

An Historic Manuscript

Bishop McQuaid's own advance information on St. Bernard's Seminary written in long hand by the First Bishop of Rochester and printed in the March 28, 1891 issue of the Catholic Journal, forerunner of the CATHOLIC COURIER is reproduced below. Accompanying the news article which appeared on the front page was a front view architect's drawing of the Seminary which the

"The attic will have 2 gymnasiums for physical exercise and training, each 120 feet long and lighted by 21 windows. The gymnasiums and bowling alleys will afford ample opportunity for recreation and amusement in stormy weather. Enclosed verandas for the first and second stories, 98 feet long and 10 feet wide, extend from wing to wing, in the rear of the Centre building.

From First Bishop's Pen

The Seminary is to be built on the Boulevard, the grand drive of Rochesterians, halfway between the city and Lake Ontario, and on the high western bank of the Genesee River. North and west of the Seminary grounds, about 40 acres in extent, lie the 260 acres of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, the burial last home of Rochester Catholics. The building presents a front of 202 feet, and including the 2 bays, of 220 ft. The north and south wings are each a depth of 107 feet, and counting in the bays, of 127 feet. The wings and entrance tower extend 15 feet in advance of the Central building. There are 3 stories, a basement and attic. The basement which is 8 feet from floor to ceiling will be used chiefly for heating and ventilating. The boiler rooms will be made fireproof. There will be no danger of explosion as the heating will be by hot water and not by steam. In each wing of the basement there will be double bowling alleys.

Here is a photo of a portion of the description of St. Bernard's Seminary as written by the Most Rev. Bernard J. McQuaid, first bishop of Rochester under whose auspices the seminary was built. This was written for the Catholic Journal, forerunner of the CATHOLIC COURIER, prior to the opening of the building.

Catholic Journal reproduced by the then new process known as "Chalk Etching." Photogravures, present day reproductions, had not appeared and wood or steel engravings were too expensive for the new Catholic paper.

With his characteristic kindness to the young editors of that day, the Bishop asked that the article be printed minus his name so that we might have all the credit for a piece of newsgathering and reportorial work.

Willard A. Marakie
Editor (at that time) of the Catholic Journal.

"We place before our readers a large view of St. Bernard's Seminary of the Diocese of Rochester. It speaks for itself. Yet a detailed description of the buildings will help those not familiar with Seminary life to understand its adaptation to its work.

"The Seminary is to be built on the Boulevard, the grand drive of Rochesterians, half-way between the city and Lake Ontario, and on the high western bank of the Genesee River. North and west of the Seminary grounds, about 40 acres in extent, lie the 260 acres of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, the last home of Rochester's Catholic dead.

"The building presents a front of 202 feet, and including the 2 bays, of 220 feet. The north and south wings have each a depth of 107 feet, and counting in the bays, of 127 feet. The wings and entrance tower extend 15 feet in advance of the Central building. There are 3 stories, a basement and attic. The basement which is 8 feet from floor to ceiling will be used chiefly for heating and ventilating. The boiler rooms will be made fireproof. There will be no danger of explosion as the heating will be by hot water and not by steam. In each wing of the basement there will be double bowling alleys.

"The first floor of the main part will have 4 reception rooms; 3 rooms for the President, 2 for the treasurer, a fireproof brick safe and a porter's room. In the south wing on the same floor, there will be a class room, 10 students rooms, water closets, a bath-room, servants' room and shoe room. In the north wing there will be a Professor's parlor, 6 rooms for guests, the Bishop's study room, and the same arrangement for water closets, bath rooms, shoe room and servants' room as on the south side. The staircases start from the wings at their junction with the main building. They are broad and light some.

"On the second floor there will be 8 double rooms for Professors; 2 class rooms; the library, 18 rooms for students and the Bishop's bedroom. In each wing, the conveniences of the first will be found on the second and third stories. On the third floor there will be 32 students' rooms; class-room for Natural Philosophy; two recreation or reading rooms; 2 linen rooms and an infirmary.

"Every room in the buildings will be well ventilated through flues descending to the basement and emptying into ducts, or channels which will convey the foul air to two ventilating shafts, each seven feet square, in the centre of which will be a smoke stack of boiler iron.

"The exterior walls of the building will be of mottled brown and grey stone, set off with Medina stone and pressed brick trimmings. It will be roofed with small sized red tile, diamond pattern. The valleys, gutters, etc., will be of copper, as will be the cross and upper part of the tower.

"The inside walls will be of brick, and the outer walls will be lined with hollow brick, this dispensing with the use of furring and lathing and lessening the danger from fire. For a like reason the floors will be daubed with mortar. The corridors will be fifteen feet wide, well lighted by three large windows in each bay. These corridors or hall ways, make up one third of the whole building, and while helping the ventilation will provide indoor promenades during unpleasant weather. They will be heated by hot-water boilers, unconnected with those which will heat the rooms.

"Another building in the rear to be put up next year, will have the Chapel, the dining rooms, kitchen, laundry, bakery, store rooms, etc. It will stand back from the centre of the main building about 40 feet, and will be reached by an enclosed passage way.

"A pond of living spring water, about half acre in extent, and not over four hundred feet from the Seminary will furnish an abundant supply of fine, uncontaminated water. The facilities for effective sewerage are great as the Genesee River flows in the rear of the premises, about four hundred feet distant, and a hundred feet beneath the high bank which here is almost perpendicular.

"In view of the fact that students for the priesthood will have to pass in the Seminary six years of hard study, at a most critical period of life, great care has been used to provide for their convenience, comfort and health during these trying years.

"The foundations are already excavated, enough stone for the construction of the building is on the ground, and the piles of lumber for the floor beams and roof, give the place the look of a wholesale lumber yard. The masons will begin laying the stone during Easter week. The corner-stone will be solemnly blessed on St. Bernard's day, Aug. 20, by which time, however, the walls will be more than half way up, a place being left for it. The building will be enclosed by Dec. 1, and finished the following Summer. It is hoped that all the buildings will be completed and ready for blessing by St. Bernard's day, 1893, in time for the opening of classes on the 8th of Sept., feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

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