

## Mercy Nuns In Elmira

**O**PENING OF NOTRE DAME High School in Elmira by the Sisters of Mercy makes more than a half-century of work for the Sisters in the Southern Tier City.

Five Sisters of Mercy from the Motherhouse in Batavia came to Elmira in 1894 to open a parochial school at St. Patrick's parish at the invitation of the pastor, the late Father James J. Bloorner.

Father Bloorner did not expect the turn out of youngsters that greeted the Sisters on September 8, 1894, and had only four class rooms in readiness. For six weeks, fifty-six 4th, 5th, and 6th "graders" sat on borrowed benches. There were no blackboards nor even a teacher's desk.

In those far-off days nine years of grammar school were required for entrance to high school and some of the boys in the upper classes were taller than their teachers.

Father Bloorner had looked forward to state aid in financing the cost of the school building and for payment of the teachers because in Corning the parochial school had been supported by public funds. In 1893, when the St. Patrick's School was about half finished, a clause was inserted in the New York State Constitution that no sectarian school could receive public money.

The problem Father Bloorner faced was to secure over \$60,000 to carry on, and he found a way. Twenty-five cents a month from every wage-earning parishioner would take care of the Sisters' annual salary of \$200, and bazaars held yearly would reduce the debt on the building, he said.

The Pastor of St. Patrick's vacated his rectory to provide a convent for the Sisters.

**T**HE NEED FOR a Catholic High School where graduates from all parochial schools in Elmira might enroll was becoming more evident every day. In September 1930, three Sisters of St. Joseph with the Rev. Father Francis Riley as principal (now pastor of St. Mary's, Hornesburgh), opened what was later known as the Elmira Catholic High School in a section of St. Peter and Paul's School.

The late Rt. Rev. Msgr. John Lee sponsored the undertaking.

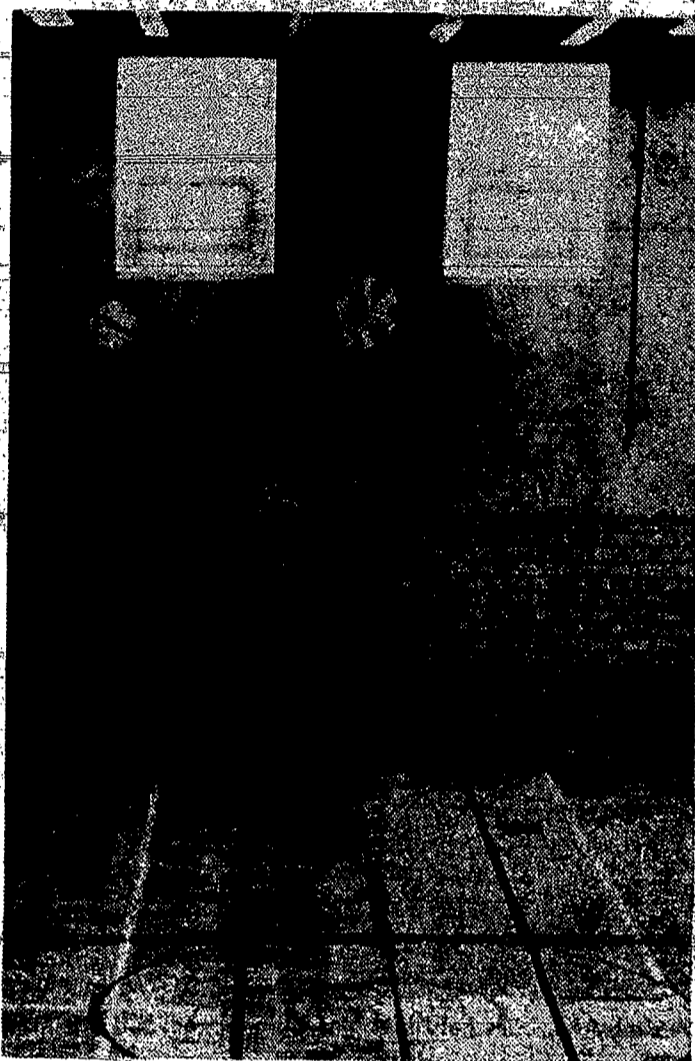
However, in 1933, the attendance having outgrown the space provided, the classes were moved to St. Patrick's, where Monsignor William Brien gave over the entire third floor of the school to provide classrooms, library, and laboratories.

More space called for more teachers, and two Sisters of Mercy were added to the staff.

Father Riley was given a parish shortly after the school's change in locale, and the Rev. William Burns now Pastor of St. Anthony's Parish took over as principal. He, with four Sisters of St. Joseph and two Sisters of Mercy, successfully carried on until two years ago, when he was succeeded by Sister Mary Raphael, principal of the new Notre Dame High School.

Under the fine cooperation of the mixed faculty of Sisters of St. Joseph and Sisters of Mercy, Elmira Catholic High was ably conducted until its final semester last year.

Among the Sisters of St. Joseph staffing the school at its close were Sister Teresa Clara, who was on the faculty for 24 years, Sister Mary Lourdes, Sister Mary Clemencia and Sister Mary Edwards. Sisters of Mercy were Sister Mary Joachim, Sister Mary Edmond and Sister Mary Raphael, principal.



Electric Scoreboard in Gymnasium.



Notre Dame High Girls



The weak and the lowly  
as well as the high and  
the mighty offer con-  
gratulations with equal  
sincerity and humility.

**MOORE BUSINESS EQUIPMENT CO.**

WILLIAM H. MOORE  
DIAL 21936

600 GRAY STREET

ELMIRA, N. Y.

**Complete Stage Draperies**

and

**Rigging Counterweight Sets**

**FURNISHED AND INSTALLED**

BY

**A. J. HOFFEND & SONS CO.**

1394 MT. HOPE AVENUE

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

**TERWILLIGER**

**ELECTRIC**

Incorporated

**ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR**

**APPLIANCES**

**ELECTRIC SUPPLIES**

DIAL 26175

107 E. CHURCH ST., ELMIRA