. The organizer was Maximilian Schneider, who purchased a huge tract of virgin forest in south Decatur County, Indiana, and named it after the community in Alsace from which he migrated. He chose this spot in southeastern Indiana because other German Catholics had begun to settle there and the land was cheap and nearby. The journey there, though, was by no means easy. There were no roads and the last six miles must have taken days.

This is the way one of our pastors, Father Carl Riebenthaler described it fifty years ago in the history he wrote for the centennial celebration of the parish:

“The prairie schooners, drawn by horses and oxen, groaned and creaked under the burden of household goods, tools and provisions along the beaten paths, while human hearts beat fast with expectancy. It was a happy, though toilsome trail, and when, at length, the caravan reached Napoleon, Indiana, it was confronted with the task of chopping through to the final destination six miles away. Through forests and over

bridgeless streams the hardy pioneers beat and pushed their way till after prodigious labors, they stood in the silence of the great forest in which they were to build their homes.”

According to the story old-timers handed down, the pioneers, 13 families in all, quickly built rude log cabins and in one of them, the home of Maximilian Schneider, the first Mass was offered by Father Joseph Ferneding.

There is considerable doubt about what has come down to us. Critical readers not satisfied with the romanticism of legend are invited at this point, before going on, to examine carefully an accompanying study of the early history of Millhousen made by Charles Hessler, a descendant of one of the pioneers. (*See page 55*)



Fr. Joseph Ferneding

But about Father Ferneding there is no doubt. This priest was the apostle to the German Catholics of Indiana. Born in Holdorf, Oldenburg, Germany, in 1802, he began studies for the priesthood before emigrating to the United States in 1832. The following year he was ordained for the Diocese of Bardstown, Kentucky, which then included Indiana. The newly ordained was appointed missionary to all the German speaking Catholics of Louisville, Vincennes, Indianapolis, Fort Wayne and all other settlements in the area. In 1834, he took up residence in New Alsace, from whence he served his many missions.

Bishop Brute obtained several volunteer priests from Germany so that by 1840 Father Ferneding's field of labor was narrowed to the

following communities: New Alsace with 150 families; Cross Roads (Dover), 90 families; Blue Creek (St. Peter's), 90 families; Pipe Creek (St. Nicholas), 30 families; Salt Creek (Oldenburg), 130 families; Brookville, 14 families; Millhousen, 20 families; Abington (Wayne County), 9 families; Richmond, 10 families; Lawrenceburg, 15 families.

Obviously, one priest on horseback could not provide Mass and the sacraments for so many far-flung communities with any regularity. Our ancestors preserved the faith with the help of the prayerbooks and rosaries they brought with them from Germany.

Sometimes, in the winter months of late 1839 and early 1840, the parishioners, under the direction of Father Ferneding, erected the first church and called it the Chapel of St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany. It was constructed of logs, and the dimensions were 20 x 24 feet. The



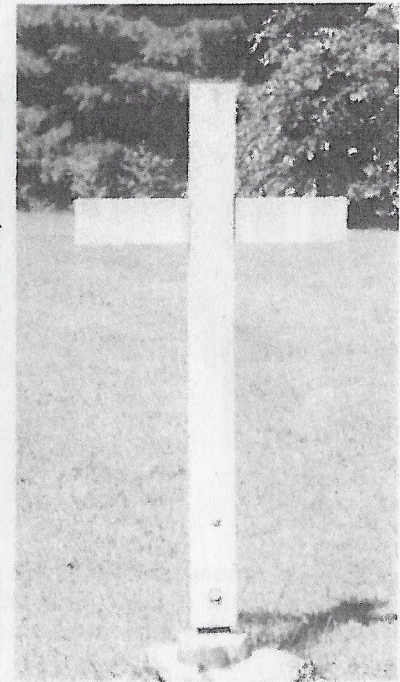
The original chapel of St. Boniface. After the second church was built in 1854, the old log church was moved and remodeled into a home. This is the last view of it before it was demolished in 1930.

chapel was in use no later than March 15, 1840, for on that date, according to the first records of the parish, the marriage of Francis Link and Mary Hessler took place with Father Ferneding officiating. And the same records show that Frideric Eickert, Adam John Hessler and Henry Victor were the first to be baptized in the new place of worship.

The chapel was built on a spot east of where the old Sister's house stands. (There is a cross back of the present sheds marking the spot.) The ground then belonged to Maximilian and Catherine Schneider. On June 20, 1840, however, the Schneiders deeded this and forty acres to the Diocese of Vincennes for a consideration of fifty dollars. The chapel was without pews and without heat. Parishioners brought their own stools and during the winter months stomped the rough floor with wooden shoes to keep their feet from complaining too much.

Some of the parishioners made it to Mass at considerable personal risk. Tradition has it that those who lived a fair distance from the chapel used to bend branches and twigs as they struggled through the pathless forest to be sure they could find their cabins when they returned from Mass.

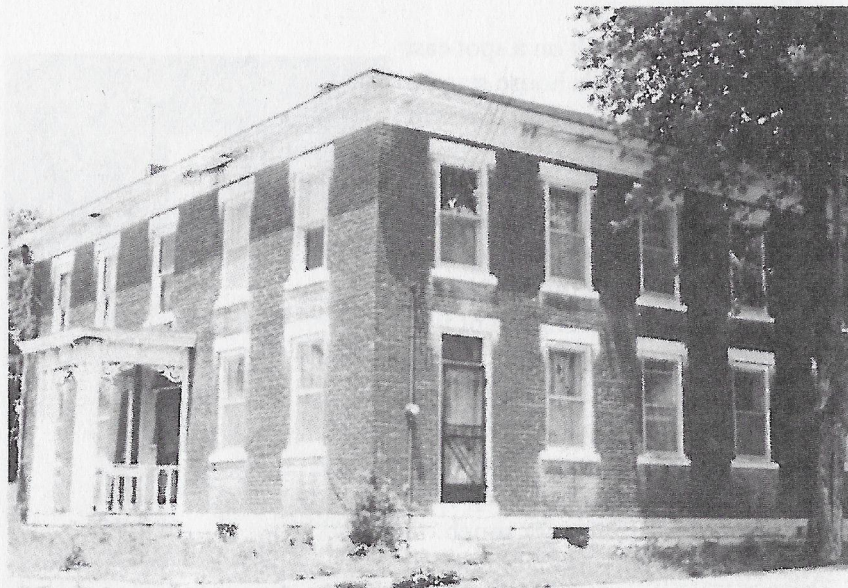
Life at home for the first parishioners was not much more luxurious than their log chapel. Their cabins were one-room affairs with the bare earth for a floor. A fireplace furnished the only heat and served as the family stove. Dinners were boiled, with meat in a pot over the fire and some sort of vegetable cooked with it. The popular supper was mush and milk. Chairs were few and beds were hard boards. Light at night was furnished by glowing embers in the fireplace or by a smoky tallow lamp. Even by day the light was dim because the windows were small and built high for protection against wolves and other wild animals.



The cross marks the spot where the first church stood.

The first death in the community was that of a certain Mr. Deutschler, who was killed by wild dogs.

Harbinger of better things to come was a large two-story L-shaped house Maximilian Schneider had built of bricks, hand-made from nearby clay. This seems to have been in 1839. In part of of his home

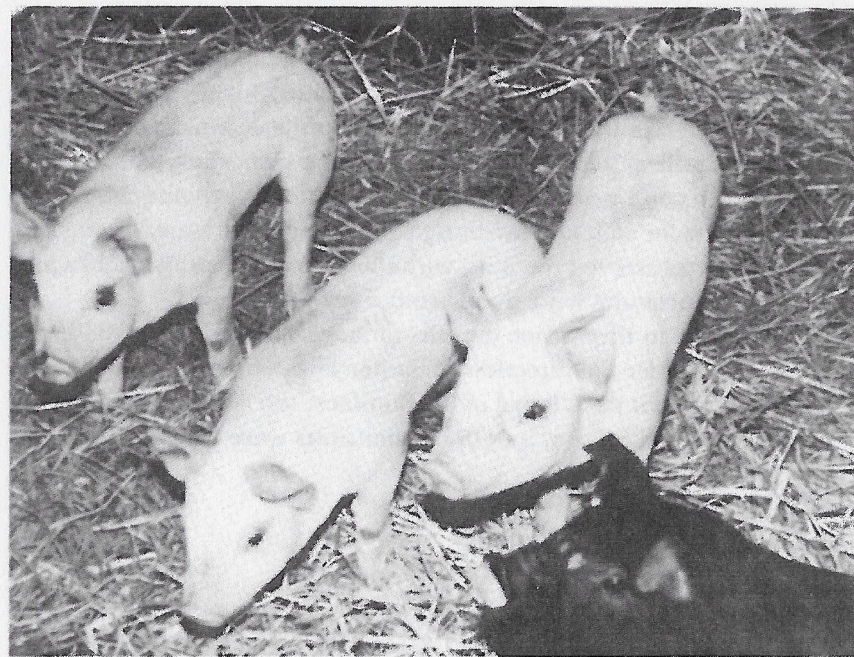


The house around which the town of Millhousen was plotted. Maximilian Schneider built it more than 135 years ago with brick hand-made on the spot to be his home and place of business.

he operated the first store and served as the first postmaster. He laid out the streets of the town to make his home the center, naming the street it was on Main Street and the one that crossed Main to form his corner, cross street.

Making enough money in those early days to purchase tools and clothing and improve the standard of living was an enormous challenge. In his own inimitable style, this is how Father Riebenthaler described the situation:

“To appreciate the plight of the farmer it will only be necessary to recall that the price of wheat was twenty-five cents a bushel; that eggs sold for two cents a dozen and hogs for one-and-a-half cents a pound; and that a bushel of potatoes brought only six cents. And these prices were realized only after a long and toilsome journey to the



Some of the first supporters of the Millhousen community.

Cincinnati markets. It is narrated that while some of the farmers loaded their produce on wagons to make the trip, others would drive the livestock along the trails. And at times some unruly porker would break from the herd and scamper through the woods and a merry chase was on. After the capture, the squealing fellow would be ignominiously brought back by the ears and tail. The farmers also drove their turkeys to market. The call of the wild was strong in these birds; and when some wild turkey king enjoying the freedom of the forest would ‘gobble’ his welcome to the tamed flock, the urge to fly through the tall timbers was great and, sometimes, it was followed to the utter dismay of the drivers.”

What was twenty cents worth in those days? It’s always interesting to compare prices. In 1843 Bishop Hailandiere issued instructions for “Tariffs For Funerals Of Adults And Funeral Services,” which decreed the following: for the church \$1.25; for each toll of the bell 6¢; for the officiating priest 75¢; for low Mass 50¢; for the singers 12½¢ each; for each server 6½¢; for the organist 50¢.

Early Priests of Millhousen

But now back to our story. In 1841, Father Ferneding became unhappy over a disagreement with Bishop Hailandiere and joined the Diocese of Cincinnati. There he was the founder of St. Paul's Church in Cincinnati, later the vicar general of the diocese and in his last years was in charge of St. Aloysius Orphanage, where he was affectionately known as "Der Waisen Vater."

The pastor of Oldenburg, Father Conrad Schniederjans, took responsibility for the budding parish of St. Boniface, Millhousen, the remaining months of 1841. The population was, indeed, growing; according to the records ten infants received baptism that year. The next year an Irish priest, Father Michael O'Rourke, visited Millhousen occasionally. Newly ordained, he was the pastor at Dover where a number of Irish had settled. He also was responsible for St. Peter's (Blue Creek) and St. Joseph's, Dearborn County. Working with Germans, perhaps, was not altogether to his liking; he returned to Ireland in 1846. During this same year, 1842, Father Roman Weinzoepflen also visited Millhousen and celebrated Mass. He was residing temporarily at New Alsace as he awaited a civil trial in Evansville.

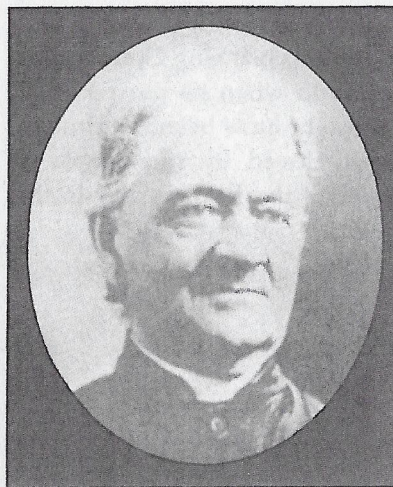
Father Weinzoepflen was the victim of a disgruntled couple who abused the seal of confession to falsely accuse him of immorality. The trial was a travesty of justice conducted in Princeton, Indiana, in those days a notoriously anti-Catholic community. The priest was sentenced to five years in the Jeffersonville penitentiary. Public opinion supported the priest. The warden at the prison told the deputy sheriffs who brought the priest: "You should have brought the judge and not the priest." Indiana Governor Whitcomb was convinced of the priest's innocence but did not pardon him for political reasons until the wife of President Polk, who had heard of the injustice, pressured him to do it. Eventually the prosecutor admitted his prejudice and the accusers their perjury. Subsequently Father Weinzoepflen joined the Benedictines at St. Meinrad, where he was buried in 1895. We will have more to say about him.

Father Carl J. Opperman administered the parish during 1843. He could not have celebrated Mass with any regularity, however, for though he was stationed in Oldenburg, he was directed by the bishop

to inquire into the needs of Catholics in southeastern Indiana. He was on horseback much of the time. But he was on hand to welcome Bishop Hailandiere when he came for an official visit in Millhousen and to confirm Adelais Ruberg, 23-years-old, Mary Spangler, 18, John Frideric Mehring, 16, and Benedict Deutcher, 16. By the end of 1843

the parish numbered fifty-two families.

Our next priest was Father Alphons Munschina, pastor of Oldenburg, entrusted with the care of Millhousen, Enochsburg, St. Mary-of-the-Rocks, and St. Nicholas. Records of deaths and marriages were begun under this pastor. The first recorded death was that of Margaret Krezin, who died February 24, 1844. The many missions may have been more than one man could handle. By the end of 1844, Father Munschina was moved to Fort Wayne and missions, where he served a year and several months. He replaced Father

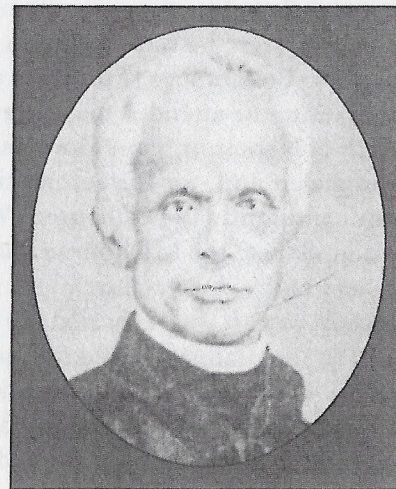


Fr. Alphons Munschina

Francis Rudolf, who in turn became pastor of Oldenburg.

This was the famous Father Rudolf who was the apostle of religious education in our part of the State. It was he who brought a Franciscan Sister from Vienna, Austria, and helped her establish the Franciscan Sisters who staffed our schools faithfully for so many years.

For two years Father Rudolf was in charge of the Chapel of St. Boniface. The people of Millhousen evidently wanted some assurance there would be regular services in their chapel, for an agreement was made with the new pastor that for the sum of fifty dollars he would celebrate Mass on ten Sundays and thirty other days during the year. Father Rudolf began a regular course of religious



Fr. Francis Joseph Rudolf

instructions for all the children, the teenagers and young adults.

He was an effective but stern teacher of morality and the commandments of the Church. A history of Oldenburg describes how in his early days there he denounced publicly those who came late for Mass and criticized the dating habits of teenagers. Some oldsters and some youngsters retaliated with abusive anonymous letters and by tearing down his pulpit and breaking windows in the log school. There are memories in Millhousen of how when he was bringing Communion to the sick he demanded that anyone around when he passed kneel down no matter how muddy the ground might have been. In time he must have mellowed, for he was greatly loved by the people of Oldenburg and was the staunch supporter of the Franciscan Sisters.

The year 1847 marked the beginning of a large German migration to the United States. Millhousen got its share. Recognizing that the parish had outgrown the log chapel, Father Rudolf began to take up subscriptions to finance a new structure. But the second church was built under the direction of none other than Father Munschina. This vigorous priest, who was to become known as the builder, was transferred in November 1845 from Fort Wayne to Long Branch, later called St. Ann in Jennings County. Here he built a church and rectory, both of logs. From this mission center he attended the congregations of Napoleon, Four Corners, St. Magdalen and, for the second time, our community in Millhousen. With his guidance, the Millhousen parishioners built a brick church at a very modest cost. It was dedicated in 1850, and St. Boniface remained the patron saint. Carrying on the educational program of his predecessor, Father Munschina transformed the old log church into a school and employed a Mr. Kramer as teacher.

Our parish prospered under the administration of Father Munschina, but so did his other missions. He built a church of frame construction in Napoleon, established a school at St. Magdalen, and at Four Corners, also known as Buena Vista, he built a church dedicated to St. James. In 1854, Father Munschina was appointed pastor of Lanesville. There he opened a school and built a new church. And there he remained until his death in 1898 at the age of eighty-three.

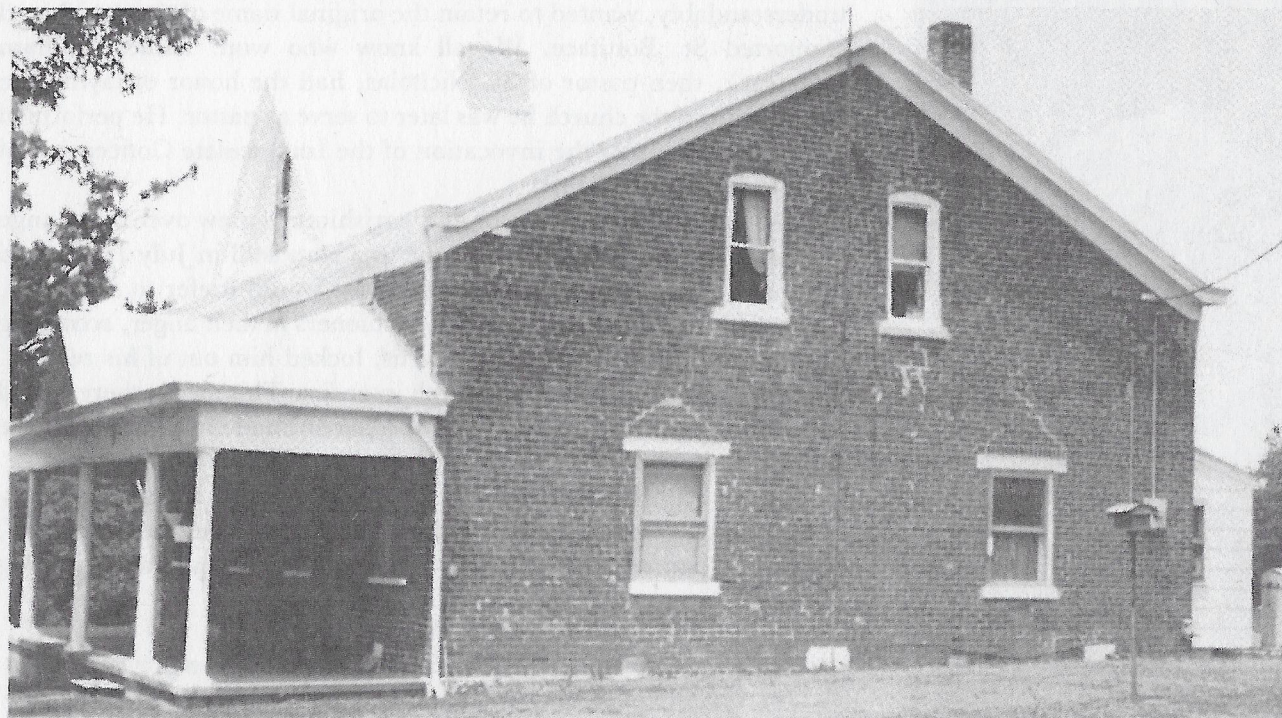
After the transfer of Father Munschina, the pastor of St. Nicholas was given the charge of Millhousen. Born in Germany, as were all the early priests except the Irishman, Father Peter Kreusch was a priest of the Cleveland, Ohio, Diocese before joining the Diocese of Vincennes. In 1856, he moved to Millhousen as the first resident pastor.



The rectory is 128-years-old and in remarkably good condition.

The first thing he did was draw plans for a place to live. To save money, Father Kreusch was his own architect, contractor and builder. The rectory stands today as a monument to his ability. The total cost was \$800. Father Kreusch was also responsible for building a larger school building and offering living quarters for the teacher. And he was long remembered as the pastor who brought to Millhousen the famous Jesuit missionary, F. X. Wenninger, who preached a month-long mission. Father Kreusch accomplished much in a short time. He left Indiana in 1857 to become pastor of St. Nicholas Church, Wheeling, West Virginia, where he remained twenty-six years before retiring.

With the departure of Father Kreusch, the parish was without a resident pastor and was attended for a year by Father Peter Waeber, the assistant of Father Rudolf at Oldenburg. Then a Dutchman, Father Arnold Pinkens resided in Millhousen for five months only to move to Alton, Illinois, where a friend of his had been named the bishop.



One of the oldest homes. Barney Zepf built this as a residence in the early 1860's. In the basement he stored a large variety of goods which he peddled for a living — first on foot, then on horseback and finally with a huckster wagon.

From November 1858 to September 1859, Father John Peter Vogt was resident pastor. He left to join the Chicago Diocese. Though his stay was short, he was much esteemed by the parishioners.

Father Janarius Weisenberger, who was ordained for the Diocese of Vincennes at the age of thirty-five in 1857, served as pastor of St. Boniface from September 1859 until April 1861. We are indebted to him for a complete census of the parish he compiled in 1860. He left the diocese after a few months as assistant pastor at Oldenburg and moved to Ohio, where he served in six different parishes until his death in 1890.

For a few months Father Francis Klein, pastor of St. Nicholas, looked after the parish of St. Boniface. In October 1861, however, Father John Baptist Weikmann became the resident pastor. He was remembered for his eloquent sermons and for obtaining a pipe organ for the church, installed in 1862 at a cost of \$625. He left Millhousen

after serving the parish less than two years. Father Weikmann was typical of so many of the priests born in Germany. They were adventuresome souls who volunteered for missionary life in a new unknown world. They found it hard, seemingly, to remain long at one post. Father Weikman served as a priest in Germany for nineteen years before coming to the United States. He labored for several years in Ohio and Wisconsin before his short stay in Indiana. He returned to Ohio for a year and then moved to Iowa, where he founded a parish in New Vienna in that State. There he died in 1870.

Between November 1863 and March 1864, Father Klein from St. Nicholas and Father John P. Gillig, the pastor of St. Vincent's, Shelby County, shared responsibility for Millhousen. Father Gillig will feature prominently in our story later.



A New Church and Troubles

The priest who began the building of the third Millhousen church was Father Ferdinand E. Hundt, who began his pastorate in March 1864. The parish had outgrown the old church and the parishioners had become more prosperous. Father Hundt visited every family in 1865 promoting the idea of a new and much larger church and asking for pledges of money to make it possible. The parishioners responded with pledges amounting to \$12,255. The parish engaged Louis Riedinger as architect, and building operations began in 1866.

May 25, 1867 was set for the laying of the cornerstone. Serious tensions between pastor and parishioners built up before the day arrived. Father Hundt, noted for his devotion to the Blessed Virgin, wanted the new church to be dedicated to Mary Immaculate; the parishioners, understandably, wanted to retain the original name of the parish and supported St. Boniface. We all know who won. Father William Pepersack, then pastor of St. Nicholas, had the honor of laying the cornerstone of the church he was later to serve as pastor. He performed the ceremony under the invocation of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

As tensions between pastor and parishioners grew over the change of names, building operations came to a standstill in July 1867. And here we come to a part of our history we would prefer to skip over. Father Hundt left the parish. The parishioners in their anger, according to the story that has come down to us, locked him out of his rectory. The parish was placed under church interdict. This meant there would be no Mass nor Sacraments until the parish made its peace with the bishop. For six months no priest came to Millhousen.

Father Hundt was transferred to New Alsace. He subsequently served the communities of St. Andrew, Richmond, Aurora, St. Peter's, Franklin County, and North Vernon. He was known as a fascinating

The wedding picture of Barney Zapf and Adelheid Fiehe, married October 6, 1863. Barney is a good example of the early Millhousen entrepreneur. he came from Germany as a teenager, began making a living as a peddler of variety goods on foot, prospered enough to afford a horse, then a huckster wagon, and finally built a large general store with living quarters above. His wife's name, Fiehe, was the original for what became Fry in our time. Barney died in 1906; his wife died in 1926.

conversationalist and an excellent writer. As pastor in North Vernon, he served as editor of *Norddeutsche Katholik*, published in Detroit. He retired in Richmond where he died and was buried on December 9, 1897, the day after the feast of Mary Immaculate, whom he loved so much.

In January 1868, the interdict was lifted by the bishop and a new pastor arrived, Father Herman Hueser, D.D. Millhousen was his first pastorate after leaving his native Germany. He began his work in the new world with great enthusiasm. The new church was completed within a year. On August 4, 1869, Bishop Maurice de St. Palais dedicated it with the title, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and placed it under the patronage of St. Boniface. A nice diplomatic compromise, which as we know, did not help St. Boniface very much in the end. His name was kept alive for some years because Father Hueser remodeled the old church into class rooms and named

it St. Boniface School.

The estimated cost of the new St. Mary Church (that seemed to be the popular name for it in the past) was \$30,000. To this must be added \$925 for three bells installed in the tower, plus \$2,000 for the frescoing of the interior by the artist William Lamprecht. Added to the parish debt was \$975 for the first convent to house two Sisters of St. Francis, who taught in the new St. Boniface School.

To meet these expenses, the \$12,225 raised from the original pledges was not enough. Father Hueser raised another \$3,500 in donations from parishioners, but this left a debt in excess of \$18,000. A doctor of theology, Father Hueser was a scholar and a saintly man; a financial wizard he was not. In October 1870, he was forced to resign. This, however, was not his last contact with the people of Millhousen. He was invited to join a colonization project in Tennessee. A number of Millhousen families joined Father Hueser in the newly founded

settlements at Lawrence and Loretto, Tenn. These settlements eventually failed; the former Millhousen residents scattered to different parts of the country. Dr. Hueser returned to Indiana to serve as pastor of SS. Peter and Paul, Huntington, for twenty-six years. The last twelve years of his life he spent in retirement in Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Father William Pepersack, the next pastor, was confronted with the task of re-establishing the credit of the parish. He raised almost immediately \$3,232 from donations from parishioners. This, plus the money from the sale of the Henry Moenedick farm (left to the parish by his will), reduced the debt some \$4,000. Seven years later the parish subscribed \$2,905. Nine-hundred of this was needed for the installation of two furnaces and other improvements in the church. The remaining \$2,000 lowered the debt.



The original Sisters convent still stands this sesquicentennial year. Msgr. Moorman lived here during his retirement.

These were not easy years to raise money. 1875 was a year of financial panic. Barney Hardebeck went bankrupt, had to close his grist and sawmills and sell his woolen factory. Bernard Zapfe, Bernard Brinkman and Adam Stahl bought it only to see it destroyed by fire a few months later.

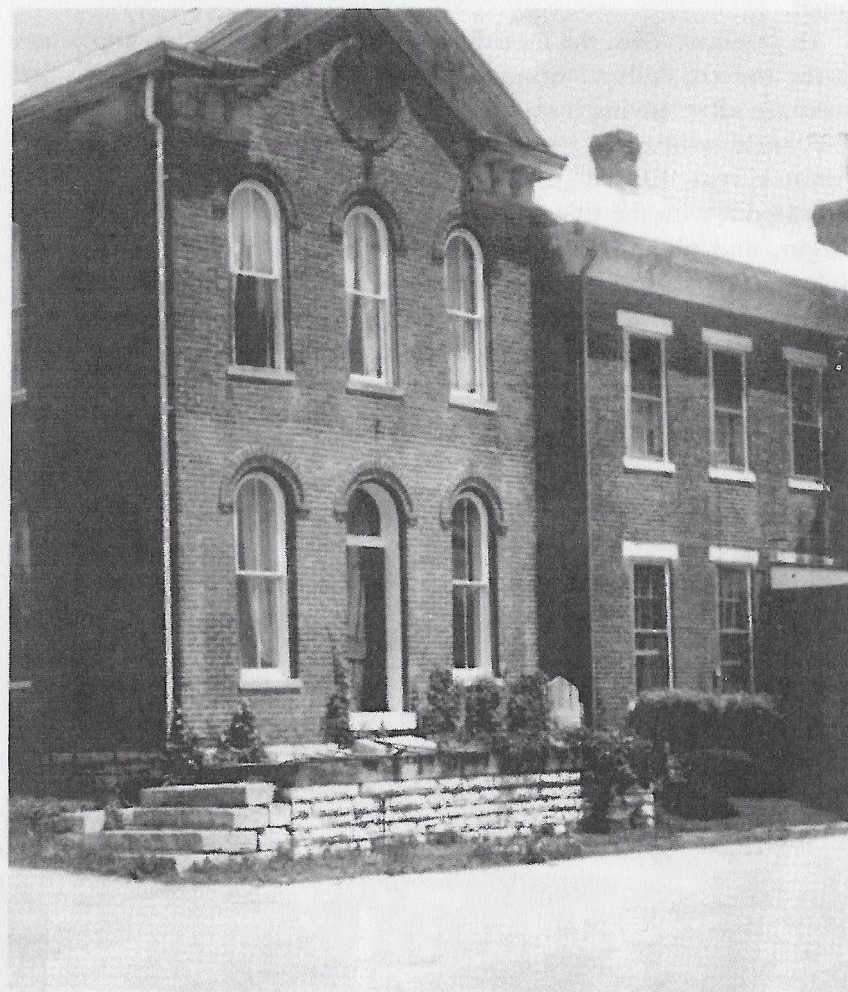
In the year 1880, more expenses challenged the parish. The new Bishop, Francis Silas Chatard, expressed the wish that a special school be established for the older boys of Millhousen. Father Pepersack invited his friend, Father Roman Weinzoeplen, to return to the parish to plan and supervise the construction of the new school. Men of the parish donated their equipment, labor and time required in hauling the stone and brick and other building materials, thus holding the cost at no more than \$2,000. The new school was blessed on September 1880 and placed under the patronage of St. Aloysius, patron of youth.

In the same year the old St. Boniface School (the old church building) was given a new appearance. The steeple was taken down, the old windows replaced and new shingles added to the roof. And this cost \$600. Father Pepersack raised only \$1,300 for these additions and improvements to the parish property. So, when he left Millhousen in 1885, the debt was still impressive at \$11,325. Until his death in 1907, Father Pepersack served as chaplain of St. Mary Hospital in Evansville. Father Riebenthaler, in his centennial history, recalled how he sang in the choir at St. Anthony Church in Evansville when Father Pepersack celebrated his fiftieth anniversary of ordination.

The parish owes much to Father Pepersack. He was responsible for establishing Millhousen's reputation for good solid education. He had been an excellent teacher before beginning his studies for the priesthood. In fact, he taught school at St. Wendel, Posey County, in southern Indiana when Father Weinzoeplen had been pastor, and this is when the two became close friends.

Father Pepersack brought unity to a parish that had suffered from dissension. Bishop Alerding, in his history of the Diocese of Vincennes, made this observation: "Millhousen had in it from the beginning a turbulent element which caused much trouble and retarded the good work of building up the congregation very much. But thanks to the firm and prudent course pursued by the present pastor (Pepersack) this element is gradually subsiding."

Fortunately, history is silent about who made up that element. It would be unworthy of us today to hazard a guess and an ugly demonstration of ingratitude to the pastor who brought about the harmony the parish subsequently enjoyed.



East High Street — unfortunately unoccupied today.

End of the Pioneer Days

It was during the pastorate of Father Pepersack that Bishop Francis Silas Chatard became the Bishop of Vincennes. He was installed in the Cathedral of St. Francis Xavier at Vincennes, August 11, 1878. He announced that he would live in Indianapolis, and there, one week later, he pontificated solemn Mass for the first time in St. John's Church, then not yet completed. Permission to change the name of the diocese from Vincennes to Indianapolis was not granted by Rome until 1898. But the year Bishop Chatard took up residence in Indianapolis, the rugged pioneer life of the early and middle nineteen hundreds, when Vincennes was considered the symbol of civilization, had disappeared. Thriving towns and cities had taken the place of the rude settlements of the earlier days.

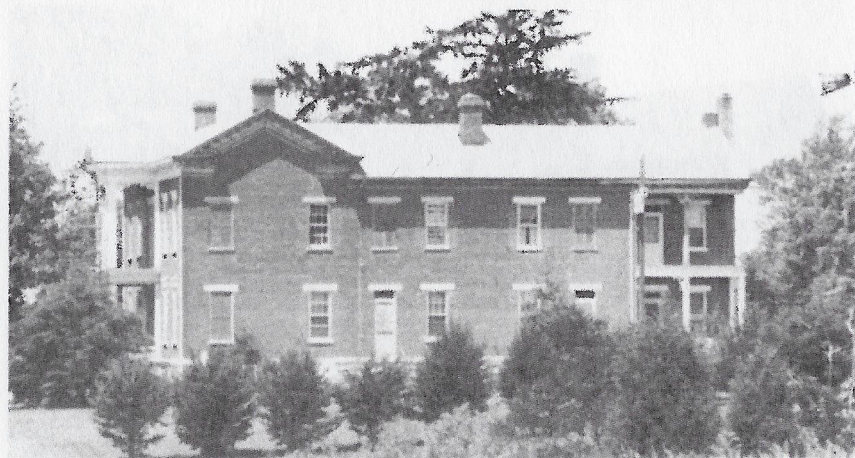
Millhousen was such a thriving town. Here is how it was described in the *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Decatur County, Indiana, 1882*: "It contains hotels, large tannery, planing mill and sash and door factory, several stores and saloons. It also has a Catholic Church with a membership of 2,000—the largest church in Decatur County. Millhousen is the most picturesque town in the county and does a good business, being the center of a large German population, which extends into the adjoining counties."

Curious to know more about those hotels, we discovered more information in an 1885 publication, *Leading Industries of the Principal Places in Decatur, Bartholomew, Jackson and Lawrence Counties, Indiana*. (Incidentally, this 1885 publication describes Millhousen as founded by thirteen German families led by Maximilian Schneider, "who settled here in 1838.")

The Spander Hotel, John Spander — proprietor, was described as Millhousen's leading hotel, "the favorite stopping place for all traveling men, commercial travelers and others." It was established in 1875 by John D. Hardabeck. Here is how it appeared in 1885.:

"The hotel building is 36 x 100 feet, one- and two-stories in height, with ample accommodations for twenty-five persons; the bar and billiard room is one of the finest in the county, supplied with a full stock of refreshments, wines, liquors, cordials and cool beer."

With equal enthusiasm, the publication wrote about the older and smaller Western Hotel, run by John Wittkemper. First opened in 1868



Millhousen's showpiece is the historic home built by Barney Hardebeck about 1854. For many years it was owned by the Feldman family and was known as the Ben Feldman home. Unoccupied for a number of years it came to be known by the children as the haunted house until it was purchased by a Protestant family, William and Jane Wheatley, who to the joy of the community are gradually restoring it to its original beauty.



This modernized structure was once the Western and then the Decatur Hotel owned by the Witkemper's. Stephen and Andrea Witkemper Ronsheim enlarged the building, brick veneered it and built several modern sheds in which they manufactured a machine for splitting logs. The business failed and the buildings are now in the hands of bankers.

by H. Brinkman, this hotel had a rapid succession of owners (Rubger and Frey, B. Brinkman, John Fromer, and George Redlake) before Wittkemper took it over in 1881. The Western had nine rooms and was patronized by the traveling public, the surrounding farming community and permanent boarders. This hotel also had a bar and billiard room, "where at all times the stranger or citizen can obtain all the cool and fresh beverages, such as lager beer, ale, wines, liquors, etc." The Western later became known as the Decatur Hotel.

The 1885 publication paid a special tribute to Mrs. George Moorman, relating how, in 1871, her husband George Moorman died leaving his widow, Mrs. E. Moorman, in sole charge of his business, which duty she had performed with marked success." This business included, besides a general store, the manufacture of furniture and a flour and planing mill.

But now back to the 1882 atlas. This useful book describes Millhousen as having "a graded school, supported during the public school term by the Trustee with the public funds and continued three or four months longer by the Catholic Church authorities."

The article in the atlas went on to say: "The first public school in Millhousen was taught by Leon Lehman about 1854. The school

house was built by Hardebeck, Straubach and Ruhle, being a private enterprise." (This may have been a reference to the school built while Father Kreusch was pastor in 1856 or 1857).

The article added: "Mr. Lehman continued in charge of the school some ten years. In 1870, three Franciscan Sisters were employed and the school graded. In 1880, a new school house was erected by donations from members of the Catholic Church. The building was furnished by the Township Trustee. There are employed three teachers, M. J. Keller, and two sisters who have been employed in the school for ten years and are excellent teachers. The work done in the school is thorough."

Interesting that our Catholic ancestors wanted and paid for considerably more school days a year than required for other public schools. What happened to the third Sister? Was she just the cook and housekeeper? Well, in another part of the atlas there were separate articles about the schools in the county. Father Pepersack contributed the one on Millhousen, in which we find this:

"At present they (Millhousen citizens) have two large splendid school buildings of brick, with four rooms, where more than 200 children are educated by four teachers—three female and one male. The teachers keep public school in compliance with all the requirements of the laws of Indiana. The female teachers are Franciscan Sisters from Oldenburg; they have chosen their profession for life; it is their vocation; they do not look upon it as a stepping stone to something else."

Besides his other accomplishments, Father Pepersack seems to have been a good promoter and salesman.

Though the 1882 atlas described Millhousen as a thriving town, it was not until 1887 that the citizens obtained incorporation papers from the Decatur County Commissioners Court. Bernard Feldman was elected the first town clerk and treasurer, and chosen as trustees to represent the three districts into which the town was divided were Joseph Keller, Louis Huegel and Joseph Moorman.

The new officers immediately enacted a number of ordinances. Among them several seem amusing for us today: "Chapter 1, section 1: It shall be hereafter unlawful for any person to commit an act of misdemeanor, viz.: by intoxication, fighting, quarrelling, throwing stones or shooting tending to endanger person or property, carrying concealed weapons, interfering with the free use of the streets and alleys, riding or driving on or over sidewalks. Any person violating this Section shall on conviction be fined not less than 50 cents nor more than Ten Dollars for each offense."

Records of the Incorporated Town of Millhausen Decatur County Indiana

Be it known that at the September Term 1887
of the Commissioners Court for the County of
Decatur State Indiana George Bohrs, John
Spanner and George M. Schindler and others
by their Attorney Ewing & Ewing filed in
said Court their petition to Incorporate the
Town of Millhausen bounded as follows:

All of Section 20 Town 9 Range 10 in said
County as bounded by the Section line thereof
except the South East corner thereof in.

Ripley County Indiana. Also the East half
of the North East quarter of Section 19 Town
and Range aforesaid as bounded by the
lines thereof containing seven hundred fifty
two and forty two hundredths ($752\frac{42}{100}$) acres.

The Survey of the aforesaid tract of land
being taken by James Puls surveyor of
Decatur County Indiana.

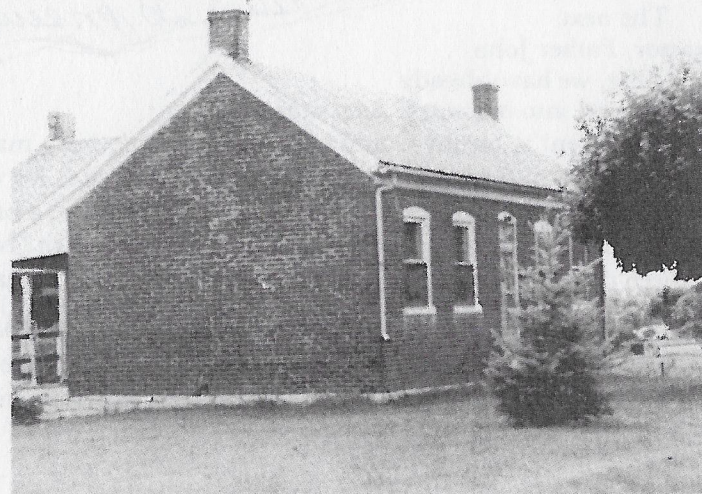
That afterwards such proceedings were had
as that said town was at the December Term
of said Court duly incorporated according
to law.

That afterwards on the 26th day of December
1887 an Election was held as provided by law
for the election of Officers as follows. A Clerk &
Treasurer and three Trustees and said town was
divided into districts as follows.

"Chapter 3, section 1: Cattle or hogs may be left out to
run in streets or alleys within said corporation. Hogs must
be ringed to prevent them from rooting, etc."

Succeeding Father Pepersack was Father Joseph
Schuck. A little man with loads of energy and a great talent
for organizing, he was able, with the help of Ben Feldman
and two-thirds of the parish who donated, to lower the
indebtedness \$7,425. This so pleased the bishop that he
absorbed \$2,500 of the remaining debt. Father Schuck did
considerable tidying up of church property and contracted
for the repair of the church roof and tower.

In 1888, Father Schuck was asked to organize the new
parish of St. Anthony in Evansville. Records seem to show
that while doing this he remained pastor of Millhausen.
It was then that Father Alexander Koesters was made his
assistant. The parents of this priest were non-Catholics.
He became a Catholic before he left Germany. He was
a tall, powerful man, a humorist and satirist with consider-
able literary talent. He remained at Millhausen until June
1891, when Father Schuck because of ill health retired to
his native Bavaria in Germany.



One of the oldest houses — empty today.

Millhousen Ind

Aug. 29, 89

This contract entered into this date above men-
tioned between Rev. Father Joseph Schuck of first
part & O.L. Puls & Co. as contracting parties
of second part Dittussett;

That said parties of first part. are to furnish
all scaffold lumber necessary, scaffold in putting
up cornice & sheeting & rafters for tower.

& That said parties of second part. are to
repair entire cornice of main building along eaves

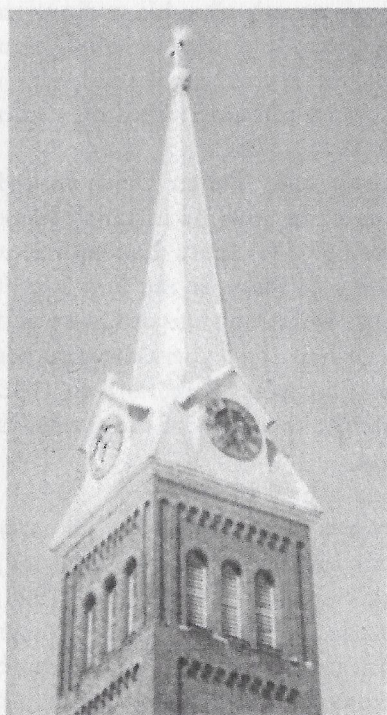
with new planer, drip & crown mold & add mould
Eight in gutter of best tin now being
at present gutter to be left in
sidered insufficient

The next
pastor, Father John
P. Gillig, we have already
introduced into our story. As pastor
of St. Vincent's, Shelby County, he had been one busy man.
In the space of four years he procured building sites for churches in Shelby-
ville and Greensburg, built a frame church in Acton, a brick church in Martinsville
and a school at St. Paul. He was later in charge of St. Magdalen, Ripley County, where he paid the
church debt out of his own means, and then St. John's, Starlight, before he came to Millhousen in 1891.

"Father John," he was affectionately called by the Millhousen parishioners. With the parish free
of debt and the property in good condition, he was able to devote all his energies to the spiritual welfare
of the parish. His devotion to the care of souls was still remembered by many of those who were
old-timers when our parish celebrated the centennial in 1934.

Father John left some landmarks
of his thirteen years with us. The most
visible is the spire on the church
tower. On October 21, 1892, the
tower, which rises to a height of 170
feet, was completed when the cross
was fixed to the spire. It must have
been an exciting day in the history of
the parish. Here is how Father
Riebenthaler described it:

"On the day of its completion, at
9:30 a.m., a solemn High Mass of
Thanksgiving was celebrated. At 1:30
p.m., a parade to the church graced
the streets of the village; steam en-
gines were fired up and whistles ad-
justed. After the blessing of the cross,
it was tied securely to the hoisting
ropes. The dangerous task of placing
the cross was assigned to Herman
Scheidler and J. Voges, who were
high up on the tower balancing them-
selves on a narrow scaffold. Many
willing hands drew the cross, by rope
and pulley, to the heights. Then came
the real feat of planting the cross in
its place; a few breathless moments—
and, as the cross sank to its place, a
pandemonium of cheering joined the
loud shrieks of whistling steam
engines to rent the air. The sudden-
ness of this outburst nearly caused the
men on the scaffold to lose their
balance and only great presence of
mind made them hold fast to their
precarious position." (Interesting
enough: Herman Scheidler had been
the first baby baptized in the new
church.)



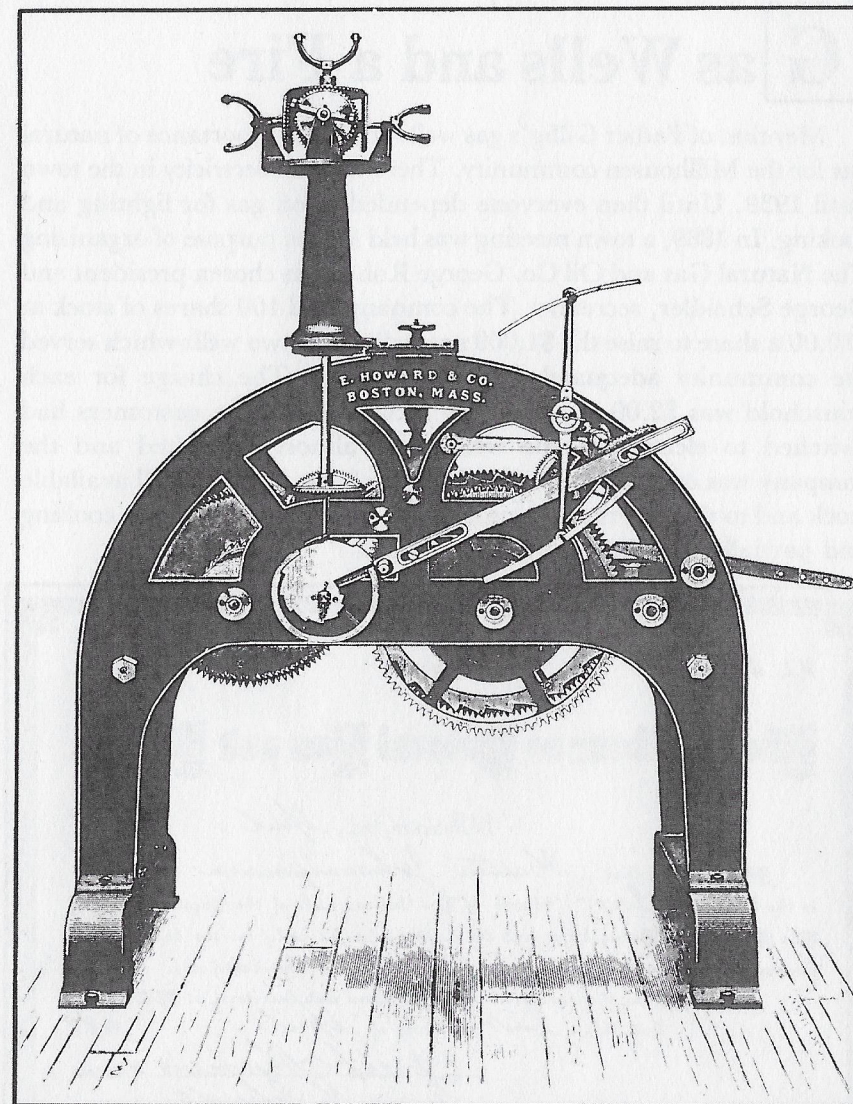
In 1899, a Howard tower clock was installed above the belfry. The Society of St. Joseph sponsored and headed the list of contributors. In 1903, the church was frescoed. Father Paul Buel was the assistant pastor then. Father John assigned him the task of raising the \$1,100 needed for this project. Young trees were cut to build the scaffolding for the decorating. Records show that the church presented the appearance of a forest.

And then there was the gas well. Father John had it drilled at his own expense. It was still

“going strong” at the time of the centennial. Rather than ask financial recompense from the parish, Father John donated “his” well to the parish with the stipulation that he be permitted a place of burial in the parish cemetery and that a yearly Mass be celebrated for sixty years for the repose of his soul and the souls of his brothers, Fathers Stephan and Matthias Gillig. Father John retired in 1904 to St. Edward’s Hospital in New Albany. He died April 25, 1908 and was buried in our cemetery, the first priest to lie there.

Yes, there were three priests in the one Gillig family. When the father died in Germany, the mother brought her three sons to the United States and somehow found Indiana. John was ordained in 1859 and immediately appointed pastor of St. Mary-of-the-Rocks. Here, in the rectory, the youngest brother, Mathias, born 1850, and the mother made their home, while Stephan was preparing for the priesthood at St. Meinrad Seminary. Matthias was known as “Matzie” or as the “Pastor’s Junge.”

Only Matthias is part of our story. After his ordination in 1874, he served as pastor of Mt. Vernon, St. Nicholas and Hamburg before he came to Millhousen as assistant to his older brother, John. His life ambition had been to found a new



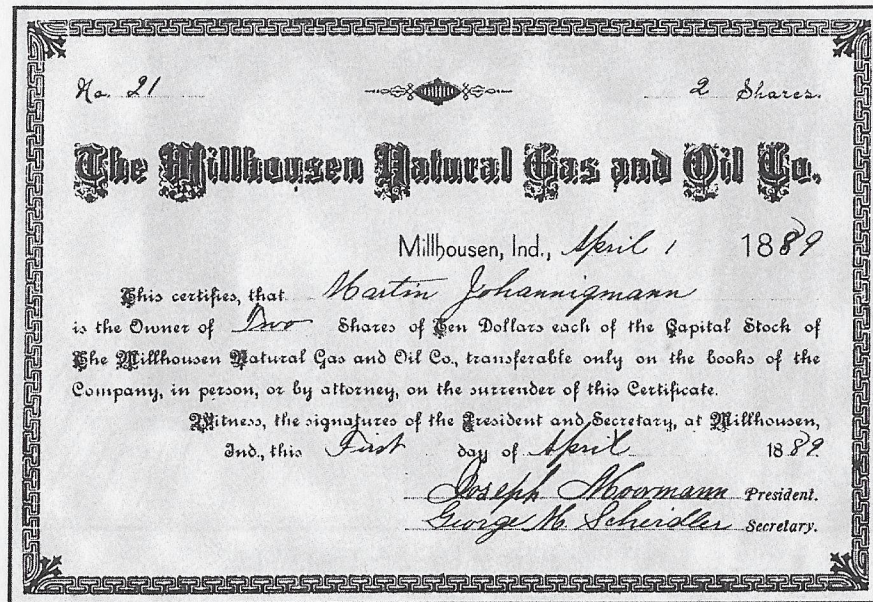
Inside secrets of our Striking Clock.

parish and build a church. He realized this in 1894, when his brother obtained permission from Bishop Chatard for him to establish

the parish of St. Dennis in Jennings County and build its church. He died March 9, 1903, and is buried in the cemetery there.

G as Wells and a Fire

Mention of Father Gillig's gas well recalls the importance of natural gas for the Millhousen community. There was no electricity in the town until 1939. Until then everyone depended upon gas for lighting and cooking. In 1889, a town meeting was held for the purpose of organizing The Natural Gas and Oil Co. George Rohrs was chosen president and George Scheidler, secretary. The company sold 100 shares of stock at \$10.00 a share to raise the \$1,000 needed to drill two wells which served the community adequately for many years. The charge for each household was \$2.00 a month. By 1952, most of the customers had switched to electricity—the wells were almost exhausted and the company was operating at a loss. William I. Stone bought all available stock and to this day realizes enough gas from the old wells for cooking and partially heating his home.



After the retirement of Father John Gillig, Father Michael Wagner administered the parish for a half year until the appointment of Father John Adam Urich. Born in 1863 in St. Joseph, Vanderburgh County, he was the first pastor born in the United States. He was educated

at St. Meinrad and ordained in 1886. A month after his ordination he became pastor of St. Ann, Jennings County. He came to Millhousen in 1904 and served faithfully for twenty-three years until 1927, when he moved to St. Anthony, Morris, where he remained until his death in 1939.

In his long and spiritually fruitful pastorate, Father Urich looked after the church building with loving care. In 1908 he installed three new altars. Subscriptions for these totaled \$2,471, more than sufficient to cover the actual cost of \$1,975. 1908 was the year the first son of the parish became a priest. Father George Moorman was ordained and offered his first Mass in the refurbished church. Two years later, Father Albin Scheidler, C.P.P.S., offered his first Mass here, and in 1913 Father Asbin's brother George became the third son of the parish to celebrate his ordination and first Mass.

1908 was also the year that tragedy struck the town.

"Millhousen is on fire and the town is threatened, was the early morning announcement conveyed to us by telephone this (Tuesday) morning," was the way the Greensburg News for September 25, 1908, began the report. The account continued: "Mrs. John Spander owns the hotel property, which includes with it a livery barn, a bar room and a dance hall. The livery barn is managed by Joe D. Plumm and the saloon is owned by Bernard Goldschmidt and managed by his brother, John. At 4:30 o'clock this morning, Mrs. Spander, who was sleeping upstairs, was attracted by a noise and discovered a fire in the bar room.

"The alarm was at once sounded, but the flames spread almost as rapidly as the alarm, so that within a very short time the store building on the east, belonging to the heirs of the late Barney Koors, was on fire, as was the large livery barn in the rear of the Spander hotel and the other smaller barns and buildings surrounding, seven buildings in all succumbing to the flames, with a total loss of near \$7,000 and only \$1,300 of insurance.

"The hand engine owned by the town was out of repair, so that the bucket brigade was enlisted to fight the fire, but everything being so dry, they were hardly a hindrance to the spreading flames."

The year 1914 marked the beginning of the Millhousen Knights of St. John, with 36 charter members. The first officers were: Rev. A. J. Urich, chaplain; Dr. N. C. Bauman, president; Ed Luken, first vice-president; John B. Rolfes, second vice-president; Bernard



Graduation Class of 1921 in front of old St. Boniface school. (Left to right) Top row: Vincent Butz, Bill Schoettmer, Raymond Hessler, Joe Harpring, Ferd Buening, Urb Cord, Carl Herbert, Clem Redelman, Richard Scheidler, Frank Ortman. Middle Row: Cyril Blankman, Raymond Fry, Carl Schneider, Albert Schoettmer. Lower row: Betty Meyer, Alma Scheidler, Clara Hessler, Bernadett Korman, Rosemary Feldman, Edna Herbert, Blanche Goldschmidt, Luella Luken, (Need Name) Schoettmer, Katherine Schraer, Clara Ortman.



Knights of St. John in all their glory, posing in 1951. (Left to right) Top row: Lawrence Moorman, Clem Koors, Bernard Bruns, Edward Luken, William Stone, Frank Herbert, Everett Wenning, James Feldman, Urban Cord, Harry Dwenger. Bottom Row: Charles Witkemper, Frank Brancamp, Jack Halstead, Carl Schneider, Edward Feldman, Alvin Cord, Norbert Duerstock, Harry Schoettmer, Edmund Wenning.

Blankman, recording and corresponding secretary; Edward Kroeger, financial secretary; B. W. Zapfe, treasurer; John Schoetmer, captain; and George Fry, William Fry, Lawrence Ruhl, Joseph Duerstock and Bernard Harping, trustees.

We'll pause here and share some interesting sidelights gleaned from that 1915 history of Decatur County. A short article on Millhousen in this publication expressed admiration at the enterprise and energy of the Germans, who because of their poverty had settled on what was regarded as almost worthless land, built up the soil and prospered as farmers.

The article pointed out that though the town of Millhousen was seriously handicapped because it was not situated on a railroad it did boast of three public buildings: a town hall with a seating capacity of one-thousand, a solid stone jail with two cells and a fire-engine house. And it emphasized that the Millhousen Telephone Co. was a local concern with its own exchange in B. W. Zapfe's Store.





Still a land-mark on High Street. Barney Zapfe built this as a general store the same year the third church was completed, 1869. The peddler was so successful he could at last expect the people to come to him. His family lived above the store. For a number of years this store housed the central exchange of the Millhousen Phone Co.

It observed that the members of the Millhousen community kept to themselves, noting that their names appear infrequently in the court docket and they rarely sought public office. "They minded their own business and permitted their neighbors to do the same," was the way it was put. However, Bernard Blankman was the county surveyor in 1915. A school teacher educated at Central Normal College, Danville, Indiana, Mr. Blankman had taught himself surveying. He was married to Clara Hardebeck.

Listed as Millhousen town officers for 1915 were: Will Dailey, clerk; John Stuchrenberg, marshal; and councilmen: George Walters, first ward; Edward Henninger, second ward; Anthony Harping, third ward.

(Our ancestors took voting seriously — mostly as Democrats. The files of Greensburg newspapers reveal the following results for presidential elections in the Millhousen precinct: 1896: Bryan (D) 143, McKinley (R) 45; 1904: Parker (D) 135, Roosevelt (R) 42; 1908: Bryan (D) 144, Taft (R) 36.)

Particularly interesting was the list of business operating in 1915:

Barbers: Joseph Pfeifer, John Green.

Blacksmiths: Edward Henninger, John & Louis Scheidler.

Brick & Stone Masons: John Green, Frank Klosterkemper.

Carpenters: Theodore Schneider, Anthony Reisman.

Drugs: Dr. J. C. Glass.

Flouring Mill: Joseph Herbert & Sons.

General Stores: B.W. Zapfe, Philomena Moorman.

Hack Line (Millhousen-Greensburg): Andrew Butz.

Harness: Joseph Herbert & Sons.

Hotel: Ferdinand Wittkemper.

Ice Cream Parlor: Mrs. Mollie Herbert.

Livery: Edward Henninger.

Painter & Paper Hanger: Joseph Pfeifer, John Herbert, Anthony Reisman.

Photographer: Louis Scheidler.

Postmaster: Dr. J. C. Glass.

Physicians: J. C. Glass, Nicholas Bauman.

Sawmill: Joseph Herbert & Sons.

Tinner: Louis Scheidler.

Saloons: Will Link, Ferdinand Wittkemper.

Wagon Makers: George Scheidler, Charles Henninger.



This is the only Millhousen Mill that has survived. Known today as Smith Bros. Feed Mill Inc., it was purchased by Alvin Smith and managed now by his son, Lawrence. The Smiths are not members of the parish, but Lawrence's wife Rebecca (Wilmer) and children are.

Back once more to our story. 1917-18 were challenging years for the German Catholics of the Millhousen community. Their loyalty was suspected by some of their neighbors. German classes in the school had to be discontinued. But at least fifty men of the parish served in the armed forces. In each of the Liberty Loan drives Marion Township exceeded its quota and Millhousen school children raised \$1,600 from the sale of thrift stamps and saving stamps.

The years that followed the war were tranquil.

Before his leaving, Father Urich and the parish had the joy of celebrating the first Mass of the fourth son of Millhousen, when Father Berthold Harpring, O.F.M., was ordained June 10, 1926

The pastor who succeeded Father Urich, Father Francis X. Wolf, was a sick man when he arrived in September 1927. A month later he resigned. For several months, visiting clergy came for Sunday Mass. Among these were Fathers Richard Betz (who died shortly after in a tragic auto accident), Romuald, O.F.M., Thomas McGrath and Joseph Kemp.

It was while the parish was without a pastor that a mini-cyclone struck Millhousen. Part of the church roof was blown off, Mrs. Rose Fry's brick house was damaged and several buildings on George Witkemper's farm lost roofs. This happened November 30, 1927.



The church as it appeared in the days when it was still illuminated by the gas lamps which are easily visible. Notice how daylight could play upon the main altar.

Father Riebenthaler Takes Charge

During a raging snowstorm the night of January 26, 1928, the small but mighty Father Carl Riebenthaler took over the parish—literally and figuratively taking it by storm.



A winter scene, home of the Dale Bruns family.

Born in Evansville in 1890, Father Riebenthaler was ordained a priest May 30, 1917. Before coming to Millhousen, he served as assistant pastor in New Albany, Tell City, Henryville, Charlestown and was pastor at Diamond, near Terre Haute, in charge of several small mission churches and chaplain for the patients at the State Sanitarium at Rockville.

The first challenge for Father Riebenthaler was fire—in the roof of the church. This must have been an exciting moment. The town's only fire-fighting equipment was a hand-operated pumper unable to get water to the high roof. Men climbed up into the church tower, hoisted water in buckets and somehow doused the flames. New asbestos shingles assured fire would not break out the same way again.

The parish cemetery was a mess. People hunted rabbits in it. Even the taller monuments were partially hidden by the tall grass and weeds. It took two years and hours and hours of volunteer labor to tidy the graves and design the impressive cemetery we can brag about today.

According to the financial records of 1932, which show an income of \$1,882 from pew rent and \$257 from Sunday collections, the rectory and Sisters' house were spruced up with papering, painting and new furniture. These and improvements to the parish grounds were preparations for the big event which Father Riebenthaler had in mind

from the day he arrived in Millhousen. This was the centennial of the parish observed in 1934.



Our cemetery, now beautifully kept, must soon be enlarged.

He must have spent many months gathering the material he used to write the history of the town and parish and the biographies of all the former pastors that went into the attractive book he prepared for the occasion. He and the parishioners not only planned long ahead of time and well for the celebration, they made sure of its success with a superb job of publicity.

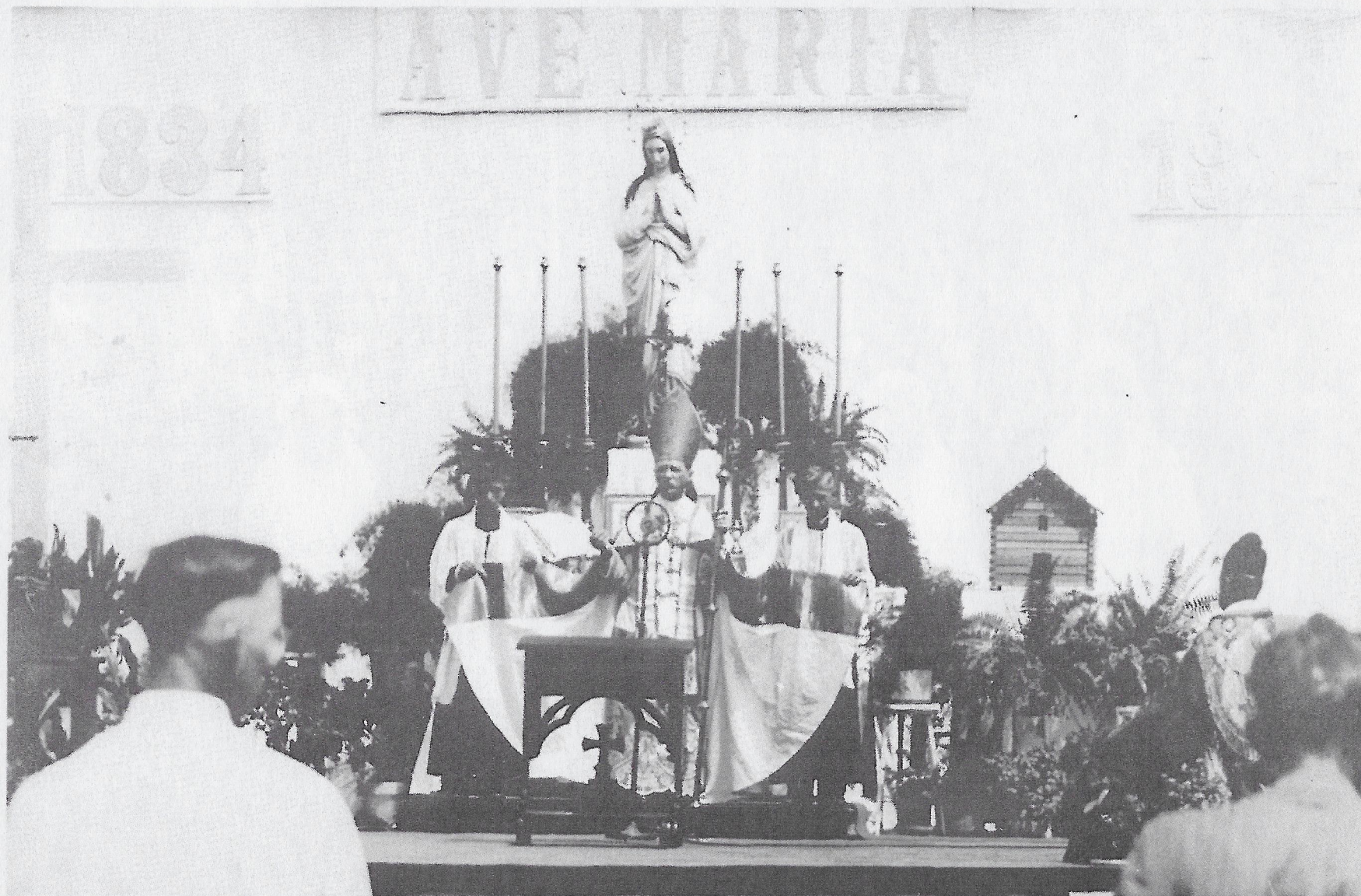
The Greensburg News reported that over 7,000 people crowded into Millhousen for Sunday August 12, 1934. The number may have been slightly exaggerated, but the reaction of the citizens was that the "whole world seemed to be pouring into Millhousen." The highlight of the centennial celebrations was an outdoor solemn high Mass on the ball diamond. Father Riebenthaler's classmate, Bishop Joseph E. Ritter, preached the sermon and four sons of the parish were at the



The graduates of 1933 pose with their pastor in front of the rectory in their solemn communion day finery. (Left to right) Front row: Hilda Scheidler, Leona Hodapp, Frances Stuehrenberg, Dorothy Fisher, Stella Moorman. Back Row: Justin Redelman, Louis Goldsmith, Omer Fry, Victor Butz, Lawrence Luken, Denny Haroring, Father Riebenshale, Lee Veerkamp, Al Brankamp, Robert Fry, Bernard Kesterman, Stanley Witkemper.

altar: Father George Moorman, celebrant, Fathers Albin and George Scheidler, deacons, and Father Berthold Harpring, O.F.M., master of ceremonies. Father Berthold was a Missionary in China visiting home at the time.

There was just the right touch of pageantry. Near the altar was a large cross and a small replica of the original log cabin church, both reconstructed from the logs of the original cabin. There was canonading during the elevation. The people sang in Latin and concluded in



Bishop Joseph E. Ritter preaching at the field Mass celebrating the centennial anniversary of the parish. Youngest bishop in the United States at the time, the future cardinal had been installed as bishop of Indianapolis just several months before the Millhousen commemoration. Note the model of the first church, made from wood that was part of the original structure.

German with "Grosser Gott" (Holy God").

(For those wondering how logs from the first church happened to be still available it may be of interest to know that when Father Kreusch built the first school house in 1857, the log chapel, having served its purpose as a temporary school, was moved across the road and up the hill a bit. It served as the home of the John Voges family, and later Mary Keller lived in it many years. Carl Schneider remembers that she used to fire the furnace in the church every Sunday morning. After her death, Carl's brother, George, tore the old building down in 1930 after he had built his home next to it.)

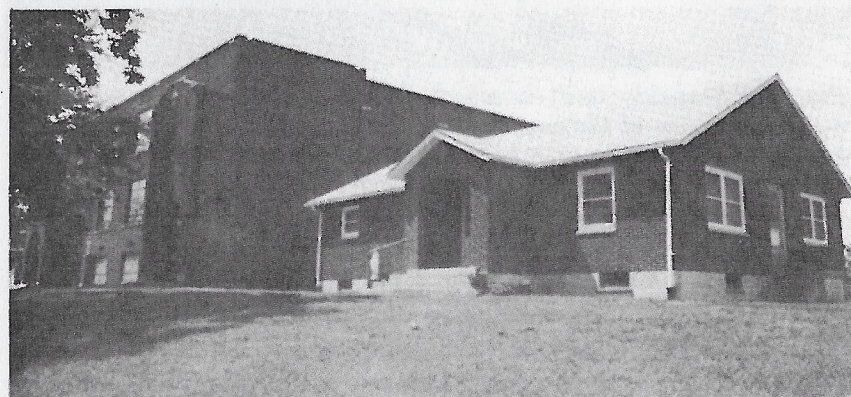


The old church looks out of place and unwanted as the George Schneider house reaches completion. George must have been reluctant to destroy it until he had no choice.

In the year of the centennial, records show there were 700 parishioners, 104 of whom were children in the grade school. There were 21 infants baptized, 6 converts, 4 deaths and 7 marriages.

An important development in the life of the parish during the thirties was the Holy Name Society. Most of the men of the parish belonged to this organization, dedicated to promoting respect for the Holy Name and regular reception of holy communion. The men received communion together each second Sunday of the month. This was helpful to other members of the parish at a time when many Catholics had not yet broken from the custom of receiving only once or twice a year. Unique for such organizations, our Holy Name Society was noted for the fraternal way the members took care of one another. If a member were incapacitated, others would plant or harvest for him; or, after a fire, pitch in and rebuild a barn.

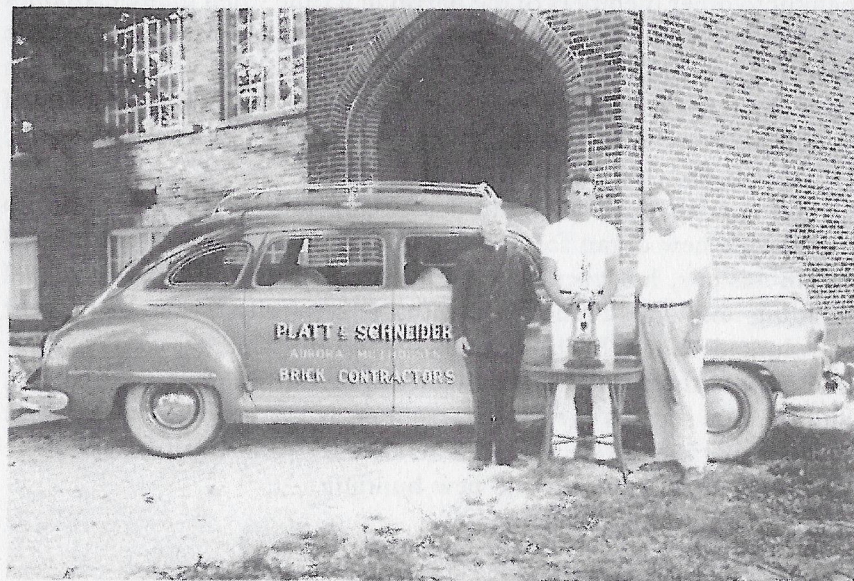
The parish weathered the depression and in 1937 was able to purchase a new organ for \$1,500. The biggest project of this period in our history, however, was the construction of the present school building and gym. Father Riebenthaler inspired a generous turnout of volunteer labor. Each family was asked to donate a week's work, and most of them did. Skilled labor worked for reduced wages of 50¢ an hour. As soon as the school term ended, parishioners set to work demolishing the old St. Aloysius school. By June 20, it was possible to lay the cornerstone of the new building.



The new Sisters' house next to the school. Our pastoral assistant, Rita Kuneven, lives here now.

Platt and Schneider Co. directed the construction. George Schneider, a parishioner, and Herman Heidt, foreman for the company and not a Catholic, donated much of their labor and know-how. Carl Schneider, better known as Charlie, brother of George, recalls with

pride the large number of men who donated their Saturday labor or worked for low pay, as brick-layers, carpenters, plumbers, etc. He vividly remembers the exciting moments when, rather than spend the money for steel-workers, they raised the big beams for the gym without the proper equipment that would have made the job safer and quicker.



Platt and Schneider built the school and gym, but this picture celebrates a victory of one of the employees of the firm. Ralph Bruns holds the trophy he won at the 1948 Indiana State Fair as the best apprentice brick-layer in the State. He is flanked by Father Riebenthaler, who was with him at the fair cheering him on, and his boss, George Schneider.

Charlie also likes to talk about a job he worked on for the parish some years later. The installation of a new furnace in the church required the building of a tall chimney. Father Riebenthaler's brother, Tony, directed this undertaking. Dale and Ralph Bruns helped lay the brick. Charlie built the scaffold. "I don't know how I ever got the courage to work so high in the sky," he marvelled. The chimney used to be higher than it is now; it was struck by lightening a few years back and was shortened in repair.

Charlie has great admiration for the ability of Father Riebenthaler to inspire volunteers and raise the needed financial donations demonstrated in the building of the school. The pastor must have been

his own contractor. A large parish record book lists the amounts he paid for materials, labor and insurance. He and George Schneider must have been pushy bosses, for the building was ready for the opening of the school the same year—dedicated November 3, 1940. After the school was finished there was a parish debt of approximately \$30,000, which was paid off within seven years. That \$30,000, plus a few thousand more, represented the cost of building, experts told Father Riebenthaler, which would have reached at least \$75,000 without the donated labor.



Clem Koors and Gertrude Hessler were married February 26, 1930 at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Millhousen, Indiana.



Sr. Margaret Mary Gertrude Koors



Sr. Alma Scheidler



Sr. Alfreda Scheidler



Sr. Joseph Marie Gertrude Koors

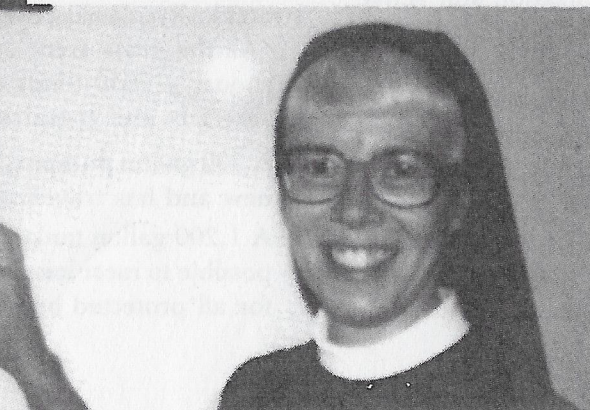
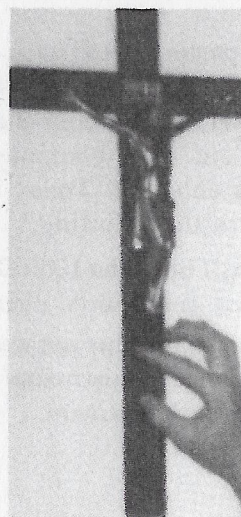


Sr. M. Bernetta Stuhrenberg

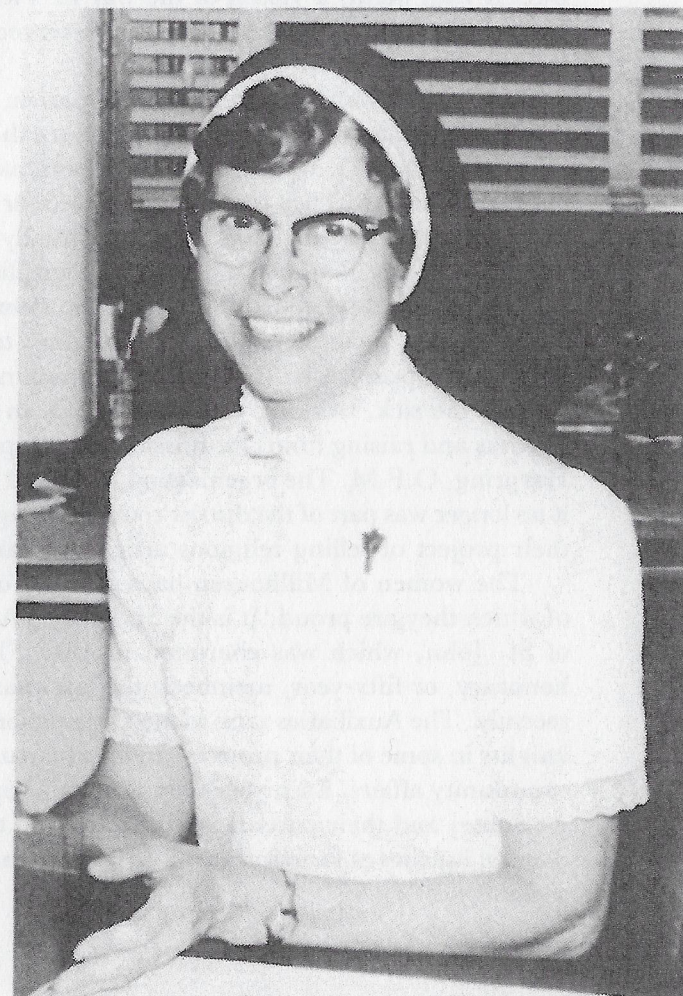
*These girls from
Millhousen
became nuns.*



Sr. Margaret Mary Stuhrenberg



Sr. M. Henriette Stuhrenberg



Sr. M. Janice Scheidler

World War II and After

Like every other community, Millhousen was without its young people during World War II. And five of our young men lost their lives in the service of their country. Early in the war, two died in the same week. Lester L. Picker, a corporal in the air corps, died November 17, 1942, and Victor Butz, private first class in the infantry, died November 22, 1942. A memorial Mass was held for the two of them December 12, 1942. Later in the war, Paul Brancamp, Lawrence Fry and Willard Waters gave their lives. All five are buried in our cemetery. Buried with them, a victim of the war in Vietnam, is John Charles Jacobs. In all 83 members of the parish served in the armed services during World War II.

During the war, the women of the parish, organized as a unit of the National Council of Women, made sure the boys in service would not be forgotten. They sent books and papers, as much as 5,000 pounds, to those in service. They had a Mass offered for them every first Friday and kept a special sanctuary lamp continually burning for them and for peace. They made altar linens and surplices for chaplains. The women observed the fourth Sunday of the month as their communion day and held their meetings this same day to organize their many projects. In peace time these included: making clothes for the poor, visiting the sick, working with the C.Y.O. in their projects, making rosaries and raising funds for missionaries, especially Father Berthold Harpring, O.F.M. The organization remained active until 1968, when it no longer was part of the district council, though the women continued their project of selling religious articles to parishioners until 1976.

The women of Millhousen have another organization still active of which they are proud. It is the St. Mary's Auxiliary to the Knights of St. John, which was chartered in 1917. There are at present 5 honorary, or fifty-year, members; the last charter members died just recently. The Auxiliaries raise money for missionaries, assist the brother knights in some of their projects, and participate in civic, religious and community affairs. Each year they sponsor a supper for the high school graduates and their parents. Fund-raising in the past was done with dances, lunches at farm sales and, in recent years, with a monthly card social.

After the war, Catholic farmers in the United States organized a movement to encourage farmers to remain on the land. Millhousen hosted a Rural Life Sunday in 1947. Over 2,000 attended a field Mass. Archbishop Paul C. Schulte recalled his own happy days growing up on a Missouri farm to preach on the glories of farm life. Throughout the day there were folk dances for adults and games for the children.

In 1948, the Archdiocesan form for reporting the financial status and vital statistics included a space for noting important events that took place in the parish during the year. The following was recorded on our annual report: "At the Indiana State Fair a parishioner, Ralph Bruns, won the apprentice mason competition and brought home a trophy and a \$500 prize."

In 1952, a new convent for the Sisters was built next to the new school. The old convent still stands, looking quite substantial. No one today knows for sure just why it was abandoned. Father Riebenthaler kept cows in a shed next to this convent and he had a menagerie of dogs cluttering the grounds surrounding the convent. Several old-timers have offered the suggestion that the Sisters in their full-length habits found it a hazardous walk between the convent and the church or the new school. The more likely reason was that the Sisters were old and found it hard to walk to school in winter weather.

In 1953 the town organized the Marion Township Volunteer Fire Department to replace the 41-year-old Millhousen Volunteer Fire Department. As the change in name implied, the new department was to protect a much larger territory. A new GMC fully equipped fire-truck replaced the old hand-pumper. A garage was built where the old jail had been.

The original fire department had been organized in 1912, with Ed Henninger, chief and Theodore Schneider, assistant chief. Five strategically placed cisterns were built that first year.

As the years went on, more equipment was purchased and the firehouse several times enlarged. Today the building encloses 1975 square feet and contains the following:

- A 500 gallon pumper. This is the 1953 GMC truck that looks brand new and has travelled only a little over 6,000 miles.
- A 1,200 gallon tanker. This plus the water in the pumper makes it possible to meet insurance requirements and thus assures lower rates for all protected by the department.



M.T.V.F.D. 1953

Millhousen is proud of the Marion Township Volunteer Fire Department. The chief, Bill Stone, keeps the equipment in tip-top shape. The firehouse serves as a civic center where the town board meets and keeps its records.

- A small truck with equipment for fighting brush fires.
- A van with an electric light plant. This carries equipment and firefighters.

All four vehicles have two-way radios. William Stone is the current chief. Directors of the organization are: Lawrence Smith, Ronald Fry, Francis Hoeing, Stephen Stone and Donald Bess. The department is financed by occasional assessments and the annual firemen's picnic.

June 27, 1954 was the day our outdoor Lady of Fatima shrine was dedicated. The Feldmen family donated the statue. The shrine itself cost almost \$1,500.

In 1955, August 15—Rural Life Day was repeated. We have a few more details about this gathering. A newspaper story announcing the event had this: "Following the distribution of Holy Communion in the parish church at 7:45 a.m., the procession will move out to the altar shrine of Our Lady of Fatima for the Field Mass." It would seem odd for us today to separate receiving Communion from the Mass in this fashion, as it would be difficult to sing in Latin with gusto the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei as happened then. According to the same news item, farmers were urged to bring along seeds for special blessings—to be mixed later as a leaven with other seeds for planting.

In 1959, a son of the parish, Father George J. Scheidler, died and became the second priest to be buried in our cemetery. His brother, Father Albin Scheidler, offered the Mass. His father, John J. Scheidler, a buggy and wagon manufacturer at Millhousen for many years, had died in 1946 at the age of 90 years.

In 1962, the church was refurbished to the tune of almost \$14,000. The altars, stations and statues were repainted. The tower was repaired and a new copper cross placed above the ball. At this time the names



Through all the redecorations & changes in the church, one original painting survived: the one on the right above the present organ.

of all the school children were placed in the tower ball. Records for 1963 show an increase in school enrollment from 116 to 145. (Records for 1965 show 168.)

In 1965, our pastor was honored with a certificate of distinction for community service at the annual achievement night of the Decatur County Extension Committee.

In 1966, the school required a new roof. That cost \$2,400. Father Riebenthaler's work was almost finished.

But there was still a big day to prepare for. On May 30, 1967, two of Father's classmates came to Millhousen to celebrate with him their golden anniversary to the priesthood. They were Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter, Archbishop of St. Louis, and Monsignor Clement M. Bosler, pastor of St. Joan of Arc parish in Indianapolis. It was a big occasion, the first time a cardinal visited Millhousen. Ten days later the cardinal died.

Father Riebenthaler retired in September this same year, to live in a home he built on Lake Santee, where he could without hindrance do what he liked to do most after fishing for souls—spend his time with rod and reel outwitting the elusive creatures that live in the water. His housekeeper, Miss Theresa Kaiser and his brother, Anton (Tony) were to live with him but hospitalization and death made this impossible for both of them.





His own health finally failing, Father Carl spent the last two years of his life in the Alexian Brothers Rest Home for retired priests in Signal Mountain, Tennessee. There he died on April 4, 1975.

We close this chapter of our history with a description of the much loved pastor that appeared in the *Greensburg News* story marking the silver jubilee celebration of Father Riebenthaler's ordination in 1942: "Short and stocky, always with a good humor gleam in his eyes—and usually a big, black cigar in his mouth—the popular priest doesn't look the 52 years to which he confesses. In more ways than one he could pinch hit for the traditional absent-minded professor—he sometimes has difficulty in remembering where he has parked his car, but it is not on record that he has ever completely lost it."

Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter comes to Millhousen to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their ordination to the priesthood with his two classmates. Left to right: Father Riebenthaler, Archbishop Paul C. Schulte, Cardinal Ritter and Msgr. Clement M. Bosler.

The Church Is Condemned

The man chosen to succede Father Riebenthaler was Rev. Joseph McCrisaken, director of the Indiana University Catholic Student Center, Bloomington. Father Mac was an out-spoken, rough-and-ready, big-hearted priest who is still remembered for his excellent sermons. He suffered from severe angina pains, which he partially controlled with nitroglycerin pills. He liked to recount how one Sunday morning, while he was vesting in the sacristy for Mass, the heart pains were so severe he couldn't relieve them with the nitro pills so he instructed a server about a certain cabinet in the rectory where a bottle of bourbon was kept. "I took a mighty swig of the whiskey," he said. "The pain stopped and I went out and preached one of my best sermons."

Father Mac had the dubious distinction of leading the parish trustees to close both the church and the parochial school. The parish school enrollment, 130, was holding its own in spite of the fact that some of the children, after completing the sixth grade, opted to attend the new junior high public facilities. But since 1962, the financial aid from the township for the seventh and eighth grades had ceased. And a shortage of teaching Sisters would require higher wages for lay teachers. So in November 1970, the parish petitioned the Archdiocesan Board of Education for permission to close its school. This was granted, and the school closed May 4, 1971. And thus sadly came to an end, after more than one-hundred years, the enormous influence for good and the inestimable contribution to the parishioners' faith and knowledge of the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg.

In 1968, engineers employed by the Aetna Insurance Company declared that because of bulging walls and a sagging of the roof, the church was no longer safe. A number of the old-timers argued that as long as they could remember the church had been in the same condition and nothing had happened. They accordingly opposed the pastor's suggestion that the church be closed.

This began a painful period in the history of the parish. Since there are still doubts in the minds of some of the parishioners concerning what happened and why decisions were made, we have studied the records and present here the sequence of events as best we can put them together.



End of a long era came with the closing of the school. Leaving the convent for good (left to right) were Sisters Mary Salesia, Jovita and Germaine Marie. Betty Johanningman was the primary-grades teacher the final year, 1971.

Coming as an outsider, Father McCrisaken was immediately alarmed by the bulging walls and sagging roof of the church that the congregation had lived with without fear for many years. In July, 1968, when an agent of the Aetna Insurance Co. was making a routine inspection of the property, Father Mac asked for a careful inspection of the church. The insurance company sent special inspectors who reported they were "fearful that the roof of this church will topple into

Father Joseph McCrisaken
with the First Communion
Class of 1968, the last to pose
in the church before it was
condemned.



(Left to right) Bottom row: Jim Hardebeck, Linda Horan, Susan Bruns, Rita Zapfe, June Brancamp, Joe Moorman; Second row: Rita Stone, Ronald Ryan, Ronald Feldman, Andy Wenning, Mark Deurstock, Linda Brancamp; Third row: Patrick Schoettmer, Theresa Schwering, Regina Schwering, Kathy Vanderpohl, Jennifer Doles, Tom Bedel; Fourth row: Steven Schwering, Ricky Koors, Bernard Schwering, Jim Herbert, Derik Jacobs, Paul Johanningman; Top row: Jim Beuning, Norbert Bedel, Father McCrisaken, Roman Johanningman, Steven Stone, Donald Wilmer.

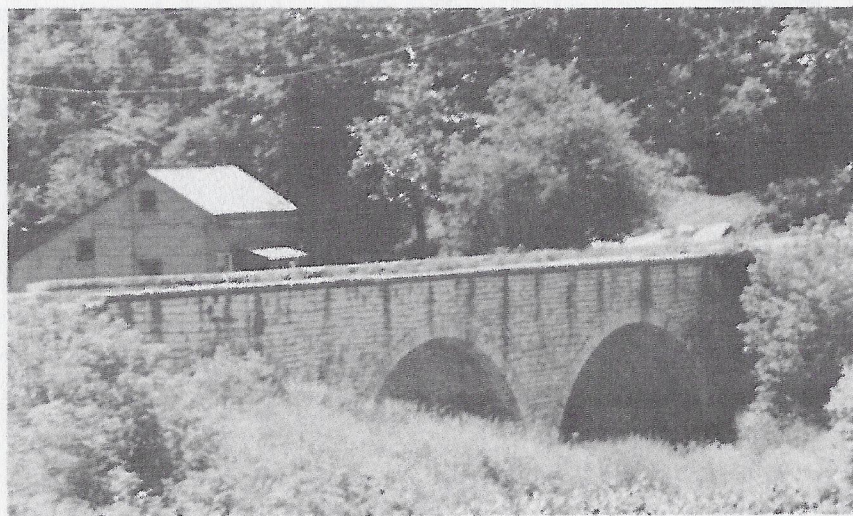


the congregation" and asked that "immediate action be taken by a competent professional engineer to examine and make recommendations necessary for the elimination of this hazard."

When this was reported to Archbishop Paul C. Schulte, he engaged the Wilhelm Construction Co. of Indianapolis to make the examination. On August 7, the company reported to the Herman C. Wolff Co., agents for Aetna, that the church was "unsafe for human habitation."

Upon receipt of this information, Father McCrisaken informed the trustees of the parish, who were unwilling to accept the decision. Informed of this, Archbishop Schulte, on August 16, wrote a letter to the trustees in which he said: "I feel that something must be done to remedy the situation. I do not think that you would wish to jeopardize the lives of your families in a church that has been condemned. If you are not satisfied with the report of the engineers already given, you should get engineers of your own choice, but make sure they are competent ones."

On August 20, the Trustees wrote to the Archbishop expressing their appreciation for his message, adding: "As you know, the opinion



A landmark on the Millhousen Road that leads to Napoleon. The bridge was built by Jacob Herbert of Millhousen. The house in the background belongs to Willard (Buck) Powers, a Protestant. His children attended our parochial school, as did the children of several other Protestant families.

of the engineers was met with emotional shock and disbelief by a large number of parishioners. With this in mind, we feel a course of action is necessary to further satisfy them as to the safety or hazards of our church structure. Initially, we humbly ask your permission to mimeograph copies of your letter to us dated August 16th for distribution to the adult members of our parish. If dissatisfaction still remains, we further propose to hire another competent professional engineering concern to establish an opinion. We are hopeful that through these added efforts a better understanding of our problem will be made available to the members of our parish."

The trustees received permission and circulated copies of the Archbishop's letter. On September 11, Father McCrisaken wrote to the Archbishop, reporting what happened subsequently. These are the pertinent sentences: "Pursuant to your instructions of August 16th, I moved the altar to the gym for Mass last Sunday. There was quite an uproar about this and an unknown person or persons attached to the church doors schedules of Masses in the neighboring parishes. The Trustees helped with the moving and stated to me that they thought most of the people were going to spend 30 minutes in the church building and then go home. Fortunately, this did not happen. However, attendance at Mass was down about 20%. The Trustees engaged an engineer from Greensburg who is named Howard Barth... His time spent in the superstructure of the church was only a small fraction of the time spent there by the Wilhelm people. I had previously gone to the State Office Building to get Bert Westhofer, the head of the Indiana Building Commission, to look at the building for purposes of condemnation. At that time I was privately told in another office that he probably would not condemn it because he didn't want to be involved in a court remonstrance. Mr. Barth, the Trustees' engineer, also contacted Mr. Westhofer. On September 4, Mr. Westhofer and an assistant came here. They talked at some length with Mr. Barth. After that the assistant spent a few minutes in the superstructure and came down. I talked to these two men in my office and they said a written report would be sent to you and to me. I have tried to talk to Mr. Barth and he turned his back and walked away. The Trustees are likewise strangely non-committal. However, there is an opinion in the parish that the church is in good shape; an opinion based on the statements of the Trustees, quoting the aforementioned people."

The Church Is Restored

Father McCrisaken's suspicions were correct. On September 19, Mr. Westhofer sent his report to the Archbishop, Father McCrisaken and Mr. Barth. He was not disturbed by the fact that the exterior walls were out of plumb. "This condition could well have been built that way as some of the parish insist that it was," he explained. Then: "The roof between the trusses shows deflection. However, the timbers appear sound and the truss connections are tight. In my opinion this building is too good to be condemned. The walls do lean outward, but it is claimed they have been out of plumb for as long as the older members of the church can remember. No cracks are evident. . . Why not keep and use the building? We recommend steel tie-rods near the top of the pilasters. . . Do not try to straighten the walls. Outside, a buttress could be built against the pilasters for appearances and reinforcing. With the suggested psychological and physical reinforcement, the church could be used."

It is obvious why there was tension between the pastor and people over the closing of the church. Father McCrisaken, not known for his diplomacy, had let it be known from the first that he wanted the church condemned and torn down. And he seemed to read something into the Archbishop's letter of August 16 that was not there. The implication in that letter was that no final decision be made until the Trustees obtain their own investigation. Father Mac closed the church before the report of that investigation was received. That report, as we shall see, was inadequate. And as it turned out, the church should have been closed. Aetna Insurance was threatening to cancel the fire and liability coverage on the building if it were not closed, and even after it was closed Aetna threatened to cancel the insurance unless a qualified engineer supplied a plan for making it safe and sound. Charles Brown, an Indianapolis architect, submitted a plan complying with the suggestions of the State investigator but would not assume responsibility for the soundness of the repair.

In November, at the request of the Herman Wolff Co., Robert W. Crooks, consulting engineer, and Richard E. Colter, professional engineer, both registered with the State, made an extremely thorough study of the church. They began by examining how the neighboring churches, built about the same time, were constructed. These were the

churches at Batesville, Oldenburg and New Alsace. In their detailed report they claim to have on file 38 colored slides detailing the construction of our building and 38 slides of the other churches.



The children's park on High Street, small but popular with the youngsters.

They studied the reports of the Wilhelm Co., Westhofer, Brown and the Aetna inspectors. They concluded that the observations made by Mr. Wilhelm and his people were essentially correct. Contrary to the observations of Mr. Westhofer, they reported: "We feel that the walls were built plumb since the corners are plumb. Equipment and know-how for constructing plumb structures are essentially the same today as they were in 1850." They concluded that the walls, not thick enough to support the roof properly, were pushed out very soon after construction. "We think that it is particularly significant," they said, "that the walls of Millhousen which had considerable horizontal thrust were built effectively half as thick as the walls at Batesville and Oldenburg which had no horizontal thrust." And they added: "It is dramatically obvious that the structure at Millhousen is not as well braced as the structures at Oldenburg and New Alsace."

These engineers noted that "attempts have been made from time to time to beef up the structure, some of which is very evident and

some of which is subtle and well concealed. The truss has been reinforced with wrought iron ties, some at joints and some across half the width of the truss."

The most significant part of their report is this: "The most serious condition we found was the complete fracture of one of the main chord members of one of the trusses. The member has been repaired, using two steel plates and several bolts. We estimate that the repair was made sometime between 20 and 50 years ago. The repairs have been partially concealed. It is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of the repair. Since the fracture is a brittle fracture, the occurrence must have been very dramatic. Inside the building it would have sounded like a charge of dynamite exploding. Outside, the deflection of the walls would have suddenly increased 2 to 3 inches. . . The state of stress in the roof is highly indeterminate. The condition which caused the fracture in the one member still exist. Another member could break at any time, and it could lead to a progressive failure in which total collapse of the roof and walls could occur in the matter of a few seconds. Age and additional deflection of the walls increase the probability of such a failure."

The engineers were willing to admit: "On the other hand the structure might stand for another 100 years. We must, however, assume that the building is unsafe since human lives are involved."

Contrary again to the Westhofer report, they conclude: "Repair of the roof structure would be very difficult to accomplish in a manner to guarantee that it would be absolutely safe. . . Repair with a tie rod would not repair the broken member nor could it pull the walls back safely to reduce the stress in the unbroken members."

Crooks and Colter did recommend as a solution: "Replace the roof structure completely with a new steel structure which has been adequately designed." This ultimately was what was done, as we shall see. The report of the two engineers reveals they had a thorough knowledge of how to judge the safety of wood structures. We mention this because Mr. Barth and several of the knowledgeable parishioners questioned the opinions of the Aetna and Wilhelm people, since they felt these city engineers could think only in terms of steel and knew little about how to evaluate wooden structure.

Correspondence from the Herman C. Wolff Co. indicate that Aetna Insurance was threatening to cancel fire and liability coverage, urging that the unused church be torn down. On March 7, 1969, the fire insurance was cancelled. On May 15, the Wolff Co. informed Father



This picture shows that, contrary to the original plans, the walls were not lowered three feet for the reconstruction.

McCrisaken that Archbishop Schulte was reluctant to take a definite stand on tearing down the church even though the liability insurance was cancelled. It was recommended that the Millhousen parish try to find some company to insure the building.

Whether this was done cannot be determined. A letter of October 8, 1970 to the pastor from Archbishop George Biskup, who had succeeded Archbishop Schulte in January 1970, sought information on what was being done to solve the problem of the church.

Father McCrisaken was not to be the one to solve it. His heart condition had grown worse. He retired in December 1970 to become one of the first persons to undergo successfully the coronary by-pass open-heart surgery. After his recovery, he became chaplain of St. Anthony Hospital in Terre Haute, Indiana. His last years he suffered intensely from cancer and died December 2, 1982.

According to the 1970 census, the town of Millhousen boasted a population of 252. That same year the parish celebrated as the fifth son of the parish to be ordained a priest, Father Robert Scheidler, offered his first Mass out in the field rather than inside in the gym.

The Experts Disagree

The new pastor who came in January 1971 was Rev. Patrick Commons. Father Pat was ordained in 1951 as a member of the Society of the Divine Word and served as a missionary in India for 14 years. He joined the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 1967 and was assistant pastor first at Holy Cross and then at St. Lawrence parishes in Indianapolis before coming to Millhousen.

His first year he was busy organizing. He encouraged the women to re-activate their St. Ann Society to replace the unit of the Council of Catholic Women. With the school closing in May, plans had to be laid for the continued religious education of the school children. Father

Pat found enough willing parishioners to prepare two teachers for each grade and he himself took responsibility for the high school students. In 1972 St. Dennis parish, Jennings County, became a mission of Millhousen to add to Father Commons's burden. In 1973 he formed a C.Y.O. unit for teenagers.

But the priority was what to do about a permanent church. A parish council to replace the Trustees was elected. This group with the pastor discussed alternatives for a year. The possibilities were three: 1) turn the gym into a permanent church, with carpeting, paneling, lower ceiling; 2) build a new modern church, tear down the old; 3) restore the old church. The consensus of the council members was that the majority of the parishioners would want the church restored and would not financially support any other plan.



1973 8th Grade Solemn Communion Class. (Left to right) Front row: Rose Marie Wenning, Sandra Bruns, Robert Hardebeck, Carl Veercamp, Robert Brancamp, Todd Reisman, Martha Scheidler, Helen Hamilton. Back row: William Runyan, David Koors, Richard Fry, Linda Schwering, Father Patrick Commons (pastor), Dale E. Bruns (CCD teacher), Bernice Vanderpohl, Edward Johanningman, Timothy Stone, James A. Bruns.



The parish makes good use of the school basement, where family reunions are held and the women of St. Ann's Society serve lunch to families after burial services. This is a happy group enjoying a Thanksgiving Day turkey dinner sponsored annually by the C.Y.O. members.

In August 1970, the Howard Barth and Associates, consulting engineers in Greensburg, at the request of one of the council members, offered the suggestion that the "best way to save the existing structure would be to remove the roof and supporting wood trusses and replace them with steel trusses on steel columns." The company estimated the cost would be between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

This must have seemed too high. The council requested an investigation from the Indiana Director of Code Enforcement of the Administrative Building Council. This investigation was made January 19, 1972. The State building inspector, a registered architect, concluded that the church might be saved by using rods to keep the walls from bulging further and reinforcing the steel plates holding together the chord broken in the truss in the center of the building.

Before this report was received, the parish had already employed the Howard J. Barth and Associates to provide professional engineering services for the "remodeling work on the existing structure."

The Aetna Insurance Co. was not satisfied with anything less than the removal of the roof and a new structure to support a new one. So, on April 26, 1972, Mr. Howard Barth presented to the parish a preliminary cost estimate for such a project. \$70,000 was the estimate. This was far too low. Barth estimated the cost of removing the old roof and detailed costs for materials but included nothing for the cost of constructing the new roof and the steel structure to support it.

Barth's plans were submitted to the Aetna Insurance Co. for approval. This company's letter of acceptance to Father Commons described succinctly just what was done to restore the church to use:

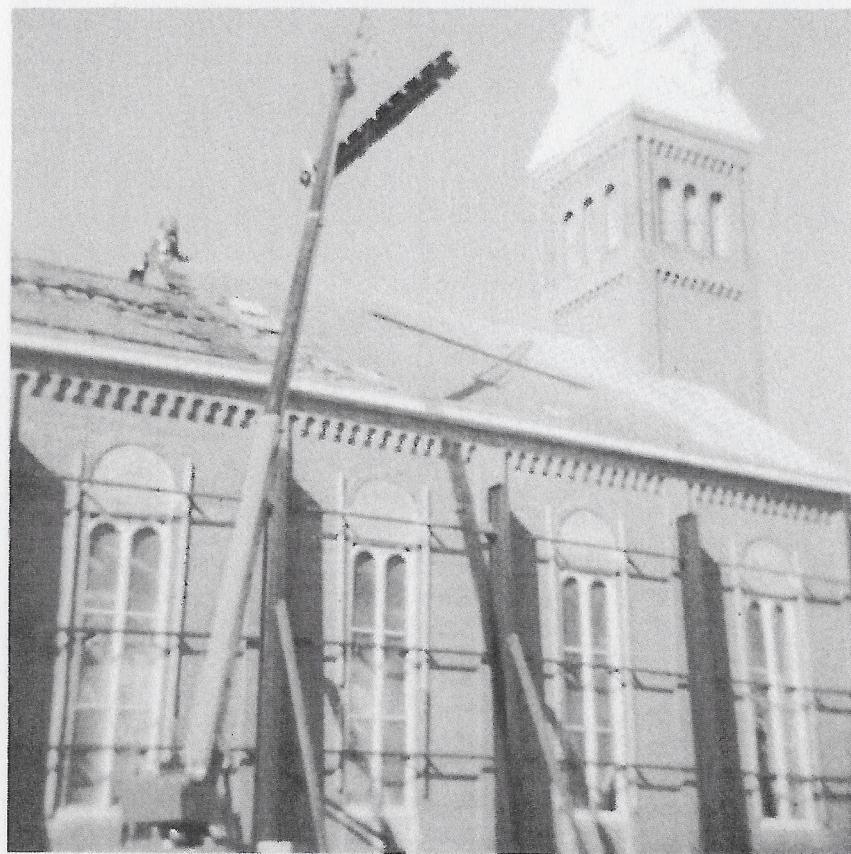
"The plan is to remove the present roof structure and the attached vaulted ceiling. Each wall and pilaster will be reduced approximately three feet. A new foundation on the outside of each pilaster will support a steel column which will reach the height of the newly established wall height. When firmed into position, the columns will be topped with a steel arch that will be supported by columns one on each side of the building. The columns will be bricked in and the roof supporting arch will be covered with wood planking and an asphalt covering."

It is worth noting here what an important part the insurance company played in this affair. A number of parishioners to this day feel that the church could have remained as it was and a lot of money saved if the opinions of the State inspectors had been followed. But the Archdiocese had a blanket coverage of all church property with the Aetna Co. And this company was impressed by the thorough report made by Crooks and Colter, the engineers employed by their agent, the Herman C. Wolff Co. And that report, we should repeat, warned that the old roof could not be repaired safely and that if another chord

broke the whole roof could come crashing down within a few seconds.

The next step was to involve the whole parish. On Sunday, June 25, each parishioner received a printed explanation of the options for solving the problem of the church and why the council recommended the new roof. The cost for this was listed as \$75,000, including repainting the inside of the church. Each adult was given a ballot on which they could vote for or against repairing the church, give comments and sign their name. When the ballots were returned, it became apparent that the majority wanted to restore the existing church — 104 in favor; 34 against.

By the end of September 1972, Father Commons had sent letters to all the wage earners of the parish, informing them that the heaviest financial share for undertaking the project could not be raised from picnics and raffles, as many recommended, but must come from the



parishioners and must be on hand to pay all the costs by the time the work was completed. He did not ask for pledges, but wanted to know how much each wage earner could give in the next 6 months and then how much in the 6 months following that. Separate letters were sent to those who had voted yes, to those who had voted no and to those who had not voted.

The immediate response was encouraging enough to allow Father Commons on October 24 to invite Mr. Barth to draw up detailed plans for construction. The parish set up an executive committee for seeking funds, made up of Dale Ortman, Carl Moorman, Ralph Bruns, Fred Klene, Raymond Retzner, Mary Ann Schneider, Carl Veerkamp and Marie Monter. The Greensburg Daily News on November 20, publicized the fund raising with a front page story with a picture of the church. Later, on two other occasions, the paper publicized the need for money to restore Millhousen's church. This undoubtedly helped, for Protestant businessmen in Greensburg contributed, including Frank Townsend who gave \$10,000. From the raffle of an Omega car some \$5,000 was raised and money came in from former parishioners.

When invitations for bids were announced, only two contractors responded, which was disappointing. Roy A. Miller and Son of Lawrenceburg, Indiana won with the lower bid of approximately \$115,000. A Greensburg contractor's bid was considerably higher. The accepted bid included the pointing of the outside brick and the interior painting, but did not cover the new lighting and electrical work, estimated to reach at least \$8,000.

It was the end of May that the parish agreed to employ the Miller Co. At that time there was about \$106,000 available. The pastor announced that at least another \$17,000 had to be raised within four months, when the construction work was to be completed. The extra money came in gradually from those who had already given who gave more and from those who had first refused to give who finally entered into the spirit of the efforts to save the church. Perhaps the response of outsiders inspired them to change their minds.

There was really no great hurry, for there were many delays ahead. Removing the old roof took much longer than the contractor anticipated. Then the delivery of the steel was held up. Then it was discovered that the bricks in the main side walls had never been tied in, making it necessary to brace the walls on the inside with angle irons to be welded

to the new steel trusses. This not only added to costs but meant there would be no roof over the building during the months of November, December and January. In a Christmas letter Father Commons had to beg for more money to cover the unexpected repairs and also to announce that the parish council had decided to carpet the floor of the renovated church and purchase chairs to replace the old pews badly damaged in removing and storing them. This required another \$10,000.



A severe winter brought a crisis. Without a roof, the walls had absorbed an enormous amount of moisture from snow and rain. Once the new roof was in place, the contractor painted the interior before the walls were dry. The paint peeled. The contractor refused to repaint,

claiming the exterior bricks, homemade as they had been, were too porous. All work on the church came to a standstill. Father Commons obtained the help of his brother James, an Indianapolis attorney. Making claims against the company insuring the contractor, the attorney finally got action on the painting.

However, the big crisis was over the floor that had been badly damaged during the removal of the old roof and altar. The floor was supposedly protected from dropping debris as the roof was disassembled, but large holes were scored into the concrete. And, unprotected from the winter weather, the hardwood of the sanctuary floor had badly buckled.



The contractor refused to accept responsibility for this damage. Months dragged on with nothing being done. Correspondence kept going back and forth between Attorney Commons and Mr. Miller and his attorney and Father Commons and Mr. Barth. Finally in the middle of November 1974, an agreement was signed in which the contractor committed his firm to restore the floor to proper condition for carpeting.

By the time the carpet was laid, windows repaired, a confessional built, baptismal fount and altars restored and new storm doors placed in the entrance, the total cost of restoration was \$163,000. No money was borrowed. A handsome donation of \$20,000 from Monsignor Moorman made this unnecessary.

It was not until March 2, 1975 that the church was ready for rededication, when Archbishop Biskup came for confirmation. The strain of all this was too much for Father Commons. It took two months

in a hospital for him to recuperate. During this period the priests of the Cathedral parish in Indianapolis came to Millhousen for weekends.

Father Pat was back in the parish in 1976, however, when the people of Marion Township converged upon Millhousen for a big bicentennial celebration of the Declaration of Independence. The celebration included a parade, fashion show, old-fashioned exhibits and folk dancing. The main event took place in the ball park. The South Decatur High School band played while the Millhousen Catholic Youth Organization conducted the flag raising ceremony. The Rev. Michael Fronk, pastor of Union Baptist Church, spoke to a large crowd on the significance of the day. Members of the Peppy Steppers 4-H Club gave brief comments pin-pointing moments in history. Members dressed to represent figures in American history were: Tessie Bruns as Uncle Sam, Karen Bruns as George Washington, Linda Moorman as Abraham Lincoln and Linda Brancamp as Theodore Roosevelt.

Still not fully recovered from the strain of restoring the church, Father Commons found that hassels with teenagers over use of the gym were too much for him and before the year was over asked to be moved. The priests from the cathedral, Fathers John Minta, Robert Ulrich and Francis Eckstein too turns on weekends until Father Earl Feltman was named pastor in 1977.



The Spirit of '76 was renewed as the people of Marion Township gathered in Millhousen for the bicentennial to celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence. (Daily News Photo by Max Scott)



The Last Resident Pastor

The founding pastor of St. Simon parish in Indianapolis, Father Feltman suffered from a debilitating heart disease, having had several bouts with death before coming to us. Mild, soft-spoken, he quickly endeared himself to the parishioners, many of whom referred to him



Father Earl Feltman assisted at the marriage of Dona Marie Bruns and Jerome W. Stockrahm, August 13, 1977

as "our little priest." His aging mother lived with him in the rectory. Clem and Gertrude Koors took good care of the house and property, lessening the burden of the pastor, staying in the rectory when he or his mother were ill.

An unusual event took place in 1978. Monsignor George J. Moorman celebrated his 70th anniversary as a priest. He was almost 95-years-old, having been born at Millhousen October 9, 1883. He originally intended to join the Franciscans and studied for the priesthood first at St. Joseph College, Teutopolis, Illinois. He changed his mind and finished his studies at St. Meinrad Seminary, Indiana, as a candidate for the Diocese of Fort Wayne. He served in the cities of Fort Wayne, Logansport, Michigan City, Whiting and South Bend. For a time he was associate editor of "Our Sunday Visitor." He retired in 1960, returned to Millhousen and took up residence in the old Sisters' house. Here he became a familiar and beloved figure in town and a great help to the pastor. During his last years he divided his time between Millhousen and St. Anthony's Hospital, Michigan City. He died July 5, 1979 at the age of 96 and is buried in our cemetery.

The year 1978 marked the end of the school boiler. It had lasted 37 years, "having gone far beyond its 20 years of life expectancy," as Father Feltman explained in his letter to the people reporting that \$19,498.78 was the best bid for an oil-burning heating system. He announced that the Archdiocese would lend the parish \$13,000 to be repaid within three years, and then begged for the \$6,500 needed immediately to have the school and gym ready for the coming winter.

The money came in and the heating plant was installed, but financial problems bothered Father Feltman throughout his brief pastorate. In March 1979, he reported that the parish had spent almost \$6,000 more than it took in and pleaded for more cooperation.

He wrote: "Our main problem is that too many of our people who have income are not contributing anything to the parish. Actually almost two-thirds of the money contributed comes from one-third of the parish." And he concluded his appeal with these words: "If I seem strong on this matter, it is only that I have a responsibility to my God, my Church and to all of you. I hope your feelings are similar and that you will respond in good faith."

The appeal of the "little priest" was effective, for to the present day the parish has had no difficulty keeping solvent.



Christmas Crib, 1983.

Just before Christmas 1980, Father Feltman was rushed to St. Vincent's Hospital in Indianapolis. It was his final heart attack; he died December 28, 1980, and is buried in the priest circle of Calvary Cemetery, Indianapolis.

A drastic shortage of priests in the Archdiocese left Millhousen without a resident priest and little hope of there being one in the near future. Monsignor Joseph D. Brokhage, administrator of St. Maurice, Napoleon, and at the time priest personnel director of the Archdiocese, volunteered to accept responsibility for Millhousen and St. Dennis. He immediately had to change Mass schedules so that the three parishes could be coordinated. Weekend Masses were so arranged that one priest, if necessary, could take care of all five: Saturday: St. Dennis, 4:00 p.m., Millhousen 5:30 p.m., Napoleon 7:00 p.m.; and Sunday: Napoleon 9:00 a.m. and Millhousen 10:30 a.m. Then he twisted the



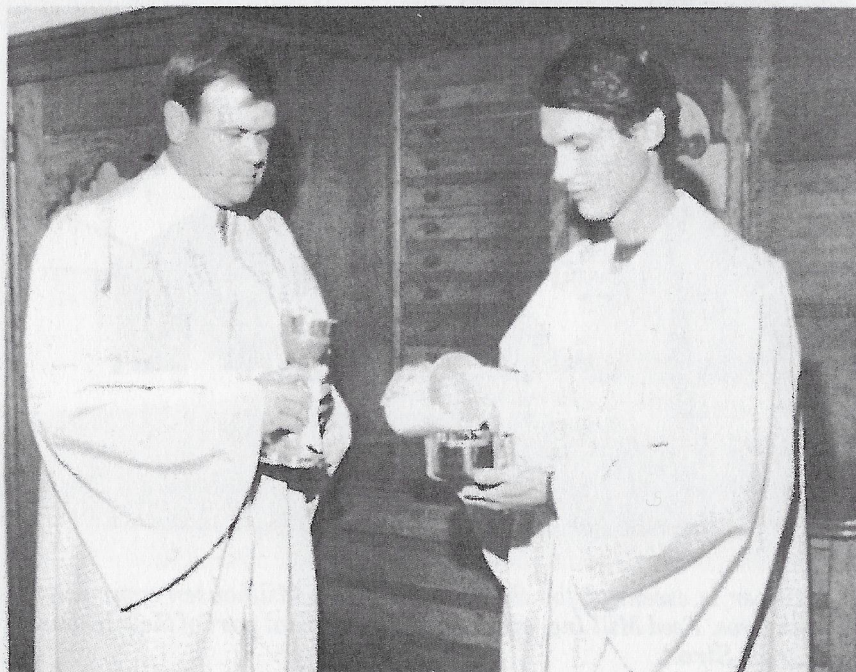
Msgr. Joseph D. Brokhage, at his desk in the rectory, administers the parishes of St. Maurice, Napoleon, and St. Dennis, Jennings Co., as well as ours in Millhousen.

arm of his retired classmate, Monsignor Raymond T. Bosler, to agree to take the Millhousen, St. Dennis schedule as often as possible. The agreement has worked out well for over three years, since when one priest is away the other can cover all three places.

New members were elected to the Millhousen parish council and new committees formed and a council organized for the first time at St. Dennis. The councils were told they were entering a new era in which they, as lay members of the Church, would have to assume more responsibility and leadership. They have done this in remarkable fashion. They soon recognized the need of a pastoral assistant who would reside in the parish. The Napoleon parish and St. Maurice, St. Maurice, Indiana, had benefitted for some years from the services of two Sisters of St. Benedict from Beech Grove, Indiana, Sisters Mary Philip Seib and Mary Cecile Deken. When Msgr. Brokhage learned there was a woman pastoral assistant available who had served successfully in a rural Kentucky parish, he persuaded the council to try her for a year.

They spruced up the former Sisters' house next to the school and welcomed Rita Knueven. Undoubtedly there were a number of parishioners wary of the experiment at first. But now after three years the consensus is that they don't know what they would do without her.

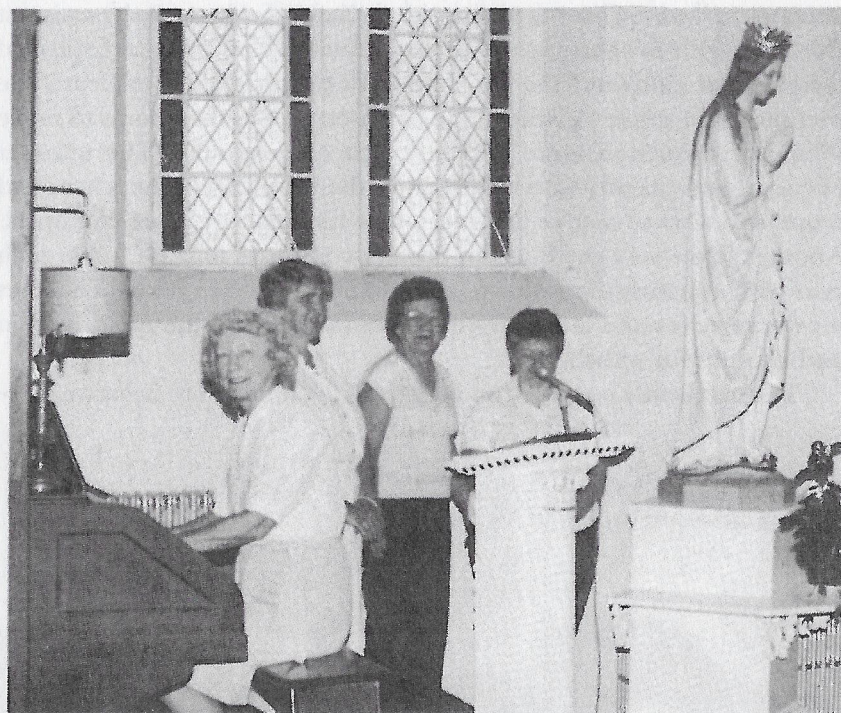
It's an over-full life Rita lives, preparing the Sunday liturgy, organizing and training the eucharistic ministers, the cantors and lectors,



Joseph Naderman (left) and Philip Hamilton serve as extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist.

preparing parents for the baptism of their children, aiding in the preparation of couples for marriage, preparing potential converts in the R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) Program she herself organized, visiting all the wide-spread parishioners, calling on the sick, organizing and meeting regularly with an evangelization committee, directing with Sr. Mary Cecil the weekly C.C.D. religious classes, representing the parish at deanery meetings, doing all the secretarial work of the parish, opening the church, starting the furnaces, and, not least, preparing and printing an excellent weekly bulletin.

Someone else will have to tell the story of this period of our history. It will be an interesting story, for this parish is developing new church



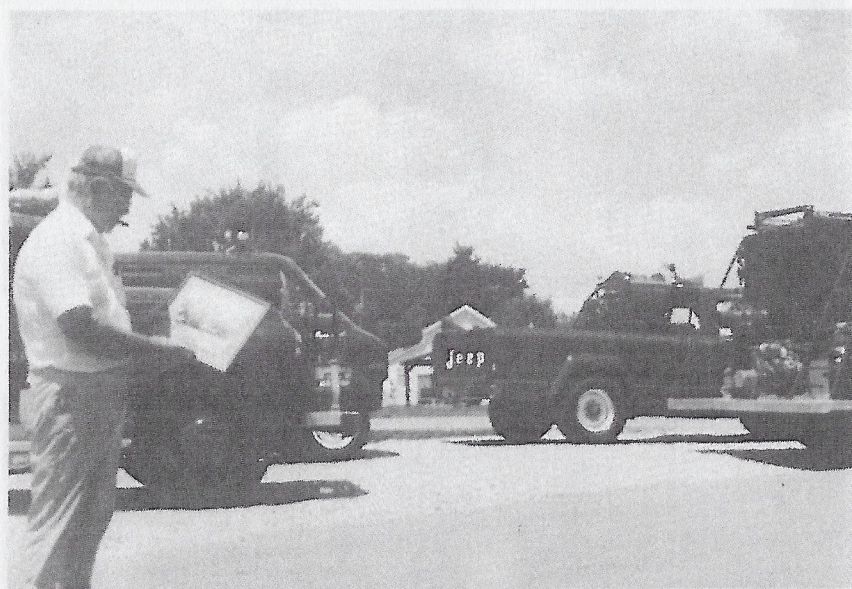
Our pastoral assistant, Rita Knueven, is at the organ, with some of her song leaders, Lorene Brancamp, Alverta Green and Karen Platt.



Sister Mary Cecile Deken, O.S.B., coordinates the catechetical instruction for the three parishes of Millhousen, Napoleon and St. Maurice. Volunteer help remodeled our classrooms to make them more attractive for religious education.

structures, showing how the laity with the help of a lay pastoral assistant can cope with the shortage of priests. We feel that the good spirit of the past that motivated the parish to work together is still evident. The way men and women pitched in to brighten up the classrooms to make religious instruction more attractive was one example. The number of volunteers recently who helped paint the basement of the school and those who worked to give the gym a new tile floor are more examples. Another is the way the St. Ann Society continues to raise funds each year with a successful rummage sale and now furnishes pitch-in lunches for the relatives and family friends after the Mass of the Resurrection and burial of a parishioner.

The excellently equipped and organized volunteer fire department—



Chief Stone admiring a picture of the firemen of earlier days.

certainly one of the best of its kind in the state—is proof that the townsfolk work together. Stone's Tavern is busy Friday and Saturday nights with families devouring chicken dinners. The town is alive. Someday in the near future some enterprising business person will capitalize on the unique atmosphere of Millhousen, remodel the brick landmarks and convince people who work in Batesville, Greensburg and Columbus that Millhousen would be a peachy place to live.



Fertilizer is essential for the farmers of the Millhousen community. Smith Bros. Feed Mill Inc. operates this important part of their business on Cross Street.

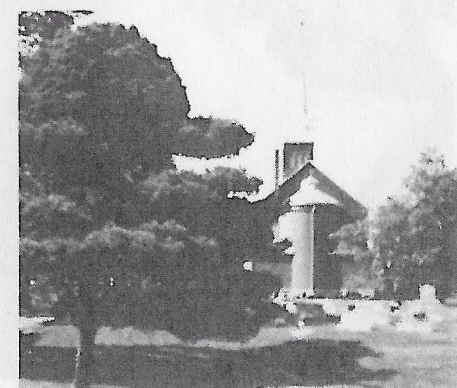
And for such an enterprising person we present here several intriguing sentences from a newspaper meditation on the glories of Millhousen by Richard S. Simons:

“Millhousen in southern Decatur County is one of those picturesque storybook villages that doesn't belong in Indiana at all, but, by some strange circumstances, has been set down on the rolling plains of the Muscatatuck River country, ten miles southeast of Greensburg.

“When Millhousen's founder, Maximilian Schneider, arrived from his native Germany in 1838, searching for a place to settle, he chose an area so remote that it remains today untouched by the main streams of travel. Consequently, his village has matured in a sort of splendid isolation that preserves its original appearance and the special European



flavor that surrounds it . . . As in many European villages, a towering church dominates the area . . . The original families not only brought their own language, customs and architectural ideas, but they settled as the Greek Revival architecture style was pushing out the earlier Federal mode. Consequently, Millhousen represents an interesting blend and an abundance of brick that gives her a substantial look seldom found in small Hoosier communities.”





A brand new Christian, fresh from the waters of the baptismal fount, Catherine Ann, daughter of Francis and Teresa Hoeing, is center stage in this picture. She and her little sister represent the Church of the future. Her grandfather, Lawrence Hoeing, partially visible on the left, symbolizes the Millhousen ancestors who have passed on the faith to her. The priest on the right is Msgr. Raymond T. Bosler, the composer of this story of Millhousen, happy in the conviction that the Church will live on in the generation to come.

Historical Society Tour Attracts 225

The chilly, breezy Sunday afternoon proved no deterrent to members of the Decatur County Historical Society, as they visited picturesque Millhousen and scenic areas in the south of Marion Township on their annual field trip.

An estimated 225 members made the tour and were accorded a warm welcome by the citizens of the Millhousen community.

Will J. Scheidler of Greensburg, a charter member of the historical society and a native of Millhousen, stated that the tour was arranged to enable members to visit the town and to see the natural beauty of the nearby area in Marion Township.

The first stop was at Immaculate Conception Church. Here the members had an opportunity to inspect the beauty of the interior of this historic edifice nearly 100-years-old.

Paintings on the wall, almost as old as the church, constitute masterpieces in art, the Rev. Father Riebenthaler stated. He added that the beautiful windows were imported from Germany.

Proceeding to the east edge of Millhousen, members of the historical group visited the historic Ben Feldman home. An outstanding specimen of early Indiana architecture, although unoccupied at present, the residence was built about 1854 by Barney Hardebeck, who operated a woolen mill at Millhousen.

A feature of this two-story brick residence is its interior woodwork, fashioned by hand at the time it was built. Practically every room in the home has a fireplace.

Historic facts relating to the Millhousen community were presented at the final stop at the Knights of St. John Hall. Monsignor George Moorman, retired Catholic clergyman now living in Millhousen, reviewed interesting facets of the history of the community where he was reared.

Stating that his father's people did not locate at Millhousen until quite a few years after it was organized, he pointed out that the Bedel family of which his mother was a member came to the thriving town of Millhousen in 1840.

They came from Oldenburg, which he said was settled by both German immigrants and others from Alsace-Lorraine.

One of his early recollections of Millhousen was at the Christmas season, when Catholics would come in darkness to the five o'clock early mass. Carrying lanterns to guide them, the church people assembling from all directions would present a scene resembling Bethlehem, he stated.

While Millhousen continues to be a wholesome community with emphasis on the church, it has been overlooked in one major respect, transportation, Monsignor Moorman stated. Millhousen has never had a railroad, although at one time a railroad from Seymour was proposed.

This has resulted in difficulty in transporting Millhousen-made articles to markets. In the early days, Millhousen products had to be hauled to Greensburg over difficult mud roads for shipment. In addition, Millhousen has never had a state highway, he pointed out.

The principal export of Mill-

housen, Monsignor Moorman declared, has been young men and young women, who have been obliged to find employment elsewhere.

A former Army chaplain during World War I and a past department chaplain of the American Legion in Indiana, Monsignor Moorman declared that Millhousen natives of German ancestry rendered loyal service to the nation in time of war.

Will Scheidler, general manager of Public Telephone Corporation here, recounted the early years of his life at Millhousen. He exhibited two small cannons, which were made by his father, John B. Scheidler, at the age of nine years. These have been used on ceremonial occasions and still can be fired, he stated.

Scheidler reported that his grandfather moved from Cincinnati to Millhousen and engaged in making wagons. Elm trees were purchased, he said, for use by this industry.

During his youth, there was a daily hack from Greensburg to Millhousen, he said. In this era hucksters would start out in their wagons Monday morning and would not return until Friday afternoon.

Millhousen, in his years there as a youth, he reported, had a brass band with striking uniforms.

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Reject

Memories of the "Old-Timers"

We got some of our old-timers together to share their memories of the past. What they all seemed to enjoy most were the recollections of the days when the church received substantial support from the rental of the pews. Their earliest memories were of the time when pews were auctioned off to the highest bidder. In good Catholic tradition the rear pews were in greatest demand, the congregation benefitting financially when rivals would outbid one another for choice positions.

In time this practice ceased. People had obtained squatter's rights to their own pews and retained them so long as they paid their annual pew rent. This rent had been pegged at \$8.50 in 1968 when the church was declared unsafe for use and chairs in the school gym took place of pews.

The old-timers laughed a lot as they recalled where different families sat each Sunday—how some couples were unable to sit together when only single spaces were available for rent. . . Annie Tichenor, who occupied a front pew with her husband, Wesley, always stood in the aisle and made her husband enter the pew first so she could be on the end. She was never without her white gloves and she sang three times louder than anyone else.

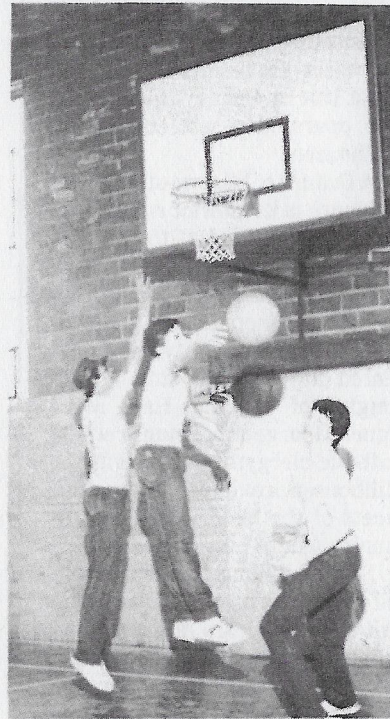
Then there was Hank Brancamp who sat in the rear, wearing his bright purple and green shirt. The memory of this prompted the observation of how in the past everyone had a special outfit for Sunday Mass. People wore more formal dress when in church in days gone by.

Church ways were different in the past. There were fond memories of how the firing of a cannon would welcome the bishop when he came for confirmation and a parade would lead him into town. Much laughter over the problems which servers used to have with learning the Latin prayers and ringing the bells at the proper time, and bragging about the way they worked so hard pumping air for the old organ.

There was considerable discussion of what a jolt it was when they were told their church had to be closed because it was unsafe. They argued a bit over who was for restoring the old church and who wanted to build a new smaller one. They remembered that Father McCrisaken wished that a tornado would come along and level both the church and

rectory. They were loud in their praise of Father Commons for the great job he did in saving the church and preserving the main altar. Preserving the main altar was a big, controversial issue, they agreed.

Talk about pastors led to recollections of how different they could be. Father Urich used to make youngsters who were late for Sunday Mass kneel in the aisle for the whole service. Father Riebenthaler forbade all Saturday night dances, even for weddings, and this ban included the Knights of St. John.



C.Y.O. members and older folks, too, keep the school gym a busy place. For this sesquicentennial year volunteers laid a new tile basketball floor.

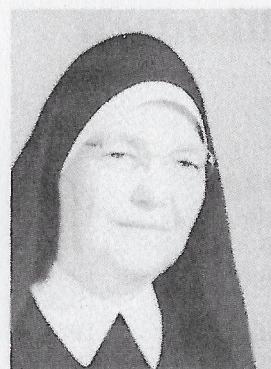
Proudest memories were of how the parishioners donated their labor and skills to build a new school and gym. The old-timers doubted that the parishioners would give their help that way today. And they were proud of the way practically the whole parish pitched in and raised the money for the restoration of the church. They were successful in obtaining donations from Protestant businessmen in Greensburg. They recalled that Frank Townsend gave \$10,000. Mr. Townsend was grateful for the honesty of the Catholic farmers of Millhousen parish. He said that he had extended credit to them to build fences during the depression and never lost a dime, something he couldn't say for other farmers in the county.

No one regretted much the passing of the practice of vespers and benediction on Sunday afternoons. Father Riebenthaler discontinued the service once the gym was built and Sunday afternoon basketball games

were scheduled. Someone recalled how a neighboring pastor expressed surprise that vespers were no longer at Millhousen and wanted to know: "What's that little fellow do on Sunday afternoon?"

Deeply regretted was the closing of the parochial school. Fond memories were shared of the Franciscan Sisters who had taught them and their children. They remembered in particular Sister Cartona and how they could put things over on her and get by with a lot of wisecracks because she was deaf.

Some of the Sisters Remembered



*Sister M. Lidwina
Merkel*



*Sister Mary Alice
Raymond*



*Sister M.
Philip*



*Sister Margaret Grace
Blain*



*Sister Marlene
Brokamp*



*Sister Gerard
Dreiling*



*Sister Ann Regina
Steinwald*



*Sister Mary Alma
Taken*



*Sister M. Angelo
Timmers*



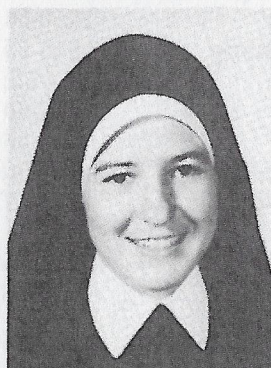
*Sister Marie de
Lourdes Dwenger*



*Sister Teresa Clare
Groh*



*Sister Agatha Marie
Kochert*



*Sister Anna Mary
Verhonik*



*Sister M. Salesia
Wesling*



*Sister Mary Hope
Zohrlaut*

Sisters Missioned at Millhousen

Living:

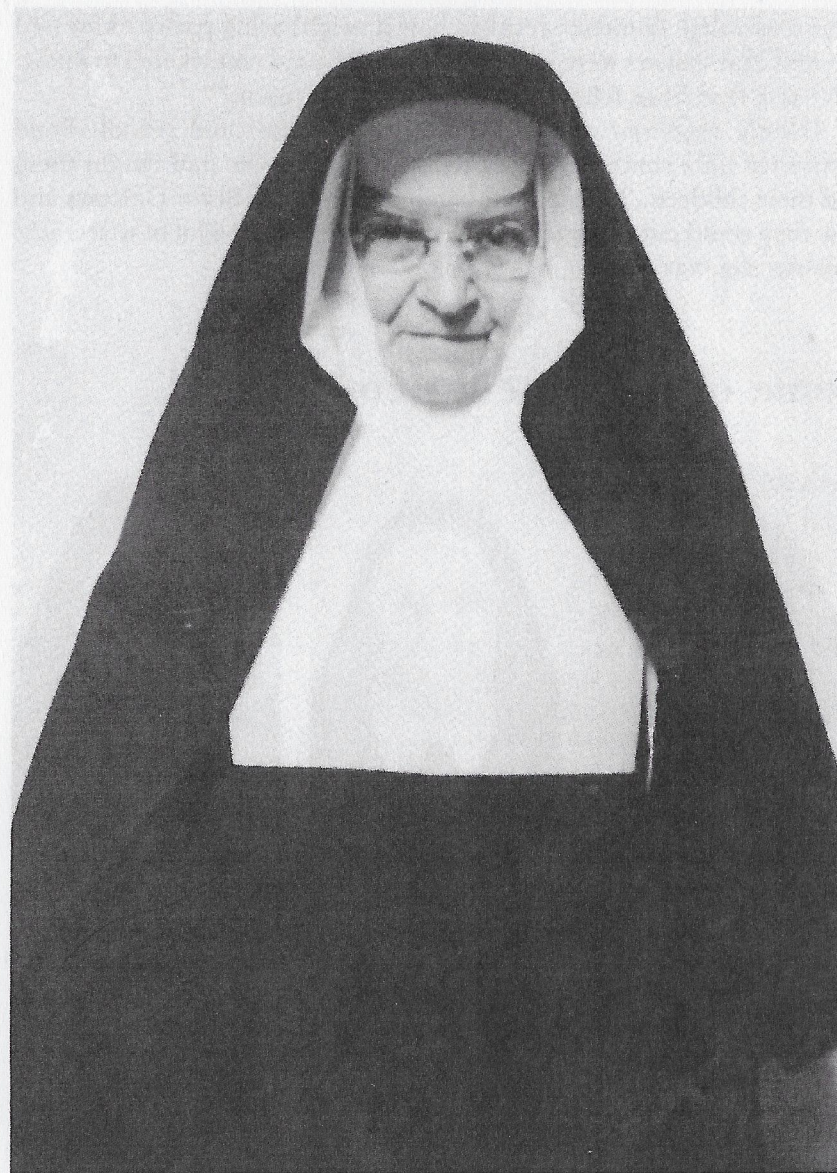
Sisters:

Mary Phillip Kalkbrenner	1918-20
Mary Hope Zohrlaut	1929-33
M. Lidwina Merkel	1933-41
Teresa Clare Groh	1938-44
M. Alma Weidner	1/40-6/40
Ann Regina Steigerwald	1941-42
Marlene Brokamp	1942-44
M. Angele Timmers	1944-50
Margaret Grace Blain	1947-49
Marie de Lourdes Dwenger	1950-52
Mary Alice Raymond	1952-53
Anna Mary Verhonik	1953-54
M. Gerard Dreiling	1955-64
Agatha Marie Kochert	1968-70
Salesia Wesling	1970-71

Deceased:

Sisters:

M. Dosithea	1926-28
Bernarda	1926-27
Roberta	1926-28
Benvenuta	1926-27
Eileen	1926-28
Ildaphonse	1927-28
Marcelline	1928-29
Antonia	1928-32
Praxedes	1928-29
Ivo	1928-29
Sulpitia	1929-32
Alexia	1929-30
Charitas	1930-32
Mary David	1932-38; 1944-50
Cordula	1932-38
Balbina	1932-33
Adolpha	1933-34
Bona	1934-37
Priscilla	1937-38
Avila	1938-1/40
Henrietta	1940-41
Doretta	1941-44
Clara	1944-47
John Magdalen	1949-53
Frowin	1950-54
Louis Marie	1953-55
Colette	1954-55; 1956-60
Flora	1954-56
Francis Marie	1955-56
Rose Dominic	1956-57
Jovita	1957-71
Bertilda	1960-65
Marcia	1963-68
Agnes	
Catherine	1964-67
Gaudentia (Estelle Wolf)	1966-71
Rosella	1965-66



Sister Leonisa served the parish for 25 years in the first quarter of this century.

A Revisionist Early History of Millhousen

By Charles A. Hessler

The most notable account of Millhousen's early history is contained in Father Carl Riebenthaler's "A Century of Catholicity in Millhousen, Indiana" (1934). This little booklet with its wealth of information contains a claim that Millhousen was founded at least as early as 1834, since the first Catholic Mass is said to have been celebrated by Father Joseph Ferneding during 1834 in the home of Maximilian Schneider at Millhousen.

Historically, it is known that Father Ferneding traveled from St. Peter's in Franklin County to Rockford in Jackson County to meet Father Lalumiere a few days after the feast of the Ascension in 1834. If Father Ferneding followed Berry's Trace on his way to meet Father Lalumiere, then it is likely that he passed rather near the future site of Millhousen. However, setting the first Mass at Millhousen in 1834 has several difficulties. Maximilian Schneider did not purchase land in the Millhousen area until December 1838. The earliest known purchase of land by a German Catholic in the Millhousen area was by Franz Vietor in May 1835. Arnold Thieman, Franz Anton Hartmann, and Blasius Gigos purchased land in 1836. Although it is possible that Father Ferneding paused to celebrate Mass in the vicinity of Millhousen during 1834, it is difficult to place Maximilian Schneider or any other German Catholic in that area as early as 1834.

Settlement of the Millhousen area by German Catholics during the late 1830's and early 1840's was actually rather gradual from all indications. John Henry Hagedorn and Francis Ruberg bought land during 1837. Michael and Nicholas Koelsch apparently arrived in the area just before Maximilian Schneider, since their deeds are dated November 1838. Traditionally, thirteen pioneer families are often mentioned in connection with the early history of Millhousen. The 1882 Decatur County atlas lists these early settlers as "Maximilian Schneider, Mr. Hartmann, Christian Ruhl, Theodore Frey, Mr. Koch, Frank

Rubard, George and Francis Veerkamp, Henry Pulse, Gabriel Pulse, John and Adam Hessler, and Theodore Willmer." Although the spellings have changed somewhat over the years, many of these names are still well represented among the citizens of Decatur County.

These thirteen early pioneers should be viewed as representative of Millhousen's earliest settlers, rather than as a definitive list of its founders. Interestingly, the list does not include several patriarchal figures who must have also played an important role in the earliest history of the Millhousen area. These men include Konrad Hessler, Herman Hardebeck, Bernard Goedeker, and Michael Friedel, who all had one or more grown children who likewise settled in the Millhousen area. Most of these patriarchs died in the 1840's and by the 1880's memory of their contributions may have already faded from most memories, but their presence is confirmed by deed and will records.

An examination of deed records in the county courthouse clearly demonstrates that these thirteen early settlers actually arrived over a period of six years or so. Two of the men included among the thirteen pioneers, Hartmann and Ruberg, were already living in the Millhousen area when Schneider bought his land in 1838. Of course, using deed records as a benchmark for setting a family's arrival is not necessarily precise, since it is possible that some families lived with each other for months or even a year or two while land was being cleared and cabins built. For example, three adult males are shown on the 1840 federal census as living in the household of John Hessler.

In addition to deed and will records, naturalization records provide some interesting clues about the early Millhousen settlers. Often there is a gap of a few years between their arrival in this area. In several instances it seems clear that they stayed in the Cincinnati area for an extended period. For example, Maximilian Schneider's oldest child was born in Ohio about 1837; a second child, Martin Schneider, was

also apparently born in Ohio in August 1839, which indicates that even after Schneider purchased his large tract of land in Decatur County in December 1838, at least part of his family either remained in or returned to the Cincinnati area during much of 1839.

Continuing with the traditional list of thirteen pioneers, Christian Ruhl bought land at the same time as Schneider, perhaps even accompanying him on the trip from Cincinnati. John Hessler and Bernard Koch purchased farms in 1839. However, the 1840 federal census makes it clear that not all of the thirteen settlers had arrived in the area in time to be included in that census. Theodore Willmer, George and Francis Veerkamp, and Theodore Frey are listed among the thirteen, but it seems clear that they did not arrive until late in 1840.

At least one of the so-called thirteen pioneers could not have arrived before 1841, since Adam Hessler only arrived at the port of Baltimore in August 1841. Adam Hessler bought land near Millhousen in November 1841, which gives some idea how long the trip across the mountains and down the Ohio valley took in those days. No record has been found concerning land purchases by Henry and Gabriel Pulse, who complete the traditional list of thirteen pioneers.

It is uncertain exactly why the name Millhousen was chosen for the new settlement. However, it is clear that the town was not named for Maximilian Schneider's hometown, since he came from the town of Herbstein in Hesse, which was also the home of the Ruhls, Gregor Schneider and Gregor Staubach. It should be noted that Adam Schneider, a son-in-law of Konrad Hessler, came from Schollkrippen in Franconia and apparently was not related to Maximilian Schneider. There are a dozen or so towns called Muhlhausen in Germany but it seems likely that the town of Millhousen was actually named for Mulhouse in Alsace, which may have been near the hometown of Franz Anton Hartmann and his brother-in-law Blasius Gigos, who both came from Alsace.

In fact, Gigos listed his home as "Altking" (or perhaps "Altking," depending on how you decipher the writing) on his application for citizenship; Altking may really be Altkirch, which is scarcely ten miles from Mulhouse. One of the real difficulties in trying to research the early history of Millhousen is sorting out the variations in spelling German names and towns. For example, Gerhard and George were sometimes used interchangeably, and Gerard was an alternate spelling. Gerhard Rethlake (or Rietlake) is probably the same person as George Ridler. Francis Vietor's name is sometimes shown as Francis Theodore.

Herbstein is shown as Harpston in one record and Herbestan in another. Crofscoll is probably Grosskahl, and Shilgrape is Schollkrippen. Also, many families had several different people with similar or even identical names: John, Adam, Henry, Francis, Mary, Anna, Margaret, and Catherine were especially popular first names.

It is interesting to note that the early settlers of the Millhousen area were mostly High Germans from central and southern Germany and many of them were related to each other or had come from the same towns. The Schneiders, Ruhls and Staubachs from Herbstein accounted for at least five different families. The Hesslers (John, Adam and Franz) and their Schneider and Link relatives, who came from Schollkrippen and Krombach, accounted for another five families. The Veerkamps and the Hardebecks constituted two more groups of families; it seems likely that they came from the lowlands of northern Germany. In later years, Low Germans were probably at least as numerous as High Germans in the Millhousen area.

The importance of Maximilian Schneider's influence during the early days of Millhousen's history should not be underestimated. It is likely that he was directly responsible for attracting several of the families who settled in the Millhousen area from 1838 to 1840.



This is the church of Herbstein in Hesse where Maximilian Schneider was baptized.

In the 1840's, more immigrants continued to arrive and a few left. Maximilian Schneider, who seems to have operated a saloon at an early date, continued to be the area's leading citizen, but Barney Hardebeck's influence was growing. Infant mortality was high, but large families were common. The town itself grew slowly, as most of the settlers were farmers who lived on their land. Even those who listed an occupation other than farming on the 1850 census seem to have lived on their own farms rather than in the town. These craftsmen included John Hessler, John Kolmann and Frank Deutschler, shoemakers; John Kretz and Stephen Deutschler, carpenters; George Kemp and Conrad Deutschler, wagon makers; Joseph Hodapp, John Hagedorn and Adam Osteimer, blacksmiths. By 1850, Blasius Gigos had moved to Napoleon where he was a merchant.

The 1843-45 parish census contains 52 family names; the 1860 census lists 82 families. This may not seem like much growth in 15 years until it is remembered that Napoleon became a separate parish in 1848, thus drawing away a number of families who had formerly been included in the Millhausen parish.

In the 1840's the countryside was relatively wild and untamed. Fences were a rarity; the invention of barbed wire lay in the future. Farmers relied on distinctive stockmarks to identify their livestock, which roamed more or less freely. A stockmark resulted from clipping or otherwise marking the ears of cattle, hogs and sheep; the stockmarks were registered at the county courthouse to minimize likely disputes. For example, Konrad Hessler's stockmark consisting of "a smooth crop off the right ear and a half crop off of the left" was recorded at Greensburg in November 1839.

There was an abundance of hardwood timber which the pioneers utilized for their homes; by 1850 it is possible that a few, more prosperous members of the community had built new brick houses with hand-made bricks. By the 1860's a number of substantial brick homes dotted the Millhausen area. Road connections with Napoleon and Greensburg were poor, but they were probably gradually improved. At least as early as 1851 a road tax, usually paid by labor, was regularly assessed. An occasional trip to the county seat at Greensburg was certainly necessary and some of the settlers are known to have returned to Cincinnati for extended periods.

At least seven young men from the Millhausen parish served in the Union army during the Civil War. John Theodore (Viotor) died in Virginia while serving in the 7th Indiana Regiment. The Indiana archives also contains military records on Isadore Strawback (Staubach), Francis Deutchly (Deutschler), Frank Hessler, John Hessler, Valentine Hahn and Henry Fry. In addition, John A. Hardebeck, who is listed as a member of the Greensburg post of the Grand Army of the Republic, probably was from Millhausen, but his military record has not been located. The actual number of Civil War veterans in the Millhausen area may include others whose records have been overlooked or were not preserved.

By the late 1860's and the 1870's, many of the children who were born to the early settlers in the Millhausen area had married and were raising families of their own. One by one, the early settlers died and many of their graves are marked with handsome tombstones in the Millhausen cemetery. Maximilian Schneider died in 1870. Theodore Willmer, who was one of the last survivors among the early settlers, died in 1884.

By 1885 the town of Millhausen had a population of about 325. It contained two blacksmith shops, two wagon shops, one flour mill, one large stave factory, a brickyard, four general stores, two sawmills, two hotels, a furniture and undertaking establishment, a tannery, a harness shop, a boot and shoe shop, a gun shop, and a watch and clock repair shop. According to a Greensburg newspaper in March 1885, the stave factory at Millhausen employed about 25 men and cut from 25 to 28 thousand staves a day.

Thus ends this account of the first half century or so of Millhausen's history. Because the historical record containing information about these early days is relatively sparse, many of the details will always remain uncertain and open to conjecture. If all of the facts were known, the popular stories about Millhausen's founding and early history might turn out to be more accurate than can be documented in the written records. In any event, these early Millhausen settlers were hard-working men and women, who loved their families and their new homeland. Their deep and abiding faith in God and the Church was a central part of their lives. This is a legacy from which we all can learn.

C Church Families of the Past

BRINKER — John Herman, December 11, 1810; Catherine Heidemeier, December 11, 1816; Mary Catherine Josephine, October 4, 1850; Mary Anna Philomena, January 10, 1852; Diederich Henry, August 14, 1854; Mary Elizabeth Heidemeier (sister of wife), 1819.

COORMANN — Henry Herman, September 24, 1814; Anna Mary Feldhaus, March 18, 1821; John, February 12, 1844; Catherine, November 6, 1846; Mary, March 14, 1849; Bernard, September 22, 1851; Philomena, October 20, 1853; Elizabeth, August 2, 1856; Henry, April 1, 1859.

DAMANN — Joseph, July 25, 1797; Mary Arleid Schulten, 1815; Anna Mary, June 22, 1843; John Francis, April 18, 1846; Arnold Henry, September 3, 1848; Mary Elizabeth, December 31, 1850; Christina, April 21, 1853.

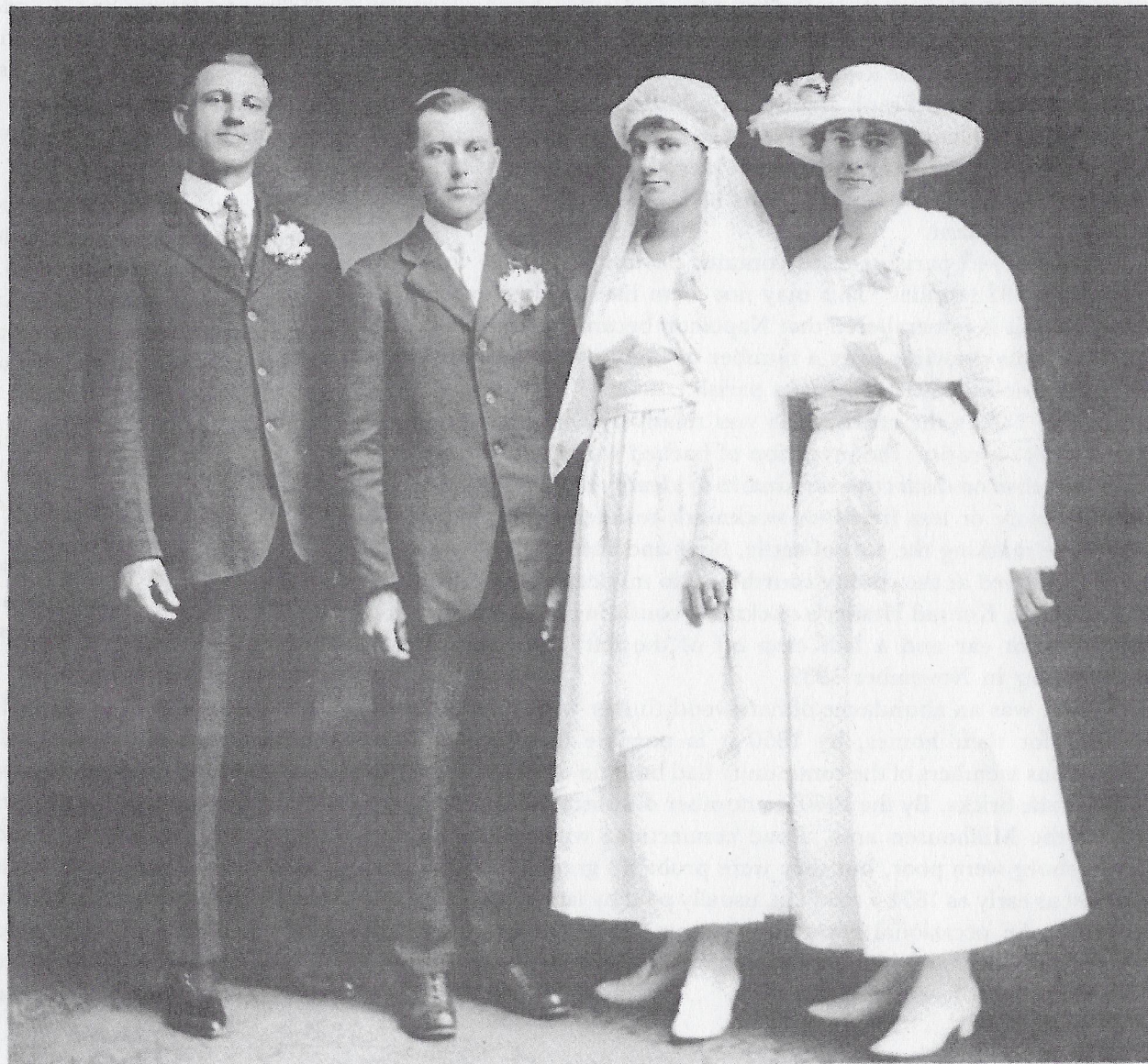
DEUTSCHLE — Mary (widow), February 2, 1824; Mary, 1851.

DUERSTOCK — Henry, December 11, 1822; Bernardina Ralker, June, 1826; John Gerard, June 17, 1851; Teresa, September, 1852; Bernard, November 1, 1853; John, February 5, 1857; Mary Julia, September 11, 1860.

EGBERT — Gerard, 1794; Margaret Kemme, 1804.

FORSTER — George, March 6, 1833; Frances Branolt, January, 1833; Andrew, 1854; William John, July, 1863; Francis, November 10, 1869.

FYE — Bernard, October 22, 1788; Marie Catherine Dickhof, October, 1805;



Wedding picture of Joseph Blankman and Elizabeth Naderman, married October 29, 1919. The witnesses were Lee Blankman and Mayme Naderman Stuhrenburg.

Bernard Joseph, October 22, 1841; Maria Anna Christina, January 20, 1844; Bernard Dickhof (adopted son), 1852.

FYE — Diederich, November 2, 1810; Catherine Goedecker, 1817; Gernard Goedecker, 1790; Elizabeth, February 3, 1842; Adelaide, August 2, 1843; Catherine, April 14, 1845; Mary Catherine Teresa, March 6, 1847; Mary Anna, June 12, 1849; Margaret, December 15, 1851; Henry, January 12, 1853; John, August 1, 1856.

FYE — John, October 6, 1806; Margaret Kleinboeling, December 25, 1806; John, August 5, 1838; Henry, April 17, 1841; Catherine, May 7, 1846; Anna Mary, May 29, 1848; Anna Mary Teresa, October 18, 1850; Francis Luding (adopted), 1831.

FUNKE — John Henry, July 28, 1807; Mary Elizabeth Rasche, December 6, 1804; Theodore, 1839; Francis; Rebecca; Josephine Weldam, 1841; Mary Margaret, February 23, 1862; Mary Rebecca, February 17, 1864.

GERWIN — Anthony, November 6, 1813; Mary Anna Schroer, 1820; Francis, November 23, 1847; Herman Henry, June 23, 1850; William, December 24, 1853; John Herman Henry, June 2, 1856; Gerard Henry, December 17, 1858.

GROTE — Bernard, November 18, 1827; Maria Elizabeth Brune, November 6, 1824; Joseph, January 9, 1853.

GROTE — John Bernard, August, 18—; Mary Gertrude Schmidt; Mary Margaret Catherine, December 7, 1848; Herman Henry, June 26, 1850; Mary Elizabeth, October 15, 1852; Mary Anna, 1854; Bernard Henry, May 9, 1856.

HARDEBECK — Bernard; Elizabeth Lott; John Herman, September 1, 1842; John Bernard, March 29, 1844; John Gerard, June 23, 1848; Mary Catherine, April 15, 1850; Mary Anna, October 28, 1853; Mary Philomena, August 30, 1858; Mary Caroline, July 10, 1860; Joseph, 1862; Anna, April, 1864.

HARDEBECK — Gerard, June 24, 1813; Mary Elizabeth Voko, 1813; Henry, January 22, 1838; Mary Catherine, 1841; John Herman, 1840; Margaret Catherine, 1843; Mary Adelaide (adopted), 1804; John Bernard, March 20, 1845; John Henry, June 22, 1847; Mary Vogue.

HARDEBECK — Henry, October 16, 1807; Regina Buettmann, 1829; Margaret Numann (mother), 1784; Herman, December 7, 1839; Henry, October, 1841; Mary Elizabeth, August, 1843; John Bernard, May 27, 1846; Gerard, September, 1848; Joseph, December 10, 1850; Herman Anthony, June, 1856; Anthony, 1857; Arnold, November 1, 1858; Elizabeth, 1860.

HARTMAN — Francis Anthony; George, September 26, 1841; Anna Catherin, October 15, 1845; Mary Agatha, January 16, 1848; Josephine, July 14, 1850; Carolina, April 4, 1853.

HEIDERICH — Christian, March 7, 1807; Elizabeth Heinz, 1818; Elizabeth, 1843; Joseph, 1844; Mary Anna, 1845; Catherine, 1848; Anthony, 1852; Peter, 1854; John Herman, May 6, 1856; Francis, July 22, 1859.

HESSLER — John, February 2, 1804; Anna Mary Noessen, July 25, 1807; John, September 8, 1832; Adam February 28, 1837; John, January 20, 1841; Margaret, April 13, 1844; Mary, July 9, 1846.

HODAP — Joseph, February 25, 1820; Frances Schoch, 1830; Magdalen, March 13, 1850; John, January 13, 1853; Carl, November 3, 1855; Mary Anna, July 3, 1857; Julia, 1860; Joseph, 1862.

HUEGEL — Ludwig, October 13, 1832; Anna Mary Hahn, June 1, 1837; Mary Christina, August 15, 1856; Magdalen, June 9, 1858.

JAEGER — Francis Anthony, May 22, 1817; Mary Anna Heunso, February 20, 1816; Bernard, February 5, 1843; Cyriacus, July 27, 1844; Dionysius, October 17, 1845; Mary Anna, November 3, 1846; Brigid, October 7, 1848; Ignatius, July 31, 1851; Agatha Apolonia, February 5, 1854; Rosina Gertrude, September 29, 1856.

JOHANNIGMANN — Dominic, November 27, 1821; Elizabeth Egbert, September, 1831; John, August 29, 1850; Mary Catherine, May 20, 1854; Matthew, August 16, 1856; John Gerard, October 12, 1858; Herman Henry, 1860; Joseph Bernard, March 1, 1862.

JOHANNIGMANN — John, April 1, 1814; Elizabeth Horsschneider, May 12, 1823; Elizabeth, April 14, 1852; Catherine, October 16, 1855; John, August 25, 1857; Mary, February 7, 1859.

KLENE — cf. MUELLER, William.

KOCH — Arnold Henry, July 25, 1818; Catherine Schmidt, 1828; Anna Maria, November 21, 1845; Bernard, January 27, 1848; Catherine, 1852; Elizabeth, April 8, 1855; Carolina, February 26, 1857; Henry, April 9, 1859.



Frank and Anna Cord were married Nov. 27, 1901. He was from Hamburg, Indiana, son of William and Philomene Lamping Cord. She was the daughter of Herman and Marie Walters Blankman of Millhousen.

- KOHLMEIER — Bernard, December 2, 1823; Catherine Wessel, 1820; Mary, October 6, 1859.
- KOORS — John Joseph, February 18, 1819; Mary Elizabeth Rackel, June 21, 1819; John Bernard Husteden (adopted), April 8, 1845; John Herman, May 23, 1853; Mary Elizabeth, January 10, 1856; Joseph Clement, October 15, 1857.
- KROGER — Diederich, November 6, 1823; Juliana Husmann, 1826; Catherine, March 9, 1851; Gerard, July 23, 1853; Mary.
- KUHLMANN — John, September 17, 1827; Mary Angela Potthoff, October, 1834; John Henry, December 11, 1853; William, May 31, 1856; Anna, May 5, 1859; John Frederick, November, 1861; Matthew, March 30, 1863; Joseph Theodore, November, 1869.
- LANDSCHULTE — Joseph John William, 1822; Mary Catherine Wigelmann, 1835; John William, May 16, 1851; Mary Anna, June 30, 1852; Bernard, August 13, 1853; Catherine Elizabeth, June 23, 1855; Anna Gertrude, July 26, 1857; Mary Anna, May 3, 1859.
- LINK — Francis, September 4, 1804; Mary Hessler, August 22, 1817; Adam, March 31, 1839; John, October 23, 1841; Francis, April 23, 1844; Herman Henry, February 15, 1847; Mary Anna, September 10, 1850; Magdalen, September 18, 1853.
- LOSECAMP — Henry, September, 1811; Elizabeth Mueller, August, 1807; Mary, December, 1841; John, May 12, 1845; Louise, June 28, 1847; Elizabeth, March 8, 1849.
- LUEKEN — Bernard, December 8, 1821; Bernadine Gossling, January 1, 1829; Bernard, September 26, 1850; Francis, May 24, 1859; Elizabeth, April 5, 1854; Anna, January 4, 1857; Gerard, March 24, 1859.
- MOELLER — Bernard, July 16, 1818; Elizabeth Schuppmann, August 13, 1824; Bernard, October 6, 1847; John Henry, July 15, 1854; Anthony John, December 18, 1856; Anthony Joseph, April 11, 1859; Maria Elizabeth, July 8, 1861; Joseph Herman, July 20, 1869; Adelaide Helming, March, 1779.
- MOELLER — John Henry, 1809; Catherine Hoelcher, 1800; Bernard Brankamp (adopted), 1842.
- MUELLER — Bernard, 1809; Elizabeth Redlake, 1814; Nicholas, May, 1838; Gerard, 1841; John, 1844; Maria, 1849; Gertrude, 1854.
- MUELLER — William, October 5, 1826; Mary Gertrude Ranke Klene, March, 1826; Henry Klene, 1848; John Bernard Klene, June 25, 1850; Mary Elizabeth Klene, December 9, 1853; Anna Mary Catherine Klene, May 28, 1856 (all children of Mrs. Mueller's first husband, Bernard Klene); Mary Elizabeth Mueller, May 25, 1856.
- NIEMANN — Henry; Gertrude (wife), Henry, March 3, 1841; Mary Catherine, April 24, 1843.
- PABST — Caspar Henry, February 18, 1812; Bernardine Meier, 1828; Mary Rose, January 11, 1857; Regina Philomena, November 28, 1858.
- PICKERS — Henry, February 22, 1799; Elizabeth Pohlmann, 1802; Henry, February 2, 1839; Christopher, September 29, 1841; Aloysia Losekamp (wife of Henry), 1847; Elizabeth (daughter), October 8, 1864.
- POELKING — Bernard, July 25, 1800; Mary Weiers, 1805; Mary, February 10, 1841; John, April 1, 1845; Francis, September 23, 1847; Gerard Henry, May 30, 1851.
- PONDER — Henry, October 8, 1809; Genevieve Schmid, 1811; Catherine, September 23, 1845; Joseph, October 8, 1840; Elizabeth, 1846; Rosalia, February 22, 1849; Margaret, January 22, 1852; John, August 24, 1854.
- POPPE — Clement, July 3, 1825; Catherine Korte, August 3, 1828; Bernard, September 15, 1850; Catherine, September 13, 1853; Clement, February 1, 1857; Sophia, July 21, 1859; Christina, January 17, 1863.
- POTTKETTER — Bernard, March 19, 1823; Catherine Nahrman, 1822; Mary Elizabeth, November 6, 1852; Francis Henry, January 26, 1857; Bernard Henry, May 1, 1859.
- POTTMEIER — Joseph, 1803; Mary Anna Voskuhle, 1808; Elizabeth Dorothy, 1846; Mary Teresa, 1848; John Gerard, 1850.
- POTTMEIER — Joseph Bernard, March 22, 1837; Mary Elker, November 29, 1839; Elizabeth, September 2, 1859.
- REDELLMANN — Balthasar Henry, December 22, 1832; Rosina Hessler, 1832; Maria Elizabeth, February 10, 1857; John, December 3, 1858; Gerhard (adopted son), July 30, 1848.
- REDELLMANN — Francis, November 19, 1825; Mary Anna Holt, July 12, 1828; Bernard Henry, April 26, 1850; John, November 15, 1852; Matthew Ferdinand, December 16, 1854; Magdalen Rosina, December 17, 1856; Mary Christina, January 7, 1859; Francis Henry, May 26, 1861; Joseph, March 12, 1863.
- REDELMANN — Matthew Henry, December 7, 1798; Catherine Philomena Romberg, February 1, 1801.
- RIETLAKE — Gerard, 1808; Mary Catherine Neuhaus, 1808; Mary Gertrude, March 15, 1843; John, March 19, 1848; John Gerard, January 14, 1851.
- ROELKER — John Gerard, July 8, 1810; Anna Mary Nichting, August 8, 1816; Elizabeth Christina, August 24, 1843; Anna Philomena Franciska, April 24, 1853; Anna Catherine, April 18, 1856; Gerard Henry, June 26, 1858.
- ROLFES — John Bernard, October 17, 1825; Mary Elizabeth Berstermann, February 10, 1818; John Henry, May 30, 1854; John Redellman, July 4, 1851.
- ROTHMANN — Bernard, August 20, 1822; Philomena, 1831; George Pallien (orphan).
- RUBERG — Francis, April 12, 1813; Mary Adelaide Goedecker, December 3, 1821; John Henry, October 21, 1848; John William, May 14, 1850; Mary Elizabeth, January 23, 1858; Carolina, January 24, 1860; John, December 10, 1863.
- RUHL — Christian, April 17, 1806; Beatrice Schneider, 1804; Catherine Hoff, 1855.

RUHL — Gerard, December 8, 1808; Mary Anna Peter, 1820; Carolina, February 6, 1842; Maximilian, February 15, 1843; Joseph, December 7, 1844; Christian, May 1, 1846; Mary Anna, December 29, 1849; John, December, 1851; Gregory, February 10, 1853; Adam, October, 1854; Anthony, February 6, 1857; Catherine Elizabeth, April 5, 1860.

SCHEIDLER — John, 1822; Cunigunda Stoeger, 1832; Adam, 1851; George, 1853; John, 1855.

SCHNEIDER — Adam, April, 1798; Adam, December, 1836; Maria Theresa Catherine, September 23, 1843; Caroline, April 25, 1841.

SCHNEIDER — Gregor, April 4, 1831; Margaret Schneider, May 1, 1835; Catherine, December 21, 1858.

SCHNEIDER — Maximilian, March 28, 1799; Catherine Pistner, July 22, 1806; Martin, August 23, 1839; Christian, July 3, 1841; Maximilian, January 2, 1843; Francis Joseph, May 17, 1845; Charles, May 6, 1847; Caroline, January 31, 1849.

SCHOCH — Gall; Catherine Schoch.

Schulte - John Bernard, 1818; Mary Catherine Wehne, August, 1818; Mary Elizabeth, February 14, 1843; Bernardina Mary, September 22, 1846; John Henry, January 17, 1854; Bernard Henry, March 4, 1856.

SHURE — David, September 15, 1836; Mary Vonder Ahe, 1839.

SPECKBAUCH — Joseph, April 5, 1820; Anna Marie Ranke, May 11, 1816; Josephine, October 24, 1847; Elizabeth, May 25, 1849; Catherine, September 1, 1851; Gerard, August 3, 1853; Mary, February 23, 1855; Henry, June 6, 1857.

STAUBACH — Gregor, March 12, 1807; Emerentia Reber, 1817; John, May 7, 1844; Maximilian, November 19, 1850; Gerard, August 1, 1852; Mary Elizabeth, October 12, 1854; Carolina, December, 1856; Theodore, November 9, 1859; Frank, 1862.

SUHRE — Caspar, March, 1803; Mary Catherine Gerwin, September, 1802; Ferdinand, September 15, 1829; David, 1836; Clara Mary, October 3, 1847.

TEUPE — Henry, October 8, 1797; Elizabeth Niermann, May, 1807; Henry, September 8, 1841; Elizabeth Speckbauch, May 2, 1849.

VEERKAMP — Francis, 1815; Teresa Schneider, 1820; Anna Mary Teresa, June 6, 1844; Henry, April 5, 1846; John Henry Joseph, November 23, 1848; Mary Teresa, October 27, 1850; Bernard, May, 1854.

VEERKAMP — Gerard, June 6, 1809; Teresa Hemrock, 1831; Joseph, November 24, 1850; John, August 1, 1853; Mary, July 25, 1856; William, January 25, 1857.

VOGES — Bernard, 1809; Anna Elizabeth Agnes, November 19, 1812; John Herman, August 15, 1844; Anna Maria Carolina, October 4, 1848.

VONDER AHE — Henry, September, 1803; Anna Mary Dickhof, December, 1807; Anthony, July 31, 1844; Gerard Henry, 1834; Bernard, 1837; Mary, 1838; Adam Allendorf, 1848.



Ben and Rosa Blankman Zapfe, married September 18, 1906. Ben was the son of Barney Zapfe and continued his father's business.

VONDER POLL — John, May 3, 1792; Mary Arleid, August 27, 1808; John Gerard, December 2, 1836; Mary Agnes, October 16, 1838; Mary Teresa, August 27, 1841; Henry August, August 28, 1843.

WAMPACH — William, December 31, 1819; Frances Krenzberg, December 17, 1817; John William, July 17, 1847; Elizabeth, July 30, 1849; Frances, September 2, 1851; Joseph, March 18, 1854; William Bernard, October 14, 1856; Mary Anna, February 28, 1859.

WENSTROP — Bernard, February 2, 1824; Catherine Orthmann, 1827; Elizabeth, May 18, 1852; Mary, December 15, 1853; Philomena, July 23, 1858; Mary Orthmann, 1798.

WILKER — William, 1828; Anthony (brother), 1825; Henry Vogel (grandfather), 1776.

WILLMER — Theodore, October 4, 1804; Mary Elizabeth Schroeder, 1814; Theodore, December 11, 1841; Gerard George, March 22, 1844; Mary Agnes, January 21, 1846; Mary Elizabeth, February 13, 1848; Mary Clara, March 29, 1850; Bernard Henry, July 27, 1855; Frances Henry, November 14, 1856; (adopted), 1780.

WITTKEMPER — Joseph, 1823; Anna Maria Wigelmann, 1820; Ferdinand, 1849; Agnes, 1851; Anthony John, 1853; Mary Elizabeth, 1854; John William, 1856.

WOLTERS — John Gerard, May 8, 1822; Mary Teresa Fisher, April 8, 1826; Teresa Elizabeth, May 24, 1851; Mary Gertrude, March 4, 1855; Bernardina, November 12, 1856; Mary Teresa, March 10, 1860; Anna Catherine, November 4, 1863.

WUERTH — Hyacinth, May 13, 1834; Christina Scherrer; Richard, February 12, 1857; Staphania, August 26, 1859.

WUERTH — Anna Maria, February 14, 1842; John, March 30, 1844; Elizabeth, July 2, 1846; Michael, January 22, 1849; Catherine Leithner (mother), February 6, 1820.

WUERTZ — Matthew; Catherine Leichtner, February 6, 1820; Anna Mary, February 14, 1842; John, March 30, 1844; Elizabeth, July 2, 1846; Michael, January 22, 1847; Catherine, July 29, 1851; Gregory, February 2, 1854; Carolina, July 9, 1856; Mary Magdalen, September 25, 1858.



The business district of Millhousen is compact, housed in one building. George and Vera Walters are the proprietors. George runs the liquor store, where he also sells artifacts, specializing in clocks. His wife Vera manages the small country store offering groceries and sundries. She is also the postmistress and operates the postoffice in her store. Down the street in the old Zapfe general store Mary Ann Schneider Ramer operates an antique store.



C Church Families — 1984

(*Asterisk indicates non-member of parish)

AmRHEIN — Kenneth, April 21, 1954; Kathy Thompson, September 18, 1955; Jennifer, May 13, 1976; Brian, January 30, 1979.

AmRHEIN — Wayne Fred, March 26, 1942; Donna Young, September 19, 1942; Wayne F., Jr., April 14, 1964; Gretchen, October 12, 1965; Michael, December 6, 1967; Aimee, June 2, 1969; Gregory, November 13, 1972.

BARHORST — Alfred, February 28, 1930; Laverne Waters, August 21, 1930.

BEDEL — Edmund, September 19, 1915; Virginia Young, May 25, 1922; Thomas, June 17, 1961.

BEDEL — Michael, September 27, 1956; Cherri Owens, October 9, 1956; Melea, June 27, 1978; Kristin, March 20, 1981.

BEDEL — Norbert, August 2, 1954; Catherine Raver, September 5, 1956; Christopher, November 27, 1979; Bernard, November 5, 1981.

BESS — Donald, September 22, 1917; Margaret Keene Witkemper, November 12, 1925.

BEWLEY — *Rick, December 24, 1957; Sharon Barhorst, January 14, 1962; Stephanie, August 7, 1983.

BLANKMAN — Paul, August 20, 1909.

BRANCAMP — Frank, November 9, 1924; Burdella Wagner, June 28, 1929.

BRANCAMP — Herman, January 27, 1924.

BRANCAMP — Leonard, April 17, 1933; Lorene Werner, June 11, 1938; Cathy, February 1, 1963; Ann, February 12, 1965; Flora, March 29, 1967; Suzie, February 19, 1969; Jenny, July 27, 1971; Leonard, Jr., January 6, 1974.

BRANCAMP — Thomas, October 6, 1956; Melody Linville, June 23, 1960; Amanda, August 24, 1979; Craig, October 28, 1981.

BRANCAMP — Walter, December 23, 1928; Rosemary Lamping, November 9, 1930; Janet, November 22, 1966; Joyce, November 22, 1966.

BRAUN — August, June 15, 1888.

BRAUN — Lester, December 26, 1920; Janet Hockersmith, May 9, 1917.

BRAUN — Thomas, July 21, 1922; Lucille Moorman, December 3, 1921.

BROWN — Anna Mae Butz, September 13, 1909.

BROWN — William C. II, April 26, 1964.

BRUMBACK — Jerry, September 24, 1944; Sheila Bischoff, August 29, 1948; Samuel, July 20, 1974.

BRUNS — Dale, November 24, 1927; Teresa C. Wickens, December 25, 1929; Timothy, May 8, 1962; Teresa M., May 21, 1964.

BRUNS — Holly, December 19, 1955.

BRUNS — Ralph, July 22, 1926; Rosemary Lee, October 6, 1928; Karen, June 23, 1965.

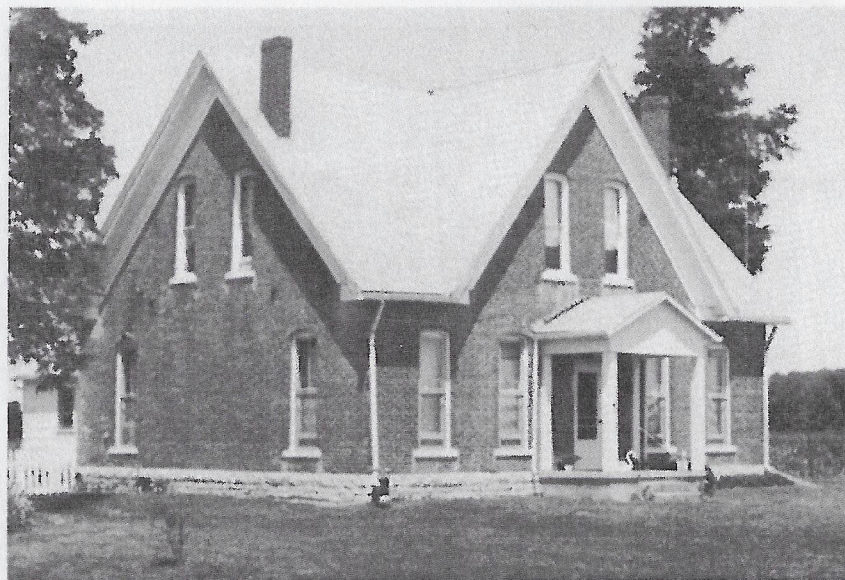
BURTON — Terry, March 5, 1949; Linda Koetter, May 17, 1950; John, August 29, 1971; Tony, May 18, 1973.

CHASE — Harley, May 11, 1962.

COBB — Herschel James, March 28, 1935; Frances Spadafora, August 16, 1937; Michelle, October 22, 1969.

COLLINS — *Darol, September 28, 1943; Toni Stone, February 16, 1945; Tina, November 20, 1966; Daren, July 27, 1968; Cory, March 8, 1971; Mark, July 12, 1972.

CORD — Anna Wenning, August 26, 1903.



The farm home of Mrs. Anna Cord marks the turn-off to the Millhouse Road, approaching from the West.

CORD — Christine Hessler, December 12, 1911.

DIEKHOFF — Alfred, February 27, 1934; Bernice Volk, April 5, 1935; Michael, March 3, 1962; Marcia, December 29, 1963; Mark, January 13, 1966; Michelle, December 5, 1967; Matthew, February 22, 1969.

DUERSTOCK — Alvin, March 15, 1903; Hilda Feldman, January 14, 1905; Arthur, August 25, 1940.

DUERSTOCK — Norbert, April 18, 1923; Ruth Kortzendorf, January 13, 1933; Mark, October 1, 1960; Carl, February 1, 1962; Joan, February 28, 1963; Deron, September 9, 1965; Randy, July 1, 1966; Keith, June 18, 1969.



The house where the doctors lived. For a time Dr. J.C. Glass and his wife lived here and here Dr. Nicholas Bauman raised his family. It is now the home of Urban Fry.

DWENGER — Mary Hessler, November 17, 1901.

EDEN — Dorothy Stuehrenberg, October 22, 1933.

ERTEL — Lee, April 2, 1951; Kathy Sams, January 24, 1960; Lyda, November 19, 1981; Lynde, October 7, 1983.

FELDMAN — Alfred, July 1, 1938; Paulene Striecker, February 13, 1944; Debra, February 19, 1966.

FERRILL — *Michael, August 26, 1952; Delores Beard, August 3, 1952; Brandon, May 1, 1982.

FERRIS — *Scott, July 1, 1958; Donna Kroger, October 30, 1960; Gabriel, February 25, 1982.

FOWL — Louise, November 25, 1896.

FRY — David, October 7, 1954; Paula Haunert, July 5, 1956; David Eric, April 4, 1978; Timothy, November 5, 1980; Brian, November 13, 1983.

FRY — Donald, March 15, 1956; Jeanne Schwering, April 16, 1958; Carl, July 10, 1983.

FRY — Edward, September 28, 1938; Diane Meyer, May 28, 1940; Steve F., September 3, 1965; Mark, December 25, 1967; David, August 9, 1969; Lynn, September 9, 1974.

FRY — Ferdinand, August 30, 1914; Bernadette Heidecker, February 7, 1921.

FRY — Frank, March 2, 1906; Pauline Wagner, January 27, 1906.

FRY — Frederick, November 23, 1952; *Pamela Wilson, October 2, 1956.

FRY — Gerard, February 13, 1956; Dorothy Blankman, February 14, 1961.

FRY — Omer, August 5, 1918; Martha Walters, May 14, 1922.

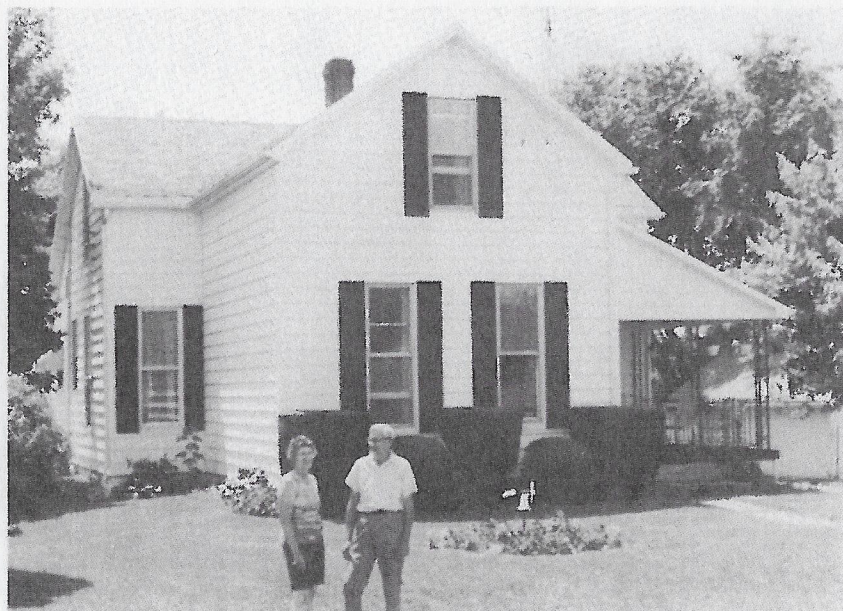
FRY — Robert, November 20, 1917; Velma Meyer, February 7, 1926.

FRY — Ronald, December 24, 1944; Sandra Stapp, January 1, 1947.

FRY — Steven M., January 29, 1956; Richard, April 15, 1959.

FRY — Urban, July 25, 1914.

FRY — Wayne, March 14, 1949; Mary Ann Menkhaus, August 4, 1950; Daryl, October 4, 1977; Darin, October 4, 1977; Jennifer, October 17, 1981.



Omer and Martha Fry in front of their home, another example of the interesting architecture in Millhousen.

FULTZ — *Don, October 17, 1930; Phyllis Redelman, January 15, 1945.
 GREEN — Alverta Klosterkemper, April 13, 1926.
 HAMILTON — Charles, May 13, 1926; Ruth Dwenger, May 27, 1928; Philip, March 27, 1960; Carol, January 27, 1963; Joyce, May 23, 1964; Dale, July 11, 1965; Joseph, May 16, 1967.
 HARDEBECK — Elmer, August 10, 1927; Marie Schantz, September 21, 1927; Dorothy, April 4, 1956; Robert, April 11, 1958; James, May 15, 1961; Karen, March 24, 1966.
 HARDEBECK — Irvin, June 11, 1924; Elsie Lecher, July 13, 1925; Patrick, January 27, 1967.
 HARDEBECK — John, July 28, 1952; Mitzi Idlewine, July 10, 1957; Shelly, September 4, 1975; Jason, December 6, 1977.
 HARDEBECK — Martha Herbert, July 14, 1920; James, February 1, 1953; Marlin, October 13, 1960; George, December 9, 1961; William, September 22, 1964.
 HARDEBECK — Ronald, February 29, 1944; Judith Hinchman, September 13, 1944; Ronald, March 17, 1966; Lori, March 23, 1969; Christopher, May 7, 1970; Michelle, April 27, 1971; Mary, September 1, 1975.



The home now of Alverta Green was originally the home of Mrs. E. Moorman, the widow of George Moorman. Next to her home was her general store. She also owned a mill and furniture factory.

HART — *Stephen, November 8, 1950; Jennifer Major, May 12, 1954; Matthew, July 5, 1980; Carey, October 10, 1983.
 HERBERT — Evelyn Freil, December 2, 1912.
 HERBERT — Dale, June 6, 1939; Maudie Lee, October 10, 1940; Roger, March 26, 1965; Charles, February 20, 1968; Michael, April 24, 1969; Alicia, November 2, 1976.
 HERBERT — James, November 20, 1937; *Carolyn Rodgers, March 5, 1940; James, Jr., April 21, 1961.
 HERBERT — Mildred, May 8, 1906; Lorena, March 17, 1912.
 HERBERT — Paul, December 26, 1924; Marjorie Wenning, February 1, 1928.
 HERBERT — Vernon, September 16, 1933; Dina Holman, December 17, 1941; Janet, December 21, 1962; Julie, June 16, 1967; Jennifer, December 6, 1974.
 HERMESCH — Dale, September 21, 1954; Sara Raver, August 14, 1955; Emily, September 13, 1977; Scott, June 11, 1979; Alicia, January 25, 1983.
 HERMESCH — Gary, September 7, 1953.
 HERMESCH — Mark, May 6, 1960; Cynthia Fry, September 15, 1963; Jeffery, January 17, 1982.
 HERMESCH — Patricia, June 10, 1952.
 HERMESCH — Ralph, June 9, 1926; Marie Hodapp, April 20, 1930; Alan, April 26, 1962; Teresa, June 23, 1964.
 HESSLER — Francis, May 11, 1900; Marjorie, September 2, 1926.
 HODAPP — Arthur, August 31, 1952; Vicky Griner, June 6, 1957; Alicia, July 12, 1981.
 HOIDAPP — Leona, March 19, 1918.
 HODAPP — Urban, February 21, 1911.
 HOEING — Alvin, September 10, 1948; Barbara Harding, May 29, 1946; Michel, September 14, 1972; Lisa, August 8, 1974; Deborah, August 25, 1976.
 HOEING — Francis, August 27, 1951; Teresa Frodge, January 15, 1956; Hollie, October 5, 1976; John, March 15, 1978; Richard, March 23, 1980; Catherine, March 28, 1984.
 HOEING — Lawrence, October 28, 1902; Helen Wenning, June 14, 1909.
 HOEING — Norbert, February 25, 1943; LaDonna Bedel, September 27, 1951; Melissa, December 15, 1975; Timothy, October 8, 1977; Christine, March 3, 1981.
 HORAN — Dorothy Moorman, May 19, 1898; Marilyn, October 5, 1938.
 HORAN — Gertrude Lecher, December 2, 1934; Marcia, March 24, 1960; Linda, April 5, 1961; Brian, December 29, 1964; Stephen, October 10, 1968.
 HULL — *John M., March 3, 1940; Margaret Dietz, October 2, 1942; John, June 11, 1966; Thomas, March 19, 1975.

JACOBS — Jerome, August 18, 1933; Elaine Mehring, May 20, 1935; Derek, October 15, 1960; Michael, March 31, 1962; David, September 5, 1966.

JOHANNIGMAN — Edward, July 3, 1959; June Brancamp, August 13, 1961; Bradley, January 14, 1983.

JOHANNIGMAN — Justin, November 25, 1930; Evelyn Schwering, December 28, 1930; Karen, November 3, 1963; Mark, February 27, 1969.

JOHANNIGMAN — Paul, June 8, 1961; Marsilia Kohlman, April 7, 1958; Rebecca, May 2, 1981; Jennifer, March 2, 1983; Jessica, March 2, 1983.

JOHANNIGMAN — Roman, March 15, 1929; Marjorie Scheidler, July 1, 1932; Jane, June 4, 1963; James, August 26, 1964; Jean, October 8, 1965; Joan, July 21, 1968; Joseph, August 18, 1969; William, October 12, 1971.

JOHANNIGMAN — Roman, Jr., September 17, 1955; Jean Wallpe, November 2, 1955; Nathan, April 21, 1981.

JOHANNIGMAN — Urban, September 24, 1927; Marjorie Veerkamp, February 11, 1928; Urban, January 19, 1963; Charles, April 7, 1964; Dorothy, November 30, 1969; Laurie, October 4, 1971.

KLENE — Fred, March 15, 1916; Gladys Mitchell, August 18, 1927.

KLOSTERKEMPER — Leona Redelman, December 22, 1896.

KNUEVEN — Rita, March 18, 1923.

KOESTER — *William, July 20, 1955; Theresa Vanderpohl, November 19, 1957; Tammy, April 3, 1982.

KOORS — Clem, February 16, 1905; Gertrude Hessler, November 12, 1910.

KOORS — David, February 6, 1959; *Sherry Morrow, June 15, 1964.

KOORS — James, February 6, 1932; Marieda Hoeing, April 24, 1937; Ricky, August 22, 1961; Daryl, December 14, 1965.

KROGER — Carl, December 21, 1912; Margaret Wilmer, May 2, 1929; Lawrence, February 27, 1969.

KROGER — Herbert, May 9, 1949; *Janice Knarr, June 11, 1949; Bret, May 2, 1969; Bart, January 9, 1971.

KROGER — Robert, November 25, 1951; Roberta Larison, June 16, 1951; Melissa, March 1, 1974; Craig, May 19, 1979.

KROGER — Tony, December 28, 1955; *Jeanne Wilkinson, July 21, 1955; Tonya, February 26, 1974; Chad, March 20, 1978; Brandi, May 11, 1982.

LUKEN — Betty Scheidler, January 13, 1899.

MANLIEF — *Charles, July 5, 1951; Patricia Hardebeck, November 20, 1953; Anthony, May 13, 1974; Craig, November 17, 1975.

MANN — Calvin, February 27, 1951; Donna Kohrman, April 9, 1951; Jonathan, October 19, 1982.

MATTOX — *Gregg, September 7, 1956; Barb Hamilton, August 10, 1957; Clint, September 19, 1977; Andy, April 9, 1980.

McCULLOUGH — Anna Dwenger, December 14, 1929; Sharon, May 16, 1960; Ruth, December 14, 1964; William, September 27, 1966; Glen, March 3, 1968.



Marie Monter, a retired school teacher, lives in what was the Scheidler home, one of the oldest in town.

McCULLOUGH — David, May 17, 1959; *Penny Biddle, August 1, 1960; John, February 21, 1982; Kevin, August 12, 1983.

McCULLOUGH — Harry, January 15, 1963; *Pamela Cordray, March 14, 1965; Colleen, January 9, 1982.

MEYER — William, May 23, 1937; Joan Waters, May 27, 1944; Janice, October 11, 1971; Victor, December 28, 1975.

MONTER — Marie, October 15, 1900.

MOORMAN — Carl, September 26, 1933; Eileen Nobbe, December 2, 1939; Carol, March 25, 1964; Tom, August 1, 1965; Gene, May 25, 1970; Donna, December 13, 1971.

MOORMAN — Joseph, July 25, 1961; *Valorie Stucker, October 4, 1961.

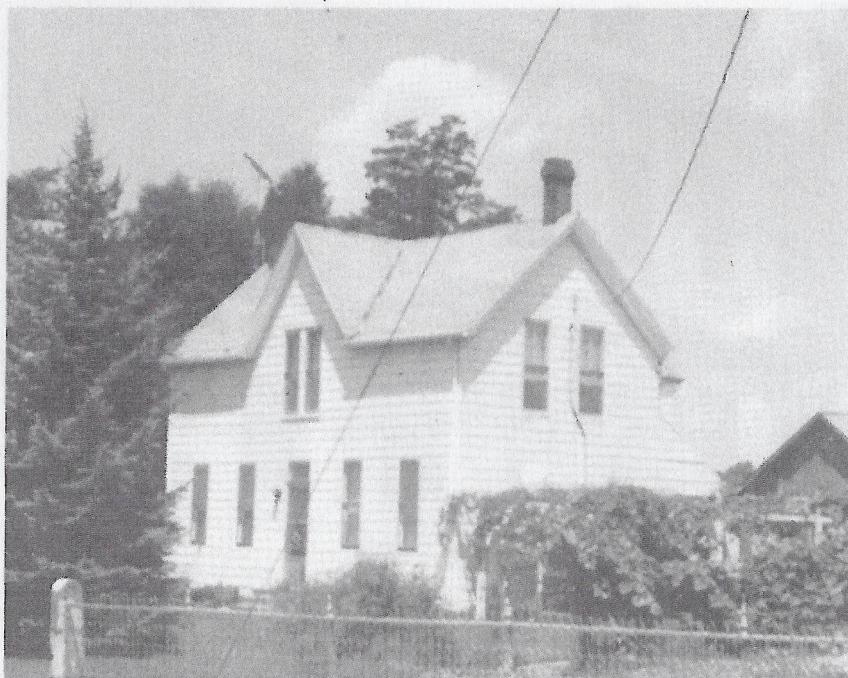
MOORMAN — Lawrence, November 16, 1916.

NADERMAN — Albert, February 4, 1946; Cheryl Holt, August 25, 1953; Michelle, March 22, 1975; Kimberly, July 2, 1976; Matthew, July 11, 1978; George, February 18, 1980; Adam, September 2, 1982.

NADERMAN — George, November 29, 1895; Clara Hessler, April 24, 1908.

NADERMAN — Marie Preuss, December 15, 1908; Joseph, December 4, 1946.

NOBBE — Kenneth, September 19, 1957; Tonya Moffett, March 6, 1960; Danielle, August 7, 1979; Desirae, May 18, 1982.



The Joseph Moorman home, where Mrs. Dorothy Moorman Horan and her daughter, Marilyn, now live.

ORTMAN — Arthur, September 28, 1916; Velma Picker, September 13, 1920.
 ORTMAN — Daniel, July 16, 1946; *Elaine Huffmeyer, December 7, 1948;
 *Benjie, March 30, 1974; *Joseph, March 6, 1976; *Jedidiah, November
 26, 1979.
 ORTMAN — Frank, June 10, 1907; Sylvia Fry, March 8, 1913.
 ORTMAN — Michael, March 2, 1950; Patricia Wilmer, May 23, 1953;
 Timothy, August 9, 1970; Kimberly, July 9, 1971; Melinda, September
 19, 1974.
 PLATT — *Larry, September 28, 1950; Karen Green, April 9, 1951; Shawn,
 May 27, 1971; Michelle, December 16, 1975.
 RAMER — *Melvin, November 17, 1931; MaryAnn Schneider, October 24,
 1932.
 REDELMAM — Albin, August 28, 1912; Edna Bedel, March 28, 1919.
 REDELMAN — Carl, December 25, 1938; Mary Smith, January 21, 1942;
 Theodore, February 22, 1963; Mary, December 25, 1965; Rebecca, March
 2, 1967; Shirley, June 22, 1968.
 REDELMAN — Edna Fry, July 17, 1912.
 REDELMAN — Gary, March 13, 1959.

REDELMAN — Mark, October 15, 1954; Nancy Abbott, June 19, 1955;
 Tamara J. Peetz, September 6, 1970; Christopher, January 21, 1975;
 Nicholas, May 3, 1980; Crystal Dawn, January 11, 1982; Lisa, November
 11, 1983.

REDELMAN — Quintin, January 24, 1918; Justin, April 9, 1920.

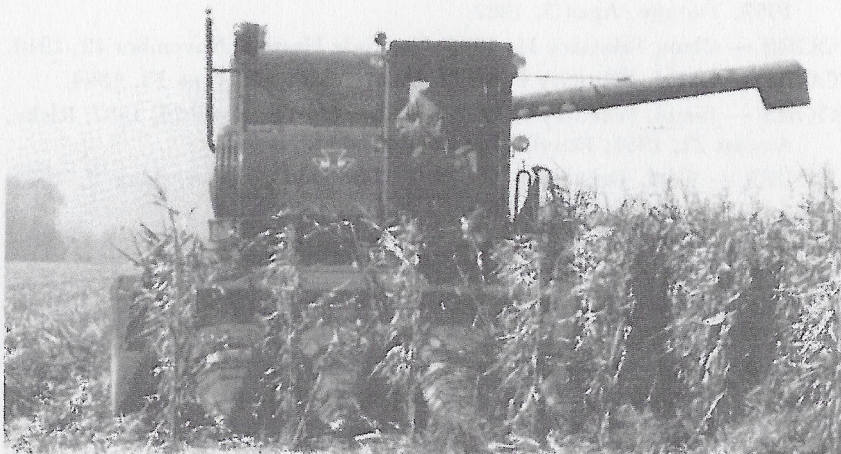
REISMAN — Harold, May 2, 1922; Virginia Gilland, October 3, 1925; Todd,
 June 20, 1959.

REISMAN — Tony, March 26, 1956; Janna DeArmond, July 14, 1960; Brooke,
 January 28, 1983.

RETHLAKE — Robert, June 23, 1923.

ROBERTS — Kenneth, August 29, 1949; Mary Jane Schoettmer, July 7, 1951;
 Michelle, November 6, 1974; Cynthia, January 19, 1981.

RONSEIM — *Stephen, July 19, 1942; Andrea Witkemper, July 30, 1946;
 Christopher, July 30, 1965; Paula, September 2, 1966; Monica, December
 15, 1969; Jeremy, May 21, 1971.

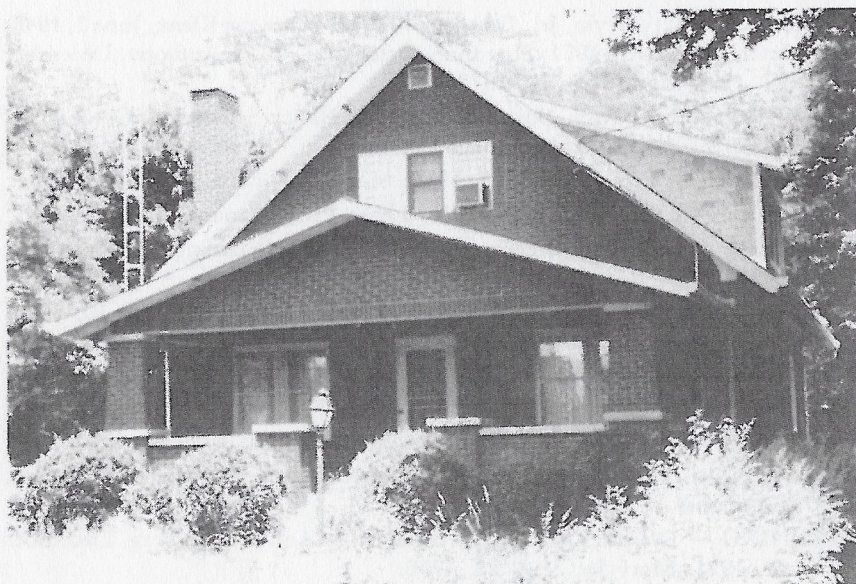


Expensive Farm Equipment — cause of several recent bankruptcies.

RUBLE — Suzanna Klene, September 11, 1948; Todd, January 29, 1970; Dana,
 June 29, 1972.

RUHL — Herbert, March 31, 1909; Gertrude Schoettmer, December 9, 1904.

RUNYAN — *William, March 4, 1934; Mary Hardebeck, August 14, 1937;
 William, April 23, 1959; Robert, April 14, 1960; Kenneth, March 3, 1963;
 Teresa, November 26, 1964.



The house that George Schneider built next to the old log church before it was torn down. His daughter Mary Ann and her husband, Melvin Ramer, live here today.

SANREGRET — Effie Brancamp, July 18, 1919.

SCHEIDLER — Anthony, November 13, 1922; Rosemary Wenning, September 28, 1928; Ann, July 9, 1955; Daniel, November 6, 1961; Patrick, March 15, 1963; Dale, December 2, 1964; James, November 6, 1967; Julie, June 20, 1969.

SCHEIDLER — Norbert, October 16, 1912; Stella Moorman, August 1, 1918; Denise, March 15, 1963.

SCHEIDLER — Tim, September 21, 1956; Jane Wessel, October 31, 1958; Andrew, June 10, 1983.

SCHNEIDER — Carl, June 10, 1907; Dora Kesterman, March 20, 1916; Edward A., April 28, 1957.

SCHOETTNER — Albert, December 23, 1931; Pauline Lamping, May 8, 1932.

SCHOETTNER — Clara Berkemeier, August 14, 1915; Carolyn, June 6, 1938.

SCHOETTNER — Edmund, September 8, 1906; William, October 2, 1908; Bernadine, July 6, 1961.

SCHOETTNER — Harry, February 5, 1911; Ethel Miller, April 24, 1919; Patrick, August 29, 1961.

SCHOETTNER — Herman, August 25, 1908; Sarah Wesseler, November 17, 1910.

SCHOETTNER — Norbert, June 23, 1944; Mary Ann Schoentrup, July 29, 1945; Patrick, December 28, 1977; Scott, May 21, 1980.

SCHOETTNER — William, May 2, 1940; Jean Luken, April 21, 1942; Catherine, December 23, 1963; Timothy, July 28, 1966; Stacey, September 13, 1971; Jay, July 14, 1977.

SCHUTTE — Daniel, September 7, 1958; Helen Hamilton, December 1, 1958; Nicholas, February 16, 1981; Amy, July 2, 1983.

SCHUTTE — Vic, August 14, 1945; Marcella Schantz, November 5, 1945; Frank, February 2, 1966; Vic, February 25, 1967; Jeanine, June 26, 1969.

SCHWERING — Garry, November 11, 1956; Annette Gentry, November 18, 1959; Jenny, July 29, 1977; Bryan, December 6, 1980.

SCHWERING — Thomas, September 24, 1926; Clara Holtel, November 1, 1932; Ronnie, July 29, 1964; Brenda, September 29, 1965; Jenny, May 22, 1967; Paula, May 15, 1968; Sheila, July 28, 1969; Dave, June 20, 1974; Jeffery, July 1, 1976.

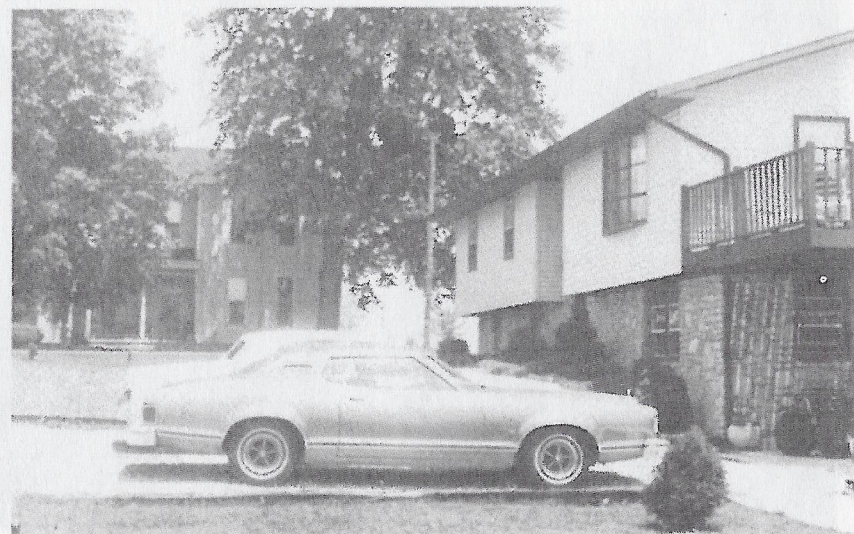
SCHWERING — Wilbur, February 8, 1920; Martha Rethlake, August 29, 1923; Linda, January 21, 1951.

SMITH — Arthur, November 28, 1933; Betty Bundren, July 31, 1932; Charity, March 27, 1972; Serenity, July 31, 1977.

SMITH — *Lawrence, January 1, 1952; Rebecca Wilmer, June 20, 1956; Matthew, September 18, 1975; Jeffrey, August 28, 1978; Nicklaus, March 17, 1980.

SNOW — *Tarry Lee, February 16, 1952; Mary Linda Eisert, February 6, 1951; Amber, October 29, 1974; Leslie, March 11, 1977; Shawna, December 7, 1981.

STIER — Marie Schoettner, June 27, 1917.



Living above the tavern became too noisy, so Bill Stone built this new home for his family. The 1980 automobiles may look odd fifty years from now.

STIER — Marvin, March 22, 1946; Ann Hamilton, July 23, 1950; Angela, May 20, 1972; Mark, August 8, 1976; Patrick, September 5, 1977; Kevin, February 8, 1982; Paul, March 31, 1984.

STONE — David, November 28, 1956; Cindy Israel, March 5, 1957; David Ryan, March 18, 1984.

STONE — Kenneth, May 22, 1958; *Gretchen Sims, August 29, 1958; Tyler, August 24, 1981; Kenneth Eric, August 27, 1982.

STONE — William, November 9, 1913; Helen Reisman, June 30, 1920; Stephen, March 18, 1954; Rita, February 28, 1961; Julie, October 18, 1962.

STUEHRENBURG — Martha Davis, March 28, 1932; Bill, March 3, 1959; Thomas, November 8, 1966; Dale, December 6, 1968; Elvera Tichenor Stuehrenberg, July 4, 1899.

VANDEBUR — *Jerry, May 13, 1953; Debbie Ortman, February 15, 1956; Angela, June 21, 1979; Jamie, March 9, 1981.

VANDERPOHL — Irvin, February 9, 1922; Mary Roell, December 18, 1923; Kate, September 5, 1961.



Dora Waters lives in this house on High Street with the fascinating facade. The death of her husband in World War II left Dora with two infants to raise alone.

VANDERPOHL — Irvin, Jr., February 7, 1948; Sharanne Klene, June 2, 1948; Irvin, August 10, 1971; Sharanne, October 27, 1973; Anthony, December 22, 1975; Carl, June 17, 1977.

VANDERPOHL — Paul, November 6, 1955; Nancy Schwering, October 26, 1959; Suzanne, October 2, 1983.

VEERKAMP — Lee, January 15, 1919; Margaret Griffin, July 11, 1919.

WALTERS — Charles, June 24, 1916; Leora Peetz, January 17, 1921.

WALTERS — George, Jr., February 3, 1920; Vera Wenning, December 22, 1921.

WATERS — Arnold, January 17, 1943; *Sylvia Taylor, January 10, 1946; Andrea, December 26, 1965; Tara, December 24, 1968; Heather, November 30, 1975.

WATERS — Dora Herbert, January 6, 1914.

WENNING — Andrew, June 30, 1961; Teresa Snyder, May 27, 1955.

WENNING — Edmund, April 12, 1924; Vera Cranford, August 27, 1932; Paul, September 7, 1962.

WENNING — Everett, October 20, 1914; Mary Ann Stuhrenberg, December 29, 1921; Mary Jo, April 28, 1956.

WESTRICK — Keith, November 3, 1952; Kathy Bedel, March 5, 1958; Jason, June 24, 1978; Elizabeth, December 23, 1979.

WILMER — Donald, November 20, 1955.

WITKEMPER — Charles, July 29, 1919.

WITKEMPER — Robert, April 25, 1952; Linda Stephens, December 7, 1951; Joseph, October 31, 1973; Andrew, October 5, 1976; Christina, August 18, 1981.

WORLAND — Jerome, November 13, 1926; Frances Stuehrenberg, October 28, 1922.

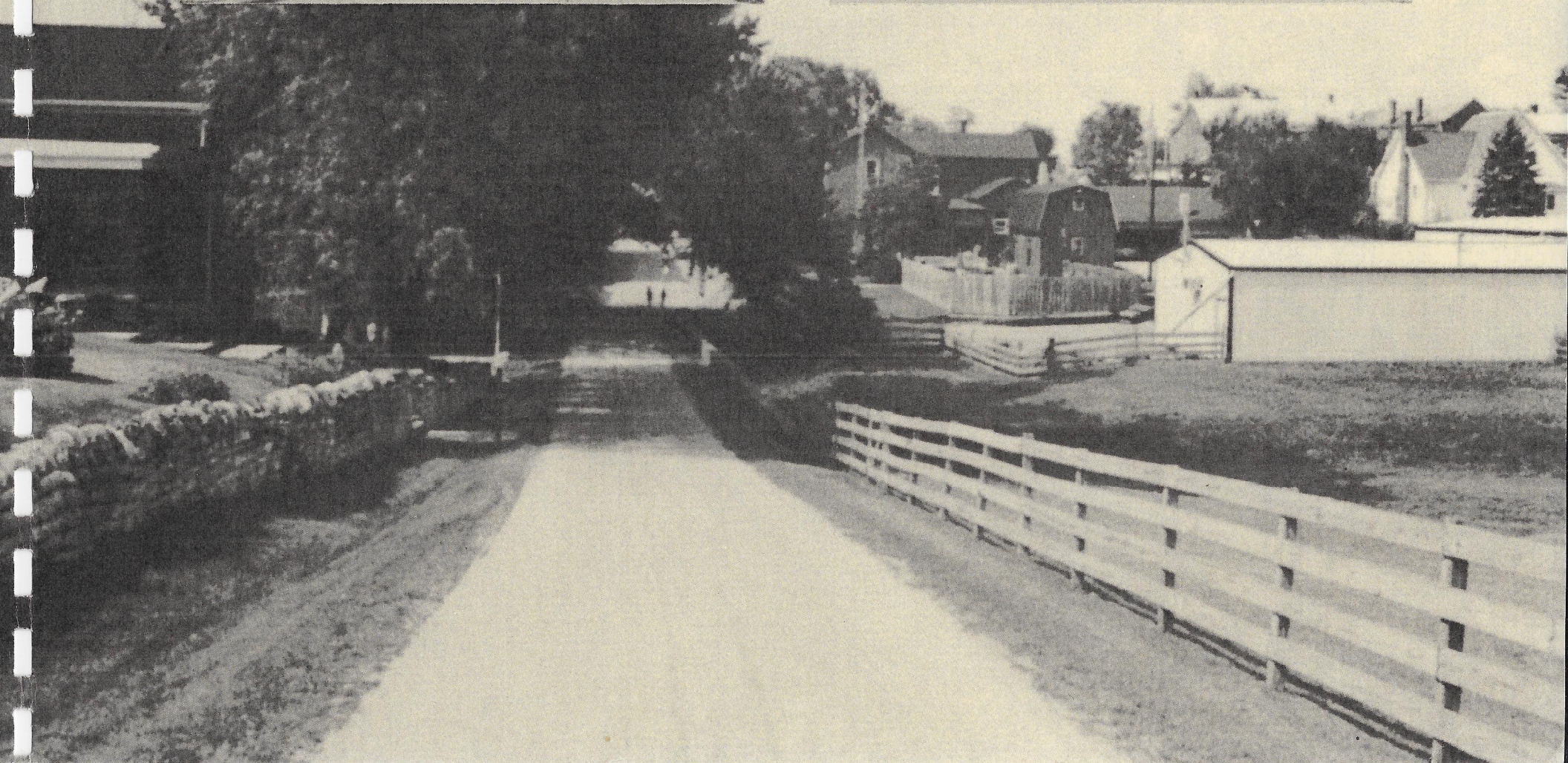
YOUNG — Geneva Elkins, July 6, 1918.

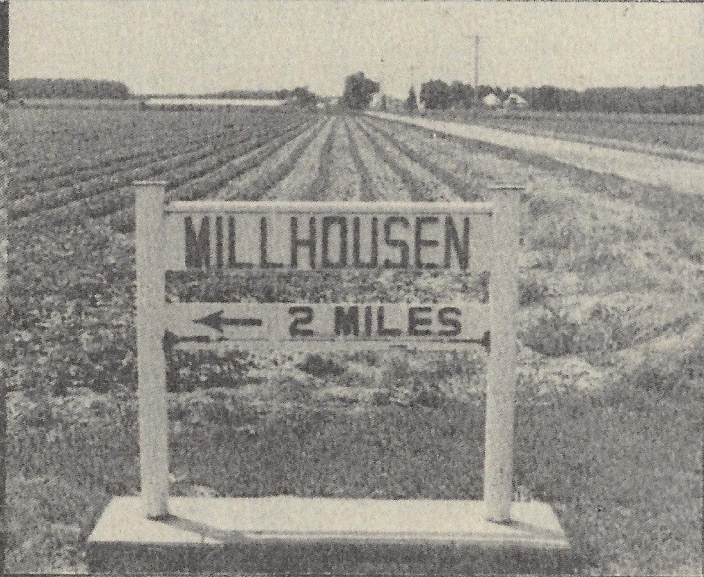
YOUNG — Richard, November 30, 1944; Patricia Callahan, March 7, 1946; Kathy, November 30, 1965; Kelli, August 21, 1968.

ZAPFE — Bernard, February 13, 1947; Sara Bishop, May 15, 1950; Jean, March 23, 1967; Steven, August 5, 1969; Sherri, April 24, 1971; Donna, May 21, 1972.

ZURLINE — John, August 6, 1904.

ZURLINE — Leonard, April 19, 1944; *Wonda Cottey, October 23, 1944; Peggy, June 14, 1965; Roger, September 28, 1966; *Robert, June 17, 1968; *Paul, October 6, 1969; *Matthew, April 14, 1984.





(George Waller's Farm)