



Tom and Helen with Bishop James E. Kearney

Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad, and at Lawyers Cooperative Publishing Company, where he met Helen Ryan, his helpmate for the past 50 years.

Tom joined the Army in 1918 and served his hitch as an aerial photographer.

He recalls from this time an adventure that nearly cost his life. While he was shooting the Florida Everglades, his plane was forced down by engine trouble. Tom recalls wandering about the trackless region on foot for two days before he was found by Seminole Indians who led him back to civilization.

Out of the Army, he returned to the Lawyers Co-op for a spell until he joined the Rochester office of the Catholic Echo in 1924.

Eight years later, he joined the Courier-Journal as editor. The time was the great depression. The paper had just been purchased by the diocese from the Catholic laymen who had previously run it. Days of struggle lay ahead.

Tom recalls the time when the paper's staff was a couple of weeks overdue on being paid. To meet the payroll, the then editor-in-chief, Msgr. William M. Hart, had to borrow from the Sunday collections of his own parish, Corpus Christi, until the crisis passed.

All through these years Tom also maintained a fierce allegiance to the organizations and clubs that promoted the Church in the community: the Knights of Columbus (which he served as Grand Knight), Rochester Notre Dame Alumni (who gave him the title of "Man of the Year in 1957), the First Friday Luncheon Club (of which he was a founder), Knights of St. John, St. Eustace Commandery, and the Laymen's Retreat League.

Tom is also a life member of the Musa Caravan, Order of the Alhambra. He edited the group's Musa Musa, for many years the only newsletter of its kind in the nation.

He is a legend, Thomas H. O'Connor. A legend of service, loyalty and newspapering of the highest order.

The Courier-Journal salutes him.



William E. McCarthy, Tom, Marchmont Schwartz, Joseph P. "Stubby" Flynn, Raymond J. Kern, Tom Conley, Dr. Walter B. O'Neill and John A. Doyle



John Dash wrote the text. David Witbeck took the photos that show the O'Connors at home.