

Detailed Map of Wairarapa District

with portions of Wellington and Hawkes Bay Provinces.



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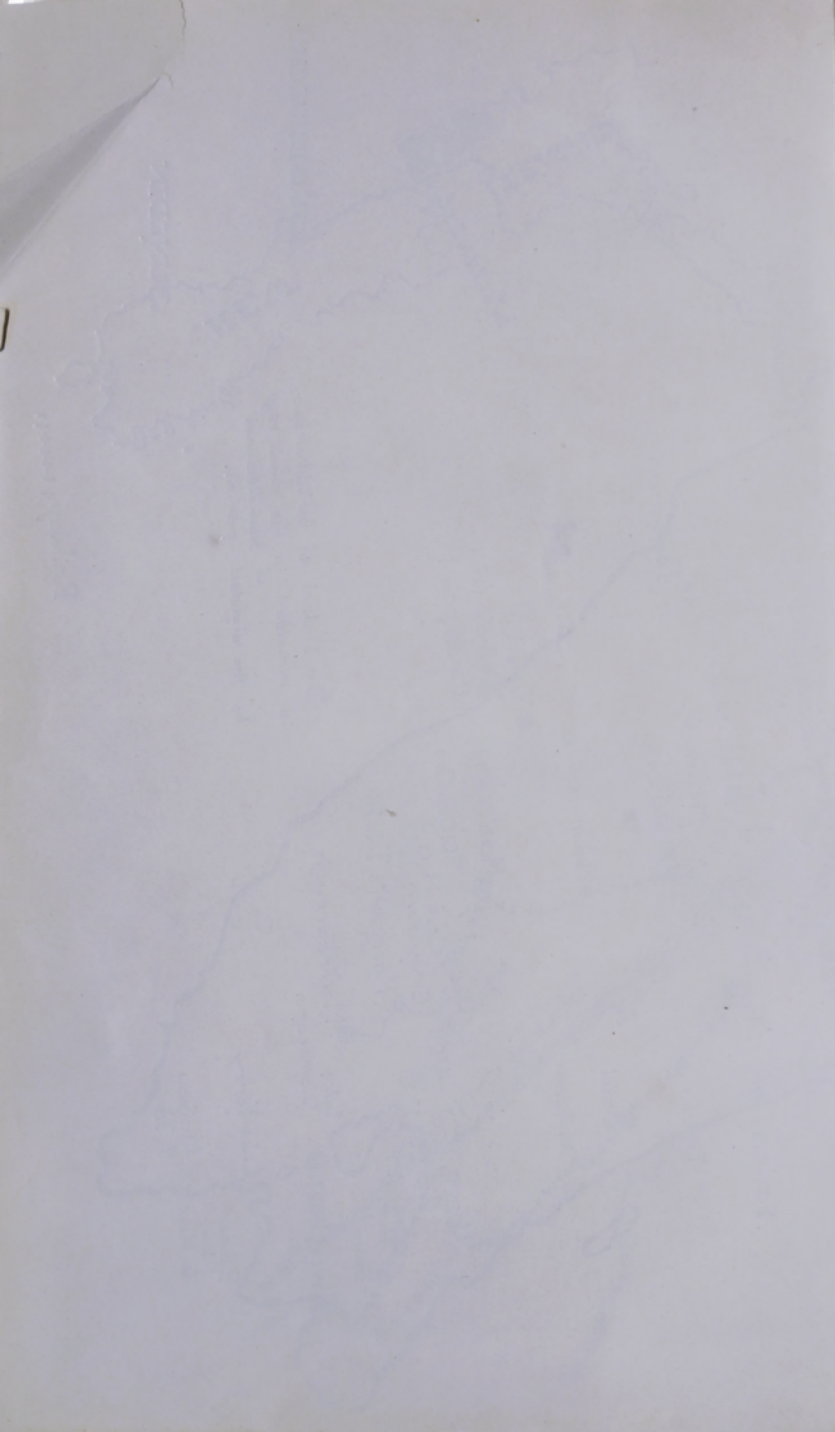
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FRUITS OF TOIL

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Fruits of Toil

*A History of the Catholic Church
in the District of the Wairarapa,
New Zealand.*

1845 - 1956

BY

Vincent J. McGlone

"May the priests who come later and reap
the fruits of toil . . . pray for the founder

A. Halbwachs, S.M."

(Inscription in first Baptismal Register)

Nihil obstat:

M. H. FLANAGAN, S.M., D.D.,

Censor deputatus.

Imprimatur:

+ P. T. B. McKEEFY, D.D.,

Archbishop of Wellington.

Wellington, May 24, 1957.

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To
the memory of
my father and mother
Joseph and Brigid McGlone
who knew so many of the priests herein
mentioned, this work is humbly dedicated
as a token of gratitude for their
prayers and sacrifices that
helped to foster my
priestly vocation.
Requiescant
in pace.

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The Most Reverend P. T. B. McKeefry, D.D.,
Archbishop of Wellington and Metropolitan.

Foreword

*By the Most Reverend P. T. B. McKeefry, D.D.,
Archbishop of Wellington and Metropolitan.*

Evaluation of the past is one of the objectives sought by historians. Older countries could then seem to offer advantages to the historian which he might not expect to find in lands of more recent growth. But is the richness of an historical past to be gauged by length of centuries, or by the nature of achievements marking real and true human progress? It is not my part to elaborate the question; sufficient for present purposes to say that real and true human progress means going forward boldly to an uncertain future; going boldly because of an appreciation of the past, an understanding of the higher values in life and a determination to preserve those values for the enjoyment and benefit of mankind.

To New Zealand came men and women from older lands, lands steeped in history, and they came to a land with a very brief historical past. They brought with them ideals, and those forms of life that had evolved in their countries through long, often tortuous centuries. These men and women were facing an uncertain future and their bold march into that future is the story of the foundations of New Zealand and the lives, works, joys, sorrows and heroisms of its pioneers.

We owe much to those who earlier gave us the first records of settlement in New Zealand. Recent years have seen an increase in historical writings. All this is to the

good, for while no one holds to the blind worship of what is past, true progress requires continuity of past, present and future. Evaluation of the past gives understanding to the present and helps shape the future.

Father McGlone's contribution to a knowledge of the past is as welcome as it is valuable. It covers the history of the Church in the Wairarapa from its beginning to the present day, and in its survey we are given a full portrayal of the men and women of the province, their lives, their sacrifices and their devoted part in establishing the Church and its works in their midst. Not all was peace and harmony which since men are not angels can never be a matter of surprise, but from the survey one gains a better understanding of the times, and what is more important a full appreciation of those to whom the Church in the Wairarapa owes so much.

In the Preface the author tells of the difficulties faced in tracing the sources for his story. They are the difficulties that have confronted so many seeking to give us a knowledge of early days in New Zealand. Father McGlone has succeeded in a very hard task, and it is to be hoped that his example will lead others to emulate him and so give us a fuller history of the beginnings and development of the Church in New Zealand. True, such a history can only be a part of the full history of our country, but the fulness of the story requires completeness in detail. We owe it to the future that our contribution be complete. Father McGlone has finished the work he set himself—it is indeed another fruit of toil whose value has been enriched by his devoted labour. Success to the work and may others profit by his example!

Preface

Someone has written—I think it was Carlyle—“Histories are as perfect as the historian is wise and is gifted with an eye and a soul”. In presenting then the story of the Catholic Church in the Wairarapa I do so in all humility. Since 1950 four towns in the district have celebrated their centenary of organized settlement and in every case the request has been made to me to supply information on Catholic affairs, only to find the bare minimum available and so much of it hearsay. Relying on such sources I have unwittingly been the cause of an error regarding the date of Greytown Catholic church in Mr. A. G. Bagnall’s book “Old Greytown”.

I am sure that all of those priests who have worked in the Wairarapa in recent years must have desired to know more of the early days with their struggles and failures, their successes and their disappointments. But, through the years, no one has come forward, fluent in pen and rich in wisdom, to give us that story. In desperation, when it is nearly too late, I have taken on my shoulders this difficult task. In my boyhood days at the old convent school in Meeanee, Hawkes Bay, nearly fifty years ago, Sister Mary Cletus of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart tried to teach me English composition, and how often when she corrected my feeble attempts at essay-writing she would say, “You’re hopeless; you’ll never write anything worth while”. I have been always conscious of this through the years and I fear the reaction of a critical public. On the other hand two priests at St. Patrick’s College in my student days, Rev. Fathers J. Eccleton and B. J. Gondringer, gave me a great love of history. So I still hope that the long and patient gathering of so many facts in this book may induce an historian of the future to incorporate them into something worthy of the name.

I wish to thank His Grace Archbishop McKeefry for his encouragement and for honouring the effort with a foreword. The Very Rev. M. Flanagan, S.M., D.D., of Mt. St. Mary’s, Greenmeadows, has been very painstaking in correcting MSS. and proofs. His many useful suggestions has improved the work considerably.

The facilities offered by the Chief Librarian and Staff of the General Assembly Library in Wellington, and by the Editors and Staff of various newspapers in the Wairarapa are worthy of special mention. The co-operation of priests, nuns and brothers has left nothing to be desired. The kindness of Mr. C. J. Wrigley of Carterton in giving me access to some very old newspapers was invaluable. For help in the typing of MSS. I am very grateful to Mr. C. C. Roots, A.P.A.N.Z.

The generous offer of Mr. A. G. Bagnall to do the General Index has lightened my burden considerably and enhanced the value of the book for reference. Knowing his high standard as an historian of the Wairarapa, I feel he has shown me a great compliment.

To the Printers, Roydhouse and Son, I offer my sincerest thanks. A sad blow was dealt my efforts by the sudden death on March 30th, 1957, of the senior partner of the firm, Mr. Reginald Roydhouse. His great interest in New Zealand history and his long association with journalism in the Wairarapa inspired me to write this book, and just as its pages were going into print the sudden call of death came to him.

To all then who in a greater or lesser degree have helped me I say a sincere "Thank you".

VINCENT J. McGLONE,

Carterton, N.Z.

Special acknowledgments:—

Masterton Borough Council—blocks.

Carterton Borough Council—block.

Greytown Borough Council—blocks.

A. G. Bagnall—various works.

St. Bride's Convent—blocks.

Marist Fathers, Greenmeadows—photos.

St. Patrick's College, Wellington and Silverstream.

"Tablet" Office—block.

C. J. Carle, Masterton—blocks.

Derek Messenger photographic studio.

Don McNab, Greytown—photos.

J. F. Thompson, M.B.E., Greytown.

Introduction

The District of the Wairarapa was neither settled nor known as early as the other provinces of the North Island of New Zealand. It was only in the 1850's that some interest was taken in this vast stretch of land, much of which was flat. Odd settlements were made in the coastal areas, particularly the East Coast, stretching from Cape Palliser to Cape Turnagain. The hinterland consisted of large stretches of virgin forest and odd patches of natural clearing. The great barriers of the Tararua and Rimutaka ranges cut off the territory from Wellington and the West Coast of the Island. A very old book, "Bishop's Guide to Wellington", tells us that "in 1841 the settlers of Wellington appear to have had little knowledge of the Wairarapa District or in fact of any portion of Wellington and its surroundings beyond the Paikakariki (sic) Hill on the one side and the Rimutaka Hill in the opposite direction". The same source tells us that the name "Wairarapa" was given by the Maoris to the lake at the lower end of the district, and they called the territory after its chief river "Ruamahanga". In the whole coast-line of the province the only shelter for ships, or port (if so it could be called), was Castlepoint. Captain Cook was off Castlepoint on Sunday, 11th February, 1770, and though he does not refer to the name he gave to "this remarkable hillock which stands close to the sea", he called it Castlepoint on his chart.

The first clergy of any denomination of which we have record, who visited the district, were the Anglican Archdeacon, William Williams with his son, Leonard (then a boy of 14) and the Reverend William Colenso. They were sailing from Poverty Bay to Wellington, and storms in Cook Strait drove them back from the Strait, and short of water they landed at Castlepoint on November 15th, 1843. The little cove where they landed Colenso named Deliverance Cove—a name it kept on world atlases until the 1890's, but it now seems to be lost.

The earliest Catholics we know to have come were Charles Clifford, Frederick Weld, and William Vavasour, who crossed the Rimutakas in 1843. Via the coast they next came in 1844 to investigate the Whareama Valley

(south of Castlepoint) and the coastal areas round about as land suitable for sheep. Mr. Weld's narrative of his investigation tells us he did not favour the locality and nothing more was done there. The leaseholds they secured elsewhere in the Wairarapa did not prove satisfactory. Hence the Wairarapa lost Catholic names which became famous in Canterbury and Marlborough.

In 1848 Auckland and Wellington were made separate Dioceses, and after the return of Bishop Pompallier from Europe on April 18, 1850, Bishop Viard, S.M., who had been consecrated by Bishop Polding in Sydney on January 6th, 1846, as Coadjutor to Bishop Pompallier, was appointed to the new Diocese of Wellington, and left Auckland with the Marist Fathers for the new missionary work. They arrived in Wellington on May 1st, 1850. Among the Marist Fathers who accompanied the Bishop of Wellington was Father Antoine Seon. He had been one of the original band of priests who together with the Venerable Father Colin formed the infant Society of Mary. Towards the end of 1840 Father Seon together with Fathers Borjon, Garin and Rozet, some Marist Brothers and a cleric (later to be known as Father Rol-leaux), sailed from Europe on a vessel called the "Mary Grey" for Sydney, at which port they transhipped for the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Both Fathers Seon and Garin were to have, directly or indirectly, some reference to the story of the Catholic Church in the Wairarapa. Father Seon was destined to be the first to minister to both pakeha and Maori in the province, and Father Garin was to foster the vocation of a boy, Francis Redwood, in Nelson. It was Francis Redwood, later Bishop of Wellington, who, knowing the needs of the great district over the Rimutaka range, sent his friend and fellow student in France and Ireland, Father Antoine Halbwachs, S.M., on his arrival in New Zealand, as the first resident priest for the new Wairarapa Mission.

The following pages are an attempt to make known to the present generation of Catholics in the Wairarapa, simply, but with as much care and accuracy as possible, the beginnings and consolidation of the Church in their midst. Records of what went on in those early days are very scarce. Much has been lost either through fires or

by indifference to the keeping of what could in time be very valuable from an historical point of view. To get together what is herein presented has occasioned long and patient research over several years, but if at last a coherent, and we hope a fairly accurate record is given for future reference, then the effort will not have been useless. The generation who could have helped by personal reminiscence has passed away and legends have grown up which, while presenting a general picture of things in those old days, have given rise at times to errors in chronology when cross-checked with recorded facts. In the "Wairarapa Standard" published at Greytown under date 1st December, 1882, someone signing himself "An Old Wairarapa Settler" wrote, "that some arrangement might be made to prepare a permanent record in the form of a book of moderate size and pretensions telling the story of the province in the early days. . . . There are enough of us old settlers living," he says, "to give the materials for such a book, if we could get a clever penman to put the thing into reasonable shape. . . . We old settlers would like our children and children's children to have before them the story of our early struggle and ultimate success."

If such a need was felt in 1882, it is much greater in 1956, and what this old settler said of life in general of the pioneers, is equally true of those pioneer priests of the Catholic Church. Their story is great, but records are difficult to obtain, and the "penman" of this sketch cannot by any means claim to be "clever," though perhaps he has been patient and persevering.

PART I

General History of the Catholic Church
in the Wairarapa

CHAPTER I.

Breaking the ground.

The District of the Wairarapa would be about 3,000 square miles in extent. It is bounded on the west by the Rimutaka and Tararua Ranges, on the east by the Pacific Ocean, on the north by the Province of Hawkes Bay and on the south by Palliser Bay. To the early settlers at Britannia (Petone Beach) it was an unknown land. The snow-covered ranges to the north of them seemed an insuperable barrier. Soon however, adventurers among the men decided to see what was beyond, and by following the beach on the east side of Port Nicholson and rounding Pencarrow Point and passing Wainuiomata Valley, they eventually discovered the great stretch of territory surrounding Lake Wairarapa—the name given by the Maoris to this large stretch of water over the Orongorongo Hills. The land beyond showed promise, and by 1850 many sheep-runs had been established in the new district. This net-work of sheep-runs, which began about 1844 through the efforts of Duke, Bidwill and Weld, had spread a great deal further north through the Valley and along the eastern sea-coast. The white population was still small, and the first census of the Wellington district taken in 1845 gives the total white population of the Wairarapa, Manawatu and Otaki as only 150.

On Christmas Day, 1840, Bishop Pompallier celebrated the first Mass in what we know today as Wellington. He remained for about 10 days, baptizing the children of the Catholic people, blessing their marriages where necessary, and in all, giving great joy to the 200 members of the Church he found there. The Bishop was assisted by Father Pezant, S.M. It was to a young Irish doctor, John Patrick Fitzgerald, that much of the credit must go of forming the first Catholic settlers into an organized body. This they certainly were, and Dr. Fitzgerald's position in the Catholic body as their catechist was confirmed by the Bishop, pending the arrival of a resident priest.

On 2nd April, 1842, a boat arrived at Port Nicholson with several Marist Fathers on board. They were on their way to Auckland. The ship stayed five days which were packed with apostolic administrations by these young missionaries. One of them, Father Forest, S.M., was eight years later to be the first parish priest of the Hutt Valley and of what was known of the territory over the Rimutakas. Another, Father Regnier, later in the 50's became the Apostle of Hawkes Bay.

When Father Forest reached Auckland, he told Bishop Pompallier of his visit to Port Nicholson, and the Bishop decided to transfer Father Borjon (Bay of Plenty) and Brother Deodat to Wellington, but alas, the boat "Eleanor" on which they began the journey, was lost at sea with all hands. The sorrow of all was great at the news of this tragedy but most of the disappointment was felt by the Catholics of Wellington. However they redoubled their prayers, and on the 31st January, 1843, there came to Wellington as a chaplain of the Hon. Henry Petre, a Capuchin, Rev. Father Jeremiah John O'Reilly. At Father O'Reilly's first public Mass on 9th February we are told that about 100 Catholics were present. Immediately steps were put in hand for a Catholic chapel, and by the third week in March it was ready for use.

When Bishop Pompallier heard of Father O'Reilly's arrival he hastened to confirm him in his position, and, for this purpose, went to Wellington in early 1844 and placed him in charge of what was really the southern half of Wellington province (which would, in those days, include Wairarapa) with Nelson as an extra. In the summary of the history of the Church in New Zealand compiled by the Editor of the "Zealandia" weekly we are told that on this visit the Bishop left Father Comte at Wellington to assist Father O'Reilly and especially to look after the Maoris. The records of those days show that Father Comte made Otaki his centre of work. There were large concentrations of the Maori tribes on the West Coast of the province, but he did not neglect other places, and there is on record a journey he made to the Lower Wairarapa in May, 1845. This was to a Maori village called Moikau, inland from the eastern side of Lake Wairarapa. He said Mass there and conferred the sacrament of baptism. The Maoris of the Wairarapa were friendly to the Europeans and they

were well aware of the arrival of the tall ships that had been bringing many British people to Port Nicholson. That Father Comte visited other villages in the Wairarapa is likely, but of that there is no record so far discovered. It would seem, then, that we can safely say that May, 1845, marks the first celebration of Holy Mass in this district. It is fairly certain also that Father O'Reilly visited the Wairarapa and conferred the sacraments, but details are lacking.

We have already noted in the introduction that the first Bishop of Wellington, Philip Joseph Viard, S.M., arrived in his See in May, 1850, together with several Marist Fathers from the Mission in Auckland. Among them were Fathers Seon and Forest—the latter being appointed to the new Mission known as the Hutt River. Attached to this mission was the great district of Wairarapa, which was just then being opened up to organized settlement by Europeans. We must bear in mind that the first European traverse of the Wairarapa was made in May, 1842, by two surveyors of the New Zealand Company, Charles Kettle and A. Wills. In the following year on April 26th, 1843, two Catholic gentlemen—Clifford and Vavasour—with the New Zealand Company surveyor Whitehead, left the Hutt and following a track over the Rimutakas came into the district on an exploratory journey. About May 4th they camped near the Waiohine River, which they crossed. They could not have dreamed then that this area they were exploring was to become, exactly 33 years later, the centre of the new Catholic mission, and that close by were to be built the first Catholic church of the Wairarapa and the house of its first resident priest. Mr. Vavasour and party did not return to Wellington by the Rimutaka track, but went back by way of the coastal route.

The district still had no road access, but it was quite clear that suitable land for close settlement was available. During the fighting with the Maoris in the Hutt Valley all work had stopped on a road to cross the Rimutaka range. In 1847 Sir George Grey, the Governor of the Colony, ordered resumption of work on this road. With its completion, at last a reasonable access from the Hutt Valley to the vast Wairarapa plains was possible, and the idea of a Small Farms Scheme there was being more than talked about. Settlers in Wellington and the Hutt looked forward



"The mountain track that was called a road." Description of the above Rimutaka Hill Road by Father Halbwachs.
This is the oldest known picture—probably about 1875.

to owning their own patch of soil and not just leasing it from absentee owners. They found voice and an energetic champion in Joseph Masters, who had a cooper's establishment on Port Nicholson Beach. But as Mr. A. G. Bagnall in his "Old Greytown" points out there was a very tangled history in the formation and flowering of the scheme.

Nevertheless the scheme did go ahead, and the first organized settlement was on the banks of the Waiohine River, and came to be called Greytown, "as a memorial to Sir George Grey—an excellent Governor". Shortly afterwards another settlement was set out and named Masterton, after Joseph Masters, who had worked so hard to bring the scheme to fruition.

By 1853 the road from Wellington to the summit of the Rimutaka range was formed, but the rest of the way into the Wairarapa was still little more than a track. It was not until June, 1856, that a dray drawn by four bullocks took the first ton of goods over the Rimutakas to the Wairarapa. As far as we know no Catholic priest had yet journeyed by this route.

The new settlers seem to have been mostly Wesleyans, although an Anglican clergyman, Rev. Ronaldson, a Church Missionary appointee, was in evidence. He found the spiritual condition of the new settlement anything but satisfactory, and was not very kind in his description of these early settlers.

At this time Father Forest, as the priest in charge of the Hutt, also had the care of any Catholics who might be in the Wairarapa. Next to nothing is known of his visitations to the Wairarapa. Baptisms and marriages are our only information. In 1861 Father Seon, S.M., came to the Hutt and the records we have show he tried to do what he could for the Catholics of the Wairarapa. He had a great love of the Maori people, and although Maori Catholics were not numerous in these parts he visited them at least a couple of times a year. Some of these Maoris had been converted in Hawkes Bay by Father Regnier, who was Father Seon's great friend. These natives had wandered down the coast from Hawkes Bay to Whakataki near Castlepoint and then spread inland towards the Ruamahunga River and Lake Wairarapa.

From the year 1865 Father Seon seems to have been able to pay more attention to the white population. Settle-

ment in Greytown and Masterton was becoming more organized and so with the appearance of the first newspaper in the province, the "Wairarapa Mercury", published in Greytown in 1867, we find Father Seon in March 2nd of that year stating:

"NOTICE TO CATHOLICS OF
WAIRARAPA.

MASS will be celebrated by Rev.

Father Seon at Greytown on 10th
March, 1867, and in the Three Mile Bush
on the following Sunday.

River Hutt. February 25th, 1867.



Rev. Father Anthony Joseph Seon, S.M., a pioneer apostle
of both Maori and Pakeha in the Wairarapa.

The Mass Centre in the Three Mile Bush was the school-house on the corner of High Street and Brooklyn Road. This place was used till St. Mary's Church was built in 1878.



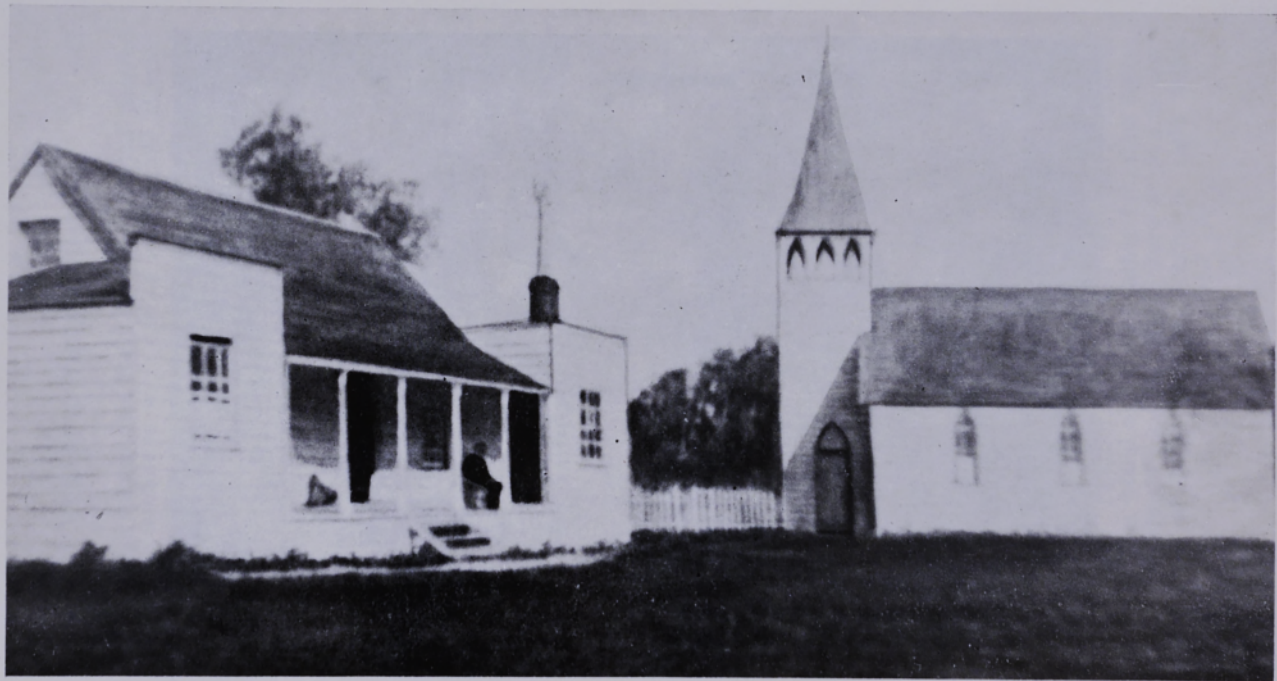
Native Miro tree planted by Thomas Ward at Morrison's Bush on site of his first home (cf. Ch. I).

The Three Mile Bush above-mentioned is the former name of the present Carterton. From the records of Thomas Ward, an early Catholic settler in the Morisons Bush area, three miles south of Greytown, we know that Father Seon said Mass also at the home of this gentleman in 1865 when he was on a return journey to the Hutt from further up the Plains. This would seem to be the first recorded Mass for Europeans. It was on the occasion of this visit that Thomas Ward donated a piece of land—ten

acres—for Church purposes. The location of this was on the lower part of the road which is today known as Ward's Line. No buildings however were erected, and, as close settlement did not develop in this area, the block was sold by the Church authorities about 36 years ago. It is now owned by another Catholic, Mr. Terry Vangioni, of Martinborough. Thomas Ward was described by one who knew him well as a "true, persevering, honest and temperate Catholic", and he must have been a great help to Father Seon, and later to Father Pertuis, in their administrations to the Catholics of the district. His grandson, the late Father Douglas Ward, did good work in the Archdiocese until his untimely death this year (1956) at the age of 46. Thomas Ward never lost his trust in God, even though he was sorely tried. In one week three of his children died of diphtheria, and about the same time he saw his home, built with much sweat and toil, burnt to the ground. To mark the spot of the house, mindful no doubt of all it meant to him through Mass therein celebrated, he and his wife planted a native tree, and when later the property was sold, a special clause was inserted in the contract of sale, that the tree was not to be destroyed, and so it still grows. Mr. Ward died on November 6th, 1906, at Greytown.

In the "Wairarapa Mercury" under date November 11th, 1867, is a record of a decision to set aside fifteen acres as a cemetery in Greytown—5 acres for the Church of England, and the remainder to be divided among the other Churches. Under the guidance of Father Seon the area for Catholic use was chosen, and this was fenced and put in order by Messrs. Thomas Ward, Bernard Gallagher, O'Connor and McIntyre.

The lack of roadways in those days must have been a great hardship for Father Seon and other priests. Father Seon always made his journeys on foot carrying a pack in the vicinity of one hundred pounds weight. There were no bridges, and the rivers were swift and subject (as they still are) to sudden flooding. Eventually the hardships he endured over many years began to take a toll of his health and he was no longer able to make the lengthy journeys of yore. So he retired to the Mission Station at Meeanee, Hawkes Bay, where after years of great suffering he died on July 30th, 1878. The veneration which the people of Meeanee had for this holy priest was shown in an



Copy of water colour painting of the original Mission House, Meeanee, Hawke's Bay. Father Seon is seated on verandah. His room is the one with the chimney.



Photo of Priests and Lay-brothers at Meeanee Mission, Hawkes Bay.

Seated from left:—Father P. Michel (pioneer of Nelson), Euloge Regnier (Apostle of Hawkes Bay and Woodville), F. Yardin (a pioneer of Wairarapa).

Standing: Pioneer Lay-brothers of Meeanee Mission, H.B.

interesting and remarkable way. When with the passing of time, newer buildings were needed and the old Mission House built in 1851 at Pakowhai and in 1858 transferred in sections by bullock teams to Meeanee, was being dismantled, Father Seon's room alone was kept intact at the wish of the people. Until 1913 it remained on its original site, but when Father William Goggan built the new presbytery in 1913, he put it in the backyard of the presbytery where it still stands, unhallowed and unknown. From a water colour picture kept at Mt. St. Mary's Scholasticate, Greenmeadows, we have reproduced the old Mission Building. Father Seon's room is the one with the chimney at the end of the verandah. Another French Marist, Father E. Pertuis, now comes on the scene. Again we can refer to the "Mercury" newspaper, under date January 18th, 1868:

TO ROMAN CATHOLICS.

I BEG THE CATHOLICS of this District of Wellington to take notice of these new regulations:—

From the 1st Sunday of February next there will be MASS every month in the undermentioned localities as follows:—

| | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1st Sunday | Lower and Upper Hutt |
| 2nd " | Wairarapa |
| 3rd " | Upper and Lower Hutt |
| 4th " | West Coast |
| 5th " | Lower Hutt |

E. PERTUIS, C.P.

18-1-68.]

The letters "C.P." after the priest's name probably were an abbreviation for Catholic Priest. The paper in its Local and General had the habit of referring to Father Pertuis as the Rev. Mr. Pertuis.

We find these public notices appearing regularly, and in 1869 Mass was also said at Mr. Wardell's home in Featherston. Mr. Wardell was the Resident Magistrate of the Wairarapa. Father Pertuis did not spare himself. On horse-back he would arrive in Featherston, then better known as "Burlings", saying Mass there at 9 a.m. and a second Mass at 11.30 a.m. in Greytown, eight miles

further north. At 3 p.m. Prayers and Sermon at Greytown, and then on to Masterton for Vespers and Sermon at 6.30 p.m.—another fifteen miles. In the winter time the programme would be modified a little, with Masses at Greytown and Carterton, and, at Masterton, Vespers in the evening, and Mass and Holy Communion on Monday



Rev. Father Eugene Pertuis, S.M.—a pioneer missionary of the Wairarapa (1866—1871). Later first parish priest of Hawera, Taranaki (1876).

morning. There were no bridges then, and such a Sunday timetable was very formidable. It necessitated the crossing of three large rivers, to mention only some of the hazards.

In 1872 Father Pertuis left the Hutt and for the next two years Fathers Goutenoire, Petitjean and Kearney

visited the Wairarapa. The latter two priests were stationed at Thorndon. In the "Wairarapa News" on Saturday, January 2nd, 1875, we read that Father McGoughey (sometimes spelt McCaughey) was in the district and would be saying Mass on Sundays throughout the month at Masterton, Carterton and Greytown. This



Rev. Father Seon's grave in the Taradale Cemetery, Hawkes Bay.
The initials in his name should be "A. J."

priest had been a Marist, but he left the Society to join another religious order, the Passionists it is said. Before this was accomplished, he helped out at the Hutt. Father Yardin arrived in New Zealand in 1875 and was sent to the Hutt. The Government Registers for weddings and funerals make it appear that he was the regular priest

visiting the Wairarapa for about the next 18 months. The last mention we can find of Father Yardin's work was a marriage he performed in Greytown on May 27th, 1876. In March of the same year he had performed the funeral obsequies of the three children of Thomas Ward.

This closes the first period of Catholic life in the district. It was a grim time for those early priests. There were few Catholics and they were very nearly all extremely poor, but these saintly priests by prayer and great sacrifices kept the light of Faith burning in the souls of the pioneer laity until June, 1876, when they were given their own pastor.

CHAPTER II.

Founding of the Wairarapa Mission.

The decade beginning with 1870 was an important one in the history of the Church in New Zealand. Bishop Viard in 1871 returned from Europe where he had made his official visit to the Pope and attended the Vatican Council. On June 2nd, 1872, he died at Wellington. About eighteen months later Father Francis Redwood, S.M., was named as second Bishop of Wellington, and on March 17th, 1874, was consecrated by Cardinal Manning in London. On the 26th November of the same year he arrived in Wellington. He had been away from New Zealand since December 8th, 1854, when, as a boy, he sailed to Europe to study for the priesthood. His return as second Bishop of Wellington, now the capital of the Colony, was a matter of great joy to all. The "Wairarapa Standard" said of Dr. Redwood that "he appeared rather a young man for a Bishop, but if he was at all wanting in years which are usually associated with high church dignitaries, and, for that reason, less venerable in the eyes of his people, he impressed all with his vigour and earnestness, his fluency and his eloquence".

Up to this time the Wairarapa District had been merely an appendage of the Hutt Parish, but it was not long to remain so. On the 3rd October, 1838, (six months before Francis Redwood's birth at Stafford in England) there was born in Alsace (France) Anthony Halbwachs. These two boys were to have much of life in common. They met as youths in the same college in France, studied together, and eventually became priests of the Society of Mary. When Bishop Redwood arrived as Bishop of Wellington he had not forgotten his old friend and classmate, and it was no surprise when Father Halbwachs came to New Zealand about a year after the Bishop.

The great stretch of territory over the Rimutaka range needed a permanent spiritual shepherd, and so the young Bishop could think of no one more suitable for the tre-

mendous task than his friend. Polish immigrants from the German section of Poland were arriving in New Zealand, and a large number were being sent to the Wairarapa. Some of the advance party had met his Lordship in Wellington, and asked for a priest who would understand them and know the German language at least. The few Irish—very few really—who were in the Wairarapa would like a priest who had some contact with the land of their birth.



Rev. Father Anthony Halbwachs, S.M.—Wairarapa's
first resident priest (1876—1884).

Bishop Redwood found it easy to satisfy both claims. Father Halbwachs knew English and German well. He had studied in Ireland too. To him, then, was given the task of pioneering the foundation of the Church in the Wairarapa. Bishop Redwood called on him to establish the first mission in this district, and at the beginning of June, 1876,

Rev. Anthony Halbwachs arrived in Greytown aboard one of Hastwell and Macara's coaches.

Unlike his fellow Marists who had been holding the fort of the faith in these parts for the previous twenty years by occasional journeyings on foot or horseback, the new priest came by coach, but his feelings were very mixed. He said to some of his fellow passengers as the coach swayed and jolted over the mountain track that was called a road, "If this is the only access to the Valley, then I feel that I'll never come out of it". More shocks were in store for the new Missionary when he found what a task was before him. It was no wonder then that, a little while later, he wrote a preface in both his Baptismal and Marriage Registers expressing what he was up against. The latter one from his Government Marriage Register has not been published before. It had become attached to the inner cover of the Register, and the writer of this history unearthed it only recently. In the first line he has omitted to put the year.

"BAPTISMAL ENTRY.

NOTICE.

The Wairarapa District has been visited once or twice a year by Catholic Priests. Thus: the Rev. Fathers Seon, Petitjean, Goutenoire, McCoughey, Chataigner, Yardin have travelled at different times over the vast plain, baptising the children and administering the other sacraments. But it has been only in the year 1876 that Dr. Redwood, Bishop of Wellington, has sent a resident priest in this district of the Wairarapa.

The Baptisms registered in this Book date only from that period—as to the registerings of baptisms performed before that time, they may be found either in baptismal records of the Hutt or of Wellington.

May God bless this unfortunate mission where there is neither church, nor residence for the priest, nay not even a congregation.

May also the priests who come later and reap the fruits of toil and labor of the tears and sufferings pray for the founder.

Masterton, in the parlor of the kind Mrs. Smally.

June 29th, 1876,
A. Halbwachs, S.M."

In August he inscribed the following at the front of his Government Marriage Register:

“J.M.J.

Catholic Mission of Vast Wairarapa District.

In the year of our Lord Jesus Christ, Dr. Redwood, Catholic Bishop of Wellington, sent as resident priest of the vast and hopeful District of the Wairarapa, his friend, A. Halbwachs, S.M. After a thousand hardships and great sacrifices, the Rev. Father established himself at Carterton, the centre township of the Wairarapa. It is only from this time that are found the registering of marriages celebrated in this parish.

May the Almighty bless those that are here inscribed. May they increase and multiply, live in peace and in the love of the Lord, bringing up their children given to them by the Almighty, in religion, in the fear and love of the Lord. May those who come afterwards, to labor in this now so difficult and rough field, pray for the soul of him, who midst tears and a thousand labors has to establish the Catholic Religion in so vast parish.

Carterton, August 8th, 1876,

A. Halbwachs, S.M.,
First Parish of the Wairarapa.”

The tenor of these two inscriptions is similar. The spelling used is American because of the fact that Father Halbwachs had taught at Jefferson College, U.S.A., for several years just prior to coming to New Zealand. The “Baptismal Entry Notice” had the year 1878, and then the final 8 was over-written as a 6. The entries in the Baptismal Register begin on the first page with the year 1880, and on the second page he has evidently transferred from some other book all his former Baptisms in 1876. It is noted that the first baptism to be performed was of the child William Edward Darroch, on June 8th, 1876, at Greytown.

Other baptisms in 1876 are interesting because being of the children of parents working on the construction of the now defunct, but once famous, Rimutaka Railway Incline. Despite what must have been a very busy life for him Father Halbwachs did not overlook little details that are interesting today — his first convert, Maria Josephine Wakelin, 19th March, 1877, and the baptisms of the first

†.

J. H. P.
Catholic Mission of the vast
Wairarapa District.

In year of our Lord Jesus Christ, Dr Redwood, Catholic Bishop of Wellington, sent as resident priest of the vast and hopeful District of the Wairarapa, his friend, J. Halburd, S. M. - After a thousand hardships and great sacrifices, the rev. father established himself at Carterton, the centre township of the Wairarapa. It is only from this time, that are found the registrations of marriages celebrated in this parish: -

May the Almighty Bless those that are here inscribed, may they increase and multiply, ~~live in~~ peace and in the love of the Lord, bringing up their children given to them by the Almighty, in the fear and love of the Lord. May those who come afterwards, to labor in this now so difficult and rough field, pray for the soul of him, who amidst tears and thousand labors has to establish the Catholic religion in this so vast parish.

Carterton, Aug. 5th 1846 -

J. Halburd S. M.
First Parish of the Wairarapa.

twins of the new mission — James Greggs and William Greggs, August 29th, 1877. His first marriage, July 10th, 1876, was that of Michael Driscoll, stationmaster in the neighbourhood of Carterton, to Jane Baillie. He notes that the groom gave him £5.

The story however has wandered a little. When the new pastor arrived, he came with a letter of introduction from Bishop Redwood. It is here reproduced in full:—

“To the Catholics of the Wairarapa District:—

“I am happy to be able at last to appoint a resident priest in the person of the Rev. Father Halbwachs, S.M., whose zeal, piety, ability and varied experience in England and Ireland, the continent of Europe and America, give the assured hopes that he will do a vast amount of good in the wide and hopeful field before him. I earnestly exhort all whom it may concern to co-operate most generously with him in carrying out his holy designs. Doubtless his coming into the district will be hailed as a great boon to the Catholic religion, and his ministrations will, I feel confident, be blessed with great fruits in all classes of the community, but chiefly in the rising generation of his vast district. May the Almighty bless in an especial manner all those who help him in his holy work. May his zealous exertions, through the favour of Almighty God, obtained especially by the blessed intercession of the Blessed Mother of God be crowned with great and lasting success. He conveys to all my best episcopal blessing until when he has prepared the way, I may come and administer the Sacrament of Confirmation, and share his consolation in beholding your faith and goodwill.

+ Francis Redwood, Bishop of Wellington.

June 1st, 1876.”

The Press of the day welcomed the new pastor and commented that they would sooner spell his name than pronounce it. The real pronunciation was Halb-wacks, but right from the beginning it was given an easier sound and he was ever known as Father Hallywax. On June 9th he said his first public Mass in Masterton, probably in the home of Mrs. Smally. At it he read the Bishop's letter and announced that they must set about building a Catholic church in the Wairarapa.

The "Wairarapa Standard" reporting this event, rather quaintly states that the Rev. Father met with a "warm" reception. The following Sunday, Mass was at Greytown. The paper mentions that this was in the Greytown church, but the mention of a church cannot be correct because the Greytown church was not built till 1880. It was probably in the Foresters' Hall or in the home of Mr. Bernard Gallagher, a pioneer Catholic of Greytown who lived alongside the Catholic "town acre". This term is interesting. In the Small Farms Scheme, the sections within the town boundaries were in acres, and the little farms taken up were outside the town boundaries—each settler being allowed one "town acre".



The late Mrs. Smally's house, 127 Perry St., Masterton, as it is to-day. The window on the side of the house is of the "parlor (sic) of the kind Mrs. Smally." cf. Ch. II.

The weather, however, was bad and there was not a large congregation. After the Mass, a meeting was held, and the heads of the families put down their names for contributions to maintain a resident priest. The result was heartening. It was necessary also that he have a home. Nearly ten years before, Fathers Seon and Pertuis had commenced raising money for a church and presbytery in anticipation of the day when the district would be separated from the Hutt. Money towards this fund was contributed by Wellington, Hutt River and Upper Hutt.

Probably this sum, £146, was used by Father Seon to buy the land in Carterton. In those days the central point was Carterton. It was more or less half way between the two older settlements of Greytown and Masterton, and in the mid-seventies looked as if it were going to be Wairarapa's main town. Formerly it was known as the Three Mile Bush, and in 1858 was named Carterton in honour of Charles Rooking Carter, an industrious and prosperous settler. Greytown and Masterton were founded as townships, whereas Carterton was never really ushered into existence, but like "Topsy" it simply "grewed". In 1856 the Government gave to immigrants who had paid their promissory notes for transport to New Zealand ten acres of land for each £20 so paid. A number of these people took up their land in the Three Mile Bush, and thus laid the foundations of Carterton. Some writers of this period are not very complimentary about Carterton. One visitor describes it as a "one horse place", but inhabited by a plucky, enterprising and independent body of citizens. "The appearance of the farm-houses is not prepossessing. They are nearly all severely plain buildings of the most primitive type and as ugly as can be. . . . Verily the country settlers near Carterton have still to be educated into a taste for the beautiful in their surroundings."

It was here, however, that Father Halbwachs decided to set up his headquarters, and a block of land—about nine acres—already obtained from the Zillwood family during Father Seon's day in 1867, was in the centre of the now fast-forming Polish Village. The fact that all these immigrants were Catholics—the only concentrated Catholic group in the whole district—decided for the present the headquarters of the Catholic Mission station.

A copy of the document concerning this property is here given:

"THIS DEED made the Twentieth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty seven, Between Thomas Zillwood of Greytown in the colony of New Zealand, Settler, of the one part, and the Right Reverend Phillip Joseph Viard of the city of Wellington in the Province of Wellington, Roman Catholic Bishop, of the other part. WITNESSETH that in consideration of the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds, at or before the execution of these presents, paid by the said Phillip Joseph

Viard to the said Thomas Zillwood, doth hereby convey and assure unto the said Phillip Joseph Viard, his heirs and assigns all that piece of land situated in and being the section number Twenty-six (26) on the plan of the Township of Carterton in the Wairarapa District and containing eight (8) acres three (3) roods and twelve (12) perches etc.

Signed: Thomas Zillwood.

Signed by the said Thomas Zillwood in
the presence of

Blake Butler, Constable of Greytown.

Herbert S. Wardell, Resident Magistrate,
Wairarapa."

The history of this land is as follows:

William Maynard obtained it by Crown Grant on March 28th, 1861. In May, 1867, he sold it to Thomas Zillwood, who four months later on September 20th, 1867, disposed of it to the Rev. Father A. Seon who was acting on behalf of Bishop Viard. When Bishop Viard died in 1872 he bequeathed it on trust for the Catholic Mission to Father Forest who was at that time parish priest of Hutt Valley including Wairarapa. Eventually, by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Wellington Empowering Act, it was vested in Bishop Redwood. In 1910 it was mortgaged to the State Advances to raise money for the building of the new presbytery. This was in Father Bowe's time. This mortgage—number 105452—was released by the State Advances on November 9th, 1916, when the whole section was sold together with the old presbytery. Thomas Leonard Adams was the buyer then, and in November, 1918, he sold it to the Arcus family who still have it.

Importance has been attached to this place because it was the site on which was built in 1878 the first Catholic church in all the Wairarapa District.

It was soon obvious that a priest of tremendous energy had been appointed, and in less than two months he was calling tenders for the erection of a presbytery. The announcement was made on August 26th, 1876, and the time limit placed was September 6th. It was interesting to read that the plans and specifications were to be seen at the Rising Sun Hotel, Greytown. The architect was Thomas Turnbull, of Lambton Quay, Wellington. This gentleman

was to be Father Halbwach's right hand man throughout all his vast building scheme for the district.

It has been said on good authority that Mr. Tom Zillwood donated one acre of the nine obtained as the site for Wairarapa's first Catholic church and presbytery. On this acre there was a two-roomed building (still in existence) where Mr. and Mrs. Zillwood lived when they were first married. In this cottage Father Halbwachs lived until his presbytery was completed. All these buildings still exist and though not now in Catholic hands, are in an excellent state of preservation in South Carterton almost opposite Phillip Street.



Wairarapa's first Presbytery—St. Mary's,—built by Father Halbwachs in South Carterton in 1876—now residence of Miss Arcus.

Even before he had a home, this dauntless priest had so organised Catholic life that we find, three months after his arrival, he has invited Bishop Redwood to come on episcopal visitation of the new Mission. Saturday, 17th September, 1876, marks the coming for the first time of a Catholic Bishop in the district. His Lordship travelled by road from Wellington over the Rimutakas, and arriving at Featherston paid a visit to the home of Mr. H. S. Wardell, who was the Resident Magistrate of the district and a Catholic. That evening the Bishop stayed the night at the Rising Sun Hotel in Greytown. Early on Sunday morning he went on to Masterton where there was Mass in the Town Hall at 11 a.m. On the Sunday afternoon he returned to Greytown where in the evening people of all denominations had assembled in the Foresters' Hall to

greet him. There were three candidates in Greytown for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Dr. Redwood explained the meaning of this great sacrament, and then went on to urge those just confirmed to keep faithful to the obligations therein imposed, and warned them against reading bad books or newspapers. He advised them not to discuss religious questions with opponents of the Catholic Church. Such discussion, he said, should be left to those who by education and office were in a position to refute specious objections. A man not duly qualified engaging in such discussion rashly risked his faith.



Original two-roomed building in South Carterton in which Father Halbwachs lived until he built his first Wairarapa Presbytery, three months later, 1876.

Referring to the pastor whom he had sent among them, he said, "Father Halbwachs is worthy of your esteem, and I trust you will assist him to obtain a decent and proper place of residence for himself, and such churches as are necessary in this district. I am very happy to come into your midst. I am pleased with the district, its prospects, its resources, and the hopes that are evident for the promotion of the Faith. But above all, I am glad to make this first visit to encourage you in all your Christian duties."

We are told that he preached for over an hour but the congregation was very pleased by his fluent oratory. It was the greatest day up to this in the Catholic life of the Wairarapa.



The "Rising Sun" Hotel, Greytown. Here Bishop Redwood, S.M., stayed on his first visit to the Wairarapa Mission, September, 1876.

CHAPTER III.

Construction of the first presbytery and church.

Dedication of church.

The visit of Bishop Redwood gave great heart to the small Catholic groups of the district, and in little over a week after his departure a tender had been accepted for the building of the presbytery, and work started at once. It is not recorded when it was completed, but it certainly was a reality before the end of the year 1876, and we read in the newspaper of the day that it was well advanced in construction by the end of September. Father Halbwachs now had a house to live in. It was a good substantial building. Carterton was famous in those days for its large totara trees and no difficulty was found in obtaining the best of heart timber. The surroundings were still very rough with the remains of forest that had been felled, but the energy of the priest and the help of good parishioners soon transformed the section. A semi-circular lawn was laid down and a Californian redwood pine placed in the middle of it. This tree is still growing.

A visitor to Carterton a year or so later speaks of the drab appearance of the place. The houses were unattractive with few front gardens or lawns. "It was really quite cheering," he said, "on entering the town, to see the priest's residence adjoining the Roman Catholic church, with lovely laid-out grounds and shrubs and flowers and everything pleasant to look upon."

However, a house was not enough. As yet there was not one Catholic church anywhere. The Anglicans and Wesleyans were both in the matter of churches well off in Greytown and Masterton. The Catholic people had much leeway to make up, so on March 24th, 1877, the following announcement was made in the local papers:

"Tenders are invited until Saturday 16th April for the erection of a Catholic church in the Wairarapa. Tenders

to be addressed to the Rev. A. Halbwachs, S.M. Plans and Specifications may be seen at John McGuire's store, Carterton.

Carterton, 20th March, 1877.

A. Halbwachs."

It was quite obvious to everyone that the Catholic pastor was the man to get things done. He had been only nine months in the district and despite the meagre resources of his scattered flock he was already getting his second building under way. The tenders received make interesting reading, in comparison with present costs: W. M. Bell, £560 10s 0d; T. Bennett, £510 0s 0d; Grey and Reid, £490 0s 0d; W. Mitchell, £485 0s 0d; Bishop and Hawkins, £416 0s 0d.

The last named, being the lowest tender, was accepted. As a matter of fact, this firm gave so much satisfaction to Father Halbwachs that they were destined to be his chief builders throughout the next five years. In this case, only the shell of the building was included in the price. Bishop Redwood made his second visit to the Wairarapa in mid-July just after the new church was beginning to take shape. He expressed himself as more than gratified at the work the pastor was doing.

The work progressed well and by the middle of January, 1878, the builders were rapidly completing their contract. So pleased was Father Halbwachs with everything especially with the great co-operation of the architect, Mr. Turnbull, that he commissioned him to prepare the plans for a larger structure to be built later in Masterton, which was growing fast. A paragraph in the "Standard" on January 17th, 1878, says, "The enterprise of the Catholic priest in the district is almost marvellous. In a short time, at the rate he progresses, he will, in the matter of church accommodation, be as far advanced as other denominations who have been in the field for many years previous to his arrival in the Wairarapa."

On April 11th, 1878, Father Halbwachs was able to announce that, following negotiations with the Bishop, the date of Sunday, May 5th, was chosen for the dedication and opening of the new church. An invitation to all, even non-Catholic friends, was published in the local press. Dr. Redwood again made the long journey to Carterton—

the third in less than two years. This was truly for the Catholics "the day which the Lord has made". Enough money was in hand to finish the exterior of the building and, with its good proportions and lofty spire of 75 feet, it was the most presentable church structure anywhere in the whole district. The "Wairarapa Standard" can be quoted as saying, "Of course there are many larger and more elaborate edifices, but none are more perfect and harmonious in design."



No picture is available of Wairarapa's first Catholic Church on its site in South Carterton. The house on the left in the above was recently built by Mr. A. J. McKenzie on the spot where Father Halbwachs placed the church. His original presbytery nestles in the trees on the right.

For Father Halbwachs, it was the culmination of all his efforts and toil, and we can see the great joy shining through his address to the Bishop:

"My Lord,

When about two years ago you sent me to establish a Catholic Mission in the Wairarapa, the place where you are to dedicate this church presented with its countless stumps and fallen trees a dismal appearance indeed — I might say the aspect of a wilderness. But since then, my Lord, with the help of God, and with the generous and charitable contributions of some good people of our own faith, as well as other denominations, the ground has been cleared and laid out, a parochial residence built, and a neat,

pretty church erected. Thanks, therefore to Almighty God, who has crowned our labours and blessed our undertakings for His holy cause. Thanks also to the good and charitable persons who have assisted me so much, and are ever ready to promote the cause of religion. Thanks also to you, my Lord, for deigning to visit this rising mission. Though we are unable to receive you with all the pomp befitting your sacred dignity, we all tender you a hearty welcome. I regret sincerely, my Lord, the inability to finish the church prior to its dedication (it lacked lining and sanctuary fittings) but I am happy to look forward to its completion at no very distant period. In conclusion we humbly beg your Lordship to dedicate this new church under the title of the Immaculate Mother of God."

In reply Bishop Redwood said he felt very grateful to Father Halbwachs for the address presented. What a change had been wrought on the spot where they were all assembled. A few months ago who could have expected to see the ground cleared, a parochial residence built and a noble little church lifting its spire above the solitude of the neighbourhood. Carterton had to thank its noble priest who had been so energetic, so unsparing of himself, and who had displayed such good judgment while labouring so indefatigably. He was happy to tender their priest his mede of thanks and hoped the Almighty would bless his efforts in other localities. He believed that before many months had passed they would have another church in Masterton. He felt it a great pleasure to come amongst them and a special honour to preside on this historic day. "Since the interior of your church is not yet completed you can scarcely have any idea of the beauty it will show forth when all the ornamentation is finished," he said.

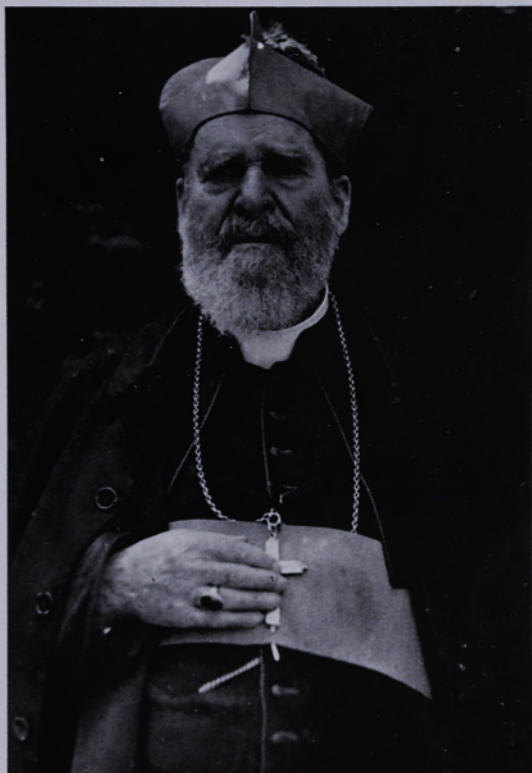
At this stage the great congregation filling every available space left the church and assembled outside, while His Lordship performed the solemn blessing and dedication. The celebrant of the Missa Cantata was Father Halbwachs, the Bishop presiding at a throne in the sanctuary. The choir had worked very hard for months past, and for the practices the members came long distances, often on foot. An old account, May 7th, 1878, tells us, "Never have we heard such fine sacred music before in the whole Wairarapa."

Bishop Redwood was always a lucid and forceful speaker. The sublimest truths he explained in simple language that could be understood even by the least educated of his hearers. The sermon he gave on this great day—the opening of Wairarapa's first church—is an admirable example of the Bishop's style. We may be pardoned then, for giving it here more or less as he delivered it.

"I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." (John XII). "Our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ showed Himself the good shepherd by removing his sheep from the bad pasture of Satan into which they had been led by the sin of our first parents, and leading them into the eternal pasture of Heaven. What does man require to attain the eternal pasturage—the supernatural end for which God has destined man? Christ is the Truth, and the sole witness to the Truth, and the source from which all derive the knowledge of what was above the human mind. This truth and power Jesus transmitted to St. Peter, the Rock, on which he built His Church, and He authorized Peter to confirm his brethren in the Faith. The first thing, then, was the Truth and the second was the doing of it. For this man requires a supernatural aid. To attain sublime ends man must obtain sublime means, and these means are found in grace. The effect of grace on the human soul is like the change produced by sunlight on the atmosphere. It was the same atmosphere when filled with darkness, but how different it appears when filled with the light of day.

"Again, look at the difference in an iron bar when cold and grey, and then compare it when heated bright and incandescent. Grace flows from the fullness and goodness of Christ, and is in the New Law given to us chiefly through the sacraments which worthy Catholics receive often, even daily. The Church of God has power to forgive sins, and sinners must resort to it for such remission. In the case where a man can not get to a priest, he may by perfect sorrow obtain pardon, but if a priest is accessible, he is bound to avail himself of the means provided by the Church. Besides the sacraments, we have prayer as a means of grace. I exhort you most earnestly to be faithful to your prayers, and through them, to the keeping of the commandments. By God's help you can do this

faithfully. Remember your duties to confession and Communion, at least during the Easter time, which in this Diocese of Wellington extends from the beginning of Lent until Trinity Sunday. Those who do not perform these duties within this period are guilty of grave sin, and if



His Grace Archbishop F. Redwood, S.M. (R.I.P.), second Bishop and first Archbishop of Wellington, 1874—1935. Photograph taken when he was nearly 60 years a bishop.

the sin is not repented of, the soul is in grave danger. . . . As Catholics, you have also other duties, chief among which is the support of the Church and pastor. This is not merely an act of charity, it is first an act of justice, a

duty binding on all Catholics. If in the past any of you have neglected this duty wilfully such are not only bound to act differently in the future, but to make restitution for the past.

"It is a joy for me to be here to-day to open this church, and I thank not only the Catholic people but the members of other denominations who have helped. You have now for the first time in your midst a church which is the centre of Truth and Light, embellishing the character and value of the whole surrounding neighbourhood."

His Lordship concluded by pointing out that there was still work to be done. "The building," he said, "that is being used at Greytown is unsuitable and inadequate; so much so that I feel inclined to interdict it altogether. As it is, I permit Mass to be said there only on rare occasions. The Greytown Catholics must in favourable weather come to church in Carterton."

It is on record that the collection taken up on the opening day amounted to £21. This great day ended with Devotions in the evening at which the Bishop preached again. Father Halbwachs had a big task in completing the interior of the building. It had yet to be lined; a pulpit, a font and a confessional had to be installed, and altar rails and a choir gallery constructed. All this work required much money, and the energetic pastor set about raising funds. What he was pleased to call his "Promenade Concerts" in Featherston, Greytown, Carterton and Masterton became famous. Coupled to this he organized a Monster Bazaar and Art Union to be held in Masterton in December, 1878. This function must have been quite a feat for Father Halbwachs. He wrote hundreds of letters to his friends and relatives in Europe and possibly elsewhere, and eventually got together about £600 worth of prizes. In the local newspaper under date August 27, 1878, there is a long article of nearly a column which gives a glowing description of the articles for this Bazaar. There were 2500 articles which the priest had acquired. A great consignment had come from Europe by the ship "Craig Mullen". It was stated that if any prize of a religious nature is won and it is not desired, it may be exchanged for something else of equal value. No function like it had ever been organized in the Wairarapa before.



Old St. Mary's Church, Carterton—the first Catholic Church in the Wairarapa. View taken in 1905 after the Church had been shifted from South Carterton. This view shows the building substantially as it was when Father Halbwachs built it.

The list of main prizes in the Art Union is given here because of its historical nature, and it is of more than passing note for us today:

- “1st Prize—Pair of valuable Buggy Horses.
- 2nd Prize—Splendid Suite of Drawing Room Furniture.
- 3rd Prize—Lady’s Gold Watch, value £20.
- 4th Prize—Gentleman’s Watch and Chain.
- 5th Prize—Magnificent Chest of Drawers.
- 6th Prize—Double-barrell Shotgun with Case.
- 7th Prize—Prime Cow.
- 8th Prize—Beautiful Bronze Clock.
- 9th Prize—Large beautiful model of Man-of-War in glass case.
- 10th Prize—Splendid mounted Opera Glasses.

Tickets 5/- each.”

The Press throughout the campaign was most friendly, and often in its Local and General paragraphs urged the goodwill of all in supporting Father Halbwachs, because of the outstanding work he was doing in the district, and the great self-sacrificing spirit he always exhibited. There is no record found of how much was made, but the result must have been good, because as we shall see, further building programmes were put in hand almost immediately.

During all this time the good priest was neglecting none of his spiritual and pastoral duties. Mass and sacraments were being afforded to the people wherever they might be. Even a couple of weeks before the opening of the Carterton church, we find him making the long journey to Te Nui and Castlepoint so that no one would miss his Easter Duty. Catechism and First Communion classes were attended to in each of the centres. In fact, when one considers the great distances that had to be travelled, the lack of metalled roads, and the slowness of transport in a trap or on horseback, it seems incredible that so much good work was done by one man.



This picture of the interior of St. Mary's was taken probably about 1909 after the church was some years on its second site at the corner of King and High Streets. The gas lighting was installed in Father Bowe's time.

CHAPTER IV.

Expansion of the work — founding of the Church in Masterton — newspaper attack on Father Halbwachs.

The work of the Church had only made a beginning. This truly apostolic pastor must have a sheepfold for another part of his flock ten miles away. Scarcely five weeks had elapsed when we find him advertising tenders for a Catholic church in Masterton. These were issued on June 10th, 1878, and a time limit was set as June 25th. Builders had their eyes on the papers, and so in an issue under date Saturday, June 29th, we read:

“The Tenders received for the new Catholic Church in Masterton are as follows:—Edwards and Montgomery, £1750; G. Merley, Upper Hutt, £1466; W. M. Bell, Upper Hutt, £1349 10s; Thomas Lynch, Masterton, £1346; Bishop and Hawkins, £1163.”

The latter tender was accepted, and the “Town Acre” for the Catholic church at Masterton, on the corner of Queen Street and Russell Street, was prepared. In the lay-out of Masterton this section had been set aside for the Catholic church, but no legal document was in existence giving the Church an inalienable right to it. It was still in the name of the Masterton Town Lands Trust. Evidently this was not discovered until St. Patrick’s Church was within a few weeks of completion when a Deed of March 22nd, 1879, was registered, giving the Right Reverend Francis Redwood the ownership in consideration of the sum of ten shillings paid by the Bishop. The document reads in part “that this acre for the sum mentioned was transferred on trust to Francis Redwood as a site for ever for a church for the celebration of Divine Service according to the rite of the Roman Catholic religion, as a site also for the house of a priest for the time being officiating in such church, and as a site for a school, and for other

religious, educational and charitable purposes in connection with the said religion”.

Prior to the opening of a church in Masterton Holy Mass was offered in various places. In the beginning a Catholic home with a suitable room was used, but as numbers grew, the Town Hall was engaged for this purpose, and we find that from 1876 till the opening of the new church on May 4th, 1879, the Town Hall was the Mass Centre on Sundays. This hall was on the site now occupied by the Railway Road Services Depot. It was destroyed by fire in 1882, and replaced later by the Opera House on the same site. In the Town Hall the first Confirmation ceremony in the Wairarapa took place on Sunday, September 18th, 1876.

The township of Masterton was growing apace, and even at this time gave promise of a great future. The Catholic population there had become larger than at Carterton, owing to the advent of Irish immigrants.

This, perhaps, would be a suitable place to say something on the Catholic settlement in the Wairarapa. By no stretch of the imagination can any part of the district be looked upon as receiving a large influx of Catholics. In the 1860-70's the territory to the north of Masterton, known as the Forty Mile Bush, which stretched up to the present town of Pahiatua, was mostly great forest and very sparsely settled. Roads, if any existed at all, lacked foundations and made travel very difficult and in winter almost impossible, except by foot or on horseback. When the Rimutaka railway was opened in 1878 it went as far as Masterton. The only concentrated Catholic group that had come was the Polish one in Carterton, and it was not very big. When the Forty Mile Bush was opened up later many Irish immigrants came to take up land there. In the late 1880's we find in the Baptismal Register for the North Wairarapa the names of the Bourkes, the Farrellys, the O'Neills, the McGruddys, the Buckleys, the Fouhys, the Roches and a host of others. It was the arrival of these Irish folk that made Pahiatua and its surroundings the good Catholic centre it still is. Middle and South Wairarapa had few Catholic Irish in proportion to the general population. Masterton, Carterton, Greytown and Featherston were strong in Protestant communities (as they still are at least nominally), in great part Anglican and



View of Queen St., Masterton, looking north, in Father Seon's time—1860's. Photo taken from opposite what is now the entrance to St. Bride's Convent.

Wesleyan-Methodist, with some influential Presbyterians to the south. As a matter of history, if the Maoris of the Wairarapa had not put so heavy a price on their land (£16,000), the English colonists from Canterbury in England would have settled here. When the Irish Bishops turned down the offer of a suitable place in the South Island for Irish settlement, these English colonists went there, and founded the Province which they named Canterbury. Eventually, the English Catholics, Clifford and



The residence of the late Lady Tancred, at Clareville, Carterton, in which the author's mother was employed in the days of Father Halbwachs, S.M. At the time this picture was made, the house had become part of Hikurangi Maori Boys' College (Anglican)—now non-existent.

Vavasour, who had sheep-runs on leasehold in the Wairarapa, left also, and settled in Canterbury and Marlborough. This will help us to understand the herculean task which Father Halbwachs had in establishing the Church in this place. Most of the Catholic men were labourers, and not too many had trades. This meant they had to move about looking for work, which made organized parish life very difficult—nay, almost impossible.

If we bear in mind what has just been written, it can be fully realized that only a man of great faith and unflinching trust in God would have set himself further and more difficult tasks. Father Halbwachs was such a man, and so he went to it with a will to have Masterton's Catholic church built. By the end of the last week in June, 1878, the tender of Bishop and Hawkins had been accepted, and construction was under way in July. We have to remember that although St. Mary's Church in Carterton had been blessed and opened, it was lacking many interior finishings. It had to be lined, and needed all the furnishings except seats. With the commitments in Masterton it took the builders longer than anticipated, and it was not until Sunday, July 13, 1879, that we find it complete in all details, even to a fine French bell in its lofty spire.

These two construction jobs, coupled to all his other work for souls, kept Father Halbwachs busy. Even churches cannot be built without money, and as the Masterton church progressed, so did the worries of the pastor. No wonder he tells us of all the sleepless nights he had, thinking out ways and means.

On February 24th, 1879, Bishop Redwood came to Masterton again—his fourth visit in three years. The church in Masterton was taking shape, and in an interview with a reporter of the "Wairarapa Daily" he expressed himself as very pleased with the structure and the sound workmanship of the builders. It was on this occasion that His Lordship made known that the church would be dedicated to St. Patrick. Hope was high of having the opening ceremonies on St. Patrick's Day, but Bishop Redwood, then conferring Confirmation in the South Island, was considerably delayed on the West Coast by floods and bad weather.

A visitor to Masterton from overseas, during the second week of March, was the celebrated Father Hennebery who was on his way to Wellington. He was a great missionary and had been preaching in some of the main centres. In the "Wairarapa Daily" of March 20th he paid a special compliment to the new church, stating that it was one of the best-designed structures he had seen in his travels through the colony. This must have given great joy to Father Halbwachs, as also to Mr. Thomas Turnbull, the architect who had designed it. It was this same architect



Queen St. (Masterton's main street) in Father Halbwachs' time. Looking north from near the present Regent Theatre.

who later drew the plans for St. Patrick's College, Wellington.

By April 26th the altar of beautiful timber in natural colour was in position. The other furnishings were complete. On the back part of the section behind the church a small cottage had been erected, so that the priest now had accommodation in Masterton as well as in Carterton.

At last the date for the dedication ceremonies was decided. It was to be Sunday, May 4th, 1879. Alas, however, the pastor was to have a grave disappointment. Word came from Wellington that Mrs. Redwood, the Bishop's mother, had died in the South Island on April 30th. and that His Lordship was going down to conduct her obsequies. There was no air travel in those days. Boat travel would not allow his return in time for Sunday. It was too late to cancel arrangements, so it was decided to go ahead with a simple blessing of the building and High Mass. The Bishop would come later for the official dedication.

If we can visualise the appearance of Queen Street, Masterton, in those days, it will help us to understand the eulogies of the newspapers at the time. "The inauguration of the only ecclesiastical building worthy of the name in Wairarapa is the subject of some congratulations," states the "Wairarapa Daily" of May 5th. "As we may expect, the various denominations will not be satisfied in the future, as they have been in the past, to possess 'barns', after seeing what the enterprise of Father Halbwachs has accomplished. Aided by the taste and skill of Mr. Thomas Turnbull and by the contractors, who have put good work and material into the edifice, we have the finest structure to date in the Wairarapa."

The church was built on rising ground to the south of the main street, and the spire standing 88 feet above the ground was visible all over the town. With a single-span roof it is not easy to make a fine exterior, but Mr. Turnbull succeeded in doing so by the admirable manner in which he proportioned to the body of the building, the tower, spire and small wings which served as sacristies.

The main entrance was through the tower. Above the door was a niche in which a statue of St. Patrick, then on its way from Europe, would be placed.

The article already quoted continues, "It is not however the exterior of the church which calls forth admiration. We have in the district plenty of churches with good exteriors, but after going to St. Patrick's we may say we have but one church interior. Whether it is the mellow light from the stained windows in the nave, or the mullioned windows in the sanctuary, or the contrast between the light polished wood of the seating, and the rich, darker wood of the altar (covered with paint in 1890, v. J. M.), or the light tints of the walls and ceilings varied by the darker polished beams supporting the roof, we know not, but the general effect of the interior is perfect. . . . He who is not stirred by the beauty of the scene is incapable of appreciating form and colour."

The Mass was sung by Father Halbwachs. There is no mention of other priests being present. Naturally the church was packed, and the pastor did the occasion honour by his eloquence. He thanked not only his Catholic people but all his friends. "The care and anxiety of building this church has rested heavily on me, and has cost me many sleepless nights. When I first came to the Wairarapa two years ago, it was hard to be toiling and slaving without a home and without a church. With a great struggle I have at length built two churches, and I call on every Catholic who has not done his duty towards the building of this church to come forward and do it now. This work is all for you. I have not laid by a shilling for myself, and if I left the district to-morrow I cannot take with me the churches I have built."

When Bishop Redwood returned from the funeral of his mother, he sent word that he would be able to dedicate St. Patrick's on June 1st. Accordingly all arrangements were immediately put in hand for that date. The "weather man" was not very helpful, and June 1st turned out anything but fine. All the same a large crowd assembled, and every hitching-post round the church had its full quota of horses and vehicles. Accompanying the Bishop on the occasion was a distinguished visitor to New Zealand, the Rev. Father Grunholtz, who had come on a special mission to the Polish communities now settled in the country.

Rev. Father Halbwachs made an address of welcome to His Lordship, to which the Bishop replied. The ceremony of solemn blessing and dedication followed according to



Graeme Ayson Photo.

Fine view of St. Patrick's Church, Masterton, built by Father Halbwachs in 1879. On right of building, the transept neatly added during 1902 in Father McKenna's time. (cf. Ch. IX).

the rules of the Roman Pontifical. The High Mass was sung by the visiting Polish priest, and the Bishop preached on the "Catholic Church", with special reference to what had happened that day. He paid a wonderful tribute to the pastor, and we record what was said:

"I cannot but commend the spirit and vigour which your priest has displayed in building a church which has been dedicated to the great Apostle of Ireland. Any words of mine would be cold and feeble to do justice to your priest, who has been the soul of the Catholic movement in the Wairarapa, and whose zeal and anxiety in the work is so well known that all must agree with me in tendering heartfelt thanks to him. I trust all will contribute liberally towards defraying any debt which still remains on the building and grounds surrounding it. I hope that it will be regarded as a point of Catholic honour as well as of Catholic duty, to give assistance to the priest who has done so much for you. I do not know where I could have got another man to do in the Wairarapa what Father Halbwachs has done."

A rather interesting episode occurred in December, 1879. When the Catholic church in Masterton was opened it lacked a bell, which did not arrive until about November. It was duly installed after Father Halbwachs had privately blessed it. The pastor decided that he would ring it for the first time on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception—then only a few days away. December 8th was mid-week that year. Up to this time the only church bell in Masterton was in the Anglican church of St. Matthew. When the bell rang out on a week-day a Local and General paragraph in the "Wairarapa Daily" asked the reason. On December 9th we read, "We made a slight mistake in yesterday's issue in attributing to St. Matthew's tower an early ringing, which ought to have been credited to St. Patrick. We trust that St. Matthew is, like St. Patrick, 'a gentleman,' and will accept our apology."

As a rule, the Press of the Wairarapa was fair in reporting Catholic topics, but an unfortunate incident happened in December, 1881. At Mass on December 5th Father Halbwachs advised the people not to vote for a Mr. A. W. Renall, who was at that time a candidate for Parliament against a Mr. Beetham. As far as can be gathered, the reason why the pastor gave the advice was

as follows: A member of Mr. Renall's family had become a Catholic. Later this person died, and Mr. Renall refused to allow Father Halbwachs to give him a Catholic burial. Instead he engaged the services of a Protestant minister. The priest was naturally very annoyed. Four years before, the Education Act establishing the State Schools had been passed, despite vigorous protests by the Catholics of the Colony. It had been a grievous blow to the Catholic Church, and the tolerance and fair-mindedness of the



St. Patrick's Church, Masterton. View taken looking south-east from the approximate spot where photo of Queen St. looking north in Father Seon's time was taken. c.f. illustration Ch. IV.

Members of Parliament meant much. Father Halbwachs clearly considered Mr. Beetham a more tolerant man, and said so.

Newspapers in those days, just as in our own times, can lose a sense of balance when politics and religion come to grips. It was unfortunate that the "Wairarapa Standard" came out with a bitter leading article on December 10th, 1881, accusing the priest of a most unseemly and indecent act. Father Halbwachs, it said, had no business

to dictate to his congregation how they should vote, and accused him of using his position as a priest performing a sacred office to interfere in a political matter "The day of priestly power and domination has forever passed away, and the sooner Father Halbwachs realizes this, the better it will be for his own comfort in future. It would be well that his conduct in this matter should be the subject of a searching investigation at the hands of his superiors in the Church."

The final piece is a real gem. "We solemnly protest against this priestly attempted intimidation and dictation, 'For if such actions shall have passage free, Bond slaves and pagans shall our children be' ".

Father Halbwachs greeted the attack with all the attention it deserved. He completely ignored it, and the storm fizzled out at once. Nothing more was heard of it.

Parish life in the district began now to take definite form. Father Halbwachs still made Carterton his main centre, but Masterton demanded more and more of his attention. He did not neglect other places, and we find that Masses were said on Sundays at monthly intervals in Greytown and Featherston, with fifth Sundays affording Castlepoint and Te Nui (now spelt Tinui) a place on the timetable. Coupled to his spiritual duties there was always the work of raising funds to meet his many commitments.

CHAPTER V.

Sacred Heart Church, Greytown — early history of Catholic life in Featherston and Tinui — preaching of the first Mission in the Wairarapa.

As has been noted elsewhere Greytown was the first established township, but as yet (1879) it lacked a Catholic church. An interesting point arises here. Where was the first church in the Wairarapa built? As a result of the investigations made to compile this history it is certain that Carterton can claim this distinction. How, then, did an idea arise that Greytown had the first church? The present writer must admit that he has been responsible to some extent for perpetuating this legend. What were the grounds for so thinking?

They were these: In the years before Father Halbwachs was appointed there are references to Mass being said in the Greytown Catholic chapel. Marriage licences were made out at times giving Catholic chapel, Greytown, as the place where the marriage was to be held. It is quite definite that the Catholic Church "acre" in Greytown was obtained on the 17th April, 1862. This would make it the first Catholic Church property in the whole Wairarapa. This section was at first in the name of Charles Rooking Carter (after whom Carterton is named), who received it by Deed of Grant from the Government on the 6th December, 1858. Eventually he conveyed the land to Bishop Viard, the first Bishop of Wellington. Mr. Hugh O'Connor either leased it or had the use of it from that time. This accounts for the belief that he gave it to the Church, and is why his name appears on some old plans. It certainly was adjoining his property. As far as can be discovered no building was placed on it until the church of the Sacred Heart was built in 1880.

Away back in 1869 there is another reference to a chapel in Greytown when someone writing in the "Mercury"

on May 27th, decrying the strange church architecture of the Wairarapa as, for example, the square tower on the new Anglican church in Greytown and a cross surmounting a Presbyterian church in Masterton, goes on to say, "and this putting aside the wonderfully small places of worship of the Roman Catholics in Greytown and Masterton".

It would seem certain that this building was not owned by the Church, and the term "chapel" was given to it in a very wide sense. Therefore the idea that Greytown had the first church is no longer tenable. It will be



Greytown's main street in the late 1860's, looking south. Mr. B. Gallagher's house in its original form is on the right. The small building next along is on the Post Office site. In the space in between is the Catholic Church acre and the entrance to the present Kuratawhiti Street.

recalled that Bishop Redwood spoke rather strongly about the unsuitability of Greytown's Mass centre when he was speaking at the opening of the Carterton church.

We do know that the Foresters' Hall, Greytown, across the street from the church section, was used on the occasion of the first episcopal visitation in September, 1876. After much searching and inquiry no further information has been found to elucidate this point, but on January 30th, 1879, we have on record a meeting of the Greytown Hall

Trustees in which authority was given to Rev. A. Halbwachs to use the Town Hall once a month for one year for Catholic services, at an annual rental of £5. In the "Standard" under date February 6th, 1879, there was published an announcement that Mass would be said in the Town Hall, Greytown, on the following Sunday at 11 a.m., and that Father Halbwachs desired to thank the Trustees for allowing him the use of the hall until such time as he would be able to erect a church in Greytown which he hoped would be during that year.

It is as well to note that this hall would not be the present Town Hall (1956), which was not built till 1907. It was the hall built by the Wairarapa Public Hall Committee in 1864. The Foresters' Hall, where the first confirmation ceremony took place in 1876, was bought in 1912 by Mr. C. G. Bouzaid, who later shifted it into the Main Street, alongside the Bank of New Zealand, and having enlarged it considerably made it the Crown Picture Theatre. Over the years many shop-days and such-like functions for the Catholic church were held in it. It was during 1956 converted into a clothing factory, and is no longer in Catholic hands.

We must now retrace our steps a little. Under date June 4th, 1878, the following appeared in the local paper:

"IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

To all Catholics of Greytown and
neighbourhood.

A PUBLIC MEETING of all Catholics of
Greytown and neighbourhood will be
held on June 9th, at 3 p.m., in the Catholic
Chapel, Greytown.

Business: To consider the erection of a
Catholic Church in the above township.

May 31st, 1878.

A. Halbwachs, S.M."

In the General News column of this paper there appears a comment on the above notice that if the public spirit of some of the leading Catholic families is equal to their means, the Rev. Father Halbwachs will have no difficulty in obtaining the necessary support for the undertaking.

The above meeting was held, but very poorly attended. Father Halbwachs made a very liberal offer of assistance

towards the proposed building, but there was little enthusiasm. However, a committee was formed to see what support the movement would get. The result was very disappointing. The Catholics in Greytown of those days did not appear, with one or two exceptions, to have been very co-operative with their priest. Various little statements that Father Halbwachs let slip later seem to show this. It is gratifying nowadays that things have changed a great deal for the better.



House of the late Mr. B. Gallagher, Greytown, as it is today, 1956. It offered hospitality to many priests over 60 years. Prior to the building of the Greytown Catholic Church, one of its rooms was probably the so-called "Greytown Catholic Chapel." (cf. Ch. XXII.)

Two years went by before we hear of the subject afresh. On June 22nd. 1880, a meeting was held at Mr. Bernard Gallagher's house in Greytown to consider the matter again. This time the people were of better heart. Possibly they felt how they had been outpaced by Carterton and Masterton. A good crowd attended the meeting, and it was decided to call tenders immediately Father Halbwachs returned from Wellington, where he had gone to attend the funeral of Very Rev. Father J. J. P. O'Reilly, the city's first resident priest. (Cf. Paragraph in Chapter XXII).

The date-line for the tenders was set at August 16th, 1880. Quite a large number tendered for the job. They are as follows: E. Gray, Greytown, £275; Thomas Lynch, Masterton, £230; Bishop and Hawkins, Greytown, £216; F. Montgomery and Co., Masterton, £203; Pat O'Connell, Wellington, £199; W. Foster and Co., Masterton, £195; W. Birley, Masterton, £148.

The tenders varied so much in price that the committee had some little trouble in reaching a decision. Eventually however, the one offered by Mr. Pat O'Connell of Wellington was accepted. He was quickly on the job, and by September 11th he had his timber stacked on the church section across the road from the Post Office.



Church of the Sacred Heart, Greytown. Built in 1880 by Father Halbwachs.

By the first week in December the church was nearly completed, and a fortnight later it was announced that the blessing and opening would take place at 11 a.m. on Christmas Day. A special choir came from Masterton. Mrs. Angela Roband (nee Dowling) of Upper Hutt, now 93 years of age, was a member of the choir. She was then a girl of 17 and lived with her mother in Masterton. She had been to school at St. Mary's Providence in Thorndon and was able to do much useful work for Father Halbwachs, especially in teaching catechism and helping in the choir. She still has happy memories of Webbe's Mass in G which was sung at Greytown that Christmas Day of 1880. Mrs. Palmer of Masterton had driven her horse and gig all the way from Masterton—15 miles—in order to play the organ and lead the choir for Greytown's great day. Father

Halbwachs himself performed the ceremonies. The situation, as well as the simple dignified lines of this little church, were very favourably commented on by the people of Greytown, and as one can see from the illustration it was well in keeping with Mr. Thomas Turnbull's designs. One newspaper, commenting on this latest Catholic church, stated that the priest's zeal in forming churches must recommend itself to everyone, especially in these times when people are so luke-warm in religious matters. It would seem that even in those days indifferentism was creeping in.



Sanctuary of Sacred Heart Church, Greytown, in the days of Father Halbwachs, 1881.

The following year the ground around the church was nicely laid out, but some of the trees then chosen later grew to massive size and completely obscured the building, keep-

ing it very damp. In 1923, during Father Hegarty's time, it was shifted forward in the section, the shingle roof was replaced with iron, and the building extended by the addition of a sanctuary. The trees were removed and a low concrete curbing put in along the Main and Kuratawhiti Streets.



The late Mrs. Bernard Gallagher, of Greytown, eldest daughter of Mr. Hugh O'Connor, who was Greytown's first Catholic settler.

An amusing story is still remembered in connection with the alterations. Messrs. Mick and Joe Bouzaid had the contract of removing the shingles from the roof. Mick Bouzaid at the time was also the owner of the local fish shop. As he swung his spade cutting off the totara shingles, a local wag passing by thought the occasion too good to miss and with quick wit called out, "Scaling the church now, Mick, as well as the fish?"

The names of two families stand out in the very early Catholic life of Greytown township — the Gallaghers and the O'Connors. Hugh O'Connor with his wife and family had come in 1857, and Bernard Gallagher arrived about ten years later. Over the years early priests found lodging with these families, especially with the Gallaghers. Mrs. Bernard Gallagher was a daughter of Hugh O'Connor, and the Gallagher and O'Connor properties adjoined the church section. Bernard Gallagher was an uncle of the late Father T. Segrief, S.M. The old home still exists and is here reproduced. Few homes in the Wairarapa could have more photographs of priests who have ministered in the district since the early days. For a while in the mid-eighties the home was let to the Tocker family, and a son of this family later became the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. Mr. Gallagher died on November 13, 1886, as the result of being thrown from his horse on to the road opposite Platform Farm. Prior to coming to Greytown he had been in the Colonial Defence Force in Wellington, and had seen service in the Maori Wars under Colonel McDonnell. He was one of the first troopers to be sent over the Rimutakas. Mrs. Gallagher and her large family of daughters were at this time on a farm which Mr. Gallagher had bought a year or two before his death. They returned shortly afterwards to their house in Greytown, where dozens of priests over the years received many kindnesses. Mrs. Gallagher died in November, 1929.

The part of the Wairarapa Plain at the foot of the Rimutaka Range down towards the Western side of Lake Wairarapa was, sometime in the late 1840's, taken over for grazing by a Mr. Burling, and "Burling's" was the more common name of the locality until about 1856, when as a result of survey, the township of Featherston was laid out. It was named after Dr. Featherston, then Superintendent of the Provincial Government. The suggestion had come from Mr. Richard Wakelin, Editor of the "Independent" in Wellington, and it was his idea also that the streets be named after the members of the Provincial Council—Fox, Wakefield, Johnston, Fitzherbert, Clifford, Bell and Revans. However, the new township made little progress — the sections were too high in price, and there was no inducement to settle within the town boundary. Hence it made

even slower progress than did Carterton.

As a Mass-centre it received no mention till about 1869, when the home of Mr. H. S. Wardell, the Resident Magistrate of the Wairarapa, was used by priests coming through from the Hutt. Later the Oddfellows' Hall was used and this was the arrangement when Father Halbwachs took up his duties in the district. The railway was under construction then, and so we find a Mass timetable for Featherston thus:

"The 4th Sunday of each month Mass in the
Oddfellows' Hall and along the Railway Line."

In 1880-81, the Mass-centre was the Town Hall. The Catholic population at this time must have been small, but Father Halbwachs, being a man of great faith, realized that a church was the only centre of Catholic life, and despite his already heavy commitments in other places, he tried to have a church in Featherston.

Checking dates has been a very difficult matter in Wairarapa Catholic Church history. Here is a classic example which taken by itself is completely misleading:

N O T I C E.

TENDERS are invited until noon of SATURDAY, the 15th inst., for the erection of a Catholic Church in Featherston.

Plans and Specifications may be seen at the residence of the Rev. Father Halbwachs, Carterton.

The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

THOS. TURNBULL,
Architect.

Carterton, March 3, 1870.

In the year above given we have an important misprint in date. It should read 1879, not 1870, because fortunately we have been able to consult the source of the cutting which originally came from the "Wairarapa Daily", March 6th, 1879. Again, we know that Father Halbwachs did not come to New Zealand till 1876.

It would seem that no tenders were received by due date, because a further notice on March 17th, 1879, states

that the plans may now be seen at the Club Hotel, Featherston. No record is published of tenders eventually received, till, on March 19th, it is stated that the tender of Messrs. Bishop and Hawkins has been accepted, and it is noted that will make the third church built by this firm for Father Halbwachs. There is no mention of the price.



The main part of this building was Featherston's first St. Teresa's Catholic Church, built by Father Halbwachs in 1881. (cf. Ch. V.)

A period of quiet seems to have descended on the scene during the year 1880. Probably lack of finance was holding up the work. Nevertheless by the end of that year things began to move again, and the framework of the church was in position by Christmas. One newspaper reported the building as appearing out of the ground with a sort of mushroom growth, unheralded by any ostentatious announcement. There was no doubt that the pastor let nothing stop him.

When the building was finished in the early part of 1881 it was put straight into use. There was no official opening, at least none is recorded. Possibly funds ran low and only the bare essentials were constructed. This would seem to be the case, because we find that on September 17th, 1883, a judgment summons in the Magistrate

Court in Greytown was issued against Father Halbwachs for £30 6s 10d for the painting of the Featherston Catholic church. The claimant was a Mr. J. Beard.

We know that the church was in use before May, 1881, because from May 10th, 1881, Mass was advertised as being said in St. Teresa's Church, Featherston. The site of this building was where the Bank of New Zealand now stands. When the second church was built in 1914 this old edifice was sold and removed to a new site. During the subsequent years it became many things. After World War II it was a plumber's workshop, and about three years ago, considerably transformed, became an accountant's office and the local T.A.B.

One would have thought that after building four churches and two dwellings, the pastor would rest on his laurels. Like the "Schaeffer Hund" (the name of the famous dog of his native land, the Alsatian) he must look after all his sheep and have a fold for each flock. There was still an outback, thirty-three miles from Masterton towards the East Coast. Catholic people had settled there and were working on the many sheep-stations round about. From the time he took up his duties in the Wairarapa this good priest did not neglect the people of Tinui (written Te Nui in those days), Castlepoint and the whole Whareama district. The roads were atrocious, there were few bridges, and many streams and rivers. Those who can go today to Castlepoint in an hour from Masterton can scarcely realize that in the 80's the Whakataki river had to be forded at least twenty times in the last twelve miles to the coast. There was no road on the hillside then.

Sometimes when he made the journey his efforts might be rewarded by only four Catholics turning up for Mass. But there were many good non-Catholic people about, and since there was no other place of worship in the whole territory, they would come to listen to his sermon, especially at the afternoon devotions in the local hall. Eventually a section of land right in the Tinui township was donated, and on the second Sunday of September, 1880, he announced that he would build a church there as soon as he had some funds. The people knew the man they were dealing with, and the feeling of the meeting that day was that the energy of Father Halbwachs being such, once he

started work, he would not rest until it was completed. Even three years before, in December 1878, he had told them, "We must have a money-raising function out here in the hall." The local correspondent for a Masterton paper questioned the wisdom of such an idea, especially at that time of the year when everybody was busy. But we read in the "Wairarapa Standard" of Saturday, December 28th, 1878, "It is not possible to judge what may be done by a little energy. The said Bazaar was duly held in the Tinui Public Hall on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Over £100 was made by Father Halbwachs during his visit, and he has set a bright example to all the other ministers of the Gospel to be more energetic in their movements, with a little less pride and prejudice".



St. Joseph's Church, Tinui, East Coast. Built by Father Halbwachs in 1882. The first church of any denomination on the East Coast of the Wairarapa.

Early in 1881 the work of building was put in hand, and by April it was progressing fast. The people were glad and proud because it was a nicely-designed little church—the first of any denomination built on the East Coast of the North Island between Cook Strait and Hawkes Bay. For a backblock's township it was quite an ornament. The rapidity with which it was built and put to use excited the admiration of everybody, and the opinion was freely expressed, even in print, that other denominations

should undertake similar buildings. The church was dedicated to St. Joseph, and by the late winter of 1881 was blessed and opened by the pastor. Sunday Mass was celebrated there on the fifth Sundays, and on various other



The Very Rev. Theophile Le Menant des Chesnais, S.M. Preacher of the first series of Missions, 1881. This picture shows him in the robes of an Archpriest—a title bestowed on him later by the Most Rev. Bishop Grimes, S.M., of Christchurch.

Sundays there were devotions in the afternoons, with Mass on Monday morning. Sometimes there was Mass during the week if the priest was staying in the district. At the

end of that year a special plot for Catholics was set aside in the Tinui cemetery and gazetted as such on December 24th, 1881.

The vast territory that had been given to this Marist Father in 1876 was now organized into something of parochial life. Each settled area had a church, and in two of them—Masterton and Carterton—the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in the tabernacle. The Good Shepherd dwelt night and day in the midst of his people. Still, the huge building programme which had gone on for the last five years, and the constant appeal for funds to meet commitments, can have a dulling effect in spiritual matters, and the pastor must have felt that this was so. Hence it is not surprising that we find on December 15th, 1881, that a Mission is to be preached throughout the Wairarapa. It was to last for several weeks, and the Director was the famous scholar and preacher, the Rev. Father Le Menant des Chesnais, S.M. During the first week it was under the special patronage of Bishop Redwood, who also conferred the sacrament of Confirmation.

The Mission opened in Masterton on December 18th. The following Sunday, which was also Christmas Day, saw the work beginning in the evening at Carterton. Each of the other churches—Greytown, Featherston and Tinui—all received their share of the time allotted, and the first series of Missions ever preached in the Wairarapa ended at St. Joseph's Church, Tinui, on January 10th, 1882.

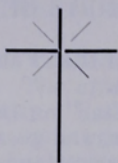
Father Halbwachs was, at this time, still living at Carterton. From there he had issued his notice concerning the Mission. By 1883 he seems to have taken up residence more constantly in his little cottage built at the back of St. Patrick's Church in Masterton, which was now developing faster than Carterton.

CHAPTER VI.

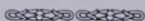
*Economic depression — growing financial difficulties of
Father Halbwachs — his transfer to Reefton — editorial
comment of Press.*

The years following 1880 were dark days in the Colony of New Zealand. It was difficult to get markets for primary produce, and a depression was on the land. Many left her shores for California and Australia. The economic position affected the well-being of the Wairarapa tremendously—and the Catholic community, being mostly wage-earners, felt the stress very much. This accounts largely for the financial embarrassment in which Father Halbwachs was beginning to find himself. The debt of £1000 on the Masterton church seemed impossible of liquidation. Very great sacrifices had already been made by the Catholic body. The pastor had put every penny he could find into lessening the debt, but his liabilities increased as his assets dwindled. He pledged everything he had to pay his debts, or to keep his creditors quiet. At length he had to let the bailiffs take away his horse and buggy. He had now no means of transport except his two feet, and in desperation, he sent out an appeal in the form of what we call a "Dodger", a copy of which is reproduced on the opposite page.

The year 1883 was still more difficult financially for the pastor. As he tells us himself "of offerings ruthlessly bereft", his plight was truly an unhappy one. Whether the people could have helped more it is now impossible to say. At that time Bishop Redwood was Acting-Provincial of the Marist Fathers, as well as Bishop of the Wellington Diocese. We have no information that he visited the Wairarapa in 1883, but in December Father Le Menant des Chesnais, S.M., visited Masterton. Was he appointed as an "Episcopal Visitor"? We do not know, but it was



A Buggy for Father Halbwachs.



DEAR SIR,

In those old days, we loved to tell
When times were good and all went well,
And o'er the Rimutaka chain,
Swept waggons filled with golden grain.
In those old days a friend I found
To help me on my endless round.
May Heav'n its blessings on him shower
And raise him still to wealth and power!
That friend he bought me harness new,
A handsome costly buggy too,
No toy but something bright and good,
To carry me through field and flood.

Nor was the pastor all to blame,
When times of woe and sadness came,
And bailiffs thick like rabbits grew,
Until no resting place he knew;
Of offerings ruthlessly bereft
Till not a buggy am I left.
Now, shall I walk this district broad
With cane in hand along the road?
No! To my friends I will appeal
And if they are as true as steel,
I'll seek from each a pound or two
To buy once more a buggy new.

Now, my dear Sir, am I too bold
In asking this small piece of gold?
Who helps the poor, the Lord doth lend,
A friend in need's indeed a friend!

P.S.—Do send me something, and address :

REV. A. HALBWACHS,

MASTERTON.

announced at that time that Father Halbwachs was being transferred to Reefton.

The "Wairarapa Star" on December 22nd, 1883, states the fact of the transfer, and goes on to say, "It is unnecessary to dwell on the circumstances under which after seven years of useful labour Father Halbwachs leaves the district, but we hope that his people and friends will make him generous offerings on this coming Christmas, his last with them."

To a very large extent the memory of Father Halbwachs has been forgotten in the Wairarapa. Many of the present generation have never heard his name. Even a small cloud can obscure the light and warmth of the sun from a particular place. When we read in the preceding pages of all this great priest accomplished in "toil and tears" in such a short time, the cloud that obscured his memory was not a very big one. Most priests will say to-day, "If you want to be remembered in a parish, leave a large debt when you go". The reverse seems to have occurred in the case of Father Halbwachs.

The two Masterton papers published Editorials on him before he left, and we feel that they should be published again in this work.

"Wairarapa Star", December 21st, 1883.

"There are few clergymen in New Zealand who have done more in an unostentatious manner to popularize religion and bind the community together by common ties of human sympathy, than Rev. Father Halbwachs. An energetic member of the Catholic Priesthood, he has studiously avoided the slightest display of sectarian zeal that might be a cause of offence to denominations outside his own. We regret to say that he is about to leave the district, which he has, at huge sacrifice to himself, beautified with monuments. For the churches he has built in every little centre are permanent evidences of his personal unselfishness and sincere devotion. No pastor could possibly lead a more Apostolic life. In his love for his Church, not only has he despised wealth, but he has made his pilgrimage in the Wairarapa one of constant tribulation. Luckily his fortitude has always been equal to his bounty, and when besieged by bailiffs, and his bed sold from under him—when even personal gifts had to be sacrificed to meet

the demands of clamorous creditors—he has appeased the latter with his blessing. The aim of his life has been to build, to adorn, to beautify. Possibly, this ambition has tried the resources of a congregation none too wealthy, just as it has surrounded Father Halbwachs with difficulties . . . We believe we are not misrepresenting him when we say that he has a soul above bigotry or hypocrisy, and that he has made lots of friends by mingling with the people and entering their joys and sorrows alike. It will be a matter of regret if a priest of the truly genuine school like Father Halbwachs is allowed to leave for his new district—Reefton—without some effort being made to recognise suitably his worth as a priest, settler and colonist”.

“Wairarapa Daily”, January 7th, 1884.

REV. A. HALBWACHS.

“The condition of church architecture in any district is a gauge not only of its religious advancement, but also of its material progress. Opinions differ as to the value of the respective Church organizations established in this Colony; but there is a very general consensus of conviction that if we had fewer parsons, we should require more police, that each minister stationed amongst us holds himself responsible for the good conduct of the members of the Church, and exercises a benevolent influence over them.

“For this reason, the Press while holding aloof from sectarian controversies, regards with approbation good work accomplished by any religious denomination. We recognize that the departure of the Rev. Father Halbwachs from this district is an occasion on which the services he has rendered to the Wairarapa should be generally acknowledged. He came here as a stranger seven and a half years ago, but it was not long before he had made friends among settlers of all classes. His special work in the district has been the building of churches. No minister of any denomination has accomplished as much in the construction of places of worship, as the Rev. Father Halbwachs, unless it be the Rev. A. Knell (Anglican) who built the churches of Masterton, Carterton, Greytown and Featherston. The Rev. Father Halbwachs' *five* churches have been probably greater undertakings. St. Patrick's in Masterton is, for example, the finest specimen of church architecture to be found in any country district of New

Zealand, and it was completed under special difficulties which would have been fatal to a man who did not, like Father Halbwachs, possess an indomitable will and full faith in the loyalty of his congregation and friends. The achievements of Father Halbwachs in building churches in the Wairarapa have been something remarkable, and shows how much good an earnest man may effect. Now that he



A hitherto unpublished picture of Rev. Father A. Halbwachs, S.M.

has placed a church in every centre of population in the district, he leaves for another part of the Colony, resigning to his successor the harvest for which he toiled. He will be followed to his new home by the good wishes and gratitude of the community in which he has laboured, and it will be many years before the good work will be for-

gotten which he has effected, almost single-handed, throughout the length and breadth of the Wairarapa.

"We do not pretend to infer that Rev. Father Halbwachs is a man without faults. In his church building schemes he probably went beyond the bounds of prudence, and thereby involved himself and his people in serious obligations; but this is not an occasion on which his fault—if excess of zeal is a fault—should be remembered. We have had the pleasure of knowing the Rev. Father since the first day when he arrived in the Wairarapa, and our best wishes go with one whom we have always found a kindly, frank, courteous and accomplished gentleman."

We may mention here that neither of the above newspapers were involved in the attack on the priest mentioned earlier, which had occurred in 1881. After the publishing of these Editorials, a move was made to organize the presenting of a Testimonial to Father Halbwachs on his departure, but no record has been found that anything of this kind was done. Maybe it took the form of something quite unofficial and private.

On his last Sunday in Masterton, a crowded congregation in St. Patrick's church heard the following farewell address:—

"My dear Friends,

I have come before you for the last time this evening not to preach you a sermon. I have simply invited you to come to the beautiful church I leave behind in order to bid you farewell. After I had spent ten years of my life as a Professor in a college in America (Jefferson College, Louisiana, v. J. M.) it pleased my superiors to send me as a missionary to the Colonies. Eight years ago I left the shores of the Mississippi to sojourn on a lovely island in the Mediterranean; then in the south of France; and then in Switzerland. Later, after bidding farewell to my native country and a fond good-bye to my aged father, sisters and brother, I sailed for the Colonies. Never will I forget the morning in January when I reached the splendid harbour of Sydney. After remaining there a few weeks and visiting the falls of the Parramatta, I started for New Zealand. Leaving home, torn away from all that was near and dear to me, you can imagine my feelings when I landed here a stranger in a foreign land. The

Wairarapa was offered to me as a Mission. I might have found a better place, but in accordance with my sacred calling, I had renounced the world, and I was ready to select as a field of labour, the poorest and most needy place I could find.

"As a youth in Holy Orders, I was in the habit of going to see a dear sister, the Mother Superior of a great military hospital in France, and I found myself mixed with the highest society, so that had I wished, the path of preferment was easy. I chose to become a missionary priest. On my arrival here, Bishop Redwood was willing to offer me one of the best places in the Diocese, for we served together as students in France and Ireland. But as he mentioned the needs of the Wairarapa, I felt it was my duty to go there. I shall never forget the day when in company with some people of Masterton, I was drawn in one of Hastwell and Macara's coaches over the dangerous Rimutakas, and I said, "If this is the only route to the Valley, I shall never come out of it", little thinking that in a few years I should be travelling that road every season. When we crowned the range, I was delighted with the beautiful valley spread out like a lovely panorama before me. But alas! on arrival at Greytown and Masterton, I found neither church nor presbytery. It is not my intention to speak at any length of my trials, my sacrifices and privations when, as a stranger, and on foot and alone, away from all other priests, I had to face the floods and storms, and journey from one township to another. I had to sleep where I could, and very often it was on the floor of a woolshed, like any swag-man. (There were severe floods in 1876. V. J. M.)

"But the noble work was begun. All round me were non-Catholics, and there was only a handful of Catholics to do what they could to support me. I went round my district, and trudged up the Rimutaka Incline to visit the navvies in their construction camps. Bad roads, insults from a few bigots, and a number of other trials did not discourage me. There were good people among those early settlers, and as I walked the Rimutaka tracks they supported me. I wrote numerous letters to friends here and abroad, pointing out the needs of the place. The times were good in the beginning, and the nine acres of land that had been secured at Carterton for a church and a presbytery, were soon changed to one of the prettiest places in the Valley. The



"There were severe floods in 1876." Invasion of the Waiohine River in 1876 at the north end of Greytown.

church of St. Mary there speaks for itself. The church of St. Patrick here in Masterton is a credit to the district and an ornament to the town. The churches of the Sacred Heart at Greytown, St. Teresa at Featherston, and of St. Joseph at Tinui, are all monuments of the generous response I met from the citizens.

"But then came the bad times of distress and want, and I had to fight against difficulties unheard of. I was compelled to pay away my last shilling; I was forced to pledge my own goods, even my bed and blankets, and never will I forget the day when the bailiffs seized all my goods, and they were sacrificed under the auctioneer's hammer here in Masterton. I sat down broken-hearted, for then I really knew what it was to be poor. But I wish not to linger on the scenes of sadness; we shall throw a veil over these sad subjects.

"I thank you all from the bottom of my heart, you, my people, and especially those of other denominations who have supported me. In a few days, I shall leave this Mission and its churches, on which I have lavished thousands of pounds, and shall go away with my few books and clothing, poor and penniless. I have noticed in the papers that when a curate has spent a few months or a year in a parish, he is presented with a testimonial and a purse of sovereigns as a token of gratitude when he leaves, but such is evidently not for me, after seven and a half years of earnest toil erecting churches and sacrificing everything. I may even have to select an hour to depart like a fugitive, when he cannot be seen by his creditors, whose claims up to this he has not been able to satisfy. Shall this be said of me, my friends? Surely not; Almighty God will provide. All my liabilities shall be paid—every one—before I leave.

"And now I bid you all good-bye. If I could, I should like to shake the hand of each one of you and all those other friends who have been willing to help me. In the Wairarapa I have found noble good-hearted Catholics, but they are few. Some even have fallen away. I love this beautiful church of St. Patrick because its building cost me so much sorrow and suffering. We must learn to say good-bye from time to time in order to prepare for the day when death shall compel us to say good-bye for ever. I shall always think of you, pray for you, and bless you;

and may God have pity on us all, so that if we do not meet again in this world, we shall, I hope, meet one day in Heaven praising God for evermore. May He, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost bless you now and always. Amen”.

Rev. Father Halbwachs left Masterton either on the 8th or 9th of January, 1884, and his successor, the Rev. Father P. Treacy arrived in Masterton on January 10th. This ended the administration in the district among the white population, of the French priests who had done such noble work through long and difficult years. Father Halbwachs worked for the next few years in various places in the South Island, especially in Canterbury. In 1892, he returned to Europe and was appointed to the International Apostolic School of the Marist Fathers at Differt, near Namur in Belgium. This College was a kind of minor seminary and scholasticate for the Society of Mary. The great knowledge he had of languages, especially English, French and German, made him a valuable asset to the teaching staff. During the holiday periods, he travelled around encouraging vocations in France and Germany for the priesthood and mission work of the Society. He never forgot New Zealand and especially the Wairarapa. He used to say, “God made New Zealand a combination of Switzerland and the South of France.” One of those who knew him in his latter days in Europe has written to the writer of this book, saying that he was aware there were such places as Carterton, Masterton, Greitown (sic), Feterston (sic) and Tinui, because Father Halbwachs began his missionary work there, and loved to talk of them. Note the spelling of Featherston. Father Halbwachs like most Frenchmen found it impossible to pronounce the “th” sound in the name.

The pupils he trained at Differt went all over the missionary world. Famous names among them are Father Lejeune, S.M., the leper priest of Makogai, and Father Laurent, one time parish priest of St. Patrick's, Sydney. He was, after God, instrumental in the vocations of three priests who worked in our own lifetime in the Archdiocese of Wellington. He met them as boys on his recruiting campaigns for vocations and brought them to Differt to begin their secondary studies. To two of them, for certain, he was Spiritual Director and English Master. These boys became later the Rev. Father William Schaefer, S.M., from

Cologne (Germany), and Father Bernard Gondringer, S.M., from Luxembourg—names famous in the annals of Catholic education in New Zealand. The third boy, (Henry Bouteiller) was French. He died at Blenheim after long years of parish work. He is best known as Father Henry, S.M.

At the end of 1906, Father Halbwachs became very ill and endured much suffering. A priest who had studied with him in the seminary at Strassbourg asked the Superior at Differt to send his friend to him at Brumath (Alsace) where he was parish priest. Within his parish, the nuns had a hostel for old gentlemen. Father Halbwachs lived there only six months, and died on June 25th, 1907. He is buried in the village of his birth, Friedolsheim, near Strassbourg. He was 69 years of age. R.I.P.

CHAPTER VII.

Coming of diocesan priests — consolidation of parochial life — the Catholic education question — Cardinal Moran's visit to Masterton.

The year 1884 marks the beginning of the Irish diocesan priests in the Wairarapa. Bishop Redwood chose as successor to Father Halbwachs an Irish priest who was at that time in charge of Lyttelton. The Province of Canterbury was still a part of the Wellington Diocese. This priest, Father Patrick Treacy, arrived in Masterton on January 10th, 1884. On January 13th—Sunday—he introduced himself to his new parishioners, and although we do not know what he said, at least one newspaper tells us that the congregation was favourably impressed by his address.

History does not tell directly why Father Treacy was chosen for the Wairarapa. Perhaps we can make a guess. In turning up the files of the Christchurch "Press" for the year 1884, we found an account of his farewell from Lyttelton. In that account we get an indication of what may have made him a suitable choice. Father Treacy told his audience that he had come to Lyttelton as a successor to a good and holy man who had however left the parish very financially embarrassed, but during his term there he had completely freed it of debt. Possibly Bishop Redwood considered that here was the very man to solve whatever there was of financial troubles in Masterton. Something like this must have been in Bishop Redwood's mind because in his "Sketch of the Work of the Catholic Church for the last Half-Century in the Archdiocese of Wellington", published in 1887, the Bishop gives a brief paragraph to the Wairarapa Mission and Father Halbwachs' work, but adds, "He left, however, a debt of £1000 on the Masterton church, which had to be paid off by degrees. The present incumbent, Father Treacy, is a secular priest and is very zealous for the maintenance of his school, which is flourishing".

The history of Catholic education in the Wairarapa will be dealt with in a special chapter later on, but there are certain matters which fit into the story better at this point. In 1877 the National Education Act was passed, making State Education in New Zealand free, secular and compulsory. Catholics were henceforth deprived of State Aid which under the Provincial Governments had been



The Rev. Father P. Treacy, second Parish Priest of Masterton and Wairarapa, 1884-1887.

allowed, except in Otago. This Act was a grievous blow to the Church, but the Catholic Body with their Bishops at the head, took up the challenge. Bishop Moran of Dunedin founded the weekly newspaper "The Tablet" to champion the cause of Catholic education, and he did heroic work in the great education struggle. In 1883 the same Bishop Moran had signified his intention of standing for Parliament to fight for the cause of Catholic education. The

Press of the Colony was using up much print in opposing this most unheard-of thing. The newspapers of the Wairarapa at this period have much to say on Bishop Moran. On the whole they were not discourteous in their articles. However, at the time another matter began to distract attention from the Catholic attitude. The Protestant churches were endeavouring to have the law amended to allow Bible-in-Schools.

The "Wairarapa Star" of June 4th, 1883, gives us a definite piece of information regarding the Catholic education position in the district, when it says, "While certain Protestant denominations in the South Island are vainly trying to graft denominationalism on to the State School System by pleading for a religious half hour, the Roman Catholics of the North, more self-reliant, are establishing schools of their own. We learn that by order of Bishop Redwood, Rev. Father Halbwachs has started a Catholic School in Masterton." This school was one room of the priest's cottage, behind St. Patrick's Church, which he fitted up as a class-room. Father Halbwachs himself helped with the teaching there when duty did not call him elsewhere. He had taught for ten years in the United States of America. The paid permanent teacher was a Miss McLean who was succeeded later by Mrs. Redman who remained in charge till mid-winter 1885.

On February 9th, 1884, a month after Father Treacy's arrival, it was stated in the "Wairarapa Daily" that a master had been engaged for the Catholic school in connection with St. Patrick's Church, and that some twenty or thirty children had been withdrawn that week from the State school to attend the one under the control of Father Treacy. We have been unable to trace the name of this teacher, or any further reference to him. At any rate, Father Treacy was finding school space very difficult, and so he set to and built the first St. Patrick's School on the spare land at the back of the church.

However, school matters were not progressing too happily, and in the middle of the next year, the pastor was involved in some unpleasantness and Court proceedings. It seems that on June 20th, 1885, a man named McAlister, supposed to be a Civil Servant, was arrested at Masterton for using abusive language to Father Treacy. The trouble occurred as the result of some remarks made at a school

committee meeting concerning Mr. McAlister's sister, Mrs. Redman, who was the teacher at the Catholic school. McAlister went to the presbytery to demand an explanation, and hasty words resulted. Subsequently two strong men seized McAlister and landed him at the police station where he was detained for about three hours before being bailed out.

The case was heard on the following Tuesday, when there were charges lodged on both sides. Father Treacy charged McAlister with threatening and abusive language, calculated to provoke a breach of the peace. McAlister charged the priest with assault and false arrest. Mr. Bunny on behalf of Father Treacy applied for a remand till Friday, but Mr. Beard, representing McAlister, objected. The Bench granted an adjournment of one hour. When the parties returned to Court, it was announced that an amicable arrangement had been come to, and the charges were struck out.

The "amicable arrangement" however, involved a public apology by Father Treacy and in the morning paper of June 23rd, 1885, there appeared the following:

Masterton,

22nd June, 1885.

TO MR. J. P. McALISTER,

Wellington.

SIR,—I beg to retract all statements which

I have made against the character of your sister, Mrs. Redman, and declare same to be unfounded, and to express to you my regret for having taken the steps which I took on Saturday last, the 20th instant, causing you to be given into custody.

(Signed) PATRICK TREACY,

Catholic Priest.

Witness—

(Signed) Arthur R. Bunny,

Solicitor, Masterton.

However, affairs in the school were not too happy, and came to a head a couple of weeks later when Mrs. Redman resigned, and a Mrs. Carrick from Blenheim was appointed

mistress of the school. She and her daughter took up residence in a cottage (still existing) in Queen Street, almost directly opposite to the present parish school.

The year 1886 was a notable one for Catholic New Zealand in general, and for the Wairarapa in a special way. During this year we had the first visit of a Cardinal to the country. Cardinal Moran of Sydney, accompanied by the Bishops of Maitland and Adelaide came at the beginning of the year to assist in the solemn dedication of the beautiful Cathedral of St. Joseph in Dunedin (February 14th), and the opening of St. Patrick's College in Wellington (February 21). For this latter function, Father Treacy organized the Wairarapa in force. A special train left Masterton that Sunday at 5.45 a.m., arriving in Wellington in time for the people to hear Mass in the city churches and be present at the opening of the College in the afternoon. In the chronicles of the College we read that of the 1400 people present, 600 had come by special train from the Wairarapa.

Something, however, that is not so well remembered, took place in Masterton three weeks before. The like has not happened since. On Wednesday, February 2nd, 1886, Cardinal Moran and the visiting Australian Bishops came by train to Masterton. The Rev. Father Treacy and several friends met His Eminence at the station whence they were driven in a landau to St. Patrick's Church for a liturgical reception. Afterwards the prominent people of town and parish were presented. The Cardinal also visited St. Patrick's School, then not long built. The "Wairarapa Standard" of that date tells us the children were given a special blessing. Perhaps this meant also a holiday, although such a detail is not mentioned. The Wairarapa Flower Show was being held that day in the town, so the Cardinal honoured it with a visit. After lunch, the party left by coach for Woodville. There was no railway yet beyond Masterton. Probably Mr. Macara was the coachman. He always drove for Governors, Prime Ministers and other prominent visitors.

Only four days after His Eminence travelled by the Rimutaka Incline we note it was not yet really fool-proof. It was the main outlet to the south, and priests who came to the district sometimes figured in its mishaps. On Saturday, February 6th, 1886, there was a

narrow escape from a serious accident. Just as the afternoon train was going through the first tunnel, beyond the scene of an old accident (in which carriages were blown over with loss of life on September 11th, 1880), the gripping gear of a Fell engine failed and the train began to run backwards. The other brakes were quickly applied but failed to act for some distance. At last the train came to a standstill in the tunnel, and then occurred a scene which was truly sensational. Men and women jumped from the carriage platforms amidst much screaming and general confusion. The darkness and the smoke did not help. At length the guard's van with its special breaking system was sent down to Cross Creek for another Fell engine and the journey was eventually continued. In jumping from the carriage one of the three priests travelling to Wellington on the train hurt his hand very severely. No names however are recorded.

One of the Wairarapa papers a few weeks later, still mindful of the Cardinal's visit, under the heading, "A Protestant Bull", infers that stock-owners in this district did not have the experience of Mr. E. B. Cargill of Dunedin, who had a valuable pedigree bull which became so furious when it saw the Cardinal in his scarlet robes and could not get at him, that it had to be shot.

On Sunday August 15th, the parish priest, Father Treacy, nearly lost his life in an accident. He was returning north after the early Mass at Carterton, and when crossing the Waingawa River, his horse shied, and the buggy collided with the side of the bridge. The vehicle was badly smashed, and overturned, throwing the priest on to the road, where the horse rolled on him. But priests seemed to be tough in those days. Some Maoris living nearby lent Father a saddle, and leaving the wrecked buggy behind, he rode on into Masterton. Though suffering much, he said his second Mass at St. Patrick's as if nothing had happened.

During the winter of 1886 the Catholic people in Greytown had expended much hard work in making their cemetery tidy and presentable. A large number of ornamental trees were planted, and when they were coming along very nicely some vandals cut out no less than 64 of them. The "Wairarapa Standard" of September 22nd used very strong language about this wanton and malicious deed:

"If we had our way, we would lash some scoundrels to a cart's tail and help flog them through the town". Newspapers were certainly picturesque in their expressions in those days.



Rev. Father John McKenna, third Parish Priest of Masterton, 1887-1930.
(Photo taken about 1890.)

Father Treacy left Masterton in November, 1887, and Father John McKenna was transferred from Wellington to take his place in December. In this same year Wellington had been made an Archdiocese, and Dr. Redwood, now the Archbishop and Metropolitan, received the pallium from the Holy Father on August 28th.

Father McKenna realized before he had been many weeks in Masterton how vast was his field of labour. He

recognized there was too much work now for one man. His brother Tom had just been ordained in Ireland, and was already on his way to New Zealand. On his arrival in Wellington on Friday, March 22nd, 1888, he came that same day to Masterton, with Father John who had met him at the boat. Within a fortnight we find him appointed as curate in Masterton. The new young priest was not allowed to be idle long, because the second day after his arrival in New Zealand—a Sunday—he performed his first baptism. Both the McKennas, besides being good priests, were great sportsmen. Father John was only two months in Masterton when he had beaten one of the crack players in the competitions of the Masterton Tennis Club. By March he was on the Committee of the Masterton Football Club.

CHAPTER VIII.

*The Forty Mile Bush:—Saga of the McKenna priests —
Pahiatua parish — Eketahuna parish — Our Lady of
Mount Carmel Church, Hamua — Immaculate Conception
Church, Mauriceville.*

So far our story of the Church in the Wairarapa has concerned the district that reaches south from Masterton to the Rimutakas. North of Masterton, there was a large stretch of country, full of very rich bush. In 1873 a main road was constructed from Masterton to connect at Woodville with another road already made through the Manawatu to Napier. In the area at this period there were probably not more than 500 people, the men-folk of which were engaged in railway construction, road-making and bush-felling. In 1874, about ten Scandinavian families had grouped together in a settlement which they called Mellenskov — often written Mellan Skog — now named Eketahuna. The sons of these families and others, having been reared in the surrounding bush, quickly became adepts with axe and saw, and much of the clearing of the Forty Mile Bush was done on contract by these Scandinavians and their sons.

In the decade beginning with 1880, many Irish immigrants came to New Zealand. Some settled around Manawatu and Hawke's Bay, but as access through the Forty Mile Bush improved, quite a number went there. The original Scandinavian pioneers were mainly of Lutheran religion, and this area in the beginning did not figure in Catholic Church affairs. The railway was being pushed on very slowly from Masterton, and side roads were giving access to the main arterial road. Pahiatua, right at the north, had become the chief township, and Father Thomas McKenna, the curate at Masterton, was devoting much of his time to the Bush. Father Halbwachs, how-

ever, even in his day, had not overlooked this territory. Hardly a month after he came to the Wairarapa we find that he baptized Victorina Mathews Reaux in the Forty Mile Bush on July 12th, 1876.



Rev. Father Thomas McKenna, first Parish Priest of Pahiatua, 1894-1919.

By June, 1888. the Catholics of Pahiatua were taking active steps to erect a church. Already they had collected £100, and were at the moment negotiating the purchase of an acre section from Mr. Wakeman, fronting Wakeman Street. Father John McKenna was successful in this deal, and set to work to build a small church on the corner of Tyndall and Wakeman Streets, but facing the latter. Even at this early date it was clear that Pahiatua would develop. It promised to be a rich centre of dairy and sheep-farming. So a further block of land—five and a half acres—was

secured nearby, as a possible school and convent site. However, later on this property was not used for this purpose, and in recent years the rapid growth of the town forced the parish to sell the block for Government Housing.

At the beginning of 1894 Pahiatua was constituted a parish, with Father Thomas McKenna as its first pastor. Good Catholic stock, nearly all Irish, had established themselves in the countryside from Hamua onwards. The railway line from Wellington through the Wairarapa to Woodville had been completed and was opened on December 11th, 1897. The settlers felt that they were no longer isolated.



Second St. Brigid's Church, Pahiatua—present parish church—after the additions of 1934.

Father Tom was always beloved of the Catholic people wherever he worked, and it was not long after his appointment to the new parish of Pahiatua before he saw that the little church there was too small. His flock were mainly young married couples, working their bush farms into good dairying country. He set to with a will to raise the money for a new church. Few if any could resist his appeal, whether they were Catholics or not. By 1897 the accommodation question was really acute, and a still bigger effort was made by pastor and people to raise more funds. We see

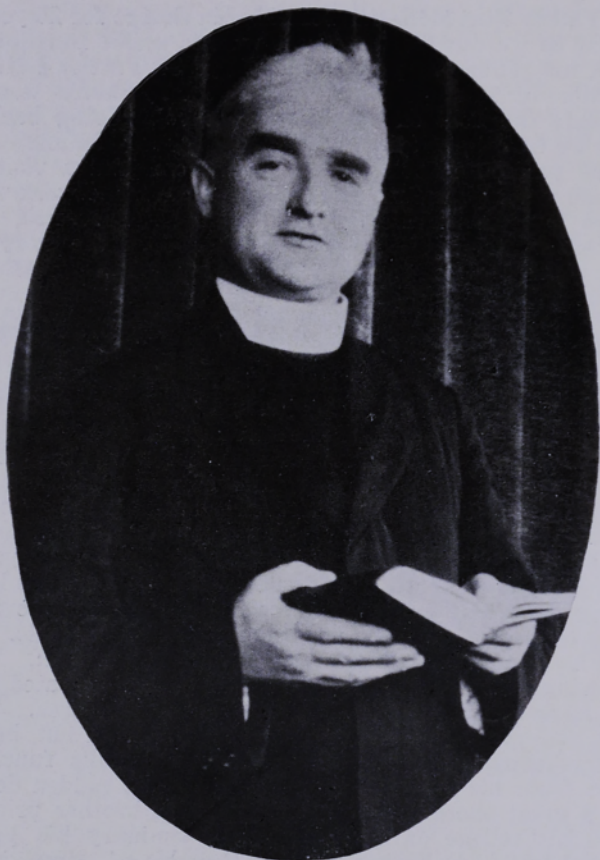
from advertisements in the newspapers of 1897 and 1898 that various functions were being held, and first-class artists engaged from Wellington, Otaki and Palmerston North. The "Pahiatua Herald" of October 14th, 1898, stated, "Since Father McKenna took charge of the Pahiatua Parish, the church attendance has continued to increase, until now it is often impossible for worshippers to crowd into the building The time is not far distant when a new church will have to be brought into use." However, his parishioners knew what mortgages were, even in those days, and they could only do their best with the little they had to spare. It was not till Monday, January 5th, 1899, that the plans of Messrs. Procter and Mason were submitted to the Pahiatua Borough Council and approved. This church was duly built and dedicated to St. Brigid. Improved through the years it is still the parish church.

It can truly be said of Pahiatua that it is the most Catholic part of the Wairarapa. Father Tom McKenna was a real Soggarth and he laid the foundations of the faith there very firmly. Wherever he could travel in his gig he would do so in order to give the people the benefit of instruction, Mass and the sacraments. Old folk or the sick were never neglected even if it meant travelling over rough bush tracks or crossing fast-flowing rivers. Before there were churches, various private homes throughout the parish were stations for Mass. In Pahiatua town his first altar-boy, we are told, was Charlie Shanahan (father of Rev. Liam Shanahan), and he was later on followed by W. Singleton and W. O'Connor. Miss Cecilia McKenny should ever be remembered as the first Sunday-school teacher. She was a sister of the late Brother Alphonsus, S.M., of Greenmeadows, Hawke's Bay.

The numerous Irish immigrants formed the background of Catholic life here, and the names of the Beachs, the Quirkies, the Farrellys, and the Goggins are associated with the Konini section. Then from over the Mangahao River there came the Walshs, the Nesses, the Eisings, the McCarthys, the Fouhys and the T. Murphys. From the east like the Wise Men there hailed the Swans, the P. J. Murphys, the McCarthys and the Nestors. In Pahiatua town we find the Singletons, the J. O'Mearas, the Igos, the Shanahans, the Quinlans, the O'Briens, the Moynihans, the McKennys and later the Byrnes.

Father Tom McKenna remained in charge for 25 years. As far as we can find out there was no public function to mark his jubilee as pastor, but at the St. Patrick's Night function in 1919 he stated that his only desire was to liquidate the debt on the convent school. Going back a little we find that Father Edward Duffy was administrator of the parish in 1903 while Father Tom paid a visit to Ireland. On his return from that trip he set to work with a will to establish the Brigidine nuns in his parish, and this eventuated at the beginning of 1906. The story of their coming will be found in the special section on Catholic education in this history.

During 1913 and part of 1914 Father John McKenna of Masterton urged his brother to join him in another trip to see their relatives in Ireland. Father Edward Long looked after the parish during his absence. In 1920 Father Tom took charge of St. Anne's Parish in Wellington and for the next three years Father Saunderson was the parish priest of Pahiatua. About mid-year of 1922 Father Edward Sweeney relieved for seven months till the appointment of Father Michael Cashman in 1923. This scholarly and kindly priest cared for Pahiatua for the next 23 years until his sudden death on May 6th, 1946. During his long term of office Father Cashman took a deep interest in everything connected with the spiritual good of his people. In 1934 he completely transformed St. Brigid's Church. The following year the convent school was centrally heated and fine basket-ball courts improved the playing area. The year 1935 marked his Silver Jubilee as a priest, but, being a very retiring man, he would allow no public function apart from his Mass of thanksgiving. His sudden death was a great shock to all, especially to his brother priests. From his college days at Maynooth seminary his great priest-friend was Father Thomas Guinane of Dannevirke. It was while walking with him alongside the presbytery that day after lunch that the summons of death came suddenly, and with the holy oil of Extreme Unction administered by his friend still moist on his brow he passed to his Creator. Requiescat in pace. Father Guinane took care of the parish for the next six months and it was through his efforts that the parishioners raised in a short time £1000 to found a bursary for the education of a priest from the parish. In what better way could the memory



The Rev. Father M. Cashman, (R.I.P.), Parish Priest of Pahiatua (1923-1946).
of the Rev. Father Michael Cashman be remembered?

The new pastor chosen was the Rev. Father Edward Sweeney who came in 1947 from the neighbouring parish of Eketahuna. He is doing great work there, especially in the field of Catholic education. In 1953 he paid a visit to his relatives in Ireland, and during his absence Father J. Austin was administrator. About the same time an

extra priest, Father Brian Carruthers, was given to the parish to help especially in the work of the country districts.

We close this section on Pahiatua with a few notes on Pongaroa. As far back as January, 1908, it was proposed to build a church there, but nothing was done about it. Father Tom McKenna used to say Mass here at intervals. When Eketahuna was made a parish, the township of Pongaroa was included in the new parochial district. In 1934 Father Austin Doherty bought a section near the Post Office and built a fine little church there. In 1947 Pongaroa reverted to Pahiatua, and is becoming quite active in Catholic life.



Church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Pongaroa, built in 1934.

Under present arrangements our history of the Wairarapa would scarcely be complete without including St. Columbkille's Church at Woodville. Though this locality is not a part of the Wairarapa district, the Catholic people there have been so long a part of St. Brigid's Parish, Pahiatua, that it is felt really necessary to include it.

The main highway through the Forty Mile Bush (North Wairarapa) meets the Palmerston North - Napier highway at right angles in the middle of the town of Woodville. To the north then, at this place, begins what used to be known as the Seventy Mile Bush Road. In the 1860's the whole territory from Napier to Woodville was

administered by Father Euloge Regnier, S.M., from the Meeanee Mission Station in Hawke's Bay. Later the territory from Waipawa southwards was cut off and became a separate parish. The resident priest, then in Waipawa, travelled to Takapau, Dannevirke and Woodville. The whole countryside was covered with rich standing bush. On the outskirts of Woodville there flows a river remarkable in a special way. It is called the Manawatu, and rises in the heart of the Seventy Mile Bush, not so very far from the new Cistercian monastery of Our Lady of the Southern Star at Kopua. It is from this river that the monastery draws its water supply. This river is famous from a geological point of view because, although it drains the eastern slopes of the Tararua and Ruahine ranges, it has, just south of Woodville, cut a passage through solid rock during the centuries, forming a large and impressive gorge. Through this it flows to the west coast of the North Island where it enters the sea at Foxton, and perhaps it is the only known river in the world which rises on one side of a high mountainous watershed and flows to the ocean on the other. We mention this river at some length, because to the east of Woodville it sweeps through a big semi-circle of country, and was formerly looked upon as the northern boundary between the Wairarapa and Hawke's Bay districts. Until the Wairarapa railway line was connected with Woodville, about 1897, there was no bridge over the Manawatu River on the main road through the Wairarapa, and it had to be crossed by ferry, or forded when the water was low enough. The first bridge was a rail and traffic bridge which did service until about five years ago when a separate rail bridge was built.

In the centre of the Seventy Mile Bush, the Hon. John Johnston, a member of the Legislative Council in Wellington, had taken up a big block of land centred on what we know today as the township of Takapau. In 1861 he sent his son, Sydney, who had recently concluded his schooling at the Jesuit College of Stonyhurst in England, to serve as a cadet on his Orua Wharo sheep-station near Takapau. Eventually Sydney inherited the estate in 1887 and, having already married Miss Sophie Lambert in 1873, lived at Orua Wharo. His generosity to the Church during his lifetime and afterwards is something worthy of undying gratitude. One of his daughters is Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford

who is a well-known benefactor of Featherston parish.

In 1883 he gave an acre section at Woodville for a Catholic church site, and the title to this was secured about March, 1884. In the "Woodville Examiner," December 8th, 1883, we are told that the Catholics of Woodville were making strenuous efforts to build a church on this section, and that a large sum of money had already been collected. A week later, December 15th, 1883, tenders were called for the building, and the time limit set for them was December 19th. The plans and specifications were to be seen at Murphy's Club Hotel, and the tenders were to be addressed to Mr. J. J. Murphy. The church site was on the Napier Road, fairly well north of the town. It was covered in bush, which took a while to clear. Mr. Foley seems to have been prominent in clearing the ground. Before there was any church, Mass was said in the school or in a private house, and it was not till August 8th, 1886, that the church was opened by Bishop Redwood. Accompanying the Bishop were Rev. Father A'Hearne, the parish priest of the district, and other visitors from Waipawa. The first Mass was celebrated by His Lordship at 8 a.m. on that day, August 8th, after the solemn blessing.

Messrs. J. J. Murphy, J. S. Murray and Peters were staunch supporters of the Church in early Woodville. The journeyings for the parish priest of Waipawa in those days were long and arduous. Woodville was sixty miles south, and there was only a horse and trap available. It was done in stages. Dannevirke and Woodville would each share a Mass once a month. Father A'Hearne was succeeded by Father Dawson, and then in 1894, when Pahiatua was made a parish, Woodville became a part of St. Brigid's Parish of Pahiatua. Father Thomas McKenna was the first parish priest. He served the people for 26 years, and in 1920 was transferred to Newtown, Wellington. Prominent men connected with St. Columbkille's in its long history are the late Messrs. G. H. Redwood, P. H. Lynch, John Murray, T. and P. Martin and G. J. Goldfinch, whose home was always open to any priest visiting the district. In October, 1936, the beautiful leadlight windows that now adorn the church were installed. The rest of the history of the Church there is closely associated with that of Pahiatua. A branch of the Hibernians was formed in 1913 and is still functioning,

and more recently a Children of Mary Sodality was established.

The grounds round the church are planted with many beautiful shrubs. Due to the great interest in New Zealand native trees of a former parishioner, Mr. Louis Skinner, we find a fine selection of matai, rimu, totara, kahikatea, miro and maire trees around the section.



St. Columbkille's Church, Woodville, built 1886.

In the meantime other places in the Forty Mile Busn required attention — Eketahuna and Hamua. These two places and the districts round them were still a part of Masterton parish, and therefore in charge of Father John McKenna. At Eketahuna Mass was said in the beginning at Mr. Kelliher's Club Hotel. He was an Irishman and always welcomed the priest. On March 29th, 1898, Father John McKenna came to Eketahuna, and pegged out a site for the first Catholic church there on a section already purchased some time before. The main portion of the building was to be 30 feet by 26 feet, and it was hoped it would seat 150. The estimated cost was £200. The sanctuary was to be added a little later. The site was a good one on a rise in Bridge Street. It was almost opposite the former Post Office. The blessing and opening of the new church was to have taken place on November 20th, 1898, but serious slips on the railway line prevented Archbishop Redwood from coming, and so the ceremonies were postponed a week, till November 27th. His Grace was

assisted in the function by Father McKenna, who said the Mass of the Sacred Heart, the Patron of the church. It was on the day after this ceremony, while the Archbishop was still in the Wairarapa, that a disastrous fire destroyed St. Mary's Cathedral in Hill St., Wellington.

Eketahuna's little church was by no means pretentious. it was unlined and lacked all decoration. Still, it was a Mass-Centre for the small number of Catholics round about. On June 23rd, 1901, the first Confirmation ceremony in Eketahuna took place. Archbishop Redwood confirmed 33 candidates. In September, 1905, when the Mauriceville church was being built, Father John McKenna decided to line Eketahuna church, add a porch, and generally improve the look of the building.



On left, Catholic Church, Eketahuna, in its original form, 1898.
In background, Anglican Church with tower.

In 1920 Eketahuna was constituted a parish distinct from Masterton. Evidently the boundaries then made separating it from Pahiatua on the north and Masterton on the south were not clearly defined. Consequently, in 1923, the matter was referred to Archbishop O'Shea who commissioned the Vicar-General, Monsignor John McKenna, to settle them precisely and to communicate his decision to the parish priest of Eketahuna. The letter establishing the exact boundaries is to be found inside the cover of the first Baptismal Register of the Eketahuna parish. Father E. J. Bergin was the first parish priest and in the beginning boarded with the Ryan family. He was succeeded in 1921

by Father J. Kennedy who took up residence at Parkville, across the Makakahi Stream, in a house, we are told, owned by Mr. Kelliher. A year or so later, the parish bought a cottage for £450 in Anderson St., and this remained the presbytery until 1939. Father V. Kelly came after Father Kennedy, arriving in February, 1923, but remained only nine months. At the end of October of that year we have the appointment of Father Austin Doherty.

The property on which the church stood was sold in 1922 to a Mr. A. H. Herbert, whose house was adjoining, with a proviso in the Agreement of Sale that the church would be shifted within ten years. When Father Austin Doherty came in 1923, it was apparent that the owner of the property was anxious to see the church removed, and so the new pastor worked to obtain the necessary funds. In Dean McKenna's time a section had been purchased on the eastern side of the railway line, at the top of Jones St. A bequest of £500 left to the parish by the Cosgrove Brothers was in part used for this purpose—£350 was the price paid by the Dean for this land. In 1926 the church was shifted to the new site by the contractors, Rigg and Co., of Masterton. Some additions were made to it by Father Doherty. Adjoining the northern side of the church was a larger piece of land running down to the railway line. It was bought as a future site for a convent and school by means of a grant from the Lonergan Trust. This Trust is vested in the Archbishop from the estate of the late Mr. Lonergan of Kaitawa, Pahiatua, and the revenue from it is to be used for Catholic educational purposes in the Wairarapa. Father Doherty remained in charge till the beginning of 1935, working the whole district of Mauriceville, Pongaroa, Hamua and Eketahuna.

In February, 1935, Father Edward Sweeney was transferred from Ohakune—where he had built a fine church—to Eketahuna. With his well-known thoroughness and determination, he decided that it was time the parish had a proper presbytery, and alongside the church he eventually built one, which was opened on December 10th, 1939. This presbytery section—the old saleyards—had by Father Doherty's forethought been purchased for £40 some years before. Father Sweeney remained parish priest of Eketahuna till 1947, when, a few months after the death of

Father Michael Cashman in Pahiatua, he transferred there, and Father Cecil Barr-Brown came to Eketahuna. The new pastor was not more than eighteen months in charge before he realized that the Sacred Heart Church needed much renovation. By the middle of 1950 he had completely transformed the old building, added a beautiful new sanctuary, with two sacristies, and even a mothers' room. Archbishop McKeefry blessed these additions on May 23rd, 1950. He was assisted at the ceremonies by the parish priest and the Rev. Vincent McGlone of Carterton.



Sacred Heart Church and Presbytery, Eketahuna, 1956.
This view shows extensive renovations to church in 1950.

The parish of Eketahuna at the moment (1957) is planning the building of a Catholic school. It will be staffed by Brigidine nuns who will live at their convent in Pahiatua and travel to and fro each day. A similar arrangement to this is in operation in many parishes in the Archdiocese.

The first church in Hamua was built in 1906. Before that time Father John McKenna used to come from Masterton and say Mass in the Hamua Hall. At times his place would be taken by one of his assistant priests in Masterton. From 1893 Father Delach, S.M., was in charge of the Wairarapa Catholic Maoris. He made regular visits to them from Otaki. Before him, Father Peter Lepretre, S.M., had worked the Maori Mission in the Wairarapa from 1886. He had his headquarters at Paki Paki in Hawke's Bay.

Father Lepretre converted all the Maoris at Te Ore Ore near Masterton and built the Sacred Heart Church there in 1890. When he handed over to Father Delach in 1893, there were still many Maoris in the Hamua district, and Father Delach's great achievement in this locality was his conversion of the chief Nireaha Tamaki, who soon afterwards gave the land on which the first Hamua church was built in 1906. It was blessed and opened on a cold wet Sunday in July. For many years this church served both Maori and pakeha, but as the Maoris became fewer in numbers, it was accepted as the church for Hamua pakeha Catholics.

The site chosen for this church was a fine one, on a rise overlooking the main road, but for some mysterious reason the weatherboarding developed a rot, and deteriorated badly over the years. In more recent times it was hardly a thing of beauty. Hamua became a good Catholic centre in the Eketahuna parish, and when the pioneers died or retired their children took over the farms. In Father E. Sweeney's time, a strong effort was made to acquire funds for a new church. He collected quite a large sum between 1936 and 1947, and Father Cecil Barr-Brown added to this capital fund.

In 1952 plans were prepared for a new church, and a decision was arrived at to change the site to one on the flat just opposite. Here on Sunday, November 23rd, 1952, a beautiful new church was blessed and opened by Archbishop McKeefry. It had the same title as the former one—Our Lady of Mount Carmel. A striking feature of the Mass of dedication said by the Archbishop, was the singing of the Common of the Mass by the congregation in Gregorian Chant. The building is in rough-cast stucco in conventional design, but it is a little gem of good taste, and by the co-operation between the pastor, the County Council and the Bourke family (who donated the land in exchange for the old site) the church is ideally situated on the corner of the main highway and Hawera Road. (Hawera was the first name of the district, but it was changed later to Hamua. v. J. M.) The corner has been splayed back, and the church lies diagonally across the section. The old trouble of parking in the main highway has been overcome and this lovely church is shown off to advantage. At the luncheon which followed the Mass, Father Barr-Brown

announced that the whole cost of £6000 had been met, and the church was opened free of debt—a tribute to the generosity of the people, and to Father Sweeney and the present pastor.

The Archbishop preached at the Mass, and he afterwards spoke again at the luncheon. A transcription of this latter speech was not made, which is a pity, because it was excellent. The theme was that the strength of the Faith in Hamua had resulted from the strong unity of Catholic



Back view of new Catholic Church, Hamua, showing former church (built by Rev. Father Delach, S.M.), on right. This old church has been pulled down.

family life, and the dedication of the people there to the vocation of farmers, which the pioneer parents had planted in the hearts of their children, who in these days were the builders of the church just opened.

When the main road from Masterton northwards was constructed, it went through the township of Mauriceville, as the railway does still. In the beginning of the settlement there were many Scandinavians engaged in the construction of the railway and in bushfelling. In the 1890's we begin to find Irish names, such as the Carrolls, the O'Connors, the Kennedys and others. It was not until 1905

that any definite move was made to have a church. Mr. F. O'Connor had donated a site, and Dean McKenna decided to build in the latter half of 1905. Mr. J. McKenzie, the father of Mrs. J. Bouzaid of Masterton, was the builder. It cost £275 and had seating for 100. The furnishings brought the total cost to £325. The altar was the gift of the builder and was made by the firm of Messrs. Hartmann, Hoar and Permain of Masterton.



Second Church of Our Lady of Carmel at Hamua, built 1952.

Archbishop Redwood, who had been visiting Palmerston North for the A. and P. Show there, came on to Masterton on November 4th, and the blessing of the new

church took place on Sunday, November 5th. The Rev. Dean McKenna sang the Mass, and the Masterton choir in charge of Mr. A. R. Bunny provided the music. The Archbishop's sermon was on "Man's duty to God". The opening collection resulted in £12, and promises that had already been made were honoured.

To-day (1956) modern transport has made this church unnecessary and at present it is not often used. Mauriceville is not now on the main highway, and there are few Catholics living round about. In the old days, the priest would always be sure of the hospitality of the Carroll family, and when necessary Mr. Carroll would drive him on to Eketahuna for his second Mass. We still have working in the Archdiocese a venerable priest who, while curate at Masterton, became well known in what to-day is the Eketahuna parish. He is the Right Rev. Monsignor John Kelly. Father John seemed to have a charmed life. In recent years he nearly lost his life in Wellington in a street accident, and the same thing almost happened 51 years ago. He was driving a horse and trap to Eketahuna on Saturday, November 25th, 1905, when at a bluff between Kaiparoro Road and Waiwaka, he, together with his horse and trap, were blown off the road down a gully 70 feet deep. He was picked up unconscious and taken to Eketahuna. He was lucky to escape with only minor concussion and bruises.

CHAPTER IX.

Continuation of story of Masterton parish:—General items — Dean McKenna: Jubilee, Vicar General, final years — arrival of Father N. Moore.

The account of the next few years is made up of items of general interest in Masterton and South Wairarapa.

The parish priest of Masterton, Father John McKenna, saw to it that the greater festivals of the Church were honoured with becoming solemnity. Holy Week and Easter were observed with special care, even to the singing of the Office of Tenebrae. At this latter ceremony the cantors generally seem to have been Father McKenna, Mr. A. R. Bunny, and Mr. Kearsley. The traditions for the Christmas celebrations had been well laid by Father Halbwachs even as early as Christmas, 1879, the year the church was opened. The Masterton newspapers were in the habit of giving detailed accounts of all these celebrations.

Both of the McKennas—Father John and Father Tom—were famous in the field of sport, especially football. They played under the name of Wallace—a family name. Father John was a Wairarapa representative player for years, and history records how one Sunday he surprised the congregation by displaying “two lovely black eyes” as the song puts it—the result of a gruelling match the previous afternoon.

The parish of Masterton still consisted of most of the Wairarapa. The pastor and his assistant must needs make long journeys—as far as Eketahuna in the north and Featherston in the south—so that they suffered a serious loss when their horse was charged and killed by the presbytery cow. She resented what she regarded as the undue attention he was paying to her recently arrived calf. The horse was quite a valuable one—it was worth about £40—and its loss considerably hindered the work in such a widespread



Original form of St. Patrick's Presbytery, Masterton. Father J. McKenna with his gig and horse.
The main part of this presbytery was built by Father Halbwachs in 1879.

parish. One newspaper made quite a feature of the incident, which occurred in October, 1897, and Father McKenna made more than one reference to it in later times. Father Long was the curate at that time, so we may suppose he had to do the country districts till the parish priest obtained a new steed.

The time was fast approaching when another parish would be necessary in the southern part of the district. The "Eketahuna Express" in October, 1897, made some pertinent remarks about the chief town of this southern district, and, we quote, "Carterton is making rapid advancing strides, and on Saturday evening the main street is thronged with people. Until a few years ago Carterton was considered the most 'miserable little hole' along the railway line, but now with its grand agricultural show, its race-course, its cycling track and its capital dairying district, together with its substantial business places along its main thoroughfare, it takes its rank as one of the finest little inland towns in the colony." No wonder we are told that Carterton's reaction to such an eulogy was, "Fill 'em up again". Hence we see that the Catholics of this southern part were making mild overtures for a parish priest of their own—a request that was granted in 1901.

At the turn of the century the South African War was much in the news, and special Requiem Masses, sometimes solemn, were being offered in Masterton. There was, for example, the solemn Requiem offered at St. Patrick's Church on Monday, February 26th, 1900, for Catholic soldiers who had died on active service.

In 1902 the growing Catholic population in Masterton made it necessary to enlarge the church, and a transept was very neatly added without destroying the symmetry of the building. This gave accommodation for about another 100 people.

Tuesday, June 21st, 1904, marks a very important event in the history of the Church here. In the section dealing with St. Bride's Convent mention will be found of the novitiate established there. The reception of the first band of novices took place that day in the parish church. There was no real chapel yet at St. Bride's, and so the parishioners were privileged to witness in a public church this beautiful ceremony of the receiving of the Holy Habit.

The Very Rev. Father Lewis, Administrator for the Archbishop who was in Rome, officiated. The names of the novices were Miss L. Truman (Sister Mary Paul), Miss T. Shapter (Sister Mary Peter), and Miss M. Cooke (Sister Mary Canice). A magnificent sermon was preached by Father Lewis, and a fairly full account of this discourse may be found in the "Wairarapa Age", June 22nd, 1904. Sister M. Paul is the only surviving member of this group. She is at present at Johnsonville, and in July of this year (1956) celebrated the Golden Jubilee of profession. Ad multos annos!

Another interesting ceremony which seems to have had a vogue in Masterton occurred a little earlier. It was the blessing of a supply of shamrocks from Ireland. This took place before the Mass on St. Patrick's Day, 1904, and was performed by the Rev. Father McDermott, C.S.S.R. The Editor of the "Wairarapa Daily" was rather impressed by this ceremony, and devoted a fine editorial to St. Patrick.

The years roll by, and on March 11th, 1908, there occurs the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Masterton's great pastor, everywhere known by this time as Dean John McKenna. He had spent 21 years of that quarter century in charge of the Wairarapa. The official celebrations took place the following Sunday, March 15th. His Grace Archbishop Redwood said the 7 a.m. Mass, the Venerable Archdeacon Devoy the 8 a.m., and the jubilarian the 10.30 a.m., which was a Solemn High Mass. The sermon was preached by the Very Rev. Augustine Keogh, S.M., Rector of St. Patrick's College, Wellington. In the evening a social was held, and a purse of sovereigns (over 100) was presented to the Dean.

Mr. A. R. Bunny was chairman and from a fine tribute we extract the following, "When you were first appointed, Very Reverend Dean, the parish was in troubled waters, overburdened with a heavy liability, and there was no apparent prospect of uplifting it. But your admirable administrative capacities soon devised the means of extinguishing the debt, and today the financial position of the parish is assured. You have established the convent school and introduced the Sisters of St. Brigid; you have

enlarged St. Patrick's Church and built new churches at Eketahuna and Mauriceville—truly a great record."

At the beginning of 1913 the Dean and his brother,



His Grace, Archbishop T. O'Shea, S.M. (R.I.P.),
Second Archbishop of Wellington.

Father Thomas McKenna of Pahiatua went for a holiday to Ireland, and it was during their absence that Father Thomas O'Shea, S.M., was appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of Wellington.

In 1913, when the likelihood of a Coadjutor being chosen to help the venerable Archbishop Redwood was being discussed, Dean McKenna was freely spoken of as "episcopabilis" (fit to be a Bishop). The Holy See did not decide that way, and after the consecration of Archbishop O'Shea on August 17th, 1913, speculation began afresh as to who would be chosen as the new Vicar-General. The writer was a college boy in Wellington Town Hall on the night of the public reception to the new Archbishop. In the course of his speech Archbishop Redwood announced that he was appointing Dean John McKenna of Masterton as the new Vicar-General. We can



The Right Rev. Monsignor McKenna, V.G., with three of his former curates.

Standing: Rev. M. Uhlenberg, 1927-1930.

Seated on left: Rev. J. Kelly (now Monsignor), 1904-1909.

Seated on right: Rev. J. Hegarty (1921-1922). R.I.P.

easily recall the great applause that followed the news. It was a popular and well deserved choice. With the office went the title of Monsignor, and it was shortly after Dean McKenna's return from Ireland that the Papal Brief arrived from Rome raising him to the dignity of a Domestic Prelate.

Monsignor McKenna was a noble character of great humility and simple faith with a marvellous overall inborn dignity. This will help us to understand what was in his mind when, at the sacerdotal Golden Jubilee of his great friend, the late Dean Nicholas Binsfeld, S.M., at Mt. St. Mary's, Greenmeadows, on August 27th, 1919, we heard the famous "last words" which have become legendary in clerical circles, "If I have been raised to great heights in the Church of God, and I have, etc."

In his latter years the Monsignor continued his active life in every parochial endeavour. The needs of the children, who loved him so dearly, were not overlooked, and his building in brick of the fine parish school of St. Patrick's in 1927 will ever keep his memory green in the annals of Catholic education in this Province. It marked the 40th year of his continuous service in Masterton.

There is an old saying that the presbytery is the second seminary, and if that is true, then the presbytery at Masterton in Monsignor's time was certainly the finest training ground any young priest could desire. In his 43 years in Masterton he had trained 23 curates. He was always the priest, whether it was in the tent, the hut, the sporting field, the home, or the Club. Is it any wonder then that throughout the Archdiocese today there are so many fine senior priests still doing great work for God and souls who received a deep and thorough spiritual and administrative training under Monsignor John McKenna?

The building of St. Patrick's School was his last great undertaking. Even at that time his health was beginning to fail, and by 1930 there was real cause for anxiety. The towering frame was losing its vigour and robustness. His last public appearance in the church was when he blessed the ashes on Ash Wednesday, 1930. On Palm Sunday evening about 9.30, he passed to his reward. Father Michael Uhlenberg was the assistant priest at that time, and he was with his beloved pastor when he gave up his soul to God.

The death of Monsignor John McKenna was also the end of an era. Forty-seven years of priesthood and 43 of



The Right Rev. Monsignor J. McKenna, V.G.
Third Parish Priest of Masterton (1887-1930).

them in one parish is a great record, and as it is people that make a parish, we hope that the Monsignor's successor, Father Nicholas Moore, will forgive us if we take verbatim a paragraph or two from a wonderful tribute he paid to his predecessor some years ago. "The Faith was the common denominator between priest and people, and Father John McKenna had no truer sons of the Faith than the early Polish settlers in Carterton and Masterton, the Lipinskis, the Treaders, the Siemoneks, the Rzoskas, the Broskas, the Stempas and the Maxes. Joy and sorrow, tears and laughter form the texture of human life, and you may be sure that Father McKenna, though never sentimental, was moved by the awful veneration which the Polish race has for an Irish priest And then there were the Irish. With such Father McKenna was in his element. Our generation cannot be expected to appreciate the unity, the friendship that lay back of the banter and the drolleries of the Monsignor with the Collertons and the O'Connors of Tinui, or the exchange of wit and humour with the Kerinses and the Savages. The families of the past are the ghosts of the present. There were the Hanley family and the Diggins family and the O'Connors of Taueru—pioneers and great souls all of them. The P. and J. Hourigans, the Percy family, Steve Connell, the O'Neill family, the O'Mearas and the McKillops, all are of that great age. Then there were the Nees and the Costellos, the Curries, the Gills and the McMullens, the Chapman, Dorset, and Hogan families. There was Humphrey O'Leary—why, you can hear the sound of the anvil to smother the anger of the moment or the chaffing banter with Father John in the Irish forge in New Zealand. And there was the great friendship with the Bunny family. There was the Ted O'Leary family. There were Pat Hamill, M. C. O'Connell and J. C. Cooper; and everyone knows that the Prices, Peter and Frank, have always been pillars of the Church. In the more northerly part of the vast parish there were the O'Donnells, the Carrolls, the Bourkes and the McGruddys; in what is now the Carterton parish the Eccletons, the Gallaghers and the Dudsons. All were friends, companions, lay-apostles of this great priest, and 'many others also whose names are not written in this book' but who are inscribed in the eternal records of God". Requiescant in pace.

In mid-winter of 1930 the Rev. Father Nicholas Moore was transferred from Patea to Masterton as its new parish priest. He came as a worthy successor to the Monsignor. He has now laboured 26 years in Masterton—years full of

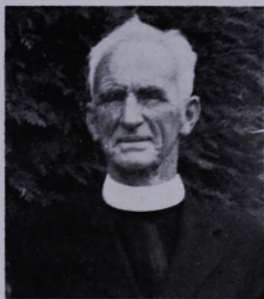


An aerial view of the playing fields and some of the buildings of St. Joseph's College, Masterton. The two-storied senior dormitory is on the extreme right but is hardly visible. In Chapter XXI will be found the full account of how this valuable site was obtained.

labour and of fruit. But history cannot be written when it is happening. His greatest achievement is the introduction of the Marist Brothers to Masterton and the establishment of St. Joseph's College in 1944. The story of this is given in the section on Catholic education in the Wai-

rarapa, but some facts of the early financing of this work could best be given here.

When the idea of a boys' secondary school was first mooted in early 1944, there was exactly nothing in the parochial treasury for such an undertaking. If ever there was a case of faith moving mountains the enthusiasm of Father Moore is a modern example. Most of us can well remember the invasion of American servicemen into New Zealand for final training for the Pacific War. Masterton was found to be a suitable place for camps, and large bodies of American Marines took up quarters at Memorial Park,



The Very Rev. Dean Moore, V.F., Fourth Parish Priest,

Solway Showgrounds and the aerodrome. When the war was over these camps had a large collection of buildings some of which were fairly well built. Father Moore saw his opportunity of getting two or three of these as the nucleus of a boys' secondary school. No one could have worked harder than did Masterton's pastor to secure the best of them. Strange though it may seem to the strictly business man, faith in the cause and trust in God were for the start his only finance. But he won through, though the struggle was long and hard. He went on a begging tour. Whether it was Dannevirke and Waipawa in the north, or Wellington in the south, parish boundaries did not worry him if it meant the saving of souls of the Catholic boys of the Wairarapa. He organized a King Carnival with candidates from the various parishes in the district, and this brought in about £1500. When a name had been agreed upon for the new school, he formed the St. Joseph's College Association, to join which Catholics in the Wairarapa were



Queen Street, Masterton, looking south before the 1942 earthquake.

asked to contribute £1 a year. There were Art Unions and appeals without number. Father Moore's great desire was to make the new college a Wairarapa effort, not just Masterton's. As his great predecessor, Father Halbwachs, had done in the 1880's to build his churches, Father Moore did in the 1940's for this cause, giving everything he had, even his life insurance. Any scheme he thought would help he tried, and it is now history that there was once a small jam factory in the presbytery backyard, turning out its real fruit product for sale under the care of two volunteer parishioners. If worry and the finding of money takes toll of a man's life, then the founding of St. Joseph's College and the care of its infant days have taken their share of Father Moore's life. Archbishop O'Shea had given him the "green light" to undertake this great work, and the college to-day stands as a fine monument crowning his years of ministry in the Wairarapa.

In 1955 the parish of Masterton honoured his 25 years as their parish priest, and on that occasion the parishioners gave him a large cheque to take a holiday to Ireland to see his relatives. But at the moment of writing (November 1956) he is still in Masterton—the "Soggarth aroon" of his people. Much more could be written but this would come better from some historian of the future, perhaps on a jubilee. Next year, 1957, marks the 75th anniversary of the taking up of residence in Masterton permanently of its first priest.

CHAPTER X.

Castlepoint.

The first locality in Wairarapa to celebrate its centenary of occupation by Europeans was Castlepoint, a sea-coast township on the east coast of the district. Though it does not figure in Catholic affairs in its beginnings, the importance of this place in the early days of white settlement gives it a right to mention. At the beginning of this book we recalled that the name Castlepoint was given by Captain Cook when he was off this part of the coast on February 11th, 1770. In November 1844, three Catholic gentlemen, famous in New Zealand history, Frederick Weld, Charles Clifford and William Vavasour, the first run-holders in the Wairarapa, made a journey from Wellington to Castlepoint with six Maoris under the chief Te Koro as guide. They were looking for further sheep country and Weld has left us a very good account of their journey. He speaks of Castlepoint as being so named from some very fine rocks which rise to a height of almost 300 feet above sea-level and bear resemblance to the broken and dismantled walls of an old medieval castle. "The scenery here," he says, "is most beautiful, and in addition Rangihakaoma (its Maori name) possesses a beautiful harbour."

In the "Nelson Examiner" of November 6th, 1847, we find that the captain of a schooner called "Gipsy" reported, on arrival in Wellington from the north, "that he was compelled to run into the bay at Castlepoint for shelter from a strong N.N.W. gale. This bay is not generally known to mariners, who will find good shelter from most gales save the north-east."

The first white settlers at Castlepoint were Thomas Guthrie and his wife, who came in 1848. Mr. Guthrie had taken a leasehold sheep-run there from the chief, Te Hapuku, of Ahuriri (Napier, Hawke's Bay).

We do not know of any records of visits by Catholic missionaries before the 1860's, when Father Seon would certainly have included it in his journeying among the Maoris of the district. There was frequent contact between

the natives of these parts and those in Hawke's Bay, and it is probable that Father Regnier may have journeyed down the coast from Porangahau to attend to those who were his converts. However, much of this is conjecture. The first definite date we have found for this history is March 19th, 1871, when Father E. Pertuis said Mass at the home of Mr. John Pickett, at Castlepoint. This Mass was advertised in the "Wairarapa Mercury" on Saturday, March 11th, 1871. We are told by an old resident in Carterton, Michael Collins, now in his eighties, that when he was a young man working on the roads for the Castlepoint Highway Board the Pickett family lived about half a mile west of the Whakataki Pa on the bank of the river of the same name.



"Stella Maris" Cottage at Castlepoint, Mass-centre of the Wairarapa East Coast Beach resort.

In Father Halbwachs' time Tinui, Whakataki and Castlepoint were visited by him even before he had built a church at Tinui, which is 12 miles inland from Castlepoint. It is on record that during the first mission ever preached in Wairarapa (mentioned earlier in this book), Father Le Menant des Chesnais, S.M., and another French priest were nearly drowned on the way to Castlepoint. In those days the river criss-crossed the road many times in the last few miles. After finishing the mission at Tinui, they were going to Whakataki and Castlepoint in a borrowed buggy. In one of the crossings the wheels went into a hole in a wide and deep portion of the river. To go forward was dangerous and to retreat was impossible and



A snapshot of Sister M. Gerard Cotter, January, 1951, feeding seagulls on the beach at Castlepoint. She was a loved personality, born at Michelago (N.S.W., Australia), professed at Masterton, 1907, died Carterton July 22nd, 1951. Her 44 years of religious life (40 of them in Wairarapa) were devoted to the domestic cares of convent life—"two Martha hands but a true Mary heart."

the position was made worse by Father Le Menant grabbing the reins from the other priest and calling out loudly, "We shall be drowned." It was lucky that the clerk of the Castlepoint Highway Board lived nearby. He knew the stream well and divesting himself dashed into the water. With a great effort he saved the two priests, and the buggy was got out later badly twisted. He received a copious flow of grateful blessings, and his friends when they heard of the incident assured him that by rescuing 4 yards of clergy he had improved greatly his prospects in the next



The beach at Castlepoint where the Brigidine Sisters of Masterton and Carterton spend a portion of their summer vacation.

life. When news of this accident first got around Father Halbwachs was mentioned as the driver. It had happened at the end of January, 1882, but a fortnight later we find Father Halbwachs denying he was the culprit. "He knew too much about driving to be shipwrecked crossing a stream between Tinui and Castlepoint." The name of his other countryman we have not been able to discover. It might have been Father Soulas from Paki Paki Maori Mission in Hawke's Bay. He transferred about that time to the Wanganui Mission and may have been paying a final visit

to his Whakataki Maoris while the mission was being preached in the district. From 1885 to 1894 Father Peter Lepretre looked after the Wairarapa Maoris, and at times he would journey on horseback along the coast from Porangahau to Castlepoint and into Masterton. If need be he would attend to the Europeans en route as we know from records of baptisms in the first baptismal register of the Wairarapa.



"Stella Maris" Oratory, Castlepoint.

With the opening up of the central parts of the district by closer settlement, better roads and later the railway, Castlepoint lost its importance as the half-way point between Wellington and Napier. In the early days this township had a large hotel and 85 years ago—April 12th, 1872—there was opened the first telegraph line between Auckland and Wellington. This was laboriously pushed through bush and over mountains and passed through Featherston, Masterton, Castlepoint, Napier, Taupo and on to Auckland. It was hoped that the locality would become a seaport of some importance, a question often discussed in the newspapers of the early days. At one

time it had a harbour board and a jetty. In the old Wellington papers there were regular notices that the S.S. Kiwi or some such coastal boat was taking cargo and passengers for Castlepoint and Napier.

But all that is now gone for good. In its place has developed a popular summer resort because it has perhaps the finest sheltered beach on the east coast between Cook Strait and East Cape. The absence of Catholics in the area for a long period meant that it was not often visited by a priest, although Maori missionaries from Otaki did go to Whakataki occasionally until the Pa disappeared. In 1950 the parish priest of Carterton obtained a cottage at Castlepoint where the Brigidine Sisters of Masterton and Carterton could have a pleasant seaside holiday for a few weeks at Christmas time. Previously these nuns would seek such a place at Paraparaumu or Eastbourne. These localities have now become thickly populated and allow the nuns no privacy. The place at Castlepoint is ideal from this point of view, and they have swimming facilities right at their front door. What is more, Archbishop McKeefry gave permission on August 4th, 1950, for an oratory to be set up in the house so that there are Mass facilities at least on Sundays, and sometimes on week days, during the summer season when a priest is available. The cottage is called "Stella Maris," and is well known now to Catholic holiday-makers as their Mass centre each Sunday of January. The very prominent lighthouse at Castlepoint suggested the name for the cottage. It came to mind because of a similar association with the Carmelite Hospice at Mount Carmel near the port of Haifa in Palestine, which is called "Stella Maris" because it is illuminated by the lighthouse on its roof.

CHAPTER XI.

Carterton and South Wairarapa established as separate parish — Father T. Cahill appointed parish priest — shifting of St. Mary's Church.

By the turn of the century it became clear to Dean John McKenna and Archbishop Redwood that a further subdivision of the Wairarapa district was necessary. The South Wairarapa had developed very much, and at the end of 1900 it was decided to make the territory south of the Waingawa River on the main road into a new parish. In a sense this was a return to the "status quo", because in the beginning it was from Carterton that the Wairarapa was worked. The Rev. Father Thomas Cahill was appointed the first parish priest, and in January, 1901, he took up residence in the presbytery at South Carterton, which had been built in 1876 by Father Halbwachs. It would be as well to mention here what had happened between 1882 and 1900 to the former presbytery in Carterton, after Father Halbwachs had gone to live in Masterton. In 1883 it was leased to Mr. H. H. Wolters, a well known man in Carterton in those days. He was the first Town Clerk of the Carterton Borough Council. In 1885 he built a home of his own which he called "Richmond" and where he lived till his death in 1926. Mrs. Stevens and family in 1885 became the tenants. She was a member of the McMaster family of Martinborough, and died at St. Mary's, as the place was called. From 1892 till the end of 1900 Mrs. Broadbent and family occupied the presbytery. St. Mary's Church was still alongside. During this period visiting priests would be given hospitality by the Broadbent family. So it happened that during a week's mission in 1899, Archbishop Redwood and Father J. Ainsworth, who were giving the Mission, were guests of Mrs. Broadbent. Apart from these special occasions the priest from Masterton, when it was necessary for him to stay overnight, would sleep in the sacristy of the church. The new parish comprised the towns of Carterton, Greytown, Featherston and Martin-

borough with the country districts surrounding them. The southern boundary on the main road was the Summit on the Rimutaka Hill.



Rev. Father Thomas Cahill, first parish priest of Carterton. Photo taken at Carterton in 1904, when he was 40. He lived to over ninety and did great work in Topsham (Devon, Eng.), where he built a beautiful brick church, and was made a Canon of the Plymouth Diocese.

It was not long before the pastor saw that in Carterton the development of residential and business areas was going to be mostly at the northern end of the town. The Railway Station and Post Office were there, together with the churches of the other denominations. He felt strongly that St. Mary's Church, right at the south end, was in the

wrong place, and forthright man as he was, said so. Father Cahill was a great priest for shifting churches, and his remarkable foresight proved in every instance he was right. Unfortunately he had a manner that would not brook any opposition. Had he taken this matter more tactfully, much of what happened later would never have occurred. In the early part of this history we stated that St. Mary's, Carterton — Wairarapa's first church — was built in the centre of the Polish settlement. To some extent this was accidental. When Father Seon bought this property in 1867, he knew nothing about a possible Polish settlement. His main idea was the central position of Carterton in the future plans of the Catholic Church in Wairarapa. The evils of "ribbon development" (the indefinite subdivision of sections for building along the main street, which has been such a headache to municipal bodies especially in Wairarapa towns) was not apparent then. About nine acres were available at the south end, and Father Seon bought them. When the Poles came they happened to take up their holdings in the side roads just opposite this Church property. Father Halbwachs came in 1876 and the presence of this large group of Catholics and the existence of the purchased land naturally influenced his decision to begin the mission station here rather than at Greytown, which had been an established town so much longer.

The assets of these Poles were a strong Catholic Faith, stout hearts and sturdy arms. They had little of worldly possessions, but they helped all they could, and made great personal sacrifices. Their holdings were not big—ten acres or so—and many of them could neither read nor write. The men-folk found work at road-making, railway construction or bush-felling. They would rear a calf or a pig, and sell it to help build the church.

It was hard, then, a quarter of a century later, to be told that what they prized so much and which they looked upon as their very own, the centre of their spiritual life, was to be shifted away from them. The distance to the new site would be less than a mile, but that did not make the blow any easier. In their villages in Poland their homes were close around the church, and the arrangement in Carterton seemed just like their homeland.

When in 1903 Father Cahill made the first mention of his intentions, serious opposition became manifest. By the end of 1903 things had moved from bad to worse. A meeting of parishioners had been held on November 2nd, but it did not clear the atmosphere. Strong language from the pulpit did not help. It simply made many desperate, and a letter to Archbishop Redwood was drawn up as a result of a meeting of the opposition. We have not thought it expedient to publish this letter. We do not know who composed it, because it is unsigned. It shows, however, that there were very deep emotions stirred up on both sides. It was found among the papers that once belonged to Michael Francis Lipinski, the head of the Polish community. It would seem that wiser counsels prevailed because another document more temperately worded has been discovered, which contains the names of the signatories but is obviously a copy of the original petition which we know was forwarded to the Archbishop. We quote this letter in full:

January 24th, 1903.

"To His Grace,

Archbishop Redwood.

"We the undersigned members of the Roman Catholic Church, resident in the District of Carterton, Wairarapa, submissively petition you to consider us before you sanction the removal of the church from its present site to the section which the Rev. Father Cahill has chosen. When the present site was chosen and purchased in the year 1866, there was a distinct promise made by the priest then here, Rev. Father Seon, that the church would not be removed unless by a unanimous vote of the congregation. We trust that by your help this engagement will not be broken. We sincerely regret that we find it necessary to trouble you in this matter, knowing as we do how busy you are in many matters you have to attend to. But the Rev. Father Cahill seems determined to oppose our wishes in this as well as many other matters. In fact we are

sorry to inform you that should you authorize the removal of the church there will be a serious diminishing in the Congregation, and consequently a falling away from the Faith. In conclusion, we would consider it a great favour if Your Grace would try to arrange to pay us a visit to settle matters here. As far as we are aware we cannot amicably get on with Father Cahill, and your presence here may be the means of settling controversies."

There are fifty-nine signatures to this Petition—forty-nine of them Polish and ten are Irish. We know of no record that Archbishop Redwood visited the Wairarapa in connection with the dispute. The Archbishop was generally known as a "man of peace," and maybe he hoped that the difficulties would work themselves out.

In this letter there is what looks like an error in fact. Mention is made that when the site was chosen and purchased in 1866 there was a distinct promise made by the priest then here, Rev. Father Seon, that the church would not be removed unless by a unanimous vote of the congregation. In regard to this statement it is difficult to see how Father Seon could have made any such promise. The church was not built till Father Halbwachs' time in 1878, and as far as can be ascertained by careful inquiry none of the signatories were in Carterton before 1876. Father Seon was never stationed here. He was at the Hutt, and came from there at fairly regular intervals. We have been able to read through some of the reminiscences recalling the 1860's written by Mr. Callister, one of the earliest residents of Carterton. He was a Methodist but knew Father Seon fairly well. He calls him in one place Father Sheen, and on another page Father O'Sheen. Of course he had to be Irish if he were a Catholic. The point we would stress, however, is that Mr. Callister gives the impression that this priest was resident here, which is not correct. It was the first resident priest, Father Halbwachs, who built the church in 1878, and it may be that he gave this undertaking, but we have not been able to find any reference to the matter.

Early in 1904 His Grace announced that he was going on a visit to Europe shortly, in company with the Very

Rev. Dean Smythe, S.M., of Hastings, Hawke's Bay. Father Cahill determined to go ahead with his plans and engaged a contractor, Mr. C. E. Daniell of Masterton. The local contractors, fearful of business repercussions later, were not willing to take the job on.

When the work began on April 24th, 1904, a hostile demonstration was made. A portion of the congregation, men, women and children, gathered in force. It is stated in the "Wairarapa Daily" of April 26th that one man struck Father Cahill, and a woman spat in his face. The next morning two policemen were present, and another disturbance took place, and the contractor was forced to leave the job. Father Cahill went post-haste that day to Wellington to interview the Archbishop, who was just on the point of leaving for Auckland to connect with a boat for Europe. The pastor, however, did get his interview, and returned to Carterton that evening—April 26th—with all the necessary authority to go ahead. It was freely stated at the time that the opponents would not disobey an absolute command from the Archbishop, but if the decision were against them, some of them would not attend Mass in the church on its new site. Unfortunately this threat was carried out, at least in one or two cases, almost to the death bed.

A newspaper correspondent under date April 27th, stated that the Poles denied that the priest was actually struck, as stated by Father Cahill, but that he was only seized by the coat and swung round. A woman stated that she did not spit in his face, but only on the ground near him saying, "I wouldn't wipe my boots on you".

Father Cahill would let nothing beat him, and in the "Wairarapa Age", Friday, April 29th, we read: "This morning Father Cahill, the Contractors, the Mayor of Carterton, Mr. James Baillie, two Justices of the Peace and the Police went to commence the removal of the Catholic Church, and if necessary to read the 'Riot Act'. The Polish section of the congregation, who were expected to oppose in force, did not appear, and the work went on. Father Cahill had received emphatic orders from Archbishop Redwood to proceed with the removal, so that Poles and those siding with them submitted to authority. Father Cahill will not, in the new circumstances, prosecute for obstruction

and assault." The paragraph was sent by Press Association message throughout the country.

The pastor's worries were not yet at an end. St. Mary's Church seems to have shown some reluctance to leave the old site. Whether it was the result of the prayers of the obstructionists or their maledictions, the removal was a long and difficult job.

We propose to give the story in the form of a chronicle in the present tense:

Saturday, April 30th.

The Contractors are making good headway in the preparations for the removal of the Catholic church. It is said that the Poles intend to hold another meeting of all sympathizers against the removal, as a last protest against what they consider an injustice. We hear a second policeman is to be stationed in Carterton.

Tuesday, May 3rd.

The work is progressing rapidly and without any disturbance.

Tuesday, May 10th.

All preparations are now completed. Mr. E. Chamberlain with his traction engine left Masterton this morning, for Carterton, in order to haul the church to its new site. The Post and Telegraph linesmen are standing by to cut the telephone wires on the street.

Thursday, May 12th.

The church building is proving a difficult thing to move. One traction engine proved too weak to move it, and if they get two engines, there is a danger the building may break up, so the difficulty of removal is more or less acute. Mr. McFie's traction engine has also been engaged.

Friday, May 13th.

As was predicted by some of the knowing ones, the strain on the building, when two engines were attached, proved too much, and the main building became severed from the sanctuary. The contractor is now detaching the two portions and shifting one at a time.

Saturday, May 14th.

The church is now out on the road, but the ground near the big drain has sunk, and the building has a cant which threatens to topple it over. There is a proposal at the moment to remove the spire (75 feet high). This was not done however. The contract is proving very expensive.

Thursday, May 26th.

The church is still on the road, but under Mr. C. E. Daniell's supervision is moving slowly, surely and safely to its new site.

Monday, May 30th.

The whole width of the road is now blocked by the church. There is little room between it and the deep drain at the side. Drivers have to be careful not to let their carts be upset through horses shying, and putting them into the ditch.

Friday, June 3rd.

The Wellington Marist Old Boys are giving an entertainment to night in the Carterton Hall in aid of the Catholic Church Removal Fund. The play, "The Wearing of the Green," will be staged, and a good evening's enjoyment is promised.

Saturday, June 4th.

There was a big crowd at the Hall last night, and a fine play was staged. The work of removing the Catholic church has been successfully completed.

Sunday June 5th.

At last the good ecclesiastical barque "St. Mary's", after a stormy passage of over three weeks has reached harbour safely, and is now tied up at its new moorings. Mass was celebrated in it to-day on the new site. The weather is really bad—a very cold southerly storm.

Monday, June 6th.

Under the capable management of Mr. C. E. Daniell no structural damage resulted to the building. Great credit is due to his overseer, Mr. V. Andrew, for the able way he has supervised the work. The traction engine of Messrs. Chamberlain Bros. has returned to Masterton.

Sunday, June 19th.

The Catholic church was formally re-dedicated to-day

by the Very Rev. Father Lewis, who is Administrator of the Archdiocese during the Archbishop's absence. There was a large congregation, and many came from Greytown.

Thus ended an episode that became well known throughout the Archdiocese. The new section on which the church was placed was donated by Mr. Joseph Alfred Dudson, and was about a mile north of the former site. It was part of an area of 25 acres which Mr. Dudson had bought from John and William Strang in 1903. He cut this block up into allotments and sold five of these to the



Rev. Father Cahill (R.I.P.), when he was 90 years old, outside his new church at Topsham, Devon, England.

parish on the 20th April, 1905, in addition to the one which he gave for the church site. It was at this time that King Street was formed which put the church on the corner of King and High Streets. The church section was fenced with totara pickets, and the handsome wrought-iron gates were made and given by Mr. H. O'Leary of Masterton. The big heart-totara posts—12 inches square—were the gift of Mr. Matthew O'Reilly.

CHAPTER XII.

Story of Carterton parish continued (a):—Prominent Catholics — final years of Father Cahill — subsequent parish priests from Father Bowe to Father Broughton.

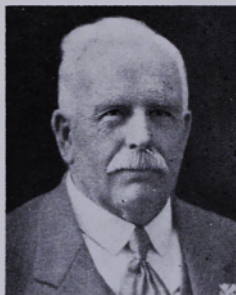
The Dudson family has been associated with the parish of Carterton since the early 1880's. Joseph Dudson was a saddler by trade, and he always saw to it that the parish priest had good equipment for his horse and buggy. Both he and his wife were energetic helpers in all church affairs, especially in the choir. Mrs. Dudson was organist for many years. In 1945, Mr. Dudson donated a fine pulpit in Gothic design (made by Mr. Oscar Manley of Eltham) to the present St. Mary's in memory of his wife. One of his daughters is Sister M. Basil of the Sisters of Mercy, Nae Nae. He died on October 25th, 1955, at the age of 95.

Another family contemporaneous with the Dudsons in the early days of the Wairarapa was the Berrills. They were all very musical and in large measure responsible for the fine choir in St. Mary's for many years. Mr. Berrill was bandmaster of the Carterton Silver Band, and conductor of the choir of St. Mary's. His daughter, Miss Connie Berrill, still lives in Carterton. She followed Mrs. Dudson as organist and remained such until recent years. Even yet she is still a leader in the parish in her quiet efficient way, and is prominent in the Catholic Women's League.

Any history of the Church in Carterton would be incomplete without reference to Michael Francis von Lipinski. He was a native of German-occupied Poland, and had been in the Prussian Army. That is how the "von" came to be in his name. He had a much higher standard of education and general training than most of the Poles who settled in Carterton, and this made him the natural leader and spokesman for the Polish group, when they settled in Carterton in the late 1870's. He married before coming to New Zealand. When Father Halbwachs first came to Carterton, he found a friend and helper in this man. His home was

always open to the priest. His eldest daughter, Augusta Lipinski, was Father Halbwachs' housekeeper. She later married Mr. R. J. Chapman, who in Father John McKenna's time was the church secretary in Carterton.

We now return to the story of the parish. During the six months following the shifting of the church, relations between the pastor and many of the parishioners did not improve. At the end of that year Father Cahill decided to go for a trip, and Father Edward Duffy came as administrator in January, 1905. One of his first tasks was to form a Church Committee. The members chosen were Messrs. F. Lipinski, J. Dudson, Kelly, Shutkowski, M. O'Reilly, Hadley, Grengor, P. Hurley, Berrill, Daley,



Mr. J. A. Dudson, R.I.P. (d. 25.10.1955). He was intimately associated with Carterton parish from 1886—1955. Mayor of Carterton 1910—11.

Monaghan and Molloy. Gradually by tact and patience Father Duffy did much to heal the hurt feelings of many. Regular meetings of the Committee were held. At one such—December 17th, 1905—the rather curious resolution was passed that in future the altar boys would take up the collections in the church.

Early in 1906, Father T. Cahill returned and at a meeting on February 18th, 1906, Father Duffy stated that "in handing back the parish shortly to Father Cahill he hoped that the people would forgive and forget whatever there had been of friction in the past and make a fresh start". This desire to a great extent was fulfilled, and during the rest of Father Cahill's term of office there was much more goodwill.

As the church settled down on its new foundations it was found that the side walls were spreading a little, so early in 1907 flying buttresses, two on each side, were constructed. In a report of the Committee to the parish on August 4th, 1907, the completion of this work was mentioned, and a reference was made for the first time to the advisability of erecting a presbytery alongside the new site of the church. The section available was one which had been bought by Father Cahill in his own name to prevent shops being erected there, which according to the late Mr. J. A. Dudson would have happened had it not been for Father Cahill's foresight.

Father Cahill was transferred to Dannevirke at the beginning of 1908, and preached his farewell sermon in Carterton on Sunday, February 16th. No one seems to remember the details of what he said, but those of us who knew Father Tom can be quite sure that after the storms he weathered they would be most interesting. At a private farewell function given by his priest friends in later years before he left New Zealand for England, he made more than passing reference to his hectic experiences in Carterton.

Father Bowe arrived on February 21st, 1908, and the question of a new presbytery to replace the one nearly a mile away in South Carterton, soon came up for serious consideration. A letter was sent on April 6th, 1908, to Father Cahill asking him to sell his section to the parish. A difficulty arose during the negotiations. Mr. Grengor, a member of the Parish Committee, had the property adjoining this section and had received a promise earlier from Father Cahill of an option over half of it if he ever sold it. (Grengor's property is now the convent and school site. v. J. M.). Father Cahill felt that he should keep his promise and the section was divided—half to the parish and half to Mr. Grengor. The total price was £80.

In the meantime Father Bowe continued to live in the old presbytery in South Carterton. A big drive was made to obtain funds, and plans were being prepared. The idea was to obtain a promise from each wage-earner of a personal donation to be spread over a period of five years. It was necessary also to get the views of parishioners in Greytown, Featherston and Martinborough. Representa-

tives from all these places met members of the Carterton committee at Greytown on September 6th, 1908. As a result it was decided to try and raise money by mortgage on the South Carterton property. Legal difficulties were encountered in this matter because the title was in the name of the Catholic Archbishop. It was not until 1910 that these were overcome, and help was obtained from the State Advances Corporation. Mention of this fact has already been made earlier in dealing with the foundation of the Church in the Wairarapa.

At length, in 1912 the new presbytery was opened, and Father Bowe had visions of one day making it into a convent. He told his sister, Elizabeth, who had come from Ireland to housekeep for him, when she complained at the size of the dining-room for one man, "Don't worry, Lizzie, this will be the nuns' community room when we make it a convent".



Interior of second St. Teresa's Church, Featherston, before 1954 additions.

In 1913 Father Bowe realized that the little church in Featherston had outlived its usefulness, and he set about making plans for a new church. However in the middle of that year he was transferred to Dannevirke, and Father Thomas Kinkead arrived in August, 1913. He continued the good work of Father Bowe, especially in regard to the new church in Featherston. A section of one acre was donated by the Card family, and although not ideal for the



The church institute buildings in Featherston Camp, World War I—Catholic, Salvation Army and Church of England.

purpose, being right alongside the railway line, it was used as the site for the new church. The architects were Messrs. Crichton and McKay of Wellington, and the builders, Mr. W. Benton and Son, Featherston. The building was of timber in neat cruciform shape and cost £1100, towards which Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford gave £500. The



Rev. Father T. Kinkead (in uniform), R.I.P. Parish Priest, Carterton 1913-1915.

Rev. Father M. O'Beirne, R.I.P. Parish Priest of Carterton 1915-1918.

new St. Teresa's was blessed and opened on September 6th, 1914, by Archbishop O'Shea, assisted by the Very Rev. Dean McKenna, V.G., and the parish priest, Rev. Father Thomas Kinkead. This was the first official visit of Archbishop O'Shea to the Carterton parish since his appointment as Coadjutor Archbishop of Wellington, on August 17th, 1913.

Featherston and nearby Tauherenikau were in this year becoming household words throughout New Zealand. World War I had broken out on August 4th, and very soon these places became the location of big military camps. It is not proposed to deal with these in this history, except to say that the Catholics of the South Wairarapa together with their priests did all they could to help the spiritual and



Rev. Father Cronin, parish priest of Carterton, 1918. R.I.P. Died during the influenza epidemic attending the soldiers in Featherston Camps.

First parish priest to be buried in the Wairarapa.

social life of the thousands of Catholic soldiers who passed through these camps. After the war, the Catholic Hall from the Camp was shifted to Masterton and became the present St. Patrick's Hall.

A convent and school were now pressing needs in Carterton parish, and we shall deal with their foundation



St. Mary's Church and Presbytery, Carterton, in Father Kinkead's time, 1913.

in detail in the special chapter on Catholic education in the Wairarapa. Father Kinkead went as chaplain on the hospital ship "Maheno" late in 1915, and his place in Carterton was taken by Father Michael O'Beirne. It was mainly due to his energy and good work that a convent and school were ready by 1917. Father Daniel Cronin came in February, 1918. When the influenza epidemic broke out in November, 1918, he did heroic work both in the parish and in the military camp at Featherston. Unfortunately he too, was stricken down and died on November 24th, 1918. His grave is in the Clareville cemetery at Carterton. He was the first parish priest to be buried within the Wairarapa district. Another young priest—just a few months from Ireland—Father M. J. Lewis, the curate at Masterton, had gone to help the dying soldiers at Featherston Camp. He also became ill and died the same day as Father Cronin. His grave is in the Masterton cemetery. It was a sad week for the Church in the Wairarapa.

The loss of two priests in the one province was a grievous worry to the Archbishop. Father Thomas Kinkead had also died of the 'flu in Taihape. As a result we find various priests filling in at Carterton. Father C. J. Outtrim, S.M., was sent for a couple of months. Then Father M. O'Beirne came back for a while until about mid-year. Father E. Phelan was appointed. When asked recently for some information about his term in the parish, Father Phelan wrote in reply, "I was mainly occupied with reducing debts in Carterton on the school and convent and in raising some money towards a new church in Martinborough." (The old wooden one had been burnt down some years before. v. J. M.). We shall meet Father Phelan's work again in connection with the M. O'Driscoll bequest.

Father R. Hegarty came on July 19th, 1922, to replace Father Phelan. He remained in charge till 1927. Father Hegarty was a well-known outdoor man. There are many stories current of his prowess as a "great shot" and fisherman. Still, like Peter of old, he was also a good "fisher of men". His friendly manner endeared him to all, and he is yet remembered by many parishioners. He did good work in connection with the renovation of the Greytown church. Father Michael Broughton succeeded Father Hegarty for one year (1928).

CHAPTER XIII.

Story of Carterton parish continued (b):—New St. Mary's Church — parish priests after Father Broughton.

In 1929, Father B. Kaveney became parish priest. He had been ordained several years before for the Dunedin diocese, and in the beginning worked there for some time. In the late twenties he came on loan to Wellington and eventually was incardinated into the Archdiocese. His great work in Carterton was the building of the new St. Mary's Church. The old church was now too small, and would not permit of enlargement. It was decided to work hard towards raising enough money to begin a new church. In Father Cahill's time there was in the parish an Irish Catholic who had some means, but he found that he could not see eye to eye with Father Tom. He was one of those who were strongly opposed to the shifting of the church from South Carterton. He came from Dunmanway, Co. Cork, Ireland, and in Father Cahill's time altered his will leaving everything in favour of Cork. When Father Phelan came to Carterton, Michael O'Driscoll liked him and changed his will, again leaving everything to Carterton. When he died there was a legacy of about £2000 towards a new church.

In Father Hegarty's time work began in earnest to get funds towards a new church in Carterton. A consistent series of functions was being held, and ladies were not given much option in the question of "Who would run what"? Generally the names of turns would be given from the altar on Sundays and that was all there was to it. Father Kaveney was not here more than a year and a half before he started discussing plans. The depression was on the land, and though money was very hard to get, yet labour and materials were available at favourable rates. The Government was in 1931 following a policy of retrenchment, and quite a number of public servants knew their

positions were precarious. One of these men in the Public Works Department decided to set up business on his own as an architect, Mr. B. F. Kelly. Father Kaveney engaged his services, and also those of another who had already been retrenched, Mr. G. C. Halse. By December, 1931, they were both, in Mr. Kelly's words, "full steam ahead" on the plans. Mr. Kelly at that time was not the fortunate owner of a car, and we must record here the kindness of Monsignor Connolly in often lending his car to the architect to make trips from Wellington to Carterton. An important matter for consideration at the beginning of 1932 was the new



Old St. Mary's Church, Carterton, minus the spire—Wairarapa's first Catholic church—in graceful retirement now as the Parish Hall on the corner of King St. and High St., Carterton.

location for the old wooden church. The first idea was to shift it to the site of the tennis court behind the present church. Mr. J. Dudson however offered to sell a suitable corner-section just across King St., and this was eventually agreed upon. Old St. Mary's, Carterton, must be the most widely travelled church in the country. We have already recorded its journey from South Carterton, and here, twenty-eight years later, it is on another trip. The contractors, Higgins and Arcus, who built the presbytery in 1912, were given this job, and by April 4th, 1932, this work was completed. On its new site it was still used

as a church until the new ferro-concrete building was ready. Since then it has been St. Mary's Parish Hall.

When tenders were called for the new structure no less than 16 firms applied. Eventually after the parish priest, the architect, and the Church Committee had gone into the matter, three firms were left for a final decision. These three firms were the lowest tenderers. Their names were Messrs. Tracey, Messrs. Palmer and Askew, and Messrs. J. H. Meyer and Co. After a very thorough investigation of these three firms the architect advised that Messrs. Tracey's tender be accepted. It turned out not to be a very happy choice, because before the job was completed the contractor was in financial difficulties, and occasioned very much worry to Father Kaveney and others.

The contract price was £3229. This did not include the tiled roof which was an extra £240. The architect pointed out to the contractor that his price was too low, but he elected to sign the contract. The clerk of works was a builder in the parish, Mr. Murt Hurley. The disastrous Napier earthquake was still a vivid memory, having occurred on February 3rd, 1931, so extra reinforcing was to be used to safeguard against possible earthquake damage. When the building was in course of construction various people interested in the trade considered that far too much reinforcing was being used. The architect's reaction was, "You may be glad of it some day". The parishioners certainly were when ten years later, in 1942, two severe earthquakes only months apart heavily damaged the school and fractured the gables of the church.

The Parish Committee at the time was Messrs. Burgess, Dudson, Boake and Hurley. They helped much in lightening the burden of the parish priest, especially when matters became difficult.

The foundation stone of the new church was laid by Archbishop O'Shea on Sunday, July 10th, 1932. The site for the high altar, which was to be in marble, was also blessed. The main part of the building fund was a bequest from the late Michael O'Driscoll of Carterton for the sum of about £2000, and the rest of the money had been collected by the parishioners.

The Archbishop in his speech stressed the fact that the measures taken with a view to a new church were a demonstration that a large section of the Carterton citizens

still looked to God for help. "The materialistic solution of capitalism and communism," said His Grace, "will not settle the difficulties of the world, but will only lead to another war. Mankind has turned its back on God and He is leaving man to his own devices. We must turn back to God and the Christian Faith, if we are to find a Saviour. If mankind will not listen to the voice of God, then there is no hope for the future."

The world-wide depression was at its height at this time, and Monsignor T. F. Connolly, to whom fell the task of making the appeal for funds to open the church free of debt, said that if this happened, and it seemed very likely that it would, then Carterton would be out of step with the rest of the world, where increasing debt seemed to be the order of the day. He hoped finally that there would be sufficient funds to instal the marble altar, which would be the only kind of altar in keeping with such a fine church.

The construction work went on but so did the worries of the pastor. Father Foster was the assistant in the parish, and he was a great help to Father Kaveney, whose health was far from good. The sub-contractors were having their difficulties too. The price quoted for the electrical work was low enough, but when one of the partners of the firm concerned cleared out for England with everything he could lay his hands on, including the cheque paid by the builder, Mr. Tracey, for the job, the other partner found himself in grave trouble with his creditors.

In the interim the parish priest became ill and had to go on sick leave. Mr. B. F. Kelly, the architect, did a wonderful job then in taking over nearly all the worry, but he received great help from the parish-appointed clerk of works, Mr. Murt Hurley. It was found necessary for the parish to guarantee the contractor, because if he abandoned the job he would be sued by various firms and made bankrupt. This would lead to many complications, the avoidance of which in the case of a church especially, was if at all possible much to be desired.

Eventually the building was completed, and on February 5th, 1933, it was blessed and opened by Archbishop O'Shea. The title of the new church was the same as the old, namely St. Mary's. Monsignor Connolly was celebrant of the High Mass, assisted by Fathers T. Linehan and B. Foster as deacon and sub-deacon respectively. There

were ten visiting priests. The total cost for this really beautiful concrete church was £4703, including the expense of shifting the old church and purchasing the new section across King St. There were still many internal furnishings required, such as seats and side altars. All these came in due time. Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford of Featherston presented the side altars, and two hand-carved wooden statues of St. Joseph and Our Lady, each costing £100. A stained glass window of the Sacred Heart was presented in memory of Matthew O'Reilly by his family, and Michael O'Driscoll had left money for a window of St. Michael. The high altar was in white Italian marble.



Present St. Mary's Church, Carterton, built in ferro-concrete in 1932.

Despite all the vicissitudes which the pastor and parish encountered in this undertaking Carterton has been blessed with a lovely church in enduring materials. There are three non-Catholic churches in the town but they are all in wood. When Father Halbwachs built the old St. Mary's, he placed in its tower a lovely statue of the Blessed Virgin. To Her he had dedicated this first church of the Wairarapa District, and it was a joy to see this same statue on the facade of the new church. He had obtained it from his homeland of France, and it was the first large statue of the

Mother of God to come to the Wairarapa. This link with the Society of Mary whose priests founded the Church in our midst should never be forgotten by the Catholics of today.

Father Kaveney's health did not improve in the years that followed the opening of the church, and on March 31st, 1935, he died at Croydon Private Hospital in Howard St., almost next door to the convent school. Today Croydon has passed into Catholic hands as St. Raphael's Home of Compassion.



From left: Church, Presbytery and Convent at Carterton, 1957.

After Father Kaveney's death Father V. Kelly of Upper Hutt was sent to Carterton. He too had to go on sick leave about 18 months later, and Father E. Carmine became the new parish priest. During his time much good work was done both in the school and parish. In the first half of 1938 a big Queen Carnival was organized by his assistant, Father A. J. Heavey. This was a really great effort by Carterton, Greytown, Featherston and Martinborough, and resulted in the raising of £1150. Most of this money was expended in Carterton especially on the convent school for needed improvements. The other parts of the parish felt that they had not been treated very



Silver Jubilee of Ordination of Rev. V. J. McGlone, Parish Priest, Carterton, November 21st, 1951.

Back Row: Rev. Fathers A. Lysaght, S.M., N. Moore, V.F., A. Keane, S.M. J. J. Kennedy, S. M., Monsignor W. Heavey, J. Fletcher, M. Cuddigan, S.S.C., C. Barr-Brown.

Middle Row: Rev. Fathers B. Tottman, T. Duffy, B. Dennehy, C.S.S.R., L. Connor, B. Keegan, N. Pettit, P. Keegan, C.S.S.R., J. McHardy, S.M., M. Mulcahy, S.M., M. Bourke, S.M., T. Fouhy, J. Fenton.

Front Row: Rev. Fathers C. Casey, S.M., T. Guinane, L. Aldridge, S.M., Right Rev. Bishop H. O'Neill, Most Rev. Archbishop P. T. McKeefry, Rev. Fathers V. J. McGlone, J. J. Cullen, S.M., P. W. Tymons, S.M., Monsignor A. J. McRae.

generously, and repercussions from this feeling lasted for many years. Fortunately today it is in the main forgotten.

In 1939 Father Felix Devlin succeeded Father Carmine. As a young priest Father Devlin had been a curate in Masterton under Monsignor McKenna, so he was no stranger to the district. He was a great mixer and was much loved by the people wherever he worked. Unfortunately, for many years he was troubled by severe asthma, which was a great trial to him in his priestly work. Despite much suffering he never shirked any of his duties. At the time of the disastrous earthquake in 1942 he spent the whole night trying to relieve the distress of the neighbours round the presbytery. Until his death in November of that year he did good work for the many troops stationed in the parish. In this he was a tower of strength to the official Catholic army chaplain, the late Father Louis Aldridge, S.M. Father Devlin's funeral was one of the largest ever seen in Carterton, and at the obsequies in St. Mary's Church there were over 60 priests.

The great work of his assistant, Father Leo Connor, after the death of his pastor is dealt with in another section. He acted as administrator of the parish until at the beginning of 1943 the present parish priest, Father V. J. McGlone, was appointed. He has been in charge for the last 14 years.

CHAPTER XIV.

Story of Carterton parish continued (c):—Jessie Meta Riddiford Trust — founding of Featherston parish — Miss Harriet Card.

We would like to mention here the establishment of the Jessie Meta Riddiford Trust. This was founded by a very generous parishioner of Featherston, Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford, on July 2nd, 1930. Since the separation of Carterton parish from Masterton in 1901 there had been only one priest stationed in the district. It has been mentioned earlier in this book that central and southern Wairarapa did not have large Catholic groups, and consequently the parish revenues were small, even though the extent of the parochial district was the largest in this budding province. Carterton being the biggest centre had Mass every Sunday, but the other towns—Greytown, Featherston and Martinborough—had Mass only once a month. In Father Kaveney's time Mrs. Riddiford expressed the wish of providing a fund that would help to meet the upkeep of an assistant priest, and so make it possible to have Mass every Sunday in Featherston and Martinborough. After consultation with Archbishop O'Shea and Father Kaveney she established a Trust which it was hoped would bring in about £100 a year. It was to be administered by the Public Trust Office and was called the Jessie Meta Riddiford Trust. From 1931, then, there were two priests in Carterton parish. Father Noel O'Sullivan was the first curate. From 1938 the policy of the Government in lowering interest rates decreased the revenue from this Trust and for many recent years it was less than £50 a year. When the Trust was founded, Mrs. Riddiford had desired to make the capital fund larger to cope with a possible recession of interest, but was discouraged from doing so by Archbishop O'Shea. A list of assistant priests who have worked in the Carterton parish will be found at the back of this book.

Father Devlin's death, the sickness of other priests and the need of army chaplains made the Archdiocese rather pressed for priests, and so on February 5th, 1943, Archbishop O'Shea wrote to Father McGlone to inform him that he would require the services of the assistant at Carterton in Wellington, and, as he could not replace him, arrangements would be made with Silverstream College for a priest to say two Masses each Sunday. This arrangement continued for seven years until, in 1950, Father N. Pettit came as assistant priest.



St. Teresa's Presbytery, Featherston, built in 1952.

From 1949, a small growth in the Catholic population at Featherston and Martinborough with their surrounding districts was becoming apparent. Returned servicemen were marrying and taking up land, and it became clear that more spiritual development would result when it was possible to make two parishes out of the area at present in the care of the parish priest of Carterton. In 1952 Archbishop McKeefry instructed Father McGlone that if a presbytery were built by him in Featherston, and no war broke out, he would see what could be done by 1953 to establish a new parish there. When the people were informed of this most of them were very pleased. Some thought a school should be built first. Martinborough parishioners considered that the presbytery should be in their parish. Eventually it was decided that the building

would be in Featherston alongside the church. Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford gave a handsome donation of £1500 towards the cost, and the rest of the parishioners gave amounts from £200 down—but nearly all who could afford it gave generously. The builders were a Catholic firm, Trotman Bros. of Greytown, and the foreman, Mr. B. H. Bull. The price was £4600. The ground plan had been designed by the pastor and had been put into working shape by Mr. Ken Trotman. Both he and his brother Terry allowed the foreman, who did a splendid job, much liberty to co-operate with the parish priest. By January, 1954, the presbytery was almost completed. Father Francis Walsh was the first parish priest of South Wairarapa. He arrived in the first week of February and although he was offered hospitality at the Carterton presbytery till the new building was ready for occupation, he preferred to live on the job in a caravan alongside St. Teresa's Church.



Second St. Teresa's Church, Featherston, built in 1914.

In the third week of April he had taken up quarters in the presbytery, and in a letter he sent to Father McGlone on April 29th, 1953, he says he finds the house very habitable, and that he will arrange with Archbishop McKeefry to have the blessing and opening on Pentecost

Sunday, May 24th. Father Walsh's many years of study in Italy, France and England had made him very particular about the aesthetic value of surroundings, and so period furniture was not entirely absent. The furnishings cost £1500. All in all, he had made the house a very comfortable priest's home.

As with all infants the new parish had its teething troubles, and these took the form of doubts as to where the boundaries should be on the northern side. They were eventually decided by a diocesan commission consisting of Monsignor A. J. McRae, Very Rev. T. Guinane and the Very Rev. N. Moore, and the new parish and its pastor settled down to work out its destiny.



Recently enlarged Church of St. Teresa, Featherston, 1956.

We must retrace our steps here a little. At the end of World War II, Mrs. Riddiford had expressed the wish to do something for St. Teresa's Church in memory of the Catholic boys from the parish who had fallen in the war, and in thanksgiving to God that He had allowed her own three sons to return. After mature consideration it was decided that this would take the form of a new sanctuary and two new sacristies. She employed the services of that distinguished architect of Wellington, Mr. Gray Young. At length a suitable plan was evolved but the difficulty of getting tradesmen and supplies held up the work for some time.

Although it was in November, 1949, that the scheme was first thought out, it was not until 1954 that the work was begun. Messrs Jenkins Bros. of Masterton were the contractors and the price was £2600. In 1952, Mrs. Riddiford went to Great Britain for a holiday and while there must have had St. Teresa's Church often in her mind. To the extent of about £800 she purchased some magnificent sanctuary furniture—tabernacle, altar candles, antependium and drapes of finest quality brocade. Besides she had painted by a well known English artist, Miss Somerset, a set of devotional stations of the cross. Crowning all this there was done by the same artist a beautiful rood (a painted crucifix in Byzantine style). This masterpiece, unique in New Zealand, is about 6 feet in height, and is similar in a smaller way to the famous 30 foot rood which dominates the sanctuary of Westminster Cathedral in London. In all this, Mrs. Riddiford was greatly assisted by the help and advice of Mr. Anthony Bartlett of London.

Father Walsh was appointed lecturer in history at Victoria University College in 1954, and in March Father James Buist came as the new parish priest. He superintended the building of the new convent school in Featherston, laid out the presbytery grounds as well as those of the school, and made further improvements to the sanctuary of St. Anthony's Church in Martinborough by the addition of a crucifix and hangings behind the high altar. At the moment (November 1956) he is having extensive additions made to the Featherston church, which are going to make it one of the finest country churches anywhere in the archdiocese. The contractors are Messrs. Trotman Bros., who have become almost the official builders of the parish. This is their third contract in as many years. To complete this beautiful church Mr. Daniel Riddiford of Wellington has donated a large painting of St. Teresa of Avila, the patron of the church, done by a Benedictine monk of Prinknash Monastery in England.

No account of the history of the Church in South Wairarapa could be complete without a reference to a wonderful lady associated with St. Teresa's Church in Featherston from 1894 to her death in 1944. She was Miss Harriet Card, born at Marsden, Westland, on December 10th, 1872. She received her education at St.

Mary's School in Greymouth, which was in charge of the Sisters of Mercy. In 1890 the family came to Wellington, and Harriet, then 18 years of age, found time each week to help in the teaching of catechism at old St. Joseph's Church in Buckle Sreet.



Interior view of the present enlarged Church of St. Teresa, Featherston, showing the unique painted Rood over the Altar.

In 1894 the family shifted to Featherston, and from that year till 1944 she was intimately associated with Featherston in every phase of its life both religious and civic. In the early days Featherston was part of the parish of Masterton, and Father John McKenna found in Miss Harriet a reliable helper in all that concerned the church and the little children. Year after year she prepared the First Communion classes and when necessary the confirmation classes too. In the care of the altar and the church nothing was overlooked, and she trained admirable sacristans among the young ladies of the parish. For those in need, either from sickness or old age, she had a special love. Her brother, John W. Card, was prominent in civic affairs over long years, and when his wife died in 1913 Miss Card added to her many other duties that of Mayoress of Featherston. She carried out this office with distinction until her final illness. It was no easy task especially during two world wars, when large camps were stationed in the

district. In 1913 she was, with the other members of the family, one of the donors of a large section of land for the new church of St. Teresa.

She organized the Catholic girls of Featherston into the Children of Mary sodality, and there is no priest who has worked in the parish who would not pay tribute to the thoroughness with which she cared for this sodality. St. Joseph's Orphanage at Upper Hutt was never forgotten by her. The choir of St. Teresa's was another of her activities and she did not spare herself in the work. Mrs. Kitty Donald, the organist, was her faithful helper for many years.

By 1943, her health had begun to fail, and one of her great crosses was her inability to do all the good deeds of yore. In the early part of 1944 her final illness came. During her last weeks she received the devoted attention of her parish priest, and on March 13th, 1944, she went to her eternal reward. She had been universally loved, and her funeral from St. Teresa's Church was the largest ever seen in Featherston. Even the children from the District High School lined the street as the cortege went by.

In her will she left £100 for St. Teresa's Parish, and this sum the parish priest invested in National Savings as a nucleus for a future convent school. Requiescat in pace.

CHAPTER XV.

Story of Carterton parish continued (d):—Martinborough.

To those who know the Wairarapa and who will read this history it may seem that Martinborough, which is off the railway and the main north-south highway, is "off the record" being given in this work. This is not so, and to compensate it for what it lacks we give it a section all to itself. The area around this town, especially to the east and south, was taken up in the early days for sheep stations. The names of Bidwill, Riddiford, Cameron, Martin and others come to mind when we think of Martinborough.

The large area of land round the present town was once owned by the Honourable John Martin, a member of the Legislative Council. It was known in those days as the Waihenga block—sometimes written Te Waihunga. In the 1870's Mr. Martin decided to subdivide a portion of his land to form a township, which was called at first Waihenga Village. The lay-out of the central portion was to be in the shape of a Union Jack, the cross-bars of which would be the streets radiating from a small central reserve or park. The streets were named Cologne, Venice, Broadway, Oxford, Dublin, New York etc., after the various places Mr. Martin had visited on a world tour. Aerial photographs show how well the lay-out of the streets has conformed to the shape of the Union Jack. At the time of the subdivision the railway had not yet come to the Wairarapa, and it was hoped that this new township would in some way—if only by a branch line—be connected with the general scheme. So special railway reserves were provided for.

Settlement of the new area, however, was very slow, and it has only been in this century that much notice has been taken of Martinborough. The Hon. John Martin died about 1892, and his estate on January 12th, 1893, passed under the administration of his sons, Albert Martin, M.D.,

and Arthur Martin. Any old boys of St. Patrick's College of the years 1912 to 1915 will remember Dr. Albert Martin as a visiting physician there with his familiar "Open your mouth and say Ah."

In honour of the founder of the town Waihenga Village was eventually called Martinborough. In the "Wairarapa Standard" of June 22nd, 1880, there appears the following:

" FENCING NOTICE.

TO the owner or owners of the sections of land adjoining the Catholic Church acre, No. 18, Waihenga township.

You are hereby requested to erect your portion of the dividing fence between the said acre in terms of the Fencing Act.

A. HALBWACHS."

This notice is certainly interesting from an historical angle. It is the only mention we know of concerning Catholic Church property in that area until the early nineties. We have been unable to find any further reference to this section. The present writer made a fairly exhaustive search at the Land and Deeds Office in Wellington, but could not locate any title to Section 18 in the name of the Catholic Church authorities. In the first plan of the subdivision made by the Hon. John Martin there is a Section 18 in Cologne Street, between Broadway Street and Princess Street, about three acre-sections up from Broadway Street. This section still remained in John Martin's name until a sale was registered to Roka Ihakara on August 29th, 1889. This is nine years after the notice which Father Halbwachs had published. What seems likely is that Mr. Martin had offered this section as a site for the Catholic church, and that it was accepted either by Father Seon or Father Halbwachs, but, because of the slow growth of the township, no official title was ever applied for, and the offer simply lapsed. We can only guess, because, if this section No. 18 is the one referred to, there is no title or document of sale known which would give the Church the ownership of it.

In Father John McKenna's time a block of three acres was bought from the Martin estate. This sale was registered on May 5th, 1894. It consisted of Sections 728 and 729 at the corner of Otaraia Road and Princess St. This property is of special interest. It was originally, in the first subdivision, put aside as the railway station reserve. It is also worthy of note that prior to one parliamentary election the first sod of the proposed railway was turned there. But that was the nearest to a railway station Martinborough ever got, and so in 1894 it became Catholic Church land.



St. Anthony's Church, Martinborough, built in 1923, plastered and completed only in 1953.

In 1895 Father McKenna found enough interest among the few Catholics round about to build a small wooden church on the corner section. It was considered that there would be enough land left, if the need should ever come, for a presbytery, school and convent. We have been unable to discover any details about the building, or when it was completed because all the Martinborough newspaper files were destroyed some years ago in a fire. However the "Wairarapa Daily Times" January 28th, 1896, tells us that an altar built for the new Martinborough Catholic church has been made in Masterton and is on view in Mr. Whitt's

shop in Queen St. It was described as excellent in construction, of Gothic design, and would be an ornament to the church.

The patron of this church was St. Anthony of Padua, and in it Mass was said at monthly intervals for the next 22 years until, on the night of October 10th, 1918, it was totally destroyed by fire. The origin of the fire is a mystery. There was no electric power to short-circuit, and the church had not been in use in mid-week. At that period a strong wave of sectarianism was being stirred up through New Zealand by the Protestant Political Association, and it was suggested at the time that the church may have been destroyed by some misguided person who thought he was serving a good cause. For the next few years the Catholic people heard Mass in the Oddfellows' Hall.

However, good came of this grievous blow. The people decided that they would build again, and they determined that this time no fire would destroy it. The insurances on the old church were £350 on the building and £50 on the contents. Father Phelan was appointed parish priest in 1919, and worked very hard to get funds for the new building. In July, 1922, Father Hegarty took over and he immediately set to work on plans. The building was to be of ferro-concrete, and Mr. McCosker was chosen as architect. He was later architect for St. Francis Hall, Hill St., Wellington, and for the new Catholic church at Petone. The plan he first produced showed the building as too high for its length, so a further fifteen feet were added. This complicated the question of cost and led to difficulties which were not solved entirely until 1952.

In early 1923 Father Hegarty started the job. No contract was let. The parish priest was clerk of works and he engaged as foreman Mr. Moloney of Wellington, who had been the foreman for the building of St. Mary of the Angels at Boulcott St., Wellington. This had been completed in 1922. The old wooden church of St. Mary's, which was so closely associated with Father J. J. O'Reilly, O.F.M., and was the first Catholic church of Wellington, has more than a passing association with St. Anthony's of Martinborough.

The high price of cement and the difficulty of supplies made the job at Martinborough an expensive one. The Catholic population was very small, and by the time the walls were up funds were almost exhausted. By incurring what looked like a big debt for a very small community the roof was put on, and there the building stood, fine in proportions, but lacking beauty, being unplastered both inside and out. For the next 29 years it looked like a rough old fort hurriedly built for defence on a battlefield of World War I. A new meaning was found in the words of Holy Scripture, when Father Con. Harnett quoted Genesis XXVIII, 17 on first seeing this building, "Terribilis est locus iste" (terrible is this place). However it was usable and was blessed by Archbishop O'Shea at the end of 1923.



The grim interior of St. Anthony's Church, Martinborough, incomplete and unplastered inside and out for 30 years.

In Father Carmine's time (1936-1938) efforts were made to finish the building and he called for tenders. The highest tender was in the vicinity of £900, and included everything necessary. However there was a change in parish administration before anything further was achieved, and the building remained grey, gaunt and cold-looking until 1951, when as the result of an appeal by the pastor, Father V. J. McGlone, a meeting was held by some of the leading Catholic men of Martinborough under the leader-

ship of Mr. Thomas Dillon in the office of Mr. Frank Duffy in the first week of March of that year. Much interest and enthusiasm was shown and over £700 was promised within a few minutes. This was a great beginning. Archbishop McKeefry came on parochial visitation on June 23rd, 1951, and on the evening of that day a deputation consisting of Messrs. T. Dillon, F. Duffy, L. McCormack and N. Hudson met His Grace at the presbytery in Carterton. Permission was readily given to go ahead provided the Archdiocese was not called upon for finance.

A few weeks later a contract was let for the plastering to A. E. Pack and Sons of Wellington, and the work got away to a flying start. Unfortunately the hiring of the tubular scaffolding was a separate item. The spring of that year was one of the wettest on record, and the external plastering was delayed at times for weeks, thus adding substantially to the costs, mainly because of the expensive hiring fees for the scaffolding. Eventually the job was finished, and by 1952 the building presented something of the beauty it was originally intended to have. Difficulties were encountered with leaks in the roof, and Mr. Tom Dillon, who in large measure superintended the whole job, had many headaches before everything was satisfactory. No one could refuse Tom in his appeal for funds. He had an answer for every emergency, and the hat went round many times for large donations of even a £100 a time until enough cash was available. To give some idea of the rising costs between 1938 and 1953 we can say that more could have been done in 1938 for £900, than what in 1953 cost in the vicinity of £3000.

From 1953 Martinborough was no longer administered from Carterton, being now part of the new parish of South Wairarapa. Earlier in this narrative reference was made to the association of this church with the old St. Mary of the Angels Church in Wellington. When this historic church was dismantled to make way for the new ferro-concrete structure, the lovely mosaic stained glass windows were stacked away and might eventually have been destroyed. The architect of St. Anthony's remembered them and they were bought for a small sum and installed at Martinborough. The tabernacle of the old St. Mary's high altar was also used at Martinborough.

On New Year's Eve, 1942, some larrikans did great damage to eight of these windows on the south side of the church by throwing stones through them. It was only in 1952 that an expert from Wellington could be obtained to make the necessary expensive repairs.

To-day Carterton and Martinborough have the only Catholic churches built of permanent materials in the Wairarapa.



Interior of St. Anthony's Church, Martinborough, when completed in 1953.

The first confirmation ceremony in Martinborough took place on Sunday afternoon, June 24th, 1951, and was performed by Archbishop McKeefry. It would be difficult to name all the individuals noted for their generosity and gifts in connection with St. Anthony's. Later on at a jubilee of the church mention might be made of them. In the meantime the author says "Well done Martinborough. Keep it up."

CHAPTER XVI.

Story of Carterton parish concluded:—St. Raphael's Home of Compassion — Maori Mission in the Wairarapa.

The story of Carterton and of the Wairarapa generally would not be complete without reference to St. Raphael's Home of Compassion. In works of charity the district is as yet in its infancy. The St. Vincent de Paul Society has been functioning in various parishes over the years. During this year (1957) Masterton celebrates the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Society in its midst. Up to 1952 there was no religious institution specially dedicated to such noble work. New Zealand's Catholic life in general has throughout its history been blessed by the sons and daughters of France. Our country's own Religious Order of nuns—the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion—was founded in New Zealand by Suzanne Aubert, known to history as Mother Mary Joseph Aubert. She gave up a life of ease in her native France, went nursing with Florence Nightingale to the Crimea, and eventually at the invitation of Bishop Pompallier came to New Zealand to help among the Maori people. At length she established the congregation of religious above mentioned to help all in need. Today Homes of Compassion are found in many parts of New Zealand, in Australia and in Fiji.

Providence guided the Sisters of Compassion to come to Carterton in a simple yet effective way. Almost opposite the convent school in Howard Street there was a large private hospital called Croydon. The main part of this building was originally the residence of Mr. T. E. Maunsell, a solicitor at one time in Carterton. Eventually he sold the house to Nurse Strang who made it into a private hospital. In 1931 Sister McKenzie took it over for surgical and maternity work. In 1936 it was bought for the same purpose by Sister Ann Kelly who named it Croydon after

the town in Surrey, England, at the suggestion of her father who had come from the Isle of Man and not from the Emerald Isle.

After World War II, Sister Kelly left Carterton and the hospital was bought by Sister Grant. She kept it for some years, but the difficulty in obtaining staff made the running of the establishment almost impossible, especially when her sister who was also a nurse decided to leave. The hospital was offered for sale for a long time, and although these folk were Baptists they often suggested to the parish priest that the Church might find it suitable for a retreat house. One day he mentioned to them that perhaps the Sisters of Compassion in Wellington might be interested in it—never thinking that such was a probability.

The Grants took up the idea very earnestly, and no one was more surprised than Father McGlone when he received word in February, 1952, that the Mother General and some of her Council were coming to have a look at the place. They were so pleased with the location and what it had to offer, especially its proximity to the parish church and convent, that they decided to buy it. The agreement to purchase was drawn up on March 18th, 1952, and official possession was obtained on April 23rd, although the first Sisters of Compassion arrived in Carterton on April 21st. It did not take many days to set up a chapel, and on April 26th, the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel, the first Holy Mass was celebrated by the parish priest, Father V. J. McGlone.

The Deeds of the property were transferred to the Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board on May 6th, 1952. For over a week previously the Sisters were busy with sick nursing in the town, and their work was becoming widely and quickly known among all denominations. What a joy their coming was to the doctors of the district. The first Superior was Sister Mary Rose, and on November 18th, 1953, she was succeeded by Sister M. Chanel. It was in this same month—November 10th—that Sister M. Etienne while on a visit from the Head House at Island Bay, became seriously ill and died about midnight of that day. The parish priest had just time to confer the last sacraments before she breathed her last.



St. Raphael's Home of Compassion, Carterton, formerly Croydon Private Hospital.

On August 31st, 1955, an adjoining property of 16 acres, with a large house and a cottage, was offered for sale to the Sisters by the Callingham estate and this was purchased and taken possession of on January 18th, 1956.

The name of Croydon has been changed to that of St. Raphael's Home of Compassion, and at present an extensive building programme is in hand. Shortly the handicapped children's section of the Island Bay Home will be transferred to Carterton. The Sisters hope also to be able to continue their great work of attending the sick in their homes. The parish of Carterton has been verily blessed by the coming of these gentle spouses of Christ, and their great charitable work especially among non-Catholics has done untold good. Already one girl from the parish, Miss Margaret Curry, has joined the order and is now a professed nun, Sister M. Loretta.

No little difficulty has been experienced in obtaining information on the Maori Mission work in these parts. In the early days the first missionaries had to journey under conditions of great hardship, often on foot, and they had little time or facilities to write down their experiences. In 1844 Bishop Pompallier had appointed Father John Comte, S.M., to Wellington for work among the Maoris. He made his headquarters at Otaki, then an important centre of Maori life. The following year Father Comte paid what is very probably the first visit of a priest to the Wairarapa. He came round the coast from Port Nicholson (Wellington) to Moikau Pa (now non-existent—sometimes spelt Moekau) in South Wairarapa, a short distance inland from the eastern shore of Palliser Bay.

According to tribal history the original Maoris of the South Wairarapa came there by two routes—one over the Rimutakas in the vicinity of Featherston, and the other round the sea coast from Wellington to Palliser Bay. They were the bold dark-skinned Rangitanes—brave men, navigators and warriors. They established themselves on the shores of the bay, and one very historical settlement was at Te Kopi. From Te Kopi the inland Maori track led to Moikau Pa, then over a hill to another important Maori Pa, Karangi, in the Turanganui River valley. This was the Whakatomotomo country, the ancient home of these Maoris.

At the time of Father Comte's visit, there were probably not more than 20 Europeans in all the Wairarapa, and his journey must have been a lonely and difficult one. He said Mass, gave instructions and conferred baptisms. We have no known records of the decade beginning with 1850. An apparent loss by fire of baptismal records at the Hutt leaves a gap in the history of the Maori baptisms. The Government Marriage Registers are of no help either because the Maoris were not obliged to obtain a license as were Europeans, and the requirements of Canon Law do not appear to have been very exacting. From 1860 Fathers Seon and Pertuis seem to have been the regular priests for both Maoris and Europeans. By this time European settlement was becoming more advanced, and when Father Anthony Halbwachs, S.M., was appointed the first resident priest of the Wairarapa special Maori Missionaries do not seem to have visited the Wairarapa until 1886. In that year Father Peter Lepretre, S.M., was appointed to the Maori Mission station at Paki Paki in Hawke's Bay, and he attended to the Maoris of the Wairarapa. Generally he journeyed down through Woodville, but sometimes he would take the coastal route and come through Castlepoint, Tinui and Te Ore Ore. In 1890 he built the Maori church at Te Ore Ore and was instrumental in converting all the Maoris of that important Pa.

This church is the only Catholic one ever built in the Wairarapa for the special use of the Maori people and situated in one of their pas (villages). It was blessed and opened by Archbishop Redwood on March 23rd, 1890. To have a House of God in their midst at last, was something of the greatest joy to them. On the day of the opening the Maori love of ritual and courtesy was shown in no uncertain manner. At an early hour a group of twenty men mounted on horseback left the Pa and rode into Masterton to St. Patrick's Presbytery where they extended a formal welcome to the Archbishop. Then arranging themselves as a mounted guard of honour, they escorted His Grace and Father McKenna through Masterton's main street out to Te Ore Ore Pa, where in the "Wharepuni" (meeting house) an address of welcome was given by the Chief. Rev. Father Lepretre acted as interpreter.

After the church had been solemnly blessed, the Archbishop said Mass and gave First Communion to fourteen

natives. At the end of the Mass the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered to these First Communicants. At 11 a.m. the official High Mass was sung. The beautiful harmony of the Maori choir could scarcely have been surpassed anywhere. All the morning more and more visitors were arriving and before the Mass was finished, nearly a thousand people were crowding around the building. The Archbishop's sermon was translated into Maori by the Rev. Father Melu, S.M., of Otaki. His Grace made a special point of thanking the Chief who had presented the land for the church.



Maori Church of the Sacred Heart, Te Ore Ore, Masterton,
built by Father P. Lepretre, S.M., 1890.

Following the religious ceremonies a marvellous feast was provided in the best Maori traditions. In the matter of appetising food nothing was forgotten, but according to one newspaper account "a number of 'civilized whites' conducted themselves in a most ungrateful and discreditable manner". The Chief from Papawai Pa (Greytown) was

also present and in a neat little speech at the end of the dinner, he thanked the Archbishop most heartily for his kindness in coming to honour their great day.

A Masterton newspaper concluded its account with these words, "Our Roman Catholic friends cannot be too highly praised for the effort they are putting forth to remove the scales of heathenism from the eyes of those whose land our European community is practically occupying. We wish Father Lepretre every success in his mission work in the district."

We find from baptismal records that for six months in 1891-1892, Father Cognet visited the Wairarapa. Father Delach at this time had joined Father Lepretre at Paki Paki where he was being trained in the work of the Maori Missions. In 1894 Father Lepretre was appointed the first parish priest of Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, and the care of the Wairarapa Maoris fell to Father Delach who for nearly the next 20 years did wonderful work in regular visits first from Paki Paki and then from Otaki. In the section on Hamua we have already mentioned some of his good work there. The mark he left on Maori communities, even though they have strayed from Catholic teaching somewhat in the course of time, shows the sterling worth of this great man of God. In the early days of this century Father Melu from Otaki also helped Father Delach in the district.

From 1915 till 1923 we find the names of various French Marists who came from Otaki to care for the Maoris. Chief among them were Fathers Vibaud, Henry and Maillard. After 1923 a period of decline set in, and for six years the Maori Mission in the Wairarapa lay moribund. In 1929, when Father J. J. Riordan, S.M., joined the staff, he did much to restore vigour and life to the Catholic natives, and visited the district regularly until about five years later the work was taken up by Father A. Venning, S.M. He was assisted at times by Father James Durning, S.M. In 1950 Father Caulfield was sent to Otaki and he has been untiring in his efforts to help the Mission in the district. His visits to the Wairarapa have been consistent and frequent, and with the help at times of Father F. Wall, S.M., have done much to infuse fresh life into the Catholic life of the native people. Father Moore, the parish priest of Masterton has done much to help the Maori people, especially at the Te Ore Ore Pa.

PART II

Catholic Education in Wairarapa

CHAPTER XVII.

First Catholic school — founding of St. Patrick's School.

In the year 1877 the National Education Act became law. This set up the State system of education—"free, secular and compulsory." The Catholic Mission in the Wairarapa was just a year old. The position of the few Catholic schools then in New Zealand was made very difficult by this new Act. The Church in the colony had a vital interest in education right from the beginning. As early as 1840, Bishop Pompallier had opened two schools at Kororareka, North Auckland, and in 1841 Father Petitjean established the first school of any kind in the town of Auckland. From 1850 on, it was mostly lay teachers that kept the Catholic schools going. In a few of the bigger centres, some members of Religious Orders were able to help. Thus we find that the Marist Fathers had attempted a high school for boys in Wellington in 1851. Some Sisters of Mercy had come to Auckland in 1850, and the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions made their first New Zealand foundation in Napier, Hawke's Bay, in 1865. In 1876 the Marist Teaching Brothers took over the Boulcott St. school in Wellington, and in the same year the Christian Brothers opened a boys' school in Dunedin. When then in 1877, the Government withdrew all financial help, the position of Catholic education was not an easy one.

In the Wairarapa, as we have already seen, Catholic life was just being organized. Before the middle of 1878, churches were non-existent. The first resident priest, Rev. Father A. Halbwachs, was devoting all his energies to the construction of at least one. By the end of 1882 he had built five, and it was then that Bishop Redwood gave him instructions to found a Catholic school in the district. Despite the grave financial burden he was already facing, this devoted priest turned the largest room in his

little presbytery in Masterton into a classroom. There was only a handful of children available, but they had souls to save, and God helped the work. The services of a Miss McLean were obtained, and in 1883 we have the beginning of Catholic education in the district of the Wairarapa.

In the following year Father P. Treacy came to replace Father Halbwachs, who had been transferred to Reefton. Father Treacy had already organized a school in Lyttelton, so he had some experience in the work. Very shortly after his arrival, he decided to build a proper schoolroom at the side of the Masterton presbytery, bordering on the vacant section which, until the last few years, was used as a playground, although the Church has never been able to buy it. The building was 40 feet by 20 feet—just one room—and cost £114.

The first teacher in this new school was Mrs. Redman. The school was called St. Patrick's after the patron of the parish. Mrs. Redman remained in charge until July, 1885, when she resigned. Mrs. Carrick of Blenheim was then engaged. She had been in charge of the first Catholic school for girls in Blenheim from 1872 till the Sisters of Mercy took over in 1885. Mrs. Carrick and her daughter, who later helped her mother with the teaching, lived in a cottage (still existent) in Queen St.—the first house on the right going north from the church. There are still a few of her old pupils alive, and they all speak of her as an excellent teacher. She maintained the best of discipline, even over big boys. No one would dare answer her back. Possibly she believed in the words of Holy Scripture found in the Book of Proverbs XIII, 24, "He that spareth the rod hateth his own son; but he that loveth him, correcteth him betimes". Mother Margaret Mary Hourigan of St. Bride's was a pupil of Mrs. Carrick, and we have her authority for paying great tribute to her former teacher at old St. Patrick's. Mrs. Carrick retired at the end of 1891, and Mr. O'Brien was appointed. Miss Carrick who had helped her mother latterly, stayed on as assistant-teacher, and also served as organist in the church.

But the good services of Mr. O'Brien were not to be enjoyed for very long. One morning, October 12th, 1892, he arrived along as usual to open the school. As he was passing the front door of the presbytery he met Father O'Meara—Father McKenna's assistant—to whom he said

he was feeling unwell. With that he appeared to stumble, and Father O'Meara took him inside the presbytery where he had just time to give him the last sacraments before he passed away. There were only a few weeks left for the year, so Father McKenna took over the school till the "break-up". Miss Carrick was in charge of the infant section. The children loved Father John, but they often mistook some of his lovely Irish pronunciations. His "fippence" often sounded like "thrippence" and made for inaccuracy in the sums. At catechism class "anineting with ile" in the sacrament of the Extreme Unction also puzzled them somewhat.

From 1893 to 1898 Mr. B. J. Dolan was in charge of the school, with Miss Carrick still as assistant. Those of us who knew "B.J." in later times as a prominent lawyer and Catholic in Napier, know that St. Patrick's must have been in good hands in the 90's. Many who made their mark in life received their primary education in this old school. Among these were the late Father Mark O'Leary, S.M., and his brother, the late Sir Humphrey O'Leary, who became Chief Justice of New Zealand. Another is Mother Margaret Mary Hourigan (the first vocation for New Zealand to the Brigidine Congregation) who is still with us. She has happy memories of her days as a pupil of St. Patrick's. In the year before the nuns came, she helped Miss Carrick with the primary classes.

This chronicle of the first Catholic school of the Wairarapa would not be complete without some reference to the last "break-up" of the school under its lay-teachers. There is always a tinge of regret in the ending of something that is good, even though it is being replaced by what is better. So it was on that Tuesday, December 13th, 1898, when parish priests, parents, school committee, teachers and children gathered for the last time under the old regime. Father McKenna with his big Irish heart felt that way as he eulogized the work of his teachers over the years. Mr. Dolan in his six years of service, and Miss Carrick in her eleven years, by their devotion, energy and organization had brought the school to a high standard of efficiency, thereby gaining the esteem of parents and pupils alike. To mark such an historic occasion, suitable permanent gifts were presented to both teachers by the children and the school committee.

This closed the pioneering period of Catholic education in the Wairarapa. The Catholic people throughout the colony were facing up loyally to the great task of educating their children along truly Christian lines. Religious Orders of men and women were being established throughout the land. When Father John McKenna as a young Irish priest sailed from his homeland for the New Zealand Mission, he found on the ship with him a band of Irish Brigidine Sisters on their way to make their first Australasian foundation in Coonamble, New South Wales. The permanence of the friendship then formed was cemented by the unity of purpose of them both, so when the time was ripe in Master-ton, it was to the Brigidine nuns in Australia that Father McKenna turned for assistance in his work of Catholic education in his vast parish.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Coming of the Brigidine nuns — St. Bride's Convent and Boarding School.

In the spring of 1897 Father McKenna went on a trip to Australia. While he was there he made definite arrangements with the Provincial of the Brigidines to send some Sisters to Masterton as soon as he had a convent built, which he hoped would be in the next year. Father McKenna left Sydney on his return to New Zealand on Saturday, November 13th, and was back in Masterton the following Friday. A special social in his honour had been organized by Father Long, his assistant in Masterton. The news that the nuns would be coming within a year gave joy to all.

When Father Halbwachs established in 1876 the Catholic Mission station of the Wairarapa, he placed it in the care of the Immaculate Mother of God, and to Her was the first church of the district dedicated. Surely, then, it was not a coincidence that one of the greatest events to occur since that time was to take place on May 24th 1898, the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians. It was the laying of the foundation stone of the first convent. Were not the nuns who were coming to live in and work throughout the district, the daughters of St. Brigid, the "Mary of the Gael"?

Distinguished guests came for the great event. Among the clergy there were Archbishop Redwood, Very Rev. Father Lewis, S.M., Vicar General and Administrator, Rev. Father Devoy, S.M., Dr. Watters, Rector of St. Patrick's College; and among the laity the Mayor, C. A. Pownall Esq., Mr. C. E. Daniell, Chairman of the Trust Lands Trust, Mr. A. W. Hogg, M.P., and also the members of the Borough Council.

The weather was not kind. It was wet and cold, but this did not deter the crowd. The occasion was specially

marked by the presentation of a silver trowel to His Grace, inscribed, "Presented to His Grace, Archbishop Redwood by the Contractors, Coradine and Whittaker, on the occasion of the laying of the Foundation Stone of St. Bride's Convent, Masterton, May 24th, 1898." The Archbishop in his speech said he had looked forward for years to seeing a convent in this promising and thriving town in the centre of the fertile and prosperous district of the Wairarapa. On account of the rain he curtailed his speech, but not without giving a short history of the Order of St. Brigid. He stressed that whatever these nuns had done in Ireland in other days, they would do also in Masterton. The people of this town were going to benefit beyond their hopes by the work and life of these good ladies in their midst.

The Archbishop concluded by remarking rather humorously that on such occasions he was expected to open a subscription list, and so he would donate ten guineas, which he hoped would be surpassed many times by other donations. This was actually achieved when an anonymous lady gave £50.

Neither did Father McKenna delay the gathering by a long speech. He was sure that while there was a lull in the showers they would all be anxious to get their cheque books out, and beat the Archbishop's donation. He spoke with feelings of gratitude of the generosity of Messrs. Staples & Co. of Wellington in connection with the site. They owned it and the old hotel, which formerly existed here. In the negotiation for the sale the sum of £500 had been agreed upon, and when all the business was completed, the Company returned the cheque, which made this magnificent site a donation. There is no doubt that Mr. Martin Kennedy, a Director of the Company, and Wellington's most prominent Catholic layman of the day, had much to do with this generous act.

An unpleasant incident in the arrangements for this great day was that the Masterton Band had been engaged, but did not appear. Father McKenna commented on the fact at the end of the proceedings and said, "They probably have some good reason of their own". On turning up the files of the "Wairarapa Star" for May 25th, we find the incident related in the Local and General, and concluding with, "As a result of the action of the Band, the conductor, Mr. D. S. Papworth, has resigned his position".



Royal Hotel, Masterton—familiarily referred to as "Top House"—now site of St. Bride's Convent. It was pulled down to make room for the convent site. Masterton band in foreground.

On the same date, this newspaper devoted a fine editorial to the prospective coming of the Sisters. After commenting on the number of religious bodies present at the ceremony, the Editor went on to say, "We must consider in this matter the great educational advantages it will offer. In the present day, when education becomes an imperative necessity in the battle of life, parents are often induced to settle in a town or district through such advantages being held out to them. The world owes a great deal to the monasteries and convents of the Catholic Church for its



St. Patrick's School, Masterton, at the time the Brigidine nuns took over. The building on the left (somewhat enlarged) was the original school built by Father Treacy alongside the Presbytery 1884 (cf. ch. VII).

education. In the earliest days these institutions were the seats of learning, and even at the present day, when education is placed within the reach of all, they still hold their own. Numbers of children of all creeds have been and are being educated at convents in this Colony, and we have never heard anything but praise for the manner in which the children have been treated. No attempt at proselytism has been made, the nuns knowing that a good

life does not necessarily belong to any particular tenet, but is rather one of the cardinal principles which form the basis of all creeds.

“Unostentatious, quiet, fearless, resigned, ever ready to stretch out a hand to assist the poor and the needy, the nuns go their way. Doing much good, they are respected and honoured by all classes of a community. Every large centre of population has much to thank them for. We are glad to see the support accorded the convent by the residents of the district.”

The building of the convent went on apace, and the one-roomed St. Patrick's School was moved from behind the church, across Queen St., to a site alongside that of the convent. The building was extended towards the street another ten feet. About three or four years later by the generosity of Thomas Heeney another extension (St. Thomas' room) was added at right angles. This served as an infant room and, as it had a raised floor, it could be used as a stage for concerts. The need of a growing roll had to be met soon again, and what is now the supper room of St. Patrick's Hall was built as St. Columba's classroom. We might mention here that St. Bride's and St. Patrick's were to become separate schools, although in both the nuns were the teachers. St. Bride's was to be mainly a secondary boarding and day school for girls, whereas St. Patrick's was the parish primary school for both boys and girls.

By the end of 1898 the convent was finished, and on December 13th the first community of Brigidine nuns arrived in Wellington. They were met at the wharf by Archbishop Redwood and Father John McKenna, and were taken to the convent of the Sisters of Mercy, Hill St., Wellington. From this meeting developed a bond between the two Congregations which has deepened throughout the years.

December 16th, 1898, will always be known to the Masterton convent as Foundation Day because on that morning they boarded the Wairarapa train for Masterton. The Jewish Rabbi, a friend of Dean McKenna, was at the station to see them off and to wish them well. Every point of interest on the way was noted, but the fascination of climbing and descending the Rimutaka Hill was a new experience. At Featherston, Father Tom McKenna and

Miss Harriet Card were there to greet them, and they were presented with bouquets of flowers. The train drew into Masterton Station at 11.30 a.m., and the Sisters could have no doubts then that they had come among friends. The members of the Church Committee — Messrs. Stempa, O'Neill, Dupre, and O'Meara — greeted them on behalf of the parish. At the convent the school children in charge of their teachers, Mr. B. J. Dolan and Miss Carrick, formed up to greet the nuns. Father Long who was assistant in the parish expressed his welcome and wished them God's blessing on the years ahead.

Before the special luncheon prepared for the Sisters, Mr. Dupre on behalf of the parishioners presented Mother Gertrude, the Superior, with a purse of thirty sovereigns. At the dinner which followed nothing was spared in the matter of hospitality, even though the day—Friday—had its limitations.

Throughout this whole year the Press of Masterton was very friendly. When it was announced that the nuns had arrived in Wellington, the "Wairarapa Star," December 14th, 1898, devoted a whole column to an Editorial on the story of St. Brigid. This fine and reverently treated article ended with this paragraph: "What was the great work which those Irish Saints of the 5th century accomplished, as distinct from their reputation for personal virtue and holiness, or the legends of their wondrous deeds? They were the instructors of the people, not only in religion but also in the arts and in many kinds of useful knowledge. They stand forth as great educators of those times in their native land. Therefore when persecution ceased in Ireland, it was only natural that the Order of St. Brigid should be revived."

On a beautiful fine Sunday, February 12th, 1899, the Brigidine convent in Masterton was blessed and opened. In Catholic educational annals it was really a great event for the district. Is it any wonder then that every known means of locomotion of those days was used by the Catholic people? Trap-horses, saddle-horses, gigs and buggies filled up the vacant land round the church. People from a distance brought their lunches, and made it a really joyous outing. From Carterton, Greytown, Featherston and Tinui people had been on the road from an early hour. The ceremony was divided into two parts—the Solemn High

Pioneer Brigidine Community of New Zealand, Masterton 1898.

Sister M. Patrick, Sister M. Claver, Mother M. Brigid, Mother M. Gertrude (Superior), Mother M. Joseph, Mother M. Teresa.



Mass in the morning at 10.30 and the blessing of the new convent in the afternoon. At the High Mass, His Grace, Archbishop Redwood presided in the sanctuary, Father Delach, S.M., was celebrant, Very Rev. Father Lewis, S.M., Adm., was deacon, and Father Lane of Lower Hutt was subdeacon.

The sermon was preached by the Very Rev. Dr. Watters, S.M., Rector of St. Patrick's College, Wellington. Taking as his text, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore teach all nations . . . teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. XXXVIII, 18-20), he gave an excellent exposition of the Catholic meaning of education. Here is a verbatim paragraph which, despite the Parliamentary Select Committee in 1956, is almost a prophecy. "A Catholic school has been erected in your midst—a school which has for its object the inculcation of true education resting on the noblest of sciences—religion. Above the clamour of the creeds on the highway of life is heard the unhesitating voice of the Church, the implacable, fair and able champion of truth. Should the present disregard of the spiritual continue, the State will relapse into a refined paganism of conventionalized vices, and Christianity will be reduced to the lowest common denominator. Throughout the centuries the education of the people has been most warmly fostered by the Church, and in the heart of the English-speaking world, the universities rose beneath the shadow of her cathedrals when England knelt at a common altar."

Mr. A. B. Bunny conducted the choir, assisted by his wife and Miss Carrick as organists.

In the afternoon at 3 p.m. the blessing of the convent was performed by Archbishop Redwood. He was accompanied by Rev. Dr. Watters, Fathers Lane, Lewis, J. McKenna, T. McKenna and Osborne. In the course of his address Dean McKenna stressed the fact that if non-Catholic children did happen to come to St. Bride's, no attempt would be made to interfere with their religious beliefs. He said also that at Cooma in New South Wales, where the nuns had last taught, one of their most enthusiastic admirers was the Anglican vicar of the town, and to give concrete proof of his admiration he had placed his own children under their care. Archbishop Redwood in



A portion of St. Bride's, Girls' College, Masterton, 1957.

his usual eloquent and facile style spoke at some length, but summed up by saying that those who had helped to make the convent a reality in Masterton could have the great satisfaction of knowing that they had assisted in a very real way in the spread of true civilization.

We have already dealt at great length with the story of the coming of the Brigidine nuns. In this section we shall try as briefly as possible to give some information about the happenings at St. Bride's down through the last 50 years. Much material is available from the annals of the Order and from the various editions of the St. Bride's Annual, published most years until recently, when rising costs made it prohibitive.

The course of education that was offered at St. Bride's in 1899 was a very comprehensive one, if the advertised prospectus can be taken as a guide. Whatever may be said nowadays for the specialized forms of education which seems to prepare men and women for only a few things in life, this prospectus offered a wide culture and choice of subjects. Here is the list: English, French, Latin and Italian, Writing, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Geometry, Geography, Geology, Botany, Physics, Astronomy, History, Shorthand, Music (instrumental and vocal), Drawing, Painting (oil and water colours), Wax Modelling, Plain and Ornamental Needlework and Calisthenics. No wonder, then, that the Tinui correspondent of the "Wairarapa Star", January 20th, 1899, complained "that many parents are sending their daughters to St. Bride's Convent. What about the 'white elephant' in Mangapakeha, 'the School'? Why has it been nearly twelve months unfinished, useless to either man or beast?"

From the time the Sisters took over Catholic education in Masterton there were two schools—St. Patrick's Primary School for boys and girls, and St. Bride's Boarding and Day High School for girls. This latter opened on February 2nd, 1899, but it was not a very encouraging event for the Sisters. There were eleven pupils and only two of them were boarders. This first group earned for themselves the title of "The New Zealand Eleven". Mother Gertrude and Sister Teresa were the first teachers. Music was in the care of Sister M. Joseph.

To find a convent on the site of a former hotel took a little getting used to, and some of the old station-hands from the outbacks in their rare visits to town found themselves embarrassed on discovering a convent instead of a hotel to greet them. An amusing story of that first year is worth recording. One lady who had read so much in the newspapers about the coming of the nuns, was sure that such a life would suit her admirably. So one day she came to the convent to ask to be admitted as a Sister. There were two slight difficulties, however. In the first case, she was not a Catholic, though she failed to see how that mattered. In the second place, her husband was still living; but he had no objection, at least so she said. In fact he was quite willing to be the gardener. We do not know how Mother Gertrude's tact measured up to settling such a delicate situation.



Group of pupils at St. Bride's, 1900.

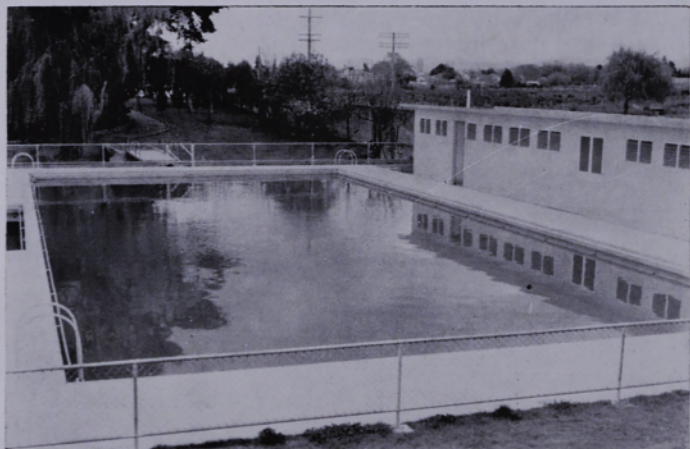
In 1900 St. Bride's High School was registered and approved by the Secretary of the Education Department in Wellington, and by the end of 1900 was recognized as an official centre for the music exams of Trinity College.

In 1902 two pupils, Miss M. Hourigan and Miss E. Collerton, expressed the desire to become nuns, and so they were sent to the novitiate in Sydney. In religion they received the names of Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque and Sister Mary Columba respectively. Sister M. Columba died on November 13th, 1912. In 1903 it was decided to open a novitiate in Masterton, and Mother Joseph was appointed mistress of novices. Over the next three years various extensions were made to the convent building, and an extra acre of land was purchased on the flat in front of the convent. This piece of land is known at St. Bride's as the "pot acre" due to the apochryphal story that said that, though the nuns paid £500 for it in 1904, someone had got it from the Maoris in the beginning for "a pot". This piece of land was one of the original "town acres" in the Small Farms Scheme in Masterton, so it is very doubtful whether the story associated with its name would bear historical investigation. All these "town acres" in the original subdivision of Masterton in 1854 had been bought by the Government from the Maoris. The trustees of the scheme obtained land then by Crown Grant and sold it to those who wished to settle under the Small Farms Plan. Nearly all legends have some foundation in fact, so the writer has made a point of investigating in the Lands and Deeds Office in Wellington the history of these three sections, now St. Bride's Convent property. All of them were "town acres" which had various owners from the time of the Crown Grant to the Land Settlement Association in the early 50's to their present ownership. The first purchaser of one of them was a Mr. Potts who bought the section in April, 1859. It would at least in those days be known as "Potts' acre", and this name evidently endured.

The only Maori name mentioned in connection with any of these three sections was that of Ihaia te Whakamairu who obtained Section No. 36 from the Association on March 14th, 1859, and sold it to Alfred Renall on June 17th, 1868, for £14 10s. This was the section for which St. Bride's paid in 1904 the sum of £500 to the executors of the Alfred Renall Estate. This section must at some time have had a building on it, thus increasing its value, since before the sale to the convent, there is mention of a mortgage on it to the Public Trust Office for the sum of £500.

Up to 1909 the convent chapel was only a temporary arrangement, but during 1908 a real chapel in brick was built, and dedicated to the Sacred Heart on January 10th, 1909. Rev. Father Clune, C.S.S.R., later Archbishop of Perth, was the preacher.

The year 1911 marks another new foundation from the Mother House of St. Bride's. Father John Kelly, who had been a curate in Masterton, was appointed in 1910 to the newly-formed parish of Foxton, and the next year he asked for some Brigidine nuns. Mother M. Raphael Doyle was sent as the first Superior. In this same year a large property in Chapel St. near the convent came on the market, and through the good services of Dean McKenna it was



Up-to-date swimming baths at St. Bride's College, Masterton.

obtained for further educational development. This property is still known as the "Fish-Ponds". It was originally used for the raising of trout by an equivalent of our modern Acclimatisation Society. No school buildings have up to this been put on it, although during Dean McKenna's absence in Ireland in 1912, Father C. Harnett, then Administrator of the parish did much work on it with a view to further expansion.

The noble work of educating Catholic girls went on through the years. Pupils left the walls of St. Bride's well equipped for the battle of life. Occasionally a non-Catholic girl through the gentle life and teaching of the nuns would get the gift of the Faith, as for example Miss Edith Johnson, who when she was 21 became a Catholic, and has been a prominent teacher and religious in the Congregation of St. Brigid.

In 1921 the west wing of the building was extended and became the special section for the use of the boarders, thus leaving the eastern part of the house exclusively for the nuns. Mother M. Gertrude, the first Superior, had the joy of celebrating her Golden Jubilee of religious profession in 1922, and in that year something for which she had worked so hard was accomplished, the erection of a beautiful marble altar in the chapel. The money to accomplish this had been built up over the years, especially by saving the discount on bills. The earthquake of 1942 damaged this altar greatly but it has been repaired in large measure.

The novitiate, which had closed in 1917 through lack of vocations, was reopened in 1929 with Mother Margaret Mary as mistress of novices. It remained in operation until 1933, since when, probable vocations are sent to Australia. Another convent was founded at Johnsonville in 1929, and Mother M. Evangelist was its first Superior.

The year 1930 was one of great sadness to St. Bride's. A young novice, Sister Mary Kevin Doyle, who had come from overseas to enter the Congregation a year before, made her religious profession on her death-bed. Also, from the beginning of this year it was clear that the health of Monsignor McKenna was failing, and on April 13th he passed to his eternal reward. To the Brigidines this was the most grievous loss they had sustained since coming to Masterton, for never did St. Bride's lose a truer father and friend.

On St. Patrick's Day, 1932, Mother M. Gertrude Banahan died at Pahiatua. She had been a pioneer nun and the first Superior of the Brigidines in New Zealand. On St. Joseph's Day her body was laid to rest in the Masterton cemetery. Two others of the pioneer community lived to celebrate their Diamond Jubilee of profession—



Basketball Tournament at St. Bride's Convent, Masterton, 1956.
Representative teams from all the Brigidine schools of the Archdiocese of Wellington.

Sister M. Patrick Phelan in 1944 and Mother Mary Joseph Flahavan in 1948. This latter year was also the Golden Jubilee year of St. Bride's foundation. Both these great nuns have since passed to their reward, Sister Patrick in 1951, and Mother M. Joseph in 1954.



Mother M. Patrick, R.I.P., one of the pioneer band of Brigidines in Masterton. Photo taken on her Diamond Jubilee Day, July 11th, 1944.

In conclusion may we be permitted to quote a fine article contributed to the Jubilee edition of St. Bride's Annual by the Rev. Father Moore, who speaks of the interest and amazement of many non-Catholics in Masterton when the Brigidine Sisters first came.

"Who are they? Where do they come from? What do they do? Imagine, if you can, the amazement and dazed stupidity of 1898. Well, here they are. Let us watch them and see what they do. For fifty years they have watched, and amazement is still there, but the dazed stupidity has gone. Now they know they are toilers, workers from sunrise to sunset. Work, work, work, — it



Mother M. Joseph Flahavan, of the pioneer Brigidine nuns of Masterton.
R.I.P. Photo on her Diamond Jubilee Day, 1948.

has done wonders to educate folks. Work in the school, work on the farm, work on the typewriter, work on the piano, active work enough to satisfy the clamour of progress.

Contemplative work—you do not expect the stranger to see the prayer, the sacrifice of those who have handed their souls to Christ. The nuns work from dawn to dusk, and no one knows how it can be done. They have no visible means of support, they are vagabonds for the cause, and yet the cause prospers because wonderful things can be done by the nuns who are wedded to the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity."



A group on St. Bride's Golden Jubilee Day, 1948.

All these were present on Foundation Day, 1898.

Standing, from left: Mrs. J. C. Cooper, Mr. L. Robinson, Mr. H. Nee, Mrs. Hamill, M. Malabar, —, Mrs. K. Gaynor, Mrs. Peters, Mrs. Russell, Mr. D. Robinson, Mrs. M. Connors, Mrs. K. Cross, Mrs. M. Spring. Sitting, from left: Sister M. Patrick, Miss Nellie Chapman, Mrs. Reilly, Mrs. E. O'Leary, Mother Margaret Mary, Sister M. Bernard, Mrs. Philpot, Miss Katie Chapman.

CHAPTER XIX.

Brigidines take over parish school of St. Patrick's, 1899.

Just as the building of St. Mary's Church in Carterton by Father Halbwachs in 1878 established organized Catholic religious worship in the Wairarapa, so did the establishment of St. Patrick's School in Masterton some few years later inaugurate Catholic education in the district. Its humble birth and initial years have already been dealt with in the story of Masterton. In this section we deal with it from the time that it was taken over by the Brigidine Sisters.

It does not appear to have had any official opening apart from the ceremonies associated with that of St. Bride's. The first assembly of the school took place on January 24th, 1899, with a roll-call of 64. The teachers were Mother M. Brigid Desmond (Head), Sister M. Michael O'Beirne and Sister M. Claver Cooke. Among the first pupils was Mary Savage, who later became a member of the Order as Mother M. Bernard, and who has done wonderful service over long years.

Right through its long history St. Patrick's School has consistently earned the commendation of Government Inspectors and there has always been the greatest cordiality between them and the religious teachers. The results of both religious and secular training given over the years by different teachers all inspired by the same ends—the honour and glory of God—speak for themselves. You will find people in many walks of life throughout the land proud of the fact that they received their primary education at St. Patrick's School.

Of the many excellent families that have passed through the school, one is worthy of special mention. It is the O'Meara family. This consisted of eleven children of the late Michael and Isabel O'Meara. From the time that the

eldest (Mary) entered the school on April 27th, 1903, until the youngest member (Lawrence) left St. Patrick's in December, 1936, there elapsed 34 years, and during that period there were always O'Mearas among the pupils.

As time went on, the roll grew, and more space was required. A new building entirely in permanent materials was being considered. The day was fast approaching when Monsignor McKenna would have laboured 40 years as the pastor of Masterton. In what better way could this long and devoted service be remembered and honoured than by building a new school in token of the people's gratitude to one who had loved their children so deeply over the years? The idea took on most whole-heartedly, and in 1926 plans were prepared by the architect, Mr. Llewellyn E. Williams of Wellington. The tender of Mr. Fred Waite of Masterton was accepted, and in July, 1927, the work was in hand.

The new school was built alongside old St. Patrick's but not on parish property. It was put on a section belonging to the Trust Lands Trust. This is an interesting name and requires explanation because it is a term special to Masterton and Greytown. The history of the Trust Lands Trust will help us to understand the position at St. Patrick's School. In 1853 an association was formed in Wellington called the Land Settlement Association—sometimes referred to as the Wairarapa Small Farms Scheme. The object of the association was to purchase land in the Wairarapa district to provide small farms for settlers. The Wairarapa was then a fairly inaccessible area because the route over the Rimutaka Hill was only a track. The Association's idea was based on the English custom of having people living together in villages with farmlands nearby. It was worked out that a settler should have a town acre and also an allocation of forty acres of farmland, as they do in England.

It did not work out that way in the Wairarapa, either in Masterton or in Greytown—the only two places where it was tried. The settler took possession of his forty acres, and, because that was where he was going to grow his crops and keep his stock, that was where he built his home. The result was that the one-acre blocks called "town acres" became in some cases more or less encumbrances. Many of these were not fenced and became overrun with weeds. The



St. Patrick's Parish School, Masterton.



Another view looking east, taken in 1957.

Land Settlement Association got many of these back on their hands. Something had to be done, and there were men in those days who foresaw that these sections could in time be very valuable, which is exactly what happened. So in 1871 an Act was passed making these abandoned acres Trust Lands. In 1896 another Act became necessary to separate the Trust Lands of Masterton from those of Greytown. These town acres are today very valuable, especially in Masterton, and are still going up in value. It is worthy of note that in the lay-out of the town acres



Group at the opening of the second St. Patrick's School, Masterton, 1928.
Front row from left: Mr. L. E. Williams (architect), Father McCarthy, S.M.,
Monsignor J. McKenna, V.G., P.P., Archbishop Redwood,
Archbishop O'Shea, Mr. Jordan (Mayor).

in both towns, corner sections on cross streets were reserved for important buildings, such as churches, schools, post-office and such. The trustees who were given control of the abandoned acres laid it down very definitely in the Act that they could be leased, but not sold. St. Patrick's School, then, if it were to be built near the convent without using up playing area, could be placed only on a piece of Trust Land. This may not be an ideal arrangement, as there is

a recurring rental, but the revenue obtained from the various Trust Lands is used in large measure for educational grants each year, and the Catholic schools in Masterton share in some measure in these grants.

The new school cost £5000, and notable donations towards the cost were £1000 each from Mr. Jeremiah Savage and Monsignor McKenna. Mr. Frank Price contributed £350 towards a teachers' staff-room. The rest of the cost was met by the parishioners either by direct donations or by functions run for the purpose. The late Captain J. C. McKillop was also a benefactor. He left £5000 in trust to the parish, the interest on which has assisted the school in many ways.

The school was blessed and opened by Archbishop Redwood on January 29th, 1928. Archbishop O'Shea, several priests and many of the prominent men of the town were present for the occasion. It is today the finest primary school building in Masterton, besides being one of the few built in permanent materials.

The disastrous earthquakes of 1942 did some damage to the school, but at first it seemed to be more or less superficial. A little later it was found that some faulty workmanship in the foundations had been affected by the 'quake, and extensive repairs became necessary. Father Moore, following the lead given by Carterton in getting an interest-free loan from the Government, was successful in doing likewise to meet the immediate cost. The reconstruction was undertaken by Messrs. Jenkins Bros. with Mr. F. C. Daniell as architect. The school was re-blessed by Archbishop O'Shea on May 7th, 1944.

We record now something of the struggle that the Catholic people of Masterton made to obtain free dental treatment for the children of St. Patrick's. Various meetings of the dental clinic committee had been attended by Father Moore and prominent Catholic laymen, but their efforts got them nowhere. The Catholic committee had made formal application to share in the dental clinic facilities, but nothing resulted.

Eventually, at a meeting in 1938, Father Moore could stand the strain no longer. When he saw the trend of affairs he rose to his feet and in no uncertain terms asked

the chairman why nothing was done, and through whose influence the Catholic application had been side-tracked. He knew his facts and the chairman found himself no match for Father Moore's incisive logic. Father Moore and his committee took up the matter directly through the help of Mr. Robertson, M.P., with the Minister of Health, who at that time was Mr. Peter Fraser.



Group taken on occasion of a visit from Ireland of the Mother-General of the Brigidines, December, 1954.

From left: Mother M. Aquinas, Mother M. Chanel (Mother-General), Mother M. Dominic (secretary to Mother-General), Mother M. Evangelist (Superior, Masterton).

In front: Mother Margaret Mary (Golden Jubilarian).

The result was that the Member for Masterton, Mr. Robertson, shortly afterwards received a letter from Mr. Fraser under date August 5th, 1938, advising him that the Director-General of Health was from that date including St. Patrick's School and St. Bride's Convent in the Masterton Dental Group. A little girl of those days, Eileen Ann Tobin, has the distinction of being the first Catholic child to be treated under the scheme in Masterton.

When the Marist Brothers came in 1946, the boys in St. Patrick's in forms I and II were taken over by the Brothers. Three years later there was another change when St. Bride's primary department was amalgamated with St. Patrick's. This was a good move because it saved the duplication of staff.



Group of clergy at the Pontifical High Mass in St. Patrick's Church, Masterton, on the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of St. Bride's Convent, 1948. Celebrant: His Grace Archbishop McKeefry.

The number on the roll of St. Patrick's has continued to increase. In 1954 the 200 mark was reached, and today (1956) there are 250 children attending the school. The present staff consists of Mother M. Carthage (Head), Mother M. Chanel, Mother M. Veronica, Mother M. Teresa and Sister M. Michelle.

CHAPTER XX.

Brigidines go to Pahiatua, 1906 — to Carterton, 1917 — to Featherston, 1954.

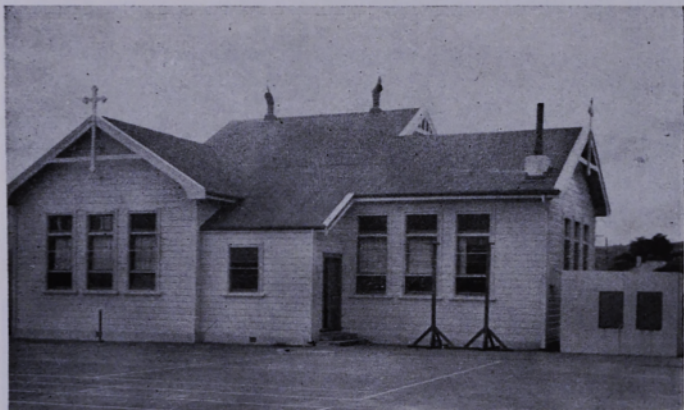
By the beginning of 1905 Father Tom McKenna had decided that his parish needed a school. He could see that the good of the souls of the children would not be secure without one. The parish had been established only ten years but the people were well aware of what the convent school was doing for Masterton. There was a fairly heavy debt on them but they had faith in God and in the future. With that in their hearts they had built their church and the presbytery, and now they were whole-heartedly with their priest in this new work.



Brigidine Convent, Pahiatua, built in 1912.

Trusting in God then, he applied to the Mother Superior in Masterton to establish a branch of the Order in Pahiatua. Permission was sought from the Provincial in

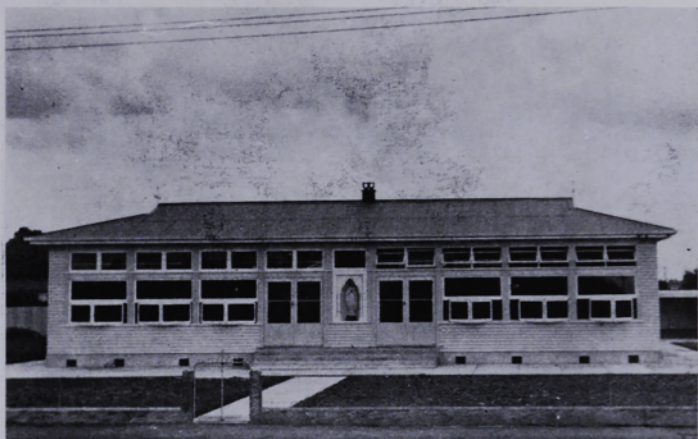
Australia, and on January 29th, 1906, Mother Brigid Desmond (Superior), Mother M. de Sales Maher, Mother Margaret Mary Hourigan and Mother M. Alphonsus Bourke left Masterton to establish the second Brigidine convent in New Zealand. Accompanying them on the journey were Dean John McKenna and Mother Gertrude, the Superior at Masterton.



St. Anthony's School, Pahiatua, built 1918.

There was no convent building in Pahiatua but the joy of the pastor in having the nuns to help him in his work, made it easy for him to hand over the presbytery to them as a temporary home. Like many temporary things, the presbytery was destined to be their home for six years until the convent was built in 1912. During these years Father Tom McKenna lived in a cottage in Tyndall St., a little down from the church on the opposite side, more or less facing where the convent is now. We may well ask, "And where was the school?" It wasn't anywhere yet, but the old Anglican church in Sedcole St. was obtained on lease as Pahiatua's first Catholic school. This building was about a quarter of a mile away from the convent, and anyone who knows the dampness of a Pahiatua winter can form some idea of the difficulties the nuns had to contend with in going to and fro twice a day, and that for twelve years.

In 1918, the last year of World War I, a fine wooden school was built in Tyndall Street alongside the convent, and was given St. Anthony as its patron. Accommodation in the old Anglican church was sufficient in the beginning as the initial roll was only 47. When the new school of 1918 was opened the roll was much greater, but the space was adequate until 1952, when the natural growth of the town and district demanded more room.



Our Lady of Lourdes Infant School, Pahiatua, built 1955.

The parish priest of this time was the Rev. Father Sweeney. At first he thought of enlarging the school, but this idea was dropped after mature consideration. On May 10th, 1955, a fire broke out and seriously damaged a part of the building. The loss was estimated at £2000. For the moment the position looked very difficult, but by magnificent team-work under the leadership of Mr. J. Brown, builder, the school was reconstructed and ready for the children again just two days after the end of the May holidays.

In the chapter dealing with the parish of Pahiatua, mention has been made of the selling of $5\frac{1}{2}$ acres for Government housing. Father Sweeney was not idle during the years following the above sale, and when he saw his chance

he bought another property in Wakeman Street across from the church. In September, 1955, he began the construction of a fine new school for the infant classes. The building was ready at the beginning of 1956, and on January 29th the opening of this new school, dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, was the high-light of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the coming of the Brigidine nuns to Pahiataua. It was a proud moment for the pastor and the people when it was announced that this beautiful new school costing £6000 was being opened free of debt. The Catholic schools of Pahiataua are unusual in that neither are named after their parish patron, St. Brigid. The main school is St. Anthony's and the new one is Our Lady of Lourdes.



St. Mary's Church, Carterton, in 1909. View before present presbytery was built. Large house on extreme right is Mrs. Grengor's Maternity Hospital, now Brigidine Convent.

The need of a convent and school in Carterton was manifest several years before they became a reality. In 1908 when Father Bowe succeeded Father Cahill, the question was brought up at his first committee meeting in the parish. This was on April 5th, 1908, when Mr. Berrill asked Father Bowe for his opinion on the matter. The new pastor stated that only that afternoon the importance of the question was

brought home to him when he found 40 children at the catechism class. "Personally," he said, "I would rather see a convent and school than a new presbytery."

At another parish meeting a year later on August 22nd, 1909, Mr. Grengor who owned what is now the convent offered to lease his house and furniture to the parish as a convent on a rental equal to 5% on £1800 with a purchasing clause for later operation, if such an arrangement would facilitate the coming of the nuns.

Little more appears to have been done in this direction for the time being. It was thought better to concentrate on building a new presbytery alongside the church, details of which have already been given earlier in this work.



St. Mary's Convent School, Carterton, built in brick in 1916.

Photo of original two-roomed building.

Father Thomas Kinkead succeeded Father Bowe in the mid-year of 1913, but pressing work in Featherston made him postpone the convent school project. World War I broke out on August 4th, 1914, and occasioned a further delay. In late 1915, Rev. Father Kinkead left Carterton

to go as chaplain on the hospital ship "Maheno". He had worked and hoped for a convent and school in Carterton, but it was left to his successor, Father Michael O'Beirne, to accomplish this endeavour. In 1916 Father O'Beirne built a two-roomed school in brick on the property facing Howard St. Before the school was built, however, a convent had to be assured if the nuns were to come. Alongside the presbytery built by Father Bowe in 1912, there was a large maternity hospital already mentioned, owned by Mr. Grengor whose wife was a maternity nurse. After some negotiation this was at length bought for a convent for £1400. Of this sum the parish contributed £400 and raised funds for the necessary alterations within the building. The remaining £1000 was paid off by the nuns through donations, the teachers' stipends, and grants from the T. G. McCarthy Trust over the years. The chapel in the convent used to be the theatre when it was a hospital, and occasionally visitors still come asking the nuns if they can go into the chapel saying, "You know, Mother, I was born in the chapel."

The nuns came to Carterton on January 28th, 1917, but they lived for two months in the presbytery until they could get possession of their home. The first Mass was said in the convent on March 30th.

Father Daniel Cronin succeeded Father O'Beirne in February, 1918, and in November of that year the terrible influenza epidemic broke out. St. Mary's School was turned into a temporary hospital and the nuns acted as nurses. The good work done on that occasion was still remembered in World War II, and when the Japanese came into the war making things look black for New Zealand, St. Mary's was again selected as a first aid centre for South Carterton under E.P.S. regulations. Although somewhat faded by wind and rain the red cross and the words, "First Aid Depot", may still be seen on a power pole in High St. Itinerant salesman of medical supplies not knowing the story are still taken in by this sign.

In 1921 another room was added to the school, and when Father Carmine was parish priest (1936-1938) he made several improvements. In 1937 an up-to-date gas heating system was installed to replace the open fires. The

following year also a wide assembly corridor on the south side was built, and a large area in the vicinity of the school put down in concrete.

Four years later, on June 24th, 1942, disaster was to strike the Wairarapa in the form of a severe earthquake. Fortunately it came at night. A chimney crashed through the roof in one room of the school. The dividing wall between two other classrooms was badly cracked. After that some classes were transferred to rooms in the convent. Another severe 'quake came on December 3rd, and the destruction was so extensive that major restoration work became necessary. A reinforced concrete framework for the whole structure was built and tied up the brick fabric in between. New walls in part were necessary, and the removal of the porches gave the exterior of the school a rather plain look, but did not detract from the attractive interior.



St. Mary's Convent School, Carterton.

View taken after earthquake 1942, showing fractured walls.

About ten days before the second earthquake the parish priest, Father Felix Devlin, died rather suddenly in the presbytery. Father Noel O'Sullivan had just time to give him the last sacraments. It was Sunday, November 22nd. The latter months of 1942 were sad and difficult ones for the parish of Carterton.

When school resumed in February, 1943, the building reconstruction was not yet completed, so classes were held in St. Mary's parish hall, as well as in the convent, until March 19th, when the school was ready again. The total cost of the repairs was in the vicinity of £1200.

The history of St. Mary's Convent, Carterton, would not be complete from an historical point of view if something were not recorded while it is still available on how the repairs of the damaged school were financed. At this time the war in the Pacific was rising to its zenith. Man-power was conscripted for necessary defence work, and all building materials were under complete Government control. Father Devlin had died before any of the repair work of the June earthquake had been put in hand, and the parish administration fell on the shoulders of his assistant, Father Leo Connor, who took charge until a new pastor could be appointed. He was assisted by the Rev. Father Noel Sullivan, and at times by Father Michael Dillon. Then came the further destruction of the December earthquake, which ruined the main fabric of the building. Something had to be done and quickly. But how? Destruction was very widespread throughout the whole district, but this was the only school which had been gravely damaged, as far as was known at that time. (Cf. St. Patrick's School, Masterton.)

Father Devlin had been negotiating with Mr. B. F. Kelly, architect, in Wellington in July, and some plans had been made for the repairs as they seemed necessary then. But after the second earthquake major restoration became urgent. The burden of worry was now on the shoulders of Father Leo Connor. He secured the services of a builder, Mr. R. H. Vincent of Wellington. The architect prepared the new plans. But there was no labour, and where the materials were to come from was anybody's guess. Letter-writing was getting the parish nowhere. Then Father Noel Sullivan in his slow deliberate way thought he "should see somebody about something". So on December 24th, 1942, he went to Wellington to interview the then Minister of Public Works, Mr. Robert Semple. We quote the result of the visit from a letter of the architect written on January 4th, 1943. "I had a visit from Father Sullivan who informed me that he had been up to Parliament House to see Mr. Semple to have the work expedited. Mr. Semple asked for

certain information, and I supplied this to Father Sullivan, who returned to Mr. Semple, and afterwards he saw Mr. James Fletcher, Commissioner of Defence Construction. Mr. Fletcher wrote two letters, one to me and one to the Controller of Man-Power, giving this job priority over all reconstruction jobs in the Wairarapa, and ordering that the necessary labour and materials be placed at our disposal, even if it meant taking men off other jobs.

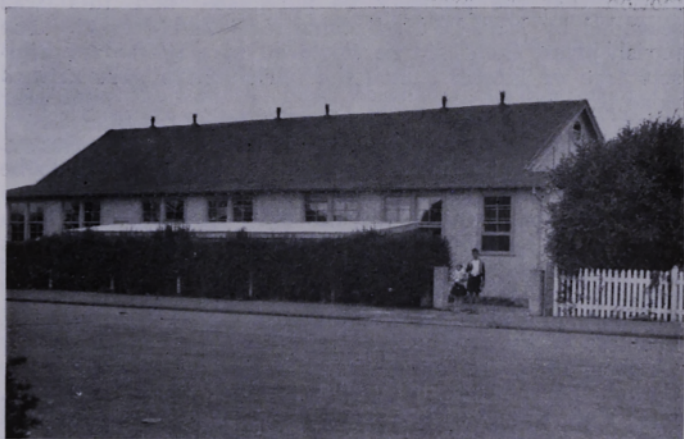
"This I consider quite a triumph. I think that Father Sullivan is to be commended for his successful efforts. I hope that he will not mind if I say that he has more 'cheek' than I have."

In the meantime the administrator of the parish was not idle. He had to find the money to pay for the reconstruction. He decided to try the Government for a loan. Time was an all-important factor where school repairs were concerned, and so he short-circuited the departments and went straight to the Acting Minister of Finance, who was then the late Mr. Peter Fraser. We hope that Father Connor will pardon our saying so, but he has been gifted with a gentle and tactful manner of approach in even the most difficult situations. He must have won the heart of Mr. Fraser, because on January 28th, 1943, a letter was received from him in which he stated, "In the preliminary discussions with you the possibility was suggested that the Church might be able to finance the work without appealing to the Government for assistance. However as the liability for payment will be on the local community, I have now to advise that a loan of £900 is approved for a term of eleven years, free of interest for the whole term, and also free of principal repayment for one year, but thereafter repayable by half-yearly repayment of £45 over the balance of the term".

Such an achievement by Father Connor is something for which Carterton parish has much to thank him. It made matters much simpler for the new parish priest, Father V. J. McGlone, when he came a few weeks later, and saw the job through to its completion.

Since 1937 the idea of having a Catholic school in Featherston had been considered, but nothing concrete was done until 1944, when the parish priest of the day decided to buy a suitable property that could be used when the time

was ripe. At this period a good deal of Government housing was being erected in the town and there was only one block of land left anywhere near the church. This was two acres—a holding-paddock owned by the Gear Meat Company of Wellington. Some years previously overtures had been made to the Company with a view to buying, but without avail. At the beginning of March, 1945, the parish priest resolved to see whether there had been any change of mind on the part of the Gear Company, and to sound out the situation he suggested to a returned serviceman and parishioner, Mr. Alex McLeod, that he write to the Company asking for an opportunity to buy the section for himself. The reply was a favourable one but the price asked was £325. On this basis negotiation began, and eventually on May 1st, 1945, the firm agreed to a reduction to £290—the Government valuation of the land at that time.



St. Mary's Convent School, Carterton, as it is to-day, viewed from Howard Street.

Father McGlone then wrote to the Gear Company asking if they would sell to the Catholic Church instead of Mr. McLeod, if he were willing. This was finally agreed upon provided Mr. McLeod did not expect to receive any commission on the sale.

The next move was to get the views of the parishioners, and a meeting was held in St. Teresa's Church on the third Sunday of May, 1945. There were other people in the town who would be interested in this section, if it became known it was for sale, so a good deal of secrecy was necessary to avoid undue complications. At the parish meeting, the pastor simply asked the views of the people on the question of getting property for a future Catholic school. He stated that he could obtain a most suitable piece of land, but was unable at this stage to say where it was located. Mr. A. E. Riddiford then spoke and said that he considered the suggestion was most far-seeing and he was wholly in favour of it. While it was only natural to wonder where the locality was, still he could see that there might be very good reasons for not giving this information just yet. Mr. Robert Ness also spoke along similar lines. Eventually Mr. A. E. Riddiford moved a motion that the property be purchased and this was seconded by Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford, and carried. The parish priest then said he would advance the money himself free of interest, until the parishioners were able to raise it.

At the time the Land Sales Act was in operation. This meant that sales of property and houses had to be approved by the Court as to price before the sale could go through. Some waited for the sale of this property to come up for consideration in order to find out where it was. But the pastor knew that property for religious and charitable purposes was exempt from the Act. A firm of solicitors in Carterton was authorized to settle the legal business of the purchase on behalf of the Church and by October, 1945, the sale of the property in the name of the Catholic Archbishop of Wellington had been registered. Miss Kate Ruane with a small group of helpers organized functions to pay off the debt and in a few months all but £50 was in hand. When this progress report was announced from the altar, a very generous parishioner, Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford, sent a cheque the next day for this amount, saying, "The people can now begin saving for the school".

Subsequent events have proved the wisdom of the purchase, even though to a very small number at the time the idea of a Catholic school in Featherston was looked

upon as something that would not be needed in the next 50 years, and would be a strangling liability on the community. The parish priest was not showing enough "worldly wisdom".

In 1944, the pastor had discussed the question of a convent in Featherston with Archbishop O'Shea. The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart were anxious to have a convent near Wellington which would be a link between their convents in the North and South Islands, especially when their sisters were travelling long distances. Negotiations had begun along these lines both with the New Zealand Provincial and with the Mother General when she was on visitation of the New Zealand part of her Congregation.

On October 14th, 1945, when Archbishop O'Shea came to Featherston for Confirmation, he congratulated the people on obtaining such a fine property, and he hoped to see Featherston with its convent and school within the next few years. Archbishop McKeefry was appointed Coadjutor to Archbishop O'Shea in June, 1947, and sometime later the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart took over the convent and school at Eastbourne in Wellington and later still another convent and school at Waiwhetu were given to them. This solved their problem without their having to wait for the indefinite situation at Featherston to be settled.

In January, 1953, when Featherston, Martinborough and surrounding districts were separated from Carterton, Father Francis Walsh was appointed parish priest of the new district. Towards the end of that year he arranged with the Brigidine Sisters to supply nuns for a school he hoped to open in 1954. The arrangement was that for a start two nuns would teach in Featherston and live at the Carterton convent, travelling to and fro each day. That same year a house and property adjoining the school section was bought by the parish.

When the new State District High School was built in Featherston, the old building was bought by a Catholic, Mr. Joe Saba, for a very modest sum. During the war it was leased as a Services Club. Efforts had been made in Father McGlone's time to buy this building from Mr. Saba as the beginning of a Catholic School, but he had no success.

In Father Walsh's time a large room in this building—now Kerslake Auction Mart—was loaned and partitioned into two smaller rooms and school began in them on February 4th, 1954. The initial roll comprised 40 pupils drawn from six different schools. The classes were from Primers to Standard III. In the beginning four parishioners offered to provide transport for the nuns. Mother M. Ephrem was appointed head-teacher and Mother M. Christopher first assistant.

It was not long before it could be seen that the transport of the nuns was not going to be satisfactory, so at a parish meeting on February 15th, 1954, a decision was made to purchase a car for the use of the nuns. The car arrived on May 14th. It was an Austin 30. We can well recall the amusement aroused by the attempts made to teach the nuns to drive. Text books and theory did not quite cover the case but eventually they did learn and learnt well, even to travel fast. Eventually a kindly traffic officer took them for their tests and they both passed as fit to get drivers' licenses.

At the beginning of the same year Father Walsh took up a post as lecturer in history at Victoria University College, and in March, 1954, Father James Buist came as parish priest of South Wairarapa. Plans for the new school had already been prepared under Father Walsh's instruction by the Wellington architect, Mr. Standish. The firm of Trotman Bros. of Greytown was given the contract. By May 25th, 1954, the work on the foundations of the new building had commenced. In the beginning operations were held up pending the arrival of a bull-dozer, but by June this delay was overcome and work went ahead. However there were still odd interruptions and it was not till the beginning of the New Year that the building was anyway ready. Classes moved in on March 18th, 1955, with a roll of 63. Eventually by mid-April everything was finished, and on Sunday, May 4th, Monsignor Connolly acting on behalf of the Archbishop blessed and opened the new school. The weather that day was not very pleasant, so after the blessing, the fine crowd that had assembled to honour the occasion adjourned to the Anzac Hall just across the street where the usual speeches were made and afternoon tea was served. It was over a friendly cup of tea that afternoon that Mr. D. H. S. Riddiford, a prominent Anglican

of Featherston, forgave Father McGlone for the shrewd way he had obtained the property on which the school now stood. Mr. Riddiford was a Director of the Gear Meat Company, and its main representative in the Wairarapa. Had he been consulted concerning the sale of the property he would have opposed it for business reasons. The Secretary of the Company had found that out only too well but too late. There is an interesting criss-crossing of purposes here, in as much as Mr. Riddiford's wife and son, both of whom are Catholics, were the mover and seconder of the motion that backed the parish priest to make the purchase. "I am glad now you have this property," said Mr. Riddiford, "when I see that fine building there and the use to which it is being put. I'll forgive you."



St. Teresa's Convent School, Featherston, 1955.

Father Buist and his parishioners have worked hard to beautify the grounds. A fine tar-sealed assembly space in front is now finished, gardens and shrubs are very much to the fore, and the whole place is a real ornament to the town of Featherston. The writer of this history, who was for ten years their pastor, cannot refrain from tendering his good wishes. *Prospere procede, Featherston, ad multos annos.*

CHAPTER XXI.

Marist Brothers arrive 1945 — St. Joseph's Boys' College established in Masterton.

From the year 1900 Catholic girls in the Wairarapa were well cared for in secondary education at St. Bride's High School, but Catholic boys were not in such a happy position. Masterton's pastor for the last twenty-five years, Father Nicholas Moore, felt this unhappy state of affairs very keenly. In early 1944 he decided that something would have to be done. Very few of the parents in the parish were in the financial position of being able to send their sons to the fine boarding school at Silverstream or to any other Catholic boys' college. The result was that 95% of the Catholic boys in Masterton and Carterton had to rely on secondary education along purely secular lines, which in this materialistic age was causing grave leakage from the Church. The situation was really serious in a district in which the Faith had never been really strong. But what could be done about it? The solution was certainly the result of a combination of prayer and action. The good pastor was doing his share of the former, but was the time ready for action? He decided he would call in his neighbouring parish priest and hear his views. "He has his moods and tenses," thought Father Nick, "I must have him on my side. He likes a good cigar after dinner occasionally. I'll get him one of the best from Bill Orange's shop, and when I see the moment is right, I'll put the proposition to him".

So began in a simple and homely way the working out of a scheme for the good of the Catholic boys—a work which even in a few short years is having marvellous results. Co-operation and unity are wonderful things, and in unity there is strength. First there was the unity of Masterton and Carterton parishes. Then came the interest and help from Eketahuna and Pahiatua.

The next important question was the matter of a site for such a school in Masterton. Father Moore at first thought of transforming St. Patrick's Hall and its club rooms. It soon became obvious that this would be far from satisfactory for any permanent arrangement. Then the "Fish-Ponds" property in Chapel St. came under review. This too, had disadvantages, even though it was parish property. Another site was considered in Pownall St. This seemed too far away from the church and other facilities, especially the bus route on the main highway.

The matter of teachers also had to be considered. Were they to be the Marist Brothers or the Christian Brothers? Before negotiations with the Christian Brothers were in any way advanced, the Provincial of the Marist Brothers, Brother Louis, came to Masterton to spy out the land, and to him the request for staff finally went.

There was still no property decided upon. More prayers were offered, and one day Father Moore was struck by one of those tornadoes of brilliant ideas so characteristic of him. In Herbert St., about five minutes from the church, there was a block of 14 acres belonging to the McKillop estate. An urgent telephone message comes through to the pastor of Carterton, "Come up immediately and have a look at this". There was no doubt about the issue now. Here was the very thing if we could get it. Father Moore could scarcely wait to get his car out of the garage in order to be off to Wellington to interview Miss Margaret McKillop—the main survivor of the family. Surely no one could have been more surprised than she was when Father Moore asked her to donate the land for the purpose. This family, as is noted elsewhere, had already been great benefactors of the Church in Masterton. She found that there were difficulties about giving it, but she would be willing to sell it at the Government valuation of £1600 with the house on it. What is more, she would give £200 towards the new school. What a wonderful start for a great undertaking! It is almost certain that had the pastor not moved rapidly when he did, this property would have gone for Government housing. It is now a matter of history that as soon as it became known that the Church had bought the block for a school, an offer was made of £1000 for building sections on a part of the large frontage. At the first general meeting held to decide the future

scheme, plans had been made of how these building sites could be disposed of without noticeably affecting the rest of the property. When the matter was being considered by the meeting, the parish priest of Carterton strongly opposed the suggestion as being a retrograde step from the point of view of appearance, and the difficulties resulting from numerous backyards abutting on the future football and cricket playing areas. Fortunately that day the new teachers, Brother Adrian (Head) and Brother Sylvester,



Main Class-rooms, St. Joseph's College, Masterton.

had arrived, and at the meeting they confirmed from their experience elsewhere, the truth of what Father McGlone contended. That settled the matter, and at the same meeting a motion was moved by Father McGlone and seconded by Mr. Laurie Robinson that the school be built on the new property and that the whole project be a memorial to the Catholic servicemen of the Wairarapa who had fallen in World War II.

In mentioning the arrival of the two Brothers, which occurred on January 31st, 1945, we have not really got ahead of ourselves in the story. Some months before,

Brother Benignus, the Procurator of the Marist Brothers, had been in Masterton to work out details with Father Moore. It was decided that the school year would begin in 1945 in St. Patrick's Hall and in the adjoining two rooms, which used to be part of the old St. Patrick's School. It was stressed that this was to be "endured" only till the new buildings were ready, which they would be some time that year. A part of the presbytery was set aside for the Brothers' residence.

The school opened on February 6th, 1945, with a total of 52 boys—Forms I to III. In the meantime the property and site in Herbert St. was being prepared, and the parish priest was leaving no stone unturned to obtain suitable buildings from the War Assets Realization Board, and funds to buy them. A large recreational hall from the old American Marine Camp on Memorial Park was purchased, but to shift it was quite a problem. It looked as if it would have to be dismantled, when a Mr. Smith from Wellington offered to shift it to its new site in one piece without so much as breaking a window. Masterton laughed—it was an idle boast; it could not be done. His secret was to place about 30 small four-wheeled chassis beneath the building and to push it along slowly on railway lines by means of powerful jacks. There were no obstructions or other buildings on the way, and the distance was only about one quarter of a mile. The biggest difficulty encountered was shifting it across Herbert St., but the job was done exactly as was said, and no windows were broken. The adapting of the building to school needs, roughcasting the exterior and other work was then carried out by Jenkins Bros.

By June 6th, 1945, the building was firmly on its new foundations but further progress was rather slow. Shortage of man-power and materials was quite a problem. Later in the year another building, the Y.M.C.A. social hall, was obtained from the Hood Aerodrome and erected parallel to, but behind, the main school building. At first this was meant to be an assembly hall and chemistry laboratory but this idea was later changed. The reason was that many boys from the country wanted to come and stay from Monday to Friday, and it was decided to make this building a temporary hostel for them.

The second year began on February 13th, 1946, with 21 boarders and a total roll of 81 students. The Brothers of those days may well remember the inconvenience associated with providing meals for the boarders. The old McKillop home on the property, which was to provide these facilities, was not available, as the tenants in it could not find another dwelling. Consequently the supper-room and kitchen in St. Patrick's Hall had to be used and this was nearly half a mile away. Travelling to and fro several times a day was a great nuisance.



Opening of St. Joseph's College, Masterton.

From left: Mrs. Kemp (Mayoress), Mr. Kemp (Mayor), Archbishop O'Shea, Mr. W. Orange (chairman), Bishop O'Neill (Dunedin), Mr. Mason (Minister of Education), Father V. McGlone, Dean Moore (parish priest), Brother Louis (Provincial), Brother Adrian (Director).

As yet the school had not been officially opened although it had been functioning for over a year. At length March 17th, 1946, was the date selected for this great event. It turned out to be a beautiful autumn day. Solemn High Mass was sung in St. Patrick's Church by the late Father E. McLaughlin, C.S.S.R., assisted by Father V. McGlone and Dr. Noel Gascoigne, who was also the preacher. Archbishop O'Shea and Bishop O'Neill were in the sanctuary.

At the afternoon ceremonies a great number of priests and Brothers came from all over the Archdiocese. Bishop H. O'Neill had journeyed from Dunedin. The Minister of Education, Mr. Mason, and Mr. Caradus of the Education Department were also among the distinguished guests. We can recall how the Senior Inspector of schools drew the attention of the Minister of Education to the wonderful transformation that had been wrought in an army building. The Mayor of Masterton, the late Mr. Kemp, for some reason or other was well down on the list of speakers, and when he did speak he humorously asked whether this was a punishment for his past sins when formerly, through his upbringing, he was not so friendly towards Catholics and their interests. The chairman of the gathering was Mr. W. Orange.

At the commencement of the second term another Brother was added to the staff. Much planting of trees and laying out of playing fields went on. In this, most valuable help and advice was given by Masterton's prominent landscape gardener and sterling Catholic, Mr. L. Robinson. In 1947 the mess-hall from Hood Aerodrome was obtained and made into a fine dormitory, into which the boarders were shifted from their temporary quarters. In the middle of that year the tenants vacated the McKillop house, which was rapidly converted into dining-room, kitchen and accommodation for the female staff. Up to this time a special committee of the St. Joseph's College Association had been in charge of the hostel arrangements. From about this time the Brothers took over the running of the boarding establishment. 1947 marks also the gaining of School Certificates by the first two candidates.

During the May holidays in 1948 the original dormitory building was altered to conform to the original plan—an assembly hall, chapel and science laboratory. In this same year one of Masterton's grand and generous Catholics, Mr. Frank Price, made it possible to obtain a two-storied house on a half-acre section adjoining the College property. Two of the Brothers moved into residence immediately in case there were any "squatters" about—an illegal habit in fashion at the time due to housing shortage.

At the end of 1948 the first candidates for the University Entrance examination were successful. By the following year the College was well established and the roll was increasing—35 boarders and 85 day-boys. Due to changes at St. Patrick's School mentioned elsewhere St. Joseph's now found it necessary to take over the boys from Standards 3 and 4. The art room and library were turned into classrooms. This year marks the beginning of the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel. Prior



Part of St. Joseph's College Chapel, Masterton.

to this Father Noel O'Sullivan, who had been the resident-chaplain at the College since 1947, had been saying daily Mass for the Brothers and boys in the common-room. The addition of two more Brothers brought the staff up to five. The year, 1949, will always be remembered as the year of the first vocations. One boy entered Holy Cross Seminary, Mosgiel, and this year (1956) received the sub-diaconate. Another boy entered the Marist Brothers' novitiate at Claremont, Timaru.



Group at first Ordination ceremony in Wairarapa—Rev. Patrick O'Connor at Masterton, July 16th, 1957.

Seated from left: Rev. Fathers B. Tottman, V. McGlone, P. O'Connor, Archbishop McKeefry,
Rev. Fathers N. Moore, P.P., V.F., N. O'Sullivan.

Standing from left: Brother Sylvester, Rev. Fathers P. McRae, J. Buist, J. Mutch, C. Barr-Brown, T. Duffy, N. Pettit,
B. Carruthers, N. Havenman, O. Dolan, J. Broadbent, Mr. S. Cuneen (student), Rev. Fathers C. Karalus, P. Dunn.

Altar Boys: A. Randall (Metropolitan Cross), N. Carson (Processional Cross), M. O'Connor (Crozier).

Altar Boys in front row: J. Eastwood, P. Mullins, J. Marsh, A. O'Connor.

At the beginning of 1951 Brother Adrian, the first Director of the College, was succeeded by Brother Wilfrid. Brother Adrian has since become the New Zealand Provincial of the Marist Brothers. The number of boarders this year remained at 35, but the day-boys increased to 90.

God has certainly blessed the work, and what was begun in 1944 in so simple and small a way was now, in 1952, calling for a larger building programme. A new house to accommodate five Brothers was built, the dining-room was extended and the original Brothers' house (the two storied one made available by Mr. Frank Price's generosity) was converted into a senior dormitory. Three lawn-tennis courts were also put down in front of the main school building.

In 1953 the number of boarders rose to 68, and there were nearly 100 day-boys. Brother Calixtus succeeded Brother Wilfrid as Director in 1954. We might mention here that some time previously another five acres had been added to the original McKillop block of 14 acres. This addition was a long narrow strip running from Herbert St. through to Kuripuni St. It was bounded on the west by Rugby Park and on the east by the College property. Before the College obtained the McKillop block it seemed very probable that a big housing scheme would be started there at any time. This, when roaded, would give access to one side of the 5-acre section, which could also be subdivided. When this very desirable thing from a speculator's point of view did not happen the five acre section was almost useless and was sold to the College at practically valuation price. St. Joseph's had now about 19 acres almost in the heart of residential Masterton.

Last year (1955) the secondary school roll reached 100. Towards the end of this year a fairly modern bungalow alongside the dining-room block was offered for sale to the College, and has now become an infirmary and junior dormitory. The total number of boarders for 1956 is 89.

Twelve years have gone by since the day when two priests—neighbouring pastors—during a friendly smoke at the fireside of one of them, saw visions of what might be. The visions were dim and the mists obscuring reality very

thick. The dauntless courage of the Very Rev. Nicholas Moore, who shouldered 95% of the burden, can be equalled only by the faith and zeal of his great predecessor, Father Anthony Halbwachs, who armed only with faith and trust in God established the Catholic Church in the place. When the centennial of the Church in Masterton is commemorated the name of the founder of St. Joseph's College, Nicholas Moore, will be written with honour alongside that of another great pioneer, Anthony Halbwachs.



View of Dormitory, St. Joseph's College, Masterton.

CHAPTER XXII.

Here and there.

The grand Catholic names of the Cliffords, the Vava-sours, the Petres and the Welds mentioned elsewhere in this history are intimately associated with the pioneering days of Wellington and the Wairarapa. They belonged to families in England with a noble Catholic tradition. Frederick Aloysius Weld has left us a good deal of information about himself which is included in his life written by Alice, Lady Lovat in 1914. What the writer "Poneke", in the Wellington "Evening Post" article "Know your Wellington", on April 27th, 1957, says of Weld, could no doubt be applied to the others mentioned above—all close relatives of Weld—that they were imbued with the highest ideals of service to their fellow men, and "all played a significant part in the cultural, social and economic development of New Zealand." The Wharekaka sheep station in the south Wairarapa was taken up on leasehold from the Maoris about 1844 by Weld, Clifford and Vava-sour. (Cf. Introduction). Frederick Weld was probably the first man to take sheep into the Wairarapa and he served New Zealand as farmer, explorer, soldier, Parliamentarian, Minister of the Crown and Prime Minister.

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An interesting piece of information has just come to hand (May, 1957) casting some light on what was known as the Greytown Catholic Chapel before the church was built there. (cf. Ch. V.). It was given to the author by Mrs. Mary Kirkwood (nee Goode). She is now 87 years old but blessed with a remarkable memory. As a child she came from England with her parents in the early 70's. They settled in Greytown. She knew Father Halbwachs quite well. When asked if she could cast any light on what was called the Greytown Catholic Chapel before the church



Congregation at St. Mary's Carterton after the Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving to commemorate Carterton's one hundred years of settlement, Sunday, March 10th, 1957.

was built she answered, "Oh! that was a room in Barney Gallagher's house". This would seem to be correct because if the reader will refer to Chapter V where this question is discussed it will be noted that a meeting was called by Father Halbwachs to consider building a church. The location for this meeting was advertised as the Greytown Catholic Chapel. Later another such meeting was called, and the local newspaper records that it took place in Bernard Gallagher's house.

Another vivid memory Mrs. Kirkwood has, was of seeing the late Mrs. Michael Lipinski with a horse and single furrow plough cultivating the Catholic Church acre in Greytown. This is very likely true because the author knows for certain that Michael Lipinski, when he arrived from Poland, was permitted with other Polish families to pitch their tents on this land while they sought employment with the Waiohine River Board, and made more permanent arrangements for accommodation.

N.B.—The "Mrs." given in the above paragraph is not a misprint.

* * * * *

Rev. Father Halbwachs, S.M., was the first resident clergyman of any denomination to live in Carterton. The Methodist church was built in 1871 but was served from Greytown till 1911. The Anglican church was opened on February 21st, 1875, but it was still a part of Greytown charge till October, 1881, when Carterton was given its own vicar.

* * * * *

A priest nephew of Father Halbwachs gives us the following story of his uncle. He was preaching in St. Patrick's Church, Masterton, on the celebration of its patron saint.

"My dear Brethren,

Today is St. Patrick's Day, the patron saint of Ireland and of this church. Some say St. Patrick was born in France; others claim he was of Irish birth; many hold that he saw the light of day in Scotland, but there was no one who ever said that he was born in England." No comment is necessary.

The total number of baptisms administered by Father Halbwachs during his seven years in the Wairarapa was 276. William Edward Darroch, who was the first child that he baptized, died on November 23rd, 1918, at the St. Patrick's College temporary hospital in Wellington—a victim of the influenza epidemic.

* * * * *

Thomas Turnbull, who was the architect and designer of the Wairarapa's first Catholic churches—five in number—lived in Wellington. In 1884 he received several honours in Great Britain, even being elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects—the highest distinction that could be given in those days by the profession of architects.

* * * * *

In view of the present interest in the question of giving justice to private schools and also the great struggle that the Catholic body has engaged in so that their children will receive a good religious education, the following extract from the leading article of the "Wairarapa Standard" under date March 3rd, 1884, is worthy of note:

"DANGER TO NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

The good system of national education—free, secular and compulsory—which has been established in this colony after many years of determined struggle, is now threatened with a danger alike from the pretended friends and open enemies. The Roman Catholics have ever fought strongly against it, but though they were wrong, yet their opposition was honest in its way. Yet we see no good reason why the R.C's should oppose the existing education system. It is absolutely free from all taint of denominationalism. Roman Catholics can with a clear conscience send their children to the State Schools, and have them taught the doctrines of their own religious creed, either at home or by their spiritual advisers. But this is not the worst danger which threatens the education system. A certain number of clergymen belonging to all denominations desire to have the Bible read in the State Schools. To have the Bible read anywhere is, of itself, a good thing, but in this particular case, it would undoubtedly result in the introduction of the denominational element into our system of education. To allow that to be done would prove fatal to the whole scheme.

The only educational system to which the majority of the people belonging to the various religious sects will agree, is a purely secular one."

The only comment that is here made is that the Catholic body in the Wairarapa did not hold with the Editor either then or since. The history of Catholic education in this work shows that.

* * * * *

The Masterton Catholic Club, which is well known throughout New Zealand, was formed at a meeting in St. Patrick's Hall, in 1931, for the purpose of fostering social, literary, and sporting activities among the youth of the parish. Members of the club have competed fourteen times in different parts of the North Island and twice in the South Island, at the competitions held annually by the Catholic Clubs' Society of New Zealand. On no less than nine occasions the members have been successful in winning the award for most points scored in contests embracing prepared debate, religious questions, elocution, impromptu speech, tennis and table tennis.

* * * * *

Extract from the "Wairarapa Standard", February 24th, 1886.

"At the present time it is computed that the Catholics of New Zealand number about 80,000, half of whom reside in Wellington districts. They have established and maintained 65 schools containing 5000 children, costing during the last ten years £263,000, in addition to which they have maintained 96 churches, 17 convents, and 3 orphanages. Fifty years ago there were probably 30 Catholics in New Zealand, and these resided at Hokianga, North Auckland."

Note: We have come a long way since then, even in the Wairarapa.

* * * * *

St. Patrick's Day in 1899 fell on a Friday and was celebrated in Masterton by a Grand Concert and Dance. Father McKenna through the local press regretted the coincidence of Friday, but stated that the canon law of abstinence did not oblige non-Catholics, and he hoped that they would not stay away because of any fear for the usual excellence of the supper.

In the early years St. Patrick's Day was observed as a holiday, and, at least in Masterton and Greytown, large sports meetings were held. There does not seem to have been the same enthusiasm in Carterton, and a correspondent writing from there on one occasion described the place as being so deserted that "a chain shot could be fired from one end of the town to the other without hurting anyone." Much prominence was given one year to the holding in honour of St. Patrick's Day of a great Scandinavian Ball organized by a lady with a very Irish name. This may have been a shrewd way of increasing the money-making potential of such a function.

* * * * *

The following story is stated to have been one of Father Halbwachs' which he would tell at weddings, especially if there were many non-Catholics present. He may have heard it in America. A young man in a Protestant church one day felt more than a passing interest in a young lady nearby. Knowing his Bible well he marked it at the Epistle of St. John, v. 5, and passed it to her. It read, 'And now, I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee that we love one another'. She returned the compliment from the Book of Ruth II, 10, 'Why have I found grace in thine eyes seeing I am a stranger.' He returned the Bible at the 3rd Epistle of St. John, v. 13, 'I have many things to write unto you; but I would not write with paper and ink: But I trust to come unto you and speak face to face that our joy may be full.' The result was they were married and lived happily ever after."

Father Halbwachs, who loved a good laugh, would chuckle and his long black beard would move up and down with the motion of his head. The author had only vague references to go on and has had to reconstruct the story from the Authorised Version.

* * * * *

The first branch of the Children of Mary's Sodality in the district was inaugurated in St. Patrick's Church, Masterton, on Sunday, September 8th, 1907, when fourteen aspirants were received by the Rev. J. McKenna. The occasion was a Mission preached by the two Redemptorists, Fathers Clune (later Archbishop of Perth, W.A.) and McDermott.



Catholic
Church



Wairarapa's first township—Greytown to-day, looking towards the south. Church of the Sacred Heart, built 1880, stands on the first land obtained by the Catholic Church in the Wairarapa.

White's Aviation Photograph.

The only Catholic church in the Wairarapa to possess a pipe organ is St. Patrick's Church in Masterton. This fine instrument was the gift of the Percy family in 1918.

* * * * *

In 1913 the Greytown Borough Council paid £50 for a strip of the "Church acre" in Kuratawhiti St. for widening purposes. The fact is mentioned because this section was the first piece of land owned by the Catholic Church in Wairarapa, and is therefore of historical importance.

* * * * *

The Masterton correspondent of the "Wairarapa Standard", December 7th, 1876, wrote, "Different towns in the Wairarapa are noted for different characteristics. Thus Featherston is famous for hospitality, Greytown for unity and concord, and Carterton for civility." We hope it is still so in 1956.

* * * * *

The first Provincial Council of the Catholic Church of New Zealand was opened in Wellington on January 21st, 1899. The Wairarapa was represented by the Rev. Father John McKenna.

* * * * *

Reference has been made in Ch. V to a judgment summons for debt being issued against Father Halbwachs on September 17th, 1883, in the Magistrate's Court, Greytown. This building, recently closed by the Justice Department, has been obtained by the Catholics of Greytown in 1957, through the generous gift of Trotman Bros. Ltd., and the main part of the court-room has been neatly added as a transept to the Greytown church which was built by Father Halbwachs in 1880. The author wonders whether the saints in Heaven enjoy any of the humorous things that happen on earth.

A few notes on the Japanese prisoner of war camp in Featherston should be given before the Catholic aspect passes into legend. The camp was set up in 1942, when the tide of war in the Pacific had turned in favour of the Allies. Over 800 Japanese were brought to Featherston, mostly from the Solomon Islands. Among them was a solitary Catholic, Maruyama Shinji, prisoner No. 197. He was a convert who had married a Japanese Catholic girl a couple of years before he was sent on active service. His wife was the housekeeper for a Japanese Catholic priest in his home town.

Rev. Father L. Aldridge, S.M., who was at the time a military chaplain to the various camps in the district, had discovered this man to be a Catholic. He was able on one occasion to say Mass for him and give him the sacraments. Shortly afterwards Father V. McGlone was appointed parish priest of Carterton and South Wairarapa, and he made strong efforts to carry on the good work begun by Father Aldridge. Unfortunately the opposition of the camp authorities prevented this. Prudence forbids the giving of details in this history of the means used to prevent the priest giving spiritual help to Maruyama, but when the whole matter was put before Army Headquarters in Wellington by the Right Rev. Monsignor Connolly, a permanent official pass—one of the few issued—was delivered by personal messenger from Wellington to the parish priest in October 1944, and for the remaining years of his imprisonment Maruyama received regular spiritual care. He was confirmed by Archbishop O'Shea on October 15th, 1945, taking the name of Francis. His piety was most marked on all occasions, and before leaving New Zealand he wrote a wonderful letter of appreciation of all the Church had done for him. This letter translated into English has been published in England in Catholic papers, and in the *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*.

CONCLUSION.

Church histories can no doubt be very dull affairs. It is not an easy matter to combine hard facts with pleasing sequences. An honest attempt has been made in these pages to give the Catholics of this generation in the district of the Wairarapa an account of some of the things that have been achieved amidst "a thousand sacrifices and great hardships".

The Catholic Church with her priests has not failed in the task of keeping the light of Faith burning in the souls of her people in this portion of the Lord's vineyard throughout the past one hundred years of organized settlement. The small seed planted by the pioneer priests has not fallen on barren soil. It was slow in sprouting, but it did grow and is now strong. In a territory where one priest worked eighty years ago, to-day eight priests labour. Twelve churches, four convents, six schools dot the land. We are reaping "the fruits of toil, of tears and of suffering" endured by the saintly founder.

In matters spiritual there is nothing static. Not to advance is to go back. When another chapter comes to be written a century hence, may the historian then have many greater things to record, satisfied that the foundations in the beginning were well and truly laid with trust in God and faith in the future.

**THE FIRST MISSIONARY PRIESTS TO VISIT
THE DISTRICT OF THE WAIRARAPA.**

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|--------|
| Rev. John Comte, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1845 - 1854. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. John Forest, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1850 - 1859. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. John Petitjean, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1850 - 1876. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. Anthony Seon, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1862 - 1871. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. John Goutenoire, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1872. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. Matthew Kearney, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1874. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. Eugene Pertuis, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1866 - 1871. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. Francis Yardin, S.M. | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1875 - 1876. | R.I.P. |
| Rev. M. McCaughey* | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 1875. | R.I.P. |

The years given are those during which these priests worked in the Wellington and Hutt districts and at times visited the Wairarapa.

* N.B.—The name of Rev. M. McCaughey is found spelt in various ways in sources used in this history (cf. pages 13 and 17). The spelling here given is the way he writes it in the Kumara Baptismal Register.

PRIESTS WHO HAVE BEEN STATIONED IN THE WAIRARAPA.

CARTERTON. *Founded 1876.*

Parish Priests :

| | |
|---|--|
| Rev. A. Halbwachs, S.M. | 1876-1882. |
| (From 1882-1901 served from Masterton). | |
| Rev. T. Cahill | 1901-1907. R.I.P. |
| Rev. E. Duffy | 1905. R.I.P. (Relieving Father Cahill). |
| Rev. J. Bowe | 1908-1913. R.I.P. |
| Rev. T. Kinkead | 1913-1915. R.I.P. |
| Rev. M. O'Beirne | 1915-1918. R.I.P. |
| Rev. D. Cronin | 1918. R.I.P. |
| Rev. C. J. Outtrim, S.M. | 1918-1919. (Relieving). |
| Rev. M. O'Beirne | 1919. R.I.P. |
| Rev. E. Phelan | 1919-1922. |
| Rev. R. Hegarty | 1922-1927. R.I.P. |
| Rev. M. Broughton | 1928. |
| Rev. B. Kaveney | 1929-1935. R.I.P. |
| Rev. V. P. Kelly | 1935-1936. |
| Rev. E. Carmine | 1936-1939. |
| Rev. F. Devlin | 1939-1942. R.I.P. |
| Rev. V. J. McGlone | 1943. (Still in charge). |

Assistants :

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Rev. F. B. Seward | 1930. |
| Rev. Noel Sullivan | 1931-1932. |
| Rev. T. Linehan | 1932. R.I.P. |
| Rev. B. Foster | 1932-1933. |
| Rev. R. Gilhooly | 1934. R.I.P. |
| Rev. A. J. Heavey | 1935-1938. |
| Rev. L. C. Connor | 1939-1942. |
| Rev. N. C. O'Sullivan | 1939-1942. |
| Rev. N. Pettit | 1950-1952. |

MASTERTON. *Founded 1882.***Parish Priests :**

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Rev. A. Halbwachs, S.M. | 1882-1883. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. P. Treacy | 1884-1887. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. McKenna | 1887-1930. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. N. Moore | 1930. |
| (Still in charge). | |

Assistants .

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Rev. T. McKenna | 1888-1891. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. W. Madden | 1891. R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. O'Meara | 1892-1893. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. P. Long | 1897-1898. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. Osborne | 1899-1900. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. T. Haire | 1900-1901. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. E. Duffy | 1902. R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. Molloy | 1903. R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. Kelly | 1904-1909. |
| Rev. W. J. Saunderson | 1909-1910. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. Molloy | 1910. |
| Rev. C. Harnett | 1911-1913. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. T. Guinane | 1914-1917. |
| Rev. E. Phelan | 1917-1918. |
| Rev. M. J. Lewis | 1918. R.I.P. |
| Rev. E. J. Phelan | 1917-1919. |
| Rev. M. Broughton | 1920. |
| Rev. R. Hegarty | 1921-1922. |
| Rev. T. McDermott | July-Dec. 1922. |
| Rev. F. Devlin | Dec. 1922-1924. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. R. Moran | 1924-1925. |
| Rev. P. Hanratty | 1925-1926. |
| Rev. T. Hilly | 1926. |
| Rev. M. E. Uhlenberg | 1927-1930. |
| Rev. W. McDevitt | 1931. |
| Rev. C. Harnett | 1932-1934. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. M. Dillon | 1935-1942. |
| Rev. M. Foley | 1936-1937. |
| Rev. R. Gilhooly | 1942-1944. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. A. Heavey | 1945. |
| Rev. D. Ward | 1946-1947. |
| | R.I.P. |
| Rev. M. Bradford | 1947-1950. |
| Rev. T. A. Duffy | 1950-1951. |
| Rev. D. Sullivan | 1952. |
| Rev. M. McDonald | 1953-1955. |
| Rev. N. Havenman | 1956. |
| | to date. |
| Rev. N. O'Sullivan, chaplain to | |
| St. Joseph's College | 1946-1952. |
| Chaplain to St. Bride's Con- | |
| vent | 1953-1957. |

PAHIATUA. *Founded 1894.***Parish Priests :**

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| Rev. T. McKenna | ..... | 1894-1919. R.I.P. |
| Rev. E. Duffy | ..... | 1903-1905. (Relieving). R.I.P. |
| Rev. E. Long | ..... | 1913-1914. (Relieving). R.I.P. |
| Rev. W. J. Saunderson | | 1920-1922. R.I.P. |
| Rev. E. Sweeney | ..... | 1922. (Relieving 7 months). |
| Rev. M. Cashman | ..... | 1923-1946. R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. Garrahy | ..... | 1934. (Relieving 2 months). |
| Rev. T. Guinane | ..... | 1946. (Relieving 6 months). |
| Rev. E. Sweeney | ..... | 1947. (Still in charge). |
| Rev. J. Austin | ..... | 1953. (Relieving). |

Assistant :

Rev. B. Carruthers, 1953 to date.

EKETAHUNA. *Founded 1920.***Parish Priests :**

| | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Rev. E. J. Bergin | ..... | 1920. R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. Kennedy | ..... | 1921-1922. R.I.P. |
| Rev. V. Kelly | ..... | 1923. (February-October). |
| Rev. A. Doherty | ..... | 1923-1934. |
| Rev. E. J. Sweeney | ..... | 1935-1946. |
| Rev. F. Walsh | ..... | 1946-1947. (Relieving 4 months). |
| Rev. C. Barr-Brown | ..... | 1947. (Still in charge). |

FEATHERSTON. *Founded 1953.***Parish Priests :**

| | | |
|---------------|-------|-----------------------------|
| Rev. F. Walsh | ..... | 1953. R.I.P. |
| Rev. J. Buist | ..... | 1954. (Still in charge). |

VOCATIONS TO PRIESTHOOD.

| | Ordained. | Town. | Parish. | |
|-----------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| Rev. James Eccleton* | 1909 | Greytown | Carterton | R.I.P. |
| Rev. Mark O'Leary, S.M. | 1914 | Masterton | Masterton | R.I.P. |
| Rev. Desmond Minett, S.M. | 1938 | Masterton | Masterton | |
| Rev. Philip Tuohy | 1939 | Carterton | Carterton | |
| Rev. Noel Doohan, S.M. | 1941 | Featherston | Carterton | |
| Rev. Thomas Fouhy | 1943 | Marima | Eketahuna | |
| Rev. Thomas G. Kerins, S.M. | 1943 | Masterton | Masterton | |
| Rev. Douglas Ward | 1946 | Martinborough | Carterton | R.I.P. |
| Rev. Patrick O'Connor | 1957 | Greytown | Carterton, later Masterton. | |

* The Rev. J. Eccleton was accustomed in later years to spell his name "Eccleston".

LIST OF SISTERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST. BRIGID.

ST. BRIDE'S CONVENT, MASTERTON. *Founded 1898.*

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| M.M. Gertrude Banahan | 1899-1921. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Teresa Flynn | 1899-1905, 1921, 1925. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Patrick Phelan | 1899-1920. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Joseph Flahavan | 1902-1930, 1940-1954. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Paul Truman | 1904. | |
| M.M. Peter Shapter | 1904-1910. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Canice Cooke | 1904-1920. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Gerard Cotter | 1904-1915. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Benignus Lynsky | 1905-1911. | |
| M.M. Anthony Faulkner | 1905-1929, 1931, 1938. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Teresa Bourke | 1909-1910, 1920-1928, 1953. | |
| M.M. Bernard Savage | 1915-1940, 1943-1954. | |
| M.M. Alphonsus Bourke | 1909, 1921-1928. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Josephine Farrell | 1923-1925. | |
| M.M. Vincent Kissane | 1925-1927. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Aquinas Johnson | 1929-1945. | |
| M.M. Otteran Phelan | 1929-1932, 1940-1942. | |
| M.M. Veronica Allen | 1930-1931, 1933-1948. | |
| M.M. Brendan Conroy | 1930-1954. | |
| M.M. Evangelist McKenna | 1933-1956. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Baptist Madden | 1939. | |
| M.M. Coleman Hughes | 1940-1943. | |
| M.M. Columcille Phelan | 1943-1953. | |
| M.M. Pascal Tully | 1946. | |
| M.M. Liguori Conway | 1956-1957. | |

PRESENT STAFF.

ST. BRIDE'S COLLEGE, MASTERTON.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| M.M. Margaret Mary Hourigan | 1905, 1929-1939, 1945-1957. |
| M.M. Dolores Ryan | 1929-1930, 1932, 1942-1957. |
| M.M. Clare Pilley | 1930-1957. |
| M.M. Josephine Byrne | 1943-1957. |
| M.M. Cletus O'Neill | 1946-1948, 1953-1957. |
| M.M. Tarcisius Shearer | 1948-1957. |
| M.M. Brigid Shiel | 1948-1957. |
| M.M. Maria Goretti Henry | 1954-1957. |
| M.M. Ethna Kavanagh | 1956-1957. |

Note that, although all the nuns in Masterton live in St. Bride's Convent, in order to include all members of the community over the years, separate lists have been given for St. Patrick's School (parish primary) and St. Bride's (secondary and boarding).

ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL, MASTERTON.

*Founded in 1884 and taken over by Brigidine Sisters
in 1899.*

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| M.M. Brigid Desmond | 1899-1905. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Joseph Flahavan | 1899-1901. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Claver Cooke | 1899-1904. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Michael O'Beirne | 1901-1908. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Raphael Doyle | 1901-1910, 1933-1935 | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Columba Collerton | 1905-1911. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Paul Truman | 1905-1910, 1925-1927. | |
| M.M. Borgia Morrin | 1906-1914. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Josephine Byrne | 1908-1922, 1930-1931. | |
| M.M. Evangelist McKenna | 1917-1921. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Aquinas Johnson | 1913-1923, 1953-1954. | |
| M.M. Francis Cooper | 1914-1925. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. John Baptist Madden | 1921-1931, 1955. | |
| M.M. Liguori Conway | 1923-1932. | |
| M.M. de Chantal Keogh | 1923-1926. | R.I.P. |
| MM. Damian Reichenbach | 1929-1930. | |
| M.M. Dolores Ryan | 1931, 1933-1941. | |
| M.M. Baptista Campion | 1933-1939, 1953-1954. | |
| M.M. Madeleine Kelliher | 1936-1939, 1948-1949. | |
| M.M. Oliver O'Shea | 1940-1941. | |
| M.M. Ambrose Smith | 1940-1945. | |
| M.M. Rose Tangney | 1942-1944, 1946-1948. | |
| M.M. Tarcisius Shearer | 1945-1947. | |
| M.M. Dominica McKenna | 1945. | |
| M.M. Josephine Farrell | 1946-1951. | |
| M.M. Ailbe O'Brien | 1948-1951. | |
| M.M. Paulinus Fouhy | 1950-1951. | |
| M.M. Anselm Reen | 1951-1952. | |
| M.M. Felicitas Landy | 1952-1955. | |
| M.M. Columba Lynch | 1953. | |

PRESENT STAFF, 1957.

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| M.M. Teresa Bourke | 1910-1920, 1933-1950, 1955-1957. |
| M.M. Chanel McKelvey | 1926-1932, 1941-1942, 1951-1957. |
| M.M. Veronica Allen | 1932, 1949-1957. |
| M.M. Carthage Fleming | 1956-1957. |
| M.M. Michelle Scrimgeour | 1956-1957. |

PAHIATUA CONVENT. *Founded 1906.*

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| M.M. Brigid Desmond | 1906-1914. | } FOUNDATION MEMBERS. |
| M.M. de Sales Maher | 1906-1929. | |
| M.M. Margaret Mary Hourigan | 1906-1921. | |
| M.M. Alphonsus Burke | 1906-1920. | |
| M.M. Laserian Kerr | 1908-1925. | |
| M.M. Canice Cooke | 1920-1922. | |
| M.M. Gerard Cotter | 1923-1938. | |
| M.M. Gertrude Banahan | 1921-1931. | |
| M.M. Vincent Kissane | 1921-1925, 1939-1940. | |
| M.M. Evangelist McKenna | 1921-1929. | |
| M.M. Aquinas Johnson | 1925-1929. | |
| M.M. Josephine Farrell | 1925-1934, 1933, 1951-1957. | |
| M.M. Paul Truman | 1929-1932, 1939-1944. | |
| M.M. Raphael Doyle | 1929-1932. | |
| M.M. Joseph Flahavan | 1932-1938. | |
| M.M. Ligouri Conway | 1932-1938. | |
| M.M. Baptist Madden | 1931-1939, 1945-1950. | |
| M.M. Brigid Gallagher | 1934-1935, 1938. | |
| M.M. Francis Cooper | 1935-1938. | |
| M.M. Anthony Faulkner | 1939-1953. | |
| M.M. Clement Touhy | 1939-1940, 1945-1947. | |
| M.M. Otteran Phelan | 1939-1940, 1943-1953. | |
| M.M. Madeleine Kelliher | 1940-1941, 1951-1956. | |
| M.M. Bernard Savage | 1941-1943. | |
| M.M. Oliver O'Shea | 1941-1942, 1957—. | |
| M.M. Colman Hughes | 1943-1944. | |
| M.M. Raphael Dowd | 1945-1950. | |
| M.M. Christopher Hoult | 1947-1950. | |
| M.M. Teresa Bourke | 1951-1954. | |
| M.M. Carthage Fleming | 1952-1954. | |
| M.M. Brendan Conroy | 1953-1957. | |
| M.M. de Paul Boyle | 1955-1956. | |
| M.M. Cyprian Wilson | 1957—. | |

CARTERTON CONVENT. *Founded 1917.*

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| M.M. Fintan Dunne | 1917-1923. | } FIRST COMMUNITY. | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Gertrude Kaufling | 1917-1933. | | |
| M.M. Benignus Lynsky | 1917-1920. | | |
| M.M. Josephine Byrne | 1924-1927, 1939-1943. | } | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Brigid Gallagher | 1924-1930. | | |
| M.M. Vincent Kissane | 1930-1933. | | |
| M.M. Paul Truman | 1933-1939. | } | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Paschal Tully | 1940-1945. | | |
| M.M. Joseph Flahavan | 1939-1940. | | |
| M.M. Josephine Farrell | 1931-1933, 1940-1946. | } | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Patrick Phelan | 1930-1939. | | |
| M.M. Anthony Faulkner | 1930-1931. | | |
| M.M. Chanel McKelvey | 1933-1939. | } | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Colman Hughes | 1939-1940. | | |
| M.M. Ambrose Smith | 1939-1940, 1945-1951. | | |
| M.M. Raphael Dowd | 1943-1946. | } | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Rose Tangney | 1945-1946. | | |
| M.M. Ita Kieley | 1954-1955. | | |
| M.M. Dominica McKenna | 1946-1952. | } | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Paulinus Fouhy | 1952-1954. | | |
| M.M. Gerard Cotter | 1939-1951. | | |
| M.M. Baptista Campion | 1951-1953. | } | R.I.P. |
| M.M. Teresa Bourke | 1952-1953. | | |
| M.M. Otteran Phelan | 1954-1955. | | |
| M.M. Baptist Madden | 1952-1955. | } | 1957 COMMUNITY |
| M.M. Bernard Savage | 1955. | | |
| M.M. Lucia Power | 1955. | | |
| M.M. Ephrem Scanlon* | 1946-1949, 1954. | | |
| M.M. Christopher Hoult* | 1950. | | |
| M.M. Ailbe O'Brien | 1953. | | |
| M.M. Aquinas Johnson | 1946-1952, 1955. | | |

* Staff of St. Teresa's School, Featherston.

MARIST BROTHERS WHO HAVE BEEN ON THE STAFF OF ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, MASTERTON.

Founded 1945.

Directors :

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Rev. Brother Adrian | 1945 - 1950. |
| Rev. Brother Wilfrid | 1951 - 1953. |
| Rev. Brother Calixtus | 1954. Still in charge. |

Staff Members :

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Rev. Brother Sylvester | 1945 - 1947, 1957. |
| Rev. Brother Edmund | 1947 - 1951. |
| Rev. Brother Fabian | 1948 - 1951. |
| Rev. Brother Vianney | 1949 - 1952, 1955. |
| Rev. Brother Egbert | 1949 - 1952. |
| Rev. Brother Benedict | 1952. |
| Rev. Brother Campion | 1952 - 1953. |
| Rev. Brother Noel | 1953 - 1956. |
| Rev. Brother Jordan | 1953 - 1954. |
| Rev. Brother Alexander | 1953 - 1957. |
| Rev. Brother Raymund | 1954. |
| Rev. Brother Lucien | 1954. |
| Rev. Brother Phelan | 1955. |
| Rev. Brother Venantius | 1955. |
| Rev. Brother Felix | 1955. |
| Rev. Brother Fergus | 1955 - 1956. |
| Rev. Brother Tarcisius | 1956 - 1957. |
| (Died Masterton, 31/7/1957). | |
| Rev. Brother Edgar | 1956. |
| Rev. Brother Placid | 1956 - 1957. |
| Rev. Brother Hilarion | 1957. |
| Rev. Brother Ralph | 1957. |

CHIEF SOURCES CONSULTED IN PREPARATION OF THIS WORK.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| New Zealand Gazette and Britannia Spectator. | } | Early editions to be found in the General Assembly and Turnbull Libraries. |
| Wellington Evening Post. | | |
| Wellington Independent. | | |
| Wairarapa Mercury—first newspaper in Wairarapa district. | | |
| Greytown Standard. | | |
| New Zealand Times—Wellington. | | |
| | | |
| Wairarapa Daily Times. | } | Fairly complete files in the Times - Age Office, Masterton, but many of the older files in poor condition. |
| Wairarapa Age. | | |
| Wairarapa Star. | | |
| Wairarapa Daily. | | |
| Wairarapa News—first newspaper in Masterton. | | |
| | | |
| Weekly Star and Wellington District Advertiser—published Masterton—bundle of odd copies discovered. | | |
| | | |
| Wairarapa Observer, later Wairarapa Daily News—odd copies, but complete files before 1926 were destroyed by fire. No duplicates known—grievous historical loss. Published in Carterton. | | |
| | | |
| Pahiatua Herald—good files in Pahiatua. | | |
| | | |
| North Wairarapa News—modern successor to above. | | |
| | | |
| Woodville Examiner—odd copies in General Assembly Library. | | |
| | | |
| Eketahuna Express—odd copies—no known files. | | |
| | | |
| Records of Catholic Church properties at Chancery office and more complete ones at Lands and Deeds Office, Wellington. | | |
| | | |
| Old Government registers of births, deaths and marriages, especially those kept at Greytown Post Office—first such office in Wairarapa. | | |
| | | |
| Historical works of Mr. A. G. Bagnall, viz: | | |
| (a) Old Greytown. | | |
| (b) Masterton's First Hundred Years. | | |
| (c) Early Castlepoint. | | |

CHIEF SOURCES—*continued.*

- Cyclopaedia of New Zealand, Volume 1. Edition 1897.
- Fishers of Men—some letters of Bishop Pompallier and other pioneer missionaries, edited by the Rev. P. T. McKeefry.
- Catholic Missionary Work in Hawkes Bay—by Rev. J. Hickson, S.M.
- Sketch of the Work of the Catholic Church in the Last Half Century in the Archdiocese of Wellington, by Archbishop Redwood.
- Two letters to Author from relatives of Father Halbwachs, S.M.
- Letters among the papers of the late Michael Francis Lipinski.
- Parish baptismal and marriage registers in the Wairarapa, Hutt and Thorndon.
- Minute book of Carterton parish meetings, 1905—1909. Not complete.
- Bishop's Guide to Wellington—sine anno—out of print.
- N.Z. Tablet—files at Holy Cross College, Mosgiel.
- Summary of History of the Catholic Church in N.Z., 1828—1936. A reprint from Teachers' Bulletin of Catholic Schools Journal, March-April 1937. Zealandia Office, Auckland.
- Year Book 1927 published by Marist Fathers of New Zealand.
- Diary of the late Mr. Sydney Johnston of Orua Wharo, Takapau. Information from Mrs. D. H. S. Riddiford, Longwood, Featherston.
- Our Centenary 1850—1950—Lower Hutt Parish. Historical notes by Rev. J. Summers.
- The Church in New Zealand, by J. J. Wilson.
- In the Path of the Pioneers, by J. J. Wilson. Defective on the Wairarapa section.
- Mr. J. F. Thompson, M.B.E., Greytown. Notes on Maori History in Wairarapa. MSS.
- Annals of St. Patrick's College, Wellington.
- Annals of the Brigidine Convents in Wairarapa.
- Historical information obtained in Hawkes Bay and Wairarapa by the author in talks with pioneers—both clerical and lay—during the last 45 years.

PRE - SUBSCRIBERS' LIST.

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Goulter, Mrs. M.
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Wrigley, Mr. C. R.

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British Council, Bogota

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Marist Fathers, St. Mary's

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Scadden, Mr. R.
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Bouzaid, Mr. Mick
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Glasspole, Mrs. K. J.
Moody, Mr. and Mrs. E.

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Duffy, Mr. D. F.
Gleeson, Miss J. M.
Jago, Miss V.
Moore, Mrs. C.
Riddiford, Mr. E. A.

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Byrne, Mother Mary Josephine
Cairns, Mrs. J. M.
Cairns, Mr. T. J.
Calixtus, Rev. Brother
Carle, Mr. C. J.
Chapman, Miss R.
Corlett, Mrs. E.
Costello, Mr. J.
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Eastwood, Mr. P. J.
Kenny, Mrs.
Kerins, Mrs. E. M.
Kerridge, Mr. and Mrs. C.
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Nelson, Mr. Trevor
Orange, Mr. W. C.
Orange, Mr. W. G.
O'Rourke, Miss E.
O'Shea, Mr. C.
Pickering, Mrs. C. M.
Reilly, Miss J.
Stemp, Mr. A.
Sumunovich, Mrs. D.
School, St. Patrick's, Std. 3 & 4

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NELSON.

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 Bourke, Mr. D. L.
 Brosnahan, Mr. P.
 Brosnahan, Mr. J. J.
 Brigidine Sisters
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 Delahunty, Mr. P. S.
 Mabey, Mrs. G.
 Murphy, Mr. J. F.
 O'Neill, Mr. J. J.
 Shanahan, Mr. J. F.

ROME, ITALY.

Irish Embassy to Holy See

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 Power, Mr. R.

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 Manning, Mr. and Mrs. R.
 O'Connor, Rev. Fr. S.

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Luoni, Mrs. M.

TAWA FLAT.

Connor, Rev. Fr. L. C.

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 Bird, Mrs. Lena
 Bird, Mr. N. J.

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 Pearce, Mr. H. S.
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McGrath, Rev. J.

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 Martin, Mr. G.
 Martin, Mr. T. P.
 McCool, Mrs. A. P.
 McCullough, Mrs. C.
 Murray, Miss R. M.

Since the illustrations in this work are incorporated into the text, it has not been thought necessary to give them a special index. Accordingly they have been included here—the more prominent ones being indicated by "illus." (illustration) or "port." (portrait).

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