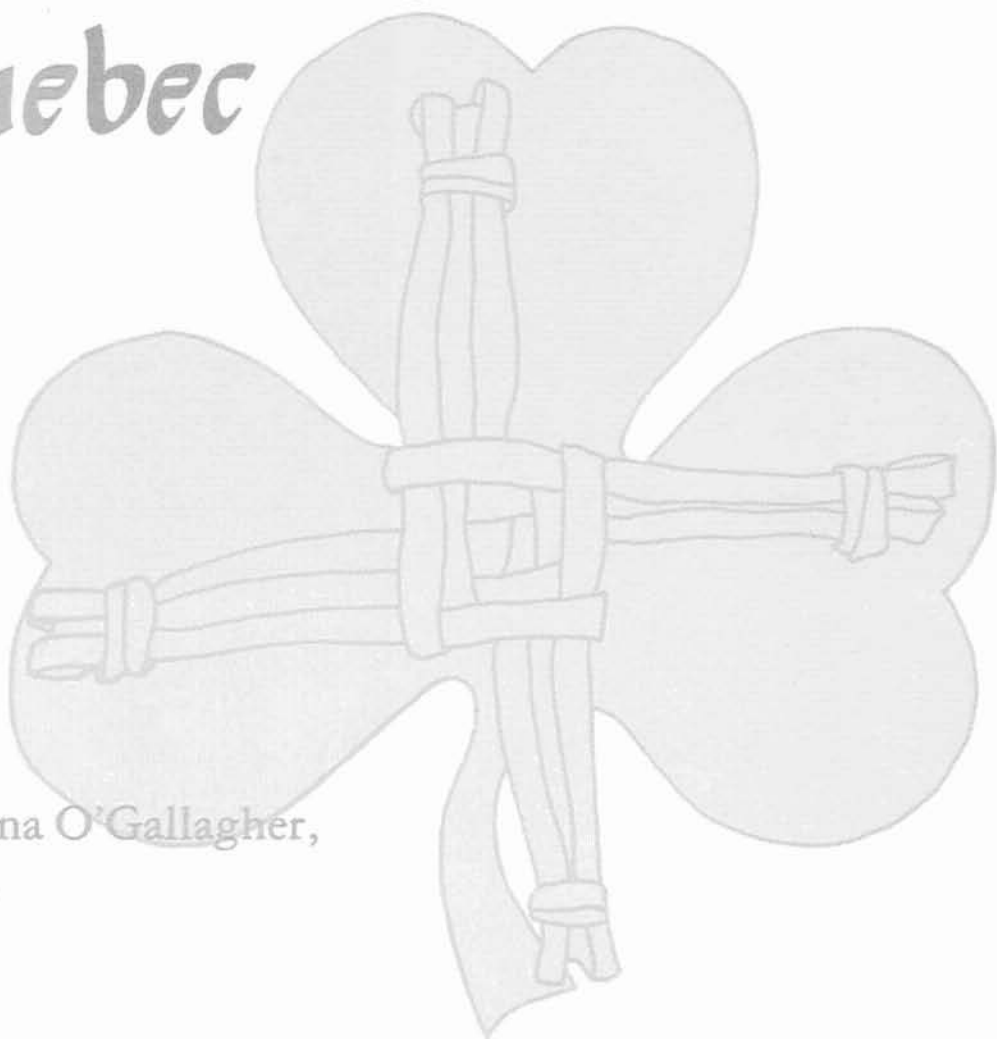


Saint Brigid's, Quebec



Marianna O'Gallagher,
S.C.H.



CARRAIG BOOKS

SAINT BRIGID'S, QUEBEC

The Irish care for their people

1856 to 1981

by Marianna O'GALLAGHER, S.C.H.

Quebec

CARRAIG BOOKS

1981

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Father Bernard McGauran: Pastor of St. Patrick's 1856-1873; Founder of Saint Brigid's Home — 1856.

FOREWORD

Through the year 1981 Saint Brigid's Home in Sillery, Quebec, held one celebration after another. The house was decorated with the appropriate garlanded golden 125 wreathed against a green background. The year was an occasion for the descendants of the Irish of Quebec and their friends to realize and examine past history, present standing and future status of the Home.

The organizing committee tried to reach all the segments of the community in its expression of celebration and thanksgiving. The staff of St. Brigid's Home itself bore the brunt of the work of providing a place, preparing refreshments, serving the throngs who came, moving furniture for the numerous gatherings, Masses, theatricals, lunches, teas, open house times. Surrounding these workers were the ladies of Saint Brigid's Guild who worked in many capacities.

The purpose of the celebration was to rejoice in the 125th year of the existence of Saint Brigid's, to see its beginnings, and to honour those past and present who were and are involved in its success.

PREFACE

In order to make this story of St. Brigid's as valid as it can be for posterity I have attempted to give as many names as possible of people who continuously or frequently acted in the role of benefactor to St. Brigid's. It is in large part a history of our people.

My principal source of information was "Annales de l'Asile Sainte-Brigitte" which covers the period 1856 to 1944. This interesting book, handwritten for the most part, includes newspaper clippings of activities in which "home" residents were involved, as well as accounts of the festal occasions that involved the parish of St. Patrick's. The "Annales" are in the possession of the Grey Nuns of Quebec because the book was written to record the day by day and year by year involvement of that religious congregation with the work of the home, and not principally for us the Irish inheritors of its wealth of information. The annals of their successors the Sisters of Charity of Halifax were also used. Letters in the Archdiocesan Archives of Quebec and in the Grey Nuns' Archives were read.

On the occasion of St. Brigid's century and a quarter of existence it is gratifying to look back and reflect upon what a good thing that home has been. It has lived up to its name "home" both for the hard times and the good times. It is an establishment that has never ceased to fill a need. It has continued to exist thanks to the persevering hard work of volunteers, men and women, who have come forward over many years to lend their multiple talents to its maintenance.

This book is dedicated to all those men and women, past and present, named and nameless, who devote themselves in ways great and small to the care of those in need, especially anyone connected with Saint Brigid's Home.

*Marianna O'Gallagher, S.C.H.
Quebec, December 9, 1981*



*Message from the President of Ireland, Patrick J. Hillery,
to St. Brigid's Home, Sillery, Quebec City
on the hundred and twenty fifth anniversary of its founding*

As one of the three patron saints of Ireland St. Brigid holds a special place amongst the Irish people for her life of devotion to the highest Christian ideals.

Your home, since its foundation in 1856, has been dedicated, in the name of St. Brigid, to the practical expression of these ideals of love and charity.

Ireland is proud of the role played by its sons and daughters in the building of Canada and is especially proud that the Irish people who settled in Canada continued their tradition of loyalty to the Christian faith and service to the community.

St. Brigid's Home stands as a shining example of service to the community with links going back to the Irish immigrants who came to Canada after the famine, and through them with the coming of Christianity to Ireland over fifteen hundred years ago.

As you celebrate your one hundred and twenty fifth anniversary it is a great honour for me, therefore, to extend greetings, and to offer heartiest congratulations on my own behalf, and on behalf of the people of Ireland, to all the staff and residents of St. Brigid's Home, and best wishes for the future.

*Áras an Uachtaráin
Aibreán 1981*

CHAPTER I

THE IRISH IN QUEBEC

If you drive out of Quebec City today along the St. Louis Road where it swings southward into the old part of the City of Sillery, you will come to a well designed, low built brick and wood building, large and comfortable looking, with a magnificent view of the St. Lawrence River. This is St. Brigid's Home, the third building in a series that has borne that name since the first establishment near the old St. Patrick's Church on McMahan Street in 1856. The roots of that 1856 establishment go back even farther however and it is the beginning, as well as the continuation, of the story that this book will put forth.

Eighteen forty seven is the date that stands out in the minds of Irish-Canadians as an infamous one, for that was the year of the Potato Famine so-called. When those thousands of poor poured into Quebec City there was already a thriving Irish community in the city, who along with their French Canadian fellow citizens tried to cope with the sad situation. The events of 1847 speeded up the establishment of institutions to care for the destitute and the Irish Catholics were deeply involved in solving the problems of the immigrants, as they themselves had once been recipients of benevolence. French Canadians and English Protestants and the Irish all worked in the creation of agencies to care for the poor. This book looks at the development of St. Brigid's from its roots in the days of Father Patrick McMahan.

Let us begin with Sunday morning, March 21 in 1847, at St. Patrick's Church in Upper Town, old Quebec, where the Irish were celebrating the Silver Jubilee of Father Patrick

McMahon. His twenty five years of priesthood were spent almost entirely in Quebec City looking after the English speaking Catholics, nearly all Irish, who formed a very large part of the French parish of Notre-Dame de Québec. The Irish were assembled that Sunday under the chairmanship of the English lumber merchant John Sharples, who, in presenting Father McMahon with appropriate gifts reminded his audience of the growth of the Irish of Quebec into a community with a church of their own. The language might be very stilted to 20th century years but the tenor of Father McMahon's life comes through both speeches. Sharples said:

By your untiring energy and zeal, careless of the sacrifice of health itself, you have collected the scattered wanderers from a distant land into a happy, numerous and a powerful class, conscious of their civil duties, and careful to perform them, you have established schools for the use and benefit of the youth of this congregation, and in your lectures from the pulpit you have taught the adults to respect themselves, and to compete through the unavoidable struggles of life, in honest emulation with their fellowmen.

With a devoted charity during two successive years when an infectious and fatal disease* decimated this city your attendance in the cause of religion and humanity at the couch of poverty, contagion and death was unwearied, and upon all occasions and under all circumstances the orphan, the widow and the emigrant have found in you their comforter, their counsellor and their friend.

This congregation by your preaching has been taught and by your example has been shown a spirit of friendship to their fellow citizens, of loyalty to their sovereign, and of devotion to their religion.

In replying to Sharples' cordial words, Father McMahon echoed his thoughts about friendship to their fellow citizens and reiterated his own desire expressed long before, at the time of the dedication of the St. Patrick's Church, for peace and understanding between his people and their neighbours. After thanking his congregation for their generous gifts Father McMahon reflected upon the church building itself, in words so gentle that one wonders how this orator could ever have been the center of a storm of political controversy over a sermon. His reply:

* Cholera in 1832 and 1834.



Father James Nelligan: Pastor of Saint Patrick's, 1851-1856.



Father Patrick McMahon: Leader of the Irish of Quebec 1822-1851; Founder of Saint Patrick's Parish; Builder of St. Patrick's Church (from the painting by Théophile Hamel).

The splendid church in which I feel this day both pride and pleasure in addressing you, is the work of your own hands and not of mine, for what could I have been able to effect without your cordial and unanimous cooperation. Yes, beloved friends, this noble edifice which you have raised for the worship of the God of your Fathers is and will continue to be evidence to all of your love of religion, as well as of the esteem in which you are held by your fellow citizens of other denominations who generously came forward to assist you in its erection. And I feel satisfied that the recollection of this will not fail to induce you to cultivate a friendly feeling towards them and to preserve unimpaired that spirit of peace, harmony and good understanding which now is the vital principle, the very life and soul of every community.

His words here on the “spirit of peace, harmony and good understanding” were given further weight when he informed his listeners of the “dispositions that our ecclesiastical superiors (have) towards us, and that the deepest interest is felt by our venerable archbishop in every matter that concerns the welfare and prosperity of this establishment”. These words proved true time and time again. Because there were elements for misunderstanding everywhere around them, indeed all the makings of a long and bitter feud, the fact that a basic understanding and familiarity did develop between French and Irish in Quebec is all the more wonderful. It is part of the very fabric of the Irish in Quebec.

However, it is Father McMahon’s prophetic words voiced in a central paragraph that form the link between his time as Pastor and the continuing growth and development of Saint Patrick’s. He said:

I have lived, beloved friends, to see a portion at least of my fondest hopes realized, and were it not that my shattered constitution and fast declining health* forbid me look forward to any length of days, I should still hope to be spared to witness the accomplishment of other important projects which I have long been considering and which I feel convinced would very much tend to the happiness of that congregation. But I have every reason to believe that Providence has reserved the realization of these fond projects for other days and abler hands.

* McMahon died four years later at the age of fifty-five.

When Father McMahon spoke of a "portion at least of my fondest hopes realized" there is no doubt that he meant the building of the church itself, and the gradual cementing of the Irish people of Quebec into a community, but there were other accomplishments of the community that he had witnessed, if not directly promoted. In 1843, the Christian Brothers had opened classes for boys in Quebec, both in Upper Town, across the street from the church, and in Lower Town on Champlain Street; and in both places Irish boys in numbers usually greater than those of their French Canadian school mates took advantage of the education the Brothers gave. No doubt the school was a portion of Father McMahon's "fondest hopes", for in 1833 even while McMahon and his men were in the midst of building the church they had expressed the need for a school for the many children of the Irish in "the cove", the area around the Lower Town Church (Notre-Dame-des-Victoires) which was then their center.

At this point, it is good to look at Quebec of the 1820s and 30s, when conditions unfavourable in Europe and a little more favourable in Canada brought about a mass emigration across the North Atlantic such as the world had hardly seen up to that time. Quebec City stood at the head of deep water navigation and as such was the landing place for the thousands who came to North America by the St. Lawrence River route. Not all the immigrants continued on to Upper Canada or to the States, however. A good number settled in and about Quebec City, lured by ready employment in the timber trade. Indeed, in 1830 according to some calculations, there were as many as 7,000 Irish Catholics in Quebec City out of a total population of 31,000. These people found leadership in their compatriot Father McMahon, and in a well established, cohesive group of Irish business men (of varying political stamp by the way) who, starting about 1824, had negotiated for and finally accomplished in 1833 the building of St. Patrick's Church on the then Sainte-Hélène Street in the Upper Town.

Quebec in the 1830s, a bustling seaport, a busy city and garrison town, saw more than its share of ordinary human suffering. Poverty and pestilence, famine and fire took a toll of men, women and children, and coupled with a vast immigra-

tion left a complement of helpless survivors —destitute old people, abandoned children and other unfortunates. All these poor people were cared for by the benevolence of their neighbours in ways both public and private, but that was never enough.

For the years before St. Brigid's was started in 1856 there are records that show the Committee of Management of St. Patrick's paying for the upkeep of disabled old people, parishioners. For example on May 31, 1841, the *Minute Book* stated:

the treasurer was ordered to pay 2/6 per week for the maintenance of Granny Burke commencing on the 10th of May. (about 75 cents)

also, in November of 1842 the Chairman, Reverend Mr. McMahan

brought before the meeting the case of the Widow Willoughby a distressed woman with but one leg, also the case of Sarah McGoughen who had also lost a leg. The Treasurer was ordered to pay them each 7/6 per month until countermanded. (about \$2.50)

The records show that in 1852 Granny Bruke was still receiving her 2/6 a week. Mrs. Willoughby died that year in May, still on the relief roll of the parish.

The work of the pastor and his committee was not, however, confined only to efforts by themselves, isolated from the life of the city. They joined the French in many things. When the Saint Vincent-de-Paul Society was brought to Quebec in 1845, members of St. Patrick's were present for its foundation meetings and came forward to unite their efforts with those of the French Canadians in extending the work of the society. A St. Patrick's Council of the Saint Vincent-de-Paul Society under the Chairmanship of John Patrick O'Meara was started in 1846, the first of five parish councils that cared for the Irish in different corners of the city. This was not the first instance of organized care of the unfortunate, but it is a significant one for it exemplified exactly what McMahan wished for: "peace, harmony and good understanding". And the time for everyone to exercise that good understanding —to the fullest— came soon enough as the problem of orphan care in the city became

more and more acute, and Irish Catholics were not the only ones who suffered. As early as 1832, for example, the first cholera epidemic left forty orphans under the care of the rector of the Metropolitan (Anglican) Church, Dr. G.J. Mountain. To care for them, he called together the heads of the families of his congregation by a notice in the *Quebec Mercury* on July 3, 1832. But of course, the care of children and others could not be a hit-or-miss affair. Quebec saw the foundation of a long lasting institution in 1831 when two separate groups of warm hearted and energetic ladies began to look after the education and the welfare of poor children and orphans. One group in the Upper Town under the leadership of Mrs. Jean Thomas Taschereau (mother of the future Cardinal of Quebec, Elzéar Alexandre Taschereau) called itself "Société d'éducation sous la direction des Dames Charitables de la Cité de Québec". The other group, in the Lower Town or St. Roch's, was founded by Mrs. F.X. Paradis under the name of "Société Charitable des Dames de Québec pour le soulagement des orphelins". Mrs. Paradis had, in fact, taken twelve little children into her own home.

In 1834 these two societies merged and purchased a house and property at the corner of des Glacis and Richelieu Street in Upper Town. Under a new name, just a little shorter than either of the previous ones, "Société des Dames Charitables de Québec", they organized and managed a school and orphanage in that building. The ladies who made up "Les Dames Charitables de Québec" in 1834 were representative of the best that society can offer of benevolence and charity. They also show us the determination of these ladies to care for all the children. The names give us a cross section of some of the leading families of the city:

Josephite Van Felson (Mrs. John Bryan Woolsey)
Marie Émilie Gauvreau (Mrs. James Prendergast)
Mrs. Henry Murray
Suzanne Aubert de Gaspé (Mrs. Judge William Power)
Archange Baby (Mrs. John Cannon)
Mrs. William King McCord (née Arnoldy)
Mrs. Ulric Tessier (née Kelley)

In 1842 the annual report of the society showed that in their first ten years of existence they had cared for 1,547 children in their school for a total cost of \$8,100. Of that amount, \$180. went for a teacher and \$60. for her assistant.

The teacher, Henrietta Chaffers, was bilingual, according to the inspectors Fathers Parent and Demers who wrote that she spoke French and English equally well. Again, testimony to the fact of Irish and French working together. Her later assistant was named Anne McMahan, a further indication that English speaking as well as French children lived in the orphanage.

About 1845 or so Bishop C.F. Turgeon of Quebec had been writing to Bishop Bourget of Montreal concerning the need for Sisters to come to Quebec to take over the orphanage founded by Les Dames Charitables. In 1849 his pleas were answered when five Sisters of Charity (Grey Nuns) and their superior Mère Marie Anne Marcelle Mallet came to the school and orphanage on des Glacis and took the reins of management from Les Dames Charitables. They had even managed to find an Irish nun in Montreal, the novice Sister Sainte-Marie, Mary Alice Dunn, daughter of John Dunn and Ellen O'Connor. It was understood that she would be especially useful in the orphanage caring for the little Irish children. And there were already a large number of them here and there in the City. Even before she left Montreal, Mère Mallet had been informed that Father McMahan of St. Patrick's was caring for thirty-three little children orphaned by epidemic.



Dramatics were always part of the program: Mary McHugh at the piano.



Piano, fiddle and step dancer, there were frequent occasions for merriment in the men's smoker.

CHAPTER II

ST. BRIGID'S HOME

*The origins of Saint Brigid's **

The exact chronology of the establishment is hard to reconstruct. There is no doubt that children were being cared for by generous families, as well as by devoted ladies in the orphanages. That the Irish were trying to gather all their orphans into one institution also appears true. In 1836 a petition was circulated by John Molloy and presented to Governor Gosford on behalf of the British Catholics of Quebec asking "for assistance towards the *completion* of an orphan asylum." In 1846 Father James Nelligan, curate at Saint Patrick's, rented a house on Ste. Hélène Street to shelter children. During the terrible summer of 1847 *sheds* were hastily put up in Saint Patrick's church yard for more poor children off the typhus-ridden ships. Most of these children were adopted. Those who were not taken into families were later cared for by the Grey Nuns. During the pressing days of 1847 and even later, many children were absorbed into families with no records kept but in the hearts of parents. For example, Mr. and Mrs. John Nesbitt (shipbuilder) parishioners of St. Patrick's, had at first opened their home on Prince Edward Street, simply as a place for children to wait for their sick parents to be discharged from the Marine and Emigrant Hospital. In the face of the hopeless situation, the Nesbitts

* The name is variously spelled: St. Bridget's, Ste Brigitte, St. Brigid (1927) and St. Brigid's. In 1970 the committee chose St. Brigid for the name.

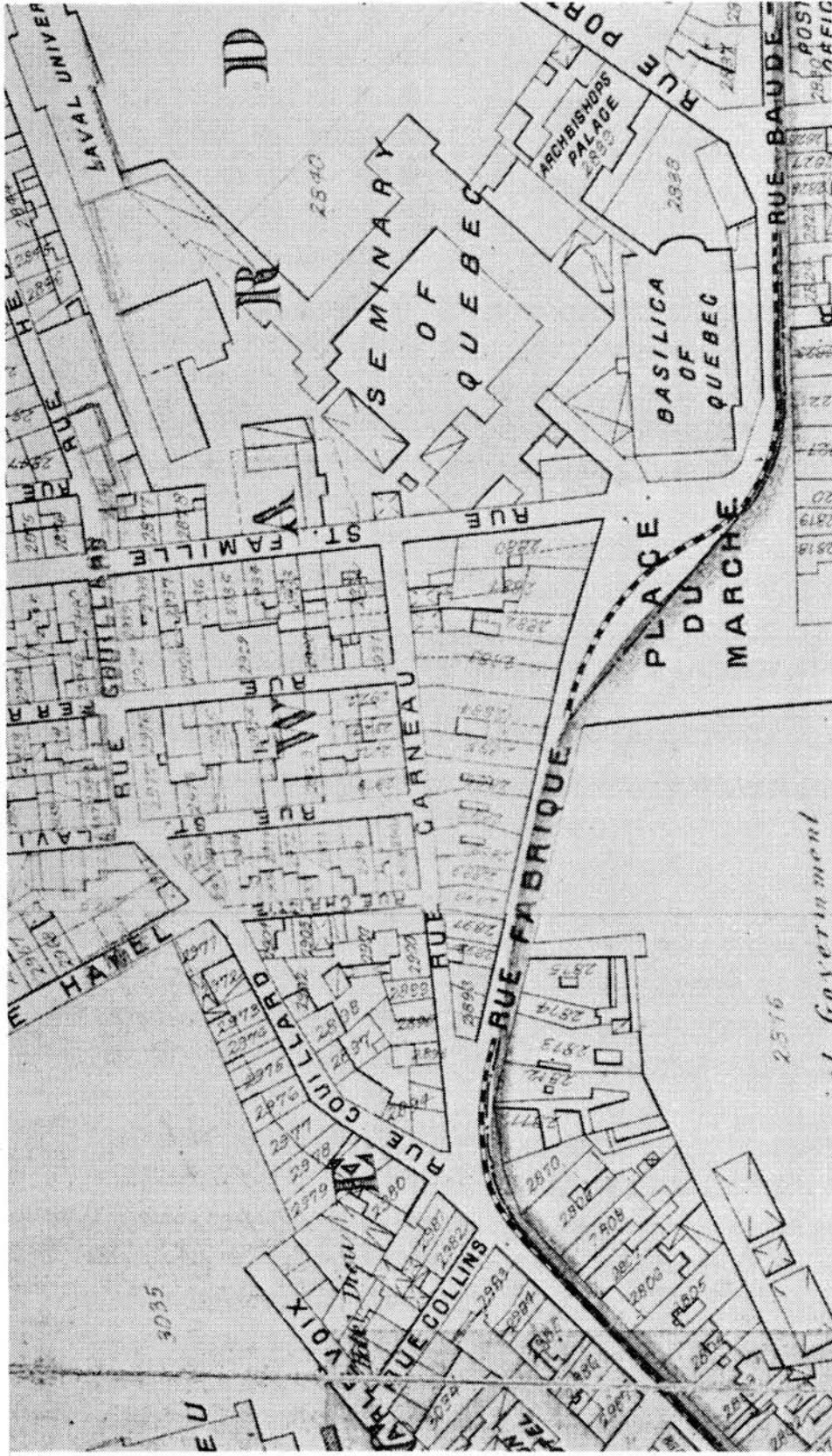
converted their home into an orphanage. In 1848 the Committee of Saint Patrick's Church ordered that 200 be sent to the Archbishop for the "care of orphans of last summer's emigration". At the same time, money was being allotted by the Committee to the Saint Vincent-de-Paul Society for the same ends. Apparently some children were not then directly under the care of the priest at St. Patrick's.

The real beginning

Father McMahon died in October 1851 and Father James Nelligan succeeded him. It was Father Nelligan's intention to carry out "the other important projects" that Father McMahon had hinted about years before. Sometime in these early days of the 1850s, Father Nelligan and Mrs. John Connolly (probably Bridget Foley) took up a collection "among the non-coms and enlisted men of the Barracks near the Cathedral" (present City Hall 1981) for the specific object of orphan care. Before Father Nelligan could act on the project he was replaced as pastor by Father Bernard McGauran.

Father Bernard McGauran was born in Sligo on August 14, 1821. He came to Quebec with his father and mother and others. Like many of the Irish he went to the college at Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière. He completed his studies at the Séminaire de Québec and was ordained by Bishop Signay in 1846. He served at Grosse Ile in the summer of 1847, where he took sick, recovered and went back again. In 1856, he succeeded Father James Nelligan at Saint Patrick's Church. St. Patrick's was granted Parish status and got the right to keep its own registers that year. The parish was large enough for him to have assistants living in the Presbytery (built by Father Nelligan on St. Stanislas Street): P. Clark, P. Kelly and J. Murphy. McGauran left St. Patrick's in 1873 when the Redemptorists came. He died in Goderich, Ontario in 1882 and is buried in St. Patrick Cemetery, Sillery, in his family plot.

Father McGauran used the "soldiers' money" to rent a house on St. Stanislas Street. On December 9, 1856, Anne Walley, the first of many Irish women, took up residence at



Hopkins' map of Quebec, 1879. Couillard Street appears, also lot no. 2816, Provincial Government: formerly the Barracks.

the new St. Brigid's. One characteristic of the Home has been its adaptability, intended for children, it quickly housed destitute ladies, old men, working women and of course, over the years, hundreds of children.

The first bazaar

In December of 1856 a bazaar was organized, the first of many, by a group of ladies of St. Patrick's Parish, to raise money for the support of St. Brigid's Asylum*, as it was first called. The advertisements in the Quebec Gazette for AN IRISH BAZAAR stated that the Asylum "has been established for the support of the aged, infirm and destitute members of the congregation". The ad continued:

Donations and clothing, provisions of furniture are earnestly solicited for this object from the charitably disposed, who may either send such donations to the Asylum, St. Stanislas Street, or may have the same sent for by leaving their names and addresses at the St. Patrick's Presbytery or at the Asylum (Dec. 1856, QUEBEC GAZETTE)

The repetition of names of the ladies who worked preparing for the four days of the bazaar will probably strike notes of familiarity for old Quebec families: the Secretary Mary E. Connolly had the following notice put in the Gazette:

The bazaar will open at 3 p.m. on the first day and 10 a.m. on the three following days. Price of admission is 8d; children half price. Mrs. H. O'Neill, Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. P. Regan will preside at the refreshment table.

Anyone wishing to leave donations of money or effects may leave them with:

Mrs. Charles Alleyn (Zoé Aubert de Gaspé)
Mrs. J. Parkin (Catherine Bradley)
Mrs. E.G. Cannon (Johanna Conroy)
Mrs. C.J. Ardouin (Mary Teed)
Mrs. L. Stafford (Mary Wherry)
Mrs. Colfer (Elizabeth Henley)

* (The connotation of mental institution used to cause people to whisper the name when that attitude was in vogue, but the name was chosen with its real meaning of a safe place).

Mrs. John Murnagh (Mary Kelly)
Mrs. J. Quinn
Mrs. J. Flanagan
Mrs. Lilly
Mrs. Lane
Mrs. Whitty
Mrs. O'Farrell
(Feb. 10, 1857 QUEBEC GAZETTE)

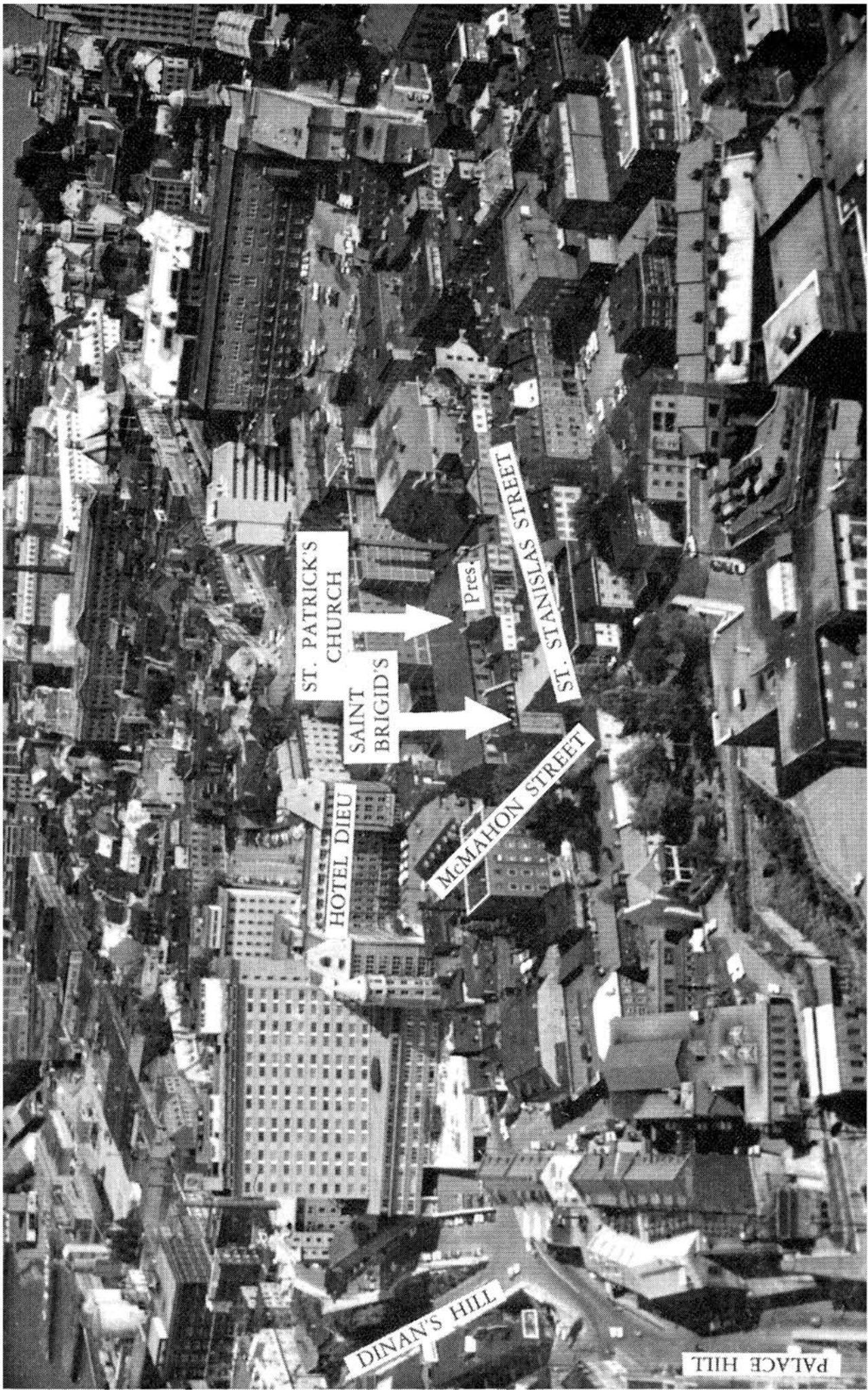
From McMahon Street to Grande Allée

In that early period McMahon Street was still known as Ste. Hélène Street. The name of St. Stanislas has not been changed. The bazaar advertisement said that the house was on St. Stanislas Street. The Grey Nuns Annales said that the house was on Ste. Hélène Street. Should a house be found on the corner of these, it would explain matters. Such a house existed and still does, and other evidence points to it. The house on the south-east corner of St. Stanislas and St. Hélène was offered for sale to Saint Patrick's by its owner, Mr. Newton, in 1845.¹ At the time, the parish was busy extending the size of the church and could not purchase the property. However, in 1858, a contract shows that the Parish ordered plumbing work to be done on that house, still owned by Mr. Newton, on April 17.² The ladies and children had moved into the Grande Allée house on April 11. Perhaps that house had been the one rented by Father McGauran.

From 1856 until the spring of 1858 the house near the church served to care for several old ladies and a handful of children. But necessity soon swept everything forward. In a series of swift-moving events Father McGauran founded the St. Brigid's Asylum Association and an agreement was reached with the Grey Nuns to provide some Sisters for the Home. Not only that, but, early in 1858 the Association was in a sound enough financial position to negotiate for a lot of land from the Committee of Management of the Church. The lot was a piece of ground 200 feet long and half as wide 'on the Plains of

1. Minute Book St. Patrick's April 14, 1845

2. ACQ greffe Philippe Huot no. 1852, Quebec, April 17, 1858.



ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH

SAINT BRIGID'S

HOTEL DIEU

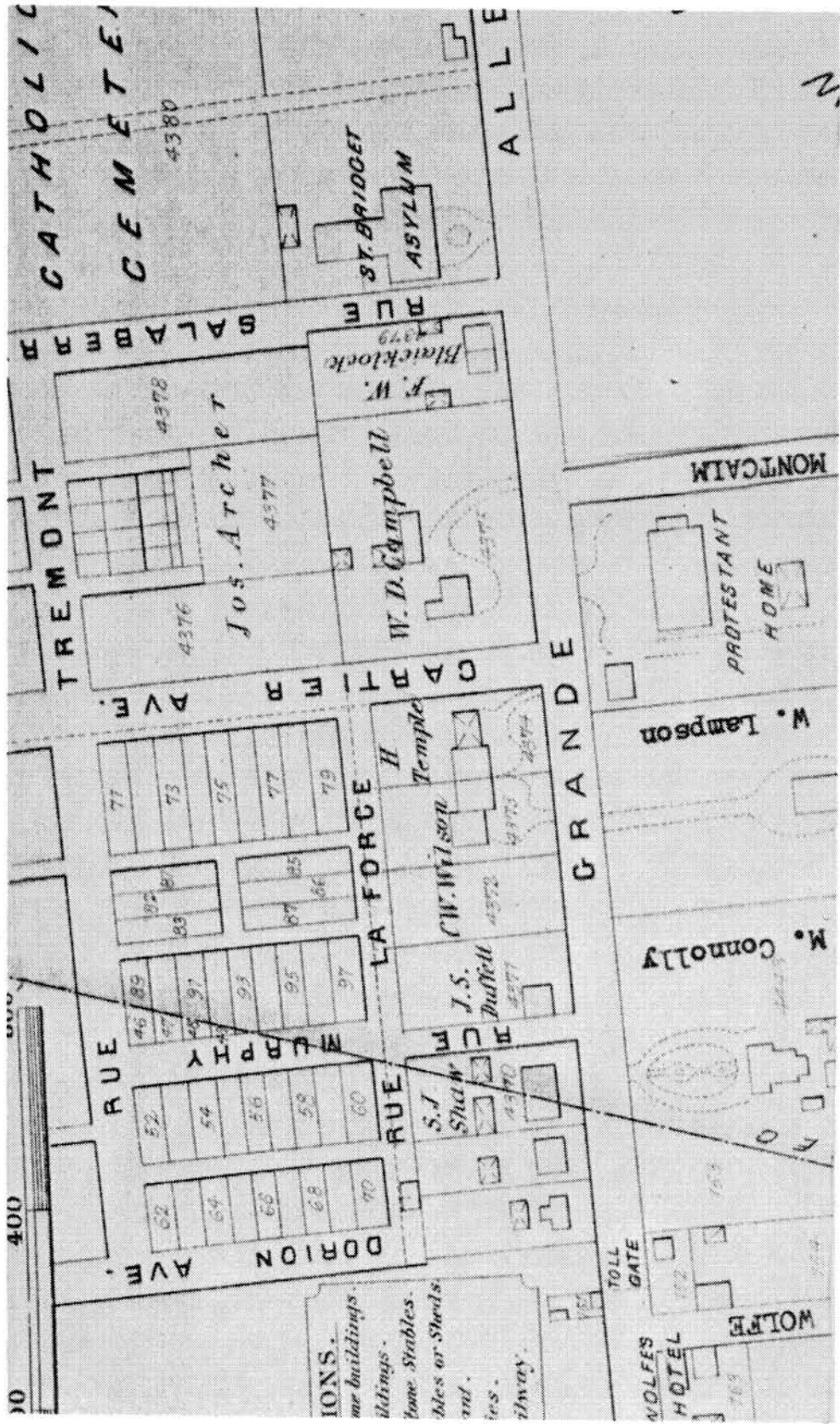
McMAHON STREET

ST. STANISLAS STREET

Pres.

DINAN'S HILL

PALACE HILL



Hopkins' Quebec, 1879: St. Bridget Asylum on Salaberry St. Cartier Avenue retained its name; other names changed.

Abraham' say the old descriptions, the western half of the cholera burying ground of 1832, i.e. on the corner of Grande Allée and De Salaberry Avenue. On it stood a sturdy old barracks 40 feet by 60 feet in size. The Committee bought lot and building from the Fabrique of Notre-Dame de Québec for \$4,000, handed it over to the St. Brigid's Asylum Association which made the necessary repairs and alterations to the building. On April 11, 1858 the people from McMahan Street moved in. Parish tradition says that there was grumbling by both residents and parishioners that the new Home was too far away from the Church, that the priest would never get there in time if somebody were sick—a tradition of complaint revised and observed in plenitude in the 1970s. Nonetheless, they moved.

The Parish had had satisfactory dealings with the Grey Nuns in the des Glacis orphanage, and hence asked them to assume charge of the new establishment, and thus it was that about twenty old (?) ladies and five or six children were accompanied to their new dwelling by two Grey Nuns, Sister Youville Lavignon and Sister St. Ignace Mahon, another French Canadian-Irish team.

For the year or so on McMahan Street, the Asylum had been in the charge of a matron, Miss Anna Bradley, who with the assistance of the St. Patrick's Ladies' Charitable Society, looked after the daily maintenance and interior running of the Home, while the St. Brigid's Asylum Association (the men) provided the extras that the Home needed.

Anna Maria Bradley was the daughter of Dr. Robert Bradley, the sister of lawyer Joseph Power Bradley, and sister-in-law of John Buckworth Parkin, another well-known Quebec city lawyer. Not much wealth was connected with Miss Bradley's years at St. Brigid's but a treasured memory among her brother's and sister's descendants lives on. A prayer book, and a little china match container are in the possession of the Parkin O'Donnell family. Miss Bradley, during both periods when she was associated as director or matron with St. Brigid's, tried to impress upon it that character of home that the original foundation had been able to create and maintain.

When the Grey Nuns assumed charge, the Mother

General, Mère Mallet, in the spirit of religious of the age perhaps foresaw some difficulties in such an arrangement involving too frequent dealings of her nuns with seculars. In an attempt to spell out duties, responsibilities, privileges and limits, she drew up a contract between the community and the St. Brigid's Association. Father McGauran acted as go-between. The contract was evidently accepted verbally, but offhandedly, by the gentlemen of the Association. One can gather at this point in the reporting of the events in the *Annales* as well as in the exchange of correspondence that from the very beginning there were misunderstandings. The Sisters tried to maintain a convent order in the house they had taken over, and the committee men tried to continue what they considered to be their duty and their rightful role in the institution they were supporting. The *Annales* report, somewhat indignantly, that the men of the committee insisted on visiting the premises without warning; that the committee complained when a young French Canadian girl was hired by the Nuns; that they objected to the Nuns buying their supplies from other than Irish merchants (when, remarked the writer of the *Annales*, the French Canadian merchants gave better prices). All this occurred within the short space of the first summer. In September of 1858 the Secretary of the St. Brigid's Asylum Association wrote to the Mother General of the Grey Nuns acknowledging the committee's awareness of the complaints. Though the language is elegantly Victorian, it is a very uncomfortable sounding letter:

we believed we were acting within the rule; we thought everything was to the satisfaction of the Sister in charge, she "never having intimated to us anything to the contrary; it is with no small degree of surprise and regret that we learn that anything should have occurred calculated to create the impression that these visits were made for the purpose of seeing how the duties of the Sisters were performed", and so on and on.

The rest of the letter continued in the same restrained tone reiterating the desire of the committee to see to the smooth running of the house, but stating that they wished to continue visiting (at predetermined times) and receiving regular financial reports without which they could not function in their

capacity of providers.

Not one word was said in the letter about the contract that Mère Mallet desired them to sign, although they had evidently seen it from their references to “accordance with the rules” or “it was always understood that the Sisters should have the right of refusing”, and so on.

The first conflict of principles of management did not have a happy ending. There were exchanges between Mère Mallet and the Committee at one time, or with Father McGauran at other times. On April 4, McGauran wrote to Mère Mallet,

« Je regrette beaucoup d'avoir à vous annoncer que le Comité de l'Asile de Ste-Brigitte ne veut pas consentir aux demandes réitérées que vous leur avez faites. J'ai le bonheur d'être && B. McGauran. »

But evidently the Sisters did not withdraw from St. Brigid's right away. Later that month, Mère Mallet demanded a show-down. If the proposed contract were not signed, said she, by May 14, she would be forced to withdraw her sisters to the Motherhouse. When no signatories appeared on the evening of May 14, the two Sisters regretfully said goodbye to their charges and to Father McGauran, and returned to the Motherhouse. It would be eighteen years before their return. In the meantime Father Edward Bonneau, who had served as curate at St. Patrick's from 1850 to 1854, persuaded Miss Anna Maria Bradley to return and take temporary charge of the budding establishment. It would be sixteen years before she too changed her position and relinquished the job that she had agreed to take temporarily, and gratuitously. In the ensuing years, the Home continued to carry on its work, sheltering the needy, supported by the men and women of the Irish community of Quebec.

With an astuteness that belies the stereotyped Irishman's “agin' the government” attitude, the Association in 1859, had made application to the legislature for incorporation. With the skilfull parliamentary help of Irishman Charles Alleyn, parishioner of St. Patrick's and well known public figure of the day, the bill became an Act of Incorporation of Saint Bridget's Asylum Association in 1860, passing without some of the damaging sub-clauses that other incorporations had included.

Other plans

Some people call the Irish dreamers, others call them men of vision. The people of the parish of St. Patrick's had a vision. They were not content with simply having a home that would care for the orphans and old people. They had a grand vision of a motherhouse at St. Brigid's. The correspondence between the men of the association and the Archbishop, both before and after the return of the Grey Nuns is filled with their dream of setting up St. Brigid's as the motherhouse of a community that would attract their daughters to religious life and guarantee the continuance of service, and a flourishing existence for the home.

With this project in mind, the committee men approached various communities: the Sisters of the General Hospital and the Good Shepherds of Quebec. However, the Association found that the conditions of the cloistered rule of the former, with their need for a large private enclosed garden or yard could not be met. As to the latter community, the Good Shepherds, letters from parishioners to the Archbishop show that their work of caring for penitents was considered out of keeping with the work of St. Brigid's in its sheltering of old people and orphans. In the long run, when finally negotiations resulted in the return of the Grey Nuns, the Association had to content itself not with a Motherhouse but simply with a clause in the contract stating that the Grey Nuns would always provide four Irish nuns for St. Brigid's.

The dream stayed around for a long time. In 1902 the committee repeated their request to Cardinal Taschereau. He very kindly pointed out that the Irish population of Quebec had diminished considerably (from 12,000 in 1871 to less in 1901) and that such a group would not be able to support the expense of a Motherhouse—maintain the large buildings with separate novitiate and so on that a Motherhouse in those days required.

Even though the idea died, for a long time Saint Brigid's was well served by "Irish girls" who had joined the Grey Nuns, until the situation in the 1940s became almost ridiculous. The rule concerning Irish nuns resulted in a rotation system, in



1877

1927

Golden Jubilee

"Praises sing to God our Lord!
May He still in blest affection,
Keep Thy Name in benediction
And thy zeal its crown award."

Royal Tribute of Praise and Gratitude

to the

Reverend Sisters of Charity

For their

Fifty Years of Devotedness

— In —

St. Brigid's Home.

"A Golden span of Love
They have measured, O! Master Good!
In sun and storm beneath Thy Cross,
Unflinching they have stood.
When the sapphire gates of thy glorious Home,
At their touch shall open be,
The cross for a diadem fair, Thou'lt change,
In Eternal Jubilee."

"All praise to St. Patrick, who brought to our mountains
The gift of God's faith the sweet light of His Love!
All praise to the Shepherd, who showed us the fountains,
That rise in the Heart of the Saviour above!"



- 1.— SOLEMN HIGH MASS, 9.00 A.M.
St. Patrick's Church, Grande Allée.



- 2.— BENEDICTION OF THE MOST BLESSED
SACREMENT, 3.00 P.M. - St. Brigid's Chapel.



"High let us all our voices raise
In that heroic Virgin's praise!
Whose name with saintly glory bright
Shines in the starry realms of light



BRIGHT SAINT, O BRIGID'S BLEST!

Enthroned in choirs above!

Hear our lays, thee to praise.
From you bright realm, now deign to hear,
Our fervent hymn and humble prayer.
Now before thee, we implore thee,
That we thy joys, thy bliss may share.

1.—Overture: "ST. PATRICK'S DAY"

by the Children of Mary's Orchestra.

* * *

2.—Jubilee Chorus: "LO! WE BRING A WREATH OF
[HONOUR"]

by the Children of the Home.

* * *

3.—Address: IN THE NAME OF THE INMATES, PAST
[AND PRESENT.]

* * *

4.—Recitation: "THE SISTER OF CHARITY"

* * *

5.—THE LAUREL WREATH AND FESTIVE GARLAND
[DRILL.]

* * *

6.—ST. BRIGID'S FIRE BRIGADE.

* * *

7.—IRISH SELECTIONS . . . By the Children of Mary's
[Orchestra.]

8.—“THE TALL TOP HAT” - - - Boys' Action Song.

• • •

9.—FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY - Girls' Dialogue.

• • •

10.—SET OF QUADRILLES - - - by the ANCIENTS.

• • •

11.—ADDRESS, & PRESENTATION OF PURSE

• • •

12.—Final Chorus : “O CANADA !”

GOD SAVE IRELAND.

which the same four, and later two Irish nuns, alternated as Superior and subjects of the Home (and this within living memory).

Changing styles

In the meantime the character of the "Asylum" was gradually changing to that of a real "Home". In 1860 when there were twenty eight ladies living at St. Brigid's, several of them were "serving girls on temporal relief". When they obtained work, out they went, knowing that the Home was there for them to return to. Thus there were, all through the times on de Salaberry, a number of working men and women who called St. Brigid's "Home". In Father McGauran's time, the twenty eight ladies mentioned above were watched over by a committee of almost twenty! There was plenty of parish involvement.

With Father McGauran ever attentive to the activities of the Home (his name is on the admission list for all the years he was pastor), the Saint Brigid's Asylum Association carried out their work of seeing to the day-to-day week-to-week running of the Home. The annual bazaar, according to the newspaper reports was a highlight of the year. Its results were usually published along with the Association's annual report in the Morning Chronicle. The 1872 report of the bazaar (under the patronage of the Countess of Dufferin, the Governor General's wife) makes interesting reading:

Saint Patrick's Society donated \$50.00; the Ship Labourers \$30.00; the estate of Rev. Clark \$150.00; and estate of Mrs. Lawrence Doyle \$10.00; the bazaar itself had brought in \$3,418. The living expenses in the following year at the Home for about 70 people amounted to \$2,125.93.

No comment is offered on the following list:

Oatmeal, bread and flour	\$440.25
Meat, Fish and butter	399.11
Groceries	550.01
Vegetables	69.33
Grazing Cows, bran	90.59

Firewood, Cartage	279.32
Bed, bedding, clothing	297.32
TOTAL:	\$2,125.93

The auditors Thomas Heatley and Edward Foley ordered the Secretary Maurice O'Leary to congratulate the Ladies. At about this time, despite the fact that Saint Brigid's was incorporated on its own, the St. Brigid's Association was submitting its annual report to the Congregation of St. Patrick's. M.F. Walsh and David Nolan were committee members along with O'Leary. The Home managed, with an occasional government grant ranging from £ 400 to £ 700 annually, to remain debt free. The reason for this was the outstanding generosity of the people. Every year brought bequests large and small. Residents frequently left substantial amounts to the Home. Prominent Quebec families made it a custom to contribute money, and specific gifts at Christmas time. More of that later.

In 1872 Miss Bradley resigned as matron of the Home. She continued to live there, and received a pension of a hundred dollars a year from the committee. She was succeeded as matron by "the widow Glavin". This lady was born Agnes O'Shaugnessy, had married Thomas Glavin at St. Patrick's in 1866, and here she was a widow in 1872. Was Miss Bradley's resignation caused by the same problems that led Widow Glavin to invoke the assistance of the Archbishop? Liquor or language? The Archbishop's Grand Vicar, C.F. Cazeau, who is fondly remembered for his care of orphans in 1847, was sent to conduct an inquiry. One wonders whether he laughed as he listened to the testimony. An abbreviated version of his long report follows. Only Mrs. Glavin's name appears, in order to avoid casting suspicion on our glorious ancestors!

Mrs. Glavin: Liquor was brought in four or five times during the summer, by Mrs. P... a boarder. I also saw an old woman aged about 54 years (!) had taken liquor about three times. No, they were not noisy, and they did not curse, they were inclined to go to bed.

Miss E.N., nurse who looked after the children: I saw Mrs. P... drunk once. The old women sometimes come down and the children hear them saying bad words. Cook G. had a



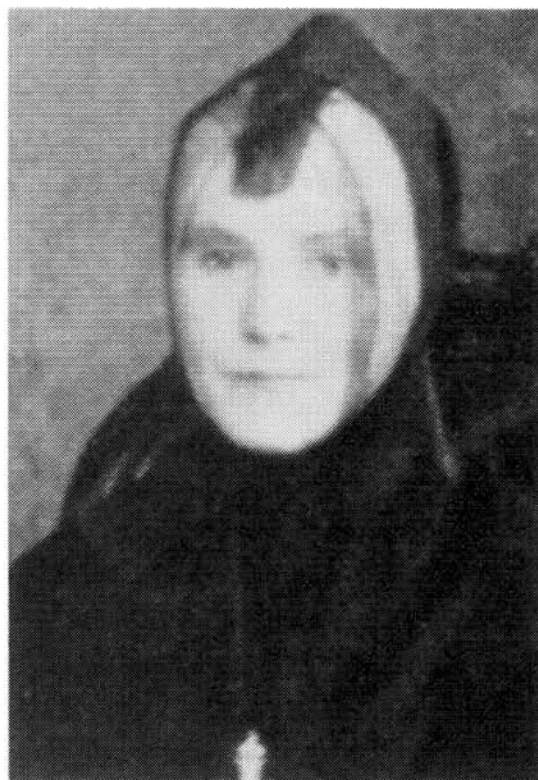
Sister St. Ammône



Sr. St. Brigid



Sister St. Patricia



Sr. St. Patrick

Dearly remembered friends — the Grey Nuns Sisters of Charity of Quebec.

bottle, but Matron took it away from her. She threw a knife at a servant.

J.M., the man servant: There's no fighting or drunkenness around here. Some angry words in a quarrel with Cook G. I heard that she threw a knife at me, but I did not see it, nor do I believe it. We were good friends a couple of hours later.

D.C.C., widow, 6 years resident: I have no knowledge of drinking or blows; sometimes there is disputing and words exchanged. My late husband was a timber tower. I teach catechism and prayers. The children are good and docile and improve much by being here. I cannot write from cataracts.

K.K., 60 years old: I have seen an odd drop now and then. No fighting, no blows, only words.

Even though financial reports appeared favorable, perhaps it was accusations like those in the above that led to the return of the nuns.

Return of the Grey Nuns

Felix Carbray, Trustee of St. Patrick's, member of St. Brigid's Association, whose cousin was a Grey Nun, was perhaps the one able to make the approaches to the Sisters to ask them to return to the care of St. Brigid's. This time the members of the Association remembered their lesson about contracts, and on February 13, 1877, before Notary John B. Parkin (brother-in-law of Miss Bradley), was signed the document that stated the conditions under which the Grey Nuns would resume charge, (« conditions un peu difficiles à remplir » commented the writer of the *Annales*).

The signers were Reverend Michael Burke, C.S.S.R., chaplain of St. Patrick's; Honorable John Hearne, Member of the Legislative Council; Henry O'Connor, merchant; and James Shea, merchant (acting as duly constituted attorney for Felix Carbray, merchant); for the Grey Nuns: Sister Delima Gauvin, Superior (Sr. Marie du Sacré-Cœur); Sister Mary Mahon (Sr. St. Louis, Assistant) and Sister Philomene Godbout (Sr. St. Marthe, Mistress of Novices) signed. The contract was for five years only and gave the management of the House to the Nuns: they must see to the upkeep of the

building and grounds, and to care for the inmates (except those who prove refractory!) (who ever heard of a refractory Irishman???) providing proper food and clothing and spending some time of each day in the education of the children. The right of admission and discharges of residents was left to the trustees of the Association —the Sisters, however, to judge how many above the agreed minimum of sixty the house could hold. Annual reports of finances and of admission and discharge were to be made to the Trustees. Thus it is that we know that from 1856 to 1945 the Home cared for 590 men and 1383 women and 2223 children. The Trustees agreed to pay to the Motherhouse of the Grey Nuns for the upkeep of the Novitiate \$12.00 per year for each Sister who worked at the Home, in addition to a stipend for the upkeep of the Sisters themselves. The contract was renewable after five years.

True to the signed agreement, the first four Grey Nuns in 1877 met the requirements of being English speaking and perhaps Irish too: Mary Ann Flynn (Sister St. Stanislas), Helen Foster-Rogerson (Sister St. Colombe) Catharine Trihey (Sister St. Rosalie) and Miss Fitzgerald (Sister Marcelle).

When the Sisters arrived on Grande Allée on February 14, 1877 for a preliminary inspection, the children had climbed the trees in front of the house to get a first glimpse of the strangers as they arrived from the Glacis Street Motherhouse. As far as the Sisters were concerned, the House was in deplorable condition. In fact, there was no place for them to sleep. For the next two weeks, therefore, two Sisters commuted every day from the Motherhouse to the Home, working all day to rearrange the household, to take inventory, list the needs and to solicit the help of the ladies of the city for the Bazaar which they judged should be the grand solution to their immediate need to raise funds and draw attention to the new management. Conditions in the house could not have been as black as the *Annales* writer declared, for on March 1, two weeks after their take-over, the house was ready for a solemn opening ceremony presided over by Archbishop Taschereau himself. The Archbishop's interest in the orphans and in the Irish was of long standing. His mother had been a founding member of the original orphanage, and Taschereau

as a young priest had ministered to the typhus victims on Grosse Ile.

The Home children offered a concert in welcoming the Grey Nuns and in greeting the Archbishop —a young lad named Conway recited a very long elaborate speech which he probably only partly understood, but which was the style of the day. The occasion seemed to give the lie to any assessment that the residents of the Home had been neglected during the time there were outside the care of the Grey Nuns. Much of the material on the above has been taken from the *Annales de Ste-Brigitte*, a large volume which combined both handwritten and newspaper clippings of the passing years. Through it is known the established routine of both the residents within the Home and the parishioners surrounding it. In addition, Quebec's daily, *The Morning Chronicle* carried the Annual reports and the public thank you of both the Committee and the Grey Nuns.

In 1881 within four years of their return to St. Brigid's the Sisters and the parish were preparing for the 25th anniversary of the Home. On that occasion the newspapers reported the Masses and sermons, the banquets, the speeches, the visits and the presentations by the children. More revealing for us, of the importance of the Home to Quebeckers, and cause for rejoicing was the financial standing of the Home.

The Treasurer that year, Henry O'Connor, and the auditors, Jeremiah Gallagher and Maurice O'Leary reported an endowment fund of more than \$13,000. During the previous twenty five years, the newspaper reported, Bazaars alone had brought in \$30,000.

From the opening of the Asylum, December 1856 to the end of last year, 1880, the entire receipts from all sources amounted to \$115,814.; deducting from this \$30,000. the cost of the buildings as they now stand, and \$13,300. the amount of the Endowment Funds, leaves a balance of \$72,514 which has been the cost of maintaining the institution up to December 1880. This averages an expense of about \$3,000. a year for the last twenty-four years. 755 poor have been admitted into the Asylum since 1856 and the number of discharged and dead is 648... this left at the end of the year 108 residents, not counting servants and Sisters. The fact that the Asylum is free from debt and that so much good has been done for the poor and needy is

owing to the generosity so long and perseveringly evinced in favor of the poor. (Morning Chronicle January 1881)

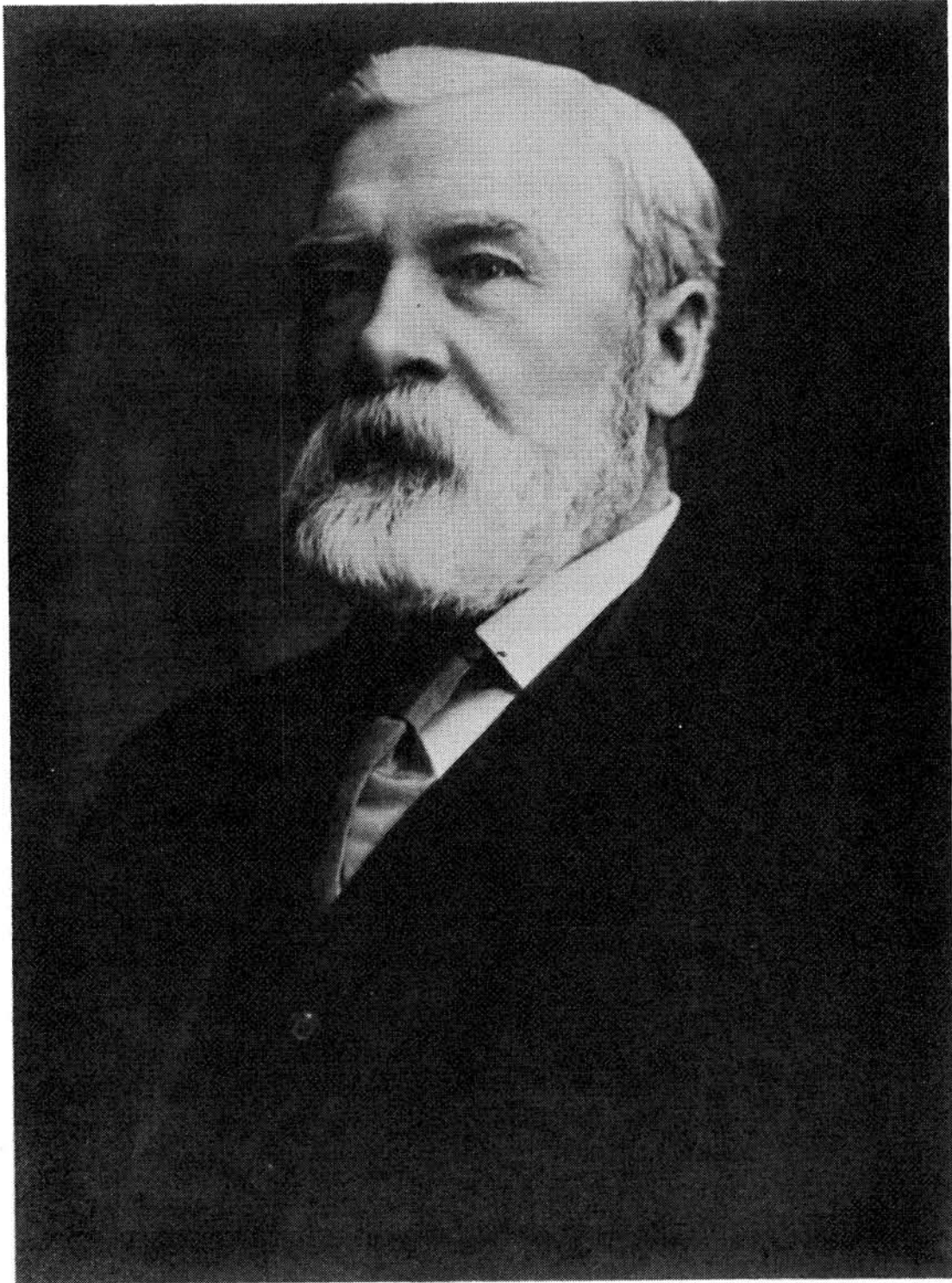
At that time the calculated running expenses were at twelve cents per head, per day. Ordinary income was three cents per head per day. The accountants must have been able to rely on extraordinary income to cover that deficit, since the reports in the newspapers always report good financial standing.



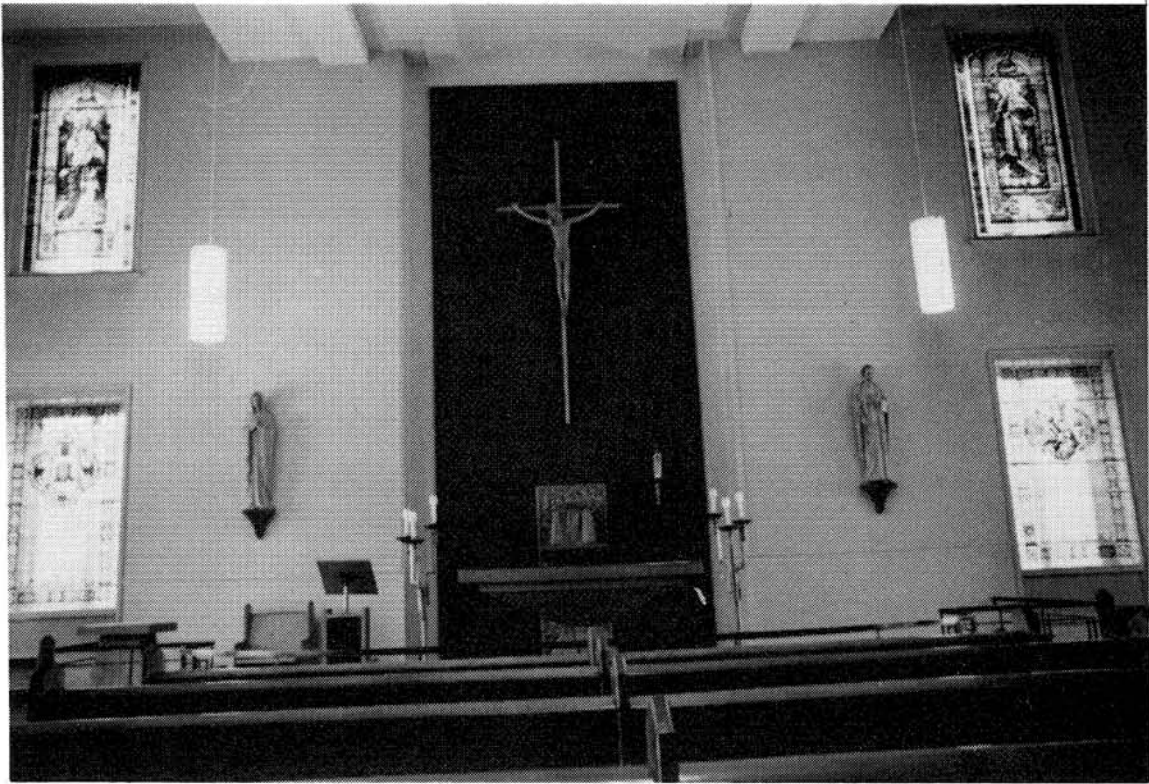
The walls may not speak, but the pictures do —Christmas visit from old St. Nick— staff enjoyed the visit as much as did the residents.



Typical of many of the benefactors of St. Brigid's was John R. O'Neil who organized the first of the Quebec Automobile Club's drives to the country, which became an annual event. John R. O'Neil's daughter Norma Kathleen married Dermot I. O'Gallagher.



Jeremiah Gallagher, C.E., served as auditor and as treasurer for Saint Brigid's Association. His son Dermot O'Gallagher was one of the prime movers for the new Home in 1973, and his grandson Brendan served as President of Saint Brigid's Inc. and St. Brigid's Reception Center from 1974 to 1978.



The very ornate, old fashioned altar with its backdrop of the Légaré Crucifixion, was replaced by a modern straight line design.



In 1963 His Eminence Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston was received as a guest by the Sisters. Father Norman Killingsworth, C.Ss.R., was rector of St. Patrick's.

CHAPTER III

LIFE AT THE HOME

The buildings and their use

Very soon after their arrival on Grande Allée, it was found that the old barracks building was too small. In 1860 a four story stone building was put up on the lot fronting on Grande Allée, at a cost of \$24,000. In 1870 the huge two story, galleried chapel on the western side of that building was dedicated by Archbishop Baillargeon.

On the occasion of the Grey Nuns' return in 1877, the Chapel was beautified: Father Henning, pastor of St. Patrick's gave the huge painting of the Crucifixion from the McMahan Street church as a backdrop for the altar. Joseph Légaré, the artist had given his painting to the church in 1836.* A painting of the Agony in the Garden was given by John Power, a statue of St. Joseph and a sanctuary lamp were given by Mr. Lennon and his sister. Miss Gourdeau and Miss McCormick gave other lamps for the sanctuary. The altar and altar rail were the gift of Mrs. O'Neil, a blind widow, who boarded at St. Brigid's for several years.

In 1882 a third addition was made: that was a combined wash-house, so-called, and stabling. The building was 56' x 40', four and a half stories high, accessible at each floor by a passage, but separated from the first buildings by a sturdy wall. The north east corner served as a stable, and the remainder of the first floor as a laundry. The new building in

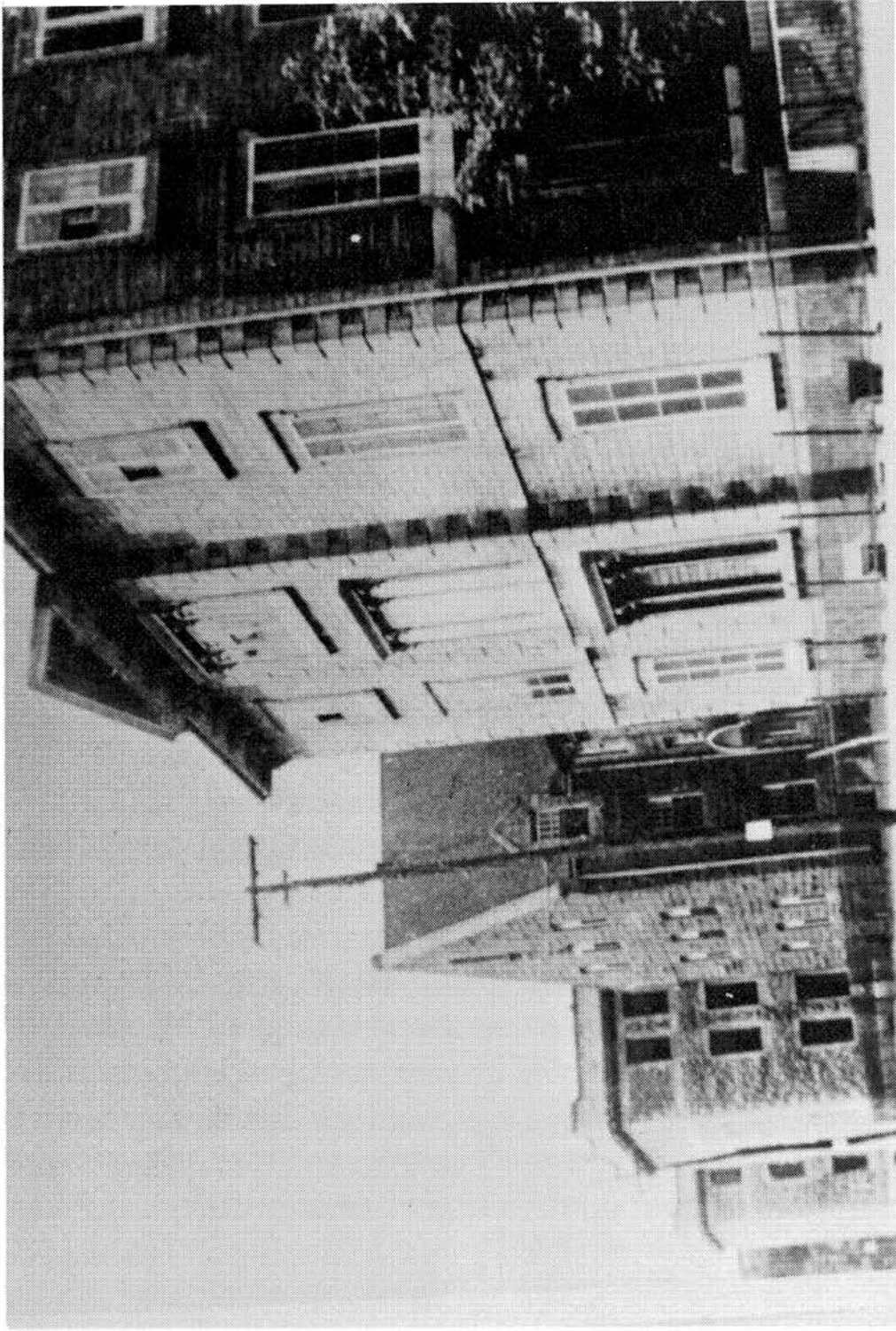
* The Légaré painting is in the Redemptorist Monastery at St. Anne de Beaupré.

1882 was immediately equipped with steam heating, which method was soon introduced to the other buildings. Installation of electricity for lighting from attic to basement was paid for thanks to Andrew J. Behan, yet another of St. Brigid's many benefactors. The Chapel was further beautified in 1902 when Ellen McAnally, widow of François Gourdeau (chief of Pilots and former Harbour master) gave the parquet floor of the sanctuary. Work was done in 1920 by Father Costello. The last building of all was completed in 1929 when Father Arthur Coughlan was Rector. That time the laundry was moved in to the last building on the north end and the new accommodations above provided private rooms and dormitories. The old familiar complex on de Salaberry housed around 150 men and women, some sixty or seventy children, usually 22 or more nuns, and some lay help who also lived in. There were dormitories and private rooms. There were huge parlors and "salles" or halls which could be used for concerts, sales, card parties, bingo, or socializing. There were several dining rooms, the chapel and its sacristy. There were craft rooms and reading corners. However, it was the large infirmaries that made St. Brigid's Home unique and valuable. Old people living at St. Brigid's knew that they need never move out of their familiar surroundings when days of sickness and final helplessness came upon them.

The building also contained the necessary administrative offices, of bursar, of Sister Superior. The pharmacy was well stocked for ordinary as well as emergency care.

The building also contained classrooms incorporated by the Grey Nuns into the Quebec Catholic School Commission. The resident boys and girls received their elementary education there. In 1879 the *Annales* recorded that some local parents enrolled their children in the classes at St. Brigid's, no doubt a satisfactory solution to the problem of sending their little boys to St. Patrick's School on McMahon Street, or the little girls to boarding school or to the Grey Nuns "way in town" at des Glacis.

The Chapel at St. Brigid's served practically as a branch church of old St. Patrick's on McMahon Street, for the many parishioners who were moving "to the suburbs" even before



2

1

3

4

From de Salaberry Avenue: the four successive buildings.



Pioneers in 1944: the Sisters of Charity of Halifax.

Front **R**to **L**: Sisters Mary Jeromina, Marguerite Marie, Anna Seton, Maria Charles (Superior), Rose Vincent, Marion Concepta, Alma Maria.

Middle: Sisters Aloysia Marie, Clare Aloyse, Daniel Marie, Alice Gertrude, Andrea Maria, Martha Mary, Mary Henry, Maria Gratia, Mary Peter.

Top: Sisters Maria Justinian, Mary Vianney, Patrick Maria, Teresa Michael, Mary Theodosia, Francis Thomas.

Many Sisters of Charity were posted more than once at St. Brigid's. So it was with Sister Mary Peter, pictured among the pioneers on page 52. She was Superior of St. Brigid's while it was still on Grande Allée.

World War I. The Sisters at St. Brigid's prepared children for their First Communion celebrated in the chapel. Marriages were performed there, as for instance that of the Home auditor Jeremiah Gallagher and Marianne Corrigan in 1888. Confirmation was administered. The local people attended Sunday Mass and evening Benediction presided over by Father Fahey, the chaplain. Miss Edith Nolan, a boarder for years at the Home, was organist for Saint Patrick's Church (old and new!) and trained a choir of children for liturgical singing as well as for concerts.

And so the full years rolled by bringing changes in Quebec. The Irish population slowly diminished. The Grey Nuns were no longer receiving the numbers of "Irish girls" that the congregation had once attracted. During the 1920s and 30s the congregation provided devoted Sisters to care for St. Brigid's. By the 1940s the slim complement of English speaking Sisters available to do the work was so small that three or four Irish Sisters alternated in positions of responsibility. Sisters St. Ammône, St. Patrick and St. Patricia and St. Brigid are among the best remembered. An agreement was reached and announcements made towards the end of 1943 that the Sisters of Charity of Halifax had agreed to take over St. Brigid's. This congregation was known to the Irish of Quebec since the opening of the Leonard School (for girls) in 1935.

Father Patrick Gallery, C.Ss.R., was the Pastor of Saint Patrick's Parish at the time of the transfer, and he wrote to the departing Grey Nuns on July 18, 1944:

... in a few days you will leave St. Brigid's Home. What memories will cling to you, to us and to the hallowed walls of that house of charity and kindness. Think of the hundreds whose eyes were closed in death and whose souls were tenderly ushered into the arms of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. I can see Sister St. Felix, Patricia, Florence, Dunstan, Brigid, Leah, St. Patrick, Ammon, Ethelbert, "Aggy" and so many others spending sleepless nights and tireless days worrying over their old women and old men and darling girls and boys and the Redemptorists... God love you all... May Our Mother of Perpetual Help hold you in her arms and sustain each of you wherever God's will calls you.

On July 27, 1944, sixteen sisters, with Sister Maria

Charles Morris as Superior, after receiving the keys from Mother St. Florence Boyce of the Grey Nuns, went into the chapel for prayer and with anxious hearts begged God's blessing on the new and extraordinary work they were undertaking.

These new Sisters were able to bring an element of vigour to the Home that had been missing during the years of diminishing energy of the last few Irish Grey Nuns. They tackled the task with humour and thoroughness and lots of help from the friends and relatives of the residents. There were many changes made—but that is a topic outside the immediate scope of this book.

The summer of 1947 brought a new Superior, Sister Mary Grace. Sister built an outdoor crib on the front lawn on Grande Allée for Christmas, 1952—the first outdoor crib in Quebec! The following year she was succeeded by Sister Anita Vincent as Superior.

In 1956, was celebrated the centenary of the Home and the arrival of a new Superior, Sister Maria Gervase. Her arrival was spectacular—every fire truck in Quebec “ringed” the Home as the Church next door burned. Sister was succeeded by Sister Cecily who in one capacity or another was to spend her final days at St. Brigid's.

Sister Cecily was followed by Sister Henry Marie during whose terms the chapel was renovated (1964) and other changes made. St. Brigid's won an international fire safety award for the needed improvements that had taken place. Sister Mary Grace returned to succeed Sister Henry Marie as Superior of the Community.

The role of the superiors over the years had been an all encompassing one. She was Mother and Administrator, of both Sisters and residents, and variously of the children, of staff. She was Public Relations department, and sometimes organizer of outings.

The 1970s brought changes. The multiple administrative roles of the Sisters were subdivided and re-aligned. Sister Mary Grace resigned as “Superior of the Home” in August 1972. A new board, St. Brigid's Reception Center, with H.J. Hannon as administrator took over.

With the coming of the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, there was a new approach to many things. One of the biggest changes occurred in 1948 with the integration of the children into St. Patrick's and the Leonard Schools, both elementary and high school. Up to that time all elementary grades had been taught in the building. In turn this necessitated using the emptied classroom space in St. Brigid's for eighty Grades 1 & 2 (until 1960) children from St. Patrick's.

Care

The Home looked after an average of sixty children a year, until 1970 when there were hardly a handful, due principally to Department of Social Affairs policy of placing children in foster homes rather than in institutions.

The world's literature contains a good number of works chronicling children's experiences in boarding schools or orphanages. Children growing up in circumstances other than the standard mother-father-brothers-and-sisters family circle are bound to have different varieties of memories from the base of that experience. St. Brigid's no doubt shared in the creation of all kinds of memories, both happy and sad. There were runaways, unhappy children, sick children, rebellious and naughty children as well as happy, healthy children there just as there were anywhere. Saint Brigid's children came to the Home from a variety of circumstances: usually loss of one or both parents: immigration epidemics (e.g. typhus in 1847), fires, landslides, flu epidemic in 1918, broken marriages.

Conscious of an element missing in the lives of the orphans, kind people attempted to bring some ordinary fun into the lives of the children. They had a large, well equipped playground. In winter the firemen from the Cremazie Street station made a rink for them. Hockey sweaters were provided for a team of stalwarts. Some innovations grew into custom. In 1912 the Quebec Automobile Club members organized a drive to the Kent House at Montmorency Falls. With the help of John R. O'Neil, it became a yearly feature. Picture the scenario as the orphans from St. Brigid's, the Finlay Home, the Ladies' Protestant Home and the Female Orphan Asylum

went for a drive out to the Falls. Some years the drive ended at the Grey Nuns' farm in Ste. Catherine's. Boat rides and picnics to the Isle of Orleans were provided by benevolent people. Leo McCullen and Georges Tcharos ran a Cub and Scout troop that gave summer outings and jamboree opportunities to the young boys. Not to be forgotten were the regular visits paid by Santa Claus to the Home. Rita Brown in that role along with Gertie Peacock prepared for weeks beforehand, with the collaboration of department heads, for the distribution of gifts that would please everyone, young and old.

In addition to these happy events, there were parties on February 1, St. Brigid's Day, and on the glorious seventeenth. The Kiwanis Club, especially when W.E. O'Reilly and Desmond Hallisey were active, provided fun. Saint Patrick's Literary Institute for years organized the St. Patrick's Matinee and Soiree the proceeds of which went to St. Brigid's, as did the proceeds of the Autumn Festival. Catholic Women's League, Saint Patrick's Old Boys' Association, the Ravenello Choral Society, the Rotary Club, the *Carnaval* duchesses, the choirs of St. Vincent's and St. Patrick's schools, Irish Employees of Quebec Power, Maurice Pollack Stores and many many others adopted St. Brigid's as their favourite visiting place. The benefactors are too numerous to list in a work of this type.

On a smaller scale, but overwhelming when added up were the gifts that poured into the Home at Christmas time. Tobacco, fruit, candy, toys, cosmetics, clothing and money in amounts large and small, were regularly listed in the *Morning Chronicle* Annual Report* with the donors' names.

If one did not give at Christmas time, the opportunity came later, when summertime rolled around! It seemed no one escaped! The Sisters made regular visits around the city collecting bread. Some people preferred to give Hetherington's bread tickets. Generous farmers in Ste. Foy and Little

* In 1913 the *Morning Chronicle* began using the name "Home" instead of Asylum. The *Annales* continued using *Asile* until 1923 when the writer began using Foyer either underlined or in quotations.



Recreational, benevolent and educational: all the Cubs received baseball gloves from the Kiwanis Club: Cullen Keane, Bill O'Reilly, Gerry Monaghan, Leo McCullen, District Commissioner Mel Bancroft, George Tcharos are the adults in the picture. St. Brigid's Wolf Cubs show off their gloves (1950s).



June 1945: Cooking demonstration and sewing exhibition by the first domestic science class.

River and Sillery loaded the Sisters' wagons with foodstuffs when they came around. One summer, the horse, the one and only horse, died. Almost before all the Sisters knew the horse was dead, the Home had another horse donated by a kindly parishioner.

Just reminiscing

The life of the Sisters was one round of work. Usually about twenty or twenty-two Sisters staffed the Home. They rose at five. They did everything that had to be done in the house. They were of course assisted by some lay help. In 1944 when the Sisters of Charity of Halifax took over, nearly all the lay help just up and left! The new Sisters had to make their way to the strange kitchen and figure out how to feed the more than a hundred people waiting for their supper.

At the time of the Spanish flu epidemic in 1918 no one in the Home got the flu, according to the *Annales*. The Sisters went out to help in the hospitals, especially the Laval Hospital. However in 1922 a city wide epidemic of scarlet fever had crowded the Civic Hospital, so ten children who came down with the disease were quarantined on the top floor of the new wing of Saint Brigid's with the Superior isolated there to look after them. She stayed there night and day nursing them, cleaning, feeding them, until they all recovered.

Another time two babies were left at the Home. They couldn't be put in the huge dorm with the other children so the Sister in charge had their cribs brought into her room in order to have her full attention at night.

Another small child was rocked to sleep at night by the Superior. Remembered by Irene Reynolds whose sister Patricia, a Grey Nun, was pharmacist at Saint Brigid's, it fits in with a tale from the *Annales*. A lady had placed a small baby at the Home, an unusual occurrence. She asked for the name of every child in the Home, and what toy each one wanted for Christmas. She fulfilled every wish.

Irene herself gave the senior girls gym classes, and when evenings proved too long regaled them with good story-

telling.

The Sisters were especially attentive to the dying, with the comfort of nursing care, and with all the prayers and consolation they could offer.

During World War I the Sisters felt that they didn't need all that the ration cards allowed so they shared all their food with the residents. This was not too taxing because they had hens which supplied the House with fresh eggs. That is, until that fateful day when the neighbours on de la Tour complained of the rooster waking them at dawn. Away went the rooster—away with the fresh eggs too, except that one more little rooster hatched out of the last batch and the story began over again at the beginning.

Centenarians

When Mrs. McGlynn was only 104 years of age she walked out to Saint Patrick's Cemetery to visit her husband's grave. On the way back a carriage with a lady and gentlemen stopped when she hailed them, and helped her in. "Musha, but you're a fine lady," she remarked. All the way in Saint Louis Road to the gates of the Home, she entertained them with her homely little story of her frequent walks out the road to the cemetery. When they let her off at Saint Brigid's, the fine lady and gentleman let her know that she had been given a lift by Lord and Lady Aberdeen (1873).

Mrs. John Rooney (Mary Caulfield) died at Saint Brigid's Home in 1952 at the age of one hundred. One time when well into her 90s, she remarked to a visitor, "When I look out the window these days I don't see any of my old friends walking by". Mrs. Rooney is remembered as the lady who made two costumes for a fancy dress skating party. Her son wanted to dress up as Pierrot, so Mrs. Rooney sewed up the diamond patterned costume for him. She did not tell him she was making a Pierrette costume for herself. At the party, young Dr. Rooney spent the evening chasing the masked Pierrette around the rink.

Not much is known about other centenarians. The old register has the name of a Mrs. Grennan who came into the



Youth and age sheltered in one home: Centenarian Miss Rose Mulleavy and young friend.



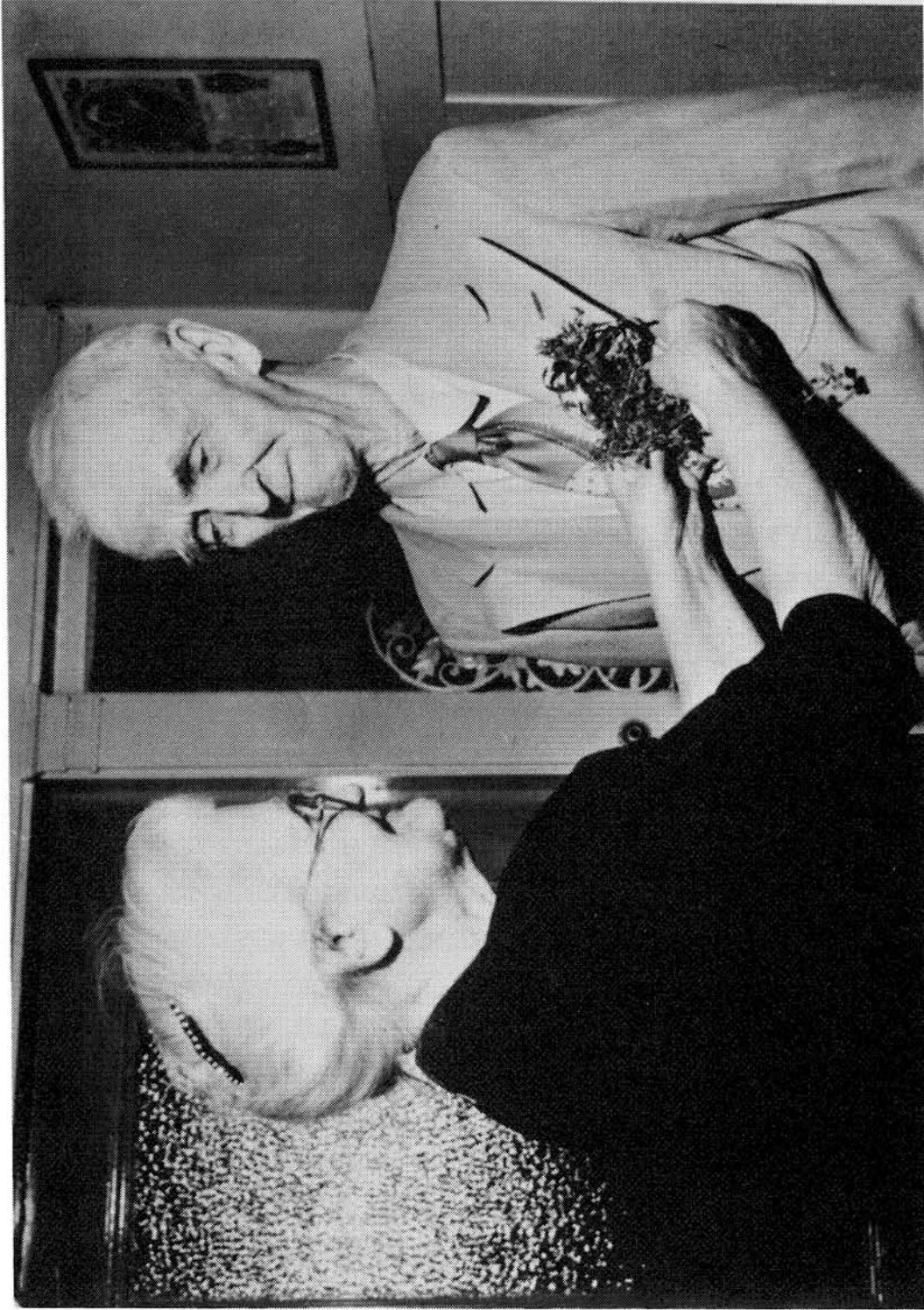
Dignity and contentment.



Miss Fitzpatrick: For years Emily Fitzpatrick *was* Saint Patrick's Social Welfare. She died at St. Brigid's Home in 1965, at the age of 91.



Miss Derouin: Mae Derouin was a school teacher for many years. She is especially remembered for her work in promoting Saint Patrick's Day celebrations —the Matinee and the Soiree. In 1975 she died at St. Brigid's, aged 90.



Saint Patrick's Day in the morning: Anne Fitzgerald pins a bunch of shamrocks on John Percey's lapel.

Home on October 24, 1894 aged 104. She died August 4, 1899, which gives her the grand total of 109 years. Mrs. Muleavy from St. Patrice de Beaurivage is pictured in these pages; she too reached one hundred years. Mrs. Elizabeth Ann McAdams Black born in Sligo died at St. Brigid's in 1972, aged one hundred years and seven months.

Two other important ladies who must not be forgotten: Miss Emily Fitzpatrick, for years the heart and soul of St. Patrick's Social Welfare died on April 12, 1965, aged 91. The other personality of the period was Miss Mae Derouin who as teacher and actress and producer kept many dramatic and musical Irish traditions alive, died on December 26, 1975, aged 90.

Just Stories

The Superior's office and bedroom were on the first floor. One night Sister Mary Grace made her usual late patrol of the building. When she went into her bedroom she found that one of the residents had absent-mindedly wandered in and gone to bed there himself.

One old gentleman was proud of his new slippers which had a silky fringe all around them. He wore them all the time. Tippy (the only bandy-legged dog in creation) liked the fringe too. One day the old man walked slowly down the corridor dragging Tippy whose teeth were well clamped into the fringe. When he met the Sister in charge, the old gentleman said: "I must have had another stroke and it affected my leg".

In the olden days Sisters in their all-enveloping habits were esteemed as on a pedestal —sometimes.

One F.W. stood watching Sister Dorena paint a staircase. Standing there with his arms folded he'd call out to all who passed by, "Look, *she* can't paint."

Sister Teresa Michael, one of the Sisters of Charity of Halifax pioneers of 1944 had this speech made to her by a

young helper in the kitchen practising her English, "Thérèse Michelle, the potatoe are burning, come on, move".

Some people have trouble with names. One resident always very happily pointed to a little wall clock and announced "Sister Mary Grapes gave me that clock".

Way back in the old days, they tell that the ship labourers used to work summers in the Cove and in the winter they headed for Port Arthur, Texas, to do the same work. Their wives and children they put in Saint Brigid's for the winter. One spring a returning bunch of the boys met in one of their favourite watering places.

"Where's Zeph?"

"Oh, he stayed in Port Arthur. He got arrested for arson."

"Well, why didn't he just marry the girl?"

Someone volunteered, "He couldn't, that'd be bigotry. He's got a wife and three kids in Saint Brigid's."

Little Miss X whose mother had died received a visit from her father every Sunday. He always gave her a dollar. Little Miss X didn't like porridge, so a quick transfer of a quarter from one pocket to another meant that her friend, little Miss Y enjoyed two bowls of porridge every day and a quarter every week. You should see sturdy Miss Y today!

The other functions of St. Brigid's

Besides its very practical role of caring for those in need, Saint Brigid's also served as a focal point for the Irish community of Quebec. Long before the schools achieved any prominence, (as far as newspaper coverage shows), St. Brigid's was the place where visiting dignitaries were received and introduced to the Irish of Quebec. Also, when the Irish wished to honour their priests or their fellow citizens, it was at St. Brigid's that the festivities took place. One such occasion was the Golden Jubilee of Right Reverend Charles Felix Cazeau. On January 7, 1880, the Irish of Quebec City extended to him a tremendous reception in which priests and people, led by Felix Carbray and Joseph Archer as trustees with Father

Henning, Rector and the other Redemptorists from Quebec, along with Father J. Eustace Maguire from Frampton with his parishioners M. Fitzgerald, J. Brochu, T.J. Fitzgerald, J. Duff, M. Duff, J. Doyle, D. Cullen, J. Redmond and others, came together to present Msgr. Cazeau with a chalice adorned with shamrocks.

They were honouring him as "The priest of the Irish" for all that he had done in 1847 and in the years following for the hundreds of Irish orphans whom he had cared for as his own. Present among the ladies of St. Brigid's was Catharine Ivory who had been an 1847 orphan.

At times like these the teachers, frequently with outside help, prepared the children in dramatic, beautifully costumed and staged concerts.

Other noteworthy visitors or benefactors were the Cardinal Archbishops of Quebec, Taschereau and Bégin whose visits are detailed in the Grey Nuns' *Annales*. In 1877 Bishop George Conroy of Ardagh, Ireland, Apostolic Ablegate to Canada, opened the bazaar. Lady Minto did the same on another occasion (1904). In 1910, Cardinal Logue of Ireland came to St. Brigid's. In 1915, the rector of St. Dunstan's College, Charlottetown said Mass there, and visited the children's classes. In that same year 1915, in the midst of the World War, John McCormack was singing on a tour raising money for the Red Cross. When he sang at the Auditorium (Capitol Theatre today), the Irish of Quebec presented him with a huge bouquet of flowers in the shape of a harp. John sent his gift on to St. Brigid's Home.

Later still Cardinals Villeneuve and Roy came to the Home to administer confirmation, to celebrate Mass, or simply on a friendly or ceremonial visit. Cardinal McGuigan of Toronto was received at St. Brigid's in 1945. In 1947 the Prime Minister of Ireland, John Costello and Mrs. Costello were gracious and enthusiastically received visitors.

More colorful still was the stay of five Redemptoristine nuns from Devonshire in England. In 1947 they were on their way to Toronto to establish a monastery. Their habits were red, white and blue. In 1955 Richard Ohari, the first Japanese to become a Redemptorist visited the Home.

Less colorful, but regular guests of Saint Brigid's, were the Sisters of Service who always stayed there when they came to Quebec to work among the immigrants still landing at the Port of Quebec long after World War II.

Probably the most venerated visitors for years at St. Brigid's were Sister St. Ammône and Sister St. Patrick, two Grey Nuns who had been devoted for a long time to the Home. Every St. Patrick's Day they were received by residents and Sisters alike with reverent affection.

CHANGING ADMINISTRATION

Since its opening in 1856 Saint Brigid's administration has undergone several changes, some of which have been dealt with in the preceding pages. The basic legal acts maintaining the institution have also undergone changes. In 1860 Father McGauran and the petitioners had succeeded in obtaining the original Act of Incorporation,

THE 1860 ACT

"Whereas an Association has been formed in the City of Quebec, for the purpose of providing for the maintenance of aged and infirm persons; and whereas the said Association has established an asylum for destitute orphans and immigrants, and has also in contemplation the establishing of a hospital where medical aid and attendance may be afforded to the indigent; and whereas certain members of the said Association, and others interested in its welfare, have, by their petition, represented that the said Association would be more efficient by giving to it the character of a corporation..." (An act to incorporate the St. Bridget's Asylum Association of Quebec. Assented to 19th May, 1860).

A list of the applicants follows. Those starred became members of the committee. The executive officers' names are indicated.

McGauran, Reverend Bernard, President

Alleyn, Honorable Charles	McGlynn, George
Alleyn, Richard	McGreevy, R.
*Archer, Joseph	*McGreevy, Thomas (active president)
Baxter, John	McMahon, Patrick
*Behan, R. W.	Neilan, George (assistant secretary)
Cannon, E. G.	Nolan, C.



In 1947 the Prime Minister of Ireland, John Costello and Mrs. Costello on a state visit to Canada, visited Quebec, and included St. Brigid's. Pictured above are L to R: Sister Frances Raphael, and Sister Loretta Marie, native born Irish, John Hearn, Irish Ambassador to Canada, Mrs. Costello, Mr. Costello and Father Fred Coughlan, C.Ss.R., Rector of St. Patrick's.



His Eminence Maurice Cardinal Roy, Archbishop of Quebec is pictured here devoutly assisting at Mass in the old chapel where he had frequently celebrated Mass before as a simple priest.

Carey, Daniel	*Nolan, Jeremiah
Cavanagh, M.	Nolan, William
Colfer, George W.	O'Brien, J.
Connolly, Michael	*O'Connor, Henry (long time treasurer)
Cook, J.	*O'Doherty, E. (1 st VP)
Cullen, Michael	O'Doherty, J.B.
Devlin, Hugh	*O'Doherty, M.J.
Dunn, M.	O'Doherty, P.O.
Enright, J.	O'Kane, J.
*Enright, Matthew	*O'Leary, James
*Flanagan, John	*O'Leary, Maurice (long service)
Gilbride, Charles	O'Meara, P.
Hanning, Patrick	O'Reilly, John
Hannon, William	O'Sullivan, Daniel
Hearn, M.A.	Quigley, T.M.
Jordan, J.M.	Quinn, Edward
Kelly, M.	Quinn, J.
Kindelin, J.	*Quinn, William (2 nd VP)
Kirwin, William	Reid, Joseph
*Lane, John, Senior	Ryan, J.
*Lane, John, Junior	Scanlan, William
*Lawlor, Patrick	Sharples, John
Lee, Nelson	Shee, Patrick
*Lilly, John	Smith, George
Lynch, Michael	
Magee, John	Stafford, Laurence
Malone, Denis	Tauffe, Edward
Malone, Thomas	Teaffe, J.
Martin, Henry	Teaffe, P.
Morgan, Terence	Thomas, Joseph
*Murphy, James (Treasurer)	Walsh, M.T.
Murphy, Thomas J.	Walsh, Patrick
McDonnel, Archibald	Walsh, Sergeant

And the Chaplain for the time being of the Catholics of Quebec —
Speaking the English Language.

In 1904 the St. Bridget's Association felt impelled to merge its assets and activities with those of St. Patrick's Parish. They handed over control to the Redemptorist Fathers, with the audit of the books to be done by the Trustees.

THE 1906 ACT

"Whereas the members and trustees of the corporation of St. Bridget's Asylum Association of Quebec have, by their petition, represented

that it is expedient that the said Association should be dissolved, and that all the property, moveable and immoveable, moneys, stocks, bonds, and all the powers now held by and vested in the said Association and Trustees should be transferred to and vested in the Corporation of the Congregation of the Catholics of Quebec Speaking the English Language, for the purpose and with the view that the said Congregation may hold and administer all such property, exercise such powers, and undertake all the obligations of the said Association for the same purposes and objects for which the said Association was incorporated."... (An act to repeal the Act 23 Victoria, Chapter 145, and amendments thereto, incorporating the St. Bridget's Asylum Association of Quebec, and also further to amend the act to incorporate the Congregation of the Catholics of Quebec Speaking the English Language. 18 Victoria, Chapter 228. Passed February 20, 1906.)

At the time of the dissolution of Saint Bridget's Asylum Association (1906) the following had succeeded their fellows of the 1860 petition and had been actively involved with the Association (* indicates executive)

Alleyn, J.	Hogan, (alderman)
Boyce, M.	*Horan, J.
Breen, W.J.	Leonard, Bernard (alderman)
*Carbray, Felix MPP	Leonard, John
Carbray, W.	Monaghan, J.
Collier, J.M.	Mulrooney, G.
Cotter, P.	*McGreevy, R.H.
Coveney, Denis	Murphy, J.E.
Delaney, John	O'Connor, Daniel
Delaney, T.	O'Donnell, Hugh, C.E.
Dinan, (alderman)	O'Flaherty, J.J.
Dobbin, W.	Parkin, J.B. — M.P.
*Doyle, P.	*Power, John
Evoy, P.	Power, William, M.P.
*Foley, Edward	Sharples, Archie
Foley, M.E.	*Sharples, Henry
*Gallagher, Jeremiah, CE	*Shea, James
Grogan, S.	Thomas, J.P.
*Hearn, John G., M.P.P.	Walsh, W.H.
Helms, Charles	

In 1970 another in the series of government acts, again upon petition, created the non-profit organization that then used its power to effect the third move of Saint Brigid's, this time to Sillery. The petitioners were: Percy Auger, Thomas J.



A familiar scene at Christmas time: Sister Mary Grace and benevolent friends.

Byrne, H.J. Hannon, James H. Monaghan, Dermot O'Gallagher, William E. O'Reilly and Fred M. Quinn.

LETTERS PATENT 1970

"The Minister of Financial Institutions, Companies and Cooperatives of Quebec, in virtue of the powers conferred by Part III of the Companies Act and pursuant to the application ... Grants to them these letters patent incorporating Saint Brigid's Home Inc., with head office in Quebec in the district of Quebec." (Letters Patent: Given and sealed in Quebec. This twentieth day of April 1970)

The newest Saint Brigid's

Beginning in the mid 1960s a group of men of the Irish community began to look at the age and condition of the De Salaberry structures. Particularly from the point of view of the danger of fire they urged that changes and renovations be made. In light of disastrous fires in old people's homes elsewhere in the Province a committee was finally formed. The fire inspection of St. Brigid's had been conducted gratuitously by experts: Leo McCullen and Timothy Burke. Urged by Dermot O'Gallagher and John Martin various actions were taken over a long period of time. Finally on November 3, 1971 the Quebec Chronicle Telegraph announced that a newly formed non-profit corporation of Saint Brigid's Home Inc., was about to embark on a million dollar project. Saint Patrick's parishioners had voted that the land on St. Louis Road in Sillery be handed over to the Corporation; a Sillery referendum had approved a change in the zoning by-law to allow that type of building, and tenders had been accepted.

Obstacles have been many, and it has taken hard work, perseverance and persistency on the part of all to properly set the stage. President (of St. Brigid's Home Inc) Dr. Paul Lachance, has done his bit, so have Vice President Charles Walsh, Secretary James H. Monahan, Treasurer A. Cook, and directors Fred Quinn, Elmar Kane, Thomas J. Byrne, John Martin, Dermot O'Gallagher, Harry Hannon and Ulric Labelle. (Quebec Chronicle Telegraph, November 3, 1971)

The laying of the corner stone was set for February 1, 1972, (feast of Saint Brigid of Kildare).

The new Home was ready for occupancy by June 1973. In a splendidly organized operation, the staff of the Home assisted by a fleet of ambulances and buses, and moving vans, effected the transfer of everyone from the old Home on de Salaberry to new quarters in Sillery. Nature played its part with sunny weather. Careful preparation insured a minimum of inconvenience for the residents with regard to moving their belongings as well as themselves.

Saint Brigid's Home still forms an integral part of the Irish community of Quebec. It is still the recipient of much loving volunteer attention. It is still the focal point of much celebration. Needless to say this was especially true during the year of its 125th anniversary 1981.

The various boards and committees that handle the many aspects of Saint Brigid's are composed of volunteers:

St. Brigid's Home, Inc. owns the land and buildings.

St. Brigid's Home Reception Centre operates the Home.

St. Brigid's Foundation receives gifts and donations and maintains a fund which provides special furnishings or activities.

The Kildare Club is the internal association of the residents.

St. Brigid's Guild is an association of two hundred ladies who provide special events, services and activities.

This little history of Saint Brigid's Home stops here, but the story goes on. There's more to the past to be read and analyzed. There's more in the future, too.

DECEASED SISTERS OF CHARITY OF HALIFAX
WHO HAVE SERVED AT SAINT BRIGID'S

Sister Maria Charles	Sister Mary Louis
Sister Anna Seton	Sister Cecilia Lawrence
Sister Marguerite Marie	Sister Mary Margaret
Sister Mary Jeromina	Sister Stella Grace
Sister Rose Vincent	Sister Mary Raymond
Sister Maria Cecilia	Sister Mary Oswald
Sister Mary Andrea	Sister Mary Cecily
Sister Agnes Clare	Sister Maria Perpetua
Sister Madeline Leo	Sister Margaret Vincent
Sister Clare Eugene	Sister Mary Charles
Sister Mary Anacletus	Sister Joseph Arthur
Sister John Bernard	Sister Mary Camillus
Sister Mary Wilfred	Sister Mary Angelorum
Sister Mary Dorena	Sister Mary Claudina
Sister Paul Damien	Sister Maria Rita Sullivan

GREY NUNS SERVED AT SAINT BRIGID'S
between 1922 and 1944, still living in 1981

S.S. François-Galvez	S.S. Aurelie L'Oiseau
S.S. Alexis-de-Rome	S.S. Adelina
S.S. Antonie	S.S. Eric Vigneault
S.S. Gabrielle Naud	S.S. Evangelina Proulx
S.S. Clementien	S.S. Jean-Regis Leblanc
S.S. Laure Rousseau	S.S. Elia Boucher
S.S. Thomas d'Aquin Comtois	S.S. Laurinus Breton
S.S. Eudoxie Bernatchez	S.S. Patrice Healy
S.S. Herenie Cloutier	S.S. François Xavier
S.S. Jeanne d'Arc Goulet	S. Marie-de-Lyon Ledoux
S.S. Jovite Guillemette	S.S. Theotiste O'Brien
S.S. Celestin	S.S. Marie-Rose Mailhot
S.S. Marie-Priscille McDonald	S.S. Julien Eymard
S.S. Leonis	

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