

Faith Spans Chasm Of Divided Nation

(Continued from page 1)

Bull Run. And he ended up with Lee at the defense of Petersburg, Virginia.

Then there was Gen. William J. Hardee, who led the attack at Shiloh. There was Gen. Lawrence O'Brien Branch, who lost his leg at Antietam. There was Commander Frederic Chatard, who blockaded the Potomac below Washington. Among the several other high Confederate officers, the most distinguished was certainly Captain Raphael Semmes. This outstanding Confederate sailor, during the course of the War, captured at least eighty-seven Union merchant vessels.

His astoundingly successful marine campaign ended only when his swift armed steam-

ship, the Alabama, was defeated off the French coast by the USS Kearsarge, in one of the most noted sea battles of the War.

But a more dramatic way of indicating Catholic participation in each of the opposing camps would be to select a hero representing each side and recount the patriotic deed for which he is most famous.

The Northern hero who at once occurs to the mind of a Rochesterian is Colonel Patrick Henry O'Rorke, Rochester's "Hero of Little Roundtop." The story of this young officer is indeed a moving one: his West Point career; his great promise; his ability as a trainer of soldiers once the War broke out; his participation in the earlier battles. Then came Gettysburg — in which, by the way, a German Catholic from Rochester, Louis Ernst, was O'Rorke's second-in-command.

The way O'Rorke fortified Little Roundtop, a key point in the field at Gettysburg, and the heroic death he met upon gaining control of that point of vantage are of the stuff of epics. But a later article in the Courier-Journal will tell his story more fully, so we shall not risk spoiling it now by too briefly a rehearsal.

Whom shall we choose from the South to contrast with O'Rorke? Lieutenant Richard W. Dowling, C.S.A. "Dick" Dowling, the hero of Sabine Pass, was not required to pay for his victory with his life. But the victory itself was fantastically great.

The Battle of Sabine Pass occurred in the Texas campaign. By 1863, the South was receiving a large amount of supplies from Texas. These supplies — many of them from Mexico — were passed across the Sabine River, which formed the boundary between Texas and Louisiana. In order to destroy this channel of communications, the Union General Nathaniel Banks ordered General William Franklin to take up the river, destroy the Confederate fortifications which guarded Sabine Pass, and seize the crucial railroad terminal of Beaumont, Texas.

Franklin and his gunboats reached the neighborhood of the Pass on August 6, 1863. The original plan had been to disembark the soldiers somewhat downstream, so that they might overtake the fort by a land attack. At the last moment Franklin decided instead to continue by water and destroy the outpost by naval bombardment.

The change of plans proved to be fatally unfortunate. Normally the fort had a garrison of two hundred. At this moment it was reduced to a mere forty men, commanded by Lieutenant Dick. The besiegers were, of course, unaware of this fact when they pulled into sight and began their attack early in the forenoon.

Even though they were a mere handful, the defenders were on their toes, and took good advantage of their position to use their guns very effectively against the Union craft. As a matter of fact, the battle was over in an hour, and the winners were not the besiegers but the besieged. General Franklin quickly withdrew downstream, leaving behind two disabled gunboats and at least two hundred prisoners. Fifty of his men had been killed or wounded.

The Confederate government voted special thanks to Lieutenant Dick and his forty men. And justly. It is not often that so small a band of soldiers has succeeded, without losing a single one of its own men, in defeating a heavily armed force one hundred times its size!

But war is not all combat, and its heroisms are not all the heroisms of conflict. The souls and the bodies of the servicemen need care; and Catholic chaplains and nursing nuns played an important part in this auxiliary phase of the War between the States.

When the Catholic volunteer regiments set off for battle, they usually took pains to secure the permanent services of a Catholic chaplain. Catholics in regiments where they were in a minority were not so well provided for, since the military chaplain system was not so well organized then as it is now.

Perhaps the best known among the Northern Catholic chaplains was a priest who came from what the South considered the very "den of unionism," the University of Notre Dame. He was Father William Corby, C.S.C., who served with the 88th N.Y. Infantry for three years of the War's most bitter fighting. When the regiment, on the afternoon of July 2, 1863, was about to enter the battle of Gettysburg, Father Corby mounted a rock and addressed its members.

He explained to them that the time was too short to enable him to hear each man's confession. Therefore, he exhorted them to make a personal act of contrition, while he gave them general absolution. They knelt and lowered their flags; and the priest, raising his hand, traced over their heads in absolution the sign of the cross.

To commemorate this inspiring moment, a bronze statue of Father Corby was later erected on the spot, his hand raised in the gesture of absolving.

There were over forty of these Union chaplains. The Catholic Confederate chaplains numbered about thirty. One of the most venerable of the Hill College, Mobile, a Catholic college which was as much a "den of rebellion" as Notre Dame was a "den of unionism." He was the Jesuit priest, Father Darius Hubert.

Father Hubert was with his Catholic soldiers from the attack on Fort Sumter, April, 1861, to the surrender at Appomattox, in April, 1865, ever attending to his duties in and out of battle, confirming his men in their faith and their courage. Another was the outspoken Father James B. Sheeran, C.S.S.R., chaplain of the 14th Louisiana, C.S.A.

It was not surprising that both North and South should turn to Catholic sisters in their search for nurses of the casualties of war. Nursing as a career for the laywoman had only lately been thought of. With the religious orders of women, however, it was an old tradition.

Some 400 nuns from over twenty religious orders participated in nursing the casualties of the Civil War, on both sides. Since the most numerous of these nursing religious were Sisters of Charity, let us take one northern sister and one southern sister of this community as illustrations.

One of the most outstanding northern nursing sisters — and one of the most outstanding women in Rochester history — was Sister Hieronymo, the superior of St. Mary's Hospital. Sister Hieronymo's Civil War career deserves a special article in the Courier-Journal. We shall only say now that under her supervision, St. Mary's was given a government contract to take care of wounded and ailing soldiers. Between 1863 and 1865 the good nursing sisters received and gave tender care to over two thousand servicemen.

Try as he might, however, the Bishop of Charleston got nowhere with the Vatican. One of the chief reasons for his failure was that it would add much to the international prestige of the Confederacy if the Pope, Pius IX, should grant it formal diplomatic recognition. He therefore dispatched to Rome Bishop Patrick N. Lynch of Charleston, with instructions to secure, if possible, the desired recognition. This was in 1864.

There was doubtless the fact that the United States at that time had a diplomatic minister resident in Rome, who could carefully counter, with the Cardinal Secretary of State, any diplomatic effort that Bishop Lynch might make in behalf of the Confederate States.



Gettysburg monument shows Holy Cross Father William Corby as he gave absolution when decisive battle was about to begin.

A southern counterpart of Sister Hieronymo was Sister Regina, because of her courage and devotion to duty, died of sheer exhaustion in 1864. She is honored as one of the heroines of the South.

Even in the area of wartime diplomacy, the opposing American government employed not only Catholic agents, but Catholic bishops.

In 1861, for instance, the Federal government was worried that the Confederacy might succeed in a bid to be recognized by England and France. On the advice of Secretary of State Seward, President Lincoln invited Archbishop Hughes of New York to visit the Emperor Napoleon III of France as an official emissary, in order to dissuade him from giving diplomatic recognition to the Confederate States.

Archbishop Hughes said his office prevented him from accepting any such official position. But he was willing to approach the Emperor as an emissary of peace, to persuade him of the unwisdom of taking any step which would prolong or further spread the conflict. His informal conversation with the Emperor of France was probably not without effect. Bishop Domenech performed a similar role at the court of Spain. Archbishop John Fitzpatrick of Boston, acting, it seems, on his own, was able to create in Belgium a better feeling towards the Union than he found when he arrived there.

Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States, meanwhile saw that it would add much to the international prestige of the Confederacy if the Pope, Pius IX, should grant it formal diplomatic recognition. He therefore dispatched to Rome Bishop Patrick N. Lynch of Charleston, with instructions to secure, if possible, the desired recognition. This was in 1864.

The South rose, slow and heavy-hearted, from the dust and rubble of its ruins. The Catholic Church in the South had shared the South's loss: many churches destroyed or desecrated; poor Catholics still further impoverished.

There was, however, at least one postwar obstacle that did not beset the Catholic Church as it beset some of the Protestant denominations in a reunited land. If Catholics north had been divided from Catholics south, it had been a political, not a doctrinal division. The Catholic prelates from both sections of the country therefore felt no embarrassment about assembling in Baltimore in 1865 for America's Second Plenary Council, in order to chart the national Catholic course for the future.

In their joint pastoral letter, the bishops made a particularly thoughtful statement with regard to the Negroes, who had been declared free in 1863 by the Emancipation Proclamation. "We could have wished," they frankly declared, "that . . . a more gradual system of emancipation could have been adopted, so that they might have

More Articles, Study, Thanks

Additional articles on the Civil War will be published in subsequent issues of the Courier-Journal.

Extensive study of that era is made at monthly meetings of the Civil War Roundtable in Pittsford, a group of 40 Rochester area historians including Father McNamara.

Last week's front page picture of General Sherman at Atlanta was obtained from the Eastman House of Photography, Rochester.

been in some measure prepared to make better use of their freedom than they are now likely to do.

Still the bishops urged the faithful to be, for that reason, all the more solicitous about the welfare of the Negro.

In this year of grace, 1961, our nation begins a four-year period of commemoration of the Civil War. It is a wise undertaking, not because of what the War was — a tragic fratricide — but because of the many lessons which the recollection of it teaches.

Noblest, perhaps, of all these object lessons, is the intense love of country which characterized both the boys in blue and the boys in grey, whether they were Protestant or Catholic or Jewish. One cannot read far in the literature of the Civil War without encountering a spirit of gallantry, of chivalry, which Americans today seem to have forgotten or to have lost.

This devotion, deeply felt and unashamedly expressed, found its focus particularly in the country's flag. Symbol of a great cause, the flag was considered worth fighting for and worth dying for.

"Lay me down and save the flag," cried Colonel James Mulligan, mortally wounded at Winchester. His companions hesitated. "Lay me down and save the flag!" he insisted.

They obeyed him; they saved the flag. But they never again saw their commander alive. And many another courageous Yankee would have made the same sacrifice as Colonel Mulligan made.

"Fold that Banner, for 'tis weary; Round its staff 'tis drooping dreary; Fold it, fold it, it is best," So sang Father

Islands Under Red China Guns

(Continued from Page 1)

glories of the communes. The Nationalists concentrate on freedom.

I examined a museum full of propaganda leaflets, matchbooks, tinned food with slogans printed inside, and bars of soap with hidden propaganda capsules. Since the wind was right that day, I watched Nationalist soldiers launching colored balloons carrying the Republic of China's flag over the mainland.

Atop Thai-Bu Mountain, from an intelligence post buried in rock, I observed the mainland shore through a 40-power telescope. The villages and artillery batteries were clearly visible, but neither that day nor on following days were any Chinese visible, other than fishermen in small boats off shore. For a country of 650 million people, they were keeping themselves well hidden.

The Major commanding the 155 mm. battery I inspected told me that even though several hundred rounds fell on and around their cement bunker during the great artillery duel of 1958, blowing up several ammunition dumps, his men did not cease their counterfire.

At Van Fleet Point — a neck of sand extending to within 2,400 yards of a Communist-held island — I visited a "Psych-War" advance base where batteries of loudspeakers were booming out recorded music. It was anything but hi-fi. A liaison

Abram Ryan, "poet-priest" of the South a few months later when the Confederacy had been vanquished. And of this Confederate flag, now the symbol of the "lost cause," he sadly continued:

For there's not a man to wave it,
And there's not a sword to save it,
And there's no one left to lave it,
In the blood which heroes gave it;

And its foes now scorn and brave it;
Furl it, hide it, let it rest;
Furl that banner, softly, softly;
Treat it gently, it is holy
For it droops above the dead. . . .

It may be that renewed interest in our Civil War can lead us — especially the young people among us — to better ap-

preciate, and even more, to perpetuate, that sense of honor, of gallantry, and of self-sacrificing love of country which were the chief glories of the War Between the States.

If our national commemoration can achieve this result, then it can be said of both the Yanks and the Johnny Rebs, in the words of Abraham Lincoln: "These dead shall not have died in vain."

Several concrete flights below ground I found the source of the music. Miss Pan, a young Catholic girl, sat in front of a microphone and announced each selection, while a technician changed phonograph records. At night she would use her honey coated voice to wreck Communist morale, ala the famous "Tokyo Rose" of World War II.

Miss Pan and her group of "half-soldiers," as they call themselves, are paid civilian employees who do a one year tour of duty on the islands. I was to meet more of her group in the succeeding days on islands even closer to the Reds.

'It Wasn't His Fault'
Chelmsford — (RNS) — The last words of a dying English priest cleared a truck driver of blame for his death, an inquest court was told here.

Father Gilbert Edward Ellis, 45, lay dying at the side of an icy road after a truck crushed him, the court was informed. A witness told Coroner L. F. Beeble that Father Ellis whispered: "Tell the driver that it was not his fault."

New Churches For Portugal
Lisbon — (RNS) — Manuel Goncalves Cardinal Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon, has asked Catholics to provide funds for the immediate construction of 81 churches and 115 chapels in the Lisbon archdiocese.

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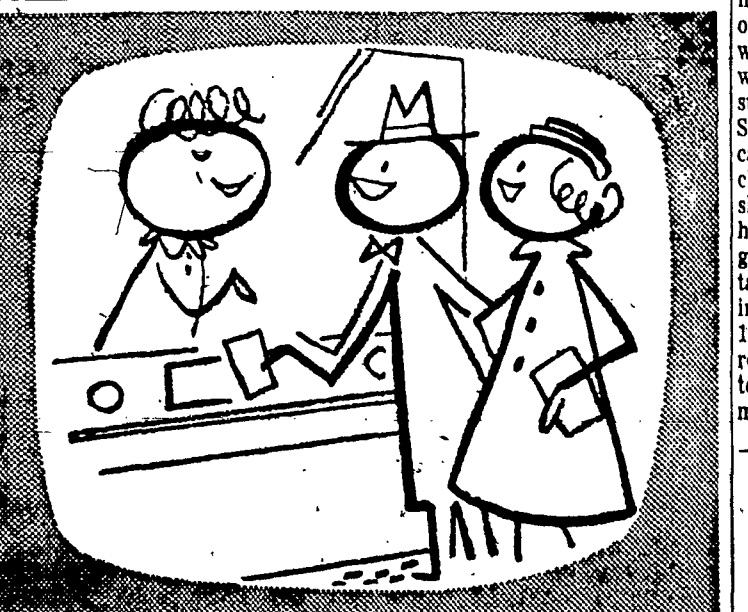
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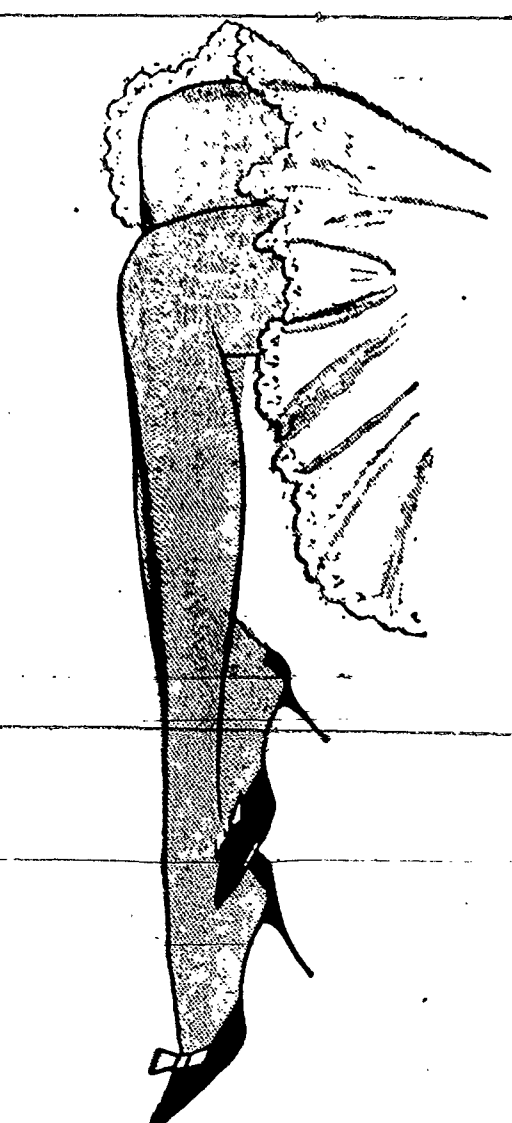
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