

# Notes from a St. Mary's Diary

Following paragraphs taken from a St. Mary's academy diary provide an interesting trip down memory lane:

## 1902

**Entertainers to Close School Term—**  
The pupils of St. Mary's academy will close the school year with entertainments, one on June 17 and the other on June 19. The beautiful drama "Caecilia" will be presented on the latter night. Dramatic personae: Caecilia, Virgin Martyr, Miss Anna L. O'Donnell; Agnes, an orphan, Miss Bea M. McCafferty; Egeria, a Roman lady, Miss Constance Harrington; Tiburtius, Florence Mullen; Quintillian, Miss Margaret Barrett; Valerian, Miss Nelle Brennan; Urban, Miss Nina M. Ryan; Athanasius, Miss Agnes Clark; Septimius, Mary M. Hagerty; Almachius, Miss Anna Dwyer; Decius, Dora Testman; Niger, Miss Agnes Hagerty; Alexander, Miss Margaret Green; Hercules, Miss Agnes Kelly; instrumental, Miss Mary Dennis, Miss Myrtle Moore; duet, "A Dream of Heaven," Miss Eva Tierney and Miss Florence Hebart.

## 1904

**9 Young Ladies Graduate From St. Mary's—**  
Miss Etha Adams recited a poem eulogizing their instructors and friends; Miss Margaret Grady rendered an essay on "True Nobility"; Miss Nelle Brennan recited Longfellow's poem "King Robert of Sicily"; Miss Agnes Kelly paid an enthusiastic eulogy to Robert Emmett; Miss Dorothy Testman recited the class poem; Miss Anna L. Dwyer presented some facts about the American flag; Miss Agnes Hagerty related a legend of the "Madonna"; Miss Margaret Green presented "A Maiden's Philosophy"; Miss Constance Harrington delivered the valedictory. Rev. M. F. Cassidy conferred the honors.  
The graduation overture was played by a piano trio, Viola Viertel, Earla Simmons and Genevieve McNichols. Miss Mary Emery was the accompanist for the choruses.

## 1908

**Wit and Sallies Cause Merriment—**  
Despite the dreadful storm which raged Thursday evening, June 11, St. Mary's halls resounded with the happy salutation and greetings of former graduates, whose spirits were not dampened and who were welcomed to their alma mater for their first reunion and banquet.  
Fifty-one young women have been graduated from this rapidly-growing institution of learning since June, 1903. Organization of the Alumnae association was a tribute of love and gratitude to their devoted instructors, and a pledge of loyalty to their alma mater.  
About 30 of the former graduates were able to be present. Miss Bea McCafferty proved a most gracious toastmistress, and caused much merriment by her rare wit and graceful sallies in introducing the speakers.  
Program: "The Work of An

Alumnae Association," Miss Florence Mullen, '03; "Reunion at St. Mary's," Miss Nelle O'Donnell, '05; violin solo, Miss Mildred Scattergood; "Memories," Miss Mamie Cullen; song, "I'm a Pilgrim," Miss Margaret Donohoe, '08; "Our Pastor," Miss Lenora Daly, '07; "Our Chaplain," Miss Cecilia Holland; vocal solo, Miss Mae Campbell, '05; "Welcome Class of 1908," Miss Margaret Green, '04; "Response," Miss Merle Hookstra, '08; piano solo, Miss Loretta Sullivan, '07; vocal duet, Misses Margaret and Elizabeth Donohoe; piano solo, Miss Elsie Gatenby; "To Alma Mater," Miss Elizabeth Donohoe.

## Alumnae Members Elected To Teaching Positions—

The following have been elected to teaching positions for the scholastic year, 1908-'09: Miss Anna O'Donnell, '03; Miss Margaret Grady, '04; Miss Kathleen Doyle, '06; and Miss Lenora Daly, '07—in the O'Neill public school; Miss Cecilia Holland, '07, principal of the Verdell school; Miss Lottie Grady, '06, will teach in Inman; Miss Anna Dwyer, '03, in Butte, Mont.; and Miss Margaret Donohoe, '08, in Stafford.

## First Brick Laid On New Addition—

Tuesday morning at exactly 9 o'clock, Mother Leonie laid the first brick for the new \$53,000 addition to St. Mary's academy. The building when completed will be the largest of its kind in the state. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Mother was presented with several checks and \$10 gold pieces.

## Loretta Sullivan Is Toastmistress—

That realization often surpasses anticipation was brought home with more than usual force to the class of 1908 on the occasion of the graduates' reception given by the juniors at St. Mary's last Tuesday evening.  
The early part of the evening was spent in playing progressive games and the prize, a delicate blue and white SMA pennant, was won by Miss Sue O'Donnell, '08. The color effect was very artistic. Blue and white in candelabra, in linen, and gracefully festooned from ceiling to the tables together with fragrant lilies of the valley, told in whose honor the hall was decorated.  
Miss Loretta Sullivan, '07, now grave, now gay, gratified expectations as toastmistress.  
Following is a list of those who graciously responded: "Our Alma Mater," Miss Elizabeth Donohoe; "Our Pastor," Miss Margaret Donohoe; "St. Mary's Bells," Miss Mae Hunt; "The Class of '08," Miss Mary Mullen; "The Juniors," Miss Rose Paul; "A Parting Thought," Miss Gea Boyle.  
The guests of honor were Very Rev. Father Cassidy, Miss Moriarity, Miss Mamie Cullen, Mr. P. J. McManus and Mr. J. A. Donohoe.

## 1909

**Fine Home Talent Show Produced—**  
The theatergoers of O'Neill were treated to a fine exhibition of dramatic acting June 9 when St. Mary's academy presented "Patricia." This play is laid in the time of early Christianity. The playing of Miss Mildred Scattergood, of Ainsworth, in the role of "Patricia" was unequalled. Miss Kathleen Stannard acted the part of Flavia, and could not be excelled by professionals; Miss Frances Hopkins played the part of Augusta, Empress of Rome; Miss Cora Pixley acted the part of Octavia; Eula Stilson, of Atkinson, took the part of Cecilia without a flaw; Miss Georgia Hall was the blind dancing girl.

## 1910

**Commencement Exercises Held in Opera House—**  
The commencement exercises of St. Mary's academy were held in the Knights of Columbus opera house Thursday evening, June 16.  
Program: piano solo, Miss Mabel F. Stratton; chorus from "Il Travatore," academic students, accompanist, Miss Myrtle Fisher; class poem, Miss Mabel F. Stratton; piano solo, Miss Clara Whitmer; reading, "The Lost Word," Miss Anna Kilmurry; violin solo, Miss Mildred Scattergood; allegory, "The Three Graces," Miss Kathleen Stannard, Miss Lillie Brooks, Miss Gertrude Hirsch, Miss Marguerite Linahan, Miss Eula Stilson.  
Conferring of honors by Very Rev. M. F. Cassidy.

## 1916

**Alumnae Reunion Held at St. Mary's—**  
At 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon, June 11, 70 members of St. Mary's Alumnae association gathered in the beautiful assembly room of the academy for a business meeting.  
After all general matters were disposed of, the election of officers resulted in the choice of Miss Margaret McGreevy, of the class of 1903, now of Omaha, president; Miss Kathleen Doyle, '06, vice-president; Miss Margaret Donohoe, '08, secretary; Miss Grace Hammond, '11, treasurer. Executive committee: Miss Grace Ward, '07; Miss Julia Biglin, '09; Miss Eula Stilson, '11; Miss Anna McCafferty, '09; Miss Marguerite Doyle, '09; Miss Rose Hughes, '13.  
At the banquet Miss Martina Golden, '07, was introduced as toastmistress. Responses were as follows: "St. Mary's," Miss Eula Stilson, '11; "Our Alumnae," Miss Mary Gallagher, '12; "Our Absent Ones," Miss Frances McGrane, '13; "The Girl of Today," Miss Violet Brown, '16; "Welcome to the Class of '16," Miss Mae Hammond, '15; "Response," Miss Cella Farrell, '16.  
The Alumnae song, "Alma Mater," concluded the program.

## Father Cassidy Delivers Address—

Graduation program, June 4—"Grande Marche Militaire," Miss Marie Johnson; violin solo, Miss Freida Downey; piano solo, Miss Cella Farrell; salutory, Miss Anna Carr; piano sextette: I—Marie Biglin, Anna Carr, II—Cella Farrell, Catherine Corey, III—Hattie Pribil, Kathryn McCarthy; vocal quartette: Violet Brown, Loretta Carlon, Mildred Kane, Freida Downey, piano duo: Cella Farrell, Josephine Jotter; valedictory, Miss Lettie Sausser. Address: Rev. Francis R. Cassidy, S. J., Creighton university.  
Class night, June 3.—Class poem, Miss Katherine Murphy; history, Miss Lettie Sausser; class prophecy, Miss Josephine Pribil; class grinds, Cecilia Kelleher; class will, Marie Biglin; presentation of class gift, Violet Brown.

## 1920

**Helen Biglin Is Valedictorian—**  
The commencement exercises were held this year on June 16. The following program was rendered: "March Militaire," Evelyn Patsel; salutory, Miss Frances Tierney; vocal duet, Miriam Gilligan, Clara Biglin; piano sextette: Miriam Gilligan, Clara Biglin, Demaris Stout, Marie Wierer, A. Stecker, Alice Howard; chorus, the class, accompanist, Agnes Shoemaker; reading, "The Legend of Service," Clara Biglin; piano solo, Bertha Colome; vocal solo, Demaris Stout; piano sextette—Frances Tierney, Irene Sutherland, Helen Biglin, Anna Ryssave, Bertha Colome, Mary McCarthy; piano solo, Helen Biglin; chorus, "Holy Redeemer," the class, accompanist, Agnes Shoemaker; valedictory, Helen Biglin.  
Conferring of honors, Father Cassidy, Address to the graduates, Rev. W. J. Corbo, of Creighton university.

## Margaret Uffing Presents Address—

Class day, June 15, program: March, Evelyn Patsel; class day address, Margaret Uffing; class history, Helen Biglin; class poem, Agnes Tierney; piano solo, Frances Tierney; class will, Miriam Gilligan; piano duo: Irene Sutherland and Marie Wierer; presentation of class gift, Alice Howard.

## 1925

**'Goose Hangs High' Title of Feature—**  
Program: "Piano duet, "Agnes Bazelman, Vera Madsen; salutory, Loretta Enright; vocal solo, Agnes Carr; violin obligato, Pauline Wirer; piano solo, Loretta Enright; class poem, Pauline Wirer; violin and piano, Helen Wierer, Joyce Kent; valedictory, Joyce Kent; conferring of honors, Rev. M. J. Brady; address, Rev. Thomas A. Kelly, S. J.; at the piano, Loretta Ryan.  
At promptly 1:30 o'clock on Wednesday, May 20, the seniors were welcomed to the junior room which had been trans-

# Story of Sisters' Coming to O'Neill

(Editor's note: The following article was written by Sister M. Alexia McGovern in January, 1940. Sister Alexia died 3 years ago in Buffalo, N. Y.):

## By SISTER M. ALEXIA

Rev. Father Cassidy and Pat McManus came to St. Francis Mission in the Rosebud territory of South Dakota every fall for hunting and this gave Mother Leopoldine and the Sisters a good opportunity to get acquainted with them. Father Cassidy, when leaving, invariably begged Mother to come down to O'Neill or send Sisters for a visit. So in August, 1896, while Mother Leopoldine was in Europe for the reelection of our General Superior, she wrote the Mission, "Sister Alexia with Sophie Walking Eagle and Frances Cut Cut may meet me in O'Neill on my return."

Thus it was that the 2 children and I arrived in O'Neill at 10 o'clock on a Monday morning. Because I had the children with me, I would not go to Father Cassidy's but was directed by the station agent to John Hunt's home in the northeast section of O'Neill. John and Dennis Hunt had plastered for us at the mission.

The Hunts, especially Mrs. Hunt, were goodness itself. She took me to Mass every morning. In the afternoon, I visited with Father Cassidy. It was while sitting on the veranda of his home where we could glance across and see the burned convent that he said to me, "Sister, if your community will take charge and rebuild the convent, I will give you the lots and everything on them."

I did not answer but looked thoughtfully straight in front of me and started a new topic as soon as I could well do so. But he was persistent and said, "You haven't answered my proposition."  
My reply was in all honesty, "Father, you don't want German Sisters or a German community in such an Irish town

as this." He answered at once, "I don't care who they are, if they are only good teachers."

While I was here, Mrs. Hunt drove around with me to call on each Catholic family. The 15th of August came during my visit and I spent a day in the sacristy helping Mrs. Pat Hagerty clean the candlesticks and decorate the altars for the next day's feast.

On my way back to St. Francis with Mother Leopoldine, who did not stop off at O'Neill (she spoke little English), I told her about Father Cassidy's request and she immediately took it up. She had the highest regard for good Father Cassidy and would have done anything to comply with his wishes. She wrote at once to Rev. Mother and word was sent from her to Buffalo that Mother Cecilia and Sister Leonarda (her business manager) should go to O'Neill and send a report to her of their findings. They came, stopped at Father Cassidy's, met all the school children then came on to St. Francis to tell us that it was an "utter impossibility" for us to take O'Neill as it was too small—the Sisters could not possibly make a living there. This was the report she sent to Rev. Mother, but Mother Leopoldine sent another letter to Rev. Mother at the same time and Rev. Mother's remarkable answer came back.

"I think if our Holy Father, St. Francis, were living it would be just such a place as O'Neill that he would want us to take and we will take it."

She sent \$6,000 to start the work, but in the meantime, Rev. Mother died and was replaced by her secretary, who felt the same as she did about O'Neill and so the work began early in 1900. School in the meantime was held in church, the choir, and the skating rink.

Mother Leopoldine was active in getting Brother Stander, S. J., from St. Francis as architect and contractor and overseer—everything to keep down expenses. The best carpenter from the mission, Theodore Piekenbrook, also was sent down to aid Brother-

er. The workers, as far as I remember, were taken from O'Neill.

A Sister with a girl went out to Tom Kearns in Utah and he gave the first \$1,000 for St. Mary's. Mother Leopoldine borrowed \$1,000 here-and-there from friends of the mission to help build the convent. She was untiring in her efforts for O'Neill. As she could neither write nor speak English, I did all her English correspondence and was, therefore, the go-between for her and Father Cassidy—hence

my knowledge of all that happened.

Instead of starving here, this convent has had more local help, more kindness and generosity than any of our houses in the United States.

Perhaps you knew the old philosopher at Creighton university, Father Coppens. In 1902, he asked me how O'Neill was getting along. I told him "splendidly!" and he said, "I knew it would. The Sign of the Cross is upon it and it is bound to thrive and grow."

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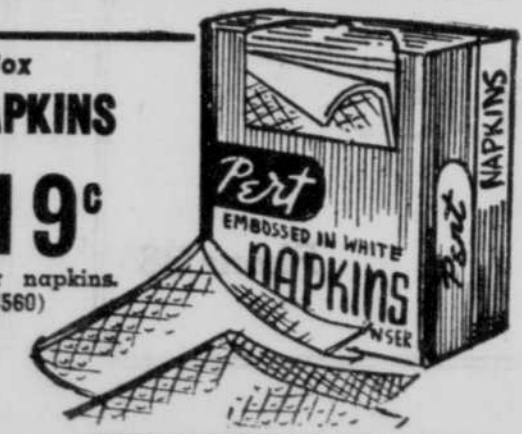
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