

CHAPTER XXVII

THE OSAGE MISSION

§ I. NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT

The first Catholic priest to evangelize the Osage Indians in the nineteenth century was Father Charles de la Croix, parish-priest at Florissant, Missouri, who visited them under orders from Bishop Du Bourg in 1822 while they were still living on their ancient lands along the Osage River in Missouri. After their removal to the Neosho district in the Indian Territory they were seen in 1827, 1828, and 1830 by Father Van Quickenborne.¹ The Osage were the first of the Indian

¹ *Supra*, Chap VI. Osage baptisms and marriages prior to the establishment of the Osage Mission are recorded in four registers: (1) *Old Cathedral Register*, St. Louis, Mo., (2) *Registre des Baptêmes*, St. Ferdinand's Church, Florissant, Mo., (3) *Sugar Creek Register*, St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas, (4) *Osage Register* (St. Francis Monastery, St. Paul, Kans.). The series of Osage baptisms up to the establishment of the Osage Mission in 1847 is as follows: (1) in St. Louis were baptized a number of Mongrains, progenitors of the numerous mixed-bloods of that name found among the Osage. Thus, Jean Baptiste Mongrain, son of Nicholas Mongrain and a Pawnee woman, July 28, 1773, Noel Mongrain, April 18, 1787, François Mongrain, son of J. Bte. Mongrain and Marie, an Indian, Aug. 6, 1797 (*Old Cathedral Register*, St. Louis). According to a statement in the *Osage Register*, Noel Mongrain's wife, Marie Pahushan, and his nine (?) children, Jean Baptiste, Noel, François, Joseph, Jules, Pelagie, Charles, Victoire, and Louis were baptized about 1820 in St. Louis. The statement, which is vouched for by Joseph Mongrain and Pierre M. Papin, is not borne out at least by the St. Louis cathedral records. Noël Mongrain and each of ten children of his (names as listed in the treaty not identical with above series) were allotted a section of land under the Osage Treaty of 1825. Article 5 of same treaty designates numerous other half-breeds who were allotted sections. Charles J. Kappler (ed.), *Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties* (Washington, 1904), 2:218. (2) At the Paul Liguiste Chouteau trading-post, Bates County, Mo., Father Charles De La Croix, parish-priest of Florissant, Mo., baptized May 5, 1822, fifteen Osage half-breed children, their names being Antoine Chouteau, Pierre Lambert, Jean Bte. Le Suis, François Le Suis, Joseph Peras, Antoine Pieu, Auguste Capitaine, Paul Lambert, Joseph Capitaine, Helene Lambert, Rosalie Capitaine (afterwards wife of Edouard Chouteau, trader residing at mouth of Flat Rock Creek, two miles from Osage Mission), Therese Sarpie, Sophie Peras, Catherine Le Suis and Eulalie [Emilie?] Lambert. On May 7, 1822, were baptized by Father De La Croix Antoine Lambert, Rosalie Lambert and Susanne, a slave (?) of Paul Liguiste Chouteau. The following were also baptized by the same priest, all in 1822: May 12, James Chouteau and Marie

tribes to engage his apostolic zeal. They were the first whom he visited in their native habitat, from them he drew the majority of the pupils for his Indian school at Florissant and among them he proposed at one time to realize a somewhat visionary plan of a Jesuit reduction modeled in accordance with the instructions of his General, Father Roothaan, on the famous reductions of Paraguay. Apart, however, from taking up again the thread of Catholic missionary activity in the midst of this interesting tribe and planting anew the seeds of faith in numerous infant baptisms, no result in the way of a permanent mission followed. Father Van Quickenborne's visits to the Osage country. Already the chapter of

Kennelle, an Indian squaw thirty years old, August 11, Joseph Bienvenu, Baptiste St Michel, Louis Bte St Michel, Auguste St Michel, François Bernale, Julie St Michel, Victoire J Bte St Michel, Louis [?] J Bte St Michel, Celeste Cardinal, Ursule Cardinal, Susanne L'Anué, Helene le Hetre, August 16, Julie Mongrain (3) Father Charles Van Quickenborne, S J, administered seventeen baptisms at the new Liguette Chouteau trading-post on the Neosho (*à Neosho chez Mr Liguette Chouteau*) on August 27 and following days, 1827 (*supra*, Chap VI, note 37). Names of the Osage half-breeds baptized at Harmony Mission, Missouri, by Van Quickenborne, August 21, 1827, were Pierre Quenville (Canville), François Quenville (Canville), Jesse alias Gesseau Chouteau, Jean Marie Vasseur, Xavier alias Brogan Entaya, Andre Marlo, Victoire Entaya, Auguste Chouteau, Pelagie Entaya, François Tayon, Julie Renon, Joseph St Michel, Rosalie St Michael, Sara Perra, Pelagie Bruce, Michael Entaya, Auguste Jaco Sarpi, Sabath or Elizabeth Sarpi (Cf Chap VI, § 3). On June 8, 1830, Father Van Quickenborne baptized, "at the house of Francis D'Aybeau near the banks of the Marmiton river, opposite the place where formerly was the village of the *grand soldat* [Big Soldier, an Osage chief]," Mary, an Osage woman about twenty-six years old, Joseph Brent Brown, son of Joseph Brown alias Equesne and Josette D'Aybeau, and Archange Vasseur, son of Basil Vasseur, a mixed-blood, and Mary, an Osage, his legitimate wife (Cf Chap VI, note 42). June 9, 1830, Van Quickenborne baptized a number of children at the house of Joseph Entaya near the Marais des Cygnes. About this time also (1828) Josephine Louaise, daughter of M Louaise and Mianga, an Osage, was baptized in Paris, France. From 1830, when Van Quickenborne last visited the Osage up to the establishment of the Sugar Creek Potawatomi Mission (1838) or a few years later, the tribe was apparently unvisited by any Catholic priest. In 1840 Herman Aelen, S J, administered four Osage baptisms near the Marais des Cygnes. The next year (July 15, 1841) he baptized ten of the tribe in a private dwelling near the Marmiton, among the number being Louis Farramond (Pharamond) Chouteau, son of Edouard Chouteau and Rosalie Capitaine. In 1842 Aelen was at the Neosho where he baptized nineteen. Verreydt had four Osage baptisms in 1843. Thereafter, up to the opening of the Osage Mission in 1847, there were numerous baptisms among the Osage by Sugar Creek missionaries, all recorded in the *Sugar Creek Register*.

The Osage Mission baptismal and other church registers, together with record-books and correspondence pertaining to the Indian school, are in the archives of the Passionist Monastery, St Paul, Kansas, the Passionist fathers having taken over the buildings of the mission and the care of the parish on the withdrawal of the Jesuits in 1892.

his earthly career had closed when his Jesuit brethren began to take active measures towards the establishment of an Osage mission

The first steps leading to a permanent Jesuit residence on the banks of the Neosho were taken by Father Felix Verreydt, superior of the Sugar Creek Mission, who on April 23, 1844, visited the Osage reserve with a view to establish a missionary-station within its borders² He must have held out hope to the Indians of a Catholic school and mission on their behalf On May 10, 1844, seventeen days later than Verreydt's visit to the Osage, nine chiefs of the tribe, including the principal chief, George White Hair, affixed their signatures in the shape of crosses to a petition addressed to the commissioner of Indian affairs

Honorable T Hartley Crawford

This petition of the undersigned chiefs and warriors of the Osage tribe of Indians respectfully represent that in accordance with the benevolent intentions of the Government of the United States we are disposed to better our condition by the introduction among us of education and the domestic arts That a school being felt by us necessary for the instruction of our children we wish to see one established among us with as little delay as possible and the Catholic Missionary Society of

² From the date of Verreydt's first visit to the Osage reserve in April, 1844, up to the arrival of Schoenmakers in 1847, the Osage were visited at intervals by the Sugar Creek missionaries Most of the preparations for the Osage Mission previous to 1847 devolved upon Father Verreydt, who may be considered one of its founders, having established a station on the Osage reserve as early as 1844 The diary in the Sugar Creek *Liber Parochialis* (F) furnishes data of Father Verreydt's activity in this connection

April 23, 1844 Father Verreydt to the Osage to establish a mission-station among them

September 16, 1844 Father Verreydt, in company with the Indian superintendent, to the Osage village, to select a site for the school buildings

September 26, 1844 Father Verreydt to St Louis to confer with the vice-provincial about the Osage Mission

January, 1845 Father Verreydt confers with Col E Chouteau at Fort Scott about the proposed buildings at Osage

February, 1845 Father Verreydt summoned by the Osage to mark out the grounds and decide on the plans for the new buildings A joiner was hired by the Indian agent to do the work and finish the structure

January 11, 1846 Father Verreydt to the Osage mission-station to arrange for the government school to be opened there

June, 1846 Father de Coen to the Osage reserve to see how far the school-buildings in process of erection are advanced

August 7, 1846 Father De Coen to the Osage to baptize their infants *Dial* (St Mary's College, St Marys, Kans), 1890

A number of missions for the Osage had been established by Protestant missionary societies, but were all discontinued before the forties "Tradition has it that these Indians never took kindly to Calvinistic doctrine" S W Brewer in *Kans Hist Coll*, 9 19

Missouri having expressed a willingness to send missionaries and establish a permanent school among us, we, seeing the great advantage derived by our neighbors, the Potawatomi, from the labors and institution of the missionaries of this Society, would be happy to receive them among us and respectfully request you to aid and encourage them in their benevolent designs towards us and that government would apply annually to the aid of the proposed school as large an amount as you may think advisable of the interest accruing on funds reserved for us by Treaty stipulations for purposes of education

Signed in presence of

John Hill Edwards,
Ind Sub-Agt
and Joseph Swiss, interpreter ³

George White Hair his X mark
Clermont
Tally, etc
[9 names]

Colonel Edwards, agent for the Osage, in whose presence the petition was signed, forwarded this document to Major Harvey, superintendent of Indian affairs, St Louis, who in turn transmitted it to Commissioner Crawford ⁴ Harvey's letter to Crawford accompanying the petition was a cordial indorsement of the Indians' wishes "Instruction of the Indians, to insure success, must be entrusted to missionaries I have no hope in the success of government teachers who go into the Indian country for the salary The great object of a large majority of those employed in the Indian country, it seems to me, is to do as little as possible, so that they insure the payment of the salary. From the devotion of the Catholics at Sugar Creek to the improvement of the Indians, I shall be pleased to see them established on a liberal footing It would be a pleasant duty to me to aid in promoting their views and giving effect to the wishes of the Osages in establishing the proposed school" ⁵ A later communication from Harvey to Crawford

³ (H) The Catholic Missionary Society of Missouri was a name assumed by the Jesuit Vice-province of Missouri in its business dealings with the Indian Office

⁴ For a brief account of the system of superintendencies and agencies in the administration of Indian affairs, cf *supra*, Chap XXIII, note 29 Major Thomas Harvey of all government officials did most to promote the establishment of the Catholic Osage Mission He wrote to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Crawford, Sept 8, 1845 "I have no doubt that the entire amount that may be received will be conscientiously laid out for the benefit of the Osages" (H) In forwarding the Osage petition to Commissioner Crawford, Harvey sent with it a letter from Colonel Edwards introducing Father Verreydt to President Tyler It does not appear that Verreydt ever went to Washington

⁵ Harvey to Crawford, July 11, 1844 (H) As corresponding secretary and agent of the board of managers of the American Indian Missionary Association, the Baptist missionary, Rev Isaac McCoy, requested government aid for a contemplated school among the Osage "It appears that the Osages have a considerable amount of money invested to be applied to educational purposes under the direc-

advises the commissioner that a number of Osage half-breeds were to move from their homes just east of the Missouri state-line to the Neosho district and that the proposed school would have to be located wherever they should settle down as they would at once give it their immediate support. Harvey had already assured the half-breeds that the school would be established in their vicinity.

At Washington, however, no eagerness was manifested to accede to the Osage petition. Sometime during the first half of 1846, approximately two years after the date of the petition, Father Van de Velde, the Missouri vice-provincial, while on a visit to the national capital, took up the question of the Osage school with Medill, Crawford's successor as commissioner of Indian affairs. Medill proposed certain terms which the superior engaged to lay before his consultors on his return to St. Louis. Van de Velde did so with the result that the terms were found unsatisfactory as he declares in a letter to Medill written in the summer of 1846: "We have therefore concluded to decline accepting the school among the Osages on the terms proposed unless the department should consent to defray the expenses of this first outlay or should appropriate at least a portion if not the whole of the present year's annual interest of the educational fund of the said Osages and authorize us to use it for this purpose."⁶ In the course of the same summer Father Van de Velde informed Major Harvey that he would be satisfied with one-half of the current year's interest on the Osage educational fund. "As it is, we are of opinion that one-half of [the] sum due for interest on annual investment and which one-half amounts to between \$900 and \$1000 would suffice for putting the school in operation. Should there be any surplus, it would be used for the benefit of the Osages. I will write at once to Father Verreydt to direct him to advise the Osage Agent that we shall take possession of the buildings as soon as they will be ready for the reception of them whom I shall send and direct him to procure everything that will be necessary to commence it."⁷ Harvey on August 31 communicated the vice-provincial's proposition to Medill, with an endorsement of it, adding "It is extremely important that something should be done promptly for the Osages. Their annuities will soon expire, their subsistence by the buffalo must soon be precarious. It is therefore imperative that their children should be educated to cultivate the soil and in the arts of civilization generally. I presume nearly all of their people that have any idea of the Christian

tion of the Department of Indian Affairs." Letter of February 5, 1845 (H). The request was not granted, the Catholic school during the period it was in the field being the only institution conducted for the education of Osage youth.

⁶ Van de Velde to Medill, July 7, 1846 (H).

⁷ Van de Velde to Harvey, August 31, 1846 (H).

religion are Catholics, they have frequently petitioned for Catholic teachers I think it would be difficult to change their feeling on the subject I would with great deference suggest the propriety of furnishing the establishment, any article thus furnished would be the property of the school The Catholics have succeeded well with the Potawatomes though they have had comparatively nothing from the government ”⁸ The Indian Office accepted the terms offered by Van de Velde and Medill announced to Harvey September 11, 1846, that the sum of \$925 38 would be paid to the proposed school in accordance with its promoter's request.

The reluctance of Van de Velde and his advisers owing to chronic scarcity of men and money to undertake a new establishment in the Indian country appears from the official minute-book of the board October 24, 1844, the vice-provincial laid the project of an Osage mission before the board, seemingly for the first time No action was taken on it, but the Indian Office was to be sounded and the Father General written to Again, on May 6, 1845, the board returned to the same project The meagre personnel of the vice-province excluded the plan of mission-headquarters with two resident fathers especially as the Indian Office had thus far given no assurance of material aid As a preliminary step, however, one of the Sugar Creek fathers, Verreydt being named in particular, was to be directed to visit the Osage reserve with a view to ascertain what measure of success could reasonably be hoped for from a mission-house within its limits Again, in July, 1846, it was resolved to proceed no further with the project of an Osage mission until some word concerning it should have been received from Rome. The next month, August 26, 1846, the board, meeting at the novitiate in Florissant, decided to accept the mission provided government supplied the necessary funds The question of a mission-staff being mooted, three separate pairs of missionaries were suggested, either Fathers Aelen and Schoenmakers, or Fathers Aelen and Bax, or Fathers Schoenmakers and Bax But no choice was made, the consultors deciding to give the matter more mature consideration and meanwhile commend it to God in their Masses and prayers Finally, on November 13, 1846, a decision was reached to enter into contract with the government to open the school in March, 1847, when the necessary buildings should have been completed. The contract was signed February 25, 1847⁹

The choice of one to take in hand the new missionary venture in the Osage country fell on Father John Schoenmakers, a native of Waspick, province of North Brabant, Holland, then in his fortieth year Already a priest, he entered the Society in Maryland January 16, 1834,

⁸ Harvey to Medill, August 31, 1846 (H)

⁹ *Liber Consultationum* (A)

but travelled west that same year, becoming a member of the Missouri Mission. He filled with efficiency various posts involving the administration of affairs, among others that of manager of the property of St. Louis University known as the College Farm, which was located on the northern outskirts of St. Louis. Shrewd, practical-minded, enterprising and with a talent for organization, the young Dutch priest was now to find an ample field in which to utilize his special gifts. If the mission among the Osage, despite its failure to work the conversion of the adult Indians, was to issue in many happy results, the outcome was due under heaven largely to the patience, perseverance, resourcefulness and religious zeal of Father Schoenmakers during the thirty-six years the management of the mission was in his hands. His associate in its foundation, Father John Bax, a Belgian, only thirty years old at the time, was a man all aglow with the charity that quickens the successful shepherd of souls. His span of years among the Osage was to be a brief one, yet long enough to bring out in relief a degree of missionary energy and zeal that deserves to be made of lasting record in the pioneer history of the West.

Early in the autumn of 1846 Father Schoenmakers was sent by Van de Velde to the Osage country where he incurred considerable expense in his efforts to set the mission on foot. Fortunately, he chanced to meet Major Harvey at Pottawatomie Creek, whence the latter, on learning of the priest's immediate need of money, at once forwarded a letter to his clerk in St. Louis, John Haverty, requesting him to pay Van de Velde the subsidy promised by the government. Schoenmakers soon after returned to St. Louis to confer with the vice-provincial, who on October 24, 1846, addressed this note to Haverty.

The Rev. Mr. Schoenmakers of our Society, whom I have selected as Superintendent of the establishment among the Osage Indians, has just returned from the Osage country, whither I had sent him to prepare whatever should be deemed necessary for commencing operations as soon as practical. The list of articles, not including the travelling expenses of himself and his associates, amounts on a moderate calculation to between \$1800 and \$2000. For a number of these he can obtain a four or six month's credit, but nearly one half must be paid with ready money. He had the good fortune to meet Major Harvey at Pottawatomie Creek, who requested him to state to me that on his arrival in St. Louis I might apply to you for the sum allowed by the Indian Department (and at present available) for the purpose of purchasing the necessary articles. I have reason to believe that the Major, who has the welfare of the Indians under his superintendency so much at heart, has given you directions concerning the payment of that sum which, it seems, he supposes to be in your hands.¹⁰

¹⁰ (H)

The money due Father Van de Velde was paid to him in St. Louis and everybody concerned looked forward to the establishment of the mission the following spring.

§ 2 SETTING UP THE MISSION

On April 7, 1847, Father John Schoenmakers with Father John Bax and Brothers John De Bruyn, John Sheehan and Thomas Coghlan started from St. Louis to inaugurate the missionary experiment among the Osage. The first stage of the journey was by steamboat on the Missouri to Kansas, as Kansas City, Missouri, was known at this period. From there the trip over the prairies to the Neosho had its hardships. It lasted two weeks, during which the travellers were without shelter of any sort, even at night, which they passed in the open at the dampest season of the year. For bedding each of the party was provided with a buffalo-hide and a single blanket. Unpleasant experiences of another kind fell to their lot. At Walnut Grove, about a hundred miles from Kansas, they descried one day in the distance a numerous troop of mounted Indians moving rapidly in their direction. The sight filled them with alarm, which grew almost to panic when the Indians, on coming up, suddenly and with great agility alighted from their horses and ran towards the baggage wagons, the contents of which they began eagerly to turn over and examine. Happily, Schoenmakers and his companions recovered their composure sufficiently to deal pleasantly with their visitors, to whom they offered some rolls of tobacco. As was afterwards ascertained, they were a band of Sauk returning from a visit they had just paid to their Osage allies. After a brief stay the Indians shook hands with the travellers in token of friendship and were off, leaving the contents of the baggage-wagons as they found them.¹¹

On April 28, three weeks after their departure from St. Louis, the party reached their destination, which was the Osage Agency, located on the right bank of Flat Rock Creek, at a point about two miles above its junction with the Neosho River. Here in accordance with arrangements made the previous autumn by Father Schoenmakers houses had been built by the government to lodge the missionaries and serve for school purposes. The houses, however, were in an unfinished state when the missionaries arrived and the school-buildings in particular soon proved quite inadequate for the number of children in attendance. Further, a mistake appears to have been made in locating the mission-buildings, which were quite out of the center of the Osage villages, a circumstance that was to add not a little to the future labors of the

¹¹ Letter of Father Bax in De Smet, *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 353

fathers¹² Apart, however, from its awkward location with reference to the Indian settlements, the place offered numerous advantages as a

¹² Father Paul M. Ponziglione, S. J., in a manuscript work, *The Osage and Father John Schoenmakers*, S. J., p. 152, indicates the location of the seventeen Osage villages. The passage is reproduced as a contribution to Osage geography.

"The majority of the Osages, after much rambling on the western plains, having shown their preference for special localities in which to form their permanent settlements, George White Hair was very particular in locating their towns and villages not far from another in distance, that his people might without much inconvenience keep up their time-honored custom of mutual visiting, and in time of need might be able to assist one another in fighting their enemies.

"The Neosho Valley as well as that of the Verdigris, being both rich in plenty of good soil, well irrigated, and having a considerable amount of timber, formed two natural sections dividing the eastern part of their very extensive reservation into two districts. In both of these (together) seventeen towns sprang up in a very short time, each having a chief of its own, but all being subordinate to George White Hair, the Head Chief of the Nation.

"The first town at the north-west end of the Neosho district was called Whape-ka and was situated on Owl Creek, some 8 miles from its mouth on the Neosho. About 10 miles below came that of Ugekzecta, just on the spot now occupied by the city of Chanute. Perhaps 5 miles further down, two chiefs, say Nishumani and Numpevale, had their respective villages not far from one another and these were all settled by the so-called Little Osages.

"Descending along the east bank of the river one found the town of Nantzewaspe, which stood almost on the identical place where one sees that of Shaw. Again, further down on the west bank at 10 miles distance, on a range of small hills, stood Pawhuska, which was George White Hair's capital and rose nearly 4 miles west of Osage Mission now called St. Paul. 5 miles east of this, on Flat-rock creek was located Briar's-town, and 8 miles south-east at the head-waters of Hickory, Beaver had built his own village on a high hill. Finally, crossing once more to the west side of the Neosho, one came to a village called Littletown, the chief of this was George White Hair's brother. This village lay on the ground now forming the east end of the city of Oswego. These were the principal towns of the Neosho District, in the limits of the reservation. I say in the limits of the Reservation because the Osages had also another town in the Cherokee lands called Chouteau's town, several miles above the junction of a creek called Grand Saline with the Neosho.

"The Verdigris District had nearly an equal number of towns and villages. Of those the first was at the northwest end of the Reservation some ten miles above the confluence of Fall-river with the Verdigris and was named by its chief Little Bear's town. The next was that of Chetopa, which stood at the head waters of a creek of the same name running west to the Verdigris. On Elk, another tributary of the river, was to be seen a nice village by the name of Elk-town. Below this and a few miles northwest of the mouth of Big Hill creek, on the beautiful location now occupied by the city of Independence, was situated a large town called by the white people Big Hill Town and by the Osage Indians Pawnee-no-pah-tze from their chief, and this was considered the principal town of this District. Finally, following down the right bank of the river, at a certain point between its junction with the Cana [?], there were three more villages a few miles apart from one another and these were called after their respective chiefs, namely, Tally, Clearmor [Clermont,

missionary center Here were the shops of the mechanics allowed to the Osage by treaty stipulations and here, too, the merchant-traders had their stores filled with the goods, mostly from St. Louis, which they sold to the Indians for cash or exchanged for peltries The name, Catholic Osage Mission, was bestowed upon the place, the term Catholic being meant to distinguish the new establishment from the Protestant missions which had been opened among the Osage before the arrival of the Jesuits and later discontinued Merchants and traders, as also employees of the American Fur Company, which maintained a number of posts in the Osage country, were to prove themselves on the whole sympathetic friends of the mission, the wholesome influence of which over the Indians helped to facilitate business dealings between them and the whites Among the latter who had business relations with the tribe under government license were Michel Giraud, whose trading-post was near the site of the present Erie, Edouard Chouteau, son of Auguste Pierre Chouteau and grandson of Auguste Chouteau, Laclede's associate in the founding of St. Louis, who resided at the mouth of Flat Rock Creek about two miles from the mission (his wife, Rosalie Capitaine, was a well-educated Osage mixed-blood), Henri Chardon, a native of Louisiana, whose trading-post lay on the left bank of Big Creek, about two miles above its confluence with the Neosho, Chardon's business partner, William Godfroy of Detroit, Pierre M. Papin on Canville

Claymore] and Black Dog These were settled by a clan of nice looking Osages, all stalwart fellows, considered to be the bravest of the nation

"As to what concerns the Half-breeds, they had no special towns, but were living on their farms all along the Neosho valley exclusively The reason of this choice was that the Neosho in those days was looked upon as the end of all white-people settlements west, and very few would then dare to venture much farther, because bands of wild Indians from New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado were frequently infesting the plains, committing depredations on travellers and occasionally murdering some of them As the Osage were most of the time at war with those Indians, neither they nor their Half-breeds would have been safe on those lands There were also two other reasons why the Half-breeds preferred the Neosho District The first was because, as they all belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, they wished to have the convenience of attending to their Christian duties and having their children educated at the Mission schools The second reason was that the Mission was their place for business" (A)

The principal villages of the Osage are also detailed by Bax (De Smet, *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 355) "The population of the tribes (comprised under the name of Great Osages and Little Osages) is (1850) nearly 5000 souls of whom 3500 reside on the banks of the Neosho, and the others on the Verdigris, a little river smaller than the former, although the valleys and the prairies that it waters are more favorable to culture" According to Agent Morrow's report for 1850 the number of Great and Little Osage for that year, the figure being based on the payroll, was 4,561

Creek, six miles west of the Missouri, and Germain Holloway, trader among the Little Osage.¹³

The Osage at the period the mission was established had taken practically no steps at all out of the state of crude savagery in which they were found by the early French explorers. Father Bax confessed to a pang of pained surprise when he witnessed the extreme material discomfort in which they lived. The adults wore little more than a loin-cloth, the children were destitute of clothing altogether. Yet for all their gross ignorance of the ways of civilized life the Osage were at heart a kindly and peace-loving people, making every effort to live on terms of amity with other Indian tribes and with the whites. Bax was at pains to refute the estimate of the tribe current among the whites, which made them out to be little better than thieves and murderers. Such charges he branded as calumnies. Numerous instances of robbery and murder, especially along the Santa Fe trail, had indeed been blamed on the Osage, but these crimes were shown on investigation to have been perpetrated by other Indian tribes, notably the Pawnee, standing enemies of the Osage, whose lands they often raided, committing thereon outrages of various kinds. As to drunkenness, Father Bax avers that the vice, though widespread in the tribe at the opening of the mission, was in the sequel largely rooted out.¹⁴ One thing he especially deplored, and this was the proximity of the whites. In the Osage country as elsewhere the Indian as a rule derived no advantage from association with the so-called civilized element, on the contrary, he learned only the vices of the latter and, not having any blasphemous terms in his own language, learned to curse God in the language of the whites.¹⁵

A boys' school was opened May 10, 1847, and exactly five months later, October 10, a girls' school, the latter being conducted by the Kentucky Sisters of Loretto. In August of the same year Father Schoenmakers addressed to the General what appears to have been his first report on the mission. The government had made a grant of seven hundred and twenty-five dollars, but fifteen hundred dollars had been

¹³ "It is right here to acknowledge the kindness of the American Fur Company toward the Osages. As a body they always showed great respect for Catholic Missions. To their influence in great part was it due that Osage Mission was established and they were its constant protectors. I feel happy as a Catholic clergyman, although not a member of the Society of Jesus, to acknowledge thus publicly our gratitude to the houses of Sarpis, Chouteau and Papin of St. Louis. The good Fathers, we often heard them say, will never forget before God Messrs. Chouteau, Papin and Giraud for the comfort they received when they first came to the Osages, when nothing but the most terrible poverty was their lot." Rev. James H. Defour in the *Western Transcript* (Osage Mission), May 17, 1872.

¹⁴ De Smet, *op cit*, p. 355.

¹⁵ *Idem*, p. 357.

spent on the undertaking. The Osage, four thousand and more in number, spent nine months in hunting and only three at home. At the time he wrote only thirteen boys had registered in the school, but these were all that could be taken care of. White Hair, a one-time pupil of the Indian school in Florissant, "a man gifted with great natural talents," had promised his cooperation. The school-boys were "as little trees" in the hands of their teachers and the report of their progress had spread throughout the tribe. One grave difficulty in evangelizing the Osage had presented itself. Like other tribes of the neighborhood they had no words for expressing the "mysteries" of faith, and this deficiency could not be supplied by an interpreter.

I know that God has a care for the least of his creatures, but for all that temporal prudence is not to be rejected nor will the mere words of Reverend Father Provincial, "*Deus providebit*," suffice to pay the debts that must be incurred. We have already gathered in some fruit. We have not indeed administered many sacraments, but we have made preparations to do so, we have baptized thirty, the majority of them adults. We hurried their baptism on account of imminent danger of death or necessity of administering other sacraments, from the young we require more instruction, the children we could not baptize in greater numbers on account of the long summer hunt. Father Bax in his zeal for the salvation of souls seeks every occasion and strains every nerve to learn the Osage language, a few months ago he was preaching to the Indians without an interpreter.

§ 3 MISSIONARY FRUITS

Overriding as best they might the obstacles placed in the way of their ministry by the bad example of the whites, Fathers Schoenmakers and Bax put forth every effort to effect the conversion of the Osage. The work progressed slowly though the tribe as a whole was being sensibly drawn into sympathy with the Church. By the June of 1850 approximately five hundred baptisms had been administered, one hundred of them to adults and children at the point of death.¹⁶ One incident in particular brought home vividly to Father Bax the Catholic

¹⁶ The first entry in the *Osage Baptismal Register (Liber Baptismalis necnon Matrimonialis Nationis Osageae)*, Archives of the Passionist Monastery, St. Paul, Kansas) is by Father Bax,—May 2, 1847, Sara Shoenka, four years old, god-father Auguste Captin (Capitaine). The father's last baptism is dated June 23, 1852, John Woipanngpashi, below Little Town, Alex[1]us (Alexander?) Biet, god-father. On a single trip, September 13-25, he baptized seventy-four, Alex[1]us Biet accompanying him and standing as sponsor in all the baptisms, which were distributed as follows: Feully's (?) Town in the Verdigris District, 13, Claymour's (Clermont's?) band or Shonkeonhe, 5, Wolf's Town (Black Dog's Band), 15, Big Hill (or Passu Ougrin), 13, Little Town, 3, Woipoka Town or Big Creek (Little Osage), 4, Tatsessakie's Town (Little Osage), 5, Big Chief Town (Little Osage), 16. In a later missionary excursion, April 22-29, 1851, Father Bax baptized fifty-seven, as

theological axiom, as he expressed it, that "the Lord offers to all nations, to every family and to each individual the means of being saved" On April 28, 1847, the very day on which the Jesuit party arrived at their journey's end, word was brought to them that an Indian was dying in a village some four miles away In the hope of baptizing him Bax set out immediately for the Indian's lodge, but found his way barred by the Neosho, which was running high and could not possibly be forded Four days later, which was a Sunday, a half-breed, who had crossed the river on the trunk of a tree to hear Mass, informed Father Bax that the sick man was all the while in a critical condition but still cherished the hope of receiving a visit from the black gown before he died The priest would delay no longer, but mounting his horse crossed the river at considerable risk and made his way to the Indian's lodge. The latter was overjoyed at the missionary's arrival and begged at once for baptism This, after some brief hurried instruction, for the Indian was fast losing strength, Father Bax conferred on him, having no doubt all the while employed the services of an interpreter. A few minutes passed and the happy recipient of the sacrament of regeneration expired Bax could not but regard the combination of circumstances as singularly providential¹⁷ Other instances of baptism administered under striking circumstances are recorded by the same father¹⁸

Among the conversions effected by Father Bax was that of Pahuska or George White Hair, principal chief of the Big and Little Osage He was a man of more than average native ability, in Agent Morrow's words, "the most sensible and managing man of the whole tribe" In the fall of 1849, while on a visit to Washington, he was presented to President Taylor, who was impressed by his intelligence and force of character White Hair's first wife, baptized by Bax in the winter of 1848, died in the fall of 1850 after a short but dutiful career in the bosom of the Church, in which also she had her two young children baptized The chief was inconsolable over the loss of his wife, fasting

follows Little Town, 6, Black Dog Town, 24, Big Hill (Tall chief), 10, Big Hill (Tsihonkie chief), 4, Cally's (Tally's?) Town, 13 Other baptisms by the same missionary were, January 30, 1850, Big Hill Town, 15, god-father in all Anthony Penn, May 21, 1850, Big Hill Town, about 30, Alexander Biet god-father in all, January 31, 1851, Big Hill Town, 25, god-father in all Anthony Penn, August 26, 1851, Nantzewaspe (Papin's Town), 9, Alexander Biet god-father in all

¹⁷ The first recorded burial after the coming of the missionaries is that of Whep-sinka, about forty-five years of age, baptized by Bax May 4, 1847, in White Hair's village and buried by the father on the same day Probably the Indian figuring in the above-mentioned incident, the dates in Bax's account and in the record are at variance

¹⁸ De Smet, *op cit*, p 365

through many months according to Indian custom. But to insure his children the care they needed he married anew, taking for partner a woman of mixed-blood, who had been educated at the mission by the Sisters of Loretto. Having asked and received the necessary instructions, he was baptized on May 29, 1851, Etienne Brond and Mother Concordia, superior of the Sisters of Loretto resident at the mission, standing as sponsors. He received his first holy communion together with the sacrament of confirmation July 15. Some months after, on January 22, 1852, he died a highly edifying death. When Father Bax, after anointing him, told him that on the morrow he would give him holy communion, the chief received the news with evident satisfaction, directing his wife to clothe him in the splendid uniform which President Taylor had given him in Washington. "This caused the warmest emotions in my soul," Father Bax is moved to write

"How great a respect the wild Indian, when instructed, has for this most august sacrament! He received Holy Communion with great feelings of piety and expressed to all present his joy for having complied with that holy duty. Before he lost the use of reason, he directed me to write down on paper that his son was to be sent to the Mission and kept there with us until he should have received a good education, that his little daughter, only five years of age should, in the event of his death, be sent to the Sisters of Loretto to stay with them until of age. The relations have acquiesced in it. Both his children are under our care. Thus did the most talented man this nation perhaps ever had, certainly he has no equal now, leave this world to enjoy the happy one above." ¹⁹

At George White Hair's death his cousin Gratamantze succeeded him as head-chief of the Great and Little Osage. There were two other candidates for the honor, both of them brothers of the deceased chief, one, Little White Hair, chief of Littletown, the other Tci-cio-anca, chief of Elk-town, at the junction of the Elk with the Verdigris. Both of these were rejected by the tribe, the first by reason of his chronic poor health, the other because he was too wild and untamed a character. Gratamantze had been a pupil in Van Quickenborne's Indian school at Florissant ²⁰

¹⁹ Bax to De Smet, February 27, 1852 (A)

²⁰ The *Osage Baptismal Register* states that Gratamantze and his brother Clermont were sons of the Osage chief, White Hair, and were baptized at Florissant by Van Quickenborne. No entry of such baptisms is to be found in the *Registre des Baptêmes* of St. Ferdinand's Church, Florissant, which records the baptism of only four pupils of the Indian school, two Sauk and two Iowa. It is likely that Van Quickenborne baptized some of the Indian boys in the school-chapel and not in the village church, in which case no record of the baptisms would presumably have been made in the parish register. Data contained in the account of Gratamantze by Pon-

As head-chief of the nation Gratamantze acquitted himself with credit, but his Catholic faith sat on him lightly. For a while his position as chief was threatened. Anthony Nivala, nephew of the dead George White Hair, by whom he was brought as a boy to Father Schoenmakers to be educated, was the center around whom gathered the hopes of Gratamantze's enemies among the Osage. Having left the mission school, Nivala quickly shed whatever Christian culture his teachers had succeeded in engrafting on his savage nature. The wild, untrammelled life of the blanket Indian claimed him utterly and he gave himself up with zest to its excesses. Falling in love with Tawagla, an Osage beauty, he married her without the blessing of the priest. He was in the full tide of his reckless career when consumption, the Indian's inveterate foe, struck him down. At first he made pathetic attempts to continue in the life of which he was so passionately fond, going forth with his companions to the buffalo hunt, but soon returning scarcely able from weakness to hold himself in the saddle. When he realized at last the certain approach of death, his one wish was to die in the kindly embrace of the mission. So Tawagla, with whom his marriage had been validated according to the canons, set up his wigwam not many paces away from the old log church and here Nivala, truly penitent and consoled with the sacraments, died at the age of twenty-eight, November 18, 1857.²¹ Gratamantze soon followed him. The head-chief of the Big and Little Osage was stricken by the scurvy, which was epidemic among the Osage in the spring of 1861. His end was similar to Nivala's. He had always shown great deference to Father Schoenmakers and in matters of importance was accustomed to seek counsel of the latter and act in accordance with it. Being aware, too, that Schoenmakers was a most skillful nurse and had successfully treated many Indians in their sickness, he had himself carried from his village of Nanze-waspe to the mission, where his wigwam was raised within a few steps of the missionaries' house. Here Schoenmakers tenderly nursed him day and night though without effecting a cure of the disease, which was past healing. But the cure of the soul was complete. Gratamantze deplored the scandal he had given, received the sacraments with sentiments of great piety and resignation to the divine will and calmly expired on March 12, 1861, at the age of about forty-eight. He was succeeded as head-chief of the Big and Little Osage by Little White Hair, so called on account of his low stature. He was sickly and half blind, handicaps which had prevented him from succeeding to the chieftaincy at the

zighione (*The Osages and Father John Schoenmakers*, S J) are at variance with the statement in the *Osage Register*, the former source stating Gratamantze to have been a son of Clermont.

²¹ Ponzighione, *Osages etc* (A)

death of his brother, George White Hair, and which were now to prevent him from exercising any great degree of influence over the tribe ²²

The first church to be erected at the Osage Mission was a log structure, thirty by thirty feet in dimensions and twelve feet high, built in 1848. It has been called the cradle of Catholicism in southeastern Kansas and with good reason for it was the first church dedicated to Catholic worship in that part of the West. The congregation, a mere handful at first, grew with the accession of Indian converts and the gradual settlement around the mission site of traders and government employees on the Osage reserve, whose children were thus enabled to enjoy the advantages of an education as day-scholars at the mission school. To accommodate the growing congregation an addition, also of logs, was made to the original building in the summer of 1858, the church now measuring sixty by thirty-three feet. This addition was made under the supervision of Brother De Bruyn, a skilful carpenter, who had seen service as a *pontanier* in the Belgian army. Three years later, in 1861, the church was still further extended by an addition of frame. The pioneer mission church, thus enlarged at intervals, continued to serve the needs of the congregation down to 1882 when the imposing stone structure begun ten years before was dedicated to divine service by Bishop Fink of Leavenworth ²³

The year 1851 saw a welcome accession to the mission-staff in the person of Father Paul Mary Ponziglione. To this Italian Jesuit the mission was to become greatly indebted, not only for his zealous and long-continued ministerial labors on behalf of Indian and white alike, but also for the unflinching industry with which he devoted himself to the task of putting on record the mission's engaging history. Father Ponziglione wielded a facile and vigorous pen. Latin he wrote with neatness and even elegance. His English, on the other hand, was not free from solecisms, but its occasional lapses from idiomatic purity were

²² *Idem* (A)

²³ *Litterae Annuae Missionis Osagiae* (A). Among the pious associations organized on behalf of the congregation of St. Francis Hieronymo, was the Archconfraternity of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary, established August 15, 1850. The register of members from this date to April 22, 1855, contains eighty-two names, among them those of the following whites and mixed-bloods: Rev. Theodore Heimann (secular priest teaching at the mission school), Etienne Brandt, Theodore Smedding, Louis Chouteau, George Tinker, Antoine Penn (died April 19, 1853), Elizabeth Etienne Brandt, Susanna Lambert, Ursula Blanchett, Mary Trudell, Charlotte Jalo, Mary Louise Chouteau, Henrietta Sittens (?), Sister Lucille, Mary De Loiva, Louis Brugier, Charles Mongrain, Louis Basil, Sarah White Hair and Anthony White Hair, whose names also occur in the register, were probably full-blooded Osage.

compensated for by an inherent literary quality which makes his accounts of mission happenings readable to a degree. Brisk, lively narrative and vivid descriptive touches abound in his writings, these being concerned almost exclusively with the history of the Osage Mission, which found in him its official historiographer²⁴

Ponziglione had become a Jesuit in Italy. Here, while attached to the college which the Society of Jesus conducted in Genoa, he made the acquaintance of Father Elet on the occasion of a visit to that city made by the latter while on his way to Rome to attend a congregation of Jesuit procurators. When Elet proposed to Ponziglione that he attach himself to the vice-province of Missouri, the young Italian priest immediately declared his willingness to take the step if the matter could be arranged with the Father General. This was promptly done through the offices of Elet and Ponziglione, after coming safe through a series of thrilling adventures in the Italian revolution of 1848, arrived in Missouri the following year. In March, 1851, Father John Baptist Miége, a Savoyard, and one of the Jesuit exiles who had found a home in Missouri in 1848, was consecrated in St. Louis Vicar-apostolic of the Indian Territory east of the Rocky Mountains. Having selected for his residence St. Mary's Mission on the Kaw River ninety miles west of the Missouri line, he invited Father Ponziglione, whom he had known in Europe, to accompany him thither²⁵. Father Elet gave his consent and the Bishop, with Ponziglione and two Jesuit coadjutor-brothers in his company, left St. Louis at the end of May for his episcopal headquarters in the West. St. Mary's Mission was reached towards the end

²⁴ Father Ponziglione's ms. papers (A) cover the entire range of Osage Mission history. Apart from a few letters which appeared in the Jesuit domestic publications *Letters and Notices* (Rochampton, England) and *Woodstock Letters* (Woodstock, Md.), this first-hand material for the civil and ecclesiastical history of southeastern Kansas is unpublished. The bulk of it may be listed under five heads: (1) the *Annual Letters* (*Litterae Annuae*) and *House History* (*Historia Domus*) of the Osage Mission compiled yearly in Latin according to the Jesuit rule. The duty of compiling these annual reports was faithfully discharged by Ponziglione during his connection with the mission. (2) *The Osages and Father John Schoenmakers, S. J. Interesting Memoirs collected from Legends, Traditions and Historical Documents by Father Paul Mary Ponziglione, S. J., Missionary among the Osages for over Thirty Years*, 1897. (3) *Missionary Chronicle*. Largely autobiographical, 1894. (4) *Journal of the Western Missions established and attended by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus presiding at the Osage Mission, Neosho County, Kansas, beginning August 11, 1867*. Ten small unbound volumes. Diary and contemporary letters of Ponziglione recording the details of his numerous missionary excursions in southern Kansas and later activities. Historically the most valuable of his Osage papers. (5) *Annales Missions*. Latin narrative account of the Osage Mission.

²⁵ For Bishop Miége and his connection with St. Mary's Mission, Kansas, see *infra*, Chaps. XXVIII, § 7, XXIX, § 2, 3.

of the same month. Here the Bishop stopped only long enough to introduce himself to his Indian flock and obtain some needed rest. A week after his arrival at St. Mary's he was on his way to the Osage Mission, still accompanied by Ponziglione, who in later years put on record some of the incidents of the journey.

By and by the ground having sufficiently dried up and the many creeks we had to cross being now fordable, we were ready to start for the Osage Mission, which lay at some 160 miles south of St. Mary's. None of us knowing the road, and no Indian being willing to offer himself as a guide for fear of meeting the Osage, Father Duerinck, the Superior of the Mission [St. Mary's] offered himself to become our guide, though he did not know more about the road than we did! However, his good will and Indian experience were acceptable to us.

As the Bishop had given to St. Mary's one of the two Brothers who had come with us from St. Louis, so now with the addition of Father Duerinck, our party was again made up of 4 persons. We were all travelling on horseback, each one carrying rations to last him for 5 days. The weather fortunately kept clear and bright, as it was very warm, we had no trouble in crossing creeks and rivers, on the 4th of July we were reaching Osage Mission.

Father John Schoenmakers, the Superior of the Osage Mission, was some time since on the lookout for us and was determined that we should not take him by surprise. Not knowing by which way we might be coming, he had his vedette to watch every path, to find out our approaching, and with such skillfulness had he prepared his plan that at 9 A.M. of the 4th of July he heard that we were at Canville's Creek, about 10 miles northwest and by noon we might be at the Mission. The program for the reception of his Lordship could not be better arranged.

And lo! some boys who were on guard discovered the Bishop's party appearing on the hills about 3 miles northwest of the Mission. At once a joyful tocsin is sounded from the church bell. As this is heard all make themselves ready and report to their special meeting place, from which, as the second peal of the same bell is given, all form into a long line and march out in procession to meet the Bishop. On the advance were marching the school-boys two and two with their teachers, next came the school-girls in the same order with the Sisters, after all Father Schoenmakers and Father John Bax were closing the procession.²⁶

After this manner did the Osage Mission welcome Bishop Miége as he visited the place for the first time. A few days after his arrival George White Hair, head chief of the Osage, with his retinue of braves, all of them rigged out in their finest Indian attire, paid his official visit to the Bishop. Seven beeves were provided by Father

²⁶ Ponziglione, *Missionary Chronicle* (A)

Schoenmakers for the feast which it was customary to prepare for the Indians on the arrival among them of a distinguished guest Bishop Miége spent two weeks at the mission, discussing its affairs with the superior and visiting some of the neighboring tribes, as the Quapaw Having appointed Ponziglione assistant to Schoenmakers, he left the mission for the military post of Fort Scott, some forty miles to the northeast, Bax accompanying him on the way

§ 4 A SEASON OF GLOOM

The spring of 1852 saw the Osage villages ravaged by one epidemic after another ²⁷ The black measles followed by typhoid fever, whooping cough and finally by scurvy, a periodical visitant among the Indians, broke out with heart-rending results Within a few weeks hundreds of the Osage had perished Spring had come early and south winds prevailed all through February. The month had almost run its course when a Quapaw Indian arrived at the mission to visit some of the school-children He was kindly received, as were all visiting Indians, and allowed to lodge overnight in the boys' department The next morning he was unwell Father Schoenmakers, on examining him, found that his body showed marks of some disorder of the skin Without losing a moment of time, he ordered one of the lay brothers to hitch up a team and take the sick Quapaw back to his village But, as a preventive measure, it was too late The Quapaw had brought in the black measles, of which the Indians stood in dread as much as they did of the small-pox Within a few days nearly all the school-children, boys and girls, were stricken with the disease When the Osage parents learned that the black measles had broken out in the schools, they were seized with an anxiety that grew to panic over the menace that now threatened the lives of their children and they came hurrying in great numbers to the mission Here they made their way into the school-houses, running distractedly from bed to bed in an effort to find their children In many instances, the sick children were snatched by their frenzied parents from the beds and carried half clothed down to the creek for a bath, the Indian's sovereign remedy for all distempers That several of the children died as a consequence of this drastic treatment is not surprising Presently the story was circulated that the fathers were to blame for the presence of the pest, having introduced it in the act of baptizing Moreover, the letters they received were carriers of germs Had not Bishop Miége sent Father Schoenmakers some

²⁷ Ponziglione's narrative, *The Osages, etc* details graphically the successive Osage epidemics of this period

vaccine in a letter? ²⁸ The Indians were finally so wrought on by their fears and imaginations that an attempt was made to burn down the mission. Only the vigilance of the fathers and brothers, who stood guard for three or four days, and their uninterrupted prayers to St. Joseph, protector of the mission, prevented the catastrophe. Having taken its toll of lives among the school-children, the black measles gradually loosened its grip on the mission and by May the schools were again in operation. Father Bax narrated the unpleasant episode with vividness in the last letter he was to write for publication ²⁹

Back in St. Louis the sympathetic De Smet could not but be distressed at the sad news that reached him from the Osage Mission. He wrote characteristically to Father Schoenmakers

We are truly afflicted at the news of the sad trials which surround you—the Lord permits it and we must bow in humble submission to His holy will—how consoling must it be after all for you and your brethren to witness so much piety in the youths you have reared with so much care in the school of our Divine Redeemer. We have read with the greatest edification the description good Father Bax gives of the deaths of your young neophytes. “God,” says he, “*appears gathering in, on every side, the little we have planted*.” The same idea Father Joset expressed to me in a letter written last November,—these are his words: “*We have remarked that all the most fervent among the Indians have followed one another to the grave—they are attacked almost every year by some epidemic disease*” ³⁰ In my trip among the various tribes last summer sickness spread on both shores of the Upper Missouri, which carried off a great number of children—

²⁸ “Some asserted that the death of so many little children was attributable to their having been baptized, others to the circumstance that Father Bax had entered their names in a register, others again to the fact of their being fed like the whites, made to wear their hair long and to the new method of clothing them. All these conjectures having been exhausted, the report was circulated that the disease had been transmitted to Father Bax in a letter, that he might communicate it to the Indians. This idea arose from the circumstance of my having sent him in a letter some vaccine matter, with a view to preserve the Osages from the ravages committed by the small-pox on the Pottawatomies, Delawares and Kickapoos.” Letter of Bishop Miège in *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith* (English series, London), 14: 281. Cf. also Gaillard à De Smet, Nov. 9, 1853. “The prejudice this woman libored under, namely, that one is condemned to death by the mere fact of receiving baptism, is very common among the Indians. The Bishop [Miège] told us that on his going one day to visit the Osage in one of their villages, when he spoke in eulogistic terms of Father Bax, the chief replied in a very serious tone: ‘Yes, Father Bax was good Father, he came to visit us, he brought us medicines, but he rendered us a very bad service this year. He killed all our children. After pouring water on their heads, while muttering some words, he wrote their names down in a book, all who were inscribed in it died.’ Father Bax was a strange sort of murderer.” (A)

²⁹ De Smet, *op. cit.*, p. 371

³⁰ Father Joseph Joset, S. J., superior of the Rocky Mountain Mission

happily all were baptized and death freed them from the dangerous contagions of this world to which they might have fallen victims "*Our Father, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,*" is our daily prayer. The Lord knows best what is good for us—He is certainly gathering in his elect from every tribe and nation ³¹

In June the Osage saw another scourge fall upon them in the shape of scurvy. Father Bax was indefatigable in visiting the sick and dying. Having some slight knowledge of medicine, he did all he possibly could to help the Indians fight the contagion, but in most cases it was the soul and not the body which was the successful recipient of his charitable attentions. Finally, the Indians, though the epidemic had not abated, deserted their villages for the annual summer hunt. Before the missionary there was now the prospect of a period of rest. But the situation was to issue otherwise. Worn down physically with constant attendance on the sick and dying, Father Bax himself fell critically ill. In his halting English he wrote from Fort Scott to Father Druyts, president of St. Louis University, a fellow-townsmen of his, both having been born at Merxplas in Belgium.

I am here at the Fort to give the Catholic soldiers an opportunity to make their Easter as also to see the Doctor about the swelling at my neck.

The measles, typhus fever and scurvy have made a dreadful havoc among our Indians. Everyone thinks that there died at least one-thousand since last January and there is not yet a stop. They went all at once in a kind of despair on their summer hunt without planting any corn, pumpkins, etc. and news has returned that every town loses 7 or 8 every day. Besides, the buffalo has all been dispersed on the plains and can find no food, this will cause awful hard times among them. Their wazkontaki or witches have pretty well established the notion that baptism kills their children. They can point out hundreds that have died. It is true, some few others not baptized died, but the fact is the generality of children were baptized. The devil is a cunning rascal.

Half-breeds and full-blood Indians are not on good terms, the latter destroy very rapidly their stock and will be worse when returning from the hunt. No agent is residing among them. All this looks very dark. We hope the government will take some measure in their regard.

We commenced gathering our scattered flock of 56 [school-children]. We have with great trouble been able to gather 22.

The only means we have left to keep up courage is full confidence in Divine Providence. Under trying circumstances missions and colleges have been abandoned and when prospects brightened up, they were out of our reach. Pray hard for us and, if convenient, let some others help you.

Many thanks for your two kind letters and other favors which I have

³¹ De Smet to Schoenmakers, St. Louis, 1852 (A).

received from you Both the feelings I entertain for you as a Brother in religion and a Merxplas man make any communication highly agreeable to me I hope I may be often favored with them Some good news from other quarters stirs up courage in one that is in trials and miseries ³²

Father Bax returned from Fort Scott to the mission, but as the disease gained on him, he was again under the necessity of seeking the services of Dr Barnes, the physician at the fort, who some months before had brought Schoenmakers through a critical illness The father had on this occasion lodged for a spell at the fort, where an orderly was assigned him by the commandant and every service made available to enable him to recover his health But Bax's malady resisted all medical treatment and he was soon brought to the last extremity Schoenmakers was constantly at his side Realizing that the end was near, the patient made an offering to God of his life for the Osage On St Ignatius day, July 31, Father Ponziglione administered the viaticum, which the dying priest received with remarkable devotion His last words to Ponziglione, who had to return to the mission were, "Father, take care of my children" The following day Bishop Miége arrived at Fort Scott on his way to the mission and, on learning of Bax's condition, determined to remain with him to the end On August 3 he anointed the dying priest, who, with the Bishop, Father Schoenmakers and Father Theodore Heimann, a secular priest, at his bedside, passed away two days later, August 5, 1852, being but thirty-five years of age He was buried the next day at the mission to the poignant accompaniment of the moans and wails of his Indian neophytes

At the Catholic Osage Mission the passing of so extraordinarily efficient a missionary at the very outset of his promising career seemed nothing short of a calamity "This school, as well as the whole Osage people," reported Osage Agent Morrow, "have sustained an irreparable loss by the death of the Rev Father Bax, which took place last August The weather was never too inclement for him to visit the most remote part of the nation to administer medicine to a sick Osage or to officiate in his priestly office" ³³

Bishop Miége communicated news of the event to the Father General

Our good and zealous Father Bax has just left us to receive in Paradise the recompense of the troubles and toils which filled up to the brim the 5 years of his apostolate among the Indians On August 5, an hour and a half after midnight, Father Schoenmakers and myself received his last sigh at

³² Bax to Druyts, Fort Scott, June 14, 1852 (A)

³³ *RCIA*, 1852, no 38

Fort Scott, 40 miles from our house, where we had brought him to put him under the care of the Fort physician. It was exhaustion following upon hardships and privations, together with an inflammation of the intestines, that carried off from our poor Mission one of its founders and its firmest support. The only words I could hear him speak was the full and entire sacrifice of his life, which he offered to God for the conversion and salvation of his dear Osage. I hope that this good and generous prayer will be heard and that the Lord by His grace will extricate us from the fix into which we have just been thrown by this very unexpected loss. If it had only pleased God to be satisfied with a dead member like myself I begged Him very sincerely to take me in place of the best of our missionaries, but the prayer was not heard and so here are our poor Osage Indians, of whom we were beginning to hope something, again without a missionary who speaks their language and can as a result obtain their complete confidence.

Father Bax's death was preceded by that of Brother Toelle, our carpenter, who for some time had been giving positive signs of insanity. He imagined that everybody around him was his enemy. He was found drowned in a creek a short distance from the Mission. It is not known whether he meant to drown himself or was drowned when crossing this river. Since then we were obliged to have a carpenter come from the States at very moderate wages for this locality, namely, a dollar a day.

Small-pox visited the Osage towards the end of winter and carried off 12 of our school children and 1200 at least of our Osage, who were attacked at the same time by the scurvy and yellow fever. All that remains to us, Very Reverend Father, is the courage of Father Schoenmakers, the good will of Father Ponzighone, and above all things else, the firm hope that God, for whom, so it seems to me, we are working here, will aid his toilers and have pity on our poor Indians.³⁴

On October 29, 1852, Father Adrian Van Hulst, a Hollander, who but a short time before had been filling the post of rector of St. Aloysius College, Louisville, Kentucky, arrived at the mission to fill the vacancy on the mission-staff created by the death of Father Bax. Eager and energetic, but not robust physically, he began his missionary career by starting out at once to visit the Osage west of the mission, as also the Quapaw and Cherokee, the last-named tribe having their villages around the confluence of the Neosho and the Arkansas. The exposure and privation incident on the life of an Osage missionary proved too severe a tax on his health and strength. To subsist on the slender store of biscuits and dry meat he could find room for in his saddle-bags and sleep at night on the open prairie were not experiences which Father Van Hulst could submit to with impunity. Despite his obvious good will, it was necessary for the superior to recall him from the mission, which

³⁴ Miége à Roothaan, 1852 (AA)

he left October 14, 1854, Ponziglione accompanying him as far as Kansas City³⁵

Almost three years were to pass before the gap in the mission staff was filled. On July 5, 1857, came to the Osage Father Joseph Van Leugenhaege, a Belgian, thirty-one years of age. He was brimful of energy and zeal for the strenuous life before him, but, as in the case of his predecessor, his health proved unequal to the strain. In the spring of 1858, while visiting a village near the mission, he was bitten by an Indian dog. It could not be ascertained whether or not the dog was mad, but as a matter of fact, from that time forward Van Leugenhaege was subject to intermittent fever of the brain. He was brought by Schoenmakers to St. Louis for medical treatment, but an attack of the malady suddenly seizing him, he died the day after his arrival in the city.³⁶

At the mission the dead priest's place was taken by Father James Van Goch, a Hollander. Arriving in his new field of labor August 25, 1858, Van Goch spent four years of unremitting apostolic labor among the Osage. Father Schoenmakers, temporarily absent from the mission at the beginning of the Civil War, was replaced by Father Adrian Hoecken who spent two years with the Osage, 1861-1863. Van Goch was recalled in 1862 while in 1867 arrived Father Philip Colleton, a native of Ireland, who was indefatigable in his ministry among the whites of the outlying country. With Ponziglione he was a builder of Catholicism in southeastern Kansas, organizing parishes, erecting churches and planting everywhere within his reach the seeds of the Faith.³⁷

In a Jesuit Indian mission the coadjutor-brothers lend services that one can only describe as indispensable. If it be true that an army travels on its stomach, it is equally true that the success of a mission on its religious side is often conditioned by the economic arrangements which

³⁵ Adrian Van Hulst, b. Velthoven, Holland, December 17, 1817, entered Society December 3, 1839, d. Chicago October 19, 1909. "Among the Osage things go as well as they can. The death of poor Father Bax almost made me believe that God did not want this Mission. Father Van Hulst, who was sent to take his place, is a good religious, full of zeal, but poor in health, it seems to me, and little fitted, I am afraid, to learn a language as horribly difficult as that of the Osage. Good little Father Ponziglione always shows great courage and devotion. But that unfortunate language, will he ever learn it?" *Miége à Roothaan*, December 17, 1852 (AA).

³⁶ Joseph Van Leugenhaege (Logan), b. Tamise, East Flanders, Belgium, October 3, 1826, entered Society September 27, 1848, d. St. Louis, Mo., July 4, 1858.

³⁷ James Van Goch, b. s-Hertogenbosch, Holland, October 28, 1831, entered Society, November 10, 1856, d. Osage Mission, Kansas, August 24, 1878. Philip Colleton, b. Donaghmoynne, 17(1st) March, 1821, entered Society July 15, 1854, d. Osage Mission, Kansas, December 1, 1876.

it is the duty of the brothers to provide for Of the brothers employed among the Osage in the first decade or two that saw the Jesuits at work in this field some find special mention in the mission annals The three that assisted Fathers Schoenmakers and Bax in the founding of the mission in the spring of 1847, Thomas Coghlan, John Sheehan and John Francis De Bruyn, were all unusually devoted helpers "If the two Fathers had to encounter much hard labor, the three brothers, perhaps, fared still worse on account of their continual contact with the savages" Thomas O'Donnell was school-master to the young Osage, over whom he acquired a marked ascendancy. John De Bruyn, a native of Belgium, was thirty-three when he arrived among the Osage, he remained with them until his death eighteen years later He was cook, dispenser, refectorian, gardener, sacristan, in a word, he was, to borrow a term that follows his name in the Jesuit official register, *ad omnia*, which is to say, commissioned for all and sundry kinds of work Shortly before he died, November 4, 1865, he confided to Father Ponziglione, who had been his confessor for years, that he had been the recipient of several supernatural favors, how one day at Florissant, when he had been ordered to do something that went against the grain, he went out into the garden and there saw lying across his path a crown of thorns, very much like the crown worn by the Savior in His passion, how on another occasion as he was praying in the novitiate chapel he saw the Mother of God gazing at him affectionately from the opened ceiling, finally, how, as he was sweeping a room at the Osage Mission house, he chanced to direct his eyes on a picture of the Virgin Mother and again clearly saw her stand before him These experiences the brother revealed to Ponziglione about twenty minutes after he had received the last sacraments and the father gave credence to them on account, so he said, of the intimate knowledge he had of the brother's heart and soul and because he believed they verified what St Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor, 1 27) "The foolish things of this world has God chosen to confound the wise" The day before he died he said with a smile to Father Schoenmakers "Life among the Osage is very hard and thorny, but for all that, I have never ceased to love it" Schoenmakers wrote to De Smet shortly after the brother's death

Brother John has always cherished a peculiar love for the Society, he never spared himself to win heaven by violence, he was always ready to assist the Indians and console them with presents gathered in his garden He was perfectly present of mind till the moment he expired Seeing his hour approach he resigned himself to the will of God, desired to undergo acts of humiliation, however, he approved and followed the simple customs of our Society Wishing to die on the bare floor he suggested that perhaps relieved from his bed he might breathe with more ease They allowed him

to sit on his chair and resting with his head on his bed he expired Strangers and neighbors have been edified in him seeing his incessant labors without receiving wages nor praise, being always jolly because he worked for God alone ³⁸

§ 5 THE OSAGE MANUAL LABOR SCHOOL

As in most attempts made by Catholic missionaries to civilize and christianize the Indian tribes of North America, it was felt by Father Schoenmakers and his associates that the chief hope of success lay with the children Settled habits, gaining force through long years of untrammelled savagery, made the adult Indians recalcitrant to the discipline of a Christian life though even among these there were numerous cases of sincere and lasting conversion As the children were the leaven that was to quicken the whole Osage mass with a new life based on the usages of civilized life and the morality of the Gospel, the best efforts of the missionaries were expended on the school At first an experiment, it very quickly outran the experimental stage and became, in the opinion of all disinterested onlookers, a genuine success

As far back as April 25, 1845, Major Harvey, the Osage agent, was authorized at his own request to erect at the agency two houses to be used for school purposes, one for boys and one for girls, each of the houses to accommodate twenty pupils and the teachers employed. According to the contract entered into between Harvey and Father Van de Velde, not more than thirty-three boys could be admitted the first six months, though the agent was empowered to allow at his discretion an increase of registration beyond this number, funds being at hand to cover the additional expense On January 1, 1848, the sum of \$5306 77 was to be available for Osage educational purposes, in view of which circumstance Commissioner of Indian Affairs Medill at the instance of the agent suggested the establishment of a few schools in the neighborhood of the mission The suggestion was never acted on, Major Harvey having advised against it, very probably reflecting the attitude of the missionaries toward neighborhood schools, which, as they expressed it, would involve "the downfall of our prospects" ³⁹

³⁸ *WL*, 14 237, 4 113 Schoenmakers to De Smet, November 28, 1865 (A) In his youth De Bruyn had been a soldier in the Belgian army, leading as such a careless life The story of his conversion, admission into the Society by Father Van de Velde on a visit of the latter to Belgium in 1842, and pathetic leavetaking of his family is told by De Smet in *Précis Historiques* (Brussels), 15 226

³⁹ "I would remark from my observation and the experience of those who have long been connected with Indian instruction that it is impracticable to keep up a neighborhood school among Indians, especially wild Indians The children will not bear restraint when in the neighborhood of their parents, who are invariably indulgent, for the least restraint, even when they can be got to school, they leave and

The school opened on May 10, 1847, with fourteen boys, Peter Blond (Brond²) a half-breed, being the first of the number to register To Mr Devereux, government agent-extraordinary to the Osage, Father Bax delivered a memorandum on the school and its prospects

We opened the school on the 10th of May and began with 13 [14] boys and continued till August [July] when three more came, about 10 of October 2 more [came] and before they will go on the summer-hunt about six or eight will come in, number of the boys is 16, which will be continually increased before they go on the fall hunting Many have given notice of sending in their boys at that period and there is no doubt but before winter approaches [as many more] will present themselves as we are able to take according to the contract The present boys surpass in every respect by far all our expectations No one has left since we began the school The sum allowed for their education will not bear the expenses, as we can raise very little, the Indians coming to us for everything The buildings are too small to accommodate the children, so that it is of the utmost necessity to have adjoining buildings erected ⁴⁰

As Van Quickenborne had established at Florissant in connection with his school for Indian boys a school for Indian girls also on the can seldom be got back Even if they could be kept at school, they [the Osage] would lose the best part of the instruction that they would obtain at a Manual Labor school, namely to labor and the common arts of civilization, etc" Harvey to Medill, Dec 9, 1846 (H)

⁴⁰ Archives of Passionist Monastery, St Paul, Kansas The names of the boys admitted May 10 were, in the order of their registration, Peter Blond, Louis Brugier, Stephen Blond, Joseph Mogrey, Wasingta, William Biet, Thomas Jopa, Michael Watchka, John Watzchiaka, Bohaimidzey, Peter Choutcau, Joseph Stephen On July 10 entered Hankahapi, Nonpatan and Oukanton, and on October 10 Louis Chouteau and Edward Zhesinka A two-story log school-house twenty by fifty feet and twenty feet high for the boys was built by Schoenmakers in 1850, the Indian Office allowing a thousand dollars for the construction An additional two-story log house, forty-two by sixteen, was built by him in the winter of 1859-1860 His first report on the school, which was addressed to Major Harvey, is dated July 10, 1847 "We commenced only with 13 children, all of whom seem to promise perseverance, several times have I heard it said both by the full and half-blooded Indians that now they see the good will of the government towards their nation, the Indians, previously to their departure for the summer hunt assembled several councils in which it was unanimously concluded to send all their children to our school, namely when they shall have returned, which will be towards the end of this month" The boys' school-house had been built for twenty, the government had offered to pay for thirty-three "How shall we accommodate a larger, perhaps a very large number? I would not hesitate to use the building destined for the education of girls, but this might cause a false suspicion among the Indians, particularly among the half-breeds, who wish most ardently the education of their female children I have allowed Antony Penn, my interpreter, to live in one of the rooms till I shall have the means of building for him and family a small log-house" (H)

principle that it was futile to educate the boys unless on growing to adolescence they could find Catholic wives with whom to persevere in the practice of their religion, so Schoenmakers realized from the beginning that a school for native girls had to be an indispensable feature of his program for the material and spiritual uplift of the Osage. He accordingly left the mission in the September of 1847 to secure sisters for this important work. Having sought them in vain in certain convents in St. Louis, he made appeal to the Rev. David A. Deparcq, spiritual director of the Sisters of Loretto of Kentucky. Here his appeal was successful. The education of Indian children was a field of apostolic effort to which Father Nerinckx's fervent sisterhood of the Friends of Mary at the Foot of the Cross had been drawn for years back and only unfavorable circumstances had prevented them from hitherto engaging in it. Only a few days before his unexpected death that venerable missionary had arranged with Governor Clark in St. Louis for the reception at the Loretto Convent of Bethlehem in Missouri of some Indian girls with whom the sisters were to begin the experiment of a school.⁴¹ The death of Nerinckx frustrated the plan and the girls were not received. But now the dream of years seemed about to be realized as Father Schoenmakers's appeal was brought to the notice of the sisters. Four of their number, Mother Concordia Henning and Sisters Bridget Hayden, Mary Petronilla van Prater and Vincentia Gale were immediately commissioned to take in hand a school among the Osage.⁴² They set out from the mother-house of the sisterhood in Kentucky under the conduct of Father Schoenmakers himself on September 9, 1847. On the 20th they left St. Louis for Westport Landing, now Kansas City, Missouri, on the steamer *J. J. Harden*. Here, at the mouth of the Kaw, they were the guests of Madame Thérèse Chouteau, the "Mother of Kansas City," whose husband, François Guesseau Chouteau, started the trading-post out of which the future metropolis was to grow. On October 2 Schoenmakers and the sisters left Kansas, having as conductor of their party Joseph Jarboe, a Kentucky Catholic settled since 1834 at the mouth of the Kaw, where as merchant-trader he had met with much success. Two canvas-covered wagons were the vehicles in which the journey was made over the prairies to the Osage Mission, one hundred and sixty miles to the southwest. On October

⁴¹ Anna C. Mimogue, *Loretto Annals of a Century*, p. 72. Also *supra*, Chap. V, § 1.

⁴² *Idem*, p. 130. Mother Concordia died August 5, 1899, wanting but a few months of being a hundred years old. The notable educational service rendered the Osage by the Sisters of Loretto is chronicled in Sister Mary Lilliana Owens, S.L., *The History of the Sisters of Loretto in the Trans-Mississippi West* (doctoral dissertation, St. Louis University, 1935).

10, eight days out from Kansas, the party reached Osage Mission. Father Bax had been anxiously awaiting the superior and his band of devoted nuns and had posted Indian boys at intervals who were to scan the northern horizon so as to catch an early glimpse of the travellers and communicate at once the news of their approach. "On the morning of the 10th of October," runs the Ponziglione chronicle, "the boys noticed some smoke way yonder on the hills about 5 miles northeast of the Mission, where the Kansas City road used to cross Flat Rock. After looking at it carefully, they concluded that surely the long expected party was coming. In fact in less than an hour they were confirmed in their opinion, when they discovered at a great distance the white tops of the two covered wagons, both slowly advancing towards the Mission."⁴³ Father Bax at once had his Indian boys out in their best attire to give a welcome to Father Schoenmakers and the nuns. Hardly two hours had passed since the arrival of the latter when Bax brought them four little girls, three of them half-breeds and one a full-blood Osage, to be the first boarders. With these the girls' boarding-school was opened that very day, October 10, 1847, the convent of the Sisters of Loretto becoming thenceforth an unfailing fountain-head of sweetness and light to the Indian youth of both sexes up and down the valley of the Neosho.⁴⁴

The first year of the boys' school had not yet run its course when the Osage sub-agent, John M. Richardson, wrote of the "unparalleled progress making by the Osage youths." In September, 1848, the same agent reported in detail on conditions in the school.

An attempt has been made heretofore at educating the Osage youth, but from some cause it did not prove successful, and the enterprise, after considerable expenditure, was abandoned. The present establishment was put in operation by the government as an experiment, with the intention of improving on the foundation if peradventure it should be found advantageous — equal to the undertaking of improving the mental capacities of the children of the nation. The Osages exercised their own partialities in the choice of missionaries to whom they should entrust the educating of their children, by making known their preferences in council to be for the black-robos (as they call them), the Catholics, which denomination was accordingly contracted for (through their principal) to take charge of the school.

The establishment is divided into a male and female department, the former being conducted by three teachers, two of whom are teachers of the Catholic persuasion. The female department is conducted by four highly accomplished Sisters, the principal of whom having been formerly engaged

⁴³ Ponziglione, *The Osages etc.* (A)

⁴⁴ A statement by Bax gives the number of girls received October 10 as five, "20 waiting for the commencement October 25, when it is expected that our goods purchased for their accommodation shall have arrived from Kansas."

in the same capacity in the very justly celebrated female school at St Genevieve, Missouri. The school for boys was opened on the 10 May, 1847. It commenced with a limited number of scholars, but they have gradually increased in number until they now amount to forty. The female school was commenced on the 10th of October of the same year, and now has in attendance twenty-five girls. The object of these missionaries appears to be to give these children a common English education. The boys are taught spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic, having certain hours set apart for manual labor, or, as I might more appropriately say, for agricultural instruction. The girls are also taught reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic, and, in addition, sewing and knitting and drawing for an amusement, they are also exercised in gardening at the proper time. The general system of education is such as is well adapted to prepare the pupils each to adorn their respective and appropriate spheres in common life. The pupils are about equally divided in each school, near half being full-blooded Osages, indicating the very important fact that the Osages appreciate the importance and advantage of educating their children, and that the school is not only popular, but that it has the confidence of the Indian. The children appear happy and contented and learn with greater facility than could be expected, they acquire a knowledge of penmanship more readily than the generality of white children and are fully equal to them in some other branches. No doubt can be entertained of their capacity to receive instruction. The unmixed Osages, however, appear to learn with more readiness and to progress faster than the half-breeds. I can justly say, without depreciating the children of other tribes, that none equal those of the Osages in their capacity to receive an education. The buildings for their school are, and were not at first, such as the missionaries had reason to expect. They were intended to accommodate only twenty boys and the same number of girls, and for an experiment at educating the Osage children. From the progress made by the pupils in learning, together with the popularity of the school among the Indians, we may reasonably and confidently infer that to enlarge the establishment would be to increase the benefits to the nation in a corresponding ratio. I have not the slightest doubt but the present worthy missionaries are fully competent and well calculated to confer on the Osage children the blessings of an education.⁴⁵

Marginal comments in the school-register afford glimpses of the types of Indian youth the managers of the institution were called upon to educate.

John or Xerxes Jaco. Towards the beginning of 1851 John fell sick with consumption, visited the Mission and was received as into an asylum and having prepared himself for his approaching end with all the patience of a good Christian, in his last visit to a *doctor medicinae*, he expressed these remarkable words, "that if he should die on the road, it would be in attempting to reach the Mission." The nearer he approached to death, the more

⁴⁵ RCIA, 1848, no 16



Portrait of John Schoenmakers, SJ (1807-1883), made in Antwerp in 1833 when he was twenty-six. Founder of the Jesuit Osage Mission.



Paul Mary Ponziglione, SJ (1818-1900), for nearly four decades a pioneer travelling missionary and builder of Catholicism in southern Kansas.



The original church of logs, Osage Mission. Oldest Catholic house of worship in southern Kansas.

St Louis University, 27 July, 1847
Hon W. Medill

Hon^{ble} Dear Sir,

I have just received letters from the Rev^d Messrs Schwemmers & Bux, who have at present the direction of the School & among the Osage Indians they went out last April. The outfit, for which the sum of \$725⁰⁰ had been allowed by the Department, has cost between \$1500 & \$1600. Fortunately but few of the Indian boys have attended at school, most of the children having been taken out by their parents in their hunting expeditions from which they were expected to return at the end of the present month. Almost all the parents have promised to send their children to school immediately after their return, & the building it is feared, will be much too small to admit all that will be presented. The children attending at present give the greatest satisfaction, & appear perfectly content & happy. Their absence is compensated by the teachers now in St Louis.

As however the surest prospect of advancing the works of civilization among the Indians chiefly depends on the education of the female children, we had formed the resolution to send out five or six Religious Ladies, (alias Nuns) who by vow & profession devote themselves to the education of girls. Six Sisters of Loretto, (Ky.) have been asked & promised for that purpose, two of them arrived here yesterday, the others are daily expected. We depended on the allowance promised for the first of this month to send them to the New School with the necessary outfit. On making application at the office of the Superintendent, I was informed that the Osage Sub-agency had been transferred to the Southern Superintendency, & that no money had been received for the purpose. This unforeseen circumstance involves me in the greatest difficulties, & I know not how to proceed. If you please have recourse to you, Dear Sir, to beg of you the favor of having the payments for the Osage Schools & made regular early in St Louis, where I reside, & where the articles necessary for the Institutions among the Osages are purchased, by Major Harvey, whom I am informed is gone to Washington, knowing the propriety, not to say the necessity of the measure which I propose, & being the greatest interest in all that relates to the welfare of these poor Indians, well, I feel confident, have no objection

First page of a letter of J O Van de Velde to Commissioner of Indian Affairs W Medill, St Louis, July 27, 1847. Files of the Indian Office, Department of the Interior, Washington

he valued the comforts of religion. Nothing could induce him to exchange place. Having received all the sacraments of the dying, he expired on the 17th of April, 1851, being about 22 years of age, and was buried on the 18th.

Thomas Jounpa received in his baptism the name of Aloysius for his meek and amiable behaviour, was loved by all his companions at school, contracted the consumption in the beginning of 1850 and after a lingering sickness and hoping piously, received all the sacraments of the dying. He expired on the 18th of December, 1850, leaving to his companions the hope of his future bliss.

John Baptist Mongrey [Mongrain] Having to overcome many of his natural failings, he was steadfast in his aim after virtue and improvement.

Peter Mongrey [Mongrain] stayed at school upwards of three years, spoke seldom, improved slowly, corrected but few of his Indian habits, knowing just enough of his religion to make his first Communion, and returned to the Osage life in the beginning of 1851.

Ignatius Hankehapi left school in April, 1853, and soon returned to the blanket.

Kahikey Fownmakers [?] went on the buffalo hunt after the measles of April, 1852, being almost alone [in] having escaped the disease. Returned from the hunt and reentered the school. Lost his father about August 1852. Soon after the death of his father school was abandoned and with it civilization and religion. Being called upon by his relatives to be their horse-hunter, the blanket and Indian life were the necessary consequences. Where are the fruits of his first Communion? How could he preserve innocence among his wild companions?

Peter Nicastoue, having received with the usual sentiments of devotion, the sacraments of the dying, was interred on the 2nd of April. At the request of his mother, being painted, rolled in a blanket, laid in a coffin and buried in the usual manner in the Mission graveyard.⁴⁶

Even the most inconsequential of written records often rise with the lapse of time to the dignity of historical documents. One may perhaps not so qualify the document which follows, but significance it has, with its mute testimony to the efforts made by Father Schoenmakers and his associates to impart to the young Osage something of the white man's culture. This letter, which Joseph Steben (Stephen[?]), Osage half-breed fourteen years of age, addressed to Secretary of the Interior McClelland, has been buried for eighty years in the files of the Indian Office, Washington.

Osage Manual Labor School
3, Feb 1856

Honorable Secretary

To become useful to ourselves and nation our teachers have taught us to compose letters. We are at it five months and as the boys love that kind

⁴⁶ Archives of the Passionist Monastery, St. Paul, Kansas

of composition we are all improving fast and our parents and friends are glad that we are able to write to them and therefore we write often to them, some two days ago we wrote many letters to our good agent who always comes to see us when he is at the mission, I think some were written for you for the fathers told us that the agent would perhaps go to Washington and see you, but the winter is so very cold that we think he cannot go, we therefore send our letters by the Post-Office which we have at the mission, but the mail could not come last week on account of deep snow for, Sir, it has frozen so hard that the ice is two feet thick in the river and the snow lays [*sic*] from one to four feet deep so that our Indians cannot come home. Some children are frozen to death and the old people suffer much. Many horses are already dead and the people tell us many more will die. What will then our Indians do when they have no horses to go to the buffalo hunt.

I now send you our respects of all the boys at school. I think we are fifty boys. Two boys were called out by the traders, Father Schoenmakers having permitted them to go, they get twenty dollars a month for writing letters and keep [ing] books, when trade is over they will come back to the Mission. I will also tell you something of the girls' school, their house is not far from ours, there are about forty girls at school, they make and mend our clothes and milk the cows, they send us sometimes pies and cakes and we cut wood for them. The fathers don't let us go in their yard, but the big boys go in the bottom to cut wood. Then Henry the German hauls it in their yard. But we are much better off than the girls, because we have a large school-house made of large cotton logs, our two class rooms 25 x 25 feet large and upstairs is our dormitory 50 x 25 feet large and above the dormitory is the clothes room, but the nine sisters and girls live all in the same house not much larger than that of the fathers.⁴⁷

The success of the mission school in educating the young generation of Osage had the result of making many Indian parents belonging to tribes other than the Osage eager to see their children also share in the benefits of the school. But Father Schoenmakers could not admit many children of this class, the government appropriation covering, with one exception, the education of Osage pupils only. Yet representatives of other tribes, especially the Miami, Wea, Piankashaw and Peoria, were occasionally found in the school. As to Quapaw children, these were admitted and paid for by the government on the same terms as the Osage. In 1853 some form of incorporation of the Quapaw with the Osage tribe appears to have taken place. At the request of the Quapaw chiefs, Schoenmakers admitted ten children of that tribe into the school on February 28, 1853, "being myself witness," as he wrote to the commissioner of Indian affairs, "that the Quapaw chiefs have obtained in council through the medium of the Agent the unanimous consent and

⁴⁷ (H) A post-office was established at the Osage Mission in 1851, Schoenmakers being appointed post-master.

approval of the Osage chiefs”⁴⁸ In May of the same year twenty-four Quapaw children, seventeen being boys and seven girls, were attending the school The Quapaw or Arkansas Indians were met by Marquette on the lower Mississippi in 1673 And now, nearly two centuries later, Jesuit successors of his were educating the children of this same tribe in the valley of the Neosho Meantime, the success attending Schoenmakers’s school was among the interesting things emigrants of the fifties heard of as they arrived in Kansas Thus Miriam Davis Colt, a pioneer of 1856, in her book, *Went to Kansas* “We passed the Catholic Mission this afternoon It is said to be the most flourishing school in the Territory. It was founded in 1847 Rev John Schoenmakers has discharged the duties of Superintendent in an efficient manner since the commencement assisted by ten Jesuit clergymen and lay-brothers The little Indians were out as we passed, in high glee”⁴⁹

All through its career, however, the school suffered from lack of due financial support The annual grant of fifty-five dollars made by the government for each pupil in attendance was found from the very first to be inadequate to meet the running expenses of the institution In October, 1855, Father Schoenmakers appealed to Commissioner Manypenny for an increase over this allowance “Since the commencement of the Osage school in 1847 little has been paid out to hired hands—however, it has been necessary to supply a yearly deficit of \$800, I own it would have been much more encouraging to us if we had been able to use the \$6400 in assisting our young people after leaving school and making our own domestic life more comfortable” The appeal was successful to the extent that for the fiscal year ending June 3, 1855, an increased allowance of \$18 75 for each pupil was granted by the Indian Office. But in 1856 Schoenmakers was put to the necessity of asking that the increased allowance be continued “Having again last summer met with a total failure of our crops caused by grasshoppers, I have continued to charge the same increased allowance, hoping that my reasons which I have laid before Commissioner Manypenny will be approved. . . . I doubt not but a true knowledge would convince you that the \$55 per annum for each child, has, in no year whatsoever, sufficed or will suffice hereafter, to keep up the school in that regularity after which we have always aimed and without which we shall find no satisfaction for ourselves because comfort and improvement of our school is our immediate end With it we are daily growing upon our Indians’ hearts to make a sacrifice of that natural affection for children

⁴⁸ Schoenmakers to commissioner of Indian affairs, May 20, 1853 (H)

⁴⁹ Miriam Davis Colt, *Went to Kansas being a thrilling account of an ill-fated expedition to that faery land and its sad results together with a sketch of a life of the author and how the world goes with her* (Watertown [N Y], 1862), p 147

to which they have hitherto so tenaciously adhered" Father Schoenmakers's appeal met with a favorable hearing, the rate being fixed at \$73 75 for each pupil and so continuing until the close of the school⁵⁰

Osage Indian sub-agents from 1847 to 1861 were J M Richardson, Henry Harvey, W J Morrow, A J Dorn and P P Elder Without exception they commended the work of the mission schools in their annual reports to Washington

This is no doubt the best school in the Indian country, particularly the female department (J M Richardson, October 25, 1849)⁵¹

The manual labor school for the instruction of the Osage youth is within a few rods of the agency I have noticed the progress of this interesting school since my arrival in this country, as well as the conduct of the children when out of school, and I think it is not out of place for me to remark here that when I consider the adults comprising the tribe from which these children were taken—bold, selfish, unconquered, entirely uncultivated, and most of them determined to carry with them to the end of their days their wild, romantic and savage habits—and then observe the friendly, courteous, respectful, and genteel deportment of these children, I have no hesitation in giving it as my opinion that the managers of this school have done their duty faithfully (H Harvey, October 23, 1850)⁵²

I have had the pleasure of attending an examination of the pupils both in the male and female department of the manual labor school now in successful operation in the Osage country, under the superintendence of the Rev Mr Schoenmaker It gives me great pleasure to give my humble testimony in favor of the manner in which this institution is conducted and I doubt if any school is exercising a more benign influence over the Indians than this one The pupils are making rapid progress in their studies, are

⁵⁰ Schoenmakers to Manypenny, October 1, 1855, Schoenmakers to McClelland, February 3, 1856 (H) Father Bax wrote to De Smet, February 27, 1852 "From this \$55 00 the child must be nourished, clothed, and all things necessary for its education [provided] which sum experience has taught us does scarcely suffice for that purpose Besides, the Mission has to support 3 Fathers and 7 lay-brothers of the Society, one secular priest [Heimann], who presides over the school [and] to whom is paid \$150 per annum" Other items of expenses were subsistence for eight Sisters of Loretto, wages for their servant, \$120, for the servant in the fathers' house, \$80, for interpreter, \$150, for washing, \$200 "To this must be added necessary repairs of the houses, furniture, farmers implements—travelling expenses to the different missionary stations An addition to the church is absolutely necessary, which will cost \$250" (A) Reverend Theodore Heimann, ordained in Kentucky by Bishop Flaget, became a Carmelite in 1864, said to have been the first to enter that order in the United States As a Carmelite he held for years the pastorate of St Joseph's Church, Leavenworth, Kansas, and died at the Carmelite novitiate, New Baltimore, Penn, September 3, 1893 Kinsella, *History of Our Cradle Land*, p 50

⁵¹ Exec Doc, 1st Sess, 31st Cong, p 1139

⁵² RCIA, 1850, no 9

well-fed and clothed and appear to be happy and well satisfied (W J Morrow, September 11, 1851)⁵³

Enclosed you will find the report of Rev. Father Schoenmaker, superintendent Osage manual labor school, this institution has been so well conducted that it has gained good commendation from all persons who have visited it and been eye witnesses of the manner in which it is conducted by the superintendent and his associates, both in the male and female departments

I would not be doing myself justice in permitting this report to close did I not commend this school to the most kind and fostering care of our government. I have never witnessed more devotion to the accomplishment of an object than is manifested by the conductors of this school. The small sum they have been receiving for the education of each child I am satisfied is not sufficient to defray their necessary expenses, after the observance of the most rigid economy (Andrew J Dorn, August 23, 1855)

This institution is worthy of the most kind and fostering care of the Government, it has had much to contend with, notwithstanding it has gradually improved and grown in popularity with the Indians from year to year. The school buildings have been added to almost yearly and still they are not adequate for the accommodation of the increased number of pupils (Andrew J Dorn, September 9, 1858)⁵⁴

Knowing as much as I do of the constant progress in usefulness of the Osage Manual Labor School among the Osage tribe of Indians under the wise and judicious management of the Rev. J. Schoenmakers, its Superintendent, and his able and zealous assistants in both the male and female department, I cannot forbear writing the Department in its behalf entirely unsolicited by any one connected with the school.

My acquaintance with said school is now about ten years and I must say that it has grown much in popularity and usefulness during that time. At my first acquaintance with the establishment it might be very properly said to be but an experiment, but now that is not the case, for it has established itself beyond any cavil or doubt permanently.

I know full well that your Honor can but acquiesce in what I said and I have now to solicit at the hands of the Department any aid that may be consistent for the enlargement and erection of additional buildings for the comfortable accommodation of the scholars in attendance. The present buildings are quite inadequate for the present scholars in attendance and I have heard that there are constant applications by parents for the reception of their children into the schools which the Superintendent is compelled to refuse on account of the want of ample accommodations (Andrew J Dorn to A. B. Greenwood, commissioner of Indian affairs, January 18, 1860)⁵⁵

⁵³ *RCIA*, 1851, no. 38

⁵⁴ *RCIA*, 1855, no. 89, 1858, no. 41. Dorn was in charge of the Osage agency about ten years (1850-1860)

⁵⁵ (H)

I should do an injustice to the very generous and laudable efforts of those fathers under whose supervision the Osage Manual labor school is if I failed to mention it in this report. From a personal and thorough examination of this institution in both of its departments, I am satisfied that the influence and superior exertions made by them in behalf of these Indians will be seen and felt when this generation shall have passed away. It is truly deserving the fostering care of the government and will, if properly supported with funds, be the means of ultimately civilizing that now benighted tribe (P. P. Elder to W. G. Coffin, superintendent of Indian affairs, southern superintendency, September 30, 1861) ⁵⁶

To the above testimonies of the Osage Indian agents may be added that of Elias Rector, superintendent of Indian affairs, southern superintendency, September 24, 1860.

The school in the Neosho agency, under Catholic auspices, has done more for the Indian youth than any other school within my superintendency, and such has been the case, I believe, ever since the discovery of the continent, with the Catholic school among the Indians. That creed, for some reason or other, better suits the capacity and intellect of the Indians than any other, and controls them better, and, it may be added that the Catholic missionaries possess the great and rare merit of attending exclusively to their proper business ⁵⁷

⁵⁶ *RCIA*, 1861, no. 3

⁵⁷ *Idem*, 1860, no. 45. The following additional testimonies may be cited:

"My observations for the few years I have been connected with the Indian character and tendencies convince me that the true and surest road to civilization through which the benighted red man of the west can pass is that made by the Catholic Church. Their humane effort and exemplary intercourse and faithful teaching have made an observable impression and are more favorably received than that of any other religious denomination. That form of worship is peculiarly adapted to the nature of the Indians and the habits of civilization have been and will continue to be more thoroughly disseminated among the Indians through this channel than by any other agency. The total number of scholars [in the Osage manual labor school] is one hundred and forty-one, in constant attendance, and would be much larger if the buildings and other facilities would admit. The whole institution is a model of industrious habits, cleanliness, order and system and reflects credit on its worthy superintendent and all connected with its management" (P. P. Elder, Neosho Agency, September 20, 1863, to Superintendent W. G. Coffin) *RCIA*, 1863, no. 88.

"It is but a simple act of justice to say that Father Shoemaker and those associated with him in conducting the Osage Mission have for the past sixteen years labored for the education, civilization and christianization of the Indians with the Neosho agency with such zeal and devotion as I have rarely seen equalled. I regard the knowledge of agricultural pursuits and habits of industry thus inculcated of vastly more advantage to the Indians than book-learning. So sensible were the Osages of the benefits they have been and are now receiving from that institution that there was not the least difficulty in getting them to provide in the late

§ 6 CIVILIZING THE OSAGE

The civilizing of the Osage, especially by bringing them to practice farming, was an aim of the mission second only in importance in the mind of its managers to their spiritual regeneration. In fact, the attempt to civilize the Indians had to come first, for there was little hope of effecting any moral or religious transformation of the natives unless they were weaned from their nomadic manner of life and taught to settle down to the pursuit of honest industry and labor. In a memorandum drawn up for a government official in the first year of the mission Father Bax discloses the views he had formed on the subject of Osage farming. "We desire very much the Government would encourage their beginning to cultivate the soil, for unless they, the Osages, change their manner of living, we can expect but little fruit from the education we endeavor to impart to their children, several of the Indians begin to see this as the buffalo becomes more scarce every year, still the traders encourage them very much for hunting, so that we fear some will never change so long as they continue to find any game." The best plan to follow in Father Bax's opinion was to have the government appoint a farmer for every Indian village to superintend the cultivation of the common-field in which every Indian would have his allotted plot of ground. "The farmer breaks the ground and keeps the fence in order. As they [the Indians] are now, they can never begin, not having the necessary instruments."⁵⁸

Early attempts to induce the Osage to live in houses ended in dismal failure. They preferred the wigwam to the white man's style of shelter. According to treaty stipulations the government built for the Osage chiefs a number of comfortable log houses equipped with all necessary furniture. The chiefs occupied them for a while, but finding them anything but pleasant quarters according to Indian notions of comfort soon moved out, selling the furniture to white settlers along the Missouri border. In the fall the fires which the Indians were accustomed to start at that time to burn out the prairie grass entirely consumed the log houses. To Father Schoenmakers's remonstrances with the Indian chiefs for refusing to live in these civilized abodes, they answered that they were infested with goblins, who every evening moaned piteously around the corners of the log houses, but their real aversion to these dwellings arose from the circumstance that while living in them they had to forego many of the social advantages and

treaty liberally for the continuation of the present and the erection of another similar institution on their diminished reservation" (W. G. Coffin, Leavenworth, September 24, 1863) *RCIA*, 1863, no. 81½

⁵⁸ Archives of Passionist Monastery, St. Paul, Kansas.

pleasures of village life. The Indians had strong social instincts and loved to pitch their wigwams as closely together as possible. The Osage villages were laid out on the same general plan, the wigwams, in number from fifty to a hundred, being distributed in long rows forming regular streets. The best site in the village was always assigned to the wigwam of the local chief, after which came in order those of the counsellors, medicine-men, town-criers, kettle-tenders and others. The wigwam continued to be the favorite shelter of the Osage up to the time the reservation was broken up.⁵⁹

Not any more successful than the attempt to get the Osage to dwell in houses was the attempt to have them patronize the grist-mill which the government erected for their use about three miles southwest of the mission near the house of Chief George White Hair. The Osage had no grain to grind and the mill, a building of considerable size, shared the fate of the log houses, being swept away by prairie-fires.

To make a farmer out of the Indian never ceased to be the ambition of Father Schoenmakers. He did not realize this ambition in any large way, though before the Osage withdrew from the vicinity of the mission in the sixties enough of success had attended his efforts to indicate what could be accomplished with a greater measure of time to enter into the process. After all, as Ponziglione somewhere pointed out, the nations of Europe were centuries in making the transition from barbarism to culture. One could not expect a people like the Osage with an aversion to labor bred in the bone to be made over night into industrious and enterprising farmers. Schoenmakers's first attempt in this direction met with absolute failure. In particular, a very carefully planned campaign devised by himself and Brother Thomas O'Donnell in the early days of the mission to induce the Osage to go to work went ridiculously wide of the mark. O'Donnell had arrived among the Osage in August, 1848, to fill the position of teacher to the Indian boys.⁶⁰ He was highly successful in his dealings with them and as a

⁵⁹ Ponziglione, *The Osages etc.* (A)

⁶⁰ "After two days delay in Kansas we started for Sugar Creek in a wagon or carriage such as that of Florissant, Rev. Fathers Verheydt [Verreydt] and Gallard [Gailand], myself and some luggage for which we had to pay \$15. We reached Westport about 12 o'clock it being about 4 miles south of Kansas. About six miles from that [place] we came on the military road, which runs straight south dividing the State of Missouri and the Indian country. This road leads to Fort Scott, about 100[?] miles from Kansas. On this road we had to travel to Mr. Jerues [Giroux's] trading-house fifty miles from Kansas and then turn west to Sugar Creek about 20 miles, which we reached in about 2 days. As to the things you might observe on the way they are first a boundless prairie on the west and from time to time some farmers' places to the east. Sometime nothing was to be seen but sky and prairie." O'Donnell to Reiselman, November 30, 1848. (A) Brother

result acquired an ascendancy over the adult Indians as well. "His natural eloquence," according to Father Ponziglione, "had a persuasive power and his conversation was not only instructive, but also most agreeable. So rich was he in anecdotes and witticisms that people could listen to him for hours without ever getting tired. Feeling that he had gained great influence over them, he never let pass an opportunity of lecturing them on the advantages of a civilized life over their nomadic customs. He would describe to them the happiness enjoyed by farmers on their homesteads with such lively colors that at last some few made up their minds to follow his advice."⁶¹

When Father Schoenmakers learned that some of the Indians were ready to turn to agriculture, he lost no time in calling them together to encourage them in their praiseworthy design. He directed them to make as many rails as would be needed to fence a forty-acre field, offering to pay for the rails at the rate of five dollars a thousand, the Indians to keep the rails as a present. It was a good bargain as the Indians saw it and they set to work with a will. Schoenmakers lent them his teams and wagons to haul the rails while he himself with some of the larger school-boys fenced in the forty-acre field. Then Brother O'Donnell, as surveyor, staked off the lots, which were to be assigned in equal dimensions to the individual Indians, while the squaws followed after him, dexterously shifting the stakes so as to obtain a larger share of land. The Indians showed great zest for the initial processes of raising a crop such as ploughing, harrowing, and planting the seeds furnished them by Schoenmakers. But here their labor ceased, the protests neither of the father nor of the brother could induce them to go further in cultivating the field. If the seeds would not spring up into crops without further attention, they were plainly of no account. The Indians pointed with a sense of triumphant logic to the grass which year by year came forth from the bosom of Mother Earth with no human toil to coax it into being. If crops of corn and wheat and barley could not be got except by laborious cultivation of the soil, there was evidently here some perversion of Nature's processes in which the Indians preferred to have no hand. After all, Nature had intended them to be hunters, not farmers, and while buffalo remained plentiful, it was the height of folly to go to work. And so this first agricultural experiment of good Father Schoenmakers issued in downright failure. By the end of July weeds, brambles and sun-flowers covered the entire field and when these disappeared in the fires the Indians were accustomed to start in October to consume the prairie grass, the very site of the forty-

O'Donnell dates his Osage letter from "the Residence of St. Francis Regis," indicating that this was an earlier name for the mission than St. Francis Hieronymo.

⁶¹ Ponziglione, *The Osages etc.* (A)

acre field became obliterated. The conclusion reached by Father Schoenmakers and Brother O'Donnell was that Indian grown-ups were proof against the seductions of farming and that success in teaching the Osage to farm, if it came at all, was to come through the rising generation.⁶²

And indeed the young generation of the tribe became in the end the occasion of at least a qualified success in Osage farming of which Father Schoenmakers felt that he could legitimately be proud. Having formed a class in agriculture among the larger boys, the father was accustomed to take them out to the fields for the necessary instruction in this vitally important part of their education. On those occasions he could not but notice the keen interest displayed by many of the older Osage in the agricultural training through which the boys were being put. Standing by and watching the latter as they worked in the fields, the Osage adults finally threw off their blankets, took a spade or other implement in hand and went to work with surprising earnestness. Here was Father Schoenmakers's opportunity. If these Indians showed so much readiness to work with the boys, they might be induced to do a little farming on their own account. And so it turned out to be. A number of Indians staked out small plots of land on which they began to raise grain and vegetables. This was in 1858. The example of these farmer-Indians was contagious. The following spring a still larger number of Indians were engaged in farming and soon formed a regular settlement of some fifty families. Without quarrelling of any kind as to the limits of their respective fields, they had picked up their claims along the fertile valley of the Neosho, the settlement starting at the point some three miles south of the mission and extending over an area of about twenty-five miles, as far down as Little White Hair's town. By disposing of some of their horses, the Osage farmers were able to procure for themselves agricultural implements and farming stock while Schoenmakers supplied them with seeds. The Osage had their reward. Their little gar-

⁶² *Idem*. Osage Indian sub-agent J. M. Richardson estimated the value of the Indian trade in 1848 (probably the result of a single hunt) at twenty-eight thousand dollars, including nearly six thousand buffalo robes, at three dollars each, ten thousand deer-skins averaging seventy-five cents each, and other peltries worth about two thousand dollars. "While on the hunt [they are] capable and willing to endure the greatest hardship." He reckoned the value of the Osage trade for the preceding thirty years at twelve hundred thousand dollars, this value in peltries going to the traders in return for goods costing the latter about five hundred thousand. The capital employed in the Indian trade on the Osage reserve for the year 1848, Richardson estimated did not exceed twenty thousand dollars (*RCIA*, 1848, no. 16). The Indians often traded their peltries to the white farmers of the Missouri border for farm produce. "When a bushel of corn could be procured for a coonskin, it was a more reasonable procedure, so the Osage mind reasoned, to go out and kill the coon than submit to the toilsome drudgery of raising the corn."

dens were blessed in early spring with an abundant output of vegetables and in June their wigwams were quite surrounded by a rich crop of corn. Father Ponziglione comments

This indeed, was a great result, of which Father Schoenmakers had every reason to be proud. For though this agricultural settlement was small, it opened the eyes of the Osage to see how they could enjoy the advantages of civilization. Nay, it made them touch with their hands some of the fruits of it. What was most remarkable in all this transaction was that, whatsoever work was done on these farms was done without the help of any assistant-farmer appointed by the Indian Department to be, as it were, their teacher in agriculture. All the improvements that were made by these farming Osages did not cost the Indian Treasury a single cent, for they never called on the Government to allow them an appropriation for this purpose. All their dependence was on good Father Schoenmakers, for not only was he ready to give them good advice, but as far as it was in his power, he would let them have whatever they needed free of charge, and when they had raised plenty of either vegetables or grain, he would purchase from them whatever they could spare, paying them regular market prices.⁶³

Reviewing the results obtained by the mission in its efforts to civilize the Osage, one may recall that the tribe had not emerged from the state of primitive savagery at the time it was opened in 1847. Twenty years later, when they withdrew into a diminished reserve, they were still for the most part an uncivilized people. Agent Dorn described them in 1857 as literally "a wild, hunting, roving band of people, subsisting most entirely from the chase."⁶⁴ Father Schoenmakers declared in 1855, "our Osages advance but very little towards civilization," and in 1856, "the full-blooded Osage has not even taken the first step towards civilization." In 1847, on his arrival among the Osage, he counted five farms operated by Indians, in 1855 the number had grown to twenty-five.⁶⁵ In 1858 he recorded "Some few families have already fenced in fields, gathered a crop and have been very successful in raising hogs and cattle, in spite of the great discouragement with which they meet from lazy Indians, perhaps relations." Finally, in 1861, at the outbreak of the Civil War, the Neosho Indian agent, P. P. Elder, reported "Some of the bands of this tribe show strong symptoms of exchanging the practice of hunting for that of agricultural pursuits, and in many instances have built houses and fences, cultivated small patches of land, raised corn, etc., of which they are proud to speak. These impressions have been imbibed by the generous efforts and kind

⁶³ Ponziglione, *The Osages etc.* (A)

⁶⁴ *RCIA*, 1857, no. 83

⁶⁵ *RCIA*, 1855, no. 90

advices of those worthy fathers connected with the Catholic Mission establishment conducted in their midst for the last fourteen years”⁶⁶

The outcome of the Jesuit missionary experiment with the Osage was therefore briefly this only a modicum of good was accomplished among the adult Osage, on the other hand there was notable success in educating the children, who, however, on going back to their families seem to have lost what they learned at school. Finally, as a diversion from the missionaries' original program a large measure of devoted ministerial aid was lent to the white settlers who gradually displaced the Indians. As to the failure to make any substantial impression on the grown-up Osage, it was admitted by all connected with the mission. Bishop Miége advised Father Roothaan in October, 1852, that the missionaries had never been able to get the Osage to work and he would gladly have closed the mission. In April, 1853, the General himself wrote to Schoenmakers: “Results among the Indians are admitted by all to be meagre. But one must not for that despair or give over the salutary work. St. Francis Xavier used to advise missionaries to invoke for the salvation of the people the souls of infants who died after receiving baptism”⁶⁷. Four years later, Father Druyts, Missouri vice-provincial, after an official visitation of the mission, reported to Father Beckx:

The Osage Indians are vicious and lazy, having no desire to be made Christians or to become good. They do not cultivate their land and yet they have just received for the last time what are called Government annuities, consisting principally of woolen blankets and a small sum of money a head. The money is spent in a few days. The blankets will soon be worn out and they will be forced to have recourse to the buffalo for clothing and food, but, as it happens, to hunt the buffalo they have to go very far and absent themselves from the reserve for three months regularly every year, with all that, there will follow the necessity of selling their lands and settling elsewhere or of perishing where they are. As to the schools, they were never so flourishing as now, 80 boys and 80 girls and more available if there were room for them. No doubt the schools do good for the time the children are in them, but what becomes of them afterwards? Once they are back in their homes, the same old manner of life, everything they learned at the Mission is soon forgotten. What our Fathers do in this mission apart from the schools amounts to very little and even this little costs them much toil and demands from them privations of every kind. Still, the Fathers as well as the coadjutor-brothers with the exception of only one live there contented and happy and make up a very regular community. All, I believe,

⁶⁶ *RCIA*, 1858, 1861

⁶⁷ Miége à Roothaan, October 28, 1852, Roothaan ad Schoenmakers, April 21, 1853 (AA)

are animated by an excellent spirit of charity and are ready to do there all the good they can and for as long a time as obedience will require

Finally, there is the testimony of Father Ponziglione, always more sanguine in his hopes for the Osage than his co-laborers "While I write these words," he says in a letter to Father Beckx of January 6, 1862, "the Indians are returning from the hunt God in His goodness has supplied them with food this time also, but while they exult over the gift received they made no account of the Giver and imitating the ways of the old pagans they congregate in the woods to offer sacrifice to the devil We have often tried to bring the Osage to a better frame of mind but in vain They readily admit that the ways of the Christians are the best, but in practice they prefer to follow those of the pagans" In the same year, May, 1862, the General, after congratulating Ponziglione on the success he was having in the schools, added "Would that you had been permitted to report the same about the adults, but I see, as your Reverence writes, that little fruit is gathered among them, that in dealing with them there is more occasion for patience than for joy, that they have not yet left their superstitions and idolatry, but return over and over to their devilish vomit and festivities" Two years later, May, 1864, Bishop Miége recorded for the Father General his final judgment on the results achieved by the Osage Mission "Father Schoenmakers is the man for the place and the circumstances . . . The old Osage are dispersed and lived partly on pillage The thought sometimes comes to me that it would be better to abandon this ground and offer the bread of the Gospel to other tribes, who would accept it with more eagerness Good has been done during the seventeen years that our Fathers have lived among them, but not a good which corresponds to the sufferings and sacrifices of the missionaries" ⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Ponziglione ad Beckx, January 6, 1862, Miége à Beckx, May 11, 1864 (AA) Still, even the adult Osage, despite their meagre susceptibility to religious teaching, had no doubt derived some profit in a moral way from their contact with the missionaries The advantages of an education had at least been impressed upon them After their removal to the Indian Territory, they were still petitioning for Jesuit instructors for their children The children, too, though much if not most of their religious education was undone by subsequent unfavorable environment, often retained in a practical way the lessons of earlier days Thus, when the Osage chief Little White Hair lay dying in 1869, he requested Louis Chouteau, son of the Osage trader, Edouard Chouteau and a one-time student of the school, to baptize him, as no priest was at hand Chouteau complied with the request "It was his [Little White Hair's] request to be baptized before he died and he said he never was baptized Finding himself on the point of death, he requested that I should baptize him and I did so to save his poor soul" L P Chouteau to Ponziglione, December 26, 1869 (A) See note 73 for Schoenmaker's opinion as to the benefit derived by the adult Osage from the mission

§ 7 THE MISSION DURING THE CIVIL WAR AND AFTER

Lying as it did in the border region of southeastern Kansas, the Osage Mission found itself during the period of the Civil War perilously close to the range of actual hostilities. Troops of both North and South passed by its doors and even camped on its premises, but without inflicting any material harm. Both sides in the great struggle were eager to enlist the military services of the Osage. The latter, on the advice of the fathers, at first escaped the importunities of the military authorities by going off on their annual buffalo hunt. But returning to their villages at the conclusion of the hunt, they were no longer able to avoid the alternative of declaring for one side or the other in the momentous struggle. They declared for the North and numbers of them subsequently joined the Union forces, though many also, as the war lasted on, were found in the Confederate armies.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ "The war deprived the Osages of all their labor and prospects. The youths of our school above the age of fifteen joined the Union army, 500 Osages had gone south, and of the remaining 3000, four companies also joined the army." Address of Father Schoenmakers at opening of the mill on Flat Rock Creek, September 24, 1870, *Kansas Historical Collection*, 9 21. Col. Olin Thurston, Civil War officer, who at the beginning of the war raised a regiment of soldiers from Allen and Woodson Counties, Kansas, and saw much service in southern Kansas, made this statement: "The Fathers at Osage Mission from the very first used their long experience and great influence with the Indians to keep them loyal to the government and to the efforts of these good Fathers we are indebted for the loyalty of these Indians during the war, more than [to] any other cause." Numerous contemporary testimonies from Indian agents and other government officials corroborate this statement. At first, however, the mission authorities would seem to have taken up an attitude of neutrality. Thus W. G. Coffin, superintendent of Indian affairs, southern superintendency, to W. P. Dole, commissioner of Indian affairs, October 15, 1862: "The Osage Catholic Mission and manual labor school, notwithstanding its location on what has been a kind of dividing line between loyal and rebellious districts, has thus far escaped destruction and maintained its usefulness. This is partly attributed to the fact that it has avoided taking part in questions of political character and followed strictly the purpose of its establishment." Neutrality, however, if it meant favoring neither side could scarcely have been maintained by the mission. As a matter of fact, already in the first year of the war it was active on the side of the Union. "Ours being a Government institution," says Father Ponziglione, "it was to be expected that our Superior should be in favor of the Union and this was enough to make him appear as a declared enemy of the Confederacy." Agent P. P. Elder, in transmitting Father Schoenmaker's report for 1862, commented: "The Osages are still our firm friends and are living in their country in their usual quiet way having furnished about 400 stalwart warriors for the second Indian regiment. That school [Catholic Manual Labor School] continues to be the pride of the nation. The efforts and zeal of those connected therewith continue unabated. Through the patriotic efforts of those 'worthy' Fathers, twenty-five well educated Indians, mostly full-bloods, from that school have enlisted in the white regiment and as far as I can learn make good soldiers." The following year, September 24,

Father Schoenmakers's well-known Union sympathies brought him into trouble shortly after the beginning of the war with the trader, John Mathews, who was married to an Osage woman and conducted a trading-post near the site of Oswego, Kansas. According to the account of the incident to be found in the Ponziglione memoirs, which, however, does not connect Mathews with it in any way, a special federal commissioner, accompanied by his secretary, had been sent out in the summer of 1861 by President Lincoln to conciliate the Indians on the Kansas border and provide for their wants. Afraid to venture alone from the Osage Mission to the Quapaw Agency, some fifty miles to the southeast, they requested Father Schoenmakers to accompany them, which he did, returning thence to the mission. When the Indians and white settlers of the locality, Confederate sympathizers it would appear, learned that the two visitors at the Quapaw Agency were federal agents, they became enraged and burned down the agency, not however before the visitors had escaped. The mob then planned to proceed to the mission with the design of burning it and taking the life of Schoenmakers, who they said had betrayed them into the hands of their enemies by introducing northern emissaries into their midst. Fortunately a storm of great violence occurring on the night of June 21 flooded the whole region around the mission, rendering the roads impassable and making it necessary for the Confederate party to give up their plan of attacking the mission. Meantime, a young Osage mixed-blood, a one-time pupil

1863, Superintendent W. G. Coffin reported from Leavenworth: "The Osage Indians are remaining loyal to the government with the exception of Black Dog's Band and some of the Half-breeds and restless spirits of other bands, who were influenced to join the rebels by misrepresentation made to them by their former agent, Major Dorn, and other emissaries sent amongst them by the rebels. In view of the very important geographical position occupied by these Indians, between the white settlements in southern Kansas and those within the rebel states, no effort on my part has been spared to counteract the machinations of the enemy and to hold them in loyalty to the United States Government, in which I have been ably assisted by Father Schoenmakers and his associates at the Osage Catholic Mission." C. C. Showalter, a Union soldier belonging to a detachment of troops under General Brannan which engaged the Confederates only about a half mile from the Osage Mission, April 22, 1863, said in an oral account: "While here I was detailed by General Brannan to call at the Mission and get what information I could. I called on Father Schoenmakers and found him strongly loyal to the Union." The foregoing data are mostly cited from W. W. Graves, *Life and Letters of Rev. John Schoenmakers, S. J., Apostle to the Osage* (Parsons, Kansas, 1916), pp. 60, 69, 80, 86, 104, 112. The same author has another contribution to the history of the Osage Mission, *Life and Letters of Fathers Ponziglione, Schoenmakers, and other early Jesuits at Osage Mission, Sketch of St. Francis Church, Life of Mother Bridget* (St. Paul, Kansas, 1916). The Civil War chapter in Ponziglione's ms., *The Osages etc.*, is reproduced in the *St. Louis Catholic Historical Review*, 4: 219 *et seq.*

of the mission school and, according to one account, a son of John Mathews, had appeared at the mission at seven o'clock on the evening of June 21 with a letter warning Schoenmakers of the plot against him Says Father Ponziglione

Without showing the least excitement on his countenance, he handed the letter to Father James C Van Goch and next to me, requesting us to tell him what he should do The matter was a very serious one He would not decide for himself We felt that a heavy responsibility was laying [*sic*] on us and for a while we could not speak a word! But there was no time to lose in vain speculations, something was to be done and we agreed that he should try to save his life by leaving the Mission at once The Father reflected for a few minutes and without any agitation replied that he thought it would be better for him to follow our advice

A most heavy rain-storm, which had begun about sun-down, was now raging in all its fury, but no attention was paid to it The best racer we had in our stables is soon saddled and exactly at 8 o'clock P M the Father is off, bound for Humboldt, some 30 miles northwest of our Mission Spite of the great darkness prevailing and the rain which kept pouring down in torrents the Father succeeds in making his way safely during that terrible night and about 7 30 of the next morning he finds himself in the midst of his friends in Humboldt Having taken a much needed rest on the next day, he resumes his journey and by the end of the month he reaches St Mary's Mission among the Pottawatomie ⁷⁰

The departure of Father Schoenmakers was followed by something like panic among the Catholic Indians and friends of the missionaries

⁷⁰ Ponziglione, *The Osages etc* Schoenmakers has this reference to his difference with John Mathews "New trials were now upon us Major Whitney, a special agent, had brought provisions for the destitute Osages, while John Mathews, my old friend, whose five children I had raised in school, raised an alarm, entreating the Indians to regard the provisions as poisonous This occurrence alienated me from my old friend Mathews and I was obliged to spend eight months at St Mary's Mission, Pottawatomie County" *Kans Hist Coll* 9 22 Mathews denied to Ponziglione that he ever put a price on the head of Schoenmakers, as had been reported On September 8 a body of about 200 Confederates under command of Col Stanwarts(?), a Cherokee half-breed, with two white men as captains, Livingstone and John Mathews, passed by the Osage Mission on their way to raid Humboldt On their return they stopped for a while at the mission, where an attempt on the part of some of them to enter the sisters' convent was frustrated by the vigorous action of Mathews "If Captain John Mathews ever was accountable for the threats which in a moment of party excitement he made against the life of Father Schoenmakers, the noble and really gallant part he acted on this occasion, to defend the Sisters' convent and prevent it from being dishonored, deserves him our warmest thanks and impels us to look on him as our great benefactor" Mathews was trapped in a house near Chetopa a few miles below the Osage Mission by a detachment of Union volunteers under Col Blunt and shot, September, 1861

Many were of opinion that the fathers should close the schools, dismiss the children to their homes and abandon the mission until such time as they could resume their labors in more peaceful circumstances. But Ponziglione, to whom the management of affairs had been committed during the absence of the superior, was resolved that the Jesuit missionaries among the Osage, having been innocent of any wrongdoing that would compromise them in the eyes either of the Indians or of the civil authorities, should stand their ground and accept whatever issue Providence might see fit to give to the crisis. "Having placed our whole trust in Him, Who has in His keeping the birds of the air, we commend ourselves and all that is ours to the Immaculate Virgin, to St. Joseph and to the Angels to whom the care of this Mission is especially committed, and go about our accustomed duties quite without fear" ⁷¹ The confidence of the missionaries was not deceived. On August 24, 1861, a band of robbers, seven in number, demanded admittance into the mission on the ground that fire-arms were concealed within the precincts. Ponziglione's life was threatened, but the intruders after a stay of a few hours went their way without doing any harm. On September 8 and again on October 14 parties of secessionist soldiers and civilians, while on their way to attack the town of Humboldt, made a brief stay at the mission. Here the warlike visitors showed themselves not unfriendly and no damage of any kind was inflicted on the mission-property. In December of the same year, 1861, Father Van Goch, then resident among the Osage, found himself in a serious predicament from which he happily escaped. While on a ministerial visit in the neighborhood of Fort Scott, he was taken into custody by a batch of Union soldiers, much the worse for liquor, who were about to deal violently with him, when an officer to whom they had brought him intervened and sent him home in safety ⁷²

The anxiety caused by the absence of the strong hand of Father Schoenmakers was at length relieved by his return on February 20, 1862

On my return to the Osage Mission in March [February] 1862 the Osages were divided. Frequent intercourse with their Southern relatives increased our dangers. The Southern Osages, accompanied by the Cherokees, invaded our Mission three times to sack and burn it, but being associated with old pupils of our school and parents whose children were still at the Mission, their counsel prevailed in sparing us, and thereby, their own interests.

But our dangers now enlarged on account of the avance and bigotry of pretended friends of the Union, and if General Charles W. Blair had

⁷¹ *Litterae Annuae*, 1861 (A)

⁷² *Idem*. Cf. *supra*, Chap. XXII, § 3

not been a true friend of the Mission, it could not have escaped destruction. Our friends, Colonels Thurston of Humboldt and Brown of Iola, checked the malice of some ill-designing leaders, but General Blair had the will and power to have Southern Kansas. The Osages, during these hard times, visited me day and night. Should my advice to them be withdrawn, I have reason to believe that Osage City, Humboldt, Iola, Le Roy, Burlington and Ottawa would have been laid in ashes by the united Osages and Cherokees.⁷³

⁷³ *Kans Hist Coll*, 9 22. A critical situation at the mission during the Civil War arose out of the failure of the government to remit the quarterly allowances for the support of the schools. Father Schoenmakers appealed to the commissioner of Indian affairs in June, 1861. "The four last quarters allowances for Quapaw pupils and nearly three quarters for Osages are now due. Already I begin to feel alarmed when from my accounts I feel myself entangled and to extricate myself from the dunns of my creditors will be a task both harassing and I fear difficult.

When commenced in 1847 it [the school] was deemed a mere experiment of Government and I rejoice to say that it succeeded admirably well as may easily be proved from the improvement in the manners and customs of the Indians since that time, for the parents are in no small degree influenced by the advantages they see accruing to their children after they have been a year or two with us. By our attention and care to these children both male and female to whom we devote all our labor and our whole lives we have succeeded in gaining the good will and affection of every Indian of both nations, so much so, that they can scarcely hear with patience of its downfall and, should it come to that point, I may hear remark that I fear its dismemberment will not take place without some exhibitions of revolt and great dissatisfaction. Indeed many of them are filled with heartfelt sorrow when we tell them that such may be the case, and what may we [not] expect from their savage natures when the realities come upon them [?]" Osage Agent Elder indorsed this appeal as follows: "From a personal examination of the cistematic arrangement and management of the school referred to in the foregoing I can [not] but hope that the earnest solicitations herein contained will receive the early attention of the department." (H) On December 26, 1861, Ponziglione, acting superintendent of the school in Schoenmakers's absence, wrote to Commissioner Dole: "The U S Government has so far been very liberal with the Osages and especially with this Manual Labor School and this makes me hope that it will continue to be so and by this means will more and more gain the affection of a nation wild indeed but so far loyal." (H) It required Father De Smet's personal intervention in February, 1862, with the authorities in Washington, including President Lincoln, to secure the payment of the arrears, amounting to some eighteen thousand dollars due to the Osage and Potawatomi mission-schools. De Smet represented that failure on the part of the government, admittedly hard up with the Civil War on its hands, to meet its engagements with the Indians in regard to their education funds would have a bad effect on them and might incline them to disloyalty. (CR, *De Smet*, 4 1507) Later the government again fell into arrears in the payment of school-funds. "It is unnecessary," Schoenmakers wrote to Dole, September 10, 1863, "to remind you of my present painful position caused by the non-payment of two quarters and a half for board, tuition and clothing of Osage children." (H) Later, October 12 of the same year, he wrote again to Dole: "You cannot but be fully convinced that these are trying times to one who have lived upward of 16 years among these Osages as Superior of this institution. I am now left without means to continue the schools." (H) Cf. *supra*, Chap XXII, § 1.

The outbreak of the Civil War found the Osage Mission school at the topmost level of its prosperity Agent Dorn witnessed in 1858 that the school "was surpassing the most sanguine expectations of its friends," and Father Schoenmakers, chafing under the pitifully inadequate quarters in which the school was compelled to carry on its work, wrote in 1859 "This amount [a thousand dollars] we have sacrificed with pleasure, encouraged by the prosperity of our schools, but it exceeds our means to erect the buildings now necessary for the education of all the Osage and Quapaw youths Being, during the last ten years, at the head of this institution, I know that this is the very time of harvest, in which all the children can be gathered in and many saved, but who will build the barns?"⁷⁴ The school at this period was educating seventy-two Osage and nine Quapaw boys, and sixty Osage and thirteen Quapaw girls Within the next decade the mission as a center of religious and cultural influence among the Osage had practically ceased to be Before the end of 1867 the Osage had withdrawn from the neighborhood of the mission to their diminished reserve and before the end of 1870 had withdrawn altogether from Kansas to the Indian Territory, now Oklahoma With the departure of the Indians, the attendance of their children at the mission school gradually dwindled⁷⁵

⁷⁴ *RCIA*, 1859, no 48

⁷⁵ In 1860 the school counted 136 boys and 100 girls, evidently the high-water mark of attendance *RCIA*, 1868, p 274 As late as 1868 the schools were still filled with Indian pupils and continued to be in high favor with the Osage and neighboring tribes They were, however, being run at a financial loss Schoenmakers wrote May 23, 1868, to Thomas Murphy, superintendent of Indian affairs, Atchison, Kansas "The Miami, Peoria and Wea Indians are moving to their new reservation lately bought from the quapaw Indians, as they passed by the mission situated 40 miles northwest from their present homes, the widow of James Joboe left two of her children in our male school upon the ground of a right they claim to send their children to any school they may reasonably select, others are in like manner desirous of having the benefits of education for their children at our male and female schools Before I accept their children into school I place the request before you and respectfully suggest that the annual amount for board, tuition and clothing should not be less than \$125 00 per capita and that such quarterly accounts be regularly paid in the same manner as I have received payment during twenty years for the Osage and quapaw pupils, namely not through the hands of an Agent who may be, but directly from Washington through the treasury Bank at St Louis, Mo The usual allowance for Osage and quapaw pupils at \$73 75 per annum has not been sufficient to meet our expenses during the seven years past, which will explain my reason why I have never received into our schools only a comparative small number of Osage and quapaw pupils during all that time Heretofore I have had the use of all the land necessary to raise cattle and grain for the support of our schools whereas I now will be taxed without mercy by the County and State I trust you will take these remarks into consideration and secure for our schools a reasonable allowance" (H) Murphy recommended Schoenmakers's petition to the

In 1870, the majority of the pupils being white, the Osage Manual Labor School was transformed into St Francis Institute for Boys under a charter issued by the state of Kansas, March 13, 1870, the girls' department being subsequently chartered September 19, 1870, under the name, St Ann's Academy

The work of the Sisters of Loretto among the Osage was noteworthy in its results. To their devoted and untiring zeal for the education of the young girls of the tribe must be attributed in large measure whatever success the Catholic Osage Mission met with in its career. While the girls alone were the direct object of their attentions, they exercised a distinct influence on the tribe at large. The Osage mothers in particular derived profit from the presence of the nuns on the reservation. Impressed by the care lavished on their daughters by these devoted women of the cloister, they were led, as Father Schoenmakers declared in his school report of 1853, "to revere them as their own teachers and advisers."

In 1859 Mother Bridget Hayden succeeded Mother Concordia Henning as head of the Loretto convent and school among the Osage. She was a woman of parts, and was singularly well equipped for the

Indian department, but without result. Later, September 9, 1868, Schoenmakers addressed Major Snow, the Osage agent. "I have just returned from an excursion among a few Indian tribes. After you and Agent Mitchell on the 24th of August had finished a brief Council in the Quapaw nation I started thence to the Shawnee Nation where I passed a pleasant night at the Agency of our friend, Major Mitchell. The following night I stopped with Speyer, Seneca chief. I also visited some Wyandottes. I must own that my heart grieved when I saw the children of these little tribes grow up to ignorance, I would have willingly consented to take some of these children into our Osage school, but being aware that I am sinking annually \$1000 on the education of Osage and Quapaw Indians I could only promise them that I would report their desire. Next I passed into the Cherokee Nation, here I found that education was duly valued, for I met with many intelligent and industrious gentlemen who look with anxiety for the time that schools shall be reestablished among them. For the present they would gladly send their children to the Osage schools, if means to educate them could be provided. On my return I saw the Peoria Indians, they are delighted with their new home of fertile soil and good wood lands. Having no schools they trust that the government will make immediate provisions which will enable them to send their children for the time being to the Osage manual labor school. While yet living at their old home in Miami county they sent their children to St Mary's Mission in the Pottowatomie Nation. Two Miami children are being educated in our school, it being understood that this little tribe has a right by treaty to send children to any school which parents might select, upon reasonable terms." (H) Schoenmakers declared in this letter that while it had been possible for him to educate, board and clothe one hundred and thirty-six boys and one hundred girls in 1860 at the rate allowed [\$73 75], such a thing was out of the question now, prices having been doubled since the war. Moreover, he had to pay county and state taxes. A monthly allowance of ten dollars a month for each child was now required to meet expenses.

trying administrative and educational duties that fell to her lot during a long period of years. Mother Bridget has her place in early Kansas history as one of the most influential of the pioneering figures of the Neosho country. Under her the school for the Osage girls reached its high-water mark of prosperity, having a year or two before the Civil War a registration of one hundred and three. The girls were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and Christian doctrine. Agent Dorn, after a visit to the school in 1853, reported that the specimens shown him of the pupils' sewing, drawing and painting, would compare favorably with similar work in "high schools in our cities." Father Schoenmakers corroborated the agent's encomium. "They sew exceedingly well," he witnesses in his report of 1853. "They work in wool and all kinds of embroidery, they paint in water and oil colors—in brief, in all kinds of work of imitation they succeed as well as any young American lady." If much of the worth-while training which the young Osage women thus received at the hands of the sisters was later robbed of its effects, the results must be attributed to the demoralizing Indian environment to which after their school days they had necessarily to return.

By sheer force of circumstances and not in consequence of conscious design on the part of the Missouri Jesuits had the transformation of the Osage establishment from an Indian mission into a center of ministerial and educational influence among the whites been brought about. Already in March, 1864, Father Coosemans, the Missouri provincial, and his consultors discussing in St. Louis the future status of the Osage Mission expressed the opinion that the province was not called upon to look after the whites of Kansas though as a matter of fact the Jesuit missionaries resident among the Potawatomi and Osage had been doing so, and that, effectively. The same opinion was again expressed at a later meeting of the province board, January 31, 1866. "The whites in Kansas and the little towns they are founding do not belong to us. Our Fathers and Brothers were sent there for the Indians, with the Indians let them depart, especially since we may expect to receive from the Government a request to take spiritual care of them in their new homes." Schoenmakers was to inform the Catholic settlers who were gathering around the mission and wished to establish a town there that no assurance whatever could be given them that the fathers would continue to reside on the Neosho or keep up the school after the withdrawal of the Indians. Later, Father Coosemans showed himself disposed to accede to a petition that the Jesuits follow the Indians to their new reserve in the Indian Territory, provided that a central mission for both Osage and Potawatomi to supplant St. Mary's and St. Francis de Hieronymo's be established and that the school be sub-

sized at the rate of one hundred and fifty dollars per pupil. In the event this plan was not realized. The missionary work carried on by the Society of Jesus since 1836 among the Indian tribes settled within the limits of what is now Kansas came to an end with the definite withdrawal of the mass of the Potawatomi and Osage from the state into the Indian Territory at the opening of the seventies.

The end of the Civil War sealed the doom of the Osage Indians in Kansas. Hundreds of ex-Union soldiers were to be compensated for the services they had rendered to the northern cause while a host of other prospective white settlers looked with covetous eyes on the fertile acres that lay uncultivated in the hands of the thriftless Osage. Public opinion therefore ran strong in favor of dispossessing the Osage of their lands notwithstanding the solemn assurance said to have been given them on occasion of the treaty of 1825 that they should remain in unmolested possession of their new reserve "as long as the grass grew on the plains and water continued to flow down the Missouri." By February, 1865, a United States commission was in the Osage country to negotiate with the tribe for the surrender of its lands. At a council held in the open near the town of Le Roy in Coffey County, Father Schoenmakers, whose opinion they eagerly sought at this critical juncture, advised the assembled chiefs and braves, as the most prudent course under the circumstances, to cede at least a part of their surplus lands. To this the Indians agreed as they also did to the proposed limits of the ceded portion, which was to be the reserve of the New York Indians on the north, the western line of the Neutral Lands on the east, the line of the Indian Territory on the south and the Verdigris (approximately) on the west. This comprised a tract fifty by thirty miles, represented roughly on the map by the present Neosho and Labette Counties. The original Osage reserve measured some two hundred and fifty by fifty miles. In recognition of the labors which Schoenmakers and his associates had unselfishly carried on during a period of eighteen years for the welfare of the Osage and as some compensation for the pecuniary sacrifices they had been obliged to make in this connection, the Indian chiefs proposed to donate to the Jesuit superior in fee simple a section of land containing the mission improvements with the privilege of purchasing two adjoining sections at a dollar and a quarter an acre. These provisions in favor of the mission, embodied in article three of the treaty subsequently signed, appear to have met with stiff opposition in certain quarters. As there was at the moment no disposition on the part of the government to sanction them, the Indians refused to negotiate further in the matter and the council was dissolved. Later the article in question was acquiesced in and a treaty signed by the Osage chiefs September 29, 1865, at a council held at the Canville trading-post near

the site where the town of Shaw subsequently arose, ten miles to the west of the Osage Mission. The Indians agreed to move to their diminished reserve within six months from the ratification of the treaty. Father Schoenmakers was present at the council and did much to bring it to a successful issue.⁷⁶

The Osage had thus ceded almost a million acres, for which they were to receive three hundred thousand dollars, while they also made over to the government another tract about two hundred and thirty miles by twenty, or two million, nine hundred and forty-four acres, which was to be sold at not less than a dollar and a quarter an acre, the fund thereby created to be kept for them in trust. Article eight of the treaty assigned to Schoenmakers at the request of the Indians a section of land in the diminished reserve in which to establish a new school for the Osage.⁷⁷ This treaty of 1865 was ratified by the United

⁷⁶ *Litterae Annuae*, Osage Mission, 1865 (A) *RCIA*, 1866, p. 41. The Canville trading post, established by A. B. Canville in 1844, was on or adjoining the site of the old Osage village of Nantze-Waspe. A letter of Schoenmakers, Nov. 27, 1866, to Father De Smet is accompanied by sketch-map indicating the three sections acquired by the mission. Schoenmakers had expected all along to receive a share of the Osage land in case the Indians sold the reserve. "In case a treaty be made with the Osages I trust a title in fee-simple will be given to me or one of the three Fathers now residing at the Mission, nothing less can remunerate our sacrifices and make these schools permanently prosper." Schoenmakers to Greenwood, January 1, 1859 (H).

⁷⁷ Ponziglione, *The Osages etc.* The text of the treaty of 1865 is in Kappler, *Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties*, 2: 878. Article 3: "The Osage Indians, being sensible of the great benefits they had received from the Catholic Mission, situate in that portion of their reservation herein granted and sold to the United States, do hereby stipulate that one section of said land, to be selected by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs so as to include the improvements of said mission, shall be granted in fee simple to John Schoenmaker[s], in trust, for the use and benefit of the society sustaining said mission, with the privilege to said Schoenmaker, on the payment of one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, of selecting and purchasing two sections of land adjoining the section above granted, the said selection to be held in trust for said society and to be selected in legal subdivisions of survey and subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior." Article 8: "The Osage Indians being anxious that a school should be established in their new home, at their request it is agreed and provided that John Schoenmaker may select one section of land within their diminished reservation and upon the approval of such selection by the Secretary of the Interior, such section of land shall be set apart to the said Schoenmaker and his successors, upon condition that the same shall be used, improved and occupied for the support and education of the children of said Indians, during the occupancy of said reservation by said tribe. *Provided*, that said lands shall not be patented and upon the discontinuance of said school shall revert to said tribe and to the United States as other Indian lands." In the rejected Drum Creek or Sturgis Treaty of May 27, 1868, provision was also made for a Catholic School. "The Osage Indians being sensible of the great benefits they have received from the Catholic Mission and being desirous to have said mission go with them to their new

States Senate June 26, 1866, and proclaimed January 21, 1867. The limits of a new Osage reserve lying entirely within the Indian Territory now Oklahoma were later established in pursuance of an act of Congress and to this reserve the tribe accordingly withdrew after having sold to the United States all their remaining lands in Kansas.

The Osage at the time they ceded to the United States in 1865 the eastern section of their reservation, comprising the future Labette and Neosho Counties and later known as the Osage Ceded Lands, were an indigent people. Indeed it was, partly at least, with a view to obtaining some badly needed funds that they made this cession. At the present day their per capita wealth is said to be the largest of any people or nation in the world. In the circumstances that brought about the transformation Father Schoenmakers appears to have had an active part. On May 27, 1868, the Osage chiefs and headmen with the approval of Commissioner of Indian Affairs Nathaniel G. Taylor, agreed by a treaty signed on Drum Creek, some twenty-five miles southwest of the mission, to cede to William Sturgis, president of the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston Railroad, their remaining lands in Kansas, eight million acres in extent. For this tract, known as the Osage Diminished Reserve, they were to be compensated at the rate of twenty cents an acre.

It was not long before the one-sided and inequitable nature of the terms in which the Indians had been led to acquiesce began to dawn upon their friends and sympathizers. A movement to prevent the ratification of the treaty by Congress was therefore set on foot and in this movement Father Schoenmakers took an active part. He made clear to the Indians the fraudulent character of the treaty they had unwittingly signed and urged them to petition Congress for its defeat. Further, he interested the white settlers in the rejection of the treaty, which would bring with it the fastening of a railroad land-monopoly on a vast section of southern Kansas. The reaction to Schoenmakers's

homes, it is freely stipulated that two sections of land to be selected by said Society at or near the agency shall be granted in fee simple to John Schoenmakers in trust for the use and benefit of the Society sustaining [?] such timber and firewood as may be necessary for the use of said Mission and school on condition that said Society shall establish and maintain a mission and school for the education and civilization of the Osages." The text of the Drum Creek Treaty with original signatures is in the Indian Office, Neosho File, 1868. "We should be much relieved of our fears should the treaty signed by the Osages 29 September 1865 be ratified and the white settlers kept from the Osage Reservation on the Verdigris River. To remove the whites from the 30 by 50 miles ceded to Government September 29 under your influence has become an impossibility, the[re] being no less than 2000 white settlers on it and there are still more on the Cherokee neutral land whilst the influx daily increases." Schoenmakers to Sells, April 11, 1866 (H)

intervention was gratifying. Chiefs White Hair, No-po-wa-lee, Chetopa, Beaver, Hard Rope, Shin-ka-wa-sa, Strike Axe and other Osage headmen signed a protest against the ratification of the treaty. Petitions and protests in great numbers were, besides, forwarded by the whites to Sidney Clark, congressman from the southeast Kansas district. Clark promptly took up the cause of the Indians and settlers and spoke with such effect in Congress against the treaty as to bring about its decisive repudiation. Congress thereupon passed a measure enjoining the Indians of whatsoever tribe from selling their lands by treaty or otherwise to anybody except to the Government. Furthermore, by an act approved July 15, 1870, it authorized the sale by the Osage of their diminished reserve to the United States at a dollar and a quarter an acre. This land was to be sold to actual settlers at the same price, the proceeds to be applied to the purchase of a new reservation for the Osage in the Indian Territory, while all money above the cost of such purchase, which was made at the rate of fifty cents an acre, was to be placed in the United States Treasury to the credit of the Osage Indians.

The road to wealth was now opened to the once poverty-stricken tribe. In 1928 the Osage fund accumulated in the United States Treasury totalled \$8,536,000, annuities from the interest on this sum being annually distributed among the members of the tribe regardless of age. Further, the million and more acres owned by the Indians in Oklahoma net them a handsome yearly income through the medium of farm, cattle and oil leases, the last named especially proving in recent years an unexpected source of wealth. "Thus it will be seen that through the efforts of this one man, [Schoenmakers]" comments a pioneer lawyer at Osage Mission, T. F. Rager, "thousands of people obtained cheap homes and the fund for the Osages, instead of being one and a half million dollars, as it would have been had the Sturgis treaty been ratified, was made some ten million dollars so that the Indian and white man were both blest in the result."⁷⁸

⁷⁸ It would be unhistorical, however, to credit this outcome to Father Schoenmakers alone. The account in the text of his activities in connection with the killing of the Drum Creek Treaty follows Graves, *Life and Letters of Father John Schoenmakers, S. J.*, 117-120. Ponziglione's version of the episode (*The Osages*, Chap. XXXIX), differs in important details from Graves's. Cf. also Samuel J. Crawford, *Kansas in the Sixties* (Chicago, 1911), pp. 299-307; Sidney Clarke, *Remonstrance against the Treaty with the Great and Little Osage Indians—Gross Injustice Done the Settler—The School Fund Despoiled and Land Monopoly Created* (Washington, 1868). The *Congressional Globe*, 40th Congress, 2nd Sess., especially p. 3256 *et seq.* (June 18, 1868), has the details of the debate provoked by the treaty. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Nathaniel G. Taylor, who headed the commission that negotiated the Drum Creek Treaty, protested that no unfair

White settlers occupied the Osage lands even before the ratification of the treaty of 1865 and while the original proprietors were still in actual legitimate possession. Numbers of them, too, did not scruple to squat within the limits of the diminished reserve before the laws afforded them the slightest ground for such procedure. The protests means had been used to induce the Indians to sign and demanded a congressional investigation.

In 1873 the Osage from their new reserve in the Indian Territory petitioned President Grant that Father Schoenmakers be allowed to resume his educational work in their behalf. As previous appeals had gone unanswered, this particular petition was carried by a special delegation to Washington. The delegation returned with charges against the Indian Department of "bad faith and rank bigotry." It was only in 1884 that a Catholic priest was allowed to settle among the Osage. Cf. Graves, *op cit*, p. 115, citing Dr. Urban de Hasque, *Early Catholic History of Oklahoma*. The petition of 1873, cited by Graves from de Hasque, follows:

"In the name of our people we, therefore, beg leave to renew our said petition and to ask that our former Catholic missionary, Father Schoenmakers and those connected with him in his missionary and educational labor previous to the late war, be permitted to locate again amongst us. We think this request is reasonable and just.

"Catholic missionaries have been among our people for several generations. Our people are familiar with their religion. The great majority of them are of the Catholic faith and believe it is right. Our children have grown up in this faith. Many of our people have been educated by the Catholic missionaries and our people are indebted to them for all the blessings of Christianity that they enjoy and they have for them a grateful remembrance.

"Since the missionaries have been taken away from us we have done but little good and have made poor advancement in education and civilization. Our whole nation has grieved ever since these missionaries have been taken away from us and we have prayed continuously God might move upon the heart of our Great Father, the president, and cause him to return these missionaries to us. We trust that he will do so because in 1865, when we signed the treaty of that date, the commissioners who made it promised if we would sign it we would have our missionaries, and we have sought every opportunity to remind our Great Father of his promise and we hope that he will have it carried out in good faith. Your government is our protector. It asks us to become civilized and we are endeavoring to take your advice. We are adopting your habits and customs as fast as we can. Your government asked us to embrace your religion and we have done so, and in doing so, we have chosen the Catholic religion. In doing this, we have only followed your example and exercised those privileges that a good God has given us and that no earthly power has any right to take away.

"Religion among the whites is a matter of conscience and voluntary choice, it is [so] among our neighboring tribes, and nations of the Indian Territory, it is so throughout all Christendom and why should it not be so among the Osages?"

"Give us, we beseech you, our own choice in this matter. The same God that made the white man also made the red one, and we pray you to remember that He has made us all alike with the same natural aspirations and desires for happiness in this world as well as in the world to come."

For the status of the Osage in Oklahoma, cf. G. E. F. Lindquist, *The Red Man in the United States* (New York, 1923), 173 *et seq*.

of the Osage Indian agents were of no avail, nothing short of a military force, which the agents could not command, being equal to the task of checking the white settlers in their continued encroachments on the rights of the Indians.⁷⁹ Moreover, crude anti-Catholic prejudices, which did not hesitate at times to translate themselves into action, were as liable as not to be found among these adventurous pioneers on Kansas soil, and of this circumstance Schoenmakers was to have personal experience in the attempt made in 1867 to wrest from him the three sections of land he had acquired under the Osage treaty. The incident is related by him in the letter of protest which he addressed on the occasion to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis Bogy.

As the land around the Mission began to be settled, I selected, before a dispute could arise, the two sections adjoining the one in fee simple. It was only in February, 1866, that a certain John Valleley jumped the S W quarter of section 24, township 29, range 20. I informed him several repeated times before witnesses that I had claimed said quarter, he built thereon notwithstanding my remonstrance and some three or four months ago our Agent G. A. Snow authorized me by letter to order said John Valleley from the land claimed either by the Mission or, should the case be, by an Osage half-breed. Notwithstanding [this] he kept on improving

⁷⁹ Typical instances are recorded by the Osage Indian agent, G. A. Shaw. "It has not been two years since these Indians relinquished near 2,000,000 acres of their lands to the white settlers. Still they are not satisfied. Immigration rolls on, like the tornado which meets nothing to check it. They have overrun all the trust lands and are now settling on the diminished reservation. I visited 40 or 50 of these intruders about two weeks ago. I notified them to leave. They were not the least surprised and all agreed that they would go when I got sufficient force to drive them off. They all seem to be well disposed men. They say that laws always have been made to protect the squatter, and they think they will not be left out in the cold when the Governor of the State is 'determined to protect them at all hazards.'" *RCIA*, 1867, p. 325. "When the late treaty was made there were about 65 families squatted on these lands, with very little improvements. When they came there they knew they were trespassers, and had no right whatever to settle where they did, but they were men who wished to 'fight for their rights.' They became very much displeased that the government did not give them each at least a quarter section of this best land for the *great hardships* they had endured among those savages and as a reward for their services in driving the Indians from their homes and the graves of their fathers and occupying their best lands which they [the settlers] had no shadow of title to." *RCIA*, 1868, p. 271. In general, the administration of Indian affairs was anything but satisfactory. "Not only did the border settlers encroach on the Indians, but the government also neglected to observe the treaties and the agents robbed the Indians of their annuity money and goods. Appointments in the Indian field service were made for political reasons and with little regard to fitness. Undoubtedly there were some men who labored earnestly for the welfare of the Indian, but the service as a whole was regarded as inefficient and corrupt." Laurence F. Schmeckebier, *The Office of Indian Affairs: its history, activity and organization* (Baltimore, 1927), p. 47.

To avoid lawsuit, I endured his trespass patiently. However, in November last he set up his full pretended claim, hired hands to cut down the best timber, which obliged me to tell the laboring-men that they were cutting on the Mission-claim, who desisted from further damage. I was not aware that a plot had been made up between Valleley himself and the Justice of Peace and as [a] party to injure the Mission. If I had known it, I would still have foreborne it patiently. In January, 1867, I was cited to appear before the Justice of the Peace charged with \$100 damages and cost of the suit. On the day appointed, 10th of January, [I appeared] at one o'clock, with my two friends, Col. Oliver Thurston, of Humboldt, and Gov. George A. Crawford, of Fort Scott.⁸⁰ The court brought against me that the treaty was changed and amended and that I had no right to said land and that John Valleley held the quarter on [a] pre-emption title. My two friends perceiving that the court aimed to bring my title into dispute and so give occasion to ill-disposed persons of jumping the Mission claim, appealed to a higher court by virtue of law ch. 121, Sec. 8 and 9 [?]. "If in any action commenced before a justice it appears to the satisfaction of the justice that the title or boundary of land is in dispute in such action, it shall be dismissed without prejudice to a future action." I myself and my friend, George A. Crawford, have tried our best with John Valleley to come to an amicable settlement, but being engaged in the party, he demanded the trial. We have used all our energy during the last 4 years to keep up our male and female Osage manual labor school. We hoped that the last Osage treaty would partly remunerate us for our many losses and instead thereof we are unwillingly dragged into a very costly law-suit. Our only hope rests in the justice of the Indian Department. An early decision [as] to our title is our only remedy to meet said party. If nothing better can be done, please send me the third article of the amended treaty relative to the Mission title. Please also to inform Rev. P. J. De Smet of St. Louis University what steps we ought to take to avoid future embarrassment. I hope you will excuse my long letter, because I feel very much perplexed how to proceed. P. S. Since I have finished this letter another claim is jumped on the land set aside for mission by treaty stipulation, ill-minded people rely on the feeling of our justice and his friends.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Col. Orlin Thurston, a non-Catholic, offered his house to Father Ponziglione for the first Catholic service in Humboldt and was chairman of the committee that gathered funds for the erection of the first Catholic church in the town.

⁸¹ (H) A letter of Valleley's (March 4, 1867) in support of his claim is also in the Indian Office files. Five days after the trial the Osage half-breeds signed a memorial in favor of the mission-claim. "Catholic Mission, 15 January, 1867. We Osage half-breeds desirous to protect our missionaries against a plot of white settlers who aim to annul the third article of our late treaty signed by us September 29, 1865, do consider said article to be a substantial part of said treaty, we are fully convinced that our Osage chiefs and headmen now on the buffalo hunt, will make the same protestation for the protection of Rev. John Schoenmakers, trustee for said Mission. Alexander Beyett [Beit], Dot Barnely, Jos Mongeon, Augustus Captain, John Beunerd, Cyprian Teyrien, Louis P. Revard, W. H. Tinker, Gesso

The outcome of the trial was the vindication of Father Schoenmakers. When it became evident that the affair was simply an attempt of unscrupulous men to ruin the mission, public opinion ran strong in favor of the Jesuit. As the prosecution appealed from the decision to a higher court which was not to sit until after three months, the mission authorities determined to employ the interval in securing a patent to their property from Washington. The above cited letter of Father Schoenmakers to Commissioner Bogy was forwarded by Mr. Crawford to Senator Ross in Washington with a request that every effort be made to complete the title of the mission to the property in dispute. This was eventually done, the Jesuit author of the *Annual Letters* recording with grateful appreciation the circumstance that the communication from Washington bearing the good news was received at the mission on March 19, festival of St. Joseph, to whom the fathers had all along devoutly commended the happy issue of the litigation. Finally, in October, 1867, the mission received from Washington a government patent signed by President Andrew Johnson, which confirmed beyond controversy its title to the three sections of land. John Valleley, who had started all the trouble by jumping the mission-claim, acquiesced in this final settlement. He tore down and carried off the materials of the house he had unlawfully put up beyond his legal building line, the ever patient Schoenmakers, though in no manner obliged to do so, compensating him for the improvements he had made.⁸²

The issue over the mission-claim was now definitely closed, but an aftermath of resentment in certain quarters over the outcome had still to be reckoned with. As many Catholics were settling around the mission, Father Schoenmakers conceived the idea of founding a town. For this purpose he donated to a stock-company the southwest quarter of section thirteen immediately adjoining on the west the quarter section occupied by the mission improvements. The town was laid out in 1867 on a site about a half-mile to the northwest of the mission buildings and was called Osage Mission. It began well and a mill was soon set up by Samuel Williams and Benjamin McDonald. "Mission town being started and prosperous," said Father Schoenmakers in a public address on the occasion of the opening of the mill, "I withdrew from partnership for conscience sake, fearing that questions might

Chouteau" Archives of the Passionist Monastery, St. Paul, Kansas. John Valleley died in the summer of 1874 near Peru, Howard County, to which place he had moved from the mission. On the approach of death he sent for Father Ponziglione. "The poor man publicly apologized for the scandal given in prosecuting our Superior without any reason, received the last sacraments with great devotion and two days after died most piously." *Western Missions Journal*, 5 8 (A)

⁸² *Litterae Annuae*, 1867, Ponziglione, *The Osages etc.* (A)

arise not in conformity with God's law and which might blast all my past labors" But the rise and progress of the new town did not pass unnoticed by the bigoted element that had been put to discomfiture in the suit over the mission-claim As an offset, another town called Erie was started some four or five miles northwest of the mission Rivalry between the two settlements became acute, especially when both entered the field as contestants for the honor of being the seat of the recently organized Neosho County, an honor which went to Erie Thus did the Osage Mission develop in the end into a settlement of whites, which in later years was to take the name St Paul Meant in the intention of its founders to promote the welfare of the Osage Indians, the mission was destined to render to the white settlers of southern Kansas services more substantial perhaps than those it rendered to the Indians, as shall presently be seen ⁸³

As ministerial service for the whites was to be particularly identified with the personality of Father Paul Ponziglione, so the record of Jesuit endeavor on behalf of the Osage gathers in the main around the striking figure of Father John Schoenmakers, who guided the destinies of the mission for the entire period of its career "He was," affirms W W Graves, who had personal acquaintance with him, "a man of medium

⁸ *Litterae Annuae*, 1867 (A) "In September, 1865, whilst the Osages sold and transferred part of their land, they have made thousands of homes for white families As the whites settled first around our Mission, the idea struck me [Schoenmakers] of a mission town Gen Blair was to be remunerated if possible and Governor Crawford wrote me a letter congenial to my plan The town took a start while Sam Williams and Ben McDonald brought us a mill I have been much blamed by our new citizens of Osage Mission town because I have given the ruling influence to the leading members of Ft Scott, but may I not trust that they will pardon me if they should know what great gratitude is due Gen Blair I have also been blamed for refusing other parties [permission] to erect a mill on Flat Rock, but any personal acquaintance with the present mill company demanded a preference I knew their capital and energy They have been faithful to their promises and built the best mill in Kansas Our friends in Fort Scott have labored hard for our railroad interests and today, whilst we celebrate the event, our city is being surveyed for the opening of a promised railroad The briars and shrubs are cleared and the field is ready for abundant harvests A library, hall and female academy built partly of cut stone adorn our new city Ten churches have been erected in this part of Kansas within one year and others are under construction, whilst settlers from every state in the Union make homes around them" Cf Graves, *op cit*, p 121 The town company consisted of Gen C W Blair, George A Crawford, Benjamin McDonald, John Naudier, the Mill Company and Father Schoenmakers Osage Mission changed its name in the early nineties to St Paul "Said to contain more than 1500 inhabitants, with all the elements of progress common to Kansas towns of this size" C C Hutchinson, *Resources of Kansas* (Kansas City, 1871), p 232 Its present population is considerably below this figure, the growth of the neighboring Parsons having reacted unfavorably on St Paul

height and build and rather quiet in his ways. He was a man of remarkable piety and goodness of heart and far above the ordinary in intelligence." Over the simple and confiding Osage, whom he strove to lift out of the depths of barbarism to something like ordered and civilized life, his ascendancy seemed complete. They appealed to him as arbiter in their disputes and his word was law. No one understood better the Osage mentality or could advise more wisely how to deal with these wayward children of the soil. As a result special agents and others often took counsel with him on Indian affairs. Major General W. B. Hazen and Colonel Richard Hinton, "fighter, writer, and orator," sought information and advice at the mission, where also Colonel Sheridan, brother to General Phil Sheridan, when discharging a special mission for the government shortly after the Civil War, spent an entire week with Schoenmakers. Colonel Blunt, whose party had tracked and killed the Confederate leader John Matthews, frequently conferred with the Jesuit during the dark days of the Civil War. Finally, General Charles Ewing and C. W. Blair, sent in 1875 by President Grant to visit the various Indian tribes and investigate complaints, took Father Schoenmakers along with them to the Osage lands in the Indian Territory, where his influence was successfully exercised in quieting the discontent occasioned by the indiscretions of the Indian agent, Isaac T. Gibson.⁸⁴

Father Schoenmakers died at Osage Mission, the scene of thirty-six years of uninterrupted and devoted labor, July 28, 1883. Father Ponziglione, his faithful colleague for almost this entire period, recorded the particulars of his death and burial.

The good father seeing the whole community kneeling around his bed rallied his dying spirit and with clear, distinct words begged pardon for all the scandals he might by chance have given. After this he received the holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction with most edifying devotion, himself

⁸⁴ Graves, *Life and Letters of Father John Schoenmakers, S. J.*, p. 106, and *passim*. Rev. W. E. Youngman, an English clergyman, who visited the Osage Mission in the early seventies, later making the acquaintance of Father De Smet in St. Louis, wrote up his impressions in *Gleanings from Western Prairies* (Cambridge, 1882), p. 33. "irregular constructions of no architectural pretensions vet with their angularities softened by the light and forming no unpleasant picture. There was the long low church with its dark walnut-wood fittings and three blocks of houses. In the middle block in a long, low room sat the aged Superior of the Mission [Father Schoenmakers]. His features were irregular yet that life of strange self-denial lent to him that calm expression one sees on faces when self has been utterly conquered. He was dressed in an ordinary black suit and was smoking his pipe. In this tiny room the furniture consisted of a bed, two chairs, a rough stove, a writing table, a book case and some strange construction that did duty as a ward-robe."

answering to the prayers. This happened on the 24th of July. For four days he did not seem to be any worse—but on the 28th every one saw that his last day had come. At 4 p. m. the whole community gathered again around his bed to recite the prayers for the dying. The Father being steadily conscious answered also to these prayers and, having thanked us all for having come to pray for him at such a solemn moment, requested us to remember him after he would be dead. He spoke no more and while we were praying at his bedside, his soul took its flight to heaven. He expired on the 28th of July [1883] at 4 30 p. m. being 76 years old. Of these he had passed 49 in our Society.

As the Father died on Saturday, a day on which our time generally is taken up with people from the neighborhood, before night the news of his death was carried all over the country by the people returning to their homes. Hence no wonder if on the next morning large crowds of people came from every direction anxious to see once more the countenance of their dear Father, who, dressed in his sacerdotal vestments, was lying in a rich casket before the main altar with such a calm and sweet appearance as to resemble a sleeping and not a dead man.

The early Masses as well as the High Mass were well attended by a large congregation. At noon all went home, but they all soon returned and at 2 p. m. they began to fill up our church. In an hour fully 700 people were packed in. Meanwhile no less than 4 times as many were surrounding the church waiting for the funeral to come out. At 4 30 p. m. the last absolution was sung and, an eulogy having been delivered on the many virtues and holy death of the good Father, the casket was closed.

Here six most respectable members of our congregation, representing its different nationalities, advanced to act as pallbearers. They raised the casket upon their shoulders, as is customary in old Catholic countries, and following the clergy marched out to the cemetery. Immediately after the casket followed the different sodalities of our Church and after these came a crowd of people estimated [at] over 3500. The funeral procession covered $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile in length and was heralded by two brass bands, who volunteered to give honor with a solemn dirge to one whom they considered as the Father of their country.

So passed, as we feel most confident, to a better life a most zealous missionary who never looked for personal glory or a big name. He was most humble, pious and devout and as he delighted in dealing with the simple and poor rather than with the high standing and rich, so God gave him the love and esteem of both. His name shall be for us a household name for ever.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Ponziglione, *Western Missions Journal*, 7 45. Hereinafter cited as *Journal*. By joint contributions from the citizens of St. Paul and the Osage Indians (then living in the Indian Territory) a church bell was cast in St. Louis in memory of Father Schoenmakers. It was made of the best bell material, weighed about twenty-one hundred pounds, was tuned to C sharp (according to Father Ponziglione) and was set in place on the tower of the new church of St. Francis de Hieronymo, St. Paul, Kansas, December 8, 1883, some twenty-five hundred persons being

§ 8 MISSIONARY EXCURSIONS AMONG THE INDIANS

Though circumstances were to prevent the reestablishment of the Jesuit mission among the Osage after the tribe had withdrawn, first to its diminished reserve in Montgomery County, Kansas, and later to the Indian Territory, the missionaries, generally Ponziglione, but on occasion Schoenmakers, Setters, Colleton, or some other of the group, continued to make periodical visits to their former charges. In 1869 Father Schoenmakers was planning a church for the half-breeds and full-blood Osage Indians of the diminished reserve. The church was to be built at Elk City in Montgomery County. "It will be convenient, too, for the white Catholics, who begin to form very large settlements all along the Verdigris" ⁸⁶ Ponziglione describes briefly an excursion of his to the Verdigris district in October, 1869. "I spent on this river one week going around through the different settlements of Half-breeds as well as of White people established in Montgomery County [Kansas], giving them an opportunity of hearing Mass and coming to the sacraments, and here baptising children, there preparing them for death. I also visited a small party of Osage Indians who did not go on the usual buffalo hunt. I tried to give them good advice, but I found them as indifferent as ever in matters of religion" ⁸⁷ By the end of 1870 the Osage, both half-breeds and full-bloods, had left Kansas for their new reserve in the Indian Territory. Here Father Ponziglione often visited them.

On the 11th of October [1872] I started on another long missionary excursion southwest in the Indian Territory to visit the Osages. This excursion has been a rather rough one though the Osages treated me as kindly as ever. Their present Reserve covers about 50 square miles. It lies south of this State of Kansas and west of the 96 [th] meridian. The country is most beautiful, well timbered and abundantly irrigated and excellent for farming, a quality, however, for which the Osages care but little, for the

present at the blessing. It bore a Latin inscription commemorating Schoenmakers's founding of the Osage Mission. In the rooms of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, is a crayon sketch of Father Schoenmakers showing him in standing posture alongside a tombstone, on which are recorded the dates of his birth and death.

⁸⁶ *Letters and Notices* (Jesuit domestic periodical, Roehampton, England), 7-18. "From the time the Osages had left this Mission we have now and then visited the Osages and their neighboring tribes in the Indian Territory not ex officio but ex caritate [out of charity], the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Little Rock allowing us all the necessary faculties in the Indian Territory, which is under his jurisdiction. By so doing we keep alive among the Osages the faith which they have received." *Journal*, 4-35.

⁸⁷ *Journal*, 2-15.

majority of the nation depend on Buffalo hunting for their support I visited the several settlements the Osages have formed on the following streams Big Cany, Bird Creek, Homeny Creek and Delaware Creek, offering them the opportunity of attending Mass and approaching the holy Sacraments, they answered tolerably well to my invitations, yet I could not get all to attend to their duty I convalidated [*sic*] 2 marriages, baptized several children and blessed 2 graves These poor Indians are very anxious to see our Mission reestablished amongst them, they repeatedly requested their Agent to satisfy them on this subject, but the Agent seems not to understand what they say about it He has established schools for their children, but they refused to send their children to any such schools⁸⁸

The Osage, the half-breeds in particular, were eager for the Jesuits to resume the educational work begun on their behalf in Kansas More than once they petitioned Washington for a Catholic school but without result, being answered by the Indian Office that they must be content with the agency school at Deepford on Bird Creek The superintendent of this school, a Quaker, was distinctly out of sympathy with the stand taken by the Catholic Osage with the result that Father Ponziglione on his visits to the agency had difficulty at times in getting in touch with the school-children to give them religious instruction and hear their confessions The attitude of the Osage agent, Major Isaac Gibson, also a Quaker, was likewise one of unfriendliness to the Catholic

⁸⁸ *Idem*, 4 8 Father Ponziglione's *Status Animarum* [church census] of the *Western Missions*, 1871, lists the names of the Osage Catholic families at that date These were apparently all or nearly all mixed-bloods The number of children is indicated in parenthesis (I) "On the Verdigris Indian settlement," Montgomery County Alexander Biette and wife (1), Gesse (Gesseau) Chouteau and wife (4), Peter Chouteau, widower (2), Stephen Belier (?), single (II) Four settlements in the Indian Territory are named (a) First Settlement "Cany Fort 8 miles below Kansas Line" Louis Pappin and wife (3) *et al* (b) Second Settlement "On Cany 10 miles below Louis Pappin" Thomas Monjeon and wife (3) *et al* (c) Third Settlement "On Cany 18 miles below Louis Pappin" Louis Chouteau and wife (2) *et al* (d) Fourth Settlement "On the Cherokee line 36 miles below Louis Pappin" August Captain and wife (4) *et al* The list is evidently incomplete Total census for the five settlements, 157, of which number 77 were children In November, 1868, Ponziglione undertook a difficult journey from the mission ninety miles south to a trading-post on the Caney in the Indian Territory where Louis Mongrain, a half-breed and former Osage Mission interpreter, lay critically ill "At first we thought it was useless to attend this call for the letter had been five days on the road and before we could reach the place the man would in all probability be dead Still this did not satisfy my heart, I could find no rest thinking of the state of one who had so often helped me to prepare others for death Hence, though the way was very long and uncertain (I had never been in that place) I decided that I ought to try my best to find him out" Mongrain was living when Ponziglione reached him and after receiving the ministrations of the Church recovered from his illness *Letters and Notices*, 6 92 *et seq* (1869)

Osage and he was not disposed to respect their wishes in the matter of religion. Finally, as a concession to the latter the Indian Office permitted them to send some of their children to the old mission school on the Neosho, which, since the withdrawal of the Osage from its neighborhood had been frequented practically by white children only. On October 29, 1876, forty-three Osage boys and eleven half-breed girls arrived at the school, the girls being taken in charge by the Sisters of Loretto. On the following January 10 twenty-nine more children were received, which made a total of eighty-three Osage children registered at the mission school during the session 1875-1876. A further large contingent was about to be received when word came unexpectedly from the Indian Office that all the Osage children had to be dismissed to their homes, it being alleged in explanation that the Osage funds were exhausted and no means were at hand for keeping the children at school. The Osage pupils were accordingly sent back to their parents at Easter. "This was a fatal blow to us and the sadness which spread among the children when they heard the news evidently proved that they were all pleased and satisfied to be with us" ⁸⁹

The Osage half-breeds, some sixty families, though sometimes falling under Father Ponziglione's censure for their nonchalant attitude towards church obligations, appear on the whole in a favorable light in his relations. He often visited them in their new settlements in the Indian Territory a short distance west of the eastern boundary of the Osage Reserve. "I am happy to be allowed to say," he is speaking of a visit made in the spring of 1880, "that quite a number of them did answer to my call and come to the sacraments. . . . Everywhere I found marriages to be blessed, children to baptise, people willing to come to their duties." Coming among them in October, 1879, he found them eager to have a school and church of their own on the new reserve, to which project the Osage agent was apparently making opposition. "And this is the biggest trouble the Osages have, of not being able to give to their children the education they would like. And this most particularly affects the half-breeds, who are naturally quite intelligent and of a very good nature rather inclined to be religious, most all of them having been raised at this our institution. They know the merits and advantages of a good Catholic education and would wish to have

⁸⁹ *WL*, 5 226. Major Isaac T. Gibson, the Osage agent, was removed from office after a U. S. commission had investigated his management of the agency. In his report of November, 1875, he is severely critical of the Catholic visiting missionary, evidently Father Ponziglione. "If the priest would let the Catholic half-breeds alone they would much prefer sending [their children] to a school where most of the time was not occupied in the study of religious ceremonies [!]" *RCIA*, 1875, p. 279.

their children raised in the same faith in which they were”⁹⁰ It was only in 1882 that Catholic schools were at length opened among the Osage, the Benedictines taking this important work in hand

In the winter of 1875-1876 the Reverend Isidore Robot, of the Order of St. Benedict, resident pastor at Atoka, Indian Territory, visited the Osage Mission to inform the Jesuits of his having been appointed by the Congregation of the Propaganda to take care of all the native red men in the Indian Territory in the capacity of protonotary-apostolic, though this title had not yet been officially conferred upon him He wished to obtain all the information he could about the Indians, especially the Osage, and requested Ponziglione to introduce him to his new charges “that they might not suspect him as an imposter” “We gave him all the information we could and as it was impossible for me at that time to go to visit the Osages on account of sickness I promised that as soon as I would recover I would, if he would so allow me, go to visit the Osages and inform them about the mission he had received To this Father Isidore replied that not only would he not object to my visiting the Osage but he would feel happy if I would do so.” (*Journal*, 5 36) Father Isidore having visited the Osage Mission again in June, 1876, Father Ponziglione agreed to meet him July 23 at the Osage agency in the Indian Territory and on that occasion “introduce him formally to the Osages”⁹¹ Whether or not the two met at the stipulated time is not on record, but Ponziglione wrote in December, 1876

⁹⁰ *Journal*, 6 46, 6 44

⁹¹ On June 14, 1876, Ponziglione wrote to his provincial, Thomas O’Neil, advising him of the proposed meeting with Dom Robot and requesting that he be informed as to whether he was to continue to visit the Indians from time to time in the contingency that the new ecclesiastical superior of the Indian Territory should petition him to do so “Our Society,” he continues, “has always been proud of them [the Indian Missions], even the most bigoted Protestant writers can [not] but praise the heroic deeds of our forefathers in civilizing and Christianizing these poor people and if today the North American Indians do so love and cherish the R C [Roman Catholic] Church, if they show so great a preference for us, it is because of the hereditary traditions they have about the good our forefathers have done to them, for whose eternal salvation [they] not only left their fatherland, riches and honors, but gave up their very life in the midst of the most cruel torments I know that several Fathers of this Province have never been in favor of our missions and have considered our work as entirely useless I do not wonder if they thought so, not being acquainted with what a missionary life among the Indians is, they have not a right idea of it But, Very Rev Father, the present condition of the Osages shows to evidence that these good Fathers have been mistaken in their judgment, and that our labors, though under-valued, have, thanks be to God, proved to be of great benefit to the Osages as well as to those other tribes with whom we occasionally have intercourse”

Visiting [September, 1876] the settlements on the Big Cana, I heard that this vast Indian Territory south of Kansas had been formed into a Prefecture Apostolic and I was officially assured that the Very Reverend Dom Isidore Robot, with whom we are well acquainted, has been appointed by the Congregation of Propaganda as Prefect Apostolic over the Indian Territory, nay more, he had already visited the Osage settlement on Birdcreek. It was natural for me to conclude that my duties with the Osages were now over, so bidding them my farewell I left the Indian Territory. By this arrangement the Province of Missouri loses the Mission she has had among these Indians since June, 1824 [?] and this did not happen through any hostility of the Indians themselves nor through any encroachments of the United States government, or Protestant bigotry but merely because she thought proper to let these missions go (*Journal*, 5 41)

The new prefect-apostolic, it would appear, undertook at first to look after the Indians himself, but later, finding the task too heavy a one, requested the Jesuits to continue their visits to the tribes under his jurisdiction. This they did, Ponziglione recording missionary excursions of his to the Indian Territory as late as 1881. While the Osage were the chief beneficiaries of the missionary zeal of Schoenmakers and his associates, other tribes were brought on occasion within range of their ministry. It will be of interest to record some of the contacts thus made with various tribes of the West and Southwest by Ponziglione, who of all the members of the mission-staff was enabled to continue his field-work the longest and carry it the farthest. In an excursion of eighteen days made in November-December, 1869, he met various groups of Indians settled north of the mission.

Both myself and my favorite horse stood the long travel without suffering. In this my mission I visited the Catholic Ottaways, Chippewas, Sacs and Foxes and the Kaws. I met with some very good Catholics both among the Indians and white people. The Chippewas as well as the Sacs and the Foxes and the Kaws most earnestly requested me to use all my energy for getting them a Catholic mission for they can no longer keep on with the Protestant Ministers to whom the education of their youth has been entrusted against their will. They told me that they frequently have petitioned the Government Agents to get Catholic Missioners but to no purpose.⁹²

At Wichita June 4, 1871, Father Ponziglione baptized an aged Arapaho woman, to whom he gave the name of Mary Cecilia. Through her as interpreter he was to come into touch with the Arapaho and Cheyenne.

⁹² Ponziglione to Coosemans, December 17, 1867 (A)

Being in the town [Wichita] I heard that this woman's son-in-law, a good friend of mine, was going to leave the next day for the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Agency on the North Fork to bring back Mary Cecilia and some other [of] her connections, who had been here for sometime on a visit I thought this was an excellent opportunity I had for going to visit both the Cheyenne and Arapahoe nations, who think [a] good deal of the Black-robe. Moreover, I knew positively that there were in that place several children of Catholic parents who had not yet been baptized and so I conclude[d] to avail myself of the opportunity and go. Having therefore taken with me such provisions as we would need on the road, we started on the 5th and having crossed the Arkansas river just at this town we went on almost always in a southwest course.

We were forming a party of nine persons and were travelling in three light conveyances. We were 6 days in crossing the plains down to the Agency on North Fork and travelled every day an average of 30 miles. These plains are not yet settled. Only at some 40 miles distance one meets what people here call [a] rancho, places where one must try not to stop if he can help it, for the most wicked set of people are there to be found. We camped out every night both goin[g] and coming back and, thank God, had no trouble of any kind. The road through those plains is a very tedious one. Now and then you come to some quite large rivers, such as the Cimarrone [Cimarron], North Fork, Canadian and Washita, we were lucky in finding these rivers rather low, on account of the dry summer we have had, and so we could ford them without difficulty. The country, however, as a general thing, is beautiful, especially south of the Canadian.

The monotony of our long travel was daily interrupted by the large droves of Texan cattle which we met at the rate of some 30,000 per day coming up to the market of North Kansas. Another great distraction which we had were the prairie-dogs through whose town we travelled for some days. These insignificant little animals, they are not larger than a squirrel, are the most playful thing you can see. We had travelled three days under the most scorching sun when about noon of the fourth we came on a rather high ground covered all over with thousands of Texas cattle. They were grazing on a nice piece of prairie, at the end of which you could see a large body of water. We felt happy at the sight and hastened to reach the place to quench our thirst and refresh our horses, but oh, illusion! The nearer we came to the lake, the farther it seemed to go from us. It was but a mirage, when we reached the coveted soil, [we] found nothing but a dry, sandy place.

In the afternoon of the 10[th] of June we reached the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Agency on the North Fork. Not long after my arrival Mary Cecilia, now my interpreter, introduced me to the chief of her Nation, telling them that I was the Black-robe. This was enough. Both Cheyenne and Arapahoes came in turn to shake hands with me, and having sat down in a large circle they smoked the calumet in my honour and asked me what news I had for them. I answered them by asking whether they recollected the Black-robe they had seen near Omaha [?] some years ago?

"Yes," say they, "we do, the last time we saw the Black-robe was in 1852 [1851], we have seen none since" "Well," said I, "that Black-robe (Father Peter J De Smet) is living yet, he is well, but he is very old and cannot come to see you here. I came to visit you in his place." Having said this I showed them my crucifix. They took it with their hands with great respect and after examining it, they returned it to me saying that it was the same as that of Father P J De Smet. They made me feel at home with them. I remained with them for a while trying to give them good advice. Meanwhile, the boys went around publishing every where that the Black-robe had come to visit them. This was enough for my security. I could go where I pleased and was everywhere received with respect. As it was Saturday and I wished to get a room where [in] to read Mass the next day, I went to see the Agent and he very kindly allowed me the use of an old store house where I fixed an altar the best I could and the next morning we had Mass at 10 o'clock, a large attendance being present. After Mass I baptized some children and an old man. I could have baptized some other adults, but as they were not sufficiently instructed I thought to put it off to some other time.⁹³

A standing grievance among the Arapaho and Cheyenne, the latter especially, was their inability to secure Catholic missionaries. At the time of Ponziglione's visit of 1871 a delegation of Cheyenne chiefs had just returned from Washington where they had made known their wishes in this regard but without result. At the agency the matter had been brought three different times to the attention of the two official interpreters of the tribe, white men both, but these were tools in the hands of unworthy officials and failed to report the wishes of the Indians to the authorities. In numerous tribes which Ponziglione visited in the seventies he found a similar situation, an earnest wish on the part of the Indians to be served by Catholic priests and a refusal on the part of the government to accede to their demands. During the period 1874-1879 Washington authorities took the stand that only one religious denomination was to be allowed to establish itself on a given reserve. These were the days of President Grant's Indian peace policy (1874-1882), which planned to give the agencies over to "such religious denominations as had previously established themselves among the Indians." "[This plan] was fair and practicable and might have proved successful had it been carried out impartially. In 1870 there were seventy-two Indian agencies and in *thirty-eight* Catholic missionaries had been the first to establish themselves. Despite this fact only eight . . . were assigned to the Catholic Church. Eighty thousand Catholic Indians passed from Catholic influence to Protestant control."⁹⁴

⁹³ Ponziglione, *Journal*, 3 18 et seq.

⁹⁴ *Idem*, 3 24 *Catholic Encyclopedia*, art "Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions," 7 46.

The Ponca, a Siouan tribe, removed in 1877 from their Nebraska reservation to the Indian Territory, were first visited by Father Ponziglione in 1878. They were then settled at Baxter Springs, about forty-five miles south of the Osage Mission, but subsequently occupied a tract "southwest of this [Osage] mission on the endless plains that stretch along the Arkansas and its very large tributaries. The Reservation of the Poncas is rather extensive and lays between the Arkansas and the Salt Fork, not being very far from their confluent [confluence]"⁹⁵ The Ponca numbered seven hundred and eighty "Of these some one hundred and fifty, most all half-breeds, belong to our Church and were nearly all baptized by good Father Peter De Smet of happy memory . . . This last winter they sent to the President a petition signed by every man and indorsed by their present agent, Colonel A. G. Boone, asking for a Catholic mission and school, but what the Grand Father at Washington will do with it is more than I can tell. So far they got no answer"⁹⁶ When in 1879 Ponziglione visited the Ponca in the Indian Territory, he found that schools under the care of Episcopalian clergymen had been established on their reserve. The Ponca protested, declaring that these missionaries the government sent them were not the ones they had called for. "They told their new Agent that they wanted R [oman] Cath [olic] missionaries and no others but to no purpose. There is no use protesting when might makes right"⁹⁷

After the Nez Percé war of 1877 Chief Joseph with some four hundred and fifty of his followers were sent to the Indian Territory, where they occupied a small reserve at the junction of the Sharkapha and Salt Ford about fifteen miles west of the Ponca agency. Here Ponziglione visited them on the same excursion of 1879 that brought him to the Ponca. Few among the Nez Percés were Catholic though Ponziglione asserts that the whole band was under Catholic instruction and was about to be baptized at the time they were deported from the mountains. "The few that are Catholic are so timid that they do not dare to show themselves for what they are. If you ask them whether they are Roman Catholics, first they may answer yes, then after a while if you ask them the same question they will answer no. If you ask them in what religion they believe, they will answer 'We believe in Cataldo's teaching and that is the only teaching we wish to have'"⁹⁸ Father Joseph Cataldo, S. J., was an Indian missionary of the Pacific Northwest, whose long career of active field service terminated only with his death in 1928 at the advanced age of ninety-three. "Their great Chief

⁹⁵ Ponziglione, *Journal*, 6 40.

⁹⁶ *Idem*, 6 14

⁹⁷ *Idem*, 6 41

⁹⁸ *Idem*, 6 42

Joseph is a very nice man, yet he too is afraid of the Government Agent and when I asked him whether he was a Roman Catholic he replied that he had no religion of any kind. When I asked him whether he knew Father Cataldo, 'yes,' he replied, 'Cataldo is my friend, he is a good man, all my people love him and I would wish very much to see him once more.'"⁹⁹

The Cherokee were visited by Father Colleton in the early seventies. In the summer of 1878 Father Ponziglione was among them for the first time. "I visited Talequah, Fort Gibson and Veneta, the three principal towns of this nation, read Mass for the few Catholic I found here and there, baptised some children. Wherever I went I was received most kindly and invited to return as soon as possible to give them a chance to know something more about the R[oman] C[atholic] Church."¹⁰⁰ In the spring of 1879 Ponziglione made his first excursion to the Creeks, exercising the ministry in their two principal towns, Muskogee and Eufaula. "These two nations," he writes, "who have from time immemorial always been neighbors, own one of the most beautiful spots of the Indian Territory. Their lands are rich and fertile and are irrigated by beautiful rivers such as the Arkansas, the Canadian, and the Cimaron. Very few Catholics are to be found among these people but the seeds of faith sowed among the Cherokees and Creeks of old by the fervent missionaries sent to them by S. Francis Borgia has not yet perished."¹⁰¹ Fisherstown, Checkota (Checotah), Pawhuska and Okmulgee were also among the Indian Territory settlements visited by Ponziglione.

The Kansa or Kaw Indians had been approached at intervals by Jesuit priests from the Potawatomi and Osage mission centers. Ponziglione records a passing call made them in 1880.

From the settlements on the Cana, which for a good space runs along the northern line of the Osage Reservation, I came on the banks of the Arkansas, which in its bend forms its western as well as southern line. Here in the northwest corner a tract of 10 miles square has been taken away from the Osages by the United States Government and given to the Kansas, or, as generally they are called, the Kaw Indians. These Indians are just like the Osages, of whom they seem to be but a branch, having the same customs, nay even the same language, which however they speak with a different accent. The full blooded Kaws are pagans, their half-breeds are all Catholics.

⁹⁹ *Idem, loc cit*

¹⁰⁰ *Idem, 6 30*

¹⁰¹ *Idem, 6 32* Jesuit missions were established in Spanish Florida as early as the latter half of the sixteenth century. It does not seem certain that the Creeks and Cherokees were among the Indians evangelized. Michael Kenny, S. J., *The Romance of the Floridas* (Milwaukee, 1934)

but are veiy ignorant in matters of religion for having had no Catholic missionaries residing with them for a long time. All the present generation knows about the Catholic Religion is that they were baptised in it. They have a great respect for the ministers of our holy Church, they declare that they do not follow any other Church but this, and are veiy anxious to have their marriages blessed and their children baptised by the Catholic priest ¹⁰²

From Osage Mission as a center some measure of missionary service had thus been expended on the Indian tribes of Kansas and the Indian Territory, though lack of adequate personnel prevented it from being organized on a permanent basis. Father Ponziglione lists one year among the tribes visited by him when the Osage were absent on their periodical buffalo hunt, the "Miamies, Weas, Peorias, Kaskaskias, Kaws, Quawpaws, Kansas [*sic*], Chippewas, Sacs, and Foxes." To these he adds "the wildest nations of the Plains bordering on Mexico and Texas, such as the Cheyennes, Araphoes, Wichitas, Caddos" and others ¹⁰³. In these for the most part passing visits little solid good could be accomplished, but at least the Catholic missionary tradition was being kept up. On returning from his excursion of 1871 to the Arapaho and Cheyenne Ponziglione wrote "What will be the result of this my visit to these wild Indian tribes it is more than I can tell, but I am confident that it will keep up the esteem they have for Catholic missionaries and will show them that we neither forget nor despise them" (*Journal*, 3 25). Five years later in a letter of December 13, 1876, Ponziglione recorded his judgment of the net result of the missionary activities centered at Osage Mission.

I have at present nothing more to say in regard to the Indians, but before I conclude these letters I am bound to acknowledge that during the 26 years I have labored amongst them as a socius of Father John Schoenmakers they have always been very kind to me and this I must say not only of the Osages but of all the other tribes with whom I came into contact during this long period of time.

(As) to what concerns the result in Christianizing them, if it has not been as abundant as perhaps expected, it is to be attributed to different causes: first, to the want of laborers in this barren part of the Lord's vineyard, for during our long staying with them we never were more than 3 priests at a time, for a good while we were only 2. One of us having to mind the temporalities of the Mission, and another having to attend to the church and the education of the Indian children who crowded our houses, and at the same time to visit the half-breed settlements, there remained only one free to devote himself to the good of the wild Indian. And as these according

¹⁰² *Idem*, 6 46 *Infra*, Chap XXVIII, § 4

¹⁰³ *Idem*, 6 25

to their habit have no permanent residence in any place but always go around moving according to the different seasons of the year, it followed that the poor missionary charged with the duty of visiting them not only had very hard work running after them, but never could do anything permanent amongst them, all he could do was to keep them friendly and induce them to send their children to this school

Another great difficulty we met with during the many years we lived with the Indians was the want of funds necessary to effect anything amongst them for with the exception of a small allowance yearly given us by the Government for the boarding and tuition of the Indian children we never received any assistance either from the [Association of the] Propagation of the faith or from our R R V [Right Reverend] Bishop or from our Superiors—or from any Catholic association of the different states of the Union—but (as the proverb says) we were left to paddle our canoe the best we could

Finally the greatest obstacle has been a systematic opposition of Governments Agents to all that we were doing or would advise to be done for their temporal as well as spiritual advantage ¹⁰⁴

§ 9 BUILDING THE CHURCH IN SOUTHERN KANSAS

The first known-by-name priest to visit the territory which is now Kansas is said (a view still open to dispute) to have been the Franciscan, Fray de Padilla, a member of Coronado's historic expedition, who met a martyr's death (c 1544) in some as yet unidentified locality ¹⁰⁵ Possibly Father Charles De La Croix, pastor of St Ferdinand's Church, Florissant, Mo, reached the Neosho in his second missionary excursion

¹⁰⁴ *Idem*, 5 42 The statement regarding the opposition of the Indian agents is puzzling in view of their repeated commendations of the Osage Mission, especially its schools, in their reports to the Indian Office (*Supra*, Chap XXVII, § 5) Perhaps Father Ponziglione had in mind the agents among the tribes visited by him in the Indian Territory

¹⁰⁵ David Donoghue, "The Route of the Coronado Expedition in Kansas," in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 33 181-92 (1929), *idem*, "Coronado, Onate and Quivira," in *Mid-America*, 18 88 95 (1936), *Mid-America*, 12 12 *et seq* (1930), *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 11 385, *Kans Hist Coll*, 9 568 The most recent critical discussion of the question (Carlos E Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas* [Austin, Texas, 1936], 1 114-115) places the scene of Fray Padilla's death in Texas The statement, apparently based on a misinterpreted passage in O'Callaghan, *Documentary History of New York*, 9 995, is sometimes made that the Jesuits had a mission in Kansas in the first half of the eighteenth century Thus, *Kans Hist Coll*, 17 143 "The first organized missionary endeavor in Kansas was by the Jesuits, who established a mission in the present county of Atchison, at a large Canza Indian village, in the year 1727" The statement is without foundation No evidence is available that any Jesuit reached Kansas before Father Van Quickenborne The point is discussed in Girraghan, *Catholic Beginnings in Kansas City, Missouri*, p 9

to the Osage Indians, August, 1822¹⁰⁶ He was followed in 1827 by Father Charles Van Quickenborne, S J, who in the summer of that year visited the Osage villages on the Neosho, and a year later, in 1828, by Father Joseph Lutz, a diocesan priest of St Louis, who resided for a few weeks among the Kaw Indians in their village a few miles above the site of Lawrence¹⁰⁷ Then came the first Catholic establishments in Kansas, the Jesuit Indian missions among the Kickapoo (1836), Potawatomi (1838) and Osage (1847)

Missionary work among the white settlers who later occupied the territory in ever increasing numbers was only incidental to the original purpose of these missions, which were set up primarily for the benefit of the Indian, but in the designs of Providence the missions became the principal agencies for the pioneer organization of the Catholic Church in Kansas The story of the efforts made over many years by the Jesuit missionaries resident at the Osage and Potawatomi missions to sow the Faith in the great commonwealth which they helped to develop is a fascinating one, the significance of which did not escape Father Ponziglione In a letter to Father De Smet of February 4, 1870, concerning the document presently to be reproduced, he wrote "This Mission established in benefit [*sic*] of the Osage nation has in the hands of God been a great instrument for the propagation of the Catholic church through these vast regions of Southern Kansas, for giving to God all the praise due for it, we can say with truth that the Mission has evangelized all the part of Kansas lying South of the old Santa-Fe road, for the labours of our Fathers extended upon a radius of more or less 100 miles all around the mission"¹⁰⁸ The detailed statement of the missionary activities of the Osage Mission Jesuits which he drew up and forwarded to De Smet on this occasion is a documentary source of importance for the history of the Catholic Church in southern Kansas No one was in a better position than Ponziglione to tell the story with abundant first-hand detail He had followed and put on record year by year almost from the beginning of the mission every development of note in its field of operations, and he was himself a large part of the missionary activities which he chronicled. The document prepared for Father De Smet follows

¹⁰⁶ Garraghan, *op cit*, p 26

¹⁰⁷ *Idem*, p 30 According to Ponziglione, Van Quickenborne in the course of his Osage excursion of 1827 was at the Chouteau and Giraud trading-post in Linn County, also at the half-breed settlement at the junction of Four Mile Creek with the Neosho (Neosho County) Van Quickenborne's own baptismal records indicate his presence in 1827 at the Liguette P Chouteau trading-post on the Neosho *Supra*, Chap VI, § 3

¹⁰⁸ Ponziglione, *Journal*, 2 19 (A)

Record of Missionary Stations and Churches

Established by the Fathers of this Mission from
the year 1847 to 1870

1 The object of the establishment of this Mission of St Francis of Jerome [Hieronymo] being the instruction of the Osage Indians in all that concerns religion and civilization, we tried all the means in our power to succeed in this work, and though we must acknowledge that we did not do much, yet thank God we have not been idle altogether, as the perusal of the following statements will show

The work in which we have been employed from 1847 to 1867 [1865], the year in which the Osages ceded to the U S Government this part of Kansas forming Neosho and Labette Counties, has been a very hard and tedious one, for the Osages in many instances proved themselves very troublesome, yet not as much perhaps as one might have expected ¹⁰⁹ Living as they do in camps and moving them frequently, our life has been that of travellers, always on the road, for some of us had always to be about visiting them either on the Neosho, or on the Verdigris river, a very inconvenient life indeed, for there being at that time no settlers in this country, we were bound to be continually exposed to the inclemency of the weather as well as to privations of all kinds

2 Our Osages according to their nomadic life being [engaged] about half of the year [in] wandering on the plains in their hunting expeditions and being at that time in the habit of abandoning their towns altogether, men, women and children, to go after the game, so every year at such seasons we used to be left here alone with our school-children and some of the half-breed families, not for some days [only], but sometimes for two, sometimes for four months To put this time to profit, we concluded to make use of the opportunity then offered by the absence of the Osages to visit the neighboring tribes of Indians and also the several Catholic families scattered here and there both on the Cherokee Neutral Lands and on the Western line of the State of Missouri

3 The following statement will show how our labors extended over this state of Kansas, which in 1847 when we established this Mission, was only an Indian Territory, in which no white man was allowed to settle Hence no house could be found with the exception of some few trading-posts erected here and there for the benefit of the Indians In consequence of this condition of the country our travelling through these lonely prairies was very hard and fatiguing, for we had to have with us provisions for us and our interpreter, who used to ride at our side ¹¹⁰ Many times in reaching the end

¹⁰⁹ The Osage lands comprising Neosho and Labette Counties were ceded to the U S Government by the treaty of 1865

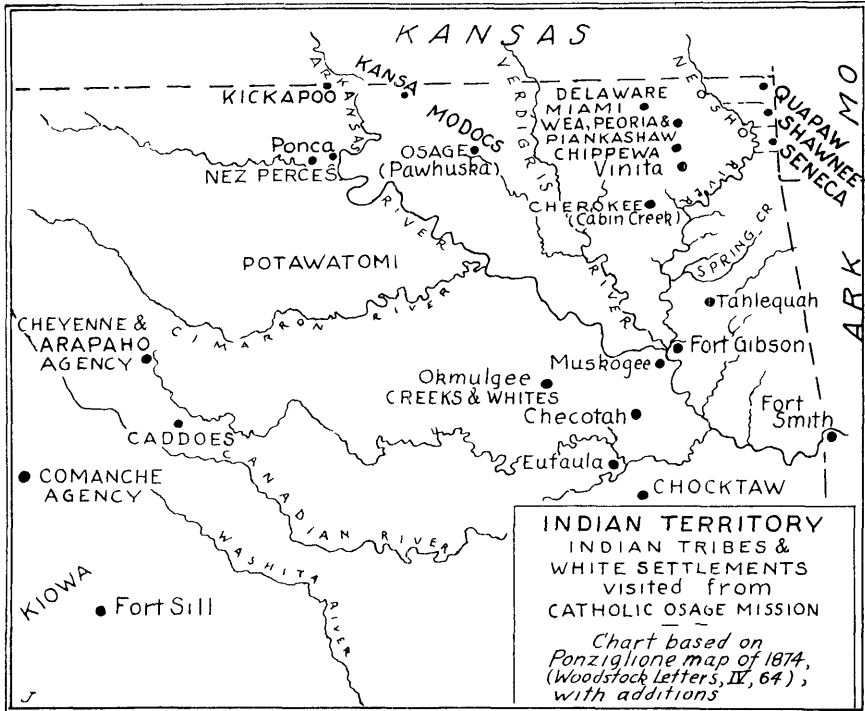
¹¹⁰ The half-breed interpreters employed by the missionaries included Alexander Beit (Beyette), William Penn, John Mitchel (St Michel), Joseph Mongrain and Louis Mongrain According to a statement of Father Bax's (Bax to De Smet,

of our journey we would find ourselves disappointed, for the Osages had left or were in such a state of excitement that it would not be prudent for us to stay with them. Hence we were obliged to lie out under the large canopy of heaven, without any shelter against rain or cold weather. Yet, despite all these difficulties, on we went from the very first year trying to do all the good we could, and whenever we found a small number of Catholics, we established among them a Missionary Station, and these stations were and are to this day houses of either half-breeds or white Catholic families, which we used to visit at regular times when practicable, some more, some less frequently according to their distance from the Mission. On such occasions we invite all the neighbors without any distinction of creed to come and assist at divine service. Having put up a temporary chapel, we hear confessions, we catechize, read Mass, administer Holy Communion, baptize children and sometimes adults, perform marriages and after this, if there are sick people in the vicinity, we bring to them the last consolations of our holy religion. So we form small congregations and in progress of time according as the number of Catholics increases, permanent chapels and churches are built in these stations, and by degrees the care of them is transferred to secular priests.

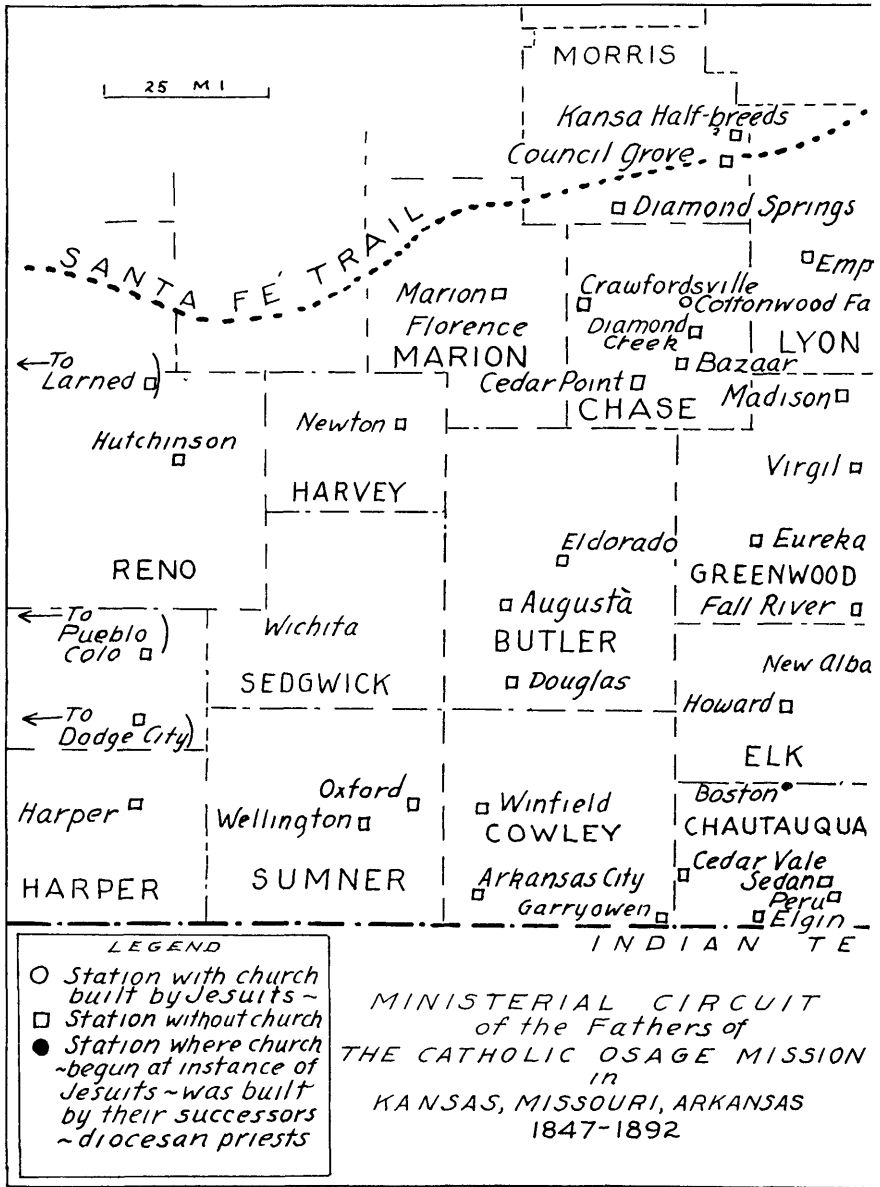
4 In 1848 Father John Baptist Bax established a missionary station on the Cherokee Neutral Lands not far from Spring river in what was then called Chailey Mongrain[']s Settlement, and another not far from this among the Quapaw Indians, both ranging at some 50 miles south of the Mission¹¹¹. In attending these stations, he occasionally visited also the

February 27, 1852) an interpreter's salary at this period was \$150 a year. (A) Among the names of god-parents at baptisms the following occur in the records: Mary Ann Papin, Louisa Chouteau, Pelagia Mongrain, Sophy Chouteau, Louis Chouteau, William Nixon, Peter Chouteau, Joseph Bertrand, Alexander Chouteau, Little August Chouteau, Patrick O'Brien, Etienne Brond, Antoine Penn. Later, when the missionaries had made themselves more or less familiar with Osage, they were apparently able to dispense, wholly or in part, with interpreters. Ponziglione wrote in 1876: "The Osage language was not neglected by us. We translated into it part of the New Testament, a catechism of the X Doctrine and a few most important chapters of ancient History of which we make use in instructing them. Several of us succeeded in gaining a tolerable good knowledge of the Osage language and are able to speak it." *Journal*, 5:28. The Osage translations, as also some word-lists in the same language, are in the Archives of the Missouri Province, St. Louis University, St. Louis.

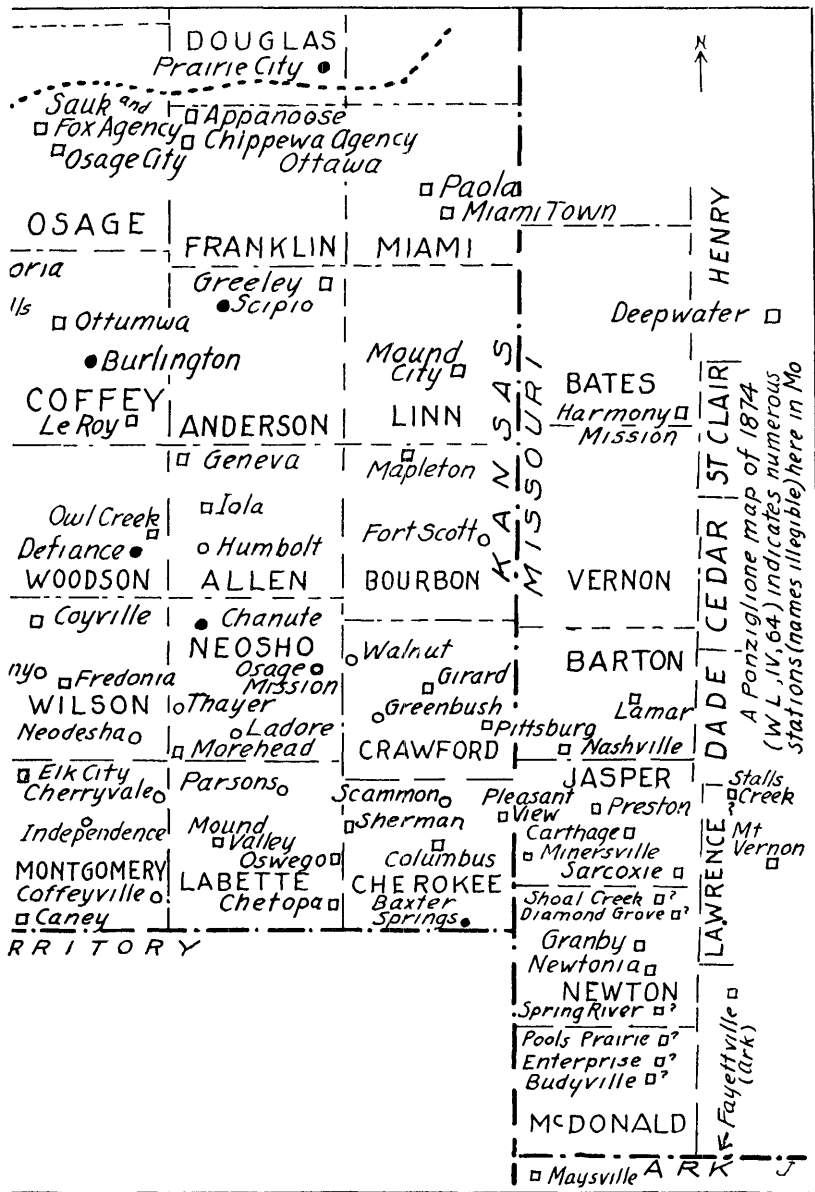
¹¹¹ The so-called Neutral Lands lay between the eastern limit of the Osage reserve and the Missouri line. Father Bax's first baptisms among the Quapaw are dated December 27, 1847, on which day he baptized Baptiste Jalo, Richard Jalo, Bartholomew Bartholomew, Alexis Bartholomew, and Susanna Bartholomew, all of them apparently half-breeds. Sixteen Quapaw were baptized during the period 1847-1853 and fifty-three during 1853. The last Quapaw baptism (Homeney [*sic*] Creek, Osage Reservation) is entered in the register, May 23, 1880, by Father Ponziglione, Sophia Chouteau being sponsor. *Baptisms, Burials, Marriages of the Quapaws, Pias (Peoria) and Cherokee Nations*. Archives of Passionist Monastery, St. Paul, Kansas. According to Ponziglione, *Annales Missionis*, Father Ignatius Maes,



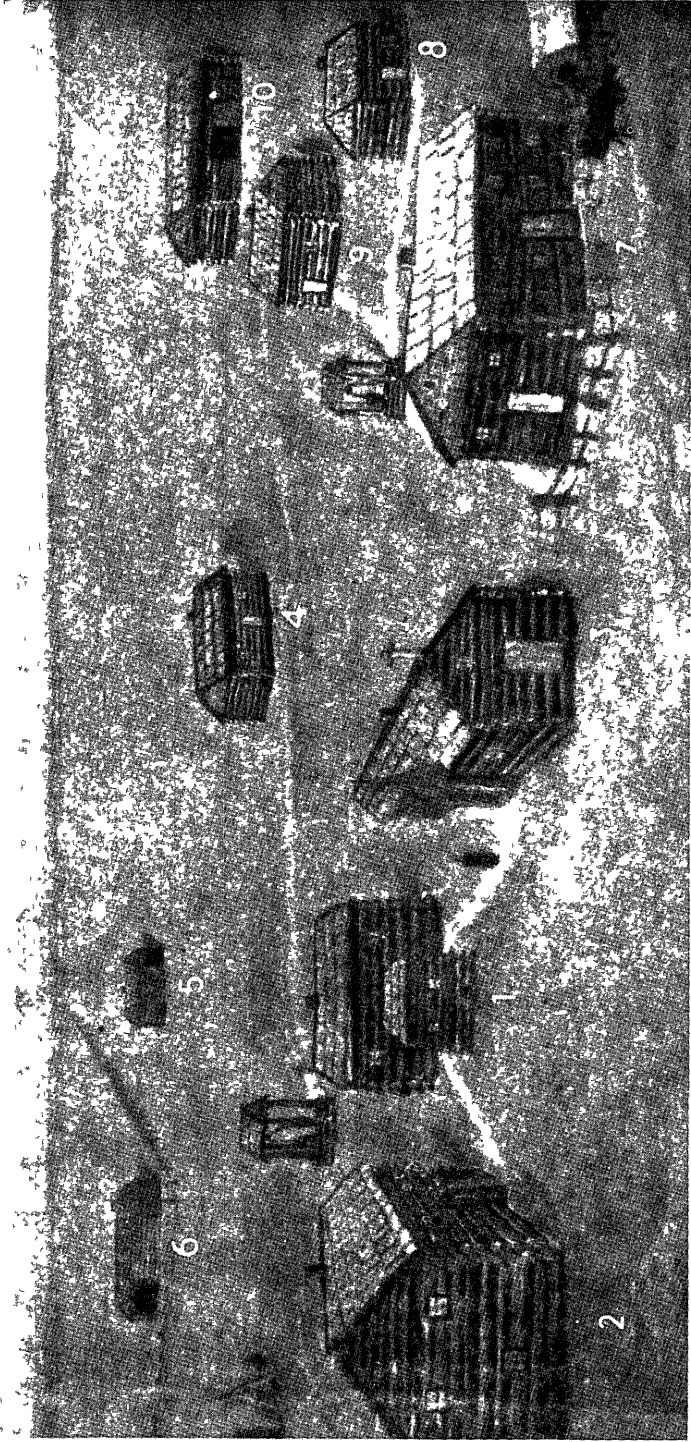
Compiled by G J Garraghan, drawn by J V Jacobsen



Compiled by G J Garraghan,



drawn by J V Jacobsen



Catholic Osage Mission as it appeared in 1865 Sketch according to data supplied by Charles F Beechwood, of Joplin, Mo , first white student to register in the mission school From painting in rooms of the Kansas Catholic Historical Society, St Benedict's College, Atchison, Kans (1) Jesuit residence (2) Boys' school (3) Church (4) Workmen's quarters (5) Blacksmith shop and tool house (6) Flour mill (7) Convent of Sisters of Loretto and girls' school (8) Bakery (9) Laundry (10) Barn

Cherokees as well as the Senecas and Shawnees living in that vicinity. He baptized some few of their children, but never could do much with the adult portion of those nations.

5 In 1850 a regular missionary [station] was erected by Father J. B. Bax amongst the Miamias, Weas, Peorias and Piankeshaws then residing on their old reservation on the Marais des Cygnes, now Miami County, some 80 miles north of this place. Father J. B. Bax having died in 1852, Father Paul Mary Ponziglione took care of this station till 1858 when the care of these small tribes was given to a secular priest [Rev. Ivo Schacht] in charge of that County.¹¹²

6 In 1850 Father J. B. Bax also established another Missionary Station at Fort Scott in Bourbon County, some 40 miles northeast of this place. This station was put up especially for the benefit of the Catholic soldiers residing in the garrison of that Post. In 1854 [1853] the Fort having been evacuated by the troops, citizens took hold of it and changed the Fort into a town, and as among the citizens there were several Catholics we kept on visiting that place from time to time. Not only were our Fathers well received in this town, but they were frequently requested to go there to preach. The Fathers went there whenever they could, and it was on one of these occasions that the town was so well pleased with them that they donated to Fathers Paul Mary Ponziglione and James C. Van Goch ten acres of land for the purpose of building a church, etc. The donation was received and in the Spring of 1864, just when our Civil War was waging most furiously, Father Paul Mary Ponziglione built there a stone church 30 x 50 feet and dedicated it in the month of August to the Mother of God under the title of Mary Queen of Angels. In the Fall of 1865 the care of the church was transferred to a secular priest [Rev. J. C. Cunningham].¹¹³

7 Another Missionary Station was also opened by Father J. B. Bax in resident for a while at Osage Mission, started in 1849 a station at Spring River, Jasper Co., for the Quapaw living there.

¹¹² For an account of the Jesuit mission opened in 1847 among the Miami of the Marais des Cygnes, Miami County, Kansas, see *supra*, Chap. XXIII, § 8. Bax's first baptism among the Miami is dated Dec. 9, 1849. He urged with the Miami agent, Major Coffey, the reopening of the Catholic Miami mission, as most of the tribe was anxious for this step. A register of Miami baptisms from 1847 to 1861, about 30 in number, is reproduced in Kinsella, *History of Our Cradle Land* (Kansas City, 1921), pp. 240-244. Rev. Ivo Schacht, who took charge of the missions in Miami, Linn and Franklin Counties in 1858, was a Belgian. As ecclesiastical superior of the Sisters of Charity of Nashville, Tennessee, he had accompanied them on their moving to Leavenworth at Bishop Miège's invitation. Father Schacht died pastor of St. Stephen's Church, Owensboro, Ky., April 10, 1874. After Father Theodore Heimann, who taught at Osage Mission, 1852, and subsequently became a Carmelite, he was the first diocesan priest to lend his services to Bishop Miège.

¹¹³ Early in 1865 Col. Blair of Fort Scott petitioned the Jesuits to open a residence and school in that town in the event of the Osage Mission being closed. Rev. J. F. Cunningham, who took over the Fort Scott parish in the fall of 1865, was subsequently first Bishop of Concordia, Kansas.

this same year, 1850, in Henry County, State of Missouri, among several families of pious Germans located on a small stream called Deepwater, some 90 miles east of the Mission. The congregation used to be attended by our Fathers of St. Mary's Mission, when they were living on Sugar Creek, now Linn County, but then Mission having been moved far North on the Kansas River, they were unable to attend it, so it fell under our charge and was taken care of by us up till 1858, in which year a permanent priest was sent to reside there¹¹⁴

8 In 1854 Father Paul Mary Ponziglione established a Mission Station among the tribes of Chippewas and Ottawas residing on the *Marais des Cygnes*, in what is now called Franklin County, some 90 miles north. These small parcels of great ancient nations were all Catholic when residing in Canada or Wisconsin, but having been deprived of the assistance of the Catholic Church since they came to this far West, nay, having been surrounded by Protestant ministers, they lost their faith or became quite careless about it, so that all they now believe in is to have their children baptized by the priest. Being given to a very free use of intoxicating liquors, it is very hard to do anything with them. In 1858 the care of these small tribes was transferred to the secular priest who visits Franklin County [Rev. Ivo Schacht]¹¹⁵

9 In 1857 Father Paul Mary Ponziglione established a few new Missionary Stations north and southwest of this place ranging at a distance of 65 to 117 miles. The first was in Anderson County where now stands St. Boniface Church near the town of Scipio. This was given to a secular priest [Rev. Ivo Schacht] in the following year.

The second was near Prairie City in Franklin [Douglas?] County among a French settlement. This also has now a church of stone and is attended by a secular priest.

The third was in Woodson County not far from the place where Dry Creek empties into the Verdigris river.

The fourth was in Howard [Greenwood] County at Patrick Crains' settlement on Fall river.

The fifth in Woodson County at Michael Collins' settlement on Owl Creek not far from Humboldt.

The sixth in Coffee County in the towns of Ottumway, Burlington and Le Roy.

¹¹⁴ Bax was in Missouri in June, 1848, visiting Diamond Grove and Sarcouxie, Shoal Creek, Newton Co., and Harmony Mission, Bates Co. The German Catholic settlement called Deepwater, in Henry County, was visited by Verreydt from Sugar Creek until the removal in 1848 of St. Mary's to the new Potawatomi reserve on the Kaw. In 1859 Ponziglione began a station at the lead-mines at Granby, Newton Co., Mo., on behalf of French settlers, also in the same year a station at Minersville, Jasper Co., Mo. *Annales Missionis*, p. 222 (A).

¹¹⁵ The station for the Chippewa and Ottawa also served the Sauk and Foxes whose reserve lay immediately west of Franklin County. In 1854 Ponziglione also opened a station at Appanoose in the future Franklin County for the half-breeds of the locality.

The seventh in Allen County in the towns of Geneva and Humboldt ¹¹⁶

10 In 1859 the same Father opened Missionary Stations in Granby, Newton County, and Minersville in Jasper County, both in the State of Missouri, the first at 90 the second at 50 miles southeast of this Mission. These Stations were seldom attended and at last were broken down during the last war, both towns being destroyed. The few Catholic families forming these stations were very fervent.

11 In 1860[?] temporary stations were opened by Father John Schoenmakers, our Superior, in the different forts and military camps of the Federal troops in our vicinity, especially at Fort Scott and Humboldt. We visited them as regularly as we could and had plenty to do in the hospitals as well as in the prisons.

During the late war our Missionary Stations both west and northwest were for a time given up and in fact there was no use for us to go to visit them, the families of Catholics living in them having almost all left the country to save themselves from the annoyance of guerilla parties, who, knowing that those settlers could have no protection, would rob them and threaten to kill them if they would not let them have what they wanted. But no sooner was peace restored in 1865 than most all those Catholic families returned to their claims, nay, most all brought with them some of their friends, so that when we returned to visit them we found that the number of our little congregations had generally increased.

12 In 1866 Father Paul Mary Ponziglione having gone to visit the Catholic families of Allen County, being in Humboldt was most earnestly requested by Col. Orlin Thurston, (a Protestant), and by a few Catholics to build a church in that town. The Colonel being a very energetic man succeeded in collecting a large subscription, as everything was promising and favorable and the Colonel was a really trusty man, the Father gave him the charge of building the church. He went to work and by the 11th of August, 1867, it was finished. The church is a stone building 30 x 60 feet neatly put up. Father Paul Mary Ponziglione celebrated in it the first Mass and dedicated the church to God under the invocation of St. Joseph. The same Father continued to take charge of that congregation till the 10th of September, 1869, on which day not only the care of this but also of all the stations established on the Neosho river north of Humboldt (and on Owl Creek west) were transferred to the care of a secular priest [Rev. Francis Keller] ¹¹⁷

13 In 1866 Missionary Stations were established by Father Schoen-

¹¹⁶ St. Boniface's, a German congregation, Potawatomi Creek, later Scipio, Anderson Co., was attended by Rev. Ivo Schacht from Lawrence in 1860. It had a resident pastor, Rev. Aloysius Meyers, about 1862. In his *Annales Missionis* Ponziglione gives 1858 as date of establishment of the stations at St. Boniface, Prairie City, Owl Creek and Fall River, also 1860 as date for Geneva.

¹¹⁷ Humboldt, Allen County. "August 11, 1867. This day the first Mass was said in St. Joseph's Church at Humboldt. The church was in the morning privately blessed by Father Paul Mary Ponziglione, who could have no other priest to help him in performing the ceremony." Ponziglione, *Journal*.

makers in Carthage and Newtonia, the first in Jasper, the second in Newton County in the state of Missouri ranging on a line from 60 to 90 miles east of this Mission. He also erected new stations at Baxter Springs on the Neutral Lands, at Oswego and Chetopa in Labette County some 45 (miles) south of this place. During the following year he was succeeded in his labors by Father Philip Colleton, who added to these stations several new ones, such as those of Guaid, Crawfordsville, Chicko and Limestone, all in Crawford County, so likewise those of Pleasant View, Sherman and Cherry Creek settlement in Cherokee County, all ranging at a distance of 20 to 30 miles east of us¹¹⁸

14 In 1867 our Osage Indians and Half-breeds having all moved on Veidigris river on their diminished reservation, Father John Schoenmakers established a Missionary Station in the center of their new settlement in Montgomery County. But the instability of the Indian character and their continual moving from place to place renders it very difficult to do any permanent good amongst them. The station built for the Indians turns out to the advantage of the many Catholic families settling in that vicinity.

15 The same year [1867] Father Paul Mary Ponziglione opened new stations both among the Sack and Fox tribes on their reservation on Salt Creek, Osage County, and among the Catholic settlers near the town of Ottawa in Franklin County. These stations were transferred to a secular priest in the following year¹¹⁹

16 In 1867 Father P. M. Ponziglione visiting the Verdigris found new Catholic settlements and organized regular stations at Madison, Veidigris Fall and Virgil in Greenwood County. He also this year extended his excursions to the Cottonwood river and its tributaries, taking care of the missionary stations formerly established by Father Louis Dumortier of happy memory at Diamond Springs, Baxter and Cedar Point in Chase County some 125 miles northwest of the Mission. The good Father Louis Dumortier having died the year before [July 26, 1867], no one visited these stations till they came under our charge¹²⁰

17 In 1869 Father Philip Colleton visited the new Catholic settlements established since the war on the western line of the State of Missouri and erected regular stations at La Mara [Lamar] and Nashville in Barton County, at Prestons in Jasper County, at Stalls Creek in Lawrence County, at Sarcaky [Sarcovie] in Newton County, at Pool's Prairie, Enterprise and Budyville in McDonald County—places ranging on a line between 50 and 120 miles southeast of this Mission. These stations being so far cannot be

¹¹⁸ Father Colleton showed great energy and zeal in organizing and serving new parishes in southeastern Kansas. Extracts from his correspondence are cited *infra*

¹¹⁹ Rev. J. Perrier

¹²⁰ Father Louis Dumortier, S. J., died at Ellsworth, Kansas, July 26, 1867. He carried on a remarkable ministry on behalf of the Catholic settlers of central Kansas, organizing parishes and building churches with a success that makes him the outstanding Catholic pioneer missionary of this section of the state (*Infra*, Chap. XXIX, § 5). Ponziglione visited Dumortier's stations in Chase County for the first time in 1868. The date 1867 in the text is evidently a mistake.

visited but once or twice in the year, and though we are not bound to visit them, yet we so far tried (whenever we could) to give to all the Catholics in our reach the chance of complying with their Christian duties at least once in the year. We hope that the secular priest now attending Springfield [Missouri] will soon be able to take upon himself the care of these small congregations, and this will give us more opportunity for helping the great many others under our care.¹²¹

18 In 1869 Father P. M. Ponziglione from Chase County extended his excursions to Eldorado in Butler and to Wichita in Sedgwick County along the Arkansas River some 150 miles west. Here also he found new Catholic settlements and calling all the Catholics together promised them he would return to see them from time to time and erected Missionary Stations. In the same year he established a station on [the] Cany or Little Verdigris some 90 miles southwest of this Mission 12 miles below the line of Kansas.¹²²

19 Finally, the same Father also organized this year [1869] another station at Forest Hill in Lyon County some 100 miles north on the Neosho among good Catholic Germans. This station was that very year transferred to a secular priest.

20 In 1870 Father P. M. Ponziglione visiting the railroaders working in Morris County established a Missionary Station among the Kaw Indian Half-breeds in their reservation on Rock Creek. The Half-breeds of this nation are all Catholic but unfortunately not very fervent. They used to be under the care of St. Mary's Mission when they lived on the Kansas river some 20 miles below the Mission. But having moved to this new reser-

¹²¹ The places in the border counties of Missouri visited by Father Colleton were all in the archdiocese of St. Louis. Rev. W. Graham was stationed at Springfield, Mo., in 1870.

¹²² "And it was in Meagher's house that on the 10 of August [1869], if I well remember, I celebrated the first Mass ever celebrated in Wichita. On the occasion of this my first visit to Wichita I found but 3 Catholic families and I am proud to say that the Catholics as well as the Protestants, not only on that occasion, but whenever afterwards I visited them, always treated me with the greatest cordiality." Ponziglione to Very Rev. M. J. Casey, Osage Mission, Oct. 22, 1888. (A) See *infra* in this chapter accounts by Ponziglione of his several visits to Wichita.

Cottonwood Falls and Diamond Creek, only eight miles apart, both being in Chase County, were visited by Father Ponziglione in 1868. In Cottonwood Falls, Mr. Samuel Wood, a non-Catholic, gave Father Ponziglione twelve lots and one hundred dollars in cash for a church. Diamond Creek was first visited by Father Dumortier from St. Mary's Mission on the Kaw. "This settlement [Cottonwood Falls] is perhaps the most fervent I have in the West. This last winter some of the Cottonwood Falls Town Company, having given us a few lots for the purpose of building a church, my people went to work and prepared the necessary material and are now ready to build. This church will be located on a very high hill almost in the center of the town. It will be a frame building 20 x 40. I blessed the foundation and dedicated it already to God under the invocation of St. Francis Borgia [May, 1870]. The dimensions of the church are rather small, but this will do for a few years." Ponziglione, *Journal*, 2 34. (A)

vation it became difficult for the Fathers of St. Mary's to attend them, and they were by degrees left to themselves. Though here a Protestant Mission was erected in the center of their reservation, yet they do not believe in it, and knowing that Father P. M. Ponziglione had come in the neighborhood, they all came to hear Mass and to have their children baptized, declaring to the Father that they were poor Catholics indeed, but they would never be Protestants.¹²³

21 Finally, the year 1870 another Missionary Station was erected at Ladore in this County of Neosho, some 12 miles west where we had a very large number of Catholics. Subscriptions to the amount of over 500 dollars have already been taken up for building a church at this place. So also new stations were opened at Canville and Mud Settlement, the first north, the second east of us some 10 miles. In both places small chapels will soon be raised.¹²⁴

22 This simple statement proves that our Society has planted Catholicity in the State of Kansas, for what this Osage Mission has done south of the Kansas River, St. Mary's Mission has more or less done north of the same. So these two Indian Missions have proved after all that they were not useless. And though the good done in the conversion of Indians, especially the Osage, has not been much, yet this is also certain, that if this State of

¹²³ "Some of the Kaw half-breeds fearing an invasion of Cheyennes and Arapahoes into their country have abandoned their homes. Some have moved to Kaw river near Topeka, others have come into Neosho county." Both the Kaw half-breeds and the Cherokee wished to send their children to the Osage Mission school. Schoenmakers to Thomas Murphy, July 27, 1868 (H)

¹²⁴ According to Ponziglione's *Annales Missionis*, the Ladore station was opened by Colleton in 1868. In May, 1870, Ponziglione opened a missionary station in Emporia in the house of a Mr. Ryan. "Mass being over, I directed my course towards Emporia, which is only some 12 miles above Neosho Rapids, but I reached this town late in the [after]noon and had to stop here, my horse having become unable to go any farther on account of his sore back. Emporia is a beautiful town, the county seat of Lyon County. It lies on a charming prairie not far from the junction of the Cottonwood with the Neosho and commands the trade of the Far West, to which it really offers a very large emporium of all kinds of merchandise. I passed many times through this town in my excursions and never could find a resident Catholic family with whom to pass the night. This winter, however, having been told that some few Catholics had got into town, I concluded I should look after them and so I went around inquiring, but to no purpose. All those I asked about this matter seemed not to understand me, some say there were not such people in their town, some seemed to have a great repugnance in pronouncing the very name of *Catholic!* This was to me a very poor encouragement. Had my horse been able to travel, I would not have stopped five minutes longer in such a place. But I had to stop. So I put up at one of the hotels, and after having taken some dinner I concluded to make another trial, and so I took another tour through town. This time I had better luck. In fact, I heard of a certain James Ryan, and following the description given me, I found the man and in him a very friendly Catholic, who could tell me of some 20 more Catholics who had of late come to that town. I felt very happy over my discovery and passed the night with my new friends." Ponziglione, *Journal*, 2 33 (A)

Kansas today [1870] numbers over 30,000 Catholics, it is in great part due to the work of these two Missions¹²⁵

We have done the work of pioneers We passed through very hard times in this southern part of Kansas, and had it not been for the special assistance of Divine Providence, more than once we would have perished, for the dangers to which we have been exposed in our excursions during these 23 years have been very great But God helping us, on we went and our labors have not been without some fruit We taught the poor Indian to fear God and to respect his Church We baptized a large number of them especially children, and of these the great many who died before reaching baptism are now certainly in heaven praying for the conversion of their nation We hope God will hear and grant their prayers We broke the sod of this once barren desert and sowed over it the word of God Other more zealous ministers of the Gospel will by degrees enter in our field and gather abundant harvests and as monuments of their conquest will build lofty cathedrals where the poor Indian or suffering emigrant saw us hoisting a simple cross But no matter who plants or gathers, God it is that gives the increase! Great is the honor of being a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord Here we have done the roughest part of the work and do not complain We feel proud of seeing this day verified in our Society the motto which was so dear to our forefathers, "*Grandia et magna pati Jesuiticum est*"¹²⁶

The plan followed by the Osage missionaries in serving the white settlers as indicated in the above account was, first, to establish stations or meeting places at convenient points where the latter could gather at regular intervals to hear Mass and receive the sacraments Later, chapels or churches were built at many of these centers The following entries are typical of numerous ones of like tenor occurring in Father Ponziglione's journals

On the 6th of November [1871] I again took the western trail and came to New Chicago [now Chanute] a Town in the northwest corner of this County [Neosho], where I was repeatedly invited by some few Catholics to go to pay them a visit So I did and found that there are around that place more Catholic families than I anticipated Though my visit came unexpected and at a quite unfavorable time, namely in the evening before the annual state election, a time of general excitement, yet I had a good attendance at Mass the next morning This has been the first Mass read in New Chicago and with this a new missionary station has been established¹²⁷

¹²⁵ The Catholic population of Kansas is today (1937) approximately two hundred and eighty thousand

¹²⁶ (A) "It is a Jesuit's lot to endure great trials" Ponziglione's list of churches, all of them in Kansas, erected by the Jesuit fathers of Osage Mission, appears *infra* in this section

¹²⁷ Ponziglione, *Journal*, 3 30 Occasional solecisms occurring in the Ponziglione manuscript records cited in this chapter have been corrected Punctuation also has here and there been supplied or modified

After Mass I started for Winfield, a little town just building on a beautiful prairie which lies along the left bank of the Walnut River twelve miles above its confluence with the Arkansas. It is surrounded by fertile farming land and is at present the seat of Cowley County. The Catholics here are few in number but they seem to be of very good will and almost all approached Holy Communion with much devotion. From the 9th of this month [January, 1872], the day on which I first celebrated Mass here, will date the foundation of a missionary station at this place.¹²⁸

On the 8[th] of September [1872] I read Mass for the first time in the beautiful little town of Augusta, in Butler County. As it was a novelty to have a Catholic service, though the weather was very bad, we had a good attendance of Catholics as well as of Protestants. I placed this station under the patronage of the Immaculate Virgin, whose Nativity that day we were celebrating.¹²⁹

The Catholics of Parsons [Labette County] are most all mechanics and laborers employed by the railroad company. These have just finished a nice frame Church, which was solemnly blessed by our Superior Father John Schoenmakers assisted by Father Philip Colleton on Trinity Sunday, the 8th of June [1873]. This church was placed under the patronage of St. Patrick and is called by the name of this great Saint.¹³⁰

This chapel is in the small town of Thayre [Thayer, Neosho County] and eighteen miles from this mission. Father John Schoenmakers, our Superior, had the honor of blessing this new house of prayer on the 9th of January [1876] and placing it under the patronage of St. Agnes.¹³¹

The establishment of stations, the erection of chapels and churches, and the organization of parishes were all steps preparatory to the transfer of this ministerial field, section by section, to diocesan care. As Ponziglione expressed it, the Jesuits were everywhere "clearing the ground and opening the way for the secular clergy." Thus we have the record of provision made by Bishop Miège for the two centers of Ottawa and Humboldt.

December 2, 1868. During his stay in Leavenworth with our Rt. Rev. Bishop he [Ponziglione] exposed to him the state of the Catholics around Ottawa City, their good wishes about building a church etc. [The] Rt. Rev. Bishop took [a] good deal of interest in all this information and charged Rev. J. Perrier who was there present, with the care of that congregation, so there will no longer [be] need for any Father of this mission to go to visit those people. Rev. J. Perrier is full of zeal and will certainly attend to this charge with success.¹³²

¹²⁸ *WL*, 2 151

¹²⁹ Ponziglione, *Journal*, 4 6

¹³⁰ *Idem*, 4 17

¹³¹ *WL*, 5 223

¹³² Ponziglione, *Journal*, 1 46

On the 30th of August [1869] as I was returning to this mission I passed Humboldt I heard that at last our Rt Rev Bishop appointed Rev Francis Keller to take care of St Joseph's Church at that place On the 12th inst I had the pleasure to present him to that congregation requesting all to be hereafter as good and accommodating to him as they always have been to me I hope that the young priest will succeed and will take care of all the missions in that vicinity This will afford me more time to attend both the Verdigris and its tributaries on which new Catholic settlements have been formed of late ¹³³

Wichita, the most important center in southern Kansas, received its first priestly services in 1869 at the hands of Father Ponziglione, who continued to visit it until the arrival in 1873 of a resident diocesan priest Successive entries in his journals supply authentic data on the beginnings of organized Catholicism in that city

The farthest point West which I have reached in this my excursion has been Wichita City, a small but lively town at the junction of the Little with the Big Arkansas river in Sedgewick County lying not far from the point where the Fifth Standard Parallel passes over the VI Principal Meridian some 150 miles west of this Mission

Having on my way heard of some Catholic families residing in Wichita I called on one of them But my coming was so unexpected that those good people would not believe that I was the Priest, nay from the signs they gave they seem[ed] to look upon me as a cheat I did not know how to get them out of the perplexity for the more I talked the worse it was I told them that I would go about town for an hour and meanwhile they should make up their mind and let me know at my return whether they wished me to read Mass for them the next morning or not, for if they would not, I would that night go somewhere else

I went therefore through town and stopping at a store I met there a good young man, a Canadian, and a middle-age man, a Brazilian, both Catholics I was speaking with them about my Missions when all at once I heard some one calling me by name I turned around and whom did I see but an old American gentleman, an old friend of our Mission No sooner people saw the familiarity of this man with me than they were convinced that really I was the Priest, and all perplexity about me was over and I was welcomed wherever I went Catholics began to apologize and Protestants invited me to their houses anxious to hear something about the Catholic Church, by way of compliment they told me, "we have here some preachers, but we don't like them or care to hear them but we like to see a Catholic priest and whenever you come we will listen to you with pleasure" I passed the night in that town Next morning [August 10, 1869] I read Mass in the house of a Catholic family [Meagher], some Protestants being present, and left that very day to attend other congregations I hope I will see

¹³³ *Idem*, I 19

these good people again The good reception they gave me makes me hope I will succeed in doing some good among them ¹³⁴

On the evening of the 13th [January, 1870] I reached the town of Wichita at the Junction of the Little with the Big Arkansas river I called at Mr Meagher[']s and was most kindly received This gentleman deserves the sympathy of all that know him, he is a Catholic of the old stamp Nine years ago he was struck with paralysis and has not been able to walk, nay he cannot stand on his feet Yet despite all this I found him very joyful, agreeable and perfectly resigned having requested [him] to tell me whether he was not tired of such a long sickness he smiled and replied "this is the will of God and I am well satisfied I know that God does all for the better", "now," he added, "your coming fills me with joy for I will once more and perhaps for the last time have the happiness of receiving holy communion" ¹³⁵

On the 17th [July, 1870] I said Mass in the town of Wichita As it was Sunday and we had already notified the people about it several days before, we had quite a large attendance at Mass as well as at 3 o'clock [in the] afternoon when I gave a lecture on the principal tenets of our holy Religion Protestants came in promiscuously with Catholics and behaved most honorably They all appeared to be satisfied and requested me most earnestly to remain with them and build a church in their town, nay, they liberally offered me land for the purpose I exposed to them how it was impossible for me to comply with their desire, but as they were determined to have a Church, that very day we formed among the Catholics a Committee of 7 Trustees, whose business will be to procure a location, and, once our Rt Rev Bishop will have approved of it, raise subscriptions and proceed to build the Church ¹³⁶

On the 27th of November [1870] I had Mass in Wichita and as that day was Sunday and the town newspapers had already two days before notified the people that on this day the Catholics would have Mass, we had a large congregation On this occasion we found that the number of Catholics had considerably increased so as to be now about 60 ¹³⁷

On the 2^d of June [1871] I reached Wichita in Sedgwick County On the 4th being Sunday I had Mass in a large school-house where I had quite a good attendance and was very much edified at the piety with which these good people came to approach the Holy Communion After Mass I baptized several children and with them an Arapahoe old woman, to whom I gave the name of Mary Cecilia ¹³⁸

For over 3 years I took a good deal of trouble to form a congregation in Wichita Last summer [1872] I succeeded in getting a most fervent lady [Mrs Meagher] to go around and raise subscriptions for the building

¹³⁴ *Idem*, 2 11

¹³⁵ *Idem*, 2 30

¹³⁶ *Idem*, 2 40

¹³⁷ *Idem*, 3 4

¹³⁸ *Idem*, 3 18

of a church in that town. She had good luck and being full of zeal went to work and had the foundation built on some nice lots which she had obtained as a present. But difficulties having arisen about the building, she applied to our Rt. Rev. Coadjutor Bishop of Leavenworth [Fink] for assistance and he sent there Rev. Father Ku[h]ls of Wyandotte to see what could be done. Father Ku[h]ls, seeing that he could rely upon the subscriptions, went around collecting them and with the amount bought a Presbyterian church (a nicely finished frame building 24 x 40 feet), moved it on the lots obtained by the above mentioned lady, fitted it for Catholic use and on the 24th of November [1872] solemnly dedicated it to God under the invocation of St. Aloysius Gonzaga. He left Wichita on the 26[th] assuring me that during the next week a Priest would be sent to reside in that town. I feel very happy for the success my labors had and wish that the new Pastor may draw abundant fruit from the Congregation I prepared for him.¹³⁹

As a graphic portrayal of the circumstances attending the beginnings of Catholic Church organization in a typical western state during the period of pioneer settlement Father Ponziglione's "relations" have unique value. This value they possess not only by reason of the ecclesiastical data they contain but also because of the glimpses they afford of economic conditions in early Kansas. The state was then attracting immigrant groups of the most diverse nationalities, Ponziglione recording visits made to knots of Irish, German, Belgian, Hungarian, Scotch, French-Canadian, and even Negro settlers. During the fifties and sixties he made his ministerial rounds on horseback, in 1870 he was respectfully suggesting to his provincial in St. Louis that "a little one-horse carriage, a buggy, I mean," would not only lighten the labor of traveling, but what was more important, would enable him to double the range of his ministry and so augment the resulting good. His wish was more than realized, the missionary and his team of horses becoming a familiar sight to the Catholic settlers all through southeastern Kansas. The following passage is typical of the lively narrative and descriptive touches in which the Ponziglione accounts abound.

I left Wichita on the 18th [July, 1870] and directed my way to a place on Bird Creek some 7 miles east of Eldorado. According to information I had received I had to find a Catholic family in that direction. I travelled the whole day. About sun down I came on a very high prairie, I looked all around but I could not see the mark of a settlement. I nearly gave up my search, when I saw at a distance a man sitting on a rock. I went to him and found a poor man broken down with sickness hardly able to speak. I told him that I was the Priest. On hearing this he was, as it were, electrified, he sprang up, spoke to me most respectfully and thanked me for coming to him. He then said, "Father, you must be hungry, come, then,

¹³⁹ *Idem*, 4 9

with me and we will have some supper." Having said this, Michael McAndrew, for this was his name, starts and I follow him and very soon we reach his residence. This is just a residence as simple as nature can make it, for the poor man has neither house nor shanty nor tent nor wagon wherein to shelter himself and his family but simply lives on the plain prairie with plenty of grass on which to lie and some rocks between on which to make [a] fire. A big large chest, a couple of chairs and some kitchen utensils form all the furniture you see around you. Yet the family, which consists of Michael McAndrew, his wife, two daughters and a small infant, enjoy themselves in this wilderness and are as happy as if they were living in an imperial palace. I was received with a hearty welcome, a frugal supper was soon set ready and with God's blessing we all partook of it, the moon giving us as good a light as a lamp would afford. The night went on very calmly and you would have thought [yourself] to be on a great ocean. The stars as it were by turns got up and, having displayed before us all their brilliancy, down they went in the west. As there was not a cloud in the heavens, we should all have been wet with dew, but providentially a soft breeze kept coming up from the south during the whole night and so we were free from this inconvenience.

Day having at last appeared, we stirred up to prepare for celebrating the Holy Sacrifice. I debated for a moment whether I should do so under such circumstances, for although our faculties allow it, yet we ought not to use this privilege without a great reason. But the ardent desire these people had of approaching the holy Eucharist—then condition and very likely [the] impossibility for a good while of [their] being able to come to the nearest Station, induced me to comply with their just wishes. We therefore raised an altar over the large chest they had and, having spread a quilt against the South that the wind might not give trouble, I hoisted up the cross and began to read the Mass.

During the late war once being in Fort Scott I celebrated Mass in an open military camp, having a tent to cover me and the altar. But this time a sky of pure sapphire was my only canopy and the sun just then rising without a cloud to mar its beauty, gives to it still greater grandeur. The wind, which during the whole night was whispering around us, seems now to be hushed in reverence to the mysteries I am celebrating and the prairie larks and doves roaming through the grass make the air resound with their sweet melodies. If you add to it the balmy fragrance of numberless flowers enameling the green grass that like a never-ending carpet covers all the country round, you certainly will have to say that a more noble temple could not be found for the celebration of the Mass.

The good family before whom I stood were sensible of the favor they were receiving! Had you seen these most devout Christians prostrated around me, their faces down on the ground adoring the Most Blessed Sacrament, had you heard their sighs and fervent prayers, you would have wondered and thanked God that such a lively faith is yet to be found in the world in this age of so great corruption.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ *Idem*, 2 41

The routine hardships of Osage missionary life as also the devotion of the missionaries are revealed in frequent records of distant sick-calls. Father Ponziglione declared it to have been the common experience of the Osage missionaries that persons who had been faithful in the discharge of church duties during life were not left, even under the most unlikely circumstances, without the ministrations of the priest in their last moments. Thus, after recording the sudden death of a Louis Roy, who sometime before had resisted his solicitations to be reconciled to the Church, Ponziglione relates the case of an Osage half-breed of excellent life, Peter Chouteau, who, as he lay dying in his home on the Verdigris, near Morgan City, Montgomery County, had attempted, vainly at first, to secure the services of a priest. By an unexpected issue of circumstances Ponziglione was led to direct his steps to the man's house to afford him the consolations of his ministry before death supervened.¹⁴¹ Summons to attend the sick, when they came from far-away localities, as they often did, meant some or other trying experience. Writing to the provincial, Father Thomas O'Neil, April 3, 1872, Ponziglione said "As our people live all scattered in the country and we are the only priests to whom people can apply in case of need, you can form an idea how laborious these calls are. So, for instance, this Spring I had a call at no less than 130 miles southwest just at the crossing of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas railroad on the Canadian. I was lucky on this occasion and found the patient living, in calls of this kind we generally come too late, and who can help it?"¹⁴² So it fell out one occasion in the winter of 1870-1871.

Last winter was a very hard one on account of the heavy fall of snow which covered the country. On the 22nd of January, the coldest part of the season, I had a sick-call some sixty miles distant from the mission in the southeastern corner of Montgomery County. On my arrival I found indeed, as I had expected that the sick man was dead, for my guide and I were too slow, the great depth of the snow which covered the roads rendering it impossible for our horses to travel faster. I said *Mass praesente cadavere* and preached a sermon to a large number of Protestants who were assembled to assist at the funeral.¹⁴³

Most of the preceding accounts of Father Ponziglione's missionary experiences are drawn from a record which he began to keep in 1867 and to which he prefixed the title, "Journal of the Western Missions Established and Attended by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus Residing at the Osage Mission, Neosho County, Kansas, beginning from

¹⁴¹ *WL*, 1 119

¹⁴² Ponziglione, *Journal*, 3 46

¹⁴³ *Letters and Notices*, 8 1

August 11th 1867" Until February, 1869, the record is in diary form, items being entered under their respective dates, after that date, it takes the shape of letters addressed to the father provincial, editors of Jesuit domestic periodicals and other persons. As presenting to the reader a cross section of his strenuous ministry, a Ponziglione letter addressed under date of July 1, 1872 to the provincial, Father Thomas O'Neil, is reproduced entire

On the last day of the past year, I start on a sick call to Independence, in Montgomery County. It was bitter cold. The prairie was covered with snow, and a strong Northeaster was blowing its best. I had never been to the place, and to the inconvenience of the having to travel a rough and unknown road for more than fifty miles, was added that of a darkness almost extreme. However, by divine mercy, and despite the darkness and the long, rough way, I reached my journey's end without any very great trouble, and at 8 o'clock, P. M. found myself at Independence.

The one who had sent for me was a poor young man who, while working in a coal mine, was buried alive by the caving in of the embankment. Fortunately for him, a large rock in falling lodged just above him, thus saving him from being crushed to death and assistance coming in time, he was found alive, though so bruised that from his waist to his feet his body was beyond all feeling of pain. Imagine how happy the poor sufferer was at seeing me with the consolations of religion which I brought! Next morning I said Mass in his room, gave him the Holy Viaticum, and administered Extreme Unction. These last sacraments filled his heart with consolation. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "truly the Mother of God has obtained this grace for me!" This poor fellow had been well educated in his young days, and though for a time he went astray, as foolish boys will do, yet the good principles which he had imbibed in his youth were not without their influence, and, corresponding to God's grace, he sincerely repented. He has since passed away, and we hope to a better life.

Having called upon the Catholics of Elk City and New Boston, I paid my first visit to Cedar Vale, a little town in the southwest corner of Howard Co. Some few Catholic families have settled there, but as most of them were absent when I called, I hastened on to another new Catholic settlement, only ten miles distant and situated in the southeast corner of the adjoining county of Cowley. As this little settlement owes its origin to a lot of Limerick lads, no one will wonder that it rejoices in the name of Garryowen. I met with much welcome and determined to give these good people an opportunity of complying with their Christian duties. On hearing this, word was immediately sent inviting all in the neighborhood to attend Mass on the following day—the Feast of the Epiphany. The eve of this Feast was a stormy one indeed. A high wind had set in upon us, which grew keener every moment until night came on and brought with it a heavy fall of snow. There was no question of remaining out of doors, and yet the question was how to get in doors. We had to huddle together in an under-

ground excavation used as a cellar, which had, it is true, the framework of a house above it, but unfortunately the so-called room had no ceiling, and the windows had not even sashes, much less panes. It was perfectly fearful. The wind and snow poured in upon us most generously, and in fact, we might as well have been out in the open air, for we had no fireplace and the whole of our comfort consisted in a little cooking stove 18 inches by 6, and a few pieces of bark to burn. There was no thought of passing the night with the neighbors, for the house which we were in was considered the best in the whole settlement, and we could not go to the woods, for we were on a high prairie and four miles from timber land. God only knows how much we suffered! But He mercifully spared us for, humanly speaking, all chances were against us, and we seemed to be doomed to freeze to death. Of course the night seemed ever so long, and though the morning came at last, it did not drive the storm away. The few who attended Mass did so at the risk of their life, but the fire of holy love which glowed in their hearts burned all the brighter and more than counteracted the killing cold from without. I was surprised at the fervor with which they approached Holy Communion. Though the altar was erected close by the side of our little stove which was kept aglow during the time of Mass, yet I had to warm the chalice several times in order that I might be able to consume the sacred species. It was only towards night that the storm subsided. We went through this second night, thank God, without much suffering.

As soon as Mass was over I left Winfield for Douglas, which lies on the same bank of the Walnut, some fifteen miles northward. Long before sundown I arrived at the house of a Catholic family about four miles southeast of the last named town, and having baptized the mother's darling in the presence of quite a number of Protestants who were anxious to see the novel spectacle, I retired to rest only to be awakened at midnight, myself to see a spectacle far more novel to me.

About 11 o'clock the sound of rolling wheels was heard, and in a few moments up drove three wagons filled with young men and women shouting and yelling and cursing at the top of their voices. Immediately we arose, and immediately, too, they swarmed into the house. What a sight! Doubtless you wonder who they are. Well, they are a set of ruffians who call themselves a dancing club, and they are gathering together parties for a big dance which is going on at a house some distance off. Without the least ceremony the leader of the motley band gives his orders, and as a refusal to comply with them would almost likely lead to a difficulty all hasten to do his bidding. I, being a stranger, am fortunately excused, and in a quarter of an hour I am alone with a little boy keeping house for them while they dance. Just think of it! Though this bacchanalian club was some distance away, yet in the stillness of the night I could hear their stamping and yelling and furious hooting. In their excitement they were singing "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die!"

While I was at this house I learned with sorrow that, since my last visit, a young man, Michael N., had been cruelly killed by a mob, or self-styled Vigilance Committee. Michael and nine others were taken and without

trial hanged to a tree on mere suspicion. The poor fellow protested, assuring them that he was innocent, but it was of no avail. Finally, seeing that all hope was gone he begged them to let him send me word in order that I might come to assist him in his last hour, but meeting with only laughter and mockery, he threw himself on his knees at the foot of the tree from which he was to be hanged, and in a loud voice recited all his prayers. When he had finished, he stood up and, calling on a lady that was present (the same one in whose house I passed the night), he besought her to let his mother and myself know that he was innocent, that he was killed without having given any offence whatever. Then turning to the executioner he said "I am ready, do with me what you please." In a few moments he was a corpse. Cases of this kind are of frequent occurrence in these remote parts where municipalities are only forming, where nothing, as yet, is well organized, and where the people, on the whole, pay very little regard to law and authority.

From Douglas I started for Augusta, a little town situated at the meeting of the White Waters and the Walnut. The country around is rich and well settled, and the U. S. Land Office which is established there draws to it the commerce of several of the adjoining counties. I passed the night on Turkey Creek, where I celebrated Mass the next morning, and then left for Eldorado, the county seat of Butler. On the following day, the 12th of Jan., I offered the Holy Sacrifice for the first time in this town, after which I started on my way homeward, taking a course due east through the counties of Greenwood, Woodson, Allen, and Neosho. I arrived at the Mission on the 18th.

In the beginning of Feb., I again set out on my western tour, and began by calling to Mass the Catholics of St. Francis Regis in Wilson County. It was a beautiful Sunday morning, in consequence of which we had quite a large attendance, but I could not remain long with them, for I had to visit Fredonia to baptize some little children, and to give the adults an opportunity of complying with their duties, and, besides, the new Catholic settlements of Neodesha and Thayer, as well as those of Chetopa and Dry Creek, stood in need of my services for the same purpose. I visited them all. During the night, which I spent in Fredonia, the little town was almost destroyed by fire. The business part of it was entirely consumed, but fortunately the house in which we were to have Mass was not in the business part, so despite the fire, the Holy Sacrifice was celebrated at the appointed time. On the 12th of Feb. I returned to the Mission.

Our Right Rev. Bishop Coadjutor having again entrusted Marion and Sedgwick Counties to our care, I left the Mission on the 9th of April to visit them, and following the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad I arrived at Newton, one hundred and eighty-five miles west of Atchison. Newton may be called the "City of the Desert." It is situated on an extensive sandy prairie six miles from any woodland whatever, and anything like fuel must come from a distance of more than one hundred miles. Water is not always to be had, for in some seasons the whole country is perfectly dry, and the only way to obviate the inconvenience is by digging

cisterns of immense capacity. However, despite all this, the town is daily increasing and business is very brisk, for a line of railway from this place to Wichita, at the confluence of the Little and Great Arkansas brings a great deal of trade. Many Catholics are settling in this neighborhood, and I hope, ere long, to establish here a good missionary Station.

After visiting a German Settlement in Montgomery Co., where I celebrated Mass and baptized some children, I went down to Parker, in the same County. The citizens of this place have built a nice frame church, 30 by 50, with money collected almost exclusively from Protestants, almost all of whom are very favorable to Catholics. This good disposition on their part is quite common for experience has taught them that wherever Catholics settle and build a church, no matter how poor a shanty it may be, business will flourish. On the 5th of May I dedicated this little church to the most Holy Name of Jesus, and on the following day returned home in order to give Father Colleton a chance to visit his missions on the railroad.¹⁴⁴

Though Father Ponziglione stands out as the most conspicuous of the Osage field-missionaries both in period of service and long-distance range of activities, the ministry of Father Philip Colleton, a native of Donaghmoyne, County Monaghan, Ireland, was an almost equally striking one. In December, 1876, Ponziglione chronicled "the death of Father Philip Colleton, our co-laborer in this part of the Lord's vineyard for over 8 years. He was a zealous, energetic and very popular missionary and was gifted with a great power, that namely of bringing the most obstinate sinners to the Sacrament of Penance as well as of [the] holy Eucharist. He had a great devotion to the Mother of God and did his best to propagate it amongst the people. He was brought to his end almost suddenly by a violent cough which afflicted him for several months. He died on the first day of December (1876). He was 55 years old, of these he passed 24 in our society."¹⁴⁵ With a view to interesting his fellow-Jesuits in the Osage mission-field Father Colleton set before them a picture of his ministry in occasional letters, a few of which are extant. Some characteristic passages are cited

Thanks to the Sacred Hearts of our dearest Lord and our sweet Mother Mary, last year was a fruitful one in blessings for the missions confided to my care. My excursions range over five counties of Missouri and five of Kansas, besides the lands of the Cherokees, mostly in the neighborhood of Fort Gibson. These people are friendly, hospitable, and courteous. Amongst them I found many of my countrymen, who had forsaken even the most cherished traditions of the Isle of Saints to be adopted among the children of these western wilds. Intermarriage with the natives is a condition without which they cannot acquire a permanent settlement in these territories.

¹⁴⁴ *WL*, 2 149

¹⁴⁵ Ponziglione, *Journal*, 5 42

Unfortunately, most of these settlers have lost the faith of their fathers. From a temporal point of view they are more prosperous. Most of the leading men among the Cherokees are sons of Irish fathers, among others, then present chief, whose name, Downing, sounds more familiar to our ears than most Indian names. They are sure to give any Irishman a most hearty welcome. When they learned I was a Priest, many asked me to baptize their children. I hope and trust in God and His sweet Mother that I shall live to see the Society establish a regular mission among these poor people.

Meanwhile the White settlers in Missouri and Kansas engage most of my time and labour. Hundreds of these good people, mostly Irish, come from all parts of the United States and from Canada to settle in these regions. Some have means, but the greater number have only "God's blessing and their four bones," as they quaintly express it. But they have health, courage, energy, and faith in the providence of Him Who feeds the birds of the air, and confidence in the help of our dear Mother. With these resources, and they are valuable ones, these faithful people convert the wild prairies, the Indian's hunting-ground and the haunt of the buffalo, into beautiful fields teeming with plenty. Most of them settle in colonies, build churches and schools, soon become independent landholders, practice the faith of their fathers, and bring up their own children in that cherished faith. They are always glad to see the Priest. The news of his arrival in a colony reaches the most distant dwellings in a very short time. Men, women, and children are then seen coming on horseback and in waggons from all directions. Confessions are at once heard, all confess once a month when they have a chance. The hardest part of a Missionary's labours is the proper training of the children, it is doubly difficult where the Catholics are few, and live in the midst of Protestants. These sectarians do all they can to entice our children to their Sunday schools, if the parent object, they sometimes find themselves ostracized by men who, however, pretend to have no holier aspiration than to promote religious liberty. The best remedy for this and other evils is to promote the system of Catholic settlements. In these, Irish settlers seem to prosper more than in any other situation in America. Even when they arrive poor, they soon become comfortable and independent, their children are educated and instructed in their holy religion . . .

I have witnessed, dear Father, hundreds of similar changes. These people become on such farms sober, good, and industrious men, they practice their holy religion, and give a decent and pious training to their children. They are always the best friends the Priest can have. Their heart and their purse are ever open the one to receive him kindly, and the other to supply his wants.

A third class of people, besides Indians and settlers, claim the attention and care of the Missionary in the southwest—viz, soldiers and railway hands. Patience, perseverance, tact, and an energetic, efficacious will are qualities necessary for a priest to effect any good among these people. He must not be astonished at anything he hears and sees, except that these

poor neglected people are not worse than they are. I say neglected, for such visits as we occasionally paid them cannot sufficiently strengthen them against the dreadful temptations to which they are exposed. Last August I visited fifteen or twenty railroad camps. I preached to the men and women, heard numerous confessions, and administered the pledge to many. One afternoon I came to a camp of 180 labourers.

To conclude, I may inform you that since November, 1869, I have built nine small churches, been instrumental in settling near those churches 840 Catholic families, heard 10,000 general confessions, exclusive of those heard at the central mission, distributed 10,000 tracts, sold \$35,000 [?] worth of pamphlets called *Plain Talk* by Monsignor Ségur, *Father Roland*, and similar little works. To defray the expenses thus incurred, I have within the same fifteen months, collected \$11,869. I hope that our good Lord will enable me to build as many more churches during the present year. Thanks be to God and His sweet Mother for having given me health and courage to persevere.

I have just returned from a long trip of twenty-five days, during which I have ridden some 750 miles. I was well received wherever I went, by Protestants as well as Catholics. Wherever I could find five or six families together I made them build a little church on the top of a neighboring hill, and raise a tall cross upon it, as an attraction for Catholic settlements. The following is my order of march. On arriving at a house my first care, after securing [i.e., finishing] my Office, is to catechise the children. At night I say the Rosary with the family, and in the morning I hear confessions, say Mass, preach, take breakfast, and start. I ride, on an average, thirty miles every day. In this trip I met with fifteen Catholic families, some of whom had not seen a priest for thirty years. How gladly they welcomed me! The Indians, too, are a fine people. In my next trip I intend to baptize two Cherokee families.

The Protestants are very ignorant, and so are their preachers, in regard to every thing Catholic, but, at the same time, they are kind, and wish to be informed. I never enter into controversy with them, I never talk about politics or hurt their feelings in any way, but if they ask me questions about our holy faith I satisfy them. One lady was so indignant at being asked, after my departure, how much she had given the priest for the *remission of her sins* that it almost made a Catholic of her. She has, at any rate, bought a splendid picture of Pope Pius IX., and hung it up in her parlour.

In Gronty and Baxter [Springs] the people gave me the Presbyterian Church to preach in, and their behavior was so becoming that on both occasions I could easily imagine myself in a Catholic Church. The citizens of Baxter offered me an acre of land in the city, and subscribed 2,000 dollars to build a Church.

I baptized three Protestant families during this trip, and there are some more under instruction. A Protestant minister paid me a visit at Gronty, and

received two hours instruction. He was a perfect gentleman, and I hope he will persevere, for he has a large family.¹⁴⁶

A survey of the activities of the Catholic Osage missionaries among the whites will conclude this chapter. To the southwest their ministry was carried as far as Fort Sill, thirty miles from the Texan border, at which post "in Capt Hogan's Quarters" Father Ponziglione held services for the garrison in 1871, to the west it was carried in 1873 by Father Colleton as far as Fort Larned and Dodge City in Kansas and Pueblo in Colorado. In 1870 the Catholic families in Kansas thus cared for from the Osage Mission numbered nine hundred and sixty-two or about five thousand souls. In 1872 Ponziglione again reckoned the Catholic population of southern Kansas at five thousand, the absolute figure could not be stated "for they were coming in every day." The Kansas counties visited were at least twenty-nine: Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Butler, Chase, Cherokee, Coffee, Cowley, Crawford, Elk, Franklin, Ford, Greenwood, Harper, Harvey, Linn, Labette, Lyon, Marion, Miami, Montgomery, Morrison, Neosho, Pawnee, Reno, Sedgwick, Sumner, Wilson, and Woodson. In 1870 besides these Kansas counties, five in Missouri, viz., Barton, Jasper, Lawrence, McDonald, and Newton, were being visited, as also two in Arkansas, viz., Benton and Washington. Moreover, periodical visits to the Osage after their removal in the Indian Territory continued down to the early eighties.

A chronological register of "Residences, Churches and Missionary Stations Established by the Fathers of the Osage Mission, Kansas Between 1847 and 1890," compiled by Ponziglione for the General, Father Anderledy, under date of January 1, 1889, enumerates ninety-nine distinct places, most of them in Kansas.¹⁴⁷ Another Ponziglione list designates fifteen churches built by the Osage missionaries in southern Kansas between 1847 and 1887.¹⁴⁸ These were St. Francis de Hieronymo, Osage Mission, Neosho County,¹⁴⁹ St. Mary Queen of Angels, Fort Scott, Bourbon County,¹⁵⁰ St. Joseph, Humboldt, Allen

¹⁴⁶ *Letters and Notices* (Roehampton, England), 7: 317-319, 321, 6: 95, 96.

¹⁴⁷ At the end of Ponziglione's *Annales Missionis* (A) is an earlier list of stations (1827-1887), one hundred and eighty in number, of which nine, missing in the later list, belong to a period prior to the opening of the Osage Mission. The list in the *Annales Missionis* records for numerous stations the names of the Catholic settlers in whose houses services were first held.

¹⁴⁸ (A)

¹⁴⁹ First church built 1847. Foundations of present church begun in spring of 1872. Corner-stone laid by Bishop Fink, June 23, 1872. Church dedicated by Bishop Fink May 11, 1884.

¹⁵⁰ Dedicated by Ponziglione August, 1864.

County,¹⁵¹ St Bridget, Scammonville, (now Scammon) Cherokee County,¹⁵² St Francis Borgia, Cottonwood Falls, Chase County,¹⁵³ St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Hickory Creek, Crawford County,¹⁵⁴ St. Ann, Walnut Station (now Walnut), Crawford County,¹⁵⁵ Sacred Name of Jesus, Coffeyville, Montgomery County,¹⁵⁶ St. Stanislaus Kostka, Independence, Montgomery County,¹⁵⁷ St. Patrick, Parsons, Labette County,¹⁵⁸ Immaculate Conception, Ladore, Neosho County,¹⁵⁹ St. Ignatius Loyola, Neodesha, Wilson County,¹⁶⁰ St. Agnes, Thayer, Neosho County,¹⁶¹ St. Francis Regis, New Albany (Coyville), Wilson County,¹⁶² and St. Francis Xavier, Cherryvale, Montgomery County¹⁶³ In addition to these fifteen churches, seven had been

¹⁵¹ Dedicated by Ponziglione August 11, 1867

¹⁵² Built apparently by Father Colleton, 1868(?)

¹⁵³ Frame church, 20 x 40 "Foundation blessed" by Ponziglione May, 1870, and church dedicated by him March 26, 1871.

¹⁵⁴ Built in 1870

¹⁵⁵ Built before 1871

¹⁵⁶ Frame church, 30 x 50, dedicated May 5, 1872, by Ponziglione at Parker (Parkerstown), Montgomery County, under the title "Holy Name of Jesus" Apparently identical with the Coffeyville church, though Parker and Coffeyville, both in Montgomery County, are listed by Ponziglione as distinct stations

¹⁵⁷ Built later than 1870 Title of the present Independence church is St Andrews "As Independence was considered my headquarters, I hastened to it and there I found that Rev Robert Loehrer had already arrived to take possession of that church and establish his residence in that city On the first of August (1878) I transferred to him charge of all the missions I had in the counties of Montgomery, Elk, and Chautauqua, reserving for myself the missions of Wilson County as well as of the Indian Territory" Ponziglione, *Journal*, 6 28

¹⁵⁸ Frame church dedicated by Schoenmakers, assisted by Colleton, Trinity Sunday, June 8, 1873

¹⁵⁹ Church at Ladore, originally Fort Roach, built before 1871 by Father Colleton Father Ponziglione in his *Osages and Father Schoenmakers*, 4 465, gives 1872 for date of erection "About 1872 the town [Ladore] was practically abandoned and it is not on the post-office list today [1912] At one time Ladore had a population of 500" "Some Lost Towns of Kansas," *Kans Hist Coll*, 12 450 Ponziglione, January 16, 1871, describes the Ladore church as "a tolerably large frame building—not yet plastered or sealed [ceiled]" Ponziglione, *Journal*, 3 8

¹⁶⁰ "This summer [1876] we erected another small church in the beautiful little town of Neodesha," at the confluence of Fall River and the Verdigris, Wilson County, "some thirty-five miles southwest of this Mission I had the first Mass in this Church on the 6[th] of August, which day being Sunday in the Octave of St Ignatius, I gave to it the name of our Holy Founder" Ponziglione, *Journal*, 5 41

¹⁶¹ Dedicated by Schoenmakers, January 9, 1876

¹⁶² Midway between Coyville and New Albany Dedicated by Ponziglione, December 4, 1871.

¹⁶³ Dedicated by Ponziglione first Sunday of September, 1877.

“started through the influence of the Jesuit Fathers” and were “put up by their successors, Secular Priests” These were St Boniface, Scipio, Anderson County, ¹⁶⁴ St John the Evangelist, Prairie City, Douglas County, ¹⁶⁵ St Joseph, Baxter Springs, Cherokee County, ¹⁶⁶ Immaculate Conception, Defiance (now Yates Center), Woodson County, ¹⁶⁷ St Francis Xavier, Burlington, Coffee County, ¹⁶⁸ St Lawrence, Chanute, Neosho County, ¹⁶⁹ St Mary Star of the West, Boston, Elk (Chautauqua) County ¹⁷⁰

At the request of Father James F X Hoeffler, S J, rector of St Ignatius College, Chicago, Father Ponziglione drew up under date of February 20, 1898, a brief autobiographical sketch

To comply with your request I will say that I was born on the 11th of February, 1818, in the city of Cherasco, 20 miles south of Torino [Turin],

¹⁶⁴ *Supra*, note 116

¹⁶⁵ Station at Prairie City, Douglas County, established by Ponziglione in 1858 Prairie City incorporated in 1857 The name occurs in a list of Kansas “extinct geographical locations” in the *Kans Hist Coll*, 12 486

¹⁶⁶ In Ponziglione’s *Status Animarum* [church census] for 1871 the Baxter Springs church is named The Assumption

¹⁶⁷ Station at Defiance opened by Ponziglione in 1860

¹⁶⁸ Station established at Burlington by Ponziglione in 1858

¹⁶⁹ Station at Chanute established by Father James C Van Goch, S J, in 1859

¹⁷⁰ Boston or New Boston was started in May, 1870, by a group of Catholic young men from the vicinity of the Osage Mission Ponziglione celebrated the first Mass May 29, 1870 *Journal*, 6 26 Boston was in Howard County, which was divided to form Elk and Chautauqua Counties, the dividing line between the two running through the town “[Sunday, August, 1878] As usual, we had Mass in a very large school house and this being over we marched to the spot donated for the church Having recited a short prayer, I exposed to the assembled people the object of the ceremony I was going to perform and having blessed the stone I located it in the corner prepared for it and, placing the whole work under the protection of the Mother of God, gave to the building begun the name of ‘St Mary Star of the West’” Ponziglione, *Journal*, 6 27 In the *Status Animarum*, 1871, we listed two church titles, the Annunciation, Cherry Creek, Crawford County, and St Cecilia, Oswego, Labette County, which are omitted in the later and more comprehensive list of January 1, 1889 Mention also occurs in the *Journal* (3 7) of a settlement in Montgomery County known as St Ignatius “Towards the evening of the 7[th] of December [1870] I reached St Ignatius settlement near Morgan City in Montgomery County and having met with some young men returning from their work I requested them to go all around and inform the people that I had come and would have Mass the next morning They did so and the next morning all our good people came to solemnize the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the B V Mary Our little church was literally full and some had to remain outside during the time of the Mass The congregation of St Ignatius church is remarkable for their devotion to the Holy Mother of God I hope that the Immaculate Virgin was pleased with us on that day and listen[ed] with joy to the fervent prayers of those pious people” Ponziglione, *Journal*, 3 7

Italy My Father was Count Felice Ferrero Ponziglione di Borgo d'Ales, and my mother was Lucia Ferrero Ponziglione di Borgo d'Ales, nata dei [born of] Marchese [Marquis] Ferrari di Castel Nuovo

When I was 10 years old I entered on a regular course of education in the best colleges our Society had in Italy, first in the city of Novara, next in that of Torino In the University of this city I was graduated

On the 27th of February, 1839, I withdrew to the Novitiate of our Society in the city of Chiavari not far from Torino Having taken my first religious vows, I was employed in stud[y]ing and teaching and I was acting as vice-Minister in our College of Genova [Genoa] at the breaking [out] of the Revolution of 1848

On the night of the 28th of February, 1848, the fanatical leaders of the Revolution in that city succeeded, without much trouble, in making the arrest of 18 old Jesuit Fathers whom they marched as captives to the Palace of the Governor and I had the honor of being added to them that same night At 2 o'clock after midnight a strong military escort conducted us to the sea and shipped us to the Fregata [frigate] S Michele, the largest war-vessel of the King of Sardinia The room there assigned to us was a narrow, dingy, shapeless kind of a cellar in the hull of that vessel, on which, without knowing why, we were kept prisoners 3 days, when we were transported to a steamer which boarded us early on the next morning in the gulf of Spez[z]ia Some people of that vicinity, having been requested by the leaders of the Revolution to give us a reception, they understood the meaning of the orders received and greeted us with rocks and dirt I was wounded in my head by one of these rocks They acted with us as savages!

Fortunately we were not far from the state line of the Duchy of Modena We hasten[ed] to cross over it and there we met people who treated us kindly About 2 p.m. we reached Massa Carrara and rested for a while with the Fathers of the college we had in that city But not to cause any disturbance, which the partisans of the Revolution might have given to them on our account, we declined to stop there for the night My companions scattered over the mountains, I took the way to Rome That day I had great difficulty in crossing from the State of Modena into that of Tuscany, but with the help of God succeeded in reaching the city of Pietro-santo, where I passed a tranquil night with a good friend of mine This friend on the next day took me to Livorno [Leghorn] and provided me with all the money I might need on my way to Rome On the next day, which was Quinquagesima Sunday, a steamer from Livorno was carrying me to Civita Vecchia and on the evening of the 7th of March I reached Rome

Those were terrible days for Rome Following the advice of Very Rev. Father General during that excitement I went to S. Andrew's house [San Andrea] to prepare with several other scholastics to receive ordination In fact, on the 25th of March, 1848, I with my companions had the happiness of being consecrated Priests

Sometime in the fall of 1847 being in Genova [Genoa] I met with Rev. Father Anthony Elet, Superior of the Missouri Province, then on his

way to Rome The Father, having asked me whether I would have any objection to come with him to S. Louis, Missouri, my reply was, I had none In less than a month Father A. Elet notified me that Very Rev. Father General had destined me for the Missouri Mission and that was the reason why from Massa Carrara I went to Rome where I expected I would make arrangements for coming to America

After receiving the blessing of Pius IX, Father Ponziglione left Rome for Turin, thence proceeding to Paris and Havre de Grace, from which latter place he took passage, June 19, 1848, in a sailing vessel for New York. There he landed, August 5, after forty-eight days at sea, a rough passage marked by storms and small-pox on board He made a stay of a month at the Jesuit college in Cincinnati and finally reached St. Louis where he was "most kindly received" by the vice-provincial, Father Elet, just one year after the two had met in Genoa

For a little over two years I was detained partly in Missouri and partly in Kentucky In March, 1851, I left with Rt. Rev. Bishop Miege for the Indian Territory Far West From that time till December 12, 1891, I have been dealing with the wildest of Indians you can find from Fremont Peak [Peak] in Wyoming to Mount Scott near Fort Sill in the Indian Territory and I feel proud to say that I was well treated by all of them The Osages however, are the ones with whom I passed the larger part of my missionary life The Mission we had with them was flourishing for several years The children proved themselves to be very intelligent The grown people, though slow in adopting Christianity, never have been any way hostile to it ¹⁷¹

Father Ponziglione left the Osage Mission June 13, 1886, to assume charge of St. Stephen's Mission among the Arapaho, Fremont County, Wyoming He returned to the Osage Mission April 19, 1887, leaving it again August 4, 1889, for Marquette College, Milwaukee Here he was stationed until March, 1890, when he was assigned a second time to St. Stephen's Mission. From here he was transferred in a few months to St. Ignatius College, Chicago, where he arrived December 12, 1891. He died at this institution March 28, 1900 "On March 28th, while the parting prayers were said for him, he kissed the crucifix and tried to say the acts of faith, hope and charity, sweetly expiring in the effort" One who had acquaintance with him, W. W. Graves of St. Paul, Kansas, has written

I knew Father Ponziglione personally and remember him as a man below average height but rather stoutly built He was an old man when I knew him (at the Osage Mission) his hair being almost snow-white, but he had

¹⁷¹ (A).

an elastic step and a cheery smile that made one forget his age. He accosted the rich and the poor, the Christian and the sinner, the friend and the stranger with the same pleasant greeting that made for him a friend of everyone. Although he wore purple and fine linen in his boyhood days, his attire in after years was always plain and in keeping with his calling.

Another pen-picture of the man embodies details supplied by persons that knew him.

In personal appearance Father Ponziglione was a wry little man, small in stature. His bright eyes were full of expression and his features resembled somewhat the picture of Pope Leo XIII. He was modest, quiet and industrious. There was a sweetness about his manner that made him extremely approachable. He looked upon the bright side of life and was fearless at all times because of his implicit trust in Divine Providence.¹⁷²

¹⁷² Sister Mary Isabel McCarthy, S.S.J., *The Influence of the Osage Mission upon Catholic Development in Southern Kansas, 1847-1883*, p. 17 (Ms. thesis, Notre Dame University, 1930). Cf. also Sister Mary Paul Fitzgerald, "A Jesuit Circuit Rider" in *Mid-America*, 18: 182-198 (1936). Two careful studies based on Father Ponziglione's unpublished writings. The general history of the Catholic Osage Mission has also been covered by Sister Mary Paul Fitzgerald in a ms. doctoral thesis (St. Louis University, 1937).