CHAPTER III

THE JOURNEY TO MISSOURI

§ I. THE CUMBERLAND ROAD

The party of Jesuits that left White Marsh early on the morning of April 11, 1823, to open in the country beyond the Mississippi the first house of their order since its restoration in 1814 consisted of Father Charles Felix Van Quickenborne, superior, master of novices and general director of the expedition, Father Peter Joseph Timmermans, assistant master of novices, seven Belgian novices, Felix Livinus Verreydt, Francis de Maillet, Judocus Van Assche, Peter John Verhaegen, John Baptist Smedts, John Anthony Elet and Peter John De Smet, and three coadjutor-brothers, Henry Reiselman, Charles Strahan, and Peter De Meyer. With the party were six Negro slaves, Tom, Moses and Isaac with their respective wives, Polly, Nancy and Succy, all of whom had been employed on the White Marsh plantation and were now assigned to service in Missouri.[1]

The first stage of the journey, from White Marsh to Wheeling, was made on foot. It was no preference on the part of the Jesuit emigrants for pedestrian exercise that prompted this mode of travelling, *pedibus apostolorum*, as one of their number expressed it The meagreness of the means at their command left them no alternative. Yet, when one reads of the experiences of other missionary travellers westward bound who chose to patronize the stage-coaches of the day, the course taken by Van Quickenborne and his party does not seem to have been so very undesirable. In 1816 Father De Andreis and his band of eleven Lazarists, among them Father Joseph Rosati, future first Bishop of St. Louis, journeyed partly on foot and partly by stage from Baltimore to Pittsburg Their experience while travelling by stage was distinctly

[1] The account of the journey of Father Van Quickenborne and his party to Missouri in 1823 as presented in this chapter is based mainly on a manuscript narrative in English by Father De Smet, one of the participants in the "expedition," as the journey in question was often referred to in Jesuit letters and records of the day This narrative, of some eighty pages octavo, constitutes little more than the opening chapter of a history of the Jesuit Province of Missouri which the missionary in the last year or two of his life set himself to compile De Smet's narrative is not an original work, but a translation or paraphrase, with added details, of a Latin history of the early Missouri Mission written by Father Peter Verhaegen (A)

unpleasant The vehicle, which was without springs, jolted painfully over the rough road, was most uncomfortably crowded, and at intervals upset or broke down, on one occasion collapsing at night in the middle of a mountain torrent and during a drenching rain The following year, 1817, Bishop Du Bourg, while on his way west to take possession of his temporary episcopal see in St Louis, followed the same route over the Alleghanies as that taken by De Andreis and his party He, too, journeyed or began to journey by stage. As the vehicle had repeatedly upset during the first two days, the Bishop, with his companion, Father Blanc, the future Archbishop of New Orleans, abandoned it altogether and made the remainder of the journey on foot Four years later, in 1821, Father Nerinckx, with seven candidates for the sisterhood of Loretto, set out by stage from Baltimore, but the conveyance having apparently collapsed on the way, the party had to walk the entire distance over the mountains When experiences like these were frequently the lot of the stage-coach passengers of the day, journeying by foot, even over the Alleghany Mountains, had its compensations [2]

The route taken by Van Quickenborne's party was the old Cumberland Road This, beginning at Cumberland on the Potomac, passed through Uniontown, Brownsville and Washington in Pennsylvania and led across what was then Virginia to Wheeling on the Ohio Together with the pike from Baltimore to Cumberland, it formed the chief line of overland communication between the East and West and was the favorite highway of emigrants to the Ohio Valley The "National Pike," for the Cumberland Road was built and maintained by federal appropriation, was soon to figure in the great senate debates

[2] Joseph Rosati, C M , *Life of the Very Rev Felix de Andreis, C M* (St Louis, 1900), p 126

Martin J Spalding, *Sketches of the Life and Times of the Rt Rev Benedict Joseph Flaget, First Bishop of Louisville* (Louisville, 1852), p 172 According to a letter of the scholastic, Van Assche, (Florissant, September 1, 1825), the stage-coach fare from Baltimore to Wheeling was a dollar for every sixteen miles No charge was made for passenger's baggage under thirty or forty pounds, but excess baggage was charged for at regular passenger rates, e g an excess of one hundred and fifty or one hundred and sixty pounds, the weight of the average man, cost a dollar per sixteen miles, the regular passenger rate

At a later period, 1837, Bishop Rosati and Father Verhaegen, travelling by stage from Wheeling to Baltimore, were to meet with discomfort on the way, as Rosati tells in his diary "April 6, 1837 We arrived in the evening at Brownsville two of the horses not yet used to pulling the vehicle refused to go, and, not to run any risk of an untoward accident, we got down from the vehicle after a mile [?] and finished the journey on foot We supped in Uniontown—near the summit of the height known as Laurelhill we alighted from the stage, for the road, all covered over with snow and ice, was too slippery and exceedingly dangerous for a distance of four or five miles we travelled on foot" Kenrick Seminary Archives (Webster Groves, Mo)

over internal improvements and there are allusions to it in the memorable Hayne-Webster discussion of 1831. The condition of the pike in 1823, according to a contemporary report, was one of neglect and decay. The Postmaster General, after riding over it from end to end, declared "that in some places the bed was cut through by wheels, that in others it was covered with earth and rocks that had fallen down from the sides of the cuttings, and that here and there the embankment along deep fillings has so washed away that two wagons could not pass each other." [3]

Having left White Marsh behind them and struck out on the country road that led to Baltimore, the Jesuit wayfarers reached the outskirts of the city before sunset of the same day. Here, fatigued after their first day of travel, they readily put up with the inconvenience of taking their night's rest in a single room, on the floor of which they spread out the mattresses they had been at pains to provide themselves with for the journey The next day they were in Baltimore, where Father Van Quickenborne took leave of Archbishop Maréchal after obtaining of him an altar stone for the celebration of Mass [4]

From Baltimore Van Quickenborne addressed to the Father General a brief account, already referred to, of the circumstances that had brought about the unexpected venture on which he was now embarked He notes that the affair is being sponsored by the government, a circumstance which leads him to invest it naively with an importance which one can scarcely suppose it to have had in the public eye

> As a consequence the eyes almost of the entire nation are fixed upon us If the venture succeeds, most abundant fruit can be hoped for The novices are delighted at the prospect of the new mission I get the money for our travelling expenses by begging and today we begin the journey in exultant spirits under the auspices of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Holy Father, St Ignatius and St Francis Xavier The Procurator of the Province gave two hundred dollars and Reverend Father Superior reenforced the seven novices with three brothers, so that now we are twelve in number Although the affair has been settled in irregular fashion (*irregulariter*) on the part of some, I trust the Lord has used these means to open up for us a very vast field which is now barren but promises to become highly fertile with the years We are to put up a house in Florissant, a place bordering on the Missouri and not far away from St Louis where up to the present Bishop Du Bourg has had his See

Bishop Du Bourg, in his concern that the federal authorities in Washington be formally advised of the departure of the Jesuit party,

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[3] McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, 5 149

[4] Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1017

had requested Count de Menou, *chargé d'affaires* of the French embassy, to inform Secretary Calhoun of the circumstance when it should come to pass. In compliance with this request de Menou transmitted to Calhoun a note dated Baltimore, April 15, 1823, which he had received from Van Quickenborne "I have the honor to inform your excellency that our band of Missionaries passed by this city today on their way to their destination on the Missouri."

The trunks and boxes that made up the baggage of the party were transferred in Baltimore to two large wagons, each drawn by six horses. These wagons, hired at the rate of three dollars and a half for each hundred pounds weight, were to transport the baggage all the way to Wheeling.[5] Moreover, a light spring wagon had been secured at White Marsh in which to carry provisions and kitchen utensils as also the "altar trunk," which contained the vestments and other equipment necessary for the celebration of Mass On the same day that they arrived in Baltimore the novices and lay brothers left the city for Conewago in Adams County, Pennsylvania, where there was a Jesuit residence, while Van Quickenborne remained behind for two days to complete preparations for the journey overland to Wheeling After forty-eight hours on the way the novices reached Conewago in a state of exhaustion, their blistered feet giving evidence that they were yet unused to the difficulties of foot-travelling over country roads Brother De Meyer was so much the worse for his experience that he fainted before reaching Conewago and it became necessary to convey him the remainder of the way in a vehicle sent for the purpose by the superior of the residence At Conewago, where Van Quickenborne came up to them, the novices spent five days, employing most of the time in copying out Father Plowden's *Instructions on Religious Perfection,* a task they had begun before leaving White Marsh From Conewago they set out early in the morning for Taneytown where they arrived on the same day. Here the pastor, Father Zocchi, an Italian, lavished attentions on the travellers and with the assistance of some Catholic families of the place, provided them with shelter.

On the morrow, as they started out, their objective was Frederick or Fredericktown in Maryland on the high road between Baltimore and Wheeling Here the heavy baggage-wagons, which had not made the detour to Conewago, were awaiting their arrival They were at Frederick before evening, sharing the hospitality of the superior of the local Jesuit residence, Father John McElroy, who had made the acquaintance of Van Quickenborne and his novices at White Marsh, where he conducted a retreat for them. From the moment he first heard about it

[5] Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1017

Father McElroy was eagerly interested in the Missouri Mission now being set on foot He presented Van Quickenborne with a roan horse, which, however, proved unserviceable on the way, as the recipient of the gift subsequently informed his friend, adding with a touch of unconscious humor that he would have sold the animal promptly had opportunity offered. While at Frederick Van Quickenborne wrote to Father Dzierozynski, April 22 "We all arrived here in good health Everything has proceeded well so far. We were most hospitably received at Conewago, had every need provided for and were sent off with one hundred and twenty dollars" The day the travellers spent with Father McElroy was the last they were to pass under a Jesuit roof until they were settled in their new home beyond the Mississippi. The little presbytery at Frederick was the farthest western outpost of the Society of Jesus in the United States.[6]

Beyond Frederick the party followed the National Pike. Each day had its customary routine described in these terms by one of the participants

> The wagons went on before or behind them by day, and at night stopped at the same place When they had made arrangements for the use of one or two rooms during the night, each one would look for his bundle of bedding in the wagon, loosen the rope that kept it folded and then would spread it out on the floor at the place assigned him for the night Next morning each one would replace his bedding in the wagon Before sunrise both Fathers said Mass Two meals a day were taken in the open air, after an early morning tramp and the discovery of a cool spring of water (pretty numerous on the public road), each one would set to work in accordance with the directions given him Some kindled the fire, others brought dishes, food and water, others again dressed the food and when cooked served it around, a fallen tree or a slab of stone on the bare ground served them as a table [7]

Here and there the group had the satisfaction of finding one or more Catholic families at a stopping-place along the way Not only was the constantly recurring problem of suitable lodgings thereby more easily solved, but they were assured a respectable place for the celebra-

[6] Van Quickenborne ad Dzierozynski, Frederick, April 22, 1823 (B) John McElroy, born in Brookborough, Ireland, May 14, 1782, entered the Society of Jesus at Georgetown College October 10, 1806, died at Frederick, Md , September 12, 1877 One of the many services rendered by Father McElroy was the pains he took, while discharging the duties of procurator or treasurer of his province, to collect and preserve a large number of contemporary letters bearing on the early years of the Missouri Mission This correspondence, now in the archives of the Jesuit Province of Maryland-New York, is important material for the history of the Missouri Mission

[7] De Smet, *History of the Missouri Mission* (Ms) (A)

tion of Mass The names of some of the Catholics who thus dispensed hospitality to the Jesuit party have been preserved. At Williams, there was Mr. Adams, at Hancock, where the Baltimore and Philadelphia high-roads came together, Mr Goulding, near Oldtown, thirty-three miles beyond Hancock, Mr. Bevens, at or near Cumberland, Mrs Timmons, a mile and a half beyond Uniontown, Mr Peter McCann, at Brownsville, Mr McSherry, at Washington, Pa , Mr. Blake, and seven miles from Wheeling, Mr. Thompson [8]

At Cumberland the party were at the foot of the eastern slope of the Alleghany Mountains, over which the western highway was to lead them Though not remarkable for mountain scenery, the Alleghanies made a deep impression on them, they probably had never seen even a respectable foot-hill in their native Flanders They marvelled at the sights that now presented themselves as they left the lower levels for higher altitudes beyond Great yawning precipices flanked the sides of the roads, stately oaks and firs lifted their heads against the mountain-sides, while from the heights above streams of the purest water came rushing down. Nine days after leaving Frederick, having descended the western slope of the Alleghanies and traversed the southwestern corner of the state of Pennsylvania, Father Van Quickenborne and his companions reached the house of a Mr Thompson, where they lodged for three days, enjoying the hospitality of that excellent Catholic With Fathers Badin, Nerinckx and other pioneer priests of America, Thompson's residence was a favorite stopping-place in their missionary journeys to and from the West. And now the arrival of Van Quickenborne and his band of emigrant Jesuits was an occasion of unfeigned pleasure to this devout layman. One of their number having presented him with a small religious picture with the names of his Jesuit guests written on the back, Mr. Thompson sent the picture to his daughter, then attending school in Baltimore, at the same time writing her a letter in which he told of the arrival of the Jesuits and the object of their journey to Missouri The daughter later became a *religieuse* of the Sacred Heart, preserving both picture and letter to her last day in grateful memory of an incident that had influenced her entire life [9]

§ 2 ON THE OHIO

Wheeling was reached on May 7 The obvious way of pursuing the journey from this point was by steamboat down the Ohio But passenger and freight rates for the distance the Jesuits intended to travel were prohibitive in view of the slender funds at their command and so

[8] Van Assche à De Nef, September 1, 1825 (A)

[9] Walter H Hill, S J , *Historical Sketch of the St Louis University* (St Louis, 1879), p 13

they resorted to a less expensive manner of transportation [10] Two large flat-boats of a type common on the Ohio in the era of immigration and known as "broadhorns" were purchased, one to carry the missionaries and their baggage, the other, the Negro servants and horses These flat-boats, securely lashed together, needed no propelling force apart from the current, with which they gently floated downstream [11]

Having transferred all their effects to the "broadhorns," the party left Wheeling behind them early in the second week of May It was customary for emigrants journeying in this fashion to secure the services of an experienced pilot There were numerous bends in the river, islands large and small interrupted its course, shoal-places, snags and sawyers were frequently encountered, while the main channel itself was not easily kept to as it often shifted its course capriciously, running sometimes mid-stream, sometimes close to shore. Piloting a flat-boat down the Ohio was not a task to be lightly undertaken by inexperienced hands. But Father Van Quickenborne could not afford to hire an expert for the business and so, purchasing a copy of the *Riverman's Guide* to furnish the theoretical information needed for the venture, he commissioned Brother Strahan, who claimed some proficiency in the art of navigation, to discharge the duties of pilot

As might have been expected, not a few untoward incidents and narrow escapes from accident marked the voyage More than once the boats were almost driven ashore by violent winds, twice they ran into a tangle of brushwood and fallen trees and could be extricated only with extreme difficulty, on more than one occasion they escaped by a narrow margin being rammed by passing steamers The boats drifted with the current by night as well as by day, two of the young men being appointed to stay up through the night and keep a close watch at the helm for danger ahead. On one occasion, about two in the morn-

[10] De Andreis and his party, twelve in number, also made the Ohio River stage (Pittsburgh to Louisville) of their journey west in 1816 by flat-boat in order to save steamboat fare, which would have been twelve hundred dollars for the party Rosati, *De Andreis* (St Louis, 1900), p 130

[11] "The flat-boat was the important craft of this era of immigration, the friend of the pioneer It was the boat that never came back, a down-stream craft solely The flat-boat of average size was a roofed craft about forty feet long, twelve feet wide and eight feet deep It was square and flat-bottomed and was managed by six oars, two of them, about thirty feet long, on each side were known as 'sweeps' and were managed by two men each, one at the stern, forty or fifty feet long including its big blade, was called the 'steering-oar', a small one was located at the prow, known as the 'gouger'" Hulbert, *Historic Highways of American Travel*, 9 119 Van Assche, apparently not with accuracy, gives the dimensions of the flat-boats as twenty-five feet long, five feet wide and seven deep (Van Assche à De Nef, September 1, 1825) In one of the boats were four horses, two belonging to the Jesuits and two to Bishop Du Bourg

ing, a steamer was heard coming upstream apparently at a very rapid rate. The watchers on board the flat-boats began to shout "lookout" as lustily as they could, only to receive back from the steamer the alarming response, "we cannot avoid you." Presently the huge craft came sweeping by within some fifteen feet of the flat-boats, which were given a lively shaking on the great rollers left in the wake of the steamer. To swell the excitement, the Negroes suddenly awakened from sleep were seized with panic, and with loud cries of distress accompanied by the neighing of the frightened horses on board the flat-boats, began efforts to save their lives One very dark night there appeared in the distance what seemed to be the large, flaming furnaces of an approaching steamer. Brother Strahan at once declared that a signal should be given from the "broadhorns," but in true nautical fashion. Father Van Quickenborne accordingly seized a blazing fagot and whirling it violently around his head began to shout "Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!" with all the vocal power he could command, his resonant voice coming back in loud reverberations from the hills and dense timber-patches that lined the river-banks But no change could be discerned in the course of the oncoming steamer The occupants of the boats were soon agreeably relieved, when, as they moved further downstream, they discovered that the object which had excited their alarm was only the furnace of a saw-mill on shore at a sharp bend of the river

Sails were no part of the normal equipment of an Ohio River flat-boat. But, a few days after leaving Wheeling the travellers became of the opinion that the addition of a mast-head and sails might accelerate materially the speed of their slow-moving craft Some members of the party accordingly put to shore in the little skiff which was carried on board and returned with several small-sized trees, one to serve as a mast-head, the others to be shaped into oars Soon a pair of large blankets were to be seen fastened to the crudely made mast and, when a favorable wind suddenly coming up caught the improvised sails fairly in the center, the boats began to move forward at an appreciable increase of speed, greatly to the delight of all on board, who thereafter never failed to set the grotesque sails to the wind as opportunity offered

Meanwhile, there was but little interruption in the regularity of religious life to which the novices had become accustomed at White Marsh. There was Mass every day on board and a bell was rung for rising, meditation, examination of conscience and other exercises belonging to the routine of religious observance A neat little altar, suitably adorned and placed at a respectful distance from the boxes and baggage on board, served for the celebration of Mass On the overland journey to Wheeling, candle-sticks had sometimes been wanting, and on such occasions two novices, each with a lighted candle in his hand, were made

to stand on either side of the altar. But this inconvenience was remedied at Wheeling by the purchase of candle-sticks. At Sunday Mass there was singing of hymns by the novices and a short address by the master of novices, the scene on such occasions suggesting the great Apostle of the East, St Francis Xavier, announcing the truths of salvation to his fellow-passengers on board the ship that was carrying them to the Indies

Provisions for table were purchased, as need arose, at the small towns passed on the way For this purpose it was customary to dispatch two or three of the novices in a small skiff to make the necessary purchases On one occasion, as three of them were returning from an errand of this kind, a sharp bend in the river hid them momentarily from view Father Timmermans, the assistant master of novices, who had been watching their approach intently, seeing them suddenly disappear from sight, was somehow seized with the apprehension that the boat and its occupants had sunk in the river Father Van Quickenborne, hearing the loud cries of his assistant, came rushing on deck and, greatly excited, at once imparted sacramental absolution to the young men in the direction where they had disappeared. The boats were then hastily run to land and moored, after which the occupants immediately began to make along the shore in the direction of the supposed catastrophe But they had not proceeded far when the three novices, having rounded the bend, suddenly came in sight, plying the oars in high spirits and quite unconscious of the shock to their companions of which they had been the innocent occasion.

Though game abounded in the woods along the river-banks, the travellers seldom if ever succeeded in bringing any down, there being no skilful marksmen among them [12] Not once in the voyage did they have the satisfaction of regaling themselves on fresh venison, though deer were sometimes seen swimming across the river. On one occasion, a fisherman in his canoe came alongside the flat-boats to dispose of his catch of fish He was standing in the canoe, holding on with one hand to the side of one of the flat-boats, when on a sudden a deer was seen swimming the river a short distance away The fisherman at once put out in his canoe towards the deer while Father Van Quickenborne and three of the novices, jumping into the skiff, also made in the same direction The skiff outstripped the canoe in the race and was soon so close to the animal that one of the novices was about to put out a hand to grasp the deer by the antlers, and, if possible, hold its head submerged under the water until it drowned. But Van Quickenborne was fearful lest the deer should leap into the boat and upset it and so gave

[12] Van Assche notes that bears, foxes, deer and wild turkeys were seen on the way

orders that no attempt be made to seize the animal As it swam away one of the young men shot at it with his rifle, but without effect. The deer soon gained the shore and was seen to disappear promptly behind the timber, none the worse for its experience on the river

No stop was made at Cincinnati though Bishop Fenwick had expressed a desire to his cousin, Father Enoch Fenwick of Georgetown College, that the party visit him in his episcopal city.[13] The first stage of the river-trip ended at Louisville where the flat-boats were unloaded, the baggage of the party being transported thence overland to Portland, three miles below Louisville on the Ohio While at Louisville, Van Quickenborne and his companions had the pleasure of meeting again the venerable Father Nerinckx, in whose company most of them had crossed the Atlantic in 1821 to become missionaries of the Society of Jesus in the New World. He had come to the city to see safe on board a steamer a colony of Loretto Sisters bound for the Barrens in Missouri, and on learning that his Jesuit recruits of two years before were about to arrive in Louisville prolonged his stay in the city to await their coming [14] Between Louisville and Portland were the falls or rapids of the Ohio A "falls-pilot" was engaged to bring the flat-boats over the rapids, the shooting of which was a hazardous venture in low water Several boats had been wrecked therein a few days before the Jesuits arrived and their occupants drowned Four of the more muscular of the novices, Van Assche among them, accompanied the pilot during the perilous passage, which was safely negotiated At Portland the horses, wagons, boxes and other effects of the emigrants were loaded again on the flat-boats, which now resumed their course down the river as far as Shawneetown in Illinois, which they reached on May 22 with no untoward incident to mark the way. Here they left the horses and as much of their baggage as was not necessary for a journey on foot, in charge of a trustworthy person, to be shipped by him to St. Louis on the first down-river steamer bound for that point After a brief stay in Shawneetown, standing close together they said the *Itinerarium,* as was their custom at the beginning of every stage of the journey.[15] Then,

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[13] Bishop Edward Fenwick to Enoch Fenwick, May 7, 1823 (B)

[14] Maes, *Nerinckx*, p 504

[15] In a letter to Dzierozynski, September 29, 1823, Van Quickenborne explains the circumstances under which he "suffered them to eat meat on a fast day N B. I did so and it was my decided opinion that we could do it The day before I had sent all over town (Shawneetown) to find fasting victuals for the next day We got some very dear, though yet enough, but by some negligence of some one they were lost the evening before the fast day The next morning at every house it was inquired whether eggs or milk or butter could be got and we could not (get them) and had to walk and were fatigued of the preceding day's work in arranging our baggage and as several were not able to live on bread and water, I, having taken the

leaving the Ohio behind them, they began the long tramp through southern Illinois to St. Louis, one hundred and fifty miles to the northwest. They had with them the light wagon in which were carried the altar equipment, kitchen utensils and other things needed on the way.[16]

Two roads led from Shawneetown to St. Louis, one old and the other new. The new road, as being the shorter, was chosen, but it proved a distressing one to follow on account of its roughness and the veritable clouds of gnats and mosquitos that infested the way. Often the insects swarmed so thickly as to cause acute physical suffering. While on the march the travellers resorted to the expedient of swinging their arms and waving branches of trees in their hands, in order to protect themselves against the plague When they camped, it was not until they had built fires with the damp, decaying trunks of trees, the smoke arising thence not being relished by the troublesome insects Good drinking water was scarce along the road Sometimes a rather suspicious looking creek was the only source of supply, and when a genuine spring was met with, the two casks carried on a pack-horse were forthwith filled with the precious water.

Young De Smet marvelled that human beings could be found to live in this malarial, mosquito-ridden country Yet here and there settlers, most of them showing the effect of the unhealthy environment in their sallow, emaciated features, had built their humble cabins, in which, with a generosity typical of the American backwoodsman of that day, they dispensed hospitality to the passing Jesuits. There was no question of accommodating the latter together under a single roof A group of four or five would stop at a cabin as evening came on and lodge therein overnight, another group would lodge in the next cabin on the road, and still another in a third, so that the members of the party sometimes found themselves separated from one another by a distance of four or five miles More than once, as the wayfarers came up late in the evening to an isolated farm-house, the occupants, suspecting some evil design, refused to unbolt the doors until the strange visitors had explained satisfactorily the purpose of their arrival In the morning, before taking to the road, they carefully noted down the names, if known to them, of the families with whom they were to stop overnight. The novices who went ahead were careful to indicate the way to those that followed by planting sticks in the ground with bits of paper attached Songs of a sacred character were often sung and tales of missionary adventure interchanged to relieve the tedium of the journey.

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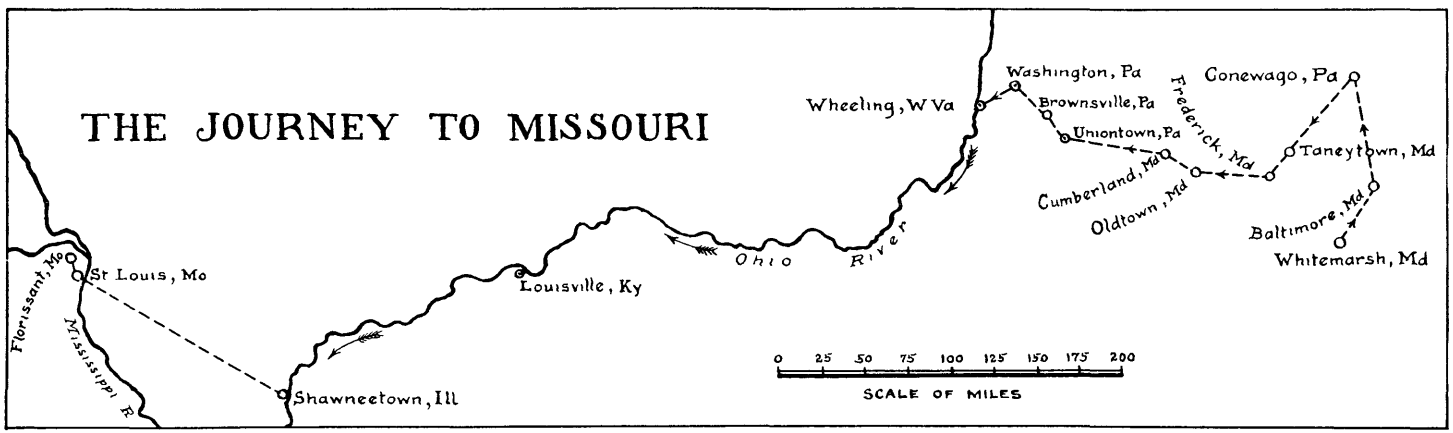
advice of those whom I knew most instructed, permitted them to eat meat, in which all agreed except F[ather] Timmermans" (B)

[16] De Smet, *Hist Missouri Mission* (Ms) (A)

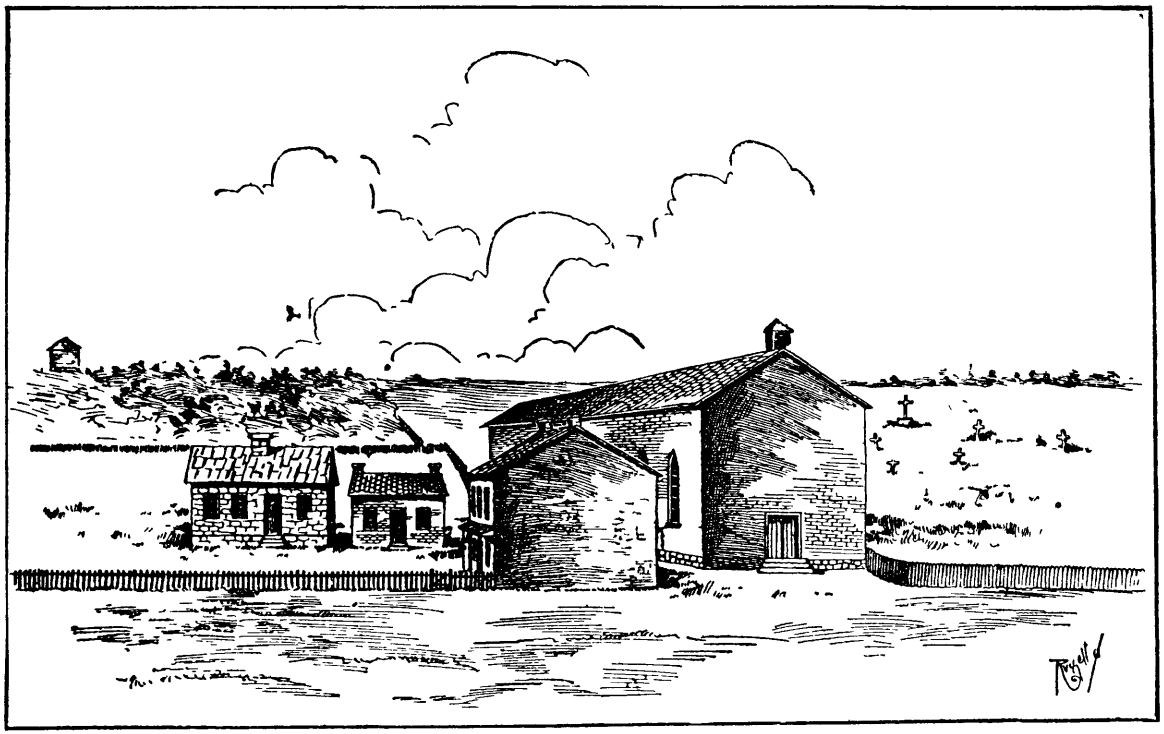
And so, covering on an average twenty-five miles in their daily march, the emigrants journeyed on in the direction of St Louis Sometimes a bridge had been washed away in a freshet and in such cases they forded the water on horseback At length they reached the American Bottom, a low-lying and quite level tract of country extending back for many miles from the Mississippi, which Dickens was at pains to picture in his *American Notes*. The spring of 1823 brought with it an unusually high rise in the Mississippi, which overflowed its banks for miles on either side, when the Jesuit party entered the bottom-land, the flood-stage had already passed, though not without leaving a deep layer of mud on the roads and much back-water in the fields and intervening creeks, through which the travellers sometimes waded knee-deep for miles at a time Finally, on Saturday, May 31, at about one o'clock in the afternoon, they descried in the distance the city of St Louis, then a French-American settlement of some five thousand inhabitants. Mud, back-water and other obstacles to progress were of no great concern to the party now, who pressed forward in their eagerness to stand and gaze at close range at the city that was to mark their journey's end. When at length they reached the water's edge on the east bank of the great river, St Louis, rising up from the opposite bank on a tier of ridges, with the Mississippi in the foreground, more like a broad lake than a river, made a charming picture to their eyes, as one of their number afterwards put on record.

Fifty-nine years had passed since Auguste Chouteau and his party landed at what is now the foot of Market Street in St Louis and began to lay out the trading-post which the Sieur Laclede-Liguest had planned the year before. In the interval the trading-post had grown to the proportions of a fair-sized town. In the first years settlers had come in large numbers from the French villages on the left bank of the Mississippi, eager to exchange the British régime for the kindly rule of Spain, for the territory west of the waterway, a French possession since the days of La Salle, passed to Spain in 1762 by the secret treaty of Fontainebleau, and remained so attached until its retrocession to France in 1800, followed by its transfer to the United States in 1803 Under a Spanish administrative régime for the thirty-four years preceding the American occupation, St Louis was nevertheless during all that period and for some time later distinctly French in population, language, and social customs and manners With the lowering of the Spanish colors and the unfurling of the American flag over the place, the English-speaking element began to increase in numbers and importance, and on the incorporation of St Louis as a city in April, 1823, Dr. William Carr Lane became its first mayor

Having crossed the Mississippi and set foot on the Missouri shore,



The route (Cumberland Road, Ohio River, Shawneetown—St Louis road) followed by the Jesuit emigrant party of 1823 Compiled by G J Garraghan, drawn by John P Markoe



The church block (Market, Second, Walnut, Third Streets), St Louis, Mo , 1823 Between Bishop Du Bourg's cathedral of brick (at right end) and the episcopal residence (at left end) stood St Louis College The buildings, which stood on Second Street, were grouped some yards west of the line of that street, known originally as *la rue d'Église* Here Father Van Quickenborne and his party were entertained on their arrival in St Louis, May 31, 1823, the Jesuits taking part the following day in the Corpus Christi procession through the church grounds From Billon, *Annals of St Louis in its Territorial Days* (St Louis, 1888)

the Jesuits had the sensation, so one of their number expressed it, of being transported to another continent The localities they had hitherto passed through on their long journey had been typically American, now they were in something of an Old World atmosphere, as was presently brought home to them when they found it necessary to address the passers-by in French to learn from them the way to the cathedral This was a longish and rather ugly structure of brick on the west side of *Rue de l'Église* (Second Street) between the present Walnut and Market Streets In the same square as the cathedral and close to it on the south were St Louis College, a two-story brick building, and the cathedral rectory Here resided Father Francis Niel, president of the college and pastor of the cathedral, together with his assistant-priests, who were also professors in the college, Fathers Saulnier, Michaud and Deys.

Bishop Du Bourg, who had journeyed to St Louis in advance of the Jesuit party, advised Father Niel of their coming with the result that when they presented themselves at the cathedral rectory they were given every attention at his hands The morrow was the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, on which day the transferred solemnity of that great feast in the Church's calendar was celebrated with *éclat* High Mass was sung and there was a procession through the cathedral grounds First went a cross-bearer, the cross in his hands a precious one of silver, then little girls strewing flowers, then thirteen clerics, including the newly-arrived novices, some in dalmatics, others in surplices, next the priests, six in number, and finally Father Van Quickenborne bearing the Blessed Sacrament, which was screened by a canopy There was ringing of bells and booming of cannon, the whole ceremony, as Van Quickenborne wrote in a letter to the East, being the most impressive he had witnessed since he came to America