Teenagers Establish Mission Beachhead

Five Rochester lads reached their goal — a lonely mission outpost in northwest Canada — after nearly a month of canoe travel down treacherous rivers, through fly and mosquito infested forests and finally by air.

The five are companions of Oblate Father Bernard Brown, also a Rochesterian, as he makes his rounds in the cold and remote areas above the Arctic Circle.

THE BOYS are Robert Haughwout, Barry Haefele, Frank Wratni, Bryan Martin and Francis McDermott.

Here is the latest chapter of their diary as sent to the Courier Journal this week:

Flying in by plane from Norman Wells spelled a quick ending to our river trip by canoe and a sudden beginning of our work on Colville Lake — the building of Our Lady of the Snows Mission.

The pilot had assured Father Brown that he would be able to fly him in on Tuesday, August 7th, along with Frank and Brian and the seven dogs and then get him later in the day and return him to Norman Wells where he was to be joined by the three other members of the band — viz. Barry Haefele, Frank McDermott and Bob Houghwout, and then continue by canoe to Fort Good Hope. But that four hour "visit" to Colville Lake turned out to be four long days with everyone wondering if the pilot had crashed and was unable to return. Not being able to communicate with the outside world exaggerated all the dire probabilities.

But on Friday afternoon a cry of "Ellakinata" — plane! went up from the Indians and when it landed on the new Mission dock, who should appear but the three missing members of the party who had taken the canoe at the Wells and proceeded to Fort Good Hope where they could charter the Beaver Aircraft to fly in 100 miles toward the barrens to Colville. Father Brown boarded the plane and went with the pilot to Good Hope.

The four day unexpected stay at Colville was not wasted. Besides setting the huge 18x20' tent which was to serve as Mission until Our Lady of the Snows was built, all the land along the lake where the building would stand was cut of willows and cleared down to the muskeg and a 72 foot dock was built out into the lake to allow planes coming with the building material to land. In short, a "beach-head" had been established and all was set for our major landing. This began on the evening of August 14th when Father Brown returned with Father Leising and the Missions' own aircraft "CF-OMI", a DeHavilland Beaver which was furnished to the Mackenzie Missions by the Society of the Propagation of the Faith and carries approximately a half a ton.

The first trip to Colville Lake, however, was way overweight with needed foodstuffs and cement for the footings of the Mission. The five boys were out on the dock looking like the survivors of Shackelton's Antarctic expedition! Father Brown returned to Good Hope that night with Father Leising to prepare more supplies, while the boys ate until midnight.

August 15, Feast of the Assumption — The Bishop sang the High Mass at Midnight in the century-old Church at Good Hope and afterwards spent some time, although it was two in the morning, talking with Father Brown about the foundation at Colville Lake. The following morning at six—the two American Missionary Oblates were winging their way north with over 1500 lbs. of precious supplies — a few 8 ft. pieces of lumber, a stove, some roofing, fish nets, dog harnesses etc. This feast is not a Holy Day of Obligation in Canada and as soon as the aircraft was unloaded, work got underway again — the dock was lengthened 50 ft. so that the heavily-laden float planes would not scrape their pontoons. The exact dimensions of the Mission were staked out and levelled.

That night at nine Father said his first Mass at Colville Lake in the big Mission tent. Twenty-two Rabbit-skin Indians were present and eleven received Holy Communion. A case of powdered milk served as tabernacle and the light of the candles did for illumination, but everyone was fervent and seemed to feel God near and even pleased with our humble efforts to bring majesty to a tent.

August 16, 17 and 18 were spent hauling gravel on our backs to make a somewhat more solid footing on the muskeg and perma-frost for the cement foundation piers of the Mission. One boat was pressed into service hauling rocks and sand for cement. The black flies were a terrific source of annoyance and caused untold hardships.

Father Leising came back from Aklavik on Friday and made four trips that day hauling more building material. On Saturday the women went out in their canoe and cut and hauled spruce bough tips which they wove into a fragrant floor for our chapel tent. They also brought fresh-killed ducks and white fish. They were all glad we had come and did their best to make us feel welcome.

Sunday, August 19. After the 9:30 Mass with sermon in English and Rabbitskin, the five Rochester boys were invited on a fishing trip by some of the Indian boys. They returned at the end of the afternoon with ten Northern Pike, some of which weighed ten pounds. Father Brown kept the camp, entertained the natives and worked out details of the new Mission plans. People came to visit Father all afternoon in his little tent. They simply sat out in front on the ground. Old and young. Some of the children played with toys Father had received from the Sisters. The men folk smoked. The women talked. It was warm in the sun. Even the two feet of moss that covers the ice beneath the ground was warm near the surface. Unless one goes deep into the southern part of our continent it is difficult to find a people so simple and unspoiled by the complexities of our civilization.

Here they have no TV, no radios even and no guitars or fiddles! Their sole recreation seems to be visiting one another—"Konta" — or "among the fires" as they call it. In the evening the bell called them all to the tent for rosary and prayers in Slavey.

Monday, August 20, was the feast of St. Bernard and hence the feast day of Father Bernard Brown's patron saint. No stop to work, however. It was too important to finish pouring the last eight of the 22 cement footings Our Lady of the Snows would be built upon. But an unexpected visit from outside brought great joy to our camp. The RCMP from Inuvik came with their plane and brought the mail including several parcels of sweets. The purpose of their trip, which brought four mounties and two nurses, was to vaccinate the sled dogs against rabies! They ran short of serum, however, as they anticipated 50 dogs and found seventy! That evening after Mass at 9:00, all the men stayed to toast the Father, smoke cigars and eat a pie lovingly donated by one of the more progressive Indians of the settlement. It was the first we had seen in a long time and a fitting climax to the first "feast" day celebrated on Colville Lake.

Tuesday, August 21. Work continued on the new Mission under clear blue skies and continuing strong S-E winds. Father Brown taught Brian Martin how to use the chain saw. He and Barry Haefele began building the log toilet. Isadore Cochon and Frank Codzie were packing dirt and moss to cover the gravel platforms the cement was cast on. Frank Wratni crossed the lake by canoe with Paul Cotchille, Alfred Messazumi and Louis Gudzie to try to get some 32 ft. logs. Around 5 p.m. a cry went up "Ellakinshrata," a flying boat was approaching from the south.

The cry was carried from end to end of our settlement. Even the sled dogs howled, sensing something unusual was happening. The plane turned to be an "Otter" piloted by Bob Inglis from Yellowknife carrying a full load of 24 ten-gallon barrels of gasoline from the small refinery at Norman Wells. Father Leising had sent him, knowing we would need this fuel to drive our generator all winter to communicate with the nearby Forts. This huge plane grounded in the sand some fifteen feet off the end of our proud little dock, but all hands pulled on a rope and gradually drew them close enough to unload their precious cargo. Then the pilot and his mechanic had supper with us. And afterwards they flew to Fort Good Hope for another ton of our building supplies including our two sleds and promised to return again in the morning.

That night after Mass we were entertained by the dazzling display of the Northern Lights. The green in them impressed the boys from Rochester the most. They sat out watching them till midnight, as the temperature slowly fell to 48.

Wednesday, August 22. Up at 7 as our cook — Sarah — who has no clock had come early and the coffee was getting cold! The Otter returned for two more trips bringing our 18 ft. canoe on its pontoons. Now we can set our net. Six of the men crossed the lake to cut dry wood for ceiling and roof rafters, as we have no dimension timber. The continuing S-E wind kept the black flies away most of the day. We were talking of the gold rush east of us on Contoyto Lake. The pilot had been telling us of flying a continuous stream of prospectors into that remote spot 250 miles north of Yellowknife. They say the gold runs 3 ounces to the ton and was discovered by a geologist working from an aircraft for one of the large mining companies. It is the first strike in the Territories in 15 years.

Thursday, August 23. We had acquired two new workers — two Indian boys who boarded our plane at Good Hope and unable to pay their share, told the pilot they would pay by working for Father Brown! So these two gypsies bring our crew to 13! It becomes a problem every morning to get everyone placed on a job. Six of them left with the boat this morning and came back at noon with 42 roof rafters cut from dry wood across the lake.

Today the Mission took a giant step forward with the laying of all the floor joices. Now if we only had boards to cover them But we are pressed for time and must start our wall logs and bypass the floor, hoping we will get the lumber before freeze-up.

Friday, August 24. A sudden and violent change in the weather keeps us pinned in our tents, prisoners of the storm. The N-W wind is cresting the waves and dashing them against our frail dock, undermining and washing away all the fill we put in at the edge of the lake to build our fish house upon. The temperature is only 12 degrees above freezing and the rain is finding many small holes in our tents we never suspected were there. The boys skip breakfast and stay warm in their sleeping bags. Later in the day they set up one of the wood stoves inside the tent. We sit huddled around the fire wondering how long the storm will last, if this is the end to our summer?

Saturday, August 25 broke grey and cold but the wind was down and the rain was over. We started work an hour earlier and fumbled around clumsily in heavy jackets and mits. But little by little as the sun climbed higher in the eastern sky it broke through the scattering clouds and we found ourselves pealing off jackets and sweating under the toil of bending those unruly logs to fit our purpose. Six of the men crossed the lake at noon and cut forty, fifteen foot spruce for our fish and meat house to be built on the water's edge.

Father Brown and Louis spent the day levelling the floor timbers, always the hardest job of building a log building. cut here and there leveling as they went until at sundown the thousand square feet of floor of the main room was dead level ready for the flooring.

Papal Letter Urges Better Pay for Spain Farmers

Valencia — (RNS) — Landowners should always strive to pay agricultural workers more than minimum wages required by law, it was stated in a letter received here from the Vatican by Auxiliary Bishop Rafael Gonzalez Moralejo of Valencia.

The letter, written by Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, Vatican Secretary of State, in the name of Pope John XXIII, was sent to Bishop Gonzalez Moralejo in his capacity as head of the Spanish National Committee on Social Problems.

Stressing principles laid down in Mater et Magistra, the social encyclical issued last year by Pope John, the communication contained advice on the solution of agricultural problems and elevation of living standards among rural sectors.

In Spain, as elsewhere, the letter pointed out, problems facing industrial workers have been overcome to some extent, but those confronting agricultural laborers have yet to be solved in many areas.

Directing attention to substandard wages prevailing in many rural regions of Spain, the cardinal observed that "justice and charity can often produce more than written laws, especially in social matters."

In this vein, he noted that wage laws cannot keep pace with living costs and should never prevent proprietors from paying their workers salaries superior to those laid down by statute.

'Our Father' Sectarian Prayer?

Washington — (RNS) — A demand that recitation of the Lord's Prayer and reading from the Bible be discontinued immediately as part of the opening exercises of the public schools in the District of Columbia has been made by the National Capital Area chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

In a strongly-worded letter to the District's Board of Education, the civil liberties group said that the board's rule that classes must open with recitation of the Lord's Prayer and a reading, without comment, from the Bible "clearly establishes a religious service in the opening exercises.

"We are convinced that the recent decision of the United States Supreme Court in Engel v. Vitale (New York Regent's prayer case) prohibits absolutely any requirement by an official body of any religious observance in the public schools of the nation."

"While the decision dealt specifically with a prayer written by an official body, we cannot believe anyone will argue seriously that although the Regents of New York could not write a prayer designed to be nonsectarian, they might instead use a prayer taken from the Christian Bible," he declared.

"To argue so would be to suggest that the Supreme Court prohibited the establishment of nonsectarian prayers carefully written by public officers but permitted the adoption of sectarian prayers written by others."

East German Bishop's Rite

Berlin — (NC) — Crowds filled the cathedral in the east German city of Erfurt to overflowing for the consecration of Auxiliary Bishop Hugo Aufderbeck of Fulda.

Archbishop Alfred Bengsch, Bishop of Berlin, consecrated the new Bishop.

In The Vineyard

The Discalced (Barefooted) Carmelite Nuns — The Discalced or Reformed Carmelites, a branch of the Order of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, was founded by St. Teresa of Avila in 1562. After spending twenty years in the Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation of Avila, she was inspired by God to live a more perfect life, and to restore the primitive rule of the cloistered life of the Carmelite Hermits given by St. Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem in the thirteenth century. St. Teresa, with the aid of St. John of the Cross and Anton de Heredia, established 16 monasteries of nuns before she died in 1582. The Reform of St. Teresa has spread throughout the entire world. They were first established in the United States in 1790 and have a convent on Westfall Road just south of Rochester. The life of a Carmelite nun is both contemplative and apostolic. By her prayers, sacrifices, and penances she atones for the numberless sins committed against the Eternal Father. Her apostolic life is spent in supplication, praying for the needs of the Church, sanctification of priests, the salvation of souls, and the conversion of sinners. This year, 1962, the Discalced Carmelite Nuns Celebrate the 400th Anniversary of St. Teresa's Reform.

Priest Heads Botany Survey In Russia

New Delhi — (NC) — An Indian priest is heading a six-member botanical survey team on a mission to the Soviet Union.

Spanish-born Father H. Santapau, S.J., who became an Indian citizen almost 20 years ago, is the first Catholic priest to serve as chief botanist of the Botanical Survey of India. He said at Delhi's Palam airport (Sept. 19) that he was looking forward to visiting Moscow during this first mission to the Soviet Union.

The team will visit laboratories and botanical gardens in Leningrad, Moscow, Tashkent and other cities in connection with a cultural agreement that India entered with the Soviet Union in 1961. Father Santapau mentioned that he had been impressed by young Russian scientists who visited India last year.

Father Santapau, a former rector of Xavier College in Bombay, is the first Catholic priest from India to be granted a three-month visa to Russia. He will be allowed to celebrate Mass privately during the mission.

Two Faiths In One Rite

Waterloo — (RNS) — The rare spectacle of Anglican and Catholic prelates in full vestments at the same ceremony was seen here at the dedication of church-related colleges on the University of Waterloo campus.

Renison College, named after the late and famous Anglican Archbishop R. J. Renison of Moosonee, Ont., was dedicated by Archbishop Howard H. Clark of Rupert's Land, Primate of All Canada. The Catholic colleges of St. Jerome and Notre Dame were dedicated by Bishop Joseph H. Ryan of Hamilton, Ont.

The two officiating prelates met and exchanged pictures of Archbishop Renison and St. Jerome.

Australia Cardinal Asks State Aid for Schools

Sydney — (RNS) — Cardinal Gilroy, Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, personally presented to Premier Robert Heffron of New South Wales a petition asking state assistance for church-related schools.

Observers attached great significance to the fact that Cardinal Gilroy delivered in person the petition of the New South Wales hierarchy at the premier's offices. In recent months Roman Catholic leaders, and a few Anglicans, have called for aid to "independent schools," those operated by religious bodies.

In August, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Archbishops of Perth made a joint appeal to the Province of Western Australia for state aid to church-maintained schools. The plea was delivered to Premier David Brand by Archbishop Robert W. H. Moline, who is also Anglican Metropolitan of Western Australia, and Archbishop Redmond Prendville of the Catholic archdiocese.

AFTER CITING the contribution of Catholic schools to New South Wales education, Cardinal Gilroy made the following recommendations to Premier Heffron.

1. That a "scholarship allowance" to pupils be granted to relieve the education costs of Catholic parents. Since the financial burden is heaviest for maintaining adolescents, he suggested that an allowance be granted first to secondary pupils at the rate of $67 per year.

2. That the granting of Teacher's College Scholarships be extended to trainees who plan to teach at independent schools. Such scholarships are now granted only to students who will teach at state schools.

3. That capital grants be extended to help independent schools cope with the increasing outlay (construction costs) necessary to provide secondary education.

4. That the state provide a portion of the salaries paid teachers in independent schools.

5. That consideration be given to the special needs of scientific education.

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