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The Community of The Dominican Sisters of Great Bend, Kansas, 1902-1941

M. Theodosia Tockert
Fort Hays Kansas State College

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THE COMMUNITY OF THE DOMINICAN SISTERS
OF GREAT BEND, KANSAS
1902-1941

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of Fort Hays Kansas State College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master
of Science

by

Sister M. Theodosia Tockert, B. S.
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Approved [Signature]
Major Professor

Date [Signature]
Chmn. Graduate Council
To our

PIONEER SISTERS

who with undaunted courage and heroic sacrifice

brought the Sisters of St. Dominic to Great Bend,

Kansas, these memoirs are lovingly and gratefully
dedicated
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer is deeply appreciative of the kindly advice, constructive criticism and encouragement of Dr. Raymond L. Welty, Head of the History Department of Fort Hays Kansas State College, who gave so generously of his time in the preparation of this study.

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INTRODUCTION

This, the first detailed review of the work of the Dominican Sisters at Great Bend, will inevitably be subject to criticism. Many will find deficiencies. Forestalling possible criticism, the author begs the reader to remember that the compilation of this apparently simple volume was very difficult and very confusing at times. The first heroic Sisters have all been called to their Eternal Home, and few who knew them survive to tell their thoughts and deeds. Others who were in the pioneer group committed very little, if anything, to writing.

The story of its Foundress and early history is part of the cherished tradition of the Community, and as such the writer has come to know it. The chronicler is disappointed at the paucity of records left by these pioneer Sisters. In extenuation the fact is offered that they were extremely busy, and faced many unfavorable situations; therefore, the archives reveal little or almost nothing of the inner workings of the struggling community to their posterity. With the deaths of Sister Amanda and Mother Blanche many of the details of the community traditions were lost. It was felt that it would be appropriate to write the history of the Community, especially because there are still a few venerable Sisters who actually saw and lived under the
jurisdiction of the foundress, Mother Antonine. Their recollections are too valuable a supplement and interpretation of the scanty written records of the first years of the Community to be left ungarnered ere they, too, slip into eternity.

For the solution of this problem the writer had access to the documents in the archives of the Motherhouse in Great Bend, which include the chronicles, annals, interviews, correspondence, and personal experiences.

For the use of transcripts of documents in the Diocesan Chancery, the writer is indebted to Monsignor Morrell at Wichita.

Since it is the work of a historian to relate the facts and interpret them and not to eulogize, the chronicler wishes to state that a little more than the mere history of the Dominican Sisters of Great Bend will be the theme of this work. An attempt is made to briefly go back to the Founder of the Order, and then to trace the continuity of the great Dominican Order from its inception down to the establishment, development, and progress of the Dominicans in Great Bend. The first chapters are devoted to the European background, followed by a short description of the Brooklyn Community in so far as it relates to the Dominican establishment at Great Bend, so as not to usher in, suspended in mid air this latter institution.

The chronicler takes up in detail and in separate chapters
the educational and hospital work of the Community. The administration of each Superior is treated in a similar fashion.

In the last part of this work, the chronicler chooses to insert various data of interest which may be helpful in interpreting this study. Each datum will carry its own title.

The history shall be concluded with a few brief remarks by the writer under the heading, "Retrospect".
CHAPTER I

Dominic, the Founder

To appreciate the distinctive character of any religious order it is necessary to understand how it came into being. This is particularly true of the Order of St. Dominic. Like all the other great orders, it dates from a severe crisis in the history of Christianity. It was designed in an hour of peril to safeguard Christian institutions and traditions older than itself, and to infuse the spirit of Christianity into a new and undisciplined development of civilized society. ¹ No institution has ever remained more consistently faithful to its original plan and purpose.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a new civilization arose in Europe, partly in consequence of what the Church had already done for secular society, but more immediately as the result of purely natural causes, economic, social and political. Without sacrificing anything that she had assimilated from previous civilizations, the Church, through Pope and Councils, began to adapt herself to the new conditions, and to encourage all that was good in them

by reproducing their counterpart within herself. The immediate result of this development from within was the Order of Preachers. It is the distinction of that Order to have been conceived by the Church, brought into being by her and formed out of her own substance. The Popes called it into existence and defined its character and work. No other Order is officially described in terms of its work; "Friars Preachers" was not assumed by the Dominicans to describe themselves, but carefully chosen for them by Pope Honorius III at the time the Order was founded.

Its main principle of action has from the first been to look to the popes for inspiration and to wait for their initiative. Independently of their official title of Order of Preachers, the Roman Church especially delegated the members to the office of preaching. The Friars Preachers were the first to make the pursuit of knowledge an integral part of their monastic program and scheme. Among the older Orders there was scarcely one which countenanced study for its own sake. Saint Dominic in founding his institute, realized that if his sons were to be preachers of the Word, if they were to challenge the new doctrines, it was necessary that they should be well equipped, not only with sacred knowledge but also with the secular learning by which men

set such store. For this reason the Order of Friars Preachers has ever played a notable part in the history of education.

The intellectual life was encouraged in every way possible; so we need not be surprised that the Order during the past seven hundred years has afforded the Church a constant stream of theologians and thinkers whose one concern it has been to defend the integrity of the Faith.  

The services rendered to the Church by the Order of St. Dominic have been the theme of many a Pontiff's words. But none has pointed out its providential mission more clearly than Honorius III, who in his bull of confirmation proclaimed that Dominic's brethren were to be for all ages pu-giles fides, the well-trusted, the ever ready champions of the Faith. 

Unfortunately for posterity, the medieval chronicler did not attach the same importance to exactitude in the matter of dates as does his modern brother, trained to scientific methods. Consequently, we cannot with authority, state the exact birth year of St. Dominic. We must content ourselves with the statement that about the year 1170, the great saint was born in Calaroga, in Old Castile. Historians unanimously assign to Felix de Guzman and Joanna D'Aza, the

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4. Little, op. cit., 738.
parents of Dominic, a conspicuous place among the nobility of Spain. Dominic was the youngest of three sons.

Dominic was educated first at home, then by a clerical relative of his mother, and finally at Palencia, a school which later became a famous university, the forerunner of Salamanca. His studies finished, Dominic was elevated to the priesthood and at the invitation of the Bishop, Martin de Bazan, took place among the cathedral canons of Osma. In numbering Dominic among the members of his official household, the bishop had in mind the assistance which a priest of his well-known piety and learning could give in effecting a reform among the canons, which for a long time he had contemplated. In this he was not disappointed, and in recognition of his part in the accomplished reform Dominic was made sub-prior of the chapter.

When Diego de Azevedo filled the bishopric of Osma, he was sent on a political embassy to Denmark. He took Dominic, the sub-prior, as his companion. Their journey led through Toulouse, a fertile field of the Albigensian heresy, where Dominic had his first controversy with an Albigensian heretic, whom he converted before the dawn of the day. This success urged him to take up the work

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5. Cathedral canons are secular priests attached to the cathedral of a diocese, and form the senate, or council, of the bishop. The cathedral canons of Osma lived under the rule of St. Augustine and in many respects followed the life of religious priests.

permanently; however, the conversion of these heretics had been entrusted by Pope Innocent III to the Abbot of Citeaux and his preaching bands. These had met with very meager success because the heresy in Southern France was firmly rooted and well organized. It had a perfect hierarchy: Pope, bishops, deacons, perfects. They had trained and able disputants, wealth, trade guilds, and social prestige. Their leaders were head and shoulders above the crowd in their lives. Dominic realized the utter need of a body of trained men to confront and overcome the heretics.

He was determined to defeat the enemy by their own form of attack. He outfasted the heretics at Toulouse, traveled on foot without magnificence and display and practiced austerities that the heretics envied him his physical endurance. Side by side, with this external austerity, grew this life of preaching and disputations. But Dominic was not contented with this; he wanted to wrestle with the trouble at its root. He found that converts of "perfect" women had been established by the heretics as centers of apostolic missionary enterprise and as educational refugees for the children of the poorer noble families, there to be tainted with the spirit of heresy.

In the course of his missions it was impossible that Dominic should have failed to become interested in a

propaganda of this nature; and women besides were in a habit of assisting at the public disputations and several had been brought back to orthodoxy. It was not enough to convert the women but also to preserve their infant faith from all manner of antagonistic influences. In other ways the heretics copied the Catholics in their organization, now Dominic set to work and copied the heretics. They made use of women to instruct others, as catechists, as spies, and as messengers. It was precisely to counteract this that Prouille was established in 1206. With a small nucleus of nine women of noble birth acting as trained teachers of the faith, St. Dominic established his first convent for women.\(^9\)

It was an educational establishment as well as a refuge whither those received to the faith might escape from uncongenial heretical surroundings and find themselves better able to be instructed in and to follow the Catholic teaching. To them Dominic gave the Rule of St. Augustine and the first constitutions, which he himself had drawn up. These were a substitute for his personal direction because the development of the Preaching Friars demanded his presence at Rome.\(^10\)

After Diego returned to Osma, Dominic continued to traverse the country and gradually drew about him men who zealously assisted him, though not by vow. This was the

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nucleus of his First Order. Peter Seila, a wealthy citizen of Toulouse, who had placed himself under Dominic's direction conveyed a commodious house in 1215 for the use of himself and his associates.

This band was merely a Diocesan organization and Dominic's aim was to establish a world wide Order. He had gone to Rome several times to lay his plan before the Holy See and obtain its approbation. In 1216, he assembled his brethren at Prouille—they numbered sixteen—and as Pope Innocent III had directed them to adopt some rule already approved, they chose the Rule of St. Augustine as the foundation of the religious edifice they hoped to raise. To this Rule they added a number of monastic customs from some of the older Orders, especially the Premonstratensian.

Once again Dominic, the Preacher, set out on foot for Rome, and on December 22, 1216, Honorius III solemnly approved the new Order. On the same day the Pope issued a second Bull, one of the briefest ever published, in which he said in words that after events proved prophetic:

... Considering that the religious of your Order will be the champions of the faith and the true lights of the world, We confirm your Order ... and we take under our care and protection the Order itself ... Given at Rome at St. Sabina, the eleventh day before Kalends of January, one thousand two hundred and sixteen in the first year of our pontificate.

12. It was the oldest and least detailed of the Western Rules and very elastic, hence, it was a simple matter to add statutes regarding study, preaching, poverty and other necessary matters.
In August of that year he dispersed his band of sixteen
to preach in France, Spain, and he himself went to Italy.14
They labored chiefly in the University cities of Europe,
and four years later when Dominic summoned the first General
Chapter of the Order of Preachers at Bologna, he was surround-
ed by representatives of eight provinces: Spain, Provence,
France, Lombardy, Rome, Germany, Hungary and England. The
Order was now thoroughly organized and solidly united. Each
of its province-units was possessed of a complete local gov-
ernment and all were under a central government, or hier-
archy.

Each house was to contain at least twelve Religious,
and to be governed by a prior; each gathering of prior-
ies (not less than three) within the limits of a nation
or a kingdom was ruled by a prior provincial, and the
whole Order of linked provinces was administered by a
Master General. Representatives of the smaller units
met periodically in council at provincial chapters; rep-
resentatives of the whole Order, met at the General
Chapters. The Chapters alone could legislate; the el-
ected officers were the executives. It was a remark-
able essay in the representative form of govern-
ment, and a definite advance on any pre-existing system.

Dominic, the Preacher, had realized his ideal in his
Order of Preachers. Even one of the great critics of the
Church writes:

Already in 1221, when Dominic as General Master
held the second General Chapter in Bologna, four years
after the sixteen disciples had parted in Toulouse,

15. Coulton, G. G., Five Centuries of Religion, Cambridge,
the Order had already sixty convents, and was organized into eight provinces ... The same year witnessed the death of Dominic, but his work was done and his removal from the scene made no change in the mighty machine which he had built and set in motion. Everywhere the strongest intellects of the age were donning the Dominican scapular, and everywhere they were earning the respect and veneration of the people. Their services to the papacy were fully recognized; and they are speedily found filling important offices in the curia. In 1243 the learned Hugh of Vienna became the first Dominican Cardinal, and in 1276 the Dominicans rejoiced to see Brother Peter of Tarentoise raised to the Chair of St. Peter as Innocent V.

Gregory IX proclaimed the sanctity of Dominic and in a solemn bull dated from Spoleto, on July 13, 1234, made his cult obligatory in the Universal Church.
CHAPTER II
Establishment of the Order

The Dominican Order is a trinity of Orders. The First Order is made up of priests, students, and lay brothers; the Second Order is made up of strictly cloistered nuns under solemn vows; the Third Order is twofold: (a) Conventual Sisters under simple vows, whether purely contemplative or active; (b) the Secular Third Order whether members of the clergy, or lay men and lay women.

In this chapter it is the writer's intention to trace briefly the continuity of the Sisters of St. Dominic from its establishment at Prouille in 1206 by Dominic to the Kansas foundation in Great Bend, 1902.

The community of nuns that Dominic established at Prouille in 1206 was the first in priority of foundation. They were known as the Second Order of St. Dominic which meant a cloistered Order, and therefore, contemplatives denoted to lives of mortification and prayer. They followed the Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions drawn up by Dominic himself.

The second convent was also founded by St. Dominic at the request of Pope Honorius III, at St. Sixtus Church, Rome,

1. Little, op. cit., 737.
in 1220. About a year later while on a journey to Spain, he founded a third convent at Madrid. In 1223 the fourth foundation was made at Bologna.

St. Mark's, Strassburg, was the fifth Dominican convent and the first to be established in Germany, and approved by Bishop Constance on October 12, 1234.

The second German convent at Altenhohenau on the Inn River was founded in 1235, by Count Conrad of Wasserburg to satisfy for a vow he had made to visit the Holy Land.

Holy Cross Convent, Ratisbon, established in 1237, sixteen years after the death of Dominic, is generally considered the third Dominican foundation in Germany. If the date February 22, 1233, the time at which the convent at Ratisbon accepted the Rule of St. Sixtus and obtained the approval of Bishop Siegfried, were taken as the date of its foundation, Holy Cross Convent could in all justice claim the distinction of being the first convent on German soil. 2

In 1230 the Dominican Friars made a foundation at Ratisbon. Forthwith they took steps to found a convent for Dominican Sisters. On February 22, 1233, Bishop Siegfried was able to approve this association of young women who desired to live according to the regulations of St. Dominic. The erection of the Church and Convent of Holy Cross was completed in 1244. This is the only Dominican Convent existing today, and established at so early a period, that has never been suppressed.

3. Albert the Great, as a teacher of philosophy, spent two years in Ratisbon at this time.
Interesting chapters have been written of Holy Cross Convent, Ratisbon, from 1233 tracing it through the great social, political, and religious upheavals in both medieval and modern times. The vicissitudes through which it passed have given to it a tradition that is unique in so far as it was the only convent in Germany which could trace its beginning almost to the advent of the Dominican Order.

With the nineteenth century, great changes occurred. In the secularization of convents and monasteries in 1802, due to the Napoleonic Wars, over three hundred convents were closed in Bavaria alone.\(^4\)

Prince Bishop Dalberg, to whom the Ratisbon convents had been granted as an indemnity, permitted two convents to remain on condition that the Religious take charge of the schools of the city. The Sisters of Holy Cross Convent refused to do this as they led a cloistered life. It was only upon the visit and the personal command of Prince Dalberg that they finally yielded.

This incident is most important in the history of the Sisters on Long Island. It explains the ready acceptance of schools and other work in Williamsburg despite the fact that the Nuns were cloistered religious.

\(^5\) That of the Dominicans of the Holy Cross and also St. Clare's inhabited by the Poor Clares.
The secularization had worked havoc on religious life in general and even those convents which remained intact its effects became very evident. That is not surprising when the actual situation of religious orders in general at the time is understood.

Relations between individual states and Rome was greatly complicated; the church had been deprived of her possessions; many bishoprics were vacant; religious orders almost destroyed; the few which remained were under such state guardianship that the regular spirit and the desire for observance disappeared.\(^6\)

Very little is known of the individual lives of the foundresses; but a new era for Holy Cross Convent and for the entire Dominican Order was approaching. In 1836, Bishop Schwaebl of Ratisbon placed the convent under diocesan jurisdiction; furthermore, in 1845, Maria Benedicta Bauer was elected prioress. Under her guidance the convent was reformed and the Dominican seed transplanted to America, in 1853.

This was not the first community of Dominican Sisters in the United States. The first Dominican Convent at Springfield, Kentucky, owes its existence to the Reverend Thomas Wilson, O. P., the first Provincial of the Province of St. Joseph. This Congregation was of American origin.

\(^6\) Kohler, \textit{op. cit.}, 31.
Father Wilson proposed the foundation of a Third Order of Dominican Sisters to the laity who worshiped in the Church of St. Rose. Nine young women presented themselves as candidates for the new community. The convent was established in 1822, and is honored today under the name of St. Catherine of Sienna.

It would be impossible to tell about the German Dominicans coming to America unless consideration is given to the vast wave of German immigration into the United States during the middle and latter half of the nineteenth century. When the Sisters came to Williamsburg, New York, in 1853, they entered a center of German American life, which was more German in customs than American. Beginning with the Napoleonic Wars of the nineteenth century, German immigrants began to flow into New York. The tide was at its height in 1853 as a result of the German Revolution of 1848, and the opportunity in America to better their financial condition.

Before launching into the American foundation it is necessary to give a preview of the missionary spirit and endeavors of this period. One of the greatest forces to stimulate interest in German Catholic missionary labors was the Ludwig-Missionsverein.

8. Founded at Munich, Bavaria, December 12, 1838, for the express purpose of giving financial assistance to Catholic Missions in Asia and America.
The Sisters of St. Dominic of the Diocese of Brooklyn, owe this Society a debt of gratitude. Through its financial aid at the outset and again when almost abandoned by human aid, the society helped them during the perilous pioneer days.

The first impulse for erecting a filiale of Holy Cross Convent in America came from Abbot, Reverend Boniface Wimmer, O. S. B., in 1851. He had traveled to Europe to see his relative, Sister M. Elizabeth Kissell. During this visit he discussed with the Sisters the dire need of Sisters to assist in the training of the children of the German immigrants. He promised to take them under his protection and would do all he could to make possible a new Dominican foundation. Soon after this historic visit, four Sisters volunteered for the foreign mission. In reality, because of her position, the moving spirit of the venture was Mother Benedicta, the Prioress.

This generous zeal was put to the crucial test of delay. It was not until July 25, 1853, that the four Sisters sailed for America and reached New York August 26, 1853.

In the Diocese of Brooklyn, the Ratisbon Dominican foundation ranks third; for the Sisters of Charity had come in 1836, and the Christian Brothers in 1851.

9. A convent not independent of the motherhouse.
10. An American missionary of St. Vincent, Pennsylvania, who had received his classical education in Ratisbon, joined the Benedictine monks in 1832, and emigrated to America in 1846.
Exactly one week after they landed they were installed in Williamsburg, New York, through the kindness of Reverend John S. Raffeiner of Holy Trinity Parish. Abbot Wimmer had previously arranged with the Reverend Raffeiner to take the Sisters into his parish. In 1854 through Rt. Reverend John Loughlin, D.D., first Bishop of Brooklyn, they were able to buy the house adjacent to the property on Montrose and Graham Avenues, where the Holy Cross Convent now stands. In June 1857, through an annuity from the Ludwig-Missionverein and the school fund, work was started on the Convent building and the dedication occurred November the same year.

New recruits from Ratisbon arrived in 1854 in the persons of Sisters Michaela Braun, Seraphine Staimer and Emelia Barth. This second group meant much for the welfare of the community, for after the death of their first prioress, Mother Josepha, in 1864, Mother Seraphine Staimer governed the congregation till 1889. Under her wise and prudent leadership the nascent forces of the small congregation were co-ordinated and developed. Mother Emelia Barth held the same office from 1889 to 1895, and under her administration the congregation expanded in usefulness. From 1895 to 1901,

Holy Cross Convent was under the jurisdiction of Mother Antonine Fischer, an American in all but birth, having been brought to the United States in 1852 as an infant by her Bavarian parents. She it was who became the foundress of the Sisters of Saint Dominic, Great Bend, Kansas, in 1902.

After the first few years of hardship a period of progress, development, and expansion was ushered in for Holy Cross Convent, Brooklyn. Between the years 1863 and 1871, more than fifty candidates were admitted, a remarkable increase, when the fact is realized that only a small number of young women sought admission during the first ten years of its history.16

Today twelve independent congregations in America trace their origin to Holy Cross Convent, Ratisbon, and incidentally to its Prioress, Mother Benedicta Bauer. The foundation at Williamsburg is now officially known by the title The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Dominic of the American Congregation of the Holy Cross in the Diocese of Brooklyn. The Motherhouse is in Brooklyn in the original location formerly known as Williamsburg.17

17. Appendix, No. 1.
CHAPTER III

Lure of the Apostolate

The genesis of the Dominican Community at Great Bend, Kansas, is to be found in the correspondence that took place in the year 1888, between Mother M. Seraphine Staimer, Superior of the Holy Cross Convent at Brooklyn, New York, and Reverend W. Emmerich, a priest in the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas.¹

Sister M. Borromea, a sister of the Reverend W. Emmerich, was at that time a member of the Dominican Community at Brooklyn. It was through Sister M. Borromea that Mother Seraphine first approached Father Emmerich with the idea of establishing a home in Kansas as a place of rest and recuperation for the sick Nuns of the large Brooklyn Motherhouse. Quite naturally, this suggested the plan for beginning charitable and educational work in Kansas, especially as those Sisters recovering their health would do best by remaining in that western climate.

Mother Seraphine had for some years during her administration, with every new foundation in the suburbs or in the rural sections of Long Island, hoped that each new foundation would provide an ideal rest house for the many

tubercular Sisters with whom the Community was burdened; but her hope was defeated by the humid climate of the Island. Tuberculosis was the great physical problem of the early Superiors. 2

Every foundation in the suburbs or country had its quota of consumptive Sisters who were given the benefit of the country air. 3 She saw in the dry climate of Kansas a splendid region for an institution, really a place of rest, for the invalids of the Brooklyn Community; and therefore she opened a correspondence with Father Emmerich concerning the matter. In the midst of these plans, however, Mother Seraphine Staimer died suddenly in 1889, and the Kansas mission plan in its embryonic stage was not developed immediately.

The new Mother Prioress, Mother Emelia Barth, ruled the community for six years, until her death, August 30, 1895. During her rather brief tenure of office many changes occurred. Her administration marks a period of transition in the viewpoint and organization of the community. Busy with internal affairs, she had little time to think of the Kansas mission.

Reverend W. Emmerich applied again to the newly elected Mother Prioress, Mother Emelia, for Sisters to teach

2. Most of the Sisters who died of the disease were infected before they entered the convent; others broke down through physical strain, and those from Germany were not acclimated. Overcrowded conditions and improper winter diets also helped.
3. Conditions before 1882, when Koch discovered the germ of tuberculosis.
in the Wichita diocese. He was told to apply again in five years, as at present there existed a shortage of teachers. Defeated again but not conquered, the zealous priest patiently waited the specified time and after a lapse of five years he renewed his petition. Time had not altered circumstances considerably, neither had a large number of vocations accrued to the community, so that Mother Emelia was forced to forget the project.

Mother Emelia had reached an age where it was becoming increasingly difficult for her to adapt herself to the changes that circumstances were forcing upon her. Timid by nature and unable to carry on a conversation in English, despite the fact that she had spent nearly forty years in America, she left much of the administration of the Community to her assistants, especially to Mother Cunegund, and to Mother Juliana, the Mistress of Novices.

But death came and severed three of the strongest links that bound her to the pioneer days of the Community, namely: Mother Cunegund, Monsignor May, and Mother Juliana. After the death of Mother Juliana, Mother Emelia was a broken woman and died two months later at the age of sixty-four. With the death of Mother Emelia, all contact

5. Mother Cunegund died October 15, 1892; Monsignor May, January 11, 1895; and Mother Juliana, June 21, 1895.
with Ratisbon and its tradition was broken. The pioneers had now passed away. A new spirit clamored for recognition. The fundamental traditions could never be changed, but of necessity they must be adapted to new circumstances. The pioneer mothers were not sufficiently conversant with American conditions; others were too young and inexperienced; others who might have effected the changes, lacked the courage to face the criticism which invariably is the lot of the reformer.

Election day, September 23, 1895, brought the Superiors and the final vowed Sisters of the various convents of the congregation to the Motherhouse for the purpose of electing a candidate for Mother Prioress. The Rule stated that they should assemble and vote secretly; the one found to have two votes more than half the number of voters, should be the new Prioress. The requisite number of votes were cast for Mother Antonine Fischer, who was a strong and enterprising leader.

The presence of the new Bishop of Brooklyn, the Right Reverend Charles Edward McDonnell, D.D., lent additional significance to the occasion. He was to effect radical changes in the inner mechanism of the community; his wise innovation made for development, progress, and increased efficiency. He appointed Reverend John P. Hoffmann as the

Spiritual Director of the Community.

The result of the election met with general approval. A unanimous sentiment prevailed that no wiser choice could have been made. By their selection, the members of the Community declared themselves for a reversal of policy, Mother Antonine's progressive view and independent impulses being too well known to permit doubt of the initiative she would assume.

Unlike her predecessors, Mother Antonine was educated in the schools of the Congregation of which she was destined to be one day its Prioress. Entering the Community at an early age, she had been superior over different houses almost constantly since her religious profession. Being a splendid educator herself, she was a leader in advancing Catholic education.

When the Reverend T. J. O'Brien brought out a uniform course of study for parochial schools, she co-operated enthusiastically. At her request, all schools under her jurisdiction adopted the course, thus eliminating many previous difficulties.

In 1896 the Brooklyn Congregation of Dominican Sisters had the status of a Second Order among religious bodies, as

7. Entered at 13 years of age, February 2, 1863; made her final vows August 4, 1864; at the age of nineteen, she was made local Superior, which office she held till 1895, when elected Prioress General.
the Ratisbon foundresses continued to observe the Constitutions of the Second Order of Saint Dominic, followed in their Bavarian Motherhouse since the thirteenth century, when making the foundation. That meant to observe the horarium of the cloistered nuns who give their entire lives to contemplative prayer and penance while to the Third Order belong the "active Religious." 9

A writer in "The Torch" gives a glimpse of a day in the life of a nun of the Second Order, 10 and incidentally throws into relief the difficulties of the Sisters on Long Island trying to be members of the Second Order and doing the work of the Third Order for more than forty years.

Therefore Bishop McDonnell of Brooklyn, wrote to Bishop von Synestry of Ratisbon, asking him this question: "Are the Sisters of Ratisbon, under the direct jurisdiction of the Bishop of Ratisbon or the Provincial of the Order of Preachers?"

His reply was: "Holy Cross is at present and has been for a long time under the jurisdiction of the Bishops." 11

Bishop McDonnell was determined to adjust the difficulties which existed, and desired to integrate Holy Cross

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Convent as part of the Great Dominican Order with which it had lost all contact.

Bishop McDonnell ordered his secretary, Reverend George W. Mundelein,\(^{12}\) to confer with Father Hoffmann concerning the change of status of the Community. They adapted the Rule of the Third Order of Dominican Sisters of Stone, England,\(^ {13}\) to peculiar American conditions, and used it as a basis of the new Rule for the Community. When completed, these Constitutions were read and discussed at a meeting of all the senior Sisters, in the presence of the two compilers. After a year's trial, the new Constitutions were revised and printed. By the order of Bishop McDonnell, the Constitutions of the Third Order Regular of St. Dominic, were substituted for those of the Second in all the houses of the Congregation, during Mother Antonine's term of office.

By its provisions, the enclosure was removed, the office of the Breviary replaced by that of the Blessed Virgin.\(^ {14}\) It also designated that a General Chapter should be summoned every six years for the election of a Priorress, and that an Intermediate Chapter should be held every three years. The distinction between choir and lay Sisters was abandoned. The above is just a superficial

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14. This was felt most keenly by the senior Sisters who were loathe to change.
enumeration of the changes introduced into the Congregation by the adoption of the Constitutions of the Third Order.

The path of a reformer is ever a rugged one. Inevitable criticism was her lot, but with characteristic energy and independence, Mother Antonine brushed aside the destructive criticism and went about her duties as though all was harmonious. The new candidates were trained in the new life, and the older Sisters gradually fell in line. It was difficult for them to see the old traditions uprooted, for it is vitally necessary in a religious community that traditions be revered, but not to the extent that it degenerates into empty formalism. A Sister of the Third Order is bound just as much as one of the Second to praise God, to bless Him, to preach Him by her life of prayer and penance. It is striking to notice that St. Dominic named the Third Order, "The Warfare of Christ" or "the Order of Penance."

Briefly the new government was intended to increase the efficiency and to promote the spiritual welfare of the Sisters, in teaching and other apostolic works. The Community as a whole sensibly and with docility followed the leadership of the Bishop and the Mother Prioress.

As Mother Antonine's term of office drew to a close, Community prepared for its first official election in
accordance with the new Rule. The new Mother Prioress, Mother Catherine, was a perfect counterpart for the extension and completion of the work of Mother Antonine. As sub-prioress, Mother Antonine received more than a majority of votes cast. Criticism was again the lot of the new sub-prioress. Like most persons of large vision, financial details did not worry her. Besides her Council was not composed of brilliant financiers. The foundations erected during her administration strained the finances of the Community almost to the limit. It was by no means bankrupt, but it required careful dealing. Mother Catherine proved equal to the difficult task.

Mother Antonine during her administration continued the correspondence with Father Emmerich but her other commitments prevented any practical settlement. Always possessed of a keen desire to serve in missionary outposts, which once had unsuccessfully sought an outlet in Lima, Peru, she sought permission to revive a plan which Mother Seraphine had tentatively considered fifteen years previously. Being relieved of the burden of Superiorship, Mother Antonine was better able to push more earnestly her plans of going to Kansas.

17. Mother Antonine, Archives of Dominican Sisters, Chancery Office, Wichita, Kansas. (Hereafter cited as Dominican Sisters.)
The day she was freed from the burden of guiding the Community, September 21, 1902, she renewed her correspondence with Rev. Emmerich. The desire to spread the Order had developed early in her religious life, and here was the occasion of satisfying her heart's desire to establish a Dominican community in Kansas for the purpose of doing educational work there.

Montrose and Graham Aves.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Sept. 21, 1901

Rev. W. Emmerich
Hochwürdiger Herr!


Um baldige Antwort bittet Hochachtungsvoll

Euer Hochwürden
ergebene dienerin in Xto
M. Antonine O.S.D.

A note appended stated this letter was answered September 28. No further correspondence was recorded till October

18. Sisters of St. Dominic, Archives, Great Bend, Kansas.
   (Hereafter cited as Sisters of St. Dominic.)
19. Dominican Sisters, Mother Antonine, op. cit.
3, 1901, when the correspondence was taken over by the Reverend J. Henry Tihen, then Chancellor of the Diocese of Wichita, later destined to become Bishop of Denver.

Holy Cross Convent,
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Oct. 3rd 1901

Rev. J. H. Tihen Chancellor
Wichita, Kansas

Reverend dear Sir:-

Your very encouraging letter received, but I am sorry to say that I cannot at present answer all your questions definitely because our Bishop is in Lourdes where he will stay a few weeks and will not be home before November.

Our community numbers 458 professed sisters and our novitiate being rather populous just now (26 Postulants) I have every hope of getting permission to take a colony West.

Originally we were cloistered nuns of the second Order of St. Dominic. But our work in the schools, Orphanages and Hospitals necessitated a change, so through the efforts and with the aid of our Bishop we exchanged for the Rule of the Third Order which we follow now.

We go out where and when our work demands it, but our convents are still cloistered in so far that the apartments of the sisters may not be entered by seculars except in case of real necessity.

My heart has always been set on Western Missions and I think if you write English next time so that our Bishop could read it he would not refuse us the means to build a modest convent in your diocese. Every beginning must be small and difficult, but I would willingly sacrifice every comfort to see our great Order established in your diocese.

Would you kindly estimate the cost of building a small structure suitable for a convent? Are building materials easily procured?

I am glad you mentioned that about the German Schools. That will be another incentive to let us go.

All the German-English Parochial Schools on L. I. with the exception of two, are in our charge. We teach all the English branches without neglecting the Mother tongue.

Trusting to hear from you soon

I am respectfully

Your humble servant in Christ

Sr. M. Antonine Fischer O.S.D.

Mother Antonine made several appeals to Mother Catherine and to the Rt. Rev. McDonnell, but each time she found difficulties awaiting her. After the exchange of many letters with Rev. Emmerich and Rev. J. H. Tihen, and careful deliberation of the Brooklyn authorities the venture was approved.

Bishop McDonnell approved her project, for he saw in it a means of giving a delicate tribute to the loyal and courageous co-operation of Mother Antonine to his plans in regard to the change of status of the Community. In his foresightedness he perceived also that the path of Mother Catherine's regime would be considerably smoother, if Mother Antonine would be away from the Community.

To prevent the new foundation from becoming too heavy a drain on the Motherhouse, Bishop McDonnell desired the Western Community to become independent immediately. 22

Holy Cross Convent
Montrose and Graham Aves.
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Feb. 4, 1902

Rev. J. H. Tihen, Chancellor
Wichita, Kansas

Rev. Dear Father:—
On the 17 ult. I have had an interview with our Rt. Rev. Bishop. He told me to write to the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Wichita, Kansas, and state that the new foundation I wish to make in Kansas should be independent of the Motherhouse.

22. Dominican Sisters, op. cit.
I have already written to Bishop Hennessy, D.D., but was very brief in stating the above, and without asking to be admitted in his diocese.

Will you kindly ask his Lordship to drop me a few lines whether he is willing to admit us? I am anxious to have this matter settled. Also let me know how much we must pay in cash on the house in Garden City, of which you sent us a photo. 23

If we succeed in getting to Kansas, I shall try my very best to get as much money as I possibly can for a start. We have quite some friends in New York and Brooklyn of whom I expect a little help. Of course the Convent will give its share also. Hoping to receive a favorable reply I beg to remain respectfully,

Your humble servant in Christ,
Sr. M. Antonine Fischer, O.S.D.

Formal application for the institution of the new community had to be made and this Mother Antonine did by placing the following touching document before Mother Catherine and her Council on November 30, 1901. The letter is the first document in the Archives, aside from the minutes of the first General Chapter, to be written in English. 24 Incidentally it reveals the sufferings of a misunderstood woman. 25

Holy Cross Convent
Montrose and Graham Avenues
Brooklyn, N.Y., Nov. 30, 1901

1. My chief reason for making a new foundation in Kansas is to instruct the poor children in the Catholic Religion, besides teaching the ordinary subjects; in one word, to save souls. Here in the great cities the Catholic children are

23. No other reference to Garden City is found. The writer has been unable to ascertain if authorities had decided on Garden City in preference to Great Bend.
well provided with Catholic teachers, whilst in the West there is a want of same.

2. To have our great Order of Saint Dominic spread; and by leading a real religious life according to our Rules and Constitutions, not only to become Saints, but also to be with God’s grace the instrument to have others join the flock of our Divine Spouse and become saintly daughters of our great Father Saint Dominic.

3. Another grave reason is the following: Six years ago I thought I was on the point of getting a chance of devoting myself to missionary work in a strange country; but the result of the election of September 23, 1895, changed my plans and I thought in being obedient and trying to do all I could for the spiritual and temporal welfare of our community, I would do the work of our Lord, Divine Providence, appointed for me. I knew well that some Sisters were not in accord with my plans, but I tried my best to convince all that I was working only for one object, namely to instill into their hearts the real spirit of the Dominican Order, first to sanctify oneself and secondly to work for the salvation of souls.

The result of the election, September 21, dashed all my hopes to pieces, because I saw the majority of the voting Sisters were not in sympathy with me.

Since then I feel myself as a useless member of the Community and my desire to make a new foundation is stronger than ever. Therefore I implore His Lordship, our Right Reverend Bishop, the Reverend Mother Prioress and her Council, to give me permission to make a foundation in Kansas. I ask also for those Sisters who volunteer for the new mission in the name of our Divine Spouse, our Blessed Mother Mary Immaculate, Saint Joseph, and Saint Dominic, whose unworthy servant I am.

Sister M. Antonine Fischer, O.S.D.

The Council reacted favorable to the petition and requested Mother Antonine to submit the following question to the small group of Sisters who desired to accompany her:

1. Did you consider seriously the step you are about to take?
2. What are your motives for going?
3. Were you influenced by any one?
4. Did you seek advice?
5. Do you know that the Kansas foundation will be a separate community?
6. Did you make any preparations for the journey?
7. Are you aware that you will not find in Kansas the comforts you are accustomed to?
8. Do you know all the Sisters who volunteered to go?
9. Whom will you blame if you become discontented?
These questions were answered satisfactorily by all concerned, and on January 10, 1902, the group made the following formal application to Bishop McDonnell:26

Feast of Blessed Gundisalvus, O.P., January 10, 1902. We, the undersigned beg leave to make a new foundation in the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas.

Signed:
Sister M. Antonine Fischer, O.S.D.
Sister M. Cunegund Trojan, O.S.D.
Sister M. Blanca Bachlechner, O.S.D.
Sister M. Dalmatia Hellriegel, O.S.D.
Sister M. Antonine Gerhold, O.S.D.
Sister M. Louise Trojan, O.S.D.
Sister M. Geraldine Mueller, O.S.D.
Sister M. Diana Trojan, O.S.D.
Sister M. Florentine Harrigan, O.S.D.

Bishop McDonnell in turn gave formal consent. On April 1, 1902, Mother Antonina resigned as Sub-Prioress of the Brooklyn Community.

On April 5, 1902, each of the departing Sisters signed the following statement, witnessed by two of the members of the Council:

I, ___________________________, do hereby declare that I know that the foundation to be laid in Kansas, in the Diocese of Wichita, is independent of Brooklyn and is under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Wichita and that I cannot return to the Congregation in Brooklyn.

______________________________
Witness

______________________________
Witness

Holy Cross Convent, Montrose and Graham Avenues, Brooklyn, N. Y., April 5, 1902.

The list of formal documents was completed by the following formal contract:

Agreement between the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Diocese of Brooklyn, N. Y., and the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas, on the fifth day of the month of April, 1902.

Present:
Members of the Order of Saint Dominic, Diocese of Brooklyn, City of New York, N. Y.
Catherine Herbert, Prioress and President
Petrina Meyer, Mother of Council,
Philomena Frey, Mother of Council,
Charitas Hart, Mother of Council,
Hilaria Droesch, Mother of Council,
Perpetua Feser, Syndica.

Present:
Members of the Order of Saint Dominic, Diocese of Wichita, Kansas.
Antonine Fischer,
Blanca Bachlechner,
Antonine Gerhold,
Dalmatia Hellriegel,
Cunegund Trojan,
Diana Trojan,
Florence Harrigan

It is mutually agreed:

1. That Mother Antonine Fischer, Sub-Prioress of the Sisters of Saint Dominic, Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, shall resign as Sub-Prioress of the above-named congregation; because Mother Antonine Fischer has decided to go to Kansas to lay a new foundation in the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas.

2. That the new foundation in the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas, laid by the Sisters of Saint Dominic, be separated from the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York.

3. That the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, give the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas, Three Thousand Dollars ($3,000) as a donation for the new foundation; that they defray the expenses for each Sister's ticket and pay for the freight and give the Sister in cash what remains of Five Hundred Dollars ($500) after payment.

27. Holy Cross Convent, op. cit.
for tickets and freight is made; also, that each Sister accompanying Mother Antonine and Mother Antonine herself, shall receive the necessary clothing of a Sister; also, that Mother Antonine and her companions receive such articles the Motherhouse can dispense with at present.

4. That an inventory be made by both Parties of all articles allowed the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic Diocese of Wichita, Kansas; also, that the inventory made by the Sisters of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, be preserved in the Archives of their Motherhouse.

5. That no Sister accompanying Mother Antonine, and Mother Antonine herself, can return to the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York; also, that each and every one of these seven Sisters renounce all claim to support--FINANCIAL or OTHER--from the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York.

Signed by:
M. Catherine Herbert, O.S.D., Prioress
Mother M. Petrina Meyer, O.S.D.
Mother M. Philomena Frey, O.S.D.
Mother M. Charitas Harth, O.S.D.
Mother M. Hilaria Droesch, O.S.D.
Mother M. Perpetua Feser, O.S.D.
Mother M. Antonine Fischer, O.S.D.
Sister M. Blanca Bachlechner, O.S.D.
Sister M. Antonine Gerhold, O.S.D.
Sister M. Cunegund Trojan, O.S.D.
Sister M. Dalmatia Hellriegel, O.S.D.
Sister M. Diana Trojan, O.S.D.
Sister M. Florence Harrigan, O.S.D.

M. Catherine Herbert, O.S.D., Prioress
M. Charitas Harth, O.S.D., Secretary of the Council.

Within a few days the little band started on its journey to plant in fresh soil the seed of St. Dominic. Their efforts and trials and the final triumph of their endeavors in the Diocese of Wichita are the subject of the following chapters. Enough to add that the congregation Mother Antonine established by it present vigor, amply justifies
all the sacrifices entailed in its foundation. With this ended Mother Antonine's active contact with the Brooklyn Community.
The Pioneer Group

Mother Seraphine and her Council
CHAPTER IV
Pioneer Days

Eagerly the pioneer group awaited the day of departure. April 16, 1902, 3:10 P.M. became a memorable time for both the departing group as well as for those who bade them God Speed. On the morning of their departure they assisted at Holy Mass and received their Eucharistic Lord for the last time in their beautiful Holy Cross Convent Chapel. Hopeful, they started towards their new field of labor wholly unawares of the hardships that lay before them.

Of their journey and its incidents little is known. Their adventures, expectations, hopes and disappointments remain a closed book for none of the pioneer group of Sisters is any longer in the community; death has sealed their lips forever. The Chronicles give this account:

We went as far as Chicago, Illinois, then branched for Racine, Wisconsin, to visit the good Sisters there. On April 21st we met our other companions at Chicago about 6:00 P.M. and then went onward toward our new destination, Great Bend, Kansas.

The purpose of this visit was to leave Sister Cunegund in Racine to get additional training in music and art. She

2. Ibid.
was to come to Kansas in time for the opening of the Academy in fall. 4

When Mother Antonine and her courageous companions stepped off the train in Great Bend, Kansas, April 23, 1902, at 7:20 P.M., they expected to be conducted to their future home, when they learned that they were shelterless. Reverend A. Wiersma, then pastor of Great Bend, greeted them thus: "I'm sorry to say, but you have no home, your house is still occupied by the students of the college." How this incident happened no one seems to know; the fact remained that no provision had been made to receive the Nuns, and they found themselves on that April night, homeless, and alone.

Reverend J. J. Hennessy, the Bishop of Wichita, had made remote preparations by assigning these Nuns to Great Bend, and had purchased for $4,800 the Central Normal School that was situated on the western outskirts of the city of Great Bend. 5 But the school was to be vacated only after the close of the second semester June 9, a condition that was forgotten when arrangements were made.

Great Bend is located at the historic big bend of the Arkansas River, and was established in 1871 by the Great

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4. This was planned by Mother Antonine long before she set foot on Kansas' soil.
Bend Town Company. By 1872 the little town on the frontier had its school building, and started the foundation for a college. In the '80's Kansas experienced a boom, during which cities were organized everywhere, and city limits extended, for there was an era of prosperity and speculation. It was during this time that some of the leading citizens of Great Bend were moved by the bounteous blessings of God, and desired to share these blessings with their fellowmen. These men united in building the college. For this purpose they organized the Great Bend Improvement Association, whose aim was to plant a college on this new outpost of civilization. In 1886, this desire crystallized into action by raising a fund of $20,000 to carry out their plan.

Reverend W. A. Bosworth, pastor of the Congregational Church at Great Bend, aided in securing funds for the erection of a stone dormitory on the grounds provided by the Improvement Association. In this building was opened on June 5, 1887, a school which was called the Central Kansas College, under the control of the Association of the Congregational Church, for the Western District of Kansas.

Meanwhile the commodious brick building was being erected on the college ground. Subscriptions finally failed and

Reverend Bosworth conferred with D. N. Heizer, who was then at the height of his prosperity. The Great Bend Tribune gives Mr. Heizer's solution:

We planned to quit any publicity just then about the fund, but prepared for a mass meeting. We had a surveyor lay out the college addition to the town and we started a quiet campaign of work among citizens of Great Bend as well as in towns along the railroad and on the night of the mass meeting we had a special train in from the east which brought a large crowd from Newton and many came in from Topeka and other points this side. The meeting was held in the old court house and C. P. Townsley was to make the first talk. Reverend Bosworth also talked and I planned the auction of lots later and was not going to talk, but I got busy and made my plea. Then we started the auction and lots were sold to as many visitors in my recollection as to local people. Anyway the sale went over big and the expense of erecting the college building was guaranteed.

Before the boom collapsed, the college was under way and was attracting a good deal of attention.

In the fall of 1887, President D. E. Sanders of the Kansas Normal College, Fort Scott, Kansas, offered to take over the college building, fit it up, and conduct a successful Normal School for ten years. The citizens at the start were to take $3,000 worth of tuition certificates. He was to be allowed to make a loan of $5,000 on the building to be paid off before ten years. The money thus raised was to be used in providing college apparatus and library equipment.

The offer thus made to the Improvement Association was

8. The Great Bend Tribune, August 10, 1933.
accepted. The school opened under the name of Central Normal College. The birthday of the C.N.C. was January 31, 1888; its first president, D. E. Sanders, and principal, William Stryker. The pioneers were eager to see their children engaged in higher learning activities.

In 1898 the college was reorganized under the direction of the Central Normal College Company, and was leased for twenty years to the National School Company.

Thus it continued until 1902; the Beacon of March 21, 1902, carried this item:

The Central Normal College was sold to Bishop J. Hennessy of the Catholic Church. J. N. Clark, who owned the largest interest in the lease of the National School Company relinquished his right.

Dr. Morrison, at the College Reunion, June 10, 1933, held at the Immaculate Conception Convent, said this regarding the closing of the college:

In 1902 the matter of education began to drift to the school sustained by the state or such as were heavily endowed. That was the time the folks quit going to school and the parents began sending them to school, and that of course was the death knell of the Central Normal College, and its type of teaching.

The final alumni banquet was held in the college building Friday, June 6, 1902. This appeared to be the closing scene in the life drama of the Central Normal College, for final commencement was held in the Methodist Church, June 11, 1902.

11. The Great Bend Tribune, June 10, 1933.
After this short digression, the chronicler continues with the history of this pioneer Dominican Community. In their distress the Sisters appealed to the Reverend Wiersma. Through the influence of this kind-hearted priest, the question was temporarily solved. He mentally canvassed his parish of about twenty-five families, and lodged them for the present with good Catholic families.

The feelings of these poor Nuns may be more readily imagined than described. The contrast between the calmness of the cloister which they so recently had left, and their present situation in a strange state of the Union, without friends and acquaintances, disappointed in their expectations, was a severe trial. Their spirit and desire for community life urged them to secure a temporary lodging so that conventual life might be observed by all. Accordingly, Mother Antonine succeeded shortly after in renting a suite in the Morrison Hotel as a place of residence until the Central Normal College would be vacated. This was to take place June 9, but only four rooms were to be occupied by the Sisters till September, when the entire building was to be at their disposal.

At the Morrison Hotel the first real sting of poverty was felt. Mother Blanche in her accounts states:

13. Ibid.
We had no furniture, so we turned over wooden boxes for tables and smaller ones for chairs. The little money we had was dear and some had to be spent for cots, kitchen utensils and the like.

Through many hardships and perils, and attended by weariness of body and soul, these pioneer Sisters began a life of which not the most fervid imagination can form an accurate conception. They stand out splendidly on the canvas of time; some incidents are revealed that shall command love and veneration, while deeds of valor and acts of honor shall appeal to the souls of men.

The financial problems were a great difficulty and many times the Sisters had to forget about a full meal. But a splendid zeal and trust in God, plus prudent reasoning and a tenacious spirit to succeed enabled the small band to overcome all obstacles.

June 9, 1902, the day of moving into the future home, Central Normal College, of the Dominican Nuns was a memorable one. Now came the day of meeting and settling the many problems that demanded their attention. The Sisters found the house in a neglected, delapidated condition. At once they began a thorough cleaning so as to put the building into a sanitary condition. No one spared strength nor energy and each gave a willing hand. Special attention was given to the northeast room on the first floor; it was to serve temporarily as the chapel. Holy Mass was to be

celebrated the very next morning by Rev. Wiersma. They worked far into the night to have the room ready to serve as a chapel. Thus room after room was prepared to serve as refectory, classroom, and reception room. This was the unpretentious palace of the Dominicans in Great Bend, and up to the present date it is still the Motherhouse.

That Mother Antonine was a woman far in advance of her time, the works that she accomplished, and those in which she failed, amply prove. Hardly could an ordinary mind have grown familiar with the situation, when she was grasping conditions of a distant future and plan to meet them. An Academy had been her aim, and in that direction all her energy was devoted.

A great amount of renovating and remodeling was paramount before the opening day of the Academy, September 8, 1902. The third story of Central Normal College was converted into a dormitory for girls, while the boys were housed in one of the dormitory buildings north of the Central Normal College which had been used by the college students. The classrooms were to be located on the second floor with an office for the Sister Directress. Two additional rooms on the first floor were used for the primary grades. Other divisions of the same floor consisted of an oratory, library, reception and music rooms and an office for Mother Priorress.

15. July 8, 1941.
The kitchen, dining room, laundry, auditorium, storage and trunk rooms were located on the basement floor. Sleeping quarters for the Sisters were scattered. Some had to be on the third floor to supervise the girls, while others took up quarters in the dormitory north of the College building to keep order among the boys.

Much time was spent in getting the Assembly Hall on the first floor converted into a permanent place for Divine Worship. Masons, plasterers, painters, and workmen of all kinds were employed. In most places only parts of the ceiling remained; walls were battered; doors and stairways had felt the whittling student's knife. Tin ceilings throughout the entire building replaced the remnant plastered ones. An indispensible necessity was a light plant that would replace the old fashioned lamp. Accordingly the acetylene carbide light system was installed. An indoor painter and decorator was employed to give special attention to the chapel, first floor hall and the two reception rooms.

Donations for the chapel came in the form of statues: Our Lady of Grace, donated by the generous parents of Sister Dalmatia Hellriegel, was placed on a rudely constructed side altar; later Mr. Charles Roesch, a loyal friend of the Sisters from Brooklyn, sent a five foot statue of the Sacred Heart. The main altar had to be purchased. This brought the oratory to a partial completion and Reverend Wiersma gave spiritual assistance to the Sisters by celebrating the
august sacrifice of the altar whenever his missionary duties permitted. Thither also Sisters and students repaired for their daily devotions.

The lack of spiritual attendance was keenly felt; never before had the Sisters experienced a want of such attention. To the primitive little church in Great Bend, many missions were attached, and the priests in charge could not offer the ministrations the Sisters craved and felt in need of, especially in their new venture.

St. Mary's Boarding and Day School opened in the college building on September 9, 1902; and the halls of the old C.N.C. re-echoed with the carefree laughter of children, the rhythm of their recitations, and the prayers of the Sisters. Fifty-seven pupils of various denominations and from various places constituted the entire enrollment. Almost 58 per cent of these students were from Great Bend, and the remainder from Seward, Haviland, Odin, Olmitz, McCracken, Albert, Ulysses, Hoisington, Pawnee Rock, and Bushton, Kansas, with just a small representation from Ashley and Alva, Oklahoma.17

The course of study was thorough, comprehensive and practical. Systematic instructions were imparted to the students in all branches pertaining to the faith, morals and science. The Sisters as instructors were of tried ability and experience. The school comprised four departments: Primary,

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17. Sisters of St. Dominic, St. Mary's School, Great Bend, 1903, 17.
Intermediate, Preparatory and High School. The preparatory department included the modern junior high division, and formed the foundation for the High School course, which extended over a period of four years. Courses of freehand drawing, calisthenics, needlework, plain sewing and chorus singing were of five months duration and payable in advance. Elective studies which were not included in the general course called for an extra fee from $10 to $15 per session of three months. Piano, violin, guitar, mandolin, vocal, harmony, painting in oil, on China, embroidery and Kensington Art work were among the electives.

All departments were given a fair trial by the students, but special interest was exhibited in the music department. Records show an enrollment of 44 students in this department the first year. Under Sister Cunegunda's able direction it proved a great success. Cora Leland, a graduate of music from Racine, Wisconsin, who later entered the community at St. Mary's, assisted her.

November 26, 1902, the solemn dedication of the remodeled college building as St. Mary's School and Convent took place.\textsuperscript{18} That marked an important milestone along the journey of these Dominican pioneers in the Middle West. Rt. Reverend Bishop Hennessy officiated, assisted by a large number of priests.

After the dedicatory ceremonies, a Solemn High Mass,

\textsuperscript{18} The Catholic Advance, November 20, 1902.
Coram pontifice, was sung by Reverend Father Schmiehausen.
Rev. J. A. Lenihan of Dodge City, Rev. B. Drath of McCracken, and Rev. G. Wiersma of Great Bend, acted as deacon, subdeacon, and master of ceremonies. Assisting the Rt. Rev. Bishop were Dr. Joseph Pompeny of Hutchinson, and Rev. Father Huna of Olmitz. Other clergy present in the sanctuary were: Rev. W. Emmerich, Rev. L. Epp, Rev. S. Sklenar, and Rev. Singer.

Reverend J. H. Tihen preached an eloquent sermon on Education, proving by the experience of centuries that education without religion is an absolute failure; and as further proof quoted recent utterances of President Elliot of Harvard University.

Other special features of the day that attracted much attention was the well rendered chorus singing by sixty-one pupils; and the cavalcade of young men that acted as an escort to His Lordship from the station to the convent.19

May 28, 1903, closed the first scholastic year of St. Mary's School with a commencement and exhibition. The year had been a great success in every respect except financially. Aiming and sincerely wishing to be useful to all, without any self-seeking, the terms were uncommonly low; boarders had to provide their own wardrobe; needy orphans, as much as possible, were admitted gratis.20

The residents of Great Bend, regardless of creed or race, cordially welcomed the Sisters and encouraged them in their noble work. Their appreciation was shown in a practical way by supplying them with all kinds of needed articles. Mother Antonine's wholehearted sincerity and simplicity won for her many friends.

A sum of $10,000 had been expended in remodeling and equipping the building for carrying out the work that had now begun. The attendance records show an increased enrollment so that more help was needed. In the meantime correspondence between these pioneer Sisters and the Brooklyn foundation brought results. In the spring of that year, 1903, Sister M. Bona, Sister M. Feliciana, Sister M. Louise and Sister M. Geraldine, four teaching Sisters, came to Great Bend to share in the pioneer life and successes of the struggling community. 21

"Poverty was mistress" at the academy for some years, but through heroic patience and perseverance of the Sisters the institution made progress. The virtue of poverty had become a necessity for the Sisters. For breakfast a cup of black coffee with one slice of bread was served; oftentimes a concoction of burnt grain had to suffice. Nature had benevolently endowed the premises with lambsquarter, a succulent weed, and it was substituted for lettuce, spinach and cabbage.

21. Mother M. Bona, Interview, Odin, Kansas, June, 1939.
The college grounds were uncultivated, being overgrown with tangled brush and weeds and briars. With a resolute will the Sisters unitedly set themselves to the task of transforming their surroundings. These pioneers possessed a capital investment of willingness, zeal, and untiring effort. Their ardent zeal to promote the welfare of their little community made them ready for any kind of labor. With heroic effort and endurance the Sisters prepared and tilled the soil for their garden crops and gathered their firewood. Not infrequently, though worn and fatigued by a day's hard labor, they were unable to sleep because of hunger.

So pressing was the debt resulting from the cost of renovating the convent, and so great was the poverty of the Sisters, that an appeal was made to Bishop Hennessy for permission to beg alms throughout the diocese. His Lordship graciously consented and wished the Sisters success in their endeavors.

The arduous and humiliating task of begging alms from door to door devolved upon various members of the Community, but most frequently upon faithful Sister Loretta. Not only the home town of Great Bend, but also the surrounding parishes were canvassed. Many people had been the recipients of the Sisters' kindness at St. Mary's Academy, or had experienced their benevolent ministrations at the hospital; therefore,

22. Rev. August Heimann, Interview, Great Bend, August, 1938.
23. Details are recounted in a separate chapter.
they received them favorably and shared with them their possessions.

This condition greatly retarded new vocations and new following from the East, and Mother Antonine found it necessary to go abroad, to Europe, to acquire members for carrying on the work that presented itself. Twice, in 1904 and 1906, were Catholic centers in Germany canvassed for candidates for the religious community in western Kansas, and each time a goodly number of zealous souls were eagerly willing to consecrate themselves to God in this field afar.

In the meantime, April, 1903, the Sisters at the request of the physicians and citizens of Great Bend, opened a hospital in one of the college dormitories north of St. Mary's Convent; an account of this field of labor will be discussed in another chapter.

The need of more Sisters became very urgent, for as early as November, 1902, Mother Antonine was asked by Reverend Emmerich of Ellinwood, and Dr. Pompeny of Hutchinson for teaching Sisters. She, like St. Dominic, sent forth her daughters and provided the two missions each with three Sisters. A similar call came in September, 1903, from the Reverend pastors of Odin, Liebenthal, and Windhorst. In a separate chapter this work will be discussed.

The ever-growing educational and hospital work demanded

24. Mother Loretta, Interview, Great Bend, June, 1939.
25. Mother M. Bona, Interview, June 16, 1939.
more members. Two young ladies, Agnes Silberhorn and Mary Pepsum, had come from New York; Cora Leland from Racine, Wisconsin, soon joined them. On December 8, 1902, the first postulant from Great Bend was admitted into the Community. The presence of the Sisters attracted Mary McFadden, a young lady of irreproachable character, to the Religious life. She was born in Missouri of very pious and exemplary Catholics. Here were four recruits for the new community. With the Rt. Reverend Hennessy's permission the novitiate was opened where these young aspirants to the religious life were to be trained in the service of the Lord.

Mother Antonine herself assumed the responsibility as Mistress of Novices; although she appointed one of the senior Sisters to be their constant companion and guide. Later Mother Antonine appointed Sister Antonine as her assistant.

Saturday, May 25, 1903, was a memorable day at the Convent. The Catholic Advance has this item: 26

Saturday, a big day at St. Mary's Convent and chapel; a large congregation was in attendance. The occasion being the reception of four young women into the Sisterhood, and the confirmation of a class of 22 young people.

This ceremony took place on a beautiful May morning, May 25, 1903. At 7:00 A.M. the Rt. Rev. Hennessy celebrated Mass at which all the Sisters, candidates, and pupils of St. Mary's Academy received Holy Communion. At 9:00 the real ceremony began. The chapel doors were opened; the altar was

ablaze with candles and daintily decorated; the organ sent forth its triumphal march; the bishop in his episcopal robes and surpliced priests had filled the sanctuary.

Then four young ladies appeared, arrayed in bridal attire. The procession wended its way into the chapel, passed by the assembled crowd of friends and relatives, who had gathered to behold for the first time such a religious ceremony.

From the Sisters' Choir came the chant "Veni Sponsa Christi" and eagerly stepping up to the altar rail, the spiritual brides besought the Rt. Rev. Bishop Hennessy to grant them the habit of St. Dominic. Upon receiving an affirmative answer each candidate taking her bridal wreath in her hands renounced the world as she faced the congregation and dropped the wreath to the floor. Turning toward the altar she begged God to grant her an eternal crown for the earthly one she had just discarded.

Leaving the chapel the candidates changed their bridal array for the religious garb; the white habit denoting purity and the black mantle, penance. On re-entering they received the rosary, the crucifix, and the name by which they were henceforth to be known in Religion,27 Miss Agnes Silberhorn to be known as Sister M. Dominic; Miss Mary Pepsum, Sister M. Dolores; Miss Cora Leland, Sister M. Joseph; and Miss Mary McFadden as Sister M. Rose.

27. The reception ceremonies today have not altered noticeably from this detailed picture of the first reception.
This ceremony was followed at 10:00 o'clock by a solemn High Mass, with the Reverend Wiersma as celebrant. Confirmation was now administered to a group of 28 young people. This ceremony was closed by an impressive sermon by Dr. Pompey and a short address by the Rt. Reverend Bishop.

In the meantime two other young ladies were entranced by the sight of the Sisters in Great Bend, Margaret Weisenberg of Ellinwood, and Mary Monger of Great Bend, swelled the little novitiate of four in 1903 to six. With the reception to the habit in 1904, these members were known as Sister M. Seraphine, and Sister M. Agnes. Sister Seraphine possessed a most lovable disposition which endeared her to all. Her life was unpretentious, and wholly devoted to the service of God. She possessed keen executive ability which remained hidden until she was appointed to lead the community.

Sister Agnes, a native of Great Bend, was a real asset to the community. Reared on a farm, she was accustomed to hard and constant work. Her Superiors never found her shirking her duties, but always anxious to relieve some other Sister who did not possess very robust constitution.

Native Kansas girls responded slowly to the new career of a Religious Life. As was elsewhere stated, with the hopes of getting recruits from Germany, where vocations

29. More will be said concerning Sister Seraphine later in this work.
were more plentiful, Mother Antonine accompanied by Sister Bona left for Germany, June 18, 1904. The community affairs were entrusted to the care of Sister M. Blanche. They were able to obtain five young ladies who sacrificed home and kindred to spend their energy in the service for others on Kansas soil. 30

In the meantime two more American girls asked for admission: Blanche Day from New York, and Clara Schafer from Ellinwood, Kansas. Despite that fact they were short on help for the work that needed accomplishment. Therefore, again in 1906 another journey was ventured to Germany. Friends from the East financed the trip. This time twelve young ladies responded. 31 Likewise, two professional musicians volunteered their services: Fraulein Reller and Fraulein Pia. These were to assist the Sisters in the Music Department. 32

The members recruited from the German ranks quickly adapted themselves to their environment. The Americanization of these immigrants was not difficult, and in speech and manners they were soon but little distinguished from the native born of their adopted country. In time all of them became naturalized citizens. However, these importations from Germany prolonged for many years the distinctly

30. These later were known as Sisters Pia, Amanda, Vincent, Emelia and Imelda.
31. Appendix, No. II.
32. Sister Annunciata, Interview, Great Bend, June, 1939.
Teutonic characteristics of the community.

Although the chronicles refer to orphans, no definite answer can be found as to the exact number. Among those whom Mother Antonine brought from Germany with her were candidates to the Sisterhood, girls of too young an age to be admitted, and lastly orphans to whose pleadings generous hearted Mother Antonine could not refuse. Some of these had sufficient means and over and above to pay for their passage; others depended on Mother's generosity. The struggling community had a very meager income, but of that little they shared with those in need. Mother Antonine's plan can be interpreted favorable in the light of getting more members for the Community.

In spite of poverty, in spite of incessant labor, religious observance and religious discipline did not suffer. Poor, indulgent human nature was given but little consideration in that pioneer Dominican Convent at Great Bend. The rule was conscientiously observed in so far as that was possible. Even those finer points of religious conduct which might have been neglected in those pioneer days, were stringently enforced.

To the youthful American or German girl who joined the Community, though she certainly was not lacking in the amenities of society, the demands made upon her by conventual

33. Last group took out citizenship papers in 1914.
regime might appear extremely exacting. Every ordinary action carried a definite rule, each movement of the day from early rising to retiring was colored by a religious significance. Silence, the criterion by which the religious fervor of a Community can be gauged, was strictly enforced. The Sisters were taught to discriminate between hours of recreation and hours of silence, and little concession was made on this point. 35

35. Sisters of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Rule and Constitutions, Brooklyn, 1905, 76-79.
St. Mary's Convent (C.N.C.) shortly after the purchase in 1902
One of the old stone dormitories of the C.N.C.

The Morrison Hotel, temporary residence of the pioneer group.
CHAPTER V
Critical Years

As years went on a chain of events arose which abruptly altered the whole course of Mother Antonine's life and ultimately removed her from the scene of St. Mary's Convent. To understand the sudden turn of affairs it will be necessary to piece fragments of information and bits of evidence from various sources. The correspondence between members of the Community and the Chancery Office throws much light on the situation.

The most onerous problem that vexed the Community was of a financial nature. A heavy debt rested upon the Community, but no cash was on hand; even necessities had to be purchased on credit and that, too was soon exhausted. Often there was a scarcity of food. Furthermore, it is also evident from the correspondence that some of the members, as a consequence of these hardships, became disheartened and longed for the stability and firmness of longer established Communities. Appeals were addressed to the Ordinary of the Diocese, the Most Reverend Bishop John Joseph Hennessy, asking him to appoint a new Superior to rule them, as the

1. Most of the information used in this chapter is taken from the personal correspondence of these members with authorities in the Chancery Office, Wichita, Kansas, where the writer gleaned this knowledge.
financial status of the Community demanded drastic changes in methods of management. The criticism was merited in so far that Mother Antonine's financial ability was not equal to the vastness of her projects.

Distressing were the affairs of the Community, no doubt, on account of the lack of financial leadership. The heavy debt, insufficient help and overwork, the dire lack of necessities, but above all the intermittent pleas sent to the Most Reverend Bishop, finally urged His Lordship to act. He sent the Reverend Monsignor Schmiehausen as his representative to hold a visitation. Monsignor interviewed each member individually and reported the facts to the Reverend Bishop, who then decided to make an appointment of a Mother General, rather than have an election, since the results of an election might not change matters. Official notice was sent to Mother Antonine asking her to resign in favor of a younger member. The Reverend August Heimann was likewise officially informed and on May 8, 1910, made this announcement from the altar to the assembled Community:

As Rev. M. Antonine has resigned, the Rt. Rev. Bishop has temporarily appointed Sister M. Seraphine as Prioress . . . .

3. The exact date is not recorded, but must have occurred between April 3-7, 1910, judging from the contents of the correspondence on file.
4. Such appointments had frequently occurred earlier in the United States.
5. Spiritual Director of the Community at the time.
Mother Antonine, according to tradition, suffered intensely from this humiliation, but she pronounced her fiat. The dark night of suffering had closed in about her, and the unforeseen circumstances tried her innermost soul.

It is not surprising, under these conditions, that the sorely tried heart longed to get away from scenes that would constantly keep unpleasant memories before her. True to her missionary instincts, she left St. Mary's Convent the evening of May 9, 1910, for a brief stay with the Dominican Sisters at Ellinwood, for she hoped to establish a new Community in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. If Mother Antonine could have divined the future with all the trials she was yet to undergo to satisfy her missionary career, she might not have entertained any future extension of her missionary zeal.

This crisis caused a temporary rift among the members of the Community and lessened the numerical strength considerably. Many of the candidates and novices were unable to bear up under the hardships; among the senior members were those who longed to go back to Holy Cross Convent, Brooklyn; others left to enter the Dominican Community of St. Catherine at Racine; and still others desired to accompany their foundress to the end of her journey. Seventeen members pledged obedience to their new Superior, Mother M. Seraphine.

7. Sister M. Augustine, Interview, Great Bend, August, 1939.
Weisenberg, and remained loyal to their Community at St. Mary's Convent.  

On April 20, 1910, according to a letter found in the Chancery archives, Mother Antonine had written to Reverend Bishop Hennessy requesting his consent to the establishment of a new Community at Baltimore, Maryland, by her and her three companions. She also enclosed a letter of the Reverend J. B. Manley who wanted Dominican Sisters to open a school in his parish, in (Hamilton) Baltimore. He likewise stated in this letter it was "... a splendid opening here for a Community ...."  

Cardinal Gibbons of the Archdiocese of Baltimore gave his consent, but Bishop Hennessy refused, no doubt fearing Mother's lack of financial leadership. In the meantime, she traveled to Racine, Wisconsin, where the Sisters at St. Catherine's extended hospitality to her until the reply should come from Bishop Hennessy. Feeling that her usefulness in the Kansas Community had come to an end, Mother Antonine desired to return to Brooklyn as the following letter will prove:

St. Mary's Convent  
Great Bend, Kansas  
Oct. 30, 1910

Rt. Reverend J. J. Hennessy  
Wichita, Kans.

8. Appendix, No. II.  
9. Sisters Antonine Gerhold, Cunegund Trojan, and Geraldine Muller.  
Rt. Rev. dear Bishop,

Since you will not give me permission to start a new mission place I am bound in my conscience to ask your Lordship to give me permission to go back to the Brooklyn Community where I spent my best years, (39) ....

Your obedient servant in Xto.,
Sr. M. Antonine Fischer, O.S.D.

A note appended to this letter states: 12 "Bishop has no objection to your going anywhere, where the Ordinary of the Diocese will receive you."

Awaiting the above reply she at once addressed a most touching epistle to Rev. Mother Prioress of the Holy Cross Convent, begging to be re-admitted into the Community as well as those Sisters that accompanied her. Again her missionary spirit prompted her to ask to be sent to Porto Rico, there to teach the negro children: 13

.... Sie werden mir die groste Freude bereiten wenn Sie mich nach Port Rico senden würden um die kleinen Negerlein im Katechismus zu instruieren. Ich bin willens irgend eine Arbeit zu verrichten, d.h. wenn ich fähig bin dazu. Es sind ja lauter Schwestern dort die ebenso für Mission Schwestern studierten wie ich, zwei haben mit mir spanish gelernt ....

Mother Catherine of Holy Cross Convent sympathized with her in her pitiable condition and immediately conferred with Bishop McDonnell. 14

The interview that Mother Antonine sought and obtained with Bishop McDonnell had its elements of drama. Deeply
conscious of the gratitude he owed her because of her co-
operation fifteen years previous, he nevertheless was forced
to take a community and diocesan viewpoint. If he permitted
Mother Antonine to return there would be danger of a cleav-
age among the Sisters; Mother Catherine's policy was not in
total accord with that of her predecessor. Again, if the
news was rumored abroad that the Prioress of a Community who
had deliberately written before witnesses that she gave up
the right to return to her former Community, could in fact
easily return, the tone of discipline in all Communities
would be lowered.

Regretfully, therefore, Bishop McDonnell refused her
request. She departed broken hearted to Kansas, while her
three companions were granted the admission they sought.

Restless with the same missionary impulse that had im-
pelled her to come to Kansas, she now felt urged to open
 correspondence with the Reverend John A. Krebs, who had
been born and educated in Brooklyn and knew her well. 15
The Chancery Archives prove that correspondence to that
effect was exchanged between Bishop Hennessy of Wichita,
and the Rt. Rev. Thomas O'Gorman of Sioux Falls, South Dak-
ota. 16 However, the reply of Bishop Hennessy is not pre-
served, but the following letter from the Reverend Krebs

15. Dominican Sisters, Mother Antonine, Letter, Nov. 18,
1910, op. cit.
16. O'Gorman, Thomas, Rt. Rev., Letter, Jan. 16, 1911,
Chancery Office, Wichita, Kansas.
Very dear Sister,

Sorry, but I can give you very little information regarding Sr. Antonine. Quite a few years ago she wrote me from Wichita, Kansas, asking me to permit her to open a school in my parish at Bowdle, S. D. I consulted my Bishop who in turn wrote the Wichita Bishop.... Soon thereafter she wrote me from Valley City in North Dak., after about two years she was no longer located there. I never heard from her since.... As far as I know, Sr. Antonine and her Community were never located in South Dakota. Bishop of Wichita refused to recommend her....

Yours in Christo,
Fr. John A. Krebs

December 9, 1910, marks the exodus of the foundress of the Kansas Community with three companions: Sister Catherine Tannheimer, Sister Petrina Dentlinger and Cand. Katie Meyerer for a new mission field in North Dakota. Even the dauntless spirits of those Sisters who had weathered the hardships of the early years with Mother Antonine were torn between the loyalty to her, and loyalty they owed their Community; however, the latter prevailed. Hands were pressed in silence, for their hearts were filled to overflowing.

Admonishing them to carry on, the aged foundress crossed the threshold of St. Mary's Convent for the last time with a...
firm step, a serene countenance, but with a heavy heart.

In 1914, Mother Antonine's health began to fail and she placed the affairs of the little Community into other hands; it has since failed and ceased to exist. The foundress sought hospitality among her friends in the Dominican Community at Mission San Jose, California. Here Mother Antonine spent the evening of her life, bringing her unusual career to an end. On July 8, 1919, she suffered a stroke of paralysis and to her other humiliations were now added months of physical helplessness. Through it all she kept the courageous serenity of her undaunted spirit, and died, fortified by the Sacraments, on January 15, 1920, at the age of seventy-two. Her remains were buried in the Sisters' Cemetery at Mission San Jose, California.

Sister Petrina who attended her during her last days writes as follows to Mother Pia, her Superior, absent at the time of Mother Antonine's death:

Mission San Jose, California
January 19, 1920

Dear Venerable Mother General,

Dear Mother,

The Lord grant her eternal rest and let perpetual light shine upon her! These are my thoughts day and night since

20. Ibid., 170-172.
my dear little Mother entered into her eternal peace. Her dissolution was welcomed because her illness had developed so during these last days that we could not look upon her suffering any longer. Your absence, dear Mother, added to her pain. Your comforting presence and consoling words would have eased her somewhat. When I spoke of you to her, she was consoled and said you were surely praying for her. I felt the parting keenly. I hardly ever felt a like sorrow and am trying hard to overcome it. Writing to you and giving vent to my feelings by pouring them into your kind heart seems to help me.

I wish to thank you above all for all the care dear Mother found here, especially for the great consideration and devotion shown her in the days of her illness. All her Sisters nurses send you greeting and heartfelt thanks for all the time so kindly allotted them to take care of Mother. We do not doubt Mother Antonine will obtain a great recompense from God for this community for she was fully appreciative of all that was done for her. Her attachment to Reverend Mother and all the good Sisters here was boundless. During her illness she often expressed herself in admiration at their love and generosity. We all shall surely have a great intercessor in heaven as soon as Mother comes to the beatific vision. Her death was a blessed one; her last moments consoling and her wonderfully youthful looking face took on heavenly peace. There was no odor of death perceptible and no one felt gloomy. All were disposed to feel consoled. Poor and humbled during life, but rich in grace and merit, at the hour of death, she died with courage and a feeling of happiness ....

I cannot consider sufficiently the goodness of God. Her loyal children cared for her, and may those who were unfaithful obtain forgiveness ....

I must not conclude this letter without telling you more in detail the events of the last days. Dear Mother Antonine received grace upon grace and we have much reason to be thankful to good Sister Prioress for all the care she gave her.

The night from Friday to Saturday Mother became worse. She had an attack which made speaking difficult though she was fully conscious. Sister Prioress had her anointed again Saturday when she also received the general absolution and everything. Sunday and Monday she seemed to rally but during the night she had another attack after which she could not speak. While all the Sisters sang the "Salve" on Tuesday morning, Mother bowed her head at the name of "Jesus": On Wednesday Father Smith .... gave her
absolution and papal blessing which made her very contented and happy. Then her breathing became more labored, the tongue heavier. On Thursday Father Engelbert visited her and once more gave her the papal blessing. Mother attempted to make the Sign of the Cross. The Sisters continued to pray at the bedside and all were edified at the holy resignation manifested by the dying Mother. That night I did not remain alone with her for I felt she was about to pass out. Sister Corona remained with me when the bell rang for night prayers. We said the prayers for the dying and Mother formed the answers with her lips, a sign that she understood. She began to get cold and her pulse was weaker so we put the candle and crucifix in her hands; she kept kissing the crucifix and so uniting her death with His who died for us all. By this time the Sisters were coming out of the chapel saying the "De Profundis". When Sister Prioress came into the room Mother opened her eyes, looked up and her soul took its flight into eternal rest. No death could be more consoling. The next day, Saturday, she was laid to rest and I am sure Our Blessed Lady led her to God. My heart was heavy with grief and sorrow but Sister Prioress was so good that I feel much better. She showed so much love to us all that I can not ever forget.

We shall be glad when you return home and hope you are well. In the meantime I remain

Your grateful spiritual daughter,
Sister M. Petrina, O.P.

Those who knew her well, and as young Sisters saw in her the ideal religious, write of her as follows:

Mother Antonine was American in all but birth. She had large vision, unlimited courage for great undertakings, a real Dominican missionary spirit, a hunger for the better things of the spiritual life. Even as a young member she manifested a holy discontent for the humdrum life in the classroom and aspired to go forth and spend herself for souls among Indians or negroes. She had hoped to make a blessed foundation in Lima, Peru, the birthplace of Saint Rose of Lima and Blessed Martin de Porres, but Monsignor May would not give his consent. She had the soul of a reformer and when she had the opportunity as Prioress General she did things in a large way.

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She had broadness of outlook and vision. A thorough school-woman herself, she co-operated enthusiastically with every move for the improvement in the schools of the Diocese on the part of the first Diocesan Superintendent of School, Monsignor Belford, and later by Monsignor O'Brien. She herself never failed to examine the schools on her tours of visitation. She reorganized the Novitiate School for the better training of the teaching Sisters and engaged Dr. J. H. Haaren, Associate Superintendent of Schools in Brooklyn to make weekly visits to Amityville to raise the standard of education.

In appearance Mother Antonine was tall and stately, serious of countenance. When she came along, her measured walk, her rather manly bearing, her deep resonant voice, proclaimed her every inch a Superior. Severe though she looked, she had a warm, motherly, understanding heart for the young Sisters especially. She looked upon them as the hope of the Community, the torch bearers of the future.

The Sisters of St. Mary's Convent can be proud of their foundress, Mother Antonine. There is no need to exalt her virtues; she had her limitations and her defects. Her gentle and trustworthy disposition probably made her overconfident and too trustful of others. She was too noble a character to think evil of others; she judged others by her own standard. Probably a more vigorous and determined policy in regard to financial matters of the Community would have averted the catastrophe of 1910. Her sterling worth makes her limitations very small indeed; her wonderful perseverance in the face of disheartening obstacles is worthy of imitation. The unconquerable spirit of this sorely tried woman was well-nigh broken; but stouter hearts than hers have quailed under like circumstances. She, by her indomitable patience and indefatigable zeal, under all kinds of
unfavorable circumstances and endless troubles, saved the nascent community from floundering in those early years. She was the embodiment of religious decorum, a woman of prayer and sacrifice, who held to the observance of the Rule and of the traditions of the Dominican Order most zealously.
CHAPTER VI

The Administration of Mother Seraphine

Upon receiving the appointment May 8, 1910, Sister Seraphine, accompanied by Sister Blanche, went to Wichita and in the presence of the Most Reverend J. J. Hennessy, pronounced her final vows in the Cathedral.

Bishop Hennessy had the fullest confidence that Sister Seraphine would lead this tottering Community along the road to spiritual and material success. She was characterized as a very wise and pious woman, well prepared to conduct the Community. Possessing the united qualities of high intelligence, great prudence, and modesty, she knew well how to take the initiative, so that it would have been difficult to find a better qualified person for the guidance of the Community at that particular time. Guided in everything by a spirit of charity and helpfulness, she was just the person to fire the hearts of the little band of seventeen devoted Sisters.

The love, respect, and confidence of her Sisters she early won; and it was her pleasure to serve them in many capacities. The title "Mother Prioress" seemed harsh and commanding to her, so at her own request she asked the Sisters to omit that title and call her Mother Seraphine. Mother in name,

1. The manner of appointing Sister Seraphine as Superior, while unusual in the canonical sense, was nevertheless of frequent occurrence in the United States at that time.
by right of title, she was most of all Mother in deed.

Mother Seraphine, in accordance with His Lordship's request, had taken up residence at the hospital. There she busied herself in perfecting the hospital management and in directing the responsible work with the help of her faithful Sisters. Mother Blanche, the newly elected Sub-prioress, assisted her in every way possible. Mother Seraphine knew how to fortify herself for this arduous work. Armed with the shield of prayer, her firm reliance on God, gave her strength to admonish, correct, and even to impose penances when necessity demanded.

With this appointment Mother Seraphine at the age of twenty-nine, assumed the burden of government, a responsibility which she was not to relinquish for twelve consecutive years. That it was a difficult task is beyond dispute. Misfortune and afflictions many times threatened to annihilate the struggling Community. Collectors were almost daily callers and as often, too, had to be turned down. Fears among the members of the Community mounted as credit sank lower. The informal family spirit of the pioneer days, based on the multitudinous activities of the Community, was not the best business arrangement. Neglected financial records could not be cited as proof that notes and bills had been paid, and to avoid legal complications, notes were often paid again;

2. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
3. She served from 1910 to 1922, and again from 1925 to her death in 1928.
or in the case of patients with hospital bills, the matter had to be dropped.

Dismal days were ahead for the diminutive Community of eighteen members, certainly not sufficient in number to keep both St. Mary's Convent and St. Rose Hospital flourishing. Upon consultation with the Most Reverend Bishop Hennessy, it was decided that the Convent must be closed and the Sisters quartered in the hospital. This step, though necessary, could not but be painful. Community tradition relates how the occupants, Sister Amanda, Sister Annunciata, and Candidate Mary Beran, grieved in closing a sanctuary in which the Holy Sacrifice had been offered; where each day in choir the Sisters side by side had raised their voices chanting the divine Office.

December 10, 1910, witnessed the exodus of the Sisters of St. Mary's Convent. What would the future have in store for them? As they closed the door, the strains of an old farewell song rose to their lips. Thus they gave vent to their pent up emotions. The echo encircling the deserted building repeated the refrain while they, with heavy hearts, wended their way towards the hospital.

Much hard labor and very distressing circumstances were in store for the valiant group. Most harassing of all was the mortgage on the entire property due to E. R. Moses. Fearing that the hospital, like St. Mary's Academy, was doomed

4. So leb den wohl du stilles Haus.
to failure, he relentlessly demanded his money, a note of $9,500, due in March, 1913. That note hung as a bad omen over the heads of the Sisters. Any day they expected to hear that they were homeless. Contemporaries say that even on the street in public, Mother Seraphine was accosted to pay the mortgage or (he) threatened to have the business taken from her.

The position of the Community was precarious, but the gentle valiant Mother Seraphine had courage—nothing daunted her. Then the thought of soliciting aid through "begging letters" presented itself. Immediately they set to work and wrote letters, "begging letters", till far into the night to ask help from friends and strangers alike. Novices and candidates quickly transferred their writing materials into the kitchen, the only place that was warm and kept the blustering winter winds at bay. There, by division of labor, hundreds of letters found their way to generous donors. Generous indeed they were; for had it not been through the intervention of His Lordship Bishop Hennessy, to whom a $5 bill was handed for the Sisters at Great Bend, almost the entire amount would have been thus collected. These gifts and donations came as a ray of sunshine where the shadows of night had fallen. Hearts were light and happy when the E. R. Moses's mortgage was paid. In accordance with a

5. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
6. This information was gathered from the Sisters who wrote these letters.
7. No permission from the Most Reverend J. J. Hennessy had been obtained to carry on this country wide canvass.
promise previously made, and in thanksgiving for the favor received, Mother Seraphine purchased and had erected the large outdoor statue of St. Joseph that still remains a beauty spot on the Community grounds.

It would be difficult, indeed, to give an adequate idea of the hardship that beset these loyal spirits. Though they had not looked forward to a life of ease and comfort, still they were scarcely prepared to be without shelter. But they were encouraged by Mother Seraphine, who assured them that nearly all religious foundations are invariably attended by poverty, difficulties, and suffering. Yet these trying years were filled with a spirit of love, of cheerfulness, of mutual helpfulness that rendered every labor easy and made every hardship light.

The years 1910-1915 certainly tested the financial leadership and executive ability of Mother Seraphine. With credit at zero, she placed the financial status of the institution in a position to ask credit anywhere and to any amount. In her dealings with the public, she was every inch the Sister Superior, kind, but firm in her convictions and capable in her business dealings. She seemed providentially fitted to cope with the difficulties that at times presented themselves. She was quick to see the opportunities of the moment and as quick to act, being gifted with indomitable courage and resolution. During this period she had the old hospital remodeled; and in 1914, the Convent grounds were undergoing extensive renovations. Furthermore, she
managed to pay off all the old debts and placed the Community on a secure financial footing.

The erstwhile St. Mary's Boarding School, an old red brick building was quickly transformed by applying a white stucco finish. If the interior was to serve as a convent and not a boarding school, much had to be done. Mother Seraphine believed in having the chapel as beautiful as the financial means would warrant. That, however, was not possible until 1918, when she had the means to have the chapel frescoed. The name of the Community St. Mary's Convent linked with St. Mary's Boarding School never did appeal to Mother Seraphine. Upon consultation with His Lordship and her Council, she had "St. Mary's Convent" changed to the "Immaculate Conception Convent." To commemorate the event, an iron archway with the above title was erected at the entrance to the convent grounds. In the course of time the Sisters' property became one of the sights of interest in Great Bend. The year of her death, 1928, she had installed an irrigation system, fountain, lily pond, stone wall, etc., at an expense of about $6,500. She, however, did not live to finish these improvements; her successor, Mother Rose, completed the undertaking in 1929.

Mother Seraphine's concept of education was comprehensive, progressive, and practical. It was her ambition to see

8. Sister Annunciata, Interview, June 10, 1939, Great Bend, Kansas.
each teacher well qualified to conduct successfully the classes assigned to her. Time, energy, and money, were advantageously expended in an endeavor to prepare efficient teachers. Plans were made to send several Sisters to St. Catherine, Kentucky, to take Academic Courses and thus prepare the younger members for the teaching profession. Mother Mary Louis, Prioress of St. Catherine's Convent, Kentucky, gave the following information:

In the year 1910-1911, Sister Amanda, Sister Augustine, Sister Annunciata, and Sister Inviolata, were received at St. Catherine of Sienna, Kentucky, for a year of resident religious training in the rule and constitution of this oldest congregation of the Sisters of Saint Dominic in the United States which has weathered the storms of one hundred and seventeen years, spread out over the land, and is still youthful and vigorous. The Sisters attended all the exercises and entered earnestly into the study of the ideals and customs of the congregation and by their devotion to prayer, work and study won for themselves the abiding love and respect of the Sisters of Saint Catherine of Sienna Congregation...

Each summer she called her Sisters back to the Convent from the various missions to make a retreat and continue their studies either at the Convent or else attend the summer sessions at the various colleges. The applications of the clergy for teaching Sisters were fast multiplying. September, 1911, only one parish school, Odin, could be accepted;

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10. Mother Mary Louis, Archives of St. Catherine Convent, Kentucky, June, 1940.

11. This school could not have been supplied with teachers unless Mother Blanche, the Sub-prioress, would consent to go. She gladly yielded to Mother Seraphine's request.
Windhorst, and Ellinwood could not be supplied with teachers. But the outlook became more hopeful when two young ladies from Odin asked to be admitted in the summer of 1911. Soon the struggling Community surrounded itself with the rich fruit of American vocations, and in spite of obstacles increased its membership. At the time of her death, 1928, the teaching Sisters were in charge of eleven Parochial Schools in the diocese of Wichita.

During the time the Convent was not occupied, frequent trips were made to the place so as to keep the premises from total neglect, as that would only increase the cost of repair. In February, 1912, the Convent was re-opened temporarily and used for giving retreat for the Candidates to reception and profession. In May, 1912, when the Sisters returned from Kentucky, the Convent was re-opened with Sister Amanda in charge. The novitiate of three was soon increased when four new aspirants entered. A period of intense training began so as to fit the members for the teaching profession.

Anecdotes relating to the administration of Mother

12. Appendix, No. III.
13. Miss Anna Tockert (Sister M. Joseph) and Miss Ella Penka (Sister M. Immaculata).
15. Profession of Sister Annunciata and reception of Candidate Mary Beran.
16. The aspirants that entered in 1912 are now known as: Sisters Dominica, Dalmatia, Bernadine, and Cecilia.
Seraphine abounds in convent tradition and will serve to add a human touch to the history of these pioneer days. The little Dominican family—professed, novices, and candidates, would gather familiarly about the youthful Superior for the evening recreation to enjoy the stories and listen to her plans. Mother Seraphine had a human side, too—that she revealed especially on feast days and at Christmas time. Then she would plan with great enthusiasm happy recreations for the Sisters and distribute among them all surprising little gifts, going as far in her generosity towards the Sisters as finances and rules of the Order allowed. She was an ardent admirer of music and song; and many times she would slip quietly away from the heavy administrative duties to spend some time with the novices and the candidates at the Convent. It was at such times she would ask them to sing and play for her. The pleasure was mutual; for what youth is there that does not delight in song! For Mother Seraphine's tense nerves it served as a tonic because song relegated all her cares into temporary oblivion.

Among the difficulties encountered by the Sisters during the first years of the Community's existence, arose the lack of transportation facilities. Automobiles were not yet in vogue in Great Bend at that time, and the Sisters had to rely on the whims of two old horses\(^\text{17}\) to expedite their

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17. Particularly Nellie and Spider.
surrey trips to the hospital and to town. Kansas blizzards often forbade the use of the surrey; then recourse was had to the wagon. It was only in the fall of 1918 that Mother Seraphine felt that the finances of the Community warranted the purchasing of an automobile. 18

Despite all her material interests and the heavy demands made on her time, Mother Seraphine was always punctual at all the spiritual exercises that go to make up the daily religious routine of convent life. She was fervent in prayer and found great delight in decorating the altars and the sanctuary of the Lord. She had a special devotion to Christ in the Garden of Gethsemani as can be proved by the beautiful picture of the Agonizing Christ that she had frescoed above the altar in the chapel.

Kindness was a striking virtue in her fruitful life. She was extremely generous to the poor, or those in need. The Reverend William Schaefers, present editor of the Advance Register, and chaplain of the St. Francis Hospital of Wichita, can testify to that. It was through the kindness, the interest and encouragement of Mother Seraphine, that William Schaefers continued his studies and thus gained his goal, the ministry.

The growth in the numerical strength of the Community allowed her to add continually to her ambitious plans. In

1910 there were only eighteen members; in 1928 the Community counted 108. She it was who first visioned the present St. Rose Hospital. Under her leadership the Sisters’ hospital work had progressed so rapidly that the old hospital on Broadway, a building which during the course of ten years had been enlarged and remodeled periodically, was doomed. In 1922, the present hospital representing an investment of approximately $125,000 was completed and dedicated. But even this building proved inadequate; within five years, in 1927, a new annex had to be added at an additional expenditure of $75,000. Despite the responsibilities attached to managing and directing hospital work, Mother Seraphine was a prodigious worker in the government of her convent, spending much of her time there, promoting the spirit of convent life.

Capable as she was in the management of the exterior work of the Community, she recognized the building of souls far greater. For this reason she assumed the responsibility of training the novices in the spiritual life. Not being able to be their constant companion and guide because of administrative duties, she appointed a senior Sister to aid her in their training. Various Sisters filled this office; the last one, Sister Dominica, served in this capacity from 1915 to 1922 when the first Canonical

19. See Chapter X on hospitalization.
20. Sisters Dalmatia, Amanda, Thomas, and Dominica.
Election took place at the Convent, and Mother Blanche was appointed first Novice Mistress.

During the year 1920, two events disturbed the tranquility of the Community; the untimely death of the Most Reverend Bishop Hennessy, the other, the resignation from office tendered by Mother Seraphine.

Apparently in good health, the Bishop had kept all his engagements when unexpectedly the news came that the Bishop died of apoplexy.

The Bishop appeared to be in good health on Monday. He dined with the priests of the cathedral at the rectory, 320 East Central, and was in almost exuberant spirits. After dinner he was driven to his home.... At seven o'clock he was attending to his lawn as was his wont. At nine o'clock his housekeeper found him in the reception room of his home, his head had dropped upon his chest.... He was removed to St. Francis Hospital, and there in the presence of the doctor, Fathers...Sisters and nurses, he died....

To Mother Seraphine the death of His Lordship was a shock; the staff on which she had leaned was broken. It should not, however, be imagined that she was incompetent and unable to carry on; far from it; but in him she found a father and guide. To him she went with all her difficulties in guiding the Community. Her confidence in him was boundless. Dwelling on this she remarked how she could consult him and come away comforted, strengthened and determined to carry on her strenuous duties. For no one ever

22. Community Annals, op. cit.
came within his influence without being touched in some way by the nobility, the unmeasured charity, the high ideals and the radiant piety of his character.

To the Sisters of the present generation, the Most Reverend Bishop Hennessy is but a name and a memory, but the Community would be most ungrateful if it ever forgot his interest in its behalf. He, with Mother Seraphine, was a prime factor in the development and expansion of the fragile Community.

It is not surprising under these circumstances that Mother Seraphine tendered her resignation as Superior to the assembled Community of Senior Sisters July 27, 1920. She felt that he had appointed and sustained her, and with his death, a new election could be conducted according to the New Canon Law promulgated in 1918. She had frequently spoken to His Lordship to release her from the office, but he had witnessed the progress of the Community and would not listen to her pleadings.

This announcement of her request came as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky to the peaceful Community. The tenderest ties had bound her to them; her relation with all were of the most motherly character; her sympathy and encouragement had enfolded them during her administration. The well-nigh distracted Community could not act that day. The

following day Mother again repeated her request; then by secret ballot the Sisters asked her to remain in office at least until the vacant bishopric at Wichita was filled. To this she consented, and served until August, 1922.

After eight months of vacancy the diocese could exclaim: *Habemus Pontificem*, for on March 11, 1921, the news flashed from Rome, that Monsignor August J. Schwertner of Toledo, Ohio, had been selected as Bishop of the vacant See of Wichita. He was born in Canton, Ohio, December 1870; ordained to the priesthood June 12, 1897; and almost a quarter of a century later June 8, 1921, received the episcopal consecration. June 22, 1921, marks the day of his solemn installation in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Wichita.

Before six months had elapsed Bishop Schwertner had visited the entire diocese, traveling more than 7,000 miles. He took an especial interest in Religious Communities, for his great message to his people was his ardent plea for vocations to the ministry and the religious life.

The next event of Community significance after the induction of Bishop Schwertner as Ordinary of the Diocese was the first Canonical Election. This was conducted at the Immaculate Conception Convent Chapel, August 18, 1922, in conformity with the Constitutions of the Order and the

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25. Sister Blanche took the initiative and suggested this to the assembled group.
new Code of Canon Law with the Most Reverend Schwertner presiding. The requisite number of votes were cast for Mother M. Bona Silberhorn.27 Mother Seraphine, longing to be freed from this responsibility, stepped aside in obedience to the new regulation governing the matter of the length of time that a Sister may serve as Superior.28

The Sisters admired and revered her as Mother Superior, but they admired her more how she, against the almost unanimous vote of her Community, was eager to give up her first place and be one of the rank and file. They realized her charming personality, her unique character, her wholesouled consecration to everything pertaining to the welfare of the Community. Her affability was an asset to her during her long career of Superior; she was easy to work with. Her entire administration spelled efficiency. After Mother Bona's three years of office were over, in 1925, when Mother Seraphine was again eligible for the office, the Sisters placed her again at the head of the Community. Again in August, 1928, she was re-elected for the customary three-year period. This term, however, was completed by the Sub-prioress, Mother Rose, for Mother Seraphine's death occurred October 16, 1928.

Mother's feastday, April 30, was always a red letter day for the entire Community; a sort of holiday when classes and

27. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
servile work were suspended. It was a day of reunion, for all the mission Sisters managed to be home. The day itself was anticipated by weeks of preparation. Note the change after Mother's departure.²⁹

Feast of St. Catherine of Sienna without Mother Seraphine. Sad—many Sisters shed tears. All went as usual—school as every other day. April 30, 1929, starts a new era—no more celebration that day.

Mother Seraphine's life was for the Sisters a model and an inspiration. Her piety was remarkable. In the midst of many distracting duties she maintained a calm spirit of recollection. She inspired the deepest respect among the Sisters who considered themselves privileged to be her associates in religion.

In appearance Mother Seraphine was tall and slender. She bore herself with a majestic gracefulness that bespoke culture and self possession. To the Sisters who came under her influence she was all that is implied in the title "Mother". Her charming personality endeared her to her subjects. All her energies were directed toward securing the comfort and well being of others, while she was utterly forgetful of herself. No Sister could resist her persuasive words.

In her early years Mother Seraphine enjoyed splendid health, but gradually it was undermined by her untiring devotion to the spiritual and temporal needs of the grow-

²⁹. Community Annals, op. cit.
ing Community. Untiringly, she labored disregarding the demands of poor human nature. Her firm will, which had been nurtured by hardship and trials, furnished strength to carry on despite fatigue and various ailments. When in 1926, the physician pronounced her ailment diabetes and urged her to rest, she smiled good naturally and said her "fiat" as usual. But that did not diminish her fervor and enthusiasm. Devoted hands of the nursing Sisters did all that was within their power to lighten her burden. She, however, insisted on carrying on her administrative duties the same as when in health. In her unselfishness she refused to receive extra care or attention, especially as long as she was able to do it herself. However, the strain and her diabetic condition gradually broke Mother Seraphine's strength.

Sister Amanda has this in her diary:

Dec. 13, 1926. On the eve of the funeral (Sister Rita) our Mother took sick, but called nobody. The following day she was in bed, at seven P. M. she consented to have a doctor call. At 8:15 Dr. Morrison gave the intravenous; at 11:45 Father Reidy came to give the last Sacraments.

She rallied from this attack; the crisis was over. The hearts of her spiritual Sisters beat high with hope; and many were the prayers of thanksgiving that sped heavenward. Slowly she regained strength; however, she was never

30. One most devoted and self-sacrificing was Sister Dolores.
31. Sister Amanda, op. cit.
again the same. This remark in Sister Amanda's diary is self-explanatory: "We pity dear Mother who is brought every morning for Holy Mass." Her strength all but spent, she still performed her duties as usual. With heroic effort she stifled the demands of her pain racked body.

The welfare of her Community was always uppermost in her mind. When she received notice that the Medical Association for the Standardization of Hospitals met at Boston October 8, 1928, she made plans to attend. Sister DeSales, Superintendent of Nurses, accompanied her and also Sister Loretta, who was to go to New York to learn the latest in anaesthetics and the operating room.

All bade them God-speed the night before, but Mother Seraphine, true to her deep interest in every one of her Sisters, made it her special duty the next day before leaving to visit each and every one of the Sisters at her post and with her usual cheerfulness bade them farewell. The Sisters were filled with misgivings, for all knew Mother's physical condition. Within a few days, October 9, their fears materialized—a telegram from Boston: "Mother is very ill." Anxious hours followed—a stream of continuous prayer was sent to heaven pleading her recovery. Her brother rushed to Boston to be at her bedside. Daily telegrams—how they dreaded their content.

32. Sister Amanda, op. cit.
33. William Weisenburg.
Suffering serenely, yet resigned, Mother remained in Boston, tenderly cared for by her companion, since doctors there did not permit her to be moved. Meanwhile word had reached Sister Loretta of Mother's condition. Immediately she hastened to her bedside.

All this time desiring to spare her Sisters the pangs of suspense, Mother did not allow word of her true condition to be forwarded until her dissolution was imminent. Then were the hearts of her Sisters deeply disturbed and grieved. How the longing to see her once more grew in every heart that loved her.

Sister Amanda kept all the mission Sisters informed of Mother's condition. The following are excerpts of some of her letters:

We can feel for you—as we too are waiting anxiously for every telephone call—trembling and fearing it might bring us the saddest of news. This time we cannot inform you as we would like to do.

Today came another telegram at noon as follows: "Mother slightly improved." It is very little, but some consolation that God has heard our prayer, because in yesterday's telegram it said we will get another message toward evening if Mother gets worse. We fear she is as low as she can be....we have no idea what Mother's trouble is. Of course, we, as well as Dr. Morrison, think that she is in a coma—unconscious.

Poor Mother, how it will add to her suffering when she wakes up to think she is so far away—her Sisters cannot be at her bedside and to think that she perhaps should pass away as so many here fear—seems too sad.

34. Sister Amanda, op. cit.
but we did not like to see dear Mother go. She was not any too well, but she was longing to go. We feel somewhat consoled that Dr. Zugg is there as he left long ago for the meeting in Boston. Mother arrived at the place where she meant to stay, but we see at today's telegram that she was taken to the hospital. Will give the address later. I had strict orders from Mother when she left...that I write her every day about home and the Sisters....

We will let you know what we hear. All at home are deeply grieved for it seems the worst might come.

Let us hope and pray and God will help.

The following note was inserted in one of her letters:

(Was sent Oct. 9, 1928) A copy of Sr. de Sales' letter which arrived Sat. A.M. I'll give it just as I recall it--it is always going around and I would not be able to send you the contents if I wait.

"I would give anything in the world if I could bring Mother home or if she were at home. Dr. Zugg was here twice to-day and he thinks she will make it, but I have my doubts. She has hardly any sugar,...but much acitone and she is very drowsy. It is a similar attack as she had two years ago, after Sister Rita's funeral. She does not suffer very much and eats very little. She worries a great deal about everything at home. I tell her not to worry, but she does. The Sisters are very good to us but I take care of her myself. Mother has two doctors besides Dr. Zugg. She does not want me to leave the bedside for a minute. The sickness came on so sudden and Sr. Loretta can tell how jolly Mother had been on the way...."

Tuesday, October 16, came the fatal message. For the Community that Tuesday was a day of shadow and gloom; however, the Sisters steeled themselves to do as Mother would have desired them to do--put their personal sorrow in the background and faithfully followed the calls of duty. 35

35. Some letters that have been used here are the personal property of the writer; others belong to Sister Dominica.
Again Sister Amanda's note to the Sisters is apropos: 

A message this P.M. (Thursday) came. "We will arrive Friday, 7:20 P.M." Our dear Mother will return, but how, you all know. What a meeting; twelve of us (Senior Sisters) go to meet her--the coffin--at the station. Come as soon as possible to spend the last days with our dear Mother.

Monsignor arranged funeral services for Tuesday, 9:30 ... Services will be in the Parish Church. Monday requiem in the Convent Chapel. Why did Mother go so far? or did God lead her away to die? We cannot understand, He knows...

Around the casket filed 108 Sisters on October 19 at 8 P.M. to view the lifeless form of their deceased Mother. They were almost inconsolable for they realized that she, from whom they had hoped so much, had been taken from them.

For four days the remains rested in the Community room, while day and night the Sisters kept vigil. On Tuesday morning the body of the beloved Superior was borne to St. Rose of Lima Church for the final obsequies. Here relatives, friends, religious of different Communities, and priests came to pay a last tribute to the great soul who had done so much for them in life. After a solemn Requiem sung by the diocesan clergy, Monsignor Farrell delivered a touching eulogy, dwelling upon the shining example she had been to her Sisters.

The forlorn Community attended the last rites of their loving Mother and then sadly followed her remains to the Sisters' Cemetery. 36 Gently they laid her to rest at the feet of Candidate Fanny Fischer as Mother had so ardently requested during her lifetime.

36. This cemetery is in connection with the city's cemetery.
The death of Mother Seraphine, sudden, at that time unexpected, cast a pall of uncertainty and gloom over the religious of the Immaculate Conception Convent. Long will her memory live in the minds and hearts of those for whom she suffered and toiled, as well as in the recollection of those who witnessed her self-sacrificing deeds. Though she was called to her reward, her spirit remained and like a beacon light guided the destiny of the Community.
St. Mary's Convent, the erstwhile C. N. C.

The Gothic Altar in the Immaculate Conception Convent Chapel
St. Joseph's Shrine

The Archway at the entrance to the Convent premises.
CHAPTER VII
The Administration of Mother Bona

The first Canonical Election held at the Immaculate Conception Convent, August 18, 1922, brought to the office of prioress Mother M. Bona Silberhorn. She was born in 1876, Bavaria, Germany; at the age of fifteen she crossed the ocean for America and within a year entered the Holy Cross Convent in Brooklyn. Her first vows were pronounced November 26, 1894, and her final vows July 29, 1905, at St. Mary's Convent, Great Bend. Shortly after her entrance in Brooklyn, she started to teach, a duty interrupted in 1903, by offering her services to the Kansas mission. In Kansas she continued her teaching career, spending over thirty years with the Kansas youth both elementary and high school. She filled the office of local superior for many years; previous to her election she had been identified with the affairs of the Community by holding the office of Councillor, which duty she discharged with care and ability.

Mother Bona, at that time at the height of her powers, devoted herself unreservedly to the welfare of the Community for three years. Forty-five years of age, of vigorous constitution, a firm character, a charitable disposition, and

an ardent desire for a life of perfection were, no doubt, some of the qualities which prompted the Senior Sisters to elect her as the Mother Prioress of the Immaculate Conception Convent. It was now her task to turn her thoughts from pleasant classroom duties to executive responsibilities requiring far more tact and judgment. Her prudence promoted the progress and influence of the Community to the greatest extent. One of her great aims during this time was to obtain the revision and approval of the Constitutions of the Congregation. Upon taking an inventory of copies available, she found that scarcely a dozen copies were in possession of the Sisters, and these were on the missions, one at each place. It was her ambition to place a copy of the Constitutions into the hands of each individual sister, that by careful study of its principles her life could be regulated accordingly.

Immediately correspondence was started with the Mother Prioress of Holy Cross Convent, Brooklyn, asking her to send some copies of the Book of Rules and Constitutions. One dozen copies of their 1905 revised Rule were forwarded instantly; due to the New Code of Canon Law, promulgated Pentecost Sunday, May 19, 1918, some of the points of the Constitutions had to be revised. In 1923, Monsignor Kaupert, Spiritual Director of the Sisters, Vicar General

2. Holy Cross adopted the Rule of the Third Order Regular in 1895.
of the Diocese of Brooklyn, and a skilled canonist, brought out a new edition of the Constitutions. He used the Constitutions of the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Kentucky, as a basis. The new Constitutions were brief but comprehensive. The 1923 edition prepared by Monsignor Kaupert contains 161 pages and presupposed the use of a customary.\footnote{Customary is a summary of prayers, ceremonies and traditional practices not contained specifically in the Constitutions.}

The original American Constitutions prepared by Fathers Mundelein and Koffmann was 200 pages. The original one in 1847 prepared by Father Shiml contained 432 pages combining Constitutions and Customary.\footnote{Crawford, \textit{op. cit.}, 309-310.}

The need for a customary had long been felt a necessity among the Sisters. Since Father Kaupert's edition of the Constitutions did not contain the sacred traditions of the Order, it was necessary to have a separate book for this purpose. There had been in use among the older sisters a German compilation of prayers and ceremonies. This had been brought from Brooklyn by the pioneer group in 1902. Not being able to secure additional copies in German, they were obliged to use the English version, which however, conflicted somewhat with Kansas conditions. In 1932, Mother Rose, the Prioress asked Mother M. Bona to revise and arrange them to meet the local conditions.

At the time Mother Bona requested Brooklyn to send copies of their Rules and Constitutions, they were undergoing revision by Monsignor Kaupert according to the new
code of Canon Law; but as soon as the Publishers released the first copy, a sample was forwarded to Mother Bona at Great Bend. She, after consultation with her council, presented the copy to Bishop Schwertner for his scrutiny and revision. After annotations were made he affixed his Imprimatur on the feast of the Assumption, 1923, and sent the copy back to Mother Bona. Some difficulties arose in the meantime regarding the adoption of the new Constitutions. To some of the members they seemed incomplete, as previously stated, many of the ceremonies formerly in the Constitutions were now reserved for the Ceremonial and Customary.

The most Reverend Bishop being informed of the situation made a few additional revisions, and ordered the book to be sent to the press without further changes as this letter proves:

Bishop's House
College Hill
Wichita, Kansas
Nov. 20th, 1923

Mother M. Bona
St. Rose Hospital
Great Bend, Kansas

Dear Mother Bona,

Under separate cover I am returning the Book of Rules and Regulations, which I took along when at Great Bend. I have gone over the whole book again and direct that it be printed as it stands without any omissions or changes, except what I have made. I would suggest that you have the printer send you proof sheets for correction before he prints the book.

Fraternally yours in Xto.,
Aug. J. Schwertner, Bishop of Wichita

6. Sample copy preserved in Archives at Great Bend.
7. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
During the summer of 1924, the most Reverend Bishop had a canonical visitation and officially distributed the book of Rules and Constitutions to each Sister and reminded her of the words addressed to her at her profession of vows when the Rules were presented to her:

Receive this book of Rules as a pledge of eternal fidelity; Know that it shall again be presented to you on the day of judgment, for your glory if you shall have observed them and for your condemnation if you shall have violated them.

Today all Dominican Institutions in the United States have adopted modern Constitutions, yet their basic traditions have come from the Rule of 1847, and thousands of Dominicans in the United States are basing their lives of sacrifice on this Rule. 9

The Community at Great Bend was not as truly Dominican in its spirit as it might have been, if the members had the privilege of being guided by Dominican Fathers as their spiritual directors. Mother Antonine was ever eager to foster the true Dominican spirit, hence in spite of all expenses and extreme poverty, she called for Dominican retreat masters. At that time they had to come from New York, as there was no mission band west, nor in the centre as today. They were most eager to come as they knew the good mission spirit of Mother Antonine.

Mother Bona belonging to that pioneer stock, was anxious to have the younger members get acquainted with Dominican

8. Sisters of St. Dominic, Ceremonial, Great Bend, 1932.
life and customs. Receiving Bishop Schwertner's acquiescence in the matter, she started correspondence in November, 1922, with the Very Reverend Father Ripple, Vicar Provincial of the St. Joseph Province, New York, who had given retreat to the Sisters in 1907, in Great Bend, at the request of Mother Antonine. The result was that on February 23, 1923, Reverend John Frense, O. P., was appointed to be the chaplain of St. Rose Hospital and Director of the spiritual affairs of the Community. Excerpts of Bishop Schwertner's letter give proof of his assent to Father Frense's appointment:

...I have given definite instructions to Father John and sincerely hope his counsel and presence will be of great assistance in building up a good and powerful religious spirit in the Community, after which I can tell more fully just what new rules and regulations are necessary.... Kindly remember me to Father John....

A resume of Father John Frense may not be out of place here. The following letter written by him will answer this purpose:

Chicago, Ill.
Feb. 1, 1923

Right Rev. Dear Bishop,

I regret very much that I could not sooner answer your kind letter of the 30th of December; first I had to expect the arrival of Father V. Provincial Ripple, who, on account of the journey of Father Provincial Meagher to China, takes his place. Yesterday evening I told F. Ripple the offer, that Mother Bona of Great Bend made to me in consequence of a long letter, that she wrote to Father Remigius Stabel, O.P., one

10. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
11. Dominican Sisters, op. cit.
of our German Fathers, sent by our Very Rev. Father General to America for alms on behalf of our poor Convents of the German Province. Our Prior of Chicago, Reverend F. Casey and our Vicar Provincial, Reverend F. Ripple agreed with the offer made to me by Mother Bona; Father Ripple will write to you in the next days from New York.

Concerning your questions: I am able to preach both English and in German. I was born in Munster, Westfalia, 24th of June, 1851; joined our holy Order in 1869, made profession in 1870. Although 71 years old, I feel still young and enjoy good health. I made my studies in Holland and in Louvain where I passed the Lectorship; taught philosophy and theology, then in our Collegium Albertinum, Greek and French for six years. In 1885 our Very Reverend General Larroca called me to Rome to be his secretary; later I stayed 14 years in our Convent in Berlin, where I founded and directed the union of Catholic workmen for 10 years. From Berlin I was sent by the order of the Very Reverend Master General Fruhwirth (now Cardinal) to Petersburg, Russia, where I had to run the German parish for 6 years. Two years I stayed in Galicia to learn Polish. Too, in the course of my missions I preached English, French, Italian, and Dutch. During the last 11 years (1910-1921) I worked in Germany (Kloster Warburg,) (Zaderborn) on behalf of the Polish "Laieonarbeiten"; during the war I also had the spiritual care of the prisoners of all kinds of nations.

At least two years ago, the present Master General, Father Theissling, sent me to Chicago to go to work here at St. Pius for the Poles, but finding here very little work for the Poles, I should not be displeased to accept the offer made to me by Mother Bona in her letter to Father Remigius Stabel, O.P.

As I told your Lordship already, our Vicar Provincial, Father Ripple, as soon as he has finished his work here and comes to New York, will write to you and give you all necessary information.

Finally I take advantage of this occasion to wish you a very happy New year, and subscribe myself,

Your Lordship's
most respectfully in Xto.,

Father John Frense, O.P.
While connected with the Community, despite the advanced age and adverse climatic conditions, Father John Frense spent himself for the advancement of the Community. Very little leisure remained to him, after his daily instructions to the novitiate members, weekly conferences, plus his duties as a hospital chaplain, and a Dominican.

Mother Bona, filled with the desire to share the spiritual benefits of the Dominican Order, approached Father John one day with the subject of affiliation. It grieved him to hear that the Community had not yet been affiliated with the great Dominican Order and thus were deprived of all the spiritual benefits in which they would have participated had they been affiliated.

Immediately Father John submitted the request to Bishop Schwertner:

Right Reverend Bishop Schwertner,

I send you enclosed here the request of one, Mother Bona, by which she desires to obtain from our Most Reverend Father General the favor of Affiliation. Please sign it; perhaps you will be so kind to add a word of recommendation. When you have returned it to me, I will send it to Rome....

Your humble servant,

Father John Frense, O.P.

Negotiations with Rome were started, and on January 30, 1924, the Master General, the Very Reverend Ludovicus

Theissling, O.P., issued the diploma affiliating the Dominican Community at Great Bend with the Order of Friar Preachers.

This excerpt from Mother Bona's letter, February 1, 1924, to Bishop Schwertner, gives proof of her happiness in having gained another victory for her Community:

I am very happy to announce to Your Lordship the receipt of the Diploma of Affiliation with Rome, accompanied by a letter from the Reverend Louis Nolan, O.P., Secretary, in which he mentioned that His Paternity, the Master General Ludovicus Theissling sends his special blessing to the infant Congregation....

Another undertaking that proved Mother Bona a fearless and zealous promoter of the Community interests was the tax ordeal. Ever anxious to decrease the heavy debt, she started investigations concerning the tax exemption cases of charitable institutions. From correspondence carried on with the leading charitable institutions of Kansas, she learned that they were tax exempt and then with all the evidence in hand she approached the institution's legal advisor with the matter. Having been encouraged by him, she next conferred with Bishop Schwertner. Immediately the question was handed over to S. A. Buckland of Wichita, the Bishop's legal advisor, who instructed her to pay only the special taxes, and not bother with the general tax.

For many years St. Rose Hospital and many other hospitals in Kansas had been exempted from taxation. Reasons

13. Appendix, No. IV.
for the same being: (1) That the hospital was considered a charitable institution and under the constitutional provision, Art. 11, Sec. I, this institution was exempt from taxation:

The legislation shall provide for a uniform and equal rate of assessment and taxation....all property used exclusively for state, county, municipal, literary, educational, scientific, religious, benevolent and charitable purposes....shall be exempted from taxation.

According to the court syllabus:16

Taxation: Exemption--Charitable Institutions. A Hospital owned and managed by a corporation organized for benevolent purposes, which has no capital stock, declares no dividends and has earned none, and which devotes all its income to the care of persons sick or injured, and in improving and extending its facilities for doing so, and which receives and cares for patients without discrimination as to their race, creed or wealth, is a charity, and its property used directly and solely for that purpose is used exclusively for charitable purposes.

(2) The State law provides that hospitals are exempt in case they receive state aid. The list of state aid for hospitals is compiled by the State Board of administration. The law ostensibly endeavors to draw a line of distinction between hospitals that are quasi charitable institutions and those which are not. Some receive as little as $20 a year from the state and therefore are exempt from taxation.

In a letter to His Lordship, Mother Bona gives this information regarding St. Rose Hospital:17

There are no records to be found in the daybook concerning State Aid; as the only daybook on hand begins

15. General Statutes of Kansas, Topeka, 1936, LXIII.
17. Dominican Sisters, op. cit.
with July 1921. But I readily recall that State Aid was received in this hospital even if accounts are no longer on hand. The daybook shows a receipt of $20 for the year June 1921-22. I received a check from the State in January for the year June 1922-23. I also recall that Mother Antonine, the first Prioress received State Aid....

Since the institution received State Aid the Barton County Commissioners put the construction of charitable institution on it. A few years ago, the board of County Commissioners of Barton County, decided that St. Rose Hospital was not entitled to tax exemption under the law and ordered the county clerk and the county treasurer to place the property of the institution on the tax rolls. So the hospital was placed on the tax roll and the hospital authorities obtained a temporary injunction against these officers. The injunction was granted, and the case was taken to court. From the very start it was considered a legal test case, no matter which way it might be decided; that the case would be appealed to the Supreme Court, as so much other property in Kansas would be affected by the final decision of the court.

The County Commissioners contented that the institution was operated on a profit basis; that the County paid charity cases to the institution; but they failed to consider the actual cost it takes to maintain a patient per day. Hospital records show this to be over $3.00 a day, and the county paid for its cases $10 a week, plus addi-

tional fee if operating room was used. The hospital records show a difference between the full charge and the amount paid to the institution by the County to be over $2,000 each year. The total amount of money received by the hospital during the year 1924 was approximately $32,000.

Furthermore, all moneys that had been received as gifts, legacies, etc., had been used in maintaining the institution and to pay the interest and indebtedness; so the notion that it was a profit making institution had not yet materialized, for the institution was still indebted.

A circular of instruction was issued by the Tax Commission directing the County Assessors that all hospital property was to be placed on the tax roll by virtue of the fact that State Aid from the State Board of administration had been withdrawn for the year 1922. Shortly after this, the Tax Commission received a list of hospitals that had been given appropriations by the State Board of administration, which fact restored them to the nontaxable position; in consequence the County Assessors were directed to exclude the same from taxation for the year 1922.

Despite that fact, Mother Bona received a delinquent tax notice, November 7, 1923, stating that the amount due for the second half of 1922 was $2091.04. Mr. Buckland had advised her, however, to pay the special taxes only.

In 1923, the hospital paid the taxes under protest and then sued the county for recovery of the amount paid.
State wide interest was aroused. Other hospitals which paid taxes under similar conditions were depending on the Great Bend case to determine the validity of the tax ruling.

The Executive Members of the State Hospital Association, especially Drs. Axtell and Hatcher, watched the proceedings earnestly and offered their assistance in securing the best attorneys in the State to assist the Hospital.

The Sam Amidon law firm, Wichita, and R. C. Russell of Great Bend, represented the hospital in the case, while W. J. Weber, county attorney, D. A. Banta, and E. Cole were attorneys for the defendant.

April 24, 1924, the case of Nuns of St. Dominic vs. County Clerk was tried in the 20th Judicial District, Great Bend, Barton County, Kansas. The court did not render a decision until the briefs were filed. A letter from S. A. Buckland to Bishop Schwertner states the verdict:

Amidon, Buckland, Hart and Porter
Wichita, Kansas
Sept. 17, 1924

Dear Bishop,

I received word this morning that the court at Great Bend had decided the Hospital case against us. He made findings of fact, however, which are decidedly in our favor and we are taking steps to take the case to the Supreme Court immediately.

Yours respectfully,

S. A. Buckland

When Judge Quinlan of the 20th Judicial District decided against the hospital, the Executive State Board of Hospitals asked for a contribution of $10 from each hospital in the state to pay court expenses, as they had decided in their annual State meeting at Emporia, October 28, 1924, to appeal the case to the Supreme Court for a final settlement for all hospitals concerned.

The Supreme Court of Kansas May 9, 1925, reversed the Barton County verdict and upheld the demand of the hospital that the County Commissioners of Barton County be restrained from assessing taxes against the institution. In effect, the Supreme Court declared that a hospital which earned no dividends and devotes all of its energies to the care of the sick and injured is a charity and need not pay taxes on its property in Kansas.

On May 9th, the county treasurer refunded the taxes paid under protest to the hospital and only special taxes had to be paid.

Entries in the diary of Mother Bona adequately reveal the spirit of gratitude and rejoicing that prevailed in the Community at the result of the settlement.

The refunded tax money was applied on the debt and, in connection with legacies received during her administration, Mother Bona reduced the debt considerably. One of these legacies was the result of an agreement that had

visitations of all the mission houses of the Community and enforced the details of the new Constitutions. In her daily life she was a pattern of religious observance. During her administration the Community advanced steadily with no setbacks. The Most Reverend Bishop continued his active interest, especially in the maintenance of financial equilibrium.

Mother Bona, doubtless, could have been re-elected at the next General Election, August, 1925, had Mother Seraphine not been eligible for re-election; but all hearts went out to their former Mother who had the confidence of the senior Sisters because of her previous experience of leadership in the Community during the formative years; and she enjoyed the trust and veneration of the younger Sisters because of her outstanding courage and her exemplary life.
Mother M. Bona
CHAPTER VIII

Mother M. Rose

The death of Mother Seraphine October 16, 1928, automatically placed Mother Rose, the sub-prioress, in charge of the Community until by an Extraordinary Chapter a canonically elected Mother Prioress would be so designated. Due to the absence of the Most Reverend Bishop August Schwertner, this event had to be postponed until the summer of 1929, when the vocals of the Community met for the first Extraordinary Chapter in its history. Their choice fell upon Mother Rose and this assured her of the Sisters' confidence in her.

Mother Rose, though not an accomplished woman of the world, nevertheless, possessed those virtues and traits of character which are the crown of womanhood. She was sincere and simple in demeanor; humble and devoted in her actions, and extremely charitable in all her dealings with others. Courageously she shouldered the burden of Community leadership; although in her own heart she may have restrained a fountain of tears, she brought glad cheer and comfort to the disheartened Sisters.

The annals of her life are brief and simple. Mary McFadden was born in Missouri, January 20, 1879, and came

1. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
to Kansas with her parents in her early childhood. Twenty-three years of her life were spent under the parental roof. When the family settled in Great Bend, she expressed a strong desire of devoting her life to the service of the Master and entered the Novitiate at St. Mary's December 8, 1902. She was the first candidate of this vicinity to join the Dominican Sisterhood. At the investiture the name of Sister M. Rose was given her. After the time of her probation was completed, she was admitted to the religious profession, July 25, 1905; her final vows were pronounced August 30, 1917. After taking the simple vows, she devoted her services to ministering to the sick at St. Rose Hospital. Complying with the state law, she willingly learned the theory of the art of nursing. Very little time for study was available in those primitive years; but she, with untiring labor and incessant effort, performed the duties incumbent on her as a nurse studying to meet the requirements of this profession. It was a common sight to see Medical books in the diet kitchen, supply room or at the charting desk. Each fragment of time was utilized to glean knowledge for the ordeal of passing the examination of the Kansas State Board for Registration Nursing; and her efforts were rewarded by having the State diploma conferred on her. She performed with meticulous care her nursing duties until the day she was placed at the

2. Community Annals, op. cit.
3. She was a member of the first class of student nurses graduating from St. Rose Hospital Training School, August 20, 1920.
helm of the Community.

Every interval left free from religious exercises, Community duties, hospital and nursing demands, was spent in such varied occupations as working in her garden, particularly her flower garden, for she passionately loved flowers, or tending to pet animals and especially was she fond of chickens. It came to be a by-word if Sister Rose could not be found—"she might be with the chickens"—and the feathered flock knew her, flocked around her as she sat on a stump and fed them. Sister Amanda in her diary has this note: ⁴

...Mother Seraphine shortly before her death remarked that this love for God's creatures is a sign of sanctity similar to Francis of Assisi...

Just this one incident out of many others to prove how humane she was. On one occasion a very young canary had been abandoned by the mother bird. Mother Rose on hearing this, adopted him, raised this fledgling by feeding him with a medicine dropper and supplying heat with a warm water bag. On her visitations to the various missions "Pete" was placed in a basket and carried along wherever she went, for she permitted no one else to handle him. Later she gave this same canary as a personal gift to the Novitiate members, and they cherished him fondly in memory of the giver. ⁵

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⁴. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
⁵. Sister M. Augustine, Interview, Great Bend, Aug. 12, 1940.
Always thoughtful, she prepared surprises for others. She took the warmest interest in everything, no matter how trifling, that affected the happiness and well being of the Sisters. It is particularly these remembrances that engendered such a love for Mother Rose that when her term expired and the fourth Chapter convened, she was again charged with leadership. The office of sub-prioress devolved upon Mother Bona and Sister Augustine was re-elected Novice Mistress.

Mother Rose entered her first full term with the years of experience gained by completing the unexpired term of Mother Seraphine. Fortified with this experience and good counsellors to assist her, she continued to elevate the tone of the Community and to prudently manage its financial and business phases.

Being naturally of a retiring and reserved nature, Mother Rose must have suffered much in her position as Prioress. She preferred silence and retirement to leadership. All through her career as a Religious, especially as Mother Prioress, her innermost thoughts and deepest affections were never openly manifested, though they were the moving principle of her judgments and actions. She made the Divine Master the Confidant of her joys and sorrows and only a chosen few really knew how human and sympathetic she was. Sister Amanda, Secretary to Mother Rose, has this in

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her diary:

...The burden of office and the ruling of others could never have been congenial to Mother Rose. Here was rather a nature to work in the hidden, to keep away from people. However, when called by obedience, to the highest position of the Community, she administered the affairs with firmness...

The material progress made during the depression years are ample proof of this fact. The Sisters are grateful to her and also to the Most Reverend Bishop Schwertner that they so carefully spanned the Community over these vexing years. By careful shepherding of resources, Mother Rose kept the Community on an even financial keel, despite the outlays for maintenance for the many mission houses and despite the reduction of the teaching Sisters' salaries, or better still, the gratis teaching in several parishes that were unable to pay. Indeed on several occasions when requests came from these mission houses for the much needed monthly check, the Community treasury was literally empty, and poor Mother Rose secretly hoped and prayed that no unforeseen emergency would arise to add to the financial burden. However, it was precisely during these years that some improvements were imperative.

One of the great problems that confronted Mother Rose was the construction of a power and heat plant. The boilers in use had outlived their longevity of service and there was question of heat being lost besides the question of

7. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
8. Mother M. Involuta, Interview, Great Bend, Kansas, 1940.
safety. After close investigation by Otto Holtz, licensed engineer of New York City, it was decided by Mother Rose and her Council to build a separate plant just north of the hospital, supplying heat and power to the hospital, convent, and other units on the premises. Plans submitted by Smith, Boucher, and Overend of Wichita, were approved by the most Reverend Bishop, September 28, 1929, at an approximate cost of $55,000. The power plant was housed in a brick building 100' x 40' x 22', with a 100 foot smokestack, built by the Weber Company of Chicago. December 30, 1929, after completion of 50 feet of this smokestack, a fire was built to dry the concrete work, but accidentally the scaffolding caught fire and had to be rebuilt; fortunately the damage on the forms did not prove very serious.

The laundry department formerly in the east end of the ground floor of the hospital was placed in the west end of the new structure and the east end served as apartments for the working force operating the heat and power plant.

The plant was modern in every respect. Three Babcock & Wilson sterling water boilers with safety devices, Worthington pump fixtures and a Carbondale ice machine were installed. From that time water and ice bills practically disappeared from the financial reports.

9. Otto Holtz, a nephew of Mother Loretta, had served several years with the Merchant Marine as engineer prior to his coming to Kansas.
Not only in the material, but also in the spiritual successes of the Community was Mother Rose deeply concerned. It suffices here merely to state the part Mother played in regard to the adoption of the Ceremonial and Customary.

The first copy, a German compilation, quickly outgrew its demand as the Community became more distinctly American in its personnel; then the Brooklyn Customary, an English version which was not in accord with Kansas conditions, was used for many years; both proved inadequate. Finally Mother Rose saw the need for revising the Brooklyn Customary and Ceremonial. Feeling herself unequal to the task, she entrusted the revision to Mother Bona. After the council sanctioned the revision, and with the approbation of the Most Reverend Bishop, the compilation was printed by the Friary Press, St. Joseph College, Hays, Kansas.

This Ceremonial and Customary of the Dominican Community of the Immaculate Conception is placed in the hands of every member of the Community, lest time-honored customs and traditional ceremonies not found explicitly mentioned in the Rules and Constitutions, be forgotten by the younger generation of Sisters.

The grotto erected by Mother Antonine on the Convent premises had always been a place of much interest to everyone. That Mother Antonine had great devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes is amply proved by the two grottoes she had

10. Approved by Bishop Schwertner, Wichita, Kansas, September 8, 1932.
erected: one on St. Rose Hospital grounds, the other on the Convent grounds. The statue used in the hospital grotto had been brought from Lourdes, France, and had touched the privileged shrine there. With the construction of the new St. Rose Hospital the grotto was razed and the statue brought to the convent. The construction of the grotto on the convent grounds was the beginning of the transformation of the premises. This rocky alcove with a rustic pre dieu at the rear of the cave, invited visitors to the shrine for a few moments respite from their labors to muse on things divine. In this condition it was when Mother Rose, in 1933, during her administration, took a special interest in the grotto, and decided to get the interior renovated so as to compare favorably with the beautiful landscaping surrounding it. She voiced her opinion to several of the Sisters, and found in them willing helpers. It was through the zealous work and personal effort of these Sisters that a new shrine was made possible.

Then came the untimely death of Mother Rose, but her successor, Mother Bona, urged the completion of the project. \(^{11}\)

The contract for the grotto was given to Alex Linenberger from Hays for approximately \(\$225\); as about twice this amount had been collected for the project, the remainder was placed in the new convent fund by Mother Bona.

\(^{11}\) Mother Bona filled the unexpired term of Mother Rose, from Oct. 9, 1933, to August 17, 1934.
Inviolata. Surrounded by a rock garden, the grotto becomes a riot of blossoms from early spring till late fall and thus forms one of the beauty spots on the convent grounds.

Another great project of Mother Rose that deserves separate and more extensive treatment was the purchase of the Ruwerts Miner Hospital at Garden City, Kansas. Mother's interests were in the success of St. Catherine's; for it had been one of her great undertakings and she wished its advancement. Very frequently she visited there and all the Sisters looked forward with much anticipation to those occasions, for Mother Rose made them so informal. Some treat or surprise was always connected with her visit and today, they form part of the hallowed traditions of St. Catherine's.

It was on such a visit that Mother Rose called on the group at St. Catherine's just prior to a three day State Nurses' Meeting at Emporia, October, 1933. She had come to take the Superintendent of the Hospital, Sister Reginald, along to the meeting. She herself was the chauffeur and driving back to Great Bend the next day, she stopped at St. Rose's to take Sisters Emelia, Henrietta and Felicitas also to the meeting. The first night away from home was spent at the Dominican House of Studies in Wichita. All

12. Mother Inviolata became Prioress, August 17, 1934.
13. Treated in a separate chapter on Hospitalization.
14. This name was given the Ruwerts Miner Hospital after the purchase.
15. The following account was given by Sister Reginald, an eye witness.
enjoyed the trip thus far, only Mother Rose who had done the driving was a bit stiff. Everyone blamed it on the length of the trip. She spent a sleepless night due to pain in her back—but she allowed herself no rest from duty and responsibility until her strength failed her. The next morning with a pillow and a hot water bag to her back, she motored to Emporia and arrived there early in the afternoon. On the way she had occasionally mentioned a peculiar numbness of the extremities which manifested itself particularly in Emporia in the attempt of getting out of the car. Instead of attending the meeting, Sister Emilia went with Mother to the Hospital where she was put to bed. But her strength was rapidly ebbing, in fact had ebbed too far for recapture, though she had no idea that death was so near—nay, at the very threshold. Again a sleepless night—but she insisted that the Sisters had come to attend the meeting, and asked all four to go and not bother about staying with her. During this time she ventured out of bed, did so and fell, and was unable to get back by herself. The Sisters became alarmed—the meeting held no longer any interest for them, for plainly Mother Rose's condition was alarming. The attending physician was puzzled and pronounced it a queer case.

A horrible fear seized the Sisters. Was Mother Rose also to die away from those she loved and cared for? To die away from home as late Mother Seraphine had done?
They could not harbor the thought. Instantly a message was wired to Great Bend informing them of what had happened and of their intention of bringing Mother back that afternoon by train.

In the meantime the disease had asserted itself—creeping paralysis. About seven-thirty the ambulance drew up at St. Rose Hospital, and a sorrowing Community awaited her. By this time Mother Rose had lost complete use of her lower limbs and slowly the paralysis was creeping upward. The strong spirit of the energetic Prioress could no longer withstand the ravages of the disease. She knew from her own diagnosis that death was imminent, but she exhibited no fear.

Immediately word was sent to all the mission houses of Mother's sudden and strange illness.

Tender hands ministered unto her, even as she had so often ministered to them; grieving hearts suffered in her suffering. Devoted love made every sacrifice a privilege and moments eagerly snatched from the busy routine of community life to be spent with her, were precious as jewels and never to be forgotten. Sisters came in from the nearby mission houses to pay tribute to their stricken Mother Superior, eager to receive her parting words of comfort. One and all they found her resigned, bearing her affliction with a fortitude that carried her serenely through

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the most painful periods. For only three short days was Mother Rose destined to comfort her Community with her bodily presence. Mother's life-long habit of forgetfulness of self and solicitude for others manifested itself especially during these closing days of her earthly career. She thought of all, asked for them, even of Sister Aloysia away at the University at Washington, D. C., and as she spoke of the heroic band at Garden City, tears bedimmed the waning luster of her eyes. Ill as she was she had the welfare of the Community at heart and summoned Mother Bona, to her bedside so that all might be safely entrusted into her hands before she would become mentally incapacitated, but dear Mother was conscious to the very end. Sister Emilia, a veteran nurse, who had stood side by side with Sister Rose in the nursing profession, was privileged to care for Mother Rose, for it was Mother's request. Sister Emilia counted no sacrifice too great in this service of love, and lavishly spent herself; today she cherishes the memory of those last days with Mother as a sacred heritage.

At the request of the fast failing Superior, the Reverend Maurice Reidy, the former chaplain of St. Rose Hospital, who had then been stationed at Arkansas City, was summoned to her bedside. Father Reidy was much disturbed at the sudden notice, and hastened to the bedside of the

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17. Personal experience of the writer.
18. Mother Bona became Mother Prioress by virtue of her office as Mother Sub-prioress.
dying Mother, Sunday evening, October 8. Mother was anxiously waiting for him and frequently inquired about his delay. Once there, he absolved and fortified her with the last rites of the Church and Mother relaxed and lay back serenely, peacefully awaiting the final summons. The Reverend M. T. Meehan, chaplain of the hospital at that time, was most solicitous likewise, for Mother's spiritual welfare.

Monday when the time for Holy Mass approached, 6:00 a.m., she desired the Sisters to leave her to attend the morning Sacrifice. Quickly they obeyed, and services over, they as quickly and anxiously returned to keep the last watch with their Mother. They had not long to wait; before the passing of another sixty minutes, amidst the chant of the *Salve*, the Master called her Home.

Her death occurred on October 9, 1933, at the age of fifty-seven, thirty-one years after her entrance into the Religious Life. Her sudden death was a great loss to the Community and caused genuine grief among her subjects, relatives, and acquaintances.

The funeral took place in the St. Rose of Lima Parish Church, Thursday, October 12, 1933. His Excellency, the Most Reverend Bishop, August J. Schwertner, pontificated at the solemn Requiem Mass.

19. It was impossible for Father Reidy to get there sooner on account of Sunday services; however, had he known Mother's condition, he would have secured a substitute for his parish work.
The Grotto on the Convent Grounds

The Power House
CHAPTER IX
Mother Inviolata, 1934-1940
Mother Aloysia, 1940--

The Sixth General Chapter of the Community was held on August 20, 1934, with the Most Reverend August Schwertner presiding. Mother Inviolata was elected Prioress, and Sister Dominica sub-prioress. Mother Inviolata with the sanction of her Council re-appointed Sister Augustine as Mistress of Novices. A few comments regarding Sister Augustine are in place here.

She became the first official Mistress of Novices of the Community in 1925 being canonically elected by the members of the Council. She was motherly yet firm, understanding, and made allowances for the whims of immature beginners. She was devoted to convent discipline and religious observance and implanted these convictions deeply in her charges. She held this responsible position for twelve years after which she was given a respite from this onerous burden.

Sister Augustine had previously served as assistant Mistress to Mother Blanche from September, 1924, to August, 1925. Before taking charge of the Novitiate, Mother Sera- phine sent Sister Augustine to Amityville, the Novitiate...
House of Holy Cross Convent, Brooklyn, in order to acquaint herself thoroughly with methods and procedure used in conducting a Novitiate. Mother Anselm, the Novice Mistress at Amityville was most gracious and spared neither time nor energy giving all possible help to Sister Augustine.

Mother Inviolata, on hearing the news that she was to shoulder the responsibility of guiding the Community, asked the Most Reverend Bishop for a Spiritual Director, preferably a Dominican, for the spiritual guidance of the Community. His Lordship gave her the assurance that he would give this matter his sincere consideration.

On October 3, 1935, the Reverend John Smith, O.P., from Providence, Rhode Island, was appointed Spiritual Guide. His interest in the Community and his devotion to it were remarkable. His wise counsel helped Mother Inviolata immeasurably. A filial love and respect was engendered among the Sisters for Father John, as he came to be known not only among the Sisters but in the surrounding parishes as well. Neither Mother Inviolata nor Mother Aloysia made any important decisions unless it first had the sanction of the spiritual director. To him they submitted their problems and difficulties and he never failed them.

He introduced the Dominican practices one by one in a prudent and zealous way. With the realization of his incum-

1. Sister M. Augustine, Interview, August 30, 1940.
2. Mother Aloysis succeeded Mother Inviolata as Prioress of the Community August, 1940.
bent duty he soon obtained one spiritual privilege after another for the Sisters. He has completely identified himself with the cause of the Community. With marked regularity and punctuality he has given the Sisters the fullest and most exemplary priestly service. His benefactions spiritual and educational will be a lasting monument of his self-sacrificing labor.

Mother Inviolata Beran, the newly elected Mother Prioress, was born in 1893 of a most pious family in Odin, Kansas, which instilled solid Christian virtues in their children. Two of their daughters are nuns in the Dominican Order at Great Bend, and one son consecrated his life to God in the Benedictine Abbey at Atchison.

Mother Inviolata attended the elementary school in her home parish and entered the Convent at the age of sixteen, August 4, 1910. Six months later, according to the Constitutions of the Order, she was clothed in the white Dominican garb. She was with the group that spent a year with the Dominican Sisters at St. Catherine's, Kentucky. On her return, she rendered valuable assistance to Mother Seraphine at the hospital. Her affable disposition and affectionate yet resolute nature made her loved by her companions and a favorite with her Superiors. Her first profession took place June 10, 1912; while her final vows were plighted August 24, 1924.

3. Mother Inviolata and Sister Cecilia.
She had begun her academic training in St. Catherine's, Kentucky. Her college course was completed by attending the summer sessions, except for one spring semester, until she finally received the B.S. from the Fort Hays Kansas State College, 1929.

She could appreciate the hardships thus entailed and was therefore an enthusiastic advocate of sending Sisters to take entire years of college training. The teachers were given every privilege and advantage deemed necessary to keep step with the onward march of education.

She was actively engaged in the teaching profession for seventeen years, i.e., until the Sisters of the Community elected her as their Mother General. Of those seventeen years, eleven were given to the youth of the public and parochial schools of the diocese, and six years were spent teaching in the Immaculate Conception Convent High School in Great Bend.

Mother Inviolata guided the Community for six years, for she was re-elected at the next Canonical Election August, 1937. During her able administration the Community made a great deal of progress. Outstanding was her success in securing the services of Dominican Fathers to act as chaplains at the convent and the hospital. She provided generously for the spiritual training of the young Sisters, taking a zealous interest in the novitiate.
Notable among the improvements was the installing of a Liturgical altar July 5, 1936, replacing the Gothic altar formerly used. Devotion to the Eucharistic King has ever been a Dominican tradition. In compliance with this, a very impressive ceremony was observed on Corpus Christi day, June 11, 1936, on the convent and hospital premises. The erection of three outdoor shrines featured the day's festivities. A large crowd was in attendance, it being the first time the day had been thus publicly observed. It has been the occasion for an annual celebration since.

Another event at the Immaculate Conception Convent that merits notice was the erection of the Rosary Shrine under the direction of the Reverend John Smith, O.P., and the Reverend Thomas J. Smith, O.P. The Shrine, the only one in this section of the country, was completed November 19, 1938, and was formally approved by the Most Reverend August J. Schwertner, Feb. 10, 1939. The Shrine was officially named "The Rosary Shrine of Mary's Devoted Clients." January 9, 1939, will always be considered an important date in the history of the Shrine, for Holy Mass was sacrificed there by the Rev. John Smith for the first time.

It was through the Reverend John Smith that the "Golden Book of the Rosary" is kept at the Shrine. He got acquainted with the idea on a visit to the famous Shrine of the Dominican Fathers in New York City. Into this book are entered the
names of all clergy, religious, and laity who promise to
recite daily at least a third part of the rosary unless
legitimately impeded. The Sisters are justly proud of the
454 signatures including distinguished members of the hier-
archy, clergy, religious, and laity entered thus far.⁴

The last administrative act of the second term of
Mother Inviolata was the drawing up the plans for the the
new convent. The Community continued to increase so steadily in members, through the many vocations from the parochial schools that after some years the old convent build-
ing became inadequate. To solve the problem temporarily a
large frame building was erected at the cost of nearly $2,500.⁵
That solved the problem of housing the Sisters; however, the
convent building itself needed enlargement or renovation.
It contained no adequate apartments that could be utilized
for conducting an efficient continuous educational program,
for classrooms were converted into dormitories during the
summer months; furthermore, it lacked the conveniences
considered indispensable in large institutions.

Confronted by such problems, the Sisters began to con-
sider the construction of a real convent, designed as a
convent, not as a makeshift compromise. For several years
they had been saving to build a fund of sufficient size to
warrant at least the beginning of actual construction work
on a new convent.

⁴. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
⁵. This was constructed during Mother Rose's administration.
Soon after Mother Inviolata assumed responsibility, she urged the importance and practicability of undertaking the building project. Although funds were inadequate, she and her Councillors were convinced that the undertaking could be postponed no longer and voted in favor of erecting the new mother house. November 26, 1939, in an informal meeting with Monsignor Farrell, permission to start was secured; this he readily granted provided the fund was sufficiently large to warrant at least the beginning.

Plans began to take definite shape—several lots west of the hospital and old convent were needed—these were received in exchange for the lots north of the Convent.

Plans were drawn up by Gerald A. Berry of Chicago. Then on March 19, 1940, approval for construction of the $350,000 convent was given by the Most Reverend Christian H. Winkelmann of the Diocese of Wichita. After careful investigation and deliberation the contract was given to Tony Jacobs of Hays, Kansas.

The location of the motherhouse was a weighty question. Naturally, for reasons personal and historical, the older members of the community preferred to remain in Great Bend. Many wished the building to be located elsewhere; however, after all the pros and cons were considered, it was decided

6. The Most Reverend Bishop Schwertner's death occurred October 2, 1939, and Monsignor Farrell was the Administrator till the vacant bishopric should be filled.
7. Mr. McKinney planned to start a pleasure resort there.
8. March 5, 1940, commemorated the installation of the Most Reverend Christian H. Winkelmann as the Bishop of Wichita.
to build west of the St. Rose Hospital.

June 26, 1940, in presence of the members of the Community the Most Reverend C. H. Winkelman blessed the site for the new Convent at Great Bend. The ceremonies commenced in the chapel at 11 a.m., where the entire Community had assembled. After the Veni Creator the procession of Sisters, visiting clergy, the Most Reverend Bishop and laity filed out to the new Convent grounds. As the procession moved along "The Litany of the Saints" was chanted.

Having arrived at the building site, the Sisters grouped themselves in a semi-circle and the Bishop blessed the ground. Part of the ceremonies was turning the first spade of dirt by His Excellency, Bishop Winkelman, breaking the way for the excavation work that would begin shortly. After the Most Reverend Bishop had turned the sod, the clergy turned a shovelful followed by Mother Inviolata, members of her Council, the architect, the contractor, and other distinguished Catholics.

The convent is constructed of re-inforced concrete, brick and tile, with Silverdale natural stone trimmings. It is a structure in the shape of an L, four stories high with a full ground floor. The east wing, however, will not be built until the need for more quarters arises.9

9. The Convent as it is constructed now will provide ample room for at least 250 Sisters.
Set back about 200 feet from Broadway and fronted by a neatly landscaped lawn, the building on a three-foot terrace extends a length of 258 feet. On the ground floor provisions are made for a Sisters' dining room, sewing room, storage rooms and elevator entrance. On the first floor are the reception rooms, a Bishop's suite, dining rooms for clerical and lay visitors, a library, a Community room for the Sisters and a large lobby. The second floor is designed as an infirmary for aged and sick Sisters, so that patients can be adequately cared for in the Convent. On the same floor are the Mother General's private office, as well as office space for members of her Council, a meeting room and the archives. The third and fourth floors are devoted entirely to private rooms for the Sisters.

The West wing extends to a depth of 105 feet. The ground floor contains the kitchen, bakery, refrigeration and food storage rooms. Accommodations on the first three floors include classrooms, science laboratories, music rooms, oratory, reception rooms, recreation rooms besides dormitories for the Juniors, Novices and Postulants.

The liturgically furnished chapel built at right angles to the main building with an entrance from the lobby extends to a depth of 110 feet, accommodating about 400 persons. Of Renaissance design in architecture, the chapel has an interior of ornamental plaster with a fine wood
wainscot. Instead of pews as found ordinarily in churches, long lines of nuns' prayer-stalls on raised platforms facing one another can be seen. The floor space between the stalls, if needed, will be available for pews. Artistic stained glass windows depicting Dominican Saints are part of the plans. The chapel ceiling is vaulted and acoustically treated. In the rear of the chapel in a separate alcove stands the Rosary Shrine. Beneath the chapel on the ground floor, a commodious visitors' lounge that serves likewise as an auditorium, is the only part of the entire structure that is built below surface. Another feature of the plan is a spacious tunnel, 365 feet long, connecting the new convent with the hospital and laundry serving as a sheltered passageway for the Sisters in any kind of inclement weather. Over the entrance to the main building rises a tower into which was placed on July 9, 1941, an 8½ foot statue of the Immaculate Conception, patroness of the Community. At 11 o'clock the Reverend John Smith, O.P., mounted a wooden scaffold from the top of the new Convent to the tip of the tower where workmen had just set up this statue. There at the lofty height of 39 feet above the roof of the convent the statue, weighing 2270 pounds, was blessed and installed. This completed the work on the tower. Another attractive feature of the new structure are the roof gardens on both ends of the building.

10. This information concerning the new structure was obtained through personal observation and from building records.
The building of the new Convent solved another problem, the matter of a nurses' home. The old Convent (C.N.C.) building will be subjected to a complete renovation in the near future. Little did the first advocate of the C.N.C. project divine that the College building was to serve such varied purposes.

The large bell hanging in the tower could likewise tell its story. Formerly it summoned College students to classes; later the same bell was connected with a huge tower clock striking the hours. Still another function was the ringing of the Angelus—a call to prayer at morning, noon, and eve; and now the alumni of the C.N.C. are seriously considering a monument in connection with the old bell.

Almost parallel with the new Convent building program came an offer to Mother Inviolata and her Council from the Larned Community to have a 35-bed hospital erected there. The Larned Community was to raise a fund of $30,000 to assure the construction; the Catholic Church, Sacred Heart Parish donating the site, while the Sisters were to pay the balance of $30,000. It would be operated by the Dominican Sisters after its construction and financial matters would be in their hands. The Pawnee County Medical Society is whole-heartedly in support of the plan and is anxious to see the much-needed hospital constructed.

11. This tower clock was installed by the Star Tower Clock & Machine Co., Milwaukee. It was the personal gift of Robert Schwalbach who has two daughters in the Community.
12. Great Bend Tribune, April 25, 1940.
Much enthusiasm was evoked at the time about the project; however, at present the plan is not pushed very vigorously because the Sisters were not in a position to spend much money since they were occupied with the new Motherhouse. Thus far no active steps have been taken.

Mother Inviolata proved to be an exceptionally good financier. The Community was free from all debt, the one condition Bishop Schwertner had insisted on before starting the new building fund, which was amply stocked when she turned the administration over to her successor, Mother Aloysia.13 Mother Inviolata was privileged to bring a dream of long standing into the realm of reality: A new Convent. She supervised the drawing of the plans and had the happiness in her administration of seeing the foundation laid.

One must admire Mother Inviolata's courage in putting her plans for a new structure into execution at this time. A brief study of the unstable condition of the country will serve to bring into relief the difficulties of building and construction work at this inopportune time.14 However, she sought to afford her Sisters the privacy of home that is befitting to virgins consecrated to God's service.

Tuesday, August 20, 1940, at the Seventh Canonical Chapter, the Community elected Sister M. Aloysia as Mother

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14. The European Continent was entangled in war, while the U.S. was engaged in a huge defense program.
Genera l for the next six years. The Most Reverend Bishop C. Winkelmann presided at the election. The office of sub-prioress was given to Mother Inviolata; bursar general to Sister M. Immaculata; the four councillors: Sister M. Imelda, Sister M. Thomasine, Sister M. Emilia, and Sister M. Theodosia; Novice Mistress, Sister M. Gabriel; and Assistant Mistress, Sister M. Hyacinth.

Mother Aloysia was born in Austria, August 30, 1898. After completing her elementary and high school studies in schools at Wals and Simbach, Germany, she came to the United States and entered the Dominican Convent at Great Bend, August 5, 1914.

She was clothed in the livery of St. Dominic June 18, 1915; was professed August 30, 1917, and made her final vows on August 12, 1924.

Her Superiors seeing her mental abilities sent her to Fort Hays Kansas State College, where she received her B.S. From there she was sent to Washington, D. C. to attend the Catholic Sisters' College and obtained her B.A. After this she taught in the parish schools at Odin and at Sts. Peter and Paul's, Ellinwood.

In 1928 the Sisters elected her as the bursar general of the Community. At various times she taught in the Immaculate Conception High School at the Convent. To finish her studies she attended the Catholic University of
America at Washington from 1930-1934 and received the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees.

On her return from Washington she taught German at the Sacred Heart Junior College, Wichita, from 1934-1937. Her College professorship ended in the fall of 1937 for she was appointed novice mistress by Mother M. Inviolata. This responsible office she held until the election of Mother General of the Community. Hitherto she had but striven to carry out the designs of her superior; and now as the successor to Mother Inviolata she found herself carrying heavy responsibilities increased by the building project. But with her position came that great heritage of unbounded trust in Divine Providence which had been so typical in the life of Mother Aloysia.

As mistress of novices, she had devoted her leisure moments to the study of religious life in general and of the spirit of the Order in particular. The traditions, the customs, and the ceremonies of the Order were regarded by her as a sacred heritage. She was a great student of Canon law and in the latter especially did Father John assist her.

Mother Aloysia stressed the religious observance as being of primary importance, without, however, losing sight of the requirements necessary for the Sisters in their various occupations. She was endowed with a singularly strong personality. Human respect never deterred her from working out her plans according to the dictates of her conscience.
A dominant characteristic of Mother Aloysia is her extraordinary confidence, her utter trust in God, which no threat of danger can move, no fear of failure weaken. She fortified the weak to accomplish the tasks which to them at times seemed impossible of execution. Her trust in Divine Providence obtained great favors for her.

Mother Aloysia's life is for the Sisters a model and an inspiration. All her energies are directed toward securing the comfort and well-being of others, while she is utterly forgetful of herself.

March, 1941, Mother Aloysia was pleasantly surprised to receive notice from the Most Reverend Bishop Winkelmann desiring the Dominican Sisters to take over the new modern 45-bed Hospital at Pratt, Kansas. The Pratt Community offered to build this Hospital, furnish it with the latest hospital equipment and then turn it over to a Religious Community on a one-dollar lease for ninety-nine years. They believed that a Catholic Hospital would prove much more satisfactory than a community or county institution.

This project Mother Aloysia laid before her Council, and after sincere deliberation accepted the offer. To meet the requirements of the constantly advancing surgical and clinical methods, Mother Inviolata and Mother

15. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
Aloysia have sent several of the Nursing Sisters to College to gain the needed college credits, now a state requirement for registered nurses before they can fill any position in any accredited hospital.

Although all credit goes to Mother Invicta for starting the building project, it was Mother Aloysia who with unremitting ardor and self-sacrifice bore the strain of seeing through the erection of the new motherhouse. After its completion, she provided for the adequate furnishing of the new home in every department; its homelike atmosphere, and aesthetic precision are observable in every detail. Though deeply imbued with the spirit of poverty, she nevertheless gladly and willingly procured whatever she deemed needful for the increased efficiency and happiness of the Sisters. Especially to be noted was her solicitude to provide as much convenience as possible for the Sisters who return annually during the summer months to the comforts of a spacious home after their year's hard work in school and hospital. During the summer of 1941, this privilege could be given to about forty of the younger Sisters. The fourth floor was completed by May 31, 1941, and it was on that day that the Convent was first occupied.

Although the building is rapidly nearing completion, no definite date can as yet be set for its dedication. For long months has the Community anticipated this day; and jubilant strains of the "Te Deum Laudamus" will
reverberate through the vaulted chapel when the memorable day occurs.

November 25, 1940, dawned a great day for the members of the Community, especially for Mother M. Loretta. It was for her the golden bells were ringing--fifty years as a professed nun, fifty years crowded with golden deeds. However, the day was observed with a quiet celebration for it was decided to honor the worthy jubilarian with a festive celebration in the new convent after the structure is completed.

When Mother Loretta left Brooklyn in 1903, to come to Great Bend for the purpose of organizing a hospital 16 little did anyone dream what good was to be accomplished by this enthusiastic Sister. It is quite fitting to stop here and pay tribute to Mother Loretta, who was one of those courageous pioneers of this Community.

Pioneering has never been popular; it is never a mass movement. On the contrary, the pioneer is a figure conspicuous in her isolation, for the pioneer must possess qualities not common to the great mass of humanity. She must have vision, courage, boldness, perseverance, and determination coupled with the willingness to be a martyr to the mission she undertakes. Success spells triumph, while failure invites the disdainful indifference of a cynical public.

16. Details of this undertaking are recorded in the chapter on Hospitalization.
Mother Loretta entered into her work with all of these qualities and it must not be forgotten that she had many obstacles to overcome. She had trained herself in the school of self-sacrifice, especially during the years she spent working in the Hospital for Contagious Diseases, Brooklyn, New York. Mother Loretta's high ideals and many virtues have placed her in a position which would merit emulation.

Profound and never ceasing gratitude is due all the benefactors of the Community. From the time Mother Antonine founded St. Mary's to the present day the Sisters have never been wanting for loyal friends and benefactors. Then as now when projects were put under way to raise funds, there was whole-hearted co-operation of the clergy, the laity, the business men and the surrounding parishes, urban and rural communities as a whole.

Not only in the material sense are the Sisters indebted to the clergy but also in many other ways when the diocesan clergy gave unstintingly of their personal services to the Community. It would be impossible to enumerate them all in this work.

From the days of those early beginnings throughout its history have the Dominican Sisters at Great Bend been blessed—not by great endowments or donations—but by moderate gifts of those who learned to know and love the spirit of the Order.

Thus this chronicle ends on the eve of a new era, the era of Community life in the new Convent. The magnificent progress made since the humble efforts of the pioneers of 1902 manifests a spirit of courage, progress, and perseverance. Today the Community is well organized, deeply spiritual and blessed with great opportunities for doing good.
Rosary Shrine
(front and back views)

Liturgical Altar replaced the Gothic Altar in 1936.
Mother M. Aloysia

The new Immaculate Conception Convent, 1941
CHAPTER X

Hospitalization

Originally, the plan of the Dominican Sisters in Kansas did not admit hospital work within the scope of the Community's labors. Nevertheless, circumstances converged toward rendering the undertaking of such charity commendable and even necessary. Almost with the arrival of the members of the Order, a movement was started in Great Bend for the establishment of a hospital to be conducted by the Dominican Sisters.

In October, 1902, Doctors Meade, Morrison, and McPherson asked if the Sisters were willing to open a hospital to help them in caring for their patients at Great Bend, rather than transferring their surgical cases to the nearest Hospital at Wichita, or Kansas City. It was at great expense that their surgical cases were transferred to the nearest hospital. In those pioneer days, money was a rarity, and therefore, such an expense was out of the question. The only alternative was to patiently suffer, and forget the relief that could be had if surgical aid could be rendered at a local institution.

The request had to be refused as there was no graduate

1. Sisters arrived April 23, 1902, and the resolutions adopted by Great Bend's Commercial Club are dated June 9, 1902.
nu rse among the pioneer Do minican Nuns; however, they were given the assurance that the request would be granted as soon as a graduate nurse could be procured. The Commercial Club of Great Bend promised their assistance in opening a hospital and enthusiastically formulated and adopted commendatory resolutions and transmitted the same to the Sisters in the following communication, namely:

GREAT BEND COMMERCIAL CLUB, Great Bend, Kansas
June 9, 1902

To the Rev. Mother Superior of the Nuns of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Great Bend, Kansas:

I have the honor to transmit to you the following resolutions which were unanimously adopted by the members of the Great Bend Commercial Club at their regular meeting on this date, to wit:

Whereas, It has come to the knowledge of the general public that the Rev. Mother Superior and the Rev. Sisters of the Nuns of the Third Order of St. Dominic, now residing in our midst, contemplate, or are considering the expediency of establishing and maintaining a general hospital in our city;

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, By the Great Bend Commercial Club, that the movement in question is one which commands our hearty support and most cordial endorsement;

That we have long recognized the pressing need of such an institution in this vicinity;

That there is a large and well-populated district tributary to Great Bend which is entirely without modern facilities where the sick and afflicted may receive proper hospital care, treatment and nursing;

That it is a matter of common knowledge that patients from this large expanse of country are continually traveling to and from the cities east of us in search of expert surgical relief and treatment;

That it is equally well known that a large number of our people are financially unable to meet the extraordinary expense of such a trip, or are physically unequal to the fatigue of the journey,

2. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
and hence are compelled to remain at home, there to languish, suffer and die from lack of expert care, treatment and nursing, such as can be procured only in connection with a modern and well-equipped hospital;

That neighboring cities and villages have frequently signified their willingness to co-operate with this city, and to lend their moral and financial support to the promotion of such an institution;

That in our opinion the movement is a worthy one in every respect, and will command the instant and the profound respect and sympathy of all classes of our people;

That we confidently believe that a hospital established here under the auspices of these Reverend Sisters would receive a cordial and generous patronage from the entire western half of Kansas and from portions of Eastern Colorado;

That our railway connections are good, our climate unsurpassed, all local conditions most favorable, and the time opportune;

In consequence of all of which, we believe the proposition would be not only a benediction to the general public but a source of revenue to the founders;

Whereas, We bid these Reverend Sisters God-Speed in their great and glorious work and give them strong assurance of our cordial sympathy and good will.

Most respectfully submitted,

F. V. Russell
Secretary

The Community debated the question seriously. The difficulties involved were overcome by the desire to enter the charitable field. Accordingly, arrangements were eagerly made to add the work of nursing the sick to their educational work.

Mother Antonine's thoughts went back to Brooklyn where she knew registered nurses would be available. When the plea came to Mother Catherine to assist the young Community in the Middle West, it was answered by Sister Loretta Feinler, a registered nurse and pharmacist in St. Catherine's
Hospital, Brooklyn, New York. Heroic virtue, a great spirit of sacrifice, and complete self-denial fitted Sister Loretta for the noble work.

Before such an undertaking could take root in the Diocese of Wichita, the Right Reverend Bishop's consent had to be obtained. No official notice could be located to that effect, however, a letter to the Chancellor of the Diocese shows that His Excellency must have given his approval.

Great Bend, Barton Co., Kansas
Aug. 28, 1902

Rev. J. H. Tiienen, Chancellor,
St. Francis Ave., Wichita, Kas.

Rev. dear Father:—

The Doctors of Great Bend took up a collection to furnish the house they rented for a hospital. Dr. McPherson asked Rev. A. Heiman to do the same at Odin. His Reverence advised him to ask the Sisters to come there next Monday with the subscription list. I told the Doctor we cannot do this without the permission of the Rt. Rev. Bishop. Will you kindly ask His Lordship for same, and send word before Monday?

I shall write a long letter to the Rt. Rev. Bishop in a few days.

Asking you kindly to remember our little band in your pious prayers, I beg to remain respectfully,

Yours sincerely in Xt.
Sr. M. Antonine F., O.S.D.

The building of which Mother Antonine speaks, was one of the old dormitories of the college, which had been moved to town to serve as a residence. Eight rooms were

left, four on the first floor and as many on the second. To this structure a kitchen and front porch were added; necessary improvements made and the hospital though very primitive and unpretentious was ready for use. It was placed under the patronage of St. Rose of Lima.

In this building St. Rose Hospital opened its doors. Two rooms were arranged for the accommodation of patients on first floor, and three on second floor. The sterilizing apartment, the laundry, the kitchen, the dining room, and a reception room all found a place on first floor. The hospital could accommodate five patients, yet records indicate that very often two beds were placed in one room for the purpose of increasing the number of beds when necessary. To this miniature hospital came Sister Loretta in the spring of 1903. What she relinquished can be estimated by the fact that she had been affiliated with St. Catherine's Hospital, Brooklyn, New York, an institution whose value was considered approximately $150,000.

To St. Rose Hospital she became its guiding genius. The first patient admitted on April 5, 1903, and four days later the first operation was performed in that humble institution, by Dr. E. E. Morrison. Sister Loretta entered into her work with all of those qualities of a veteran, but it must not be forgotten that she had many

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4. Mother Antonine's missionary ambitions were centered in Lima, Peru, but a returning Dominican Missionary discouraged the project due to the low moral standard of the country. St. Rose, the first American saint, was a tertiary of the Dominican Order. Mother Antonine was a great admirer of her.
obstacles to overcome. In that little frame building which she converted into a hospital, she not only gave all the anesthetics, took care of the sterilizing department, was head dietitian, but also scrubbed floors, and performed many other menial tasks too numerous to mention.

The spirit of sacrifice is demanded of every pioneer, and likewise it was demanded of Sister Loretta. Her life was a record of many deeds of sacrifice wrought unrelentingly all day and many nights. The number of patients at times surpassed the accommodations the hospital could offer, and after a hard day's work, Sister Loretta was found to deprive herself of her own bed, to spend a few hours resting on a cot, or often giving that up and seeking rest in a rocking chair. This rare spirit of sacrifice furnishes the key for the marvelous success of the hospital.

St. Rose Hospital entered upon its career in the month of April, 1903, a weak, struggling infant, destined to grow to rapid maturity and proportions beyond the fondest dreams of its most enthusiastic promoters. From this date the hospital made a gradual but steady progress. After the first year the need of such an institution was apparent, and from the increasing patronage it was necessary to purchase larger quarters. The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce knowing the need, came to their rescue.
The proposition resulted into a number of meetings held for the avowed purpose of discussing the hospital question. Public spirited citizens, and leading physicians worked earnestly and successfully as the following letter proves:

Great Bend, Kansas
Dec. 22, 1903.

Sr. M. Antonine Fischer, O.S.D.,
Great Bend, Kansas

Reverend Mother:

The committee in charge of the hospital proposition convened last evening and gave careful consideration to the subject of the conveyance of the hospital property and to your communication of 16 inst. You will find herewith enclosed a form of deed which we trust will meet with your approval. We have endeavored to eliminate the objectionable features of the former deed. You will observe that the premises are conveyed to you for hospital purposes and we merely ask that you maintain the institution in an up-to-date manner. We do not purpose to exercise any surveillance over you in any way whatever. The matter will rest entirely in your own hands as to method, management, equipment, etc. Certain trustees are designated in the deed merely to proving legally for a reversion of the title in case you cease to use the property for hospital purposes. As long as it is so used it is yours. Should you abandon it then some provision must appear in the face of the deed for a legal reversion of the title. We feel that this property should be secured to the people of this community for charitable purposes and if such purposes should fail and no other proper use appear then that the donors should receive back their respective interests in proportion to their contributions to the purchase price. We do not believe you will allow the property to revert or that you will ever fail to maintain the institution in a strictly first class manner and this provision is merely a legal formality. Awaiting your early response and trusting it will be of a favorable nature, I am

Yours very respectfully,
F. Vernon Russell

5. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
A committee of Great Bend citizens took it upon themselves to bring the matter before Bishop Hennessy on his visit to St. Mary's. Their proposition was to purchase the spacious residence of Mr. G. N. Moses on West Broadway, re-model and furnish it with every convenience for an up-to-date hospital. Mr. Moses held the building at $8,000, but disposed of it for hospital purposes at $5,000 which amount was promptly subscribed by the public spirited citizens of Great Bend.

The following deed was presented to the Sisters and they took possession on February 12, 1904.

W. D.

George N. Moses
To
Nuns of the Third Order of St. Dominic.

George N. Moses and Ida A. Moses his wife of Great Bend, Barton County, Kansas for the sum of Five Thousand Dollars convey and warrant to the Nuns of the Third Order of St. Dominic a corporation organized under the laws of Kansas the following described premises Situated in the County of Barton and State of Kansas to-wit: Lots one, Two, Three, Four, Five, and Six (1-2-3-4-5-6) in the Block Nineteen (19) in Heizer Park Addition to the City of Great Bend the said premises to be used by said corporation for the purpose of conducting a hospital thereon or for some other charitable public purpose.

Witness our hands this 22nd day of January 1904.

George N. Moses
Ida A. Moses

(continued)

6. Original residence and property of D. N. Heizer, then purchased by G. N. Moses, one of Great Bend's leading citizens.

7. Barton County Register of Deeds, County Records, Great Bend, 1904, Book 37, 530.
State of Kansas, County of Barton

Be it remembered that on this 22nd day of January, 1904, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the County and State aforesaid, personally appeared George B. Moses his wife who are personally known to me to be the same persons who executed the foregoing instrument of writing and said persons duly acknowledged the execution of the same as their voluntary act and deed. Witness my hand and notarial seal the day and year last above written.

M. H. Moses
Notary Public

Com expires Feb'y 11, 1906.

File Jan. 25, 1904, at 9 A. M.

Flora A. Smith
Reg of Deeds

Recorded in Book 37, of Deed Record, at page 330

The old hospital was now abandoned for the newly equipped building on West Broadway, and the sign, St. Rose Hospital, placed over the Moses home. By converting some rooms into wards, fourteen patients could easily be accommodated.

A residence on the same block, in close proximity to the hospital, was transformed into a chapel, recreation room, sleeping apartments for Sisters and a laundry.

The Board of Managers for the St. Rose Hospital were:
The Most Reverend J. J. Hennessy, President, Wichita
Ven. Mother Antonine, Vice-President
Sister M. Blanche, Superintendent of Hospital
Sister M. Loretta, Superintendent of Nurses
When the building was purchased in 1904, it was considered ample room for many years to come. The nursing Sisters bent their talent and energy to the task with such success that their reputation as excellent nurses became well known. The physicians were able to do more and better work; thus, by the very nature of things, the hospital work pushed on rapidly. Even this building proved too small; many applicants had to be refused admission for lack of accommodations. Occasionally the Sisters nursed the sick in their private homes, but this practice could not be encouraged for it lessened the much needed help at the hospital and in 1907 this practice was abandoned.

Old-time superstitions, that people went to the hospital to die, were overcome. Hospitals everywhere in the West labored for years against the prejudice that had existed. But the progress of science, particularly of surgery, eventually made people more "hospital minded".

Soon Mother Antonine had to face new difficulties, the enlarging of the present structure. The Sisters had already taken a great burden upon themselves, and it looked on many occasions that they could not "carry on", yet help had always come on time to ward off a critical situation. But to erect a new building, or even to erect an addition to the hospital seemed a huge task, for in

8 The Great Bend Tribune, June 5, 1908.
1906, the treasury was empty, and further more it was even difficult to raise the interest on the heavy mortgage.

Its operation was not to be conducted on a profit-making basis. It functioned under a heavy financial deficit every year, inasmuch, as a large percentage of its service was rendered free, or at less than cost, to the poor and needy. The Sisters literally made themselves mendicants to swell the appropriations for its maintenance.

Accordingly, Mother Antonine had recourse to the Most Rev. Hennessy asking him for a written permission for the Sisters to go collecting, so they would not meet with any difficulties.

Likewise she wanted a leave of absence from the diocese to go to friends in Brooklyn to get the loan for the hospital. Permission was granted her; just what financial aid she secured is not definitely known now, but there is evidence that the trip was not in vain.

The Catholic Advance of June 2, 1906, states:

The growing popularity of St. Rose's Hospital at Great Bend will oblige the Sisters to double their present capacity. The grounds are ample enough to permit a large building. The garden and lawn are neatly kept and the new grotto of Lourdes with its beautiful statue is very attractive.

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9. St. Rose Hospital Records, Great Bend, Kansas.
11. Mother Antonine, Archives, op. cit.
The new building estimated at $17,000 designed by the Sisters and the plans were forwarded to the Rt. Rev. Hennessy, April 25, 1907. Ground was broken for the addition the latter part of September, 1907.

An account in the Catholic Advance gives a fairly accurate description of the new annex to the north of the main building: 13

...This addition (50x50) will contain 13 rooms, two wards, capable of accommodating nine beds, a chapel, a large operating room, and other rooms necessary for the work of the hospital. It contains an elevator; the building will be heated by steam. The operating room will be one of the finest in the western part of the state, and will be strictly up-to-date in every respect. The building is of brick, two stories and basement. The latter with a cement floor and the inside work pure white. Various business and professional men of the city have undertaken to furnish rooms thus relieving the Sisters of this expense. When all completed and used in connection with the old part of the hospital, they will have accommodations for about 35 patients. The institution had been very much crowded. They have been having an average of 15 patients cases all summer.

The porch of the old building has been torn away, a fine wide cement floor porch has been added, which can accommodate a number of chairs for patients who are convalescing.

This is an institution of which the city may be proud and for which the citizens have a right to be thankful. It has done world's of good. The Sisters are at all times willing to labor in the interest of others and have built up a reputation here that will be sustained and which should be the envy of others who are in the same work.

The installation of an elevator meant much to the hospital staff. It was primitive to be sure, for it was run on pulleys and propelled by man power, not literally.

13. The Catholic Advance, September, 1907.
but virtually, for the Sister portress who admitted the patient, likewise manipulated the elevator. This innovation eliminated the laborious method of carrying patients up the winding stairs.

The work on the annex was rapidly progressing and so did the debts. On April 23, 1908, a $15,000 mortgage, in seven notes with 7% interest payable semi-annually to the Citizens National Bank, Great Bend, Kansas, was held against all the property of the Nuns of the Third Order of St. Dominic. All of these notes matured on April 23, 1909.¹⁴

The Sisters went collecting and became skillful beggars not only in Great Bend, but in the neighboring parishes, and aside from their religious duties they spent their time going from house to house gathering a few cents here, food there, cattle or hogs or chickens elsewhere,¹⁵ and occasionally a substantial sum was handed them. There were probably few towns in the county and vicinity through which they had not begged. Some friend who had received treatment at the Sisters' hands would volunteer to take them from place to place in his surrey.¹⁶

By October the building was ready for dedication, but for some unknown reason the dedication was delayed to November 6, 1908. The dedicatory services were conducted by the most Reverend Hennessy assisted by the Reverend

¹⁴. Sisters of St. Dominic, Archives, op. cit.
¹⁵. That started the barnyard a block north of the hospital.
¹⁶. Mother Loretta, Interview, op. cit.
Heiman of Odin, the Reverend Drath of Bushton, the Reverend Birrenbough of Dubuque, and the Reverend Herrmann of Great Bend. The epitome of his Excellency's address was a short concise statement of the work of the women who devote their lives to the noble work of nursing.  

Close and careful financing were necessary now. In order to give undivided attention to this work, Mother Antonine established headquarters at the hospital instead of the convent. But alas, Mother's financial ability was not equal to the vastness of her projects.

The hospital, the only institute of its kind in central Kansas, offered all the convenience and comfort for its patients, but the Sisters' quarters were far from being a comfort.

Indeed the cramped quarters in the partly completed attic with small windows, where the Sisters were domiciled during the night, was a poor recompense for the heavy day's work. They almost froze to death in winter and baked by intense heat in summer.

Night duty was another problem. The financial conditions were so strained that no extra night force could be hired, so the day nurses took their turn regularly at the night shift. Some of the nursing Sisters had not yet completed their training and to take over the entire

17. The Great Bend Tribune, November 6, 1908.
18. Some had gone to St. Francis Hospital, Wichita, Kansas, for short courses in nursing.
responsibility at night was not an easy or pleasant task. Then some of the veterans in the field felt sorry for them and instead of taking the much needed night rest in bed they would find some nook or corner, and rest on a cot, a trunk, or else in an old rocking chair, ready at an emergency call from the inexperienced and youthful night watch. To relieve these Sisters from their strenuous labor, the younger Sisters in the novitiate who were attending high school classes during the day, volunteered to lessen part of the work. Consequently, one registered nurse and one of these "volunteers" took charge. Night duty was then divided into two shifts, thus enabling the Sisters to keep on working during the day. They did not mind sacrificing that half night's repose, for they had offered their life for the service of others. It was a novelty for the "volunteers", and many situations occurred that bring laughter today instead of tears, as it did then.

Yet these conditions under which these Sisters lived and worked, especially the twelve hour shifts, were sure to take their toll of health and strength and life, for some of them are prematurely old and unable to be in active service; others have gone to their eternal reward. Younger hands today are holding aloft the torch which they so gloriously laid down.

These conditions prevailed until 1917 when matters improved and a registered night force could be hired.
It might be well to pause in this narrative to pay tribute to one who stood so loyal by the Dominican Nuns when days were darkest. Particular mention is made of Doctor Meade who sacrificed all to come to their rescue. When the mortgages was ready to foreclose in 1913, it was this faithful and staunch friend who saved the Community.

This building served till 1922, when congested conditions again demanded an annexation or a new structure. Administrations had changed hands during this span of time, and at the helm of the Community was Mother Seraphine, who possessed uncommon executive ability. With ample experience gained during the crisis of 1910, she continued to elevate the tone of the Community and to prudently manage its financial and business phases.

The hospital had made great strides as can be seen from the following excerpt taken from the Great Bend Tribune:

...The secretary of the state board having to do with the registration of trained nurses recently paid a visit to the local hospital and after thorough inspection of the institution complimented the management on the high state of efficiency obtained and especially as regards the training courses for nurses which she stated was one of the most modern and efficient she had ever seen. A complete three year course was the general rule...and the training given here was of such a character as to reflect the highest credit on the institution and the medical fraternity connected with it.

In checking over the records at the hospital covering

the years of 1916 to 1920, 2252 surgical cases had been handled, and of this vast number 56 deaths had resulted, and this list included cases due to accidents which had been brought to the hospital. During the stated period, the hospital had 957 medical cases, and of these an even 100 died; in comparison with these figures, the records for 1940 show that 3502 patients were admitted and only 96 deaths resulted.

Probably not another similar institution in the country could show records of such small percentage of deaths. Much of this success can be attributed to the staff in attendance which is of widely recognized ability as may be inferred from the large number of patients who come from great distances seeking their services. The Sisters in charge desire no encomium for the splendid work which they have done and are performing for stricken humanity, save the "Well done!" of the Master whom they strive to serve in their works of mercy, and so they have been reluctant in the matter of publicity.

In 1920, both the members of the Community and the staff of the hospital, realizing the needs not only of Great Bend but of all western Kansas, decided that another move would be necessary. The plan of building an entirely new structure and equipping it with the latest and best known hospital equipment was undertaken. Several lots
were purchased near the convent grounds that the Dominican Community might be more intact and enable the Sisters at the hospital to attend some of the Community services at the Convent. Likewise, additional help might be quickly recruited from the convent force in case of emergencies.

Situated on grounds adjacent to the Convent on Broadway in the extreme western part of the city, the hospital is free from the noises of the average community. The barren spot upon which it was located was rapidly transferred into a place of beauty by landscaping the premises, a task in which Mother Seraphine found particular delight.

Mother Seraphine and her Council made a survey of many well-known institutions of this kind, and adding to that their own years of practical experience, set forth to adopt every good feature in hospitalization found elsewhere and improved upon them wherever they could. The plans for the new building provided for 75 beds and absolutely modern equipment. It was thought that should suffice for many years to come. The plan was not only build "just another building", but to erect the "ideal hospital", with the advantage that future additions could be made when necessary.

Early in the spring of 1920, the excavation began and progressed rapidly. There was some delay at the beginning on account of delayed shipments of material. When that difficulty was overcome the work continued without interrup-
tion. The first years of this new undertaking were not barren of hardships and trials.

A campaign for funds was inaugurated shortly after the commencement of the building. It was in the form of furnishing a room in the new building with the attraction that the name of the donor was to appear above the entry of the room thus furnished. A room with private bath facilities required a $500 donation, while one without such facilities amounted to $250. Every room in the three-story main building and two-story east wing were disposed of in a very short time. Another ruse adopted by a few hundred public spirited men and women were the "Buy a Brick" $5 cards. Valuable assistance was given by the hospital staff in furnishing equipment for such rooms as laboratory, operating rooms, X-Ray department and sterilizing division.

The main structure had three stories and a full basement under the entire building. The arrangement is such that sunlight enters practically every room. Steam heat, electric elevators, a model kitchen with an entire electrical arrangement, a clinical laboratory providing chemical, bacteriological, serological and pathological services, Hydrotherapy and Physiotherapy departments, besides operating rooms connected with a sterilizing department are part of the equipment.

The laundry equipped with modern electrical appliances was located in the east basement wing. Clothes chutes
lead from each floor to the basement. Up to the installation of the new laundry equipment, the bulk of the hospital linens were sent to the McMullen laundry in town. Expenses were cut considerably when this practice was abandoned.

Dedication of the hospital was scheduled for August 17, 1922. The Very Reverend August Schwertner conducted the services, assisted by forty members of the Catholic clergy. The morning services were devoted to the observance of Holy Mass in the Convent chapel followed by a sermon by His Excellency, in which he paid a very high tribute to the work of a nun. Large crowds had gathered to witness the dedicatory services. At 3 p.m. the procession started from the convent and proceeded to the hospital. The dedication started by blessing the building on the outside from all four sides, then the inside, and finally ended with a special blessing in the chapel of the new building.

The chapel in the east annex is small, but artistic. The beautiful marble altar is the gift of the Reverend Maurice Reidy of happy memory. Mr. Heine, a noted Chicago painter and frescoer, was employed to decorate the chapel. His work was far from being completed when the migration from the old to the new building took place the first week in February. In order to conduct religious

22. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
her training in Bellevue Hospital, N. Y., and also in St. Catherine's, Brooklyn. In 1924 she was awarded her certificate of medical technologist.\textsuperscript{26} The X-Ray apparatus was installed by Dr. E. E. Morrison, who took a particular pride and interest in this department.

Complete sets of records are kept up to date in the record filing room, on first floor adjacent to the business office. Dr. Morrison and Sister Johanna must be given full credit for this movement. In 1922 the institution was anxious to get on the accredited list of hospitals and this was one of the requirements. Dr. Morrison bought the first filing cabinet and placed it in one of the basement rooms, where the first records were kept. Sister Johanna, while away for her training as technologist, had taken as a sideline record work. In 1932 the record room was moved to its present quarters with a certified record custodian. Records are complete in every respect since the building was erected on West Broadway.

In 1937 more room had to be provided. This time the institution did not witness an annex, but an exodus. To meet the emergency, the student nurses that had been domiciled in the east annex of the hospital, were given quarters in a nurses' home, a residence about a block south of the hospital which had been rented for that purpose. The

\textsuperscript{26} Sister Johanna, O.P., Interview, St. Rose Hospital, Great Bend, Kansas, June 13, 1939.
quarters formerly occupied by the nurses had been transformed into a modern, fully equipped pediatrics department, where special attention is given to suffering and crippled children.

The staff of physicians stand pre-eminent in their lines. There has been a steady movement among the Barton County Medical Association, toward specialization to the effect that the same professional diagnosis and treatment that may be obtained in any large hospital may likewise be obtained at St. Rose. The regular staff consists of thirteen physicians plus nine members on the courtesy staff. Among the staff are represented Orthopedists, Urologists, Dentists, Ear, Eye, Nose, and Throat Specialists, besides Medical Doctors.

The following are the officers of St. Rose Staff:

President of staff -- Dr. M. F. Russell
Vice-President------ Dr. H. C. Zugg
Sec.-Treasurer------- Dr. L. R. McGill

The department of Pharmacy requires a registered pharmacist in charge according to State Law of Pharmacy. This requirement was met in 1906 by Sister M. Loretta, a registered Pharmacist of New York. The beginning was primitive, to be sure, but with constant effort it has reached its present modern status. In 1934 after long and efficient service, she reluctantly resigned her position to a younger

member. Sister Loyola, the present pharmacist, attended the Wuester School of Pharmacy in Wichita and worked under a Registered Pharmacist for two years. She successfully passed the examination given by the Kansas Board of Pharmacy, and received her certificate from the same institution which qualifies her as a registered Pharmacist, providing this certificate is renewed every year according to State Law. The State Law of 1934, requires a student desiring to become a registered pharmacist to have a four-year college course and actual training approved by the Pharmaceutical Board before the applicant may present himself for examination to the State Board of Pharmacy.

A very vital improvement in this institute is the hospital library which is entirely due to the efficient leadership of the Reverend Thomas J. Smith, O.P., Director of the Training School and Chaplain of the St. Rose Hospital. With the modest beginning of 900 volumes on September 21, 1937, it has at present over 2,500 bound volumes, classified and indexed according to the Dewey Decimal System. The librarian is also taking the added charge of book binder, for in her leisure hours, she manages to work in the bindery.

29. Kansas State Board of Pharmacy, op. cit., 16.
30. Was made Director of the Training School in 1935 and Chaplain in September, 1941.
31. Sister M. Maurice, Interview, Great Bend, May 23, 1939.
One of the factors contributing to the effectiveness of the institution has been the training school for nurses. Much credit belongs to Mother Seraphine, who was instrumental in starting the Training School. She saw the need for registered nurses and therefore employed a registered nurse from St. Joseph Hospital, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the first Superintendent. Sister Henrietta is the present Superintendent of Nurses, and has held this position the past ten years. The training School was opened in November, 1917, with the following student nurses: Sisters Rose, Emelia, Raymond, Johanna and Dolores. This same class graduated August 20, 1920. After that, young ladies were admitted, and since then has been most successful. To date, 150 nurses have been honorably graduated from the institution. At the present time there are 50 student nurses in training, one of the largest classes ever enrolled. One of the special features of the School is the character education of the nurses. This important position was entrusted to the Director of the School, the Reverend Thomas J. Smith, O.P., from Providence, Rhode Island. He is endowed with ample faculties, and exercises a strong formative influence on the mind and character of those with whom he comes in contact. He is untiring in promoting this work, as he knows he is forming character, training hearts and souls to be beacon lights for others. He is

32. Sister M. Henrietta, Questionnaire, Great Bend, July 22, 1940.
skillful in imparting knowledge and has given the faculty of St. Rose valuable assistance in their work.

The Training School is non-sectarian, often a majority of the nurses being of a religious belief other than that of the institution. In Sister Amanda's diary, 1930, this entry is found: "First time that the hospital has a class of 41 members in training and that 50% are Catholic girls." The St. Rose Training School is affiliated with Marymount College. The curriculum of studies is sufficiently comprehensive to place the school among the leading institutions of nursing education.

In 1917 the students were required to have one year of high school, or none at all, if they were capable of doing the work. Their course of training comprised 300 theoretical hours. Today, the applicants must be graduated from accredited high schools, and have an average scholastic standing. Their training course now requires three entire years with 750 theoretical hours.

St. Rose Hospital is an accredited institution, meeting all the requirements of the American College of Surgeons. This College of Surgeons has established regulations and requirements covering the building, equipment, chemical, microscopical, pathological and X-Ray Laboratories, Training School for Nurses, Staff Organization, and

33. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
34. St. Rose Hospital, Certificate of Accreditation.
the class of work that must be done that the sick may have
the benefit of good medical or surgical service to which
they are entitled. A standardized hospital must make written
reports to the proper representatives of the College
whenever required and must always be ready for inspection
at any time by official inspectors. In 1924 this privi-
lege was accorded to the institution, and it has ever since
been on the accredited list.

Lack of accommodations compelled them to add the $75,-
000 west annex in 1927. That increased the bed capacity
to 125. The annex, erected largely through popular sub-
scription and under the personal supervision of Mother
Seraphine, contains the physiotherapy department, the new
training school rooms and auditorium, a general dining room
for attendants, a special suite for visiting clergy, and
modernly equipped rooms for patients.

The Very Reverend August J. Schwertner solemnly dedi-
cated the new annex on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday afternoon,
November 24, 1927, the same day that the Community cele-
brated its Silver Jubilee. It was a great success, due
no doubt to every member of the Order, but particularly to
Mother M. Seraphine, who not only carried on the work of
looking after the regular duties of her position, but with
assistants, looked after every detail of the celebration.

35. Dominicana, Cloister Chronicles, June, 1927, 171.
36. Ibid., December, 1927, 339.
After the dedicatory services the hospital was thrown open to visitors. More than 1500 visitors took advantage of this opportunity to see the institution.

The St. Rose Hospital personnel of 1927 was:

Mother M. Seraphine, Q. P., General supervision and management
Sister M. Francis De. Sales, Superintendent of Nurses
Rev. M. T. Meehan, Chaplain of St. Rose Hospital
Dr. E. E. Morrison, Chief of Staff

The personnel of 1937 includes:

Mother M. Aloysia, the Reverend Mother General of the Community
Mother M. Inviolata, General supervision and management of the hospital
Sister M. Henrietta, Superintendent of Nurses
The Rev. Thomas J. Smith, O.P., Director and Chaplain of Hospital
Dr. M. F. Russell, Chief of Staff

St. Rose Hospital is the crowning glory of a little more than a quarter of a century of work accomplished by the Dominican Sisters at Great Bend. The institution is superior to many of the hospitals in the state, and equal in point of efficiency and equipment to the best in the state. Testimonials of satisfaction from present and former patients are received constantly. This efficiency is due in a large measure to the competent staff of physicians and the well-trained nurses who assist them. It is an institution in which Great Bend can not only take a just pride, but which is also a pride to all western Kansas.

37. Statement made by Franklin H. Martin, director general of American College of Surgeons at its 21st annual congress in Chicago.
The Sisters employed at the St. Rose hospital were ever anxious to have a new field of labor. There was an occasion when the hospital at Hoisington could have been purchased, but on account of its proximity was not deemed desirable. The occasion presented itself during Mother Rose's administration, when Dr. O. W. Miner of Garden City offered the building, Rewerts and Miner Hospital, for sale in 1930.38

The hospital had its beginning in a modest way the same year that the Dominican Sisters came to Great Bend, 1902, when the late Dr. O. L. Helwig opened a small apartment with two rooms over the present location of the Dunn Dry Goods Company. In 1904 the scene of activity was transferred to the corner of Seventh and Chestnut Streets, where it was possible to care for twelve patients. Dr. Charles Rewerts became associated with Dr. Helwig in the medical profession, continuing in the work as partner till the demise of Dr. Helwig in 1913.

The increasing demands on the cramped quarters suggested a change and accordingly removal was made to the present location on Fifth Street in 1916. There a spacious rooming house was purchased, remodeled and changed into a hospital with a capacity of 24 beds.

On October 1, 1924, Dr. O. Miner became associated with Dr. Rewerts. Young, ambitious Dr. Miner immediately

38. Sister M. Reginald, Questionnaire, Garden City, Kansas, July 5, 1939.
suggested erecting a new structure, and plans were made for a large and modern hospital with the result that the new hospital was opened on April 2, 1928. The old portion was incorporated with the new as an annex. The new addition increased the capacity to 45 beds. In addition to these buildings there was also a laundry and a nurses' home accommodating about fifteen nurses. This later was acquired in 1930. Wonderful work was accomplished in that building all due to the untiring efforts of Dr. Rewerts. But the community and people from a large territory extending into Oklahoma on the south, and Colorado on the west, were shocked to hear of his sudden death, December 18, 1929; his premature death being the result of overstrain. His untiring sacrifice knew no bounds. His unceasing practical interest in the affairs of the hospital and the welfare of the patients prompted him to give the best at all times, and the strain proved to be too great.

Dr. Miner was at a loss of how to continue without the aid of Dr. Rewerts, or another physician of equal ability. He realized the responsibility and difficulties of managing a hospital, and although his life's dream had proved a reality, he considered it practically impossible to continue under circumstances. Then a suggestion was made to him that he might be able to dispose of it to an Order or Community of Sisters, and Mrs. Miner consented to such a procedure. On January 13, 1931, the Right

Reverend August J. Schwertner of Wichita and Mother M. Rose of Great Bend, inspected the hospital with its equipment, nurses home, and laundry. They were well pleased with the property and after consultation with the Council, Mother M. Rose closed the deal January 30, 1931, by purchasing the Rewerts-Miner Hospital, Garden City, Kansas, for $67,500. The hospital property included one-half block facing Fifth Street and is located in the residential district of Garden City.

The Garden City Daily Telegram carried this article:

Dominican Sisters, Great Bend, are new owners. Possession soon. Improvements for hospital and equipment are contemplated by new owners. Dr. O. W. Miner today announced the sale of the Rewerts-Miner Hospital, Garden City, to the Dominican Sisters of Great Bend. The deal was closed this morning and the Sisters will take possession of the hospital within the next few weeks.

The sale, which has been contemplated for some time, was closed by Dr. Miner and representatives of the purchasing organization. The sale includes all of the property on the half block on which the hospital stands.

Many improvements are being planned for the hospital by the new owners. Several improvements in the equipment and additions to the main building will probably be made.

The training school which has been conducted at the hospital will be continued by the owners. This will be open to both Protestant and Catholic nurses, and many nurses will be employed in the hospital.

The hospital will open to all doctors of Garden City who meet the board's requirements. Osteopaths and Chiropractors will be excluded from using the hospital. It is possible that the sale will bring one or more new doctors to Garden City.

The hospital at Great Bend, owned by the Dominican Sisters, is rated as a Class A Hospital, the highest rating that can be given.

40. Sisters of St. Dominic, Archives, op. cit.
41. The Garden City Daily Telegram, Garden City, Kansas, January 30, 1931.
Then came the great excitement at St. Rose; volunteers to go West were asked for. In comparison to the modern St. Rose, it was far from being complete in furnishings. Immediately the collecting fever began. Things that had been relegated to the garret were again brought to light and stored with the treasures to go to Garden City. Supplies for the chapel, particularly were needed. Both St. Rose and the Convent freely donated vestments and accessories used in divine worship.

The Very Reverend August J. Schwertner having great confidence in the ability of Sister Francis De Sales, a registered nurse from St. Joseph's Hospital, Milwauk, appointed her as the superior of the hospital and the Sisters. The members accompanying her were: four registered nurses, namely, Sisters Emelia, Bernadine, Reginald, and Emanuail, one expert cook and dietitian, Sister Cecilia, with Sister Jordan in charge of the laundry.\(^{42}\)

February 21, 1931, preparations were complete, and the Sisters bade farewell to their companions at St. Rose and came to the convent to receive final instructions before leaving the Motherhouse. Mother Rose herself accompanied them; having been a nurse herself, she wanted to see them get a fair start, and then also to lessen that terrible feeling of homesickness which was bound to

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overtake them in strange surroundings with fewer conveniences than at St. Rose. They took actual possession of the hospital, February 23, 1931, and from that time the hospital was known as St. Catherine's Hospital.

On their arrival they found Dr. Miner the only practicing physician and with him a corps of nurses; no great change was made in the personnel of the nurses till a few weeks later. Sanitary conditions of the building were not to the taste of the Sisters and hence a wholesale cleaning program was inaugurated the first week. Necessary changes and improvements were contemplated and undertaken immediately, such as the chapel and Sisters' quarters.

As soon as rumors spread that the hospital was in charge of the Sisters, several physicians were ready to cast their lots with Dr. Miner, who had really been left alone to care for the entire institution. The first to make the acquaintance with the institution was Dr. G. K. Lewis who came to Garden City the latter part of February, 1931. Then another member was added to the staff in March, when Dr. H. C. Sartorius of Garden City had completed his course. Dr. R. M. Troup had previously done some work at the Rewerts-Miner Hospital; he now, likewise, became a member of the regular staff. Dr. Bailey, who had been operating his own private hospital in Garden City was forced to abandon the idea due to the depression,
and come over to St. Catherine's in the spring of 1936.\textsuperscript{43}

The first staff meeting was called July 31, 1931. Much was transacted at that meeting; among other things the election of the staff officers with the following appointments:

President------------Dr. O. W. Miner
Vice-President--------Dr. R. M. Troup
Secretary and Treasurer-------Dr. H. C. Sartorious

Likewise a better system of records and files was recommended; recommendations, however, are not realities. It took three years for the installation of a complete record file room, with a certified record librarian, Sister M. Reginald. This was not her duty, but her great interest in the hospital urged her to get the hospital on the accredited list of American College of Surgeons. Day time was so well scheduled among various duties, that no thought could be given to the files. This, then, had to be accomplished at the expense of health, and night time was used. Constant effort in this finally resulted in a complete set of files that passed the careful scrutiny of the hospital inspectors.

Another requirement that had to be met was the departmentalization of the institution. Gradually that was also complied with. Their X-Ray department was equipped with a G. E. new Portable Machine; the operating department was improved by adding a regular fracture table;

\textsuperscript{43} Sister M. Reginald, \textit{op. cit.}
and the latest improvement was the purchase of a Safety Gass Machine, Augustinian model. 44

The training school for nurses was affiliated with Marymount College, Salina, and the course offered at St. Catherine's is similar to the curriculum at St. Rose. To date, 1940, the school has graduated 42 registered nurses. At present St. Catherine's has 21 student nurses trained by a certified Superintendent.

The regular staff today consists of 7 physicians, plus a visiting staff of four members. Many other medical doctors come and go, but do not take permanent residence there due to adverse economic conditions.

The hospital has a capacity of 50 beds, and has an average daily census of 36. Average days' stay per patients in the institute was 7.28 days. During 1937, the hospital treated 1302 patients, having a total of 9,484 patient days with total deaths of 31, or 2.3%, as compared with the record of 1935, the great dust era, having 12,290 patients days with 59 deaths or 4 45%. Those were the days when days were turned into nights for it necessitated lights for any indoor work, and nights became days in order to bring the place into a half way sanitary condition for the next day.

No need for collection in that region during that

44. Sister M. Reginald, op. cit.
45. Sisters of St. Dominic, St. Catherine's Hospital Record Files, Garden City, Kansas, 1937.
year and several years after; there simply was nothing to collect. As in old St. Rose, people paid their bill in kind, or others offered to work their bill off at the institution. During all these hard times they managed to keep the institution going, and what is still more encouraging, have paid a stout sum on their indebtedness. Much credit belongs to the effective management of the institution, which has been under the leadership of the following sisters: Sisters De Sales, Cecilia, Annunciata, Pauline, and the incumbent Superior, Sister Augustine (February, 1941).

A staunch friend of the Sisters in Garden City was Reverend George Spaeth, C.P.P.S., the chaplain of the hospital. In reality Father George was in charge of the Mexican Congregation at Garden City, and as his parishioners were too poor to build a rectory, he was invited by the Sisters to take up his residence in the hospital. From the time of his appointment as chaplain by his Provincial, he has served the Sisters' Hospital almost without remuneration. To him they submitted their problems, their difficulties, and their fears and he never failed them.

No less solicitous for the spiritual welfare of the Sisters was Father Brunswick, C.P.P.S., pastor of St. Mary's parish in Garden City, who was their spiritual guide. No task was too arduous for him, and in fulfilling his duties no obstacle could swerve him from his plans.

46. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
The Sisters are deeply indebted to these two zealous priests, who have the interests of the institution at heart.

Crowded conditions at the hospital convinced Rev. Mother M. Inviolata that something had to be done to alleviate the situation. The residence right across the alley east of the hospital was for sale, September, 1938. This residence was purchased to be converted into apartments for the Sisters.

This hospital has been accredited by the American College of Surgeons in 1935.

Thus the interesting history of two hospitals under the care of the Sisters of St. Dominic in Kansas comes to a close. Each year they care for several thousand patients regardless of race or denomination, and very frequently without any pay or remuneration. It is a blessed task, yet weighty in its demands, and replete with worries not only financial but also otherwise.

47. Sisters of St. Dominic, Archives, op. cit.
48. St. Catherine's Hospital, Certificate of Accreditation, 1935, Garden City, Kansas.
One of the C.N.C. dormitories converted into the first St. Rose Hospital in 1903. (Now a private residence.)
The Second St. Rose Hospital, 1904, the former G. N. Moses Residence.

St. Rose Hospital in 1907 with the new brick annex.
The present St. Rose Hospital on West Broadway (1922)
CHAPTER XI

Educational Endeavors

The Constitutions which prescribe the Christian education of youth as the characteristic end of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Dominic bid the Sisters strive to perform this duty with the greatest possible perfection. To enable the Sisters to fulfill conscientiously this prescription of the Constitutions, each Mother Prioress made plans for the education and professional training, even though the exigencies of pioneer life made extensive demands on their time and energy.

The sixteen elementary schools, one normal training school, two accredited high schools and two nurses' training schools placed under the charge of the Dominican Sisters in the past quarter of a century are scattered throughout the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas.

The Wichita Diocese established in 1887 was bound on the east by the sixth meridian, on the west by Colorado, on the south by the Indian territory and on the north by the northern lines of these counties: McPherson, Rice, Barton, Rush, Ness, Lane, Scott, Wichita, and Greeley. In 1897 the Holy See attached fourteen more counties

located east of the sixth principal meridian, the new boundaries being: on the west by Colorado, south by Oklahoma, east by Missouri, and north by the north lines of Bourbon, Allen, Woodson, Greenwood, Morris, Marion, McPherson, Rice, Barton, Rush, Ness, Lane, Scott, Wichita, and Greeley counties in Kansas. ³

In 1887 the Wichita Diocese boasted of six Parochial schools; in 1900 the list had been increased to seventeen.⁴

The parochial school system in the Diocese of Wichita was not organized, but each school was a law unit itself. Its efficiency depended a great deal on the zeal and skill of the pastor and especially on the training of the Sisters.⁵ As early as 1905 Bishop Hennessy urged the building of parochial schools; at his death in 1920, the diocese had fifty parochial schools and all but eight were in charge of Sisters.⁶

Rt. Reverend August Schwertner, the successor of late Bishop Hennessy, spared no effort to encourage education, especially in effecting a uniform parochial system in the Wichita Diocese. In 1928, he appointed the Reverend Leon McNeill the official diocesan superintendent of schools to work as his personal representative.⁷ Within a short time the administrative personnel of the diocesan school

⁵. Ibid., 102.
⁶. Ibid., 102.
organization consisted of: the Rt. Reverend Bishop, the Diocesan Superintendent, the Diocesan Board of Priests, the Advisory Board of Sisters, the Sister Supervisor, the Reverend Director of the Schools, the Sister Principal, and the Classroom Teacher.

It is under this official organization that seventy elementary schools are in operation. As mentioned above, sixteen of these are conducted by the Sisters of St. Dominic and the others are distributed among the various Orders: Sisters of St. Joseph, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, Sisters of Charity, and the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood.

According to the founder of the Order, each Dominican should be studious, prayerful and active; his true followers will then bear his likeness of teachers, contemplatives, and apostles.

As a result of the high mission entrusted to the Order, the Sisters of St. Dominic have endeavored to do their part in this project of education. With strenuous effort and at great sacrifice to make their teaching corps a thoroughly trained professional group, each prioress encouraged the higher education of the members of the community.

Prior to 1918, the teaching Sisters used the vacation

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months as a special period of preparation for the ensuing scholastic year. Some attended Normal Schools at Great Bend to be qualified as certified teachers in the fall; others, particularly younger members, were given courses in methods and subject matter so as to fit them for the teaching profession. These Sisters took and successfully passed the Teachers Examinations given by the State under supervision of some local school official designated by the County Superintendent.

One fact may not be overlooked: the pioneer group that planted the seed, had received a thorough training in Brooklyn and came with certificate in hand to teach in these early schools of Kansas. Mother Antonine having had the advantage of a systematic and thorough training course in Brooklyn appreciated higher education, and it was her ambition to see each teacher well qualified to conduct successfully the classes assigned to her.

Owing to the stringent laws on education and the great demands made upon teachers, it was not sufficient for the Sisters to devote summer vacation to study and self-improvement. In rating the classroom teachers, college hours were to be considered. Therefore, in 1921, Seven Sisters were sent to Hays, Kansas, to attend the Kansas State Teachers’ College. For several years this institution was the only one attended by the Dominican Sisters; however, in 1917, two Sisters from Great Bend had registered in
Washington, D. C. In 1932 the Sisters studied at the Sisters' College of the Diocese of Wichita, Branch Summer School of the Municipal University of Wichita. So the places of study have increased until today Dominican teaching sisters from Kansas have attended at St. Francis College, Joliet, Illinois; Marymount, Salina, Kansas; Sacred Heart Junior College, Wichita; Friends University at Wichita; Catholic University, Washington, D. C.; the Art Institute in Chicago; and Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas. There are in the Community at the time of this writing, 1941, eighty qualified teachers, with certifications ranging from a Normal Training Certificate to a Doctor of Philosophy Degree. 

The attainment of higher degrees has been a physical strain for the Sisters attempting to achieve them. It has meant a double portion of labor each day for many years and in a few instances the strain has been too great and the Sisters have succumbed.

An ideal Dominican combines the active with the contemplative life. There is an absolute danger for Sisters pursuing higher education to minimize spiritual exercises in order to obtain time for class and research work; again, when the Diocesan plan for parochial education was established, some schools were loathe to change from county

10. Sisters of St. Dominic, Community Annals, Great Bend, 1940.
to diocesan supervision, pressure being brought on them from local public high schools. Many Sisters then tried to please both organizations and therefore of necessity had to follow a double program. Such strain is likely to overshadow the primary object of every religious teacher: namely, the pursuit of her soul's perfection, and that ideal is often lost sight of in the crowded life of the religious teacher in this day. The religious life requires for its successful living some leisure time for reflective thought and prayer.

The search for credits, courses and requirements for certification sent practically each teaching Sister to summer school with few exceptions. This helped most of them to attain their education piecemeal over a long period of years, while they performed the ordinary tasks of teachers during the year. Conditions have changed in the last decade; since 1933 some Sisters have been selected for college work for an entire year without burdening them with extraneous work. The younger members of the community are particularly favored with this arrangement. To avoid this fast living, the religious communities should raise the educational standards of its applicants; but that is the ideal, far from being real.

Neither the parochial schools nor the Sisters' residences throughout the Diocese of Wichita, are owned by the Community. The parishes furnish these, and the
Sisters merely reside there during the teaching term and return to the Motherhouse to spend the vacation months at home, but for the most of them, to advance their scholastic standing.

The first educational endeavors undertaken by the Dominican Sisters in Kansas was St. Mary's Academy, of which previous mention was made. This phase of the educational system continued to operate until the fall of 1910. At this time administrations changed, and after taking thorough inventory of the situation, it was decided to close the school due to lack of support. In 1912, Mother M. Seraphine had St. Mary's School remodeled and reopened as a Novitiate and called it the Immaculate Conception Convent. 11

In 1917 a high school was opened at the Convent in order to prepare the younger members for college work. It was originally affiliated with the Great Bend High School; authorities there furnished and supervised semester tests and gave the credits to the students. Although this was a fair arrangement, yet it was not satisfactory to members of the Community who thought it best to get the school accredited. Gradually all the requirements of the State Board had been met, and in 1928, it was a fully accredited high school.

11. Refer to Chapter VI, "The Administration of Mother Seraphine."
A serious obstacle to the success of Mother Antonine's educational program was the insistent demand of the pastors for teaching Sisters. So eager were the Reverend Clergy to secure a Catholic training for their children, the proper care of the sanctuary and choir for their churches, and the economy of low-salaried teachers for the parish that they would brook no refusal.

It is beyond the scope of this work to trace the development of each parochial school that has been in charge of the Sisters of the Community. A little sketch of some of the pioneer schools, however, does not seem out of place here.

In 1902, the Reverend W. Emmerich asked for two teachers to conduct his school at Ellinwood, Kansas. The Sisters began teaching in a dilapidated building. Their own quarters were in a worse condition, but they even shared their incommmodious small home with the parish children who lived a great distance from the school. One of the Sisters stationed there in these pioneer days and still living in 1940, recalls very vividly the daily program. Rising at a very early hour, the day's work began by prayer and meditation, followed by the daily class routine. After the day's work in school was over with its burden of physical stress and mental strain, the Sisters returned to their little convent home in time for Matins and Lauds.
After supper their charges needed assistance in preparation of their assignments for the next day; next they exercised a mother's role by tucking the youngsters in bed; and finally climaxed the long day by preparing for the next day's classes. Reasonable recreation, rest, even the simplest comforts for the body were conspicuous by their absence. This school was discontinued by the Dominican Sisters in the fall of 1910, due to a lack of sufficient teachers.

The same year the Reverend Dr. J. A. Pompeoney of Hutchinson, Kansas, requested Mother Antonine to send two teaching Sisters for his parochial school. The enrollment was large and accommodations small; hence, many had to be refused admittance. The school progressed beyond expectation. In 1905 a new brick building with accommodations for two hundred pupils was erected. The school was given over about 1907 to the Sisters of St. Joseph, Wichita.

The Holy Family School, Odin, Kansas, was conducted by the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood from Ruma, Illinois, until 1902. Adverse economic circumstances prompted them to discontinue sending their Sisters from such a distance to Odin. In 1903, the Dominican Sisters from Great Bend took over the school, and have been in

12. Sister M. Augustine, Interview, Great Bend, 1939.
charge since. The school was a crude stone two-story structure erected without any special plan by the parishioners themselves. The first enrollment was fifty-two but increased each year that soon larger accommodations were necessary; the result was the erection of the present massive native stone structure. The elementary enrollment passed the two-hundred mark in 1924. At present an accredited Rural High School Class C with an enrollment of thirty-one is conducted in addition to the elementary school in this building.

In 1906 the Dominican Sisters were asked to provide two teachers each for the parochial schools at Windhorst and Liebenthal, respectively. Economic conditions and lack of teachers caused the Sisters to discontinue their labors at these missions in 1910.

Everything in and about these early schools bespoke of poverty and economy. Nearly all buildings used for school purposes were not originally intended for schools, but financial conditions forced them to use these substitutes. There were in some cases old frame churches, or residences, that underwent some kind of metamorphosis and emerged as school buildings with classrooms. All pedagogical material was limited; in many instances the only furniture and equipment being desks and a stove; and in most cases all supplementary material was made by the Sisters themselves. It is only with the advent of the
systematized diocesan plan and the construction of modern brick buildings that the schools are well furnished and equipped.

The sixteen elementary schools in charge of the Dominican Sisters are divided into nine two-teacher schools, one one-teacher school, and six graded schools. That requires forty-four teachers; eleven of these are employed in public schools and obtain support from public school funds, while the salary of the remaining teachers comes from parish funds.

Peculiarities of all kinds have crept in the method of paying, as the following will show: In one instance a partially graded school of three teachers had the tuition method of paying. On an average only $50.00 a month was collected for the three teachers. This method was started in 1927 when the school was taken over and was still in vogue in 1937. Since then a definite salary basis has been adopted.

Another example is recorded during the depression years, where farmers refused to sell their crops, and paid their church and school dues in kind, which in turn was applied in the same manner on the teachers' salary.

Another parish decided to reduce the teaching staff to one Sister, as they were unable to pay the salary.

15. Appendix, No. III.
17. Sisters of St. Dominic, op. cit.
during the depression years. Kindhearted Mother Rose not wanting one Sister to be thus over burdened, sent two teachers, one to receive pay, the other to teach gratis. The plan was a novel one for no salary was intended. The entire parish of about thirty families was listed and each family was given a designated week during which they were to supply the Sisters with food, etc. This method was definitely abandoned in 1936.

During the depression many teachers' salaries were not paid, and records show them still in arrears; some parishes finding themselves unable to meet their old obligations, have asked the Community to cancel their debt in a few instances amounting to several thousand dollars. Despite these unfavorable circumstances, the Sisters, true to their ideal, never shirked their duty. The religious teaching Sister who is consecrated to this work by the vows of religion, is unmindful of compensation, or personal gain.

The Diocesan educational program also includes children who cannot attend the parochial school. To attain that end the Religious Vacation School movement started in the summer of 1929. The Rt. Reverend August Schwertner at a meeting of the Advisory Board on Education, December 15, 1928, outlined for the Sister representatives of the various communities his plan for the Religious Vacation
Schools and urged them to furnish as many teachers as possible for this important missionary work. Four Dominican Sisters joined the staff that summer. Every year saw an increase in vacation schools, enrollment and teachers. The summer of 1929, sixteen vacation schools with an enrollment of 737 were conducted by five religious orders, lay teachers and priests. One hundred forty-two of these students were under the care of the Sisters of St. Dominic. In 1939 the vacation schools had grown to seventy-one with an enrollment of 2,292, conducted by the same group of teachers, the Dominican Sisters furnishing thirty teachers and instructing 593. Content, method, and place of instruction vary according to local needs. Pupils sometimes range in age from five to eighteen years and in education from kindergarten to senior high. In many places two classes are conducted simultaneously in the church or hall. The Sisters receive no fixed remuneration for their services beyond appropriate lodging, board, and transportation. However, in some cases the parish makes them a voluntary offering.

For the purpose of unifying the educational efforts of the Sisters and likewise of providing definite assistance to the teachers in the various schools the office of full-time community supervisor of schools was instituted, and

Sister M. Immaculata, O.P.,\textsuperscript{20} shouldered this responsibility for many years till ill health forced her to yield this important position to Sister Benigna, O.P., in 1936. The Sister Supervisor is also to be at the call of the Diocesan Superintendent for any other diocesan school work which he wishes to commit to her. It is impossible to overestimate the work of the Sister Supervisor in regard to the improvement of the morale, methods, and the personnel of the teaching staff of the sisters.

September, 1933, the Sacred Heart Junior College in Wichita, was organized primarily as a training school for the teaching Sisters in the Diocese of Wichita. The faculty members were selected from the various communities in the Diocese, and from among the outstanding clergy. Sister M. Aloysia, O.P., had completed her graduate studies for the doctorate with a major in German at the Catholic University, Washington, D. C., in 1934; in the fall of that year she was employed to teach the German courses at the College.\textsuperscript{21} This position she held till she was appointed Novice Mistress at the Novitiate in Great Bend. Since then she has been training young girls for the service of God. It is here the young aspirant comes in contact and gets acquainted with the life work of a Sister.

\textsuperscript{20} Diocese of Wichita, Fourth Annual School Report, 1931-32, 6.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 24.
Since the opening of the Academy in 1902, the work has been rapid, the sisters in accord with the Dominican tradition, that effective teaching can be accomplished only by the background of thorough education, have trained their members well for this field of labor. The religious teaching sister is alert to the best educational thought. Her period of training never ends; the name she bears as a Dominican urges her daily to devote some definite time to study.

Truly had the Most Reverend Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis said: "The work of education requires greater sacrifice and higher consecration of purpose than devotion to a life of charity in the alleviation of bodily suffering." 22

After thirty-eight years of existence the sisters of St. Dominic of the Immaculate Conception Convent can contemplate with honest pride their share in the difficult work of Catholic education. They have done remarkably well when all difficulties are considered.

Teaching Communities with data regarding schools, pupils, teachers, and pupils per teacher in elementary schools for the year 1937-38.23

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CHAPTER XII

In Memoriam

Charity toward the deceased members of the Congregation is woven richly into the tapestry of the Community's history. At the death of a sister the notice is sent immediately from the Motherhouse to each mission house; likewise, the deceased benefactors of the Community and the relatives of the sisters, too, are gratefully remembered.\(^1\)

Love prompts giving more than duty requires. While the corpse of a sister lies in state at the Motherhouse, groups of sisters alternate in keeping vigil day and night. The funeral obsequies are simple but impressive. While the body lies in state a crown of thorns is placed above her head and one of roses at her feet; however, before the corpse is taken to the chapel for the final Requiem, the Mother Prioress in presence of all the sisters, drapes a white veil over her and exchanges the two crowns, placing the roses on her head and the thorns to her feet. The ceremony is symbolic of the struggle fought in this life that is exchanged for the bliss of eternity.\(^2\)

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2. \textit{Ceremonial and Customary}, Dominican Community, Great Bend, 1932, 156.
After the Requiem Mass sung usually in the convent chapel, the corpse, escorted by the members of the Community, is borne to the sisters' cemetery to be interred in its lowly grave.

A mute yet eloquent history of the Community is enshrined in its Cemetery situated at the extreme west end of the city cemetery of Great Bend. One of the most striking features of the sisters' plot is the evidence it presents of the democratic equality of the graves. There is not the slightest distinction in the appearance of the mounds; every one is surmounted by a four foot wooden cross, painted white, inscribed merely with the religious name of each Sister and the date of her death. These could tell many a tale of struggle, victory, sorrow, consolation, and serenity. Some of these tales have already been told in this history.

At the entry of the sisters' cemetery are the graves of three benefactors. In the center is the resting place of the Reverend Maurice Reidy, who requested to be buried on the sisters' plot; he had been a staunch friend of the Community while living and he desired to remain with them in death. Immediately to the rear of the plot begin the serried rows of crosses. In most Community Cemeteries special places are reserved for the burial of the Mother Prioresses; not so here. Conspicuous by its absence is
the mortal frame of a valiant woman of God—Mother Antonine Fischer, whose remains lie far across the continent, entombed in the cemetery of the Sisters of Mission San Jose, California. It was the request of Mother Seraphine to rest at the feet of Cand. Fanny Fischer, and there she was placed among the rank and file of her Sisters. A curious incident occurred in connection with this behest. At the demise of Sister Rita in 1926, the spot for burial was pointed out to the one in charge. The day before the interment Rev. Mother Seraphine, anxious to see for herself if all was in compliance with her orders at the cemetery, went to the sisters' plot and beheld the very spot she had reserved for herself, dug for Sister Rita. She smiled, for she felt that a privilege to see her own grave dug, was accorded her; but very resolutely commanded the grave to be closed and a new one at the proper place to be made.3

The chronicler felt that a sketch sketch of each deceased resting in the sisters' cemetery would not be out of place here. Many of these have made history, although they were entirely unconscious of it during their lifetime.

The convent cemetery was plotted after the death of Cand. Fanny Fischer, the first member of that little

3. Community Annals, op. cit.
Community to be called to her eternal reward, October 24, 1907. She was born in 1891, at Stuttgart, Wurttemberg, Germany; came to America with Mother Antonine in 1906 and entered the Dominican Community at Great Bend. Typhoid fever was rampant in the city the next year and thirteen sisters contracted the fever, among them Cnd. Fanny. Not being able to resist the terrible ravages of the disease, she succumbed. Her death doubtless cast terror into the hearts of her companions. Fanny's grave, the first one in the sisters' cemetery looked very lonely surrounded by a tangle of brush and weeds.

But she was not long to remain thus alone. On December 8, 1908, death summoned one of the pioneers, Sister Dalmatia Hellriegel. Born in Brooklyn, in 1866, she entered Holy Cross Convent there in 1892. In April, 1902, she accompanied Mother Antonine to the Kansas foundation, where she spent herself in promoting Community interests. After an illness of ten days, although she suffered from chronic ailments a long time, death came to her, abruptly ending her missionary career at Odin, Kansas, where she was then stationed. The deceased was of a happy and cheerful disposition, well seasoned by the ennobling works of sacrifice and suffering, with a heart open to all human appeals for sympathy, and entirely devoted to the further-

ance of religion. Solemn funeral obsequies were held at Holy Family Church at Odin. In the afternoon of December 9th, the funeral cortège wended its way to Great Bend, where the interment took place on the following day. 5

But the angel of death was not yet satisfied; again in seventeen months he knocked at the portals of St. Mary's, this time summoning Sister Pia Aumann in her 25th year and the sixth of her religious life. She had come from Bavaria, Germany, to America with Mother Antonine in 1904. At first she was employed in teaching; but additional help was mandatory at St. Rose Hospital so she was sent to St. Francis Hospital, Wichita, for a short course of nursing, after which she spent the rest of her short life to the very hour of her death caring for the sick and afflicted. Many nights spent in silent suffering finally compelled her to seek relief from the skilled surgeon's hand, May 24, 1910. A few hours after the operation a hemorrhage of the brain resulted; every possible remedy then known was applied; but soon without a word, only a last look and Sister Pia had passed to the Great Beyond. Sister's gentle manner and lovable disposition had endeared her to all who knew her or had received her kind ministrations at the hospital. Her sudden and unexpected death cast a shadow of sadness over the diminutive band of sisters. It was Mother

Seraphine's first loss and keenly she felt her untimely death in the bloom of her youth and usefulness.\(^6\)

But dear Mother Seraphine was spared such an unpleasant recurrence for the next sixteen years, 1926. Apparent perfect health made parents and Community hope for a long useful career for youthful Sister Rita Kaiser, but alas! health and youth are no guarantee of life. Born a native Kansan, she entered on her religious life when scarcely sixteen years of age. In May, 1921, she was invested with the habit of the Order. Though weak and indisposed since the spring of 1926, it was not until a few days after pronouncing her final vows that the dreadful infirmity of tuberculosis asserted itself. Fever wracked her, perspiration bathed her during the long sleepless nights, a hacking cough broke her rest, languor oppressed her and her body steadily wasted away. The final summons came December 10, 1926; the poor wasted body was clothed in the religious habit and a little crucifix placed in the left hand together with the formula of profession.

Within two years after Sister Rita's demise, the sisters laid their own dear Mother Seraphine to rest in God's Acre. This account has been related elsewhere in this work.

The death of Mother Seraphine darkened the few remaining months of Mother Blanche Bachlechner's life. She died after an illness of over two years, just three months

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\(^6\) The Great Bend Tribune, May 27, 1910.
and three days after Mother Seraphine's death, January 19, 1929. She had been the oldest member of the Community and the only surviving member of the heroic band that came to Great Bend in 1902. Her death brought to an end a long successful life; for many years she was active at the hospital; spent her youthful years in the classroom; for almost twenty-six years she held the office of Sub-prioress at the convent and finally the all important office of Mistress of Novices was entrusted to her. Her fidelity to duty won her the love and respect of all entrusted to her care. She was laid to rest next to Mother Seraphine; thus, these two that were one in earnest zeal for the welfare of the Community, sleep side by side in the little cemetery.7

The passing of Sister Amanda Brummer May 12, 1932, was most keenly felt by all. She held, besides all the many other duties placed upon her, the responsible duty of portress. It was in this sphere of occupation especially, that Sister Amanda found an outlet for her self-sacrificing hospitality and kindness. She did not spare herself when she could contribute to the happiness and comfort of any one. She had great love for the mission sisters; no step was too much, no labor too hard to make every homecoming a most pleasant and enjoyable one. The writer very poignantly recalls the incident of going home to attend the

funeral, pressing the button at the door—a new portress—the old familiar figure was lying in state within the convent walls. The last seven years of her life were spent at the convent, where she was private secretary to Mother Seraphine and later to Mother Rose. During the first years of her religious life she taught school in many parishes of the diocese; when returning to the Motherhouse she made visiting and ministering to the sick at the hospital her special duty. Up to the day, May 12, 1932, that a stroke of paralysis overtook her, she was active. The attending physician wondered at her will power which enabled her to rise from a bed of suffering to join the Sisters in the Spiritual Exercises, but the effort exhausted her; a steady decline at once set in. Medical skill and the loving care of her sisters were of no avail. Without a sign of agony in the last hour she slept peacefully in the Lord, May 12, amid the strains of the Salve Regina.8

A year later, May 6, 1933, the Community again sustained a heavy loss in the death of Sister Regina Huse, who died after a brief illness of two days. Only those who lived in close proximity to Sister knew of her chronic bodily ailments which she tried to conceal so as not to be ordered to bed and thus be inactive. She found her greatest happiness in acts of charity performed for

8. It is the custom in the Dominican Order to sing the Salve Regina every evening in procession after Compline, and it is sung also at the bedside of a dying religious.
others. The acute attack which made an immediate operation necessary resulted in her untimely death. Through her religious career of fourteen years, Sister Regina served faithfully and joyfully the needs of her Community.

The same year, five months later, October 9, 1933, occurred the death of Mother Rose which has been already related.

With the passing of Sister Dolores Panek, June 14, 1935, the Community lost another useful member. Born in Cary, Illinois, in 1888, she came to Kansas when five years of age; she entered the Dominican Convent at Great Bend September 11, 1915. Charity, which was one of her outstanding virtues, urged her to consecrate her life to the care and relief of suffering humanity. She was graduated from St. Rose's Training School of Nurses in 1920. Her entire life as a Religious was spent at St. Rose Hospital where she worked faithfully and conscientiously until five months prior to her death. Because of her pleasant disposition and the interest in her patients, she enjoyed a wide acquaintance in the state. Due to this fact the final obsequies were held in St. Rose of Lima Parish Church. Indicative of the high esteem in which Sister Dolores was held in the Community and surrounding territory was the large number of people who attended her funeral service at St. Rose Church. All were unable to get into
the church for the final rites. It was estimated that at least one hundred fifty motor cars were in the funeral procession. 9

Sister Mary Bertrand Kaiser, sister to the deceased Sister Rita, died in her twelfth year of her Religious life at St. Rose Hospital, April 10, 1936, ten years after her sister's death. Five years previous to the final summons, Sister had been in poor health, suffering from the ravaging effects of a chronic disease. For nearly three years she was confined to her bed of pain. After the solemn Requiem, interment was made in the Sisters' lot where services were conducted by the Reverend J. J. Davern.

On January 19, 1937, death knocked at the very door of the Novitiate and called one of the youngest to render an account to her Maker. Sister M. Dorothy Burkhard of Garden City, entered the Novitiate May 12, 1932. Her great desire of serving suffering humanity was satisfied by permitting her to enter St. Rose Training School to follow her special calling. At all times she lent herself readily and without complaint to whatever task was assigned her. An attack of the flu, together with a streptococcic infection lowered her vitality that when other complications set in, her physical condition was unable to fight the toxins in her system. One short but intense week of

suffering ended her youthful life. Her death cast a pall over the entire Community, because death came truly as a thief in the night to Sister Dorothy; the necessary precaution against spreading the contagion meant isolation; that demanded sacrifice on every sister's part, for all longed to minister to her. Her unobtrusiveness in life accompanied her in death, for only the sisters in isolation with her were privileged to escort the remains to its final resting place. Her simple headstone in the Cemetery should be a source of meditation for every Religious who pauses prayerfully before it.

Visitation of the cemetery to offer loving mementos for the departed sisters has been cultivated in the community as a pious practice; however, the distance to the cemetery causes many inconveniences. For the past thirty-four years the cemetery remained unaltered, although efforts were made by Mother Inviolata to obtain the sanction of the civil authorities of the city to have a private cemetery closer to the Convent grounds. Plans to that effect have not yet materialized.

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RETROSPECT

In retrospect the Sisters can look upon the progress of the Community since 1902 with a measure of satisfaction. The foundation of the Immaculate Conception Convent has been laid deep by severe trials and great sufferings. Like its parent Convent in Brooklyn, it passed through one ordeal after another. However rough the going, however discouraging the obstacles, however severe the hardships, the road they trod in patience led to success. It has now attained permanence and stability.

For the material and spiritual development of the Community credit must be given to the discerning and unselfish leadership of the Superiors. How well these Prioresses of the Immaculate Conception Convent have performed their work, the history here recorded tells.

Vain, however, would this enumeration of the advancements of the Community be, if no more could be said. But back of all, is the spiritual life, so carefully cherished, so wonderfully increased since the seed was planted on Kansas soil by Mother Antonine. This, not the material success, is what makes Immaculate Conception Convent of Great Bend truly great and wealthy. Therefore, the Superiors of the Community merit the praise, love, and gratitude freely given them by their devoted Sisters.
In the effort to value the contributions to the Community's welfare, one may stress too much the deeds of those in authority and forget the sacrifices of the rank and file. The verdict of time is that the Community has reared many obscure and humble members who have been and are a credit to the Dominican Order. The Community can proudly look over the glossary of its roster and exclaim, "by their fruits you shall know them."
APPENDIX
COMMUNITIES OF DOMINICAN SISTERS IN THE UNITED STATES ORIGINATING IN RATISBON IN 1233 A.D.

Holy Cross Convent, Ratisbon, Germany 1233 A.D.

- Congregation of the Holy Cross, Brooklyn, New York 1853 (1,014 Members)
- Congregation of Saint Catherine of Sienna, Racine, Wisconsin, 1862 (511 Members)

- Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)
- Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)
- Third Order of St. Dominic, Great Bend, Kansas, 1902 (149 Members)

- Congregation of the Queen of the Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)
- Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)
- Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)

- Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Caldwell, N.J. 1890 (388 Members)
- Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Caldwell, N.J. 1890 (388 Members)

- Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)
- Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)
- Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, Calif. 1888 (454 Members)

- Congregation of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1916 (193 Members)

- Congregation of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Tacoma, Wash. 1888 (132 Members)
- Congregation of The Immaculate Heart of Mary, Akron, Ohio 1929 (129 Members)

(Twelve Communities of Dominican Sisters in the United States can trace their origin to Ratisbon to the year 1233. In these twelve Communities, according to the Catholic Directory of 1936 to 1937, there are 5,257 members. Of these, 4,746 trace their origin to Ratisbon through Brooklyn.)

Thus the two choir nuns who came to America in 1853 each became a foundress of a flourishing congregation, and the first two convents established at Williamsburgh and Second Street, New York, both for a time became Motherhouses.

Today twelve independent congregations in America trace their origin directly or indirectly to Holy Cross Convent, Ratisbon, and incidentally to its prioress, Mother Benedicta Bauer. The origins and relationships of these various congregations make a very interesting study. The foundation at Williamsburgh whose history has just been narrated is now officially known by the title, The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Dominic of the American Congregation of the Holy Cross in the Diocese of Brooklyn. The Motherhouse is in Brooklyn in the original location formerly known as Williamsburgh, and the Novitiate is in Amityville, New York. The following congregations have branched off from this first foundation: (1) The Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Mt. St. Mary-on-the-Hudson, was established as a branch house on September 22, 1859, at Second Street, New York, and became independent in 1869. (2) The Congregation of the Queen of the Holy Rosary, Mission San Jose, California, was established as a branch house at St. Boniface School, San Francisco, California, on November 11, 1876, and it became independent in 1886. (3) The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Immaculate Conception Convent, Great Bend, Kansas, branched off from Holy
Cross Convent, Brooklyn, in 1902, and became independent in April of the same year.

A large number of congregations trace their origin to the second foundation at Second Street, New York, whose Motherhouse and Novitiate were transferred to Newburgh, New York, in 1896: (1) The Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Caldwell, New Jersey, was founded in Jersey City in 1872 and separated from the Motherhouse in New York in 1881. (2) The Convent of the Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York, was founded in 1876 and became independent in 1890. (3) The Congregation of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Grand Rapids, established in Michigan in 1877, became independent in 1894. (4) The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Dominic of the Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, Adrian Michigan, was established in that place in 1892, and became an independent congregation in 1923. (5) The Congregation of the Holy Cross with its Motherhouse at Everett, Washington, on August 30, 1890. It was first established as the Province of St. Rose with its Motherhouse in New York, but became an independent congregation in 1923.

Two congregations owe their origin to the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Caldwell, New Jersey. The first is the Congregation of

2. Sisters of St. Dominic, Archives, op. cit.
of St. Thomas Aquinas, Tacoma, Washington, which was established in Pomeroy, Washington, on October 24, 1888. It became independent of the Motherhouse in Jersey City in the same year, but the canonical establishment of the independent Motherhouse at Pomeroy was not made until 1890. In 1893 the Motherhouse was transferred to Tacoma. The Sisters of St. Dominic of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Akron, Ohio, became independent of the Motherhouse in Caldwell, New Jersey, in 1929.

The Congregation of St. Catherine of Sienna, Racine, Wisconsin, established in 1862, traces its origin directly to Ratisbon, and was founded by Mother Benedicta Bauer, the former prioress of Holy Cross Convent, Ratisbon, who came to America in 1858.

APPENDIX, No. II

(1) Those who came from Germany in 1906 later were known as:

Sister M. Thomas
Sister M. Hyacinth
Sister M. Petrina
Sister M. Raymond
Sister M. Augustine
Sister M. Ludovica

Sister M. Rosaria
Sister M. Johanna
Sister M. Florentine
Sister M. Annunciata
Sister M. Jordana
Cand. Fanny Fischer

(2) The Eighteen Loyal Members:

Mother M. Seraphine
Mother M. Blanche
Mother M. Loretta
Mother M. Bona
Mother M. Rose
Sister M. Agnes
Sister M. Pia
Sister M. Amanda
Sister M. Vincent

Sister M. Imelda
Sister M. Thomas
Sister M. Raymond
Sister M. Augustine
Sister M. Rosaria
Sister M. Johanna
Sister M. Clara
Sister M. Annunciata
Sister M. Emalia

(3) Those who returned to Brooklyn, Holy Cross Convent:

Sister M. Antonine Gerbold
Sister M. Cunegund Trojan
Sister M. Geraldine Muller

(4) Those who accompanied Mother Antonine:

Sister Petrina
Sister Catherine
Cand. Katie Meier (Sister Corona)

(5) Some returned to their homes, especially Candidates and young professed Sisters.
## APPENDIX, No. III

Schools Conducted by the Dominican Sisters, Immaculate Conception Convent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Type of building</th>
<th>Teachers employed</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Ellinwood</td>
<td>St. Joseph</td>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discontinued in 1911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Hutchinson</td>
<td>St. Theresa</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discontinued in 1911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Odin</td>
<td>Holy Family</td>
<td>Native stone</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>Dist. &amp; Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Ellinwood</td>
<td>St. Peter &amp; P.</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discontinued in 1911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Liebenthal</td>
<td>St. Joseph</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discontinued in 1911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Windhorst</td>
<td>St. Mary</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discontinued in 1911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>St. Catherine</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Dist. &amp; Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>St. Leo</td>
<td>St. Leo</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>Dist. &amp; Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Ellinwood</td>
<td>St. Peter &amp; P.</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Dist. &amp; Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>St. Boniface</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Garden City</td>
<td>St. Peter</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>Dist. &amp; Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Beaver</td>
<td>St. Joseph</td>
<td>Brick</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Fowler</td>
<td>St. Anthony</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Schulte</td>
<td>St. Peter</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Clonmel</td>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>Brick</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Seward</td>
<td>St. Francis</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>St. Anthony</td>
<td>Brick</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Plain Great</td>
<td>St. Rose</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Larned</td>
<td>Sacred Heart</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>St. Mary</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Garden City</td>
<td>St. Mary</td>
<td>Modern, brick</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX, No. IV. Map showing the location of the elementary schools in charge of the Dominican Sisters.
APPENDIX, No. IV

LETTER OF AFFILIATION

Father Ludovicus Theissling,
Professor of Sacred Theology, Master General and Humble Servant of the entire Order of Friars Preachers.

To our beloved in Christ, the Prioress General and each and all of the Sisters of the Third Order of the Congregation of the Immaculate Conception, whose motherhouse is in Great Bend, Kansas, United States of North America.

HEALTH AND THE PARTICIPATION OF SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

The holy Patriarch, St. Dominic, glorious Defender of the Faith and soldier of Christ, in order more completely and successfully to extirpate heresy, and to vanquish the enemy of souls with the arms of faith, zeal, mortification, and charity, instituted not only the Order of Friars Preachers and enclosed convents for pious contemplative women, but also founded the Third Order, commonly called the Warfare of Christ or of Penance. This institute, approved by so many Sovereign Pontiffs, and endowed and enriched with favors, privileges, and countless Indulgences, has produced a large number of faithful servants of Christ, of both sexes, distinguished for holiness of life, among whom shine forth particularly the glorious Virgin Catherine of Sienna, Chosen Spouse of Jesus Christ, and also that first flower of sanctity of South America, Rose of Lima.

Whereas, moved by these considerations, you, beloved daughters, who are engaged in the education and instruction of children, and in the care of the sick in Great Bend and in other places, and there live together in Congregation, have earnestly sought from Us, that being enrolled in the aforesaid Order, you may be empowered to enjoy the Indulgences and privileges granted to the same;

We acceding to your wishes and pious entreaties, in virtue of the Apostolic authority entrusted to us and by these Presents do receive and admit into our Third Order of the Warfare of Jesus Christ or of Penance, each and all of the Sisters or pious women of this your Congregation, whether already professed or hereafter to be professed according to the Rule of the Third Order and the Constitutions approved for the Institute, under a legitimate Superior or some Priest delegated by the Ordinary, whom for this purpose now and henceforth we specially and expressly
delegate; and we do enroll them therein, so that they may participate not only in all the spiritual benefits of the Order in general, but in particular in all the privileges, favors, and Indulgences, which other Sisters of the Third Order, living in Community, rightfully enjoy and possess, both in life and after death.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Given at Rome from our house near the International Angelic College, this sixth day of January, in the year of our Lord, 1924.

FATHER LUDOVICUS THEISSLING, Master general of the Order. Gen. Reg. p. 386

FATHER ANGELICUS FERETTI, Secretary

This excerpt from Mother Bona's letter February 1, 1924, to Bishop Schwertner, gives proof of her happiness in having gained another victory for her community:

...I am very happy to announce to Your Lordship the receipt of the Diploma of Affiliation with Rome, accompanied by a letter from Rev. Louis Nolan, O.F. Secretary, in which he mentioned that His Paternity, the Master General Ludovicus Theissling sends his special blessing to the infant Congregation....

APPENDIX, No. VI

Canonical Erection

Mother Antonine upon her arrival must have made preparation to consult with either Bishop Hennessy of Wichita or the Reverend J. H. Tihen, Chancellor. Just what transpired on that visit no one knows. They must have encouraged her in her undertaking, otherwise she would have acted to the contrary and abandoned the project. As was Bishop Hennessy's policy, he committed nothing concerning the problem to writing, feeling assured that their faculties from Bishop McDonnell were ample enough to cope with the situation.

There are no documents at hand to sustain the above conclusion but there is the incontrovertible fact of the canonical erection of the Immaculate Conception Convent by the Modo Proprio Del Providentia of 1906. This decree recognizes the canonical erection of an institution without a written instrument by reason of the official act performed by the ordinary of the Diocese as canonical visitation, reception of members into the order, receiving their vows, etc. After the promulgation of the new Code of Canon Law in 1918, queries were sent to Rome from various

institutions in the United States to settle such doubtful questions. The Sacred Congregation of Religion in a decree dated November, 1922, ordered the Bishops to recognize all communities in good standing which had not hitherto been erected by a formal episcopal decree.
APPENDIX, No. VII

Mother Generals of the Immaculate Conception Convent,
Great Bend, Kansas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Mother Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902 - 1910</td>
<td>Mother M. Antonine</td>
<td>(Foundress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910 - 1922</td>
<td>Mother M. Seraphine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922 - 1925</td>
<td>Mother M. Bona</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925 - 1928</td>
<td>Mother M. Seraphine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928 - 1931</td>
<td>Mother M. Seraphine</td>
<td>(Mother Rose finished the term from October, 1928, to 1931 because of Mother Seraphine's death)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931 - 1934</td>
<td>Mother M. Rose</td>
<td>(Mother died in 1933, so the term was again finished by the Sub-prioress, Mother Bona)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934 - 1937</td>
<td>Mother M. Inviolata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937 - 1940</td>
<td>Mother M. Inviolata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 -</td>
<td>Mother M. Aloysia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Pamphlets


Deals with the oldest convent of Benedictine Nuns in the United States.


Used in tracing the origins and early history of the Benedictine Sisters in Europe to the Brooklyn foundation.


Gives details of spirit of the early Benedictines.


Short Treatise.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Pamphlets


Deals with the oldest Convent of Dominican Sisters in the United States.


Used in tracing the origin and early history of the Dominican Sisters in Europe to the Brooklyn foundation.

Drane, Mother Frances Raphael, O.P.  The spirit of the Dominican Order.  2nd ed.  Chicago, Benziger Brothers, 1910.  276 p.

Gives details of spirit of the early Dominicans.


Short treatise.

This rule was first observed also in the community of the Immaculate Conception Convent.


Present rule observed in Immaculate Conception Convent.


A course of addresses presenting the ideals and aims of the order.


Very valuable reference; since it is the history of our Motherhouse.

Used for factual information regarding diocese.


Good.


Very extensive history of inquisition.


Valuable source material.

Kansas.  Kansas laws, statutes, etc. Revised statutes of Kansas ... Topeka, The Kansas State Printing Plant, 1935.

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Cambridge, At the university press, 1927. II, 137-152.
Cambridge studies in Medieval life and thought edited by G. G. Coulton.

Wichita Diocesan Chancery. Annual school reports of the diocese of Wichita. Wichita, Diocesan school office. 1928-1938.
Contains information of the vacation school movement.

Very valuable source material.

Valuable--written from source collections.

Used in chapter dealing with the educational projects of the Community.

Used to get facts in case of "Barton County Commissioners vs. Nuns of Third Order of Saint Dominic.


This rule served as a model for the revised edition used at the Immaculate Conception Convent.


Good source.


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Topeka, Kansas State Printing Plant, 1937. 45 p.

Same as preceding reference.


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Contains canons dealing with religious congregations of women.


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It is a daily reflection on their lives.

Sisters of St. Dominic. St. Rose Hospital Yearbook of 1910.

Booklet issued in connection with enlargement of the old hospital.


Valuable for history of Central Normal College.


Booklet published in connection with the Academy in 1903.


A short review.

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Fair.
Factual material.

Source material.

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The official paper for the Diocese of Wichita.

Very helpful.

Found the Tribune most helpful.

Has many fine articles on Dominican life.

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Superintendent of St. Rose Training School for Nurses.

Sister M. Reginald, Questionnaire, Garden City, July 5, 1939.

Superintendent of St. Catherine’s Hospital.

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Heimann, Rev. August J. Great Bend, Kansas, August 22, 1938.

Was chaplain during the hardest times of the community.
Morrell, Monsignor. Wichita, Kansas, June 25, 1939.

Present chancellor of the Wichita Diocese.

Mother Inviolata. Great Bend, Kansas, June, 1939-June, 1940.

Very helpful.

Mother Bona. Great Bend, Kansas, Several Interviews in 1938-1939.

Gave very valuable information. One of the pioneers in the community.

Mother Loretta. Great Bend, Kansas, June 17, 1939.

Started the first hospital in Great Bend.

Sister Agnes. Great Bend, Kansas, June 18, 1939.

One of the first American postulants to enter the community.

Sister Annunciata. Great Bend, Kansas, Several Interviews in 1938-1940.

An eye witness and participant. A real source of information especially regarding the transition period.

Sister Dominica. Great Bend, Kansas, June 18, 1939.

Gives interesting accounts of reopening convent.
Well informed on hospitalization.

Titen, Bishop J. Henry.  Wichita, Kansas, June 25, 1939.  
Handled much of the correspondence that brought the Sisters here in 1902.

Weikmann, Rev. Albert M.  Wichita, Kansas, June 24, 1939.  
One of the pioneer priests who helped the community.

Sister Augustine.  Great Bend, Kansas, August, 1939-1940.  
An intimate friend of Mother Antonine.

Sister Maurice.  Great Bend, Kansas, May 23, 1939.  
Hospital librarian.

Manuscripts, records and files

Valuable.

Hospital statistics.
Barton County Commissioners. Tax receipt records. Great Bend, 1907-1925. vol. G, 1907-1925
p. 436 and p. 459.
(Tax statistics) Tax records supplied by County Clerk of Barton County.


Used for verification.

Hospital statistics.

Hospital statistics.


Could not have written an accurate account of the years 1902-1910 without this source.


Valuable.

Sister M. Petrina. Correspondence. (personal)

August, 1939.

Secured valuable information. One of the Sisters who stayed with Mother Antonine to the end.

Crawford, Eugene J. Correspondence. (personal)

August, 1939.

Secured permission to use material from his work, "Daughters of Dominic on Long Island."

Mother Mary Louis. Archives of St. Catherine Convent, Kentucky. June, 1940.

Report gave valuable information of the Sisters' stay in Kentucky.


Source material. Very valuable.