

MOUNT de CHANTAL

CENTENARY

1848-1948

Cum permissione superiorum

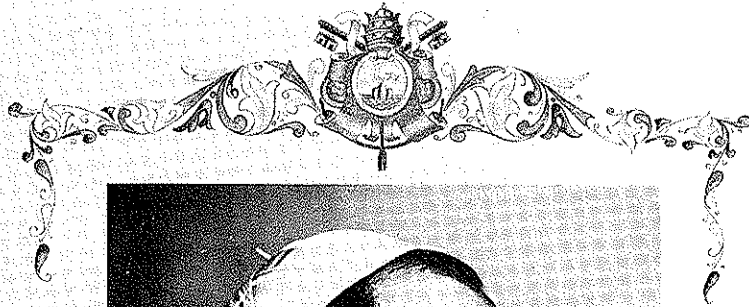
Centenary
OF THE
Convent of the Visitation



MOUNT DE CHANTAL

Wheeling, West Virginia

1848-1948



Most Holy Father



The Mother Superior and the Sisters of the ~~Order~~
 Visitation, humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness,
 beg the Apostolic Benediction for their Community,
 Students, Alumnae, Benefactors and Friends, on the
 occasion of the Centenary of the foundation of their
 Monastery and Academy at Mount de Ghantal,
 Wheeling, West Virginia, April 4, 1948.

*Humiliter supplicamus ut vestra beatorum
 Petri et Pauli apostolorum intercessionibus ad nos perveniat*

1948



This painting of The Visitation was presented to Mount de Chantal by our revered Founder, Most Rev. R. V. Whelan, D.D.

*My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

*For He Who is mighty hath done great things to me;
And holy is His name.*



DEDICATION

To their beloved Father in Christ
His Excellency, Most Rev. John J. Swint, D.D.

To their esteemed Friends among the Clergy and Religious

To the devoted Members of the Alumnae Association

To their loyal Students and their worthy Parents

To their kind Friends and generous Benefactors

To their saintly Founder, Most Rev. Richard Vincent Whelan
and the valiant little Community of 1848,
which, by its courage and perseverance,
made possible the "Mount" of today

This Souvenir of their Centennial Year
is gratefully dedicated by
The Sisters of the Visitation
Mount de Chantal, Wheeling, West Virginia

APRIL 4

1948



MOST REV. JOHN J. SWINT, D.D.



Bishop's Residence
WHEELING, W. VA.

To the Reverend Sisters and Venerable Alumnae
Mount de Chantal Academy

A hundred years in the life of an individual is a rare thing indeed; but in an Institution or Community, especially a Religious Community, it is only a beginning. Yet within that hundred years what changes have taken place in the Community and in the world! How many Religious have lived, and worked, and sanctified themselves and gone to their eternal reward in your House during that time! And how many girls, inspired by your spirit and formed by your training, have passed through your hands to good, intelligent and useful womanhood! You can now look back upon a century of accomplishment with much satisfaction and justified pride. But, best of all, through the passage of time and the changes all round about you, you have kept the Visitandine spirit. Go on, and on, and on with your work; and may God, who has blessed you so abundantly during these hundred years, continue to guide and protect you under the patronage of our Blessed Mother and of St. Francis, your founder and patron, to the achievement of still greater things for numerous individual souls and for God and country, in the years that lie before you.

Devotedly in Christ,

+ *John J. Swint*
Bishop of Wheeling.



Saint Francis de Sales giving the Book of Constitutions to Saint Jane Frances de Chantal and the first Sisters of the Visitation, in Annecy, France, more than three centuries ago.

A CENTURY OF GROWTH

"Rich with the heritage of Time"

ON April 4, 1948, Mount de Chantal reached the hundredth anniversary of its foundation as a Visitation Monastery and Academy. The pioneer Sisters came to Wheeling from Baltimore, which community had been established a few years previously by the first Visitation monastery in the United States, the convent of Georgetown, D. C. Though uniquely American in its origin, Georgetown soon became affiliated with the first Visitation house in the world, that of Annecy in France, which is still regarded as the final authority on any question of rule or custom that may arise.

PLANTING THE TREE IN FRANCE

The Visitation Order was founded over three hundred years ago, in 1610, by Saint Francis de Sales, the Bishop of Geneva, to provide the advantages of religious life to the widow, the elderly, the infirm, or to those not attracted to the great austerity that was characteristic of the Orders of the period. He planned to establish a community of pious women living together in mutual charity without solemn vows or enclosure and striving for sanctity by meekness, humility, and simplicity. His companion in this worthy enterprise was Saint Jane Frances Fremyot de Chantal, a young widow, who desired to consecrate her life to God. After disposing of her large estates and arranging for the proper education and training of her children, the Baroness de Chantal retired, on June 6, 1610, with three other valiant women of like aspirations, to the first Visitation convent (called the Gallery House) at Annecy, France. There, under the guidance and direction of Saint Francis de Sales, she became the foundress of the Order.

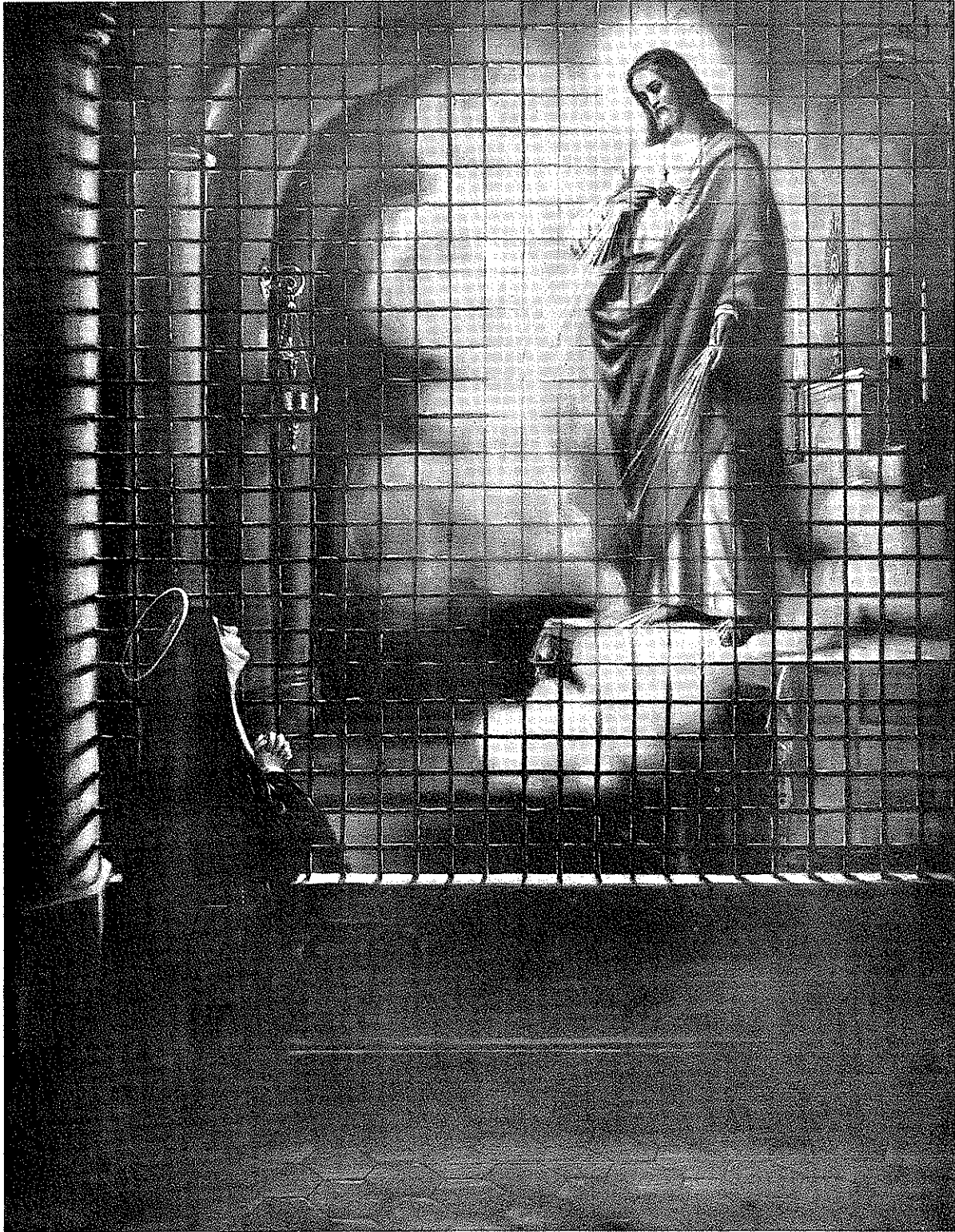
Originally they had planned to unite the contemplative with the active life by having the Sisters visit the poor and sick people of the city, and, for this reason, Saint Francis de Sales placed his little flock under the patronage of Our Lady of the Visitation, though the nuns were commonly called "The Daughters of Holy Mary." The sight of Sisters leaving their convent to enter the hovels of the poor aroused opposition in a France still under the influence of mediæval ideas about propriety of conduct for women, so, condescending to the opinion of the Archbishop of Lyons, Saint Francis de Sales consented that his little congregation be raised to the rank of a religious order,

which of necessity in those days, involved solemn vows and strict enclosure with the consequent abandonment of the project of visiting the poor. Thus the plan of the two founders was modified by force of circumstances, and resulted in the establishment of a cloistered, contemplative Order. After the Papal Bull approving the Order was issued in 1626, Visitation monasteries spread throughout the world. Each convent is independent and is under the immediate and direct supervision of the bishop of the diocese. Circular letters sent out yearly, however, keep the Sisters acquainted with the events of each convent.

Neither one of the founders planned to form a teaching order such as those established during the past century. The Rules, Customs, and daily routine of life as given to the Order by Saint Francis de Sales, contain no mention of education or provisions for maintaining a school, but are directed, on the contrary, towards the contemplative life. He wrote that the chief purpose of the Visitation Order is that the Sisters "let their whole life and all their actions tend to unite them with God, to assist by prayer and good example Holy Church and the salvation of their neighbor, and for this end, they must desire nothing so much as to be so virtuous that their good odor in pleasing God may be diffused in the hearts of the faithful."

The social and economic conditions of aristocratic 17th century France, however, were responsible for the fact that, shortly after the foundation of the Order, the Visitation convents opened their cloisters to conduct boarding schools for a limited number of girls, all daughters of the nobility, destined for either religious life or society. In fact, little Françoise de Chantal, who had accompanied her mother to Annecy, may be called the first pupil of the Visitation. Within twenty-five years after the opening of that first house, the annals of the period record that those schools were numerous, and the children often welcomed Mother de Chantal on her visitation of the foundations with songs and recitations. Thus a precedent was set for the establishment of schools from the very time of the foundress herself.

These academies, nevertheless, were small and occupied the attention of but a few members of the community, and regular monastic life went on undisturbed. The only words that the foundress wrote on education or teaching were, "They (the scholars) shall be tenderly instructed and formed in spirituality according to their little capacity by a very gentle and prudent Sister." Thus the simplicity and mildness characteristic of the Order became, by the foundress' precept, the characteristic of the Visitation-bred girl. Madame de Sévigné, granddaughter of Saint Jane de Chantal, is an outstanding example



Revelations of the Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary.

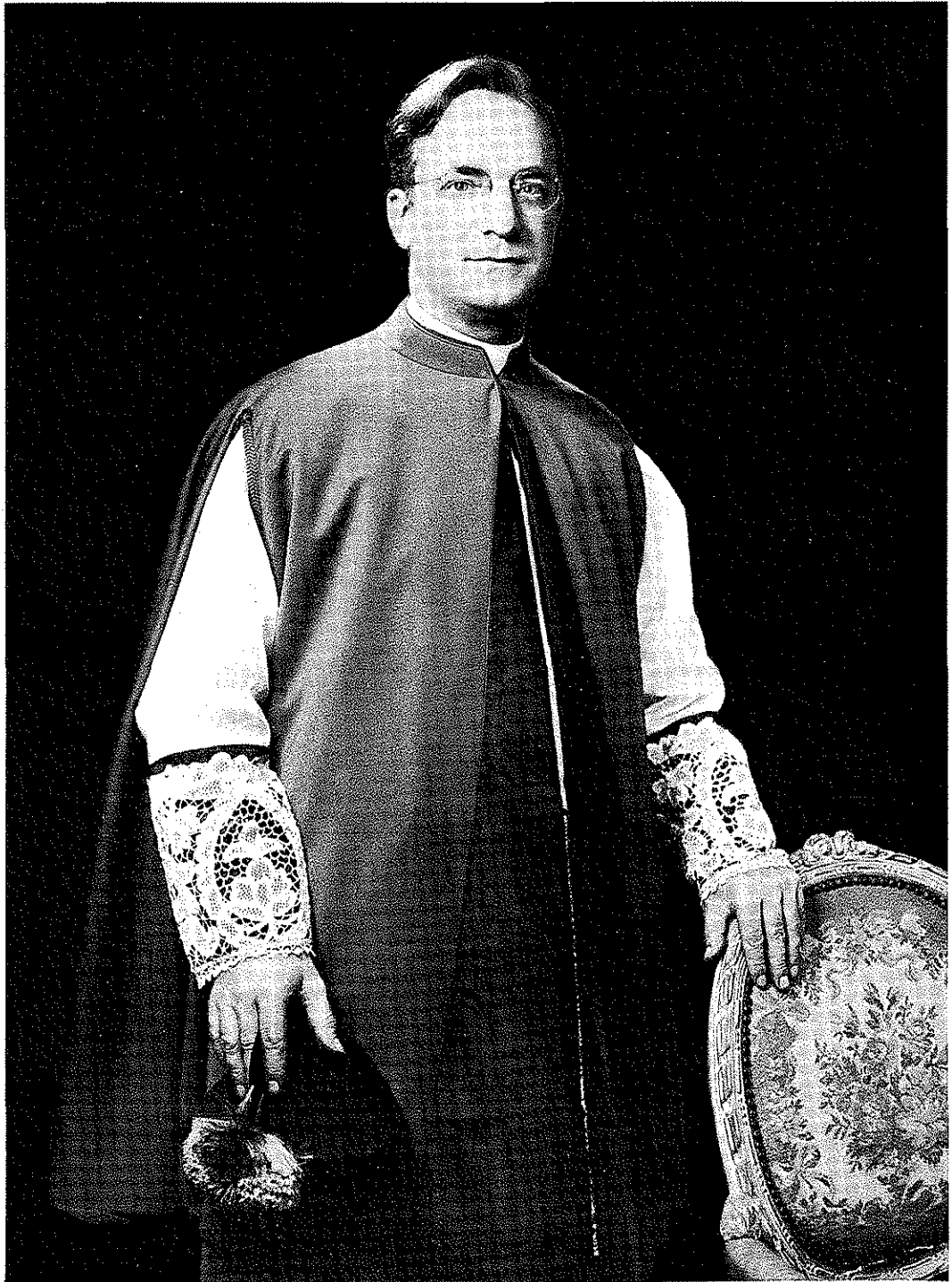


Most Rev. Richard V. Whelan taught religion in 1848

first few years, the Sisters used these parlors as their Chapel until the Cathedral was completed. One of these rooms constituted the Sanctuary and the Sisters' Choir, while the other served as the nave of their "basilica." The Sisters ranged their chairs in a semi-circle around the altar just within the large folding doors separating the parlors, while in the nave proper, the pupils had their places in straight rows. To the right of the center hall, another small one at right angles bisected the space, the front room being the parlor and the other the Directress' office. Upstairs the dormitory extended over the length of the Chapel, and a classroom and the art studio, over the rooms on the right. The space above the large hall was used as a playroom, and occasionally, as a classroom. In the basement, additional classrooms, the refectory, kitchen, store room and laundry took up every available space, while the Monastery occupied the wing. They paid for the house by educating Mr. Moore's daughters, and a large cash donation coming at this time from Mrs. Zane was a very welcome gift.

VISITATION ACADEMY OF WHEELING OPENS

Only five days after their arrival on April 4, 1848, at the behest of Bishop Whelan, they opened their Academy. Since Catholics were few and far between in the city which was predominately Protestant, the advent of "nuns" caused a sensation difficult to appreciate today when Sisters of various orders are a familiar sight. Before their arrival advertisements announcing the opening of the school had been offered to and frequently declined by the newspapers. Many parents, however, more interested in the welfare of their daughters than in un-American bigotry, applied for admission for their children, so the Sisters opened their doors to a school of thirty pupils. Within a month this number had grown to forty-nine, and in a year the enrollment totaled ninety-six. Most of these girls were day students, (there were only sixteen boarders at first) and a large number were pupils in the "Benevolent School." For sixteen years, at the express wish of Bishop Whelan, the Sisters taught the first parochial school in the diocese. Housed in the basement of the Cathedral, the school was entrusted to Sister Eleanora Walsh, and the Sisters employed in the Academy eagerly sought the privilege of helping out when their time permitted. Each week, the Bishop himself taught the catechism, which class the Catholic pupils of the Academy likewise attended. Later, the Sisters of Saint Joseph, who had come to Wheeling to found a hospital, took over the parish school which they still conduct.



Rt. Rev. Msgr. Edmund J. Yahn teaches religion in 1948

Neither the students nor the Sisters of those early days led lives of luxury. In fact, they had to endure real hardships, though, of course, the standard of living of that period was very different from ours. The annals tell us that the children's dessert was often bread and molasses; that there was no milk except for tea and coffee; and that the afternoon lunch consisted of dry bread. The Sisters were poor and lacked many of the conventual and educational comforts of long-established institutions. Oil for lamps and coal in buckets were carried to classrooms, but the dormitories were unheated. Every evening water was carried up many flights of stairs so that the girls might each receive a dipperful for both wash-basin and tooth-mug. Reared as people are today, it seems scarcely credible that gentlewomen, as were those pioneers, could ever survive the rigors of winter cold, an unheated house, no running water — the absolute lack of the comforts that, to our generation, are necessities. While the privations and hardships of those early days were many and various, the only one that evoked a real complaint was that of their being deprived of living beneath the same roof with the Blessed Sacrament. The little chapel was not permitted to remain in use, and for years the Sisters were obliged to cross their enclosed yard for Mass, Office, and other Community prayers to a little side-choir built for this purpose in the Cathedral.

THE TREE TAKES ROOT

From the very beginning, the foundation Sisters courageously set about the task of raising their Academy to the standards of their own Alma Maters — Baltimore and Georgetown Visitation Academies. The prospectus, published in the Wheeling newspaper of March 27, 1848, a few days before their arrival, gives a general idea of the regulations of the school, the course of studies, and itemizes the expenses per semester.

PROSPECTUS

Of the Order of the Ladies of the Visitation

B. V. M.

The school for young ladies is to be opened at the urgent request of esteemed friends, who appreciate justly the importance of permanency and system in the instructors of youth. The method of education and general regulations will be the same as those of well-known Academies of the Visitation at Georgetown and Baltimore from which the Sisters issue forth in the hope of extending their usefulness. The terms are so reduced as to accord with the customs of the place, while the course of instruction will embrace all the usual requisites and accomplishments of female education as taught in the best schools.

TERMS

Board, Lodging, light and fuel, per semi-annual session	\$50.00
(Allowance will be made for those who furnish own bedding)	
Washing per semi-annual session	5.00
Half-boarders semi-annual session	20.00
Tuition in Senior Classes	14.00
Tuition in Junior Classes	12.00
Tuition in Elementary Classes	8.00
Ink, quills and paper	2.00
<i>Extra</i> Tuition in French and Spanish, per quarter	5.00
Drawing and Painting	5.00
Music on the Piano	10.00
Use of instrument	2.00
Music on Harp and its use	16.00
Music on Guitar and its use	10.00
Embroidery and fancy work	2.00
Vocal music	5.00

Dancing at Master's charge

Boarders will pay semi-annually

Day boarders will pay quarterly

Should a pupil be withdrawn before the expiration of a quarter no deduction will be made.

In the course of the year two examinations will take place: the first in December, followed by a few days Vacation at Christmas; the second in June followed by the distribution of premiums.

School will recommence the first of August.

All letters will be examined.

Boarders will be allowed to visit parents only once a month.

School will open on the tenth of April.

Although no record remains of the exact course of studies which was offered for the munificent tuition of \$14.00, a prize list from 1857 reveals that in addition to English, ancient and modern history and geography, Christian Doctrine, etc. which would normally be expected in a high school of those days, the curriculum also offered a variety of subjects ranging from chemistry, astronomy, botany, moral philosophy, French and Latin, to painting, embroidery, and domestic economy. Gold medals for the completion of the required course of studies were awarded from at least 1856 on. By 1865, Italian and German were added to the language department, while geometry and algebra were included in that of mathematics. Training in instrumental and vocal music, however, has characterized the Academy from those first days down to the present time. The prospectus of 1848 indicates that these cultured and educated pioneer teachers were prepared to offer lessons on piano, harp, and, amusing as it may seem in our day, the guitar. With the arrival of Miss Louise Gubert of Philadelphia in 1856, the music department was destined to receive the spark of genius that would make the school rank for many years with fine conservatories both here and abroad. Widely known in the East as a vocalist and musician, she declined every enticement to seek renown, in order to give herself and her glorious voice to God. She was known in religion as Sister Mary Agnes, and, in her, God bestowed upon the Wheeling community a rare and priceless soul, as well as a valuable teacher.

In April, 1852, the Academy was placed on a firm basis by incorporating it according to the laws of Virginia under the title of "The Wheeling Female Academy." The enrollment continued to increase and many parents, especially from Southern states, placed their girls in the Academy as resident students. The faculty had also been augmented by a number of accomplished teachers who came from Georgetown and Baltimore.

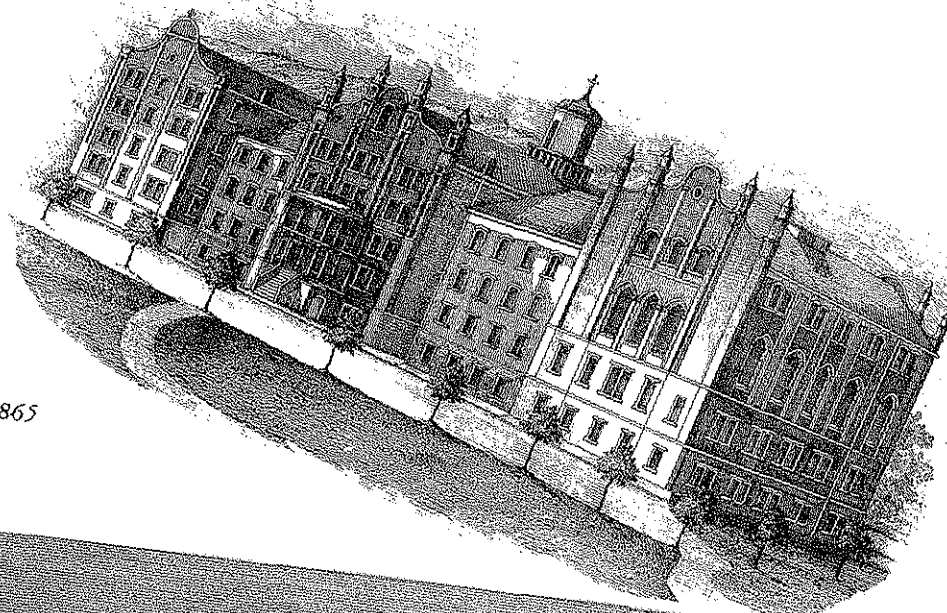
To meet the need for more space, two stories were added to "The Old Mansion" and an addition erected in what had been the yard. This provided for classrooms, music-practice rooms, two dormitories, and a pink-frescoed music salon for the Saturday night musicales or "soirée musicales" as they were called. A Wheeling resident of that period wittily commented on the general appearance of the Academy after the construction of those improvements: "Bishop Whelan, in conformity with his own canons of architecture, made additions horizontal and vertical, to the old aristocratic mansion and then joined to it an entirely new building, making of the whole one of the most remarkable groups of architectural creations to be found anywhere in the state."

Despite the fact that general unrest pervaded the nation because of the slavery question; that members of the Know-Nothing group had threatened to burn the convent and Cathedral to the ground; and that Virginia had been divided and the state of West Virginia admitted into the Union in June 1863, the enrollment in the Academy continued to grow larger. It was thought wise, therefore, to seek a new and permanent location for the Visitation Monastery and Academy.

TRANSPLANTING TO MOUNT DE CHANTAL

On the way to Wheeling, the foundation Sisters had passed an extensive tract of land called the Steenrod Farm, a portion of which answered all their requirements — convenience of access, an elevated position, and magnificent environment. The beautiful wooded slopes, the winding valley of the little stream, the natural spring of water near which there is now a reproduction of the famed grotto of Lourdes, the ring of hills which form a perfect enclosure seemed to have prepared from time immemorial an ideal setting for a convent and school. Bishop Whelan purchased this section of the Steenrod property and engaged an architect to draw up building plans. He did so, but as soon as he was entrusted with the necessary funds to begin building, the architect absconded with both plans and money. It fell to Bishop Whelan to provide a substitute, and once again he himself took charge of erecting a home for his beloved Visitandines. He not only completed the plans for what is today Mount de Chantal, but also supervised the actual building operations. Traditions tell us that the bricks made on our own grounds were set in place, many and many a one, by the Bishop himself. At length in July 1865, the Sisters left their Eoff Street foundation, and moved two miles from the bustling city to the peaceful solitude of Mount de Chantal. The building, however, especially the Monastery, was still incomplete, so that the Sisters were obliged to live in the Academy for a few months. There was not even a front door — the entrance was boarded over and all exits and entrances were made through the playroom doors — the Chapel stood as a bare, unfinished, unroofed wing, but it was home, and the Sisters settled down to arrange for beautifying and equipping their Academy for a boarding school.

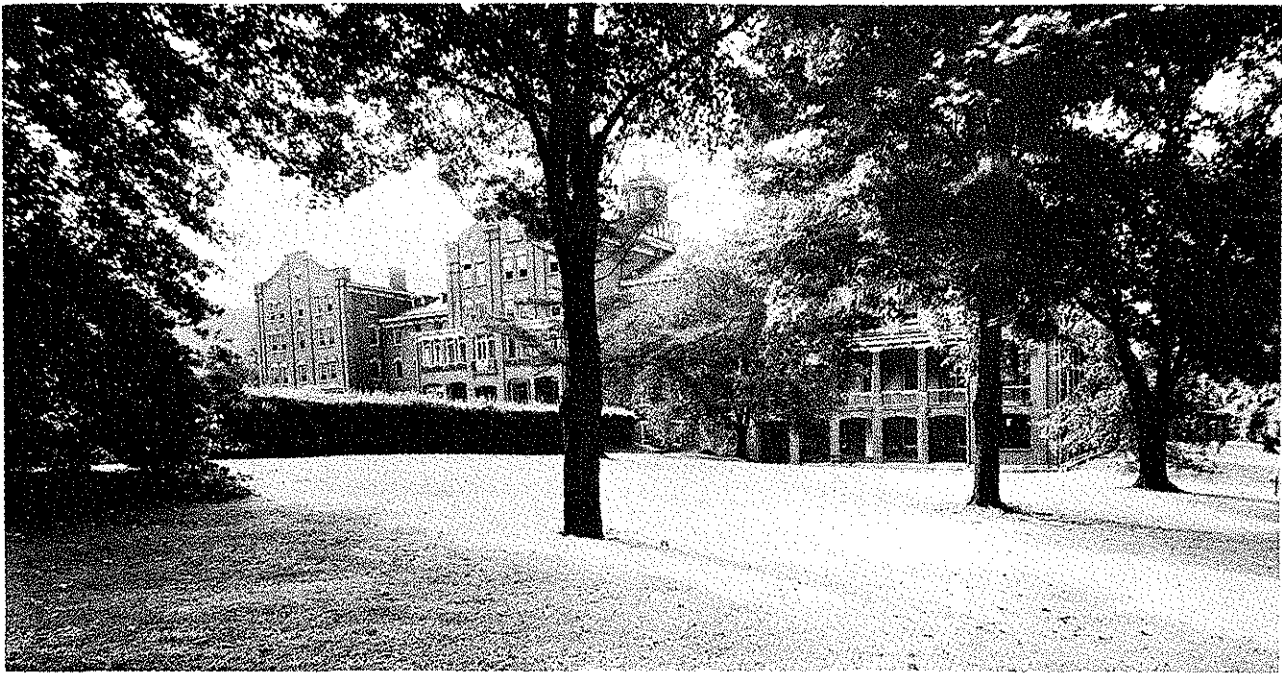
In the course of the next few years the building was not only completed, but much of the imperfect material, used because of war conditions, was replaced, and necessary furnishings provided. Part of the original farm land has always been kept under



1865



1880



1948

cultivation; orchards and vineyards were planted; and from a very early period, a greenhouse was maintained to provide flowers for the Chapel in winter months. Land, originally cow pastures and potato fields, was transformed into level lawns and glowing flower beds. High rail fences gave way to green hedges, a statue of the Sacred Heart was placed on a slight elevation in front of the building, and where there had been but one solitary tree, there were soon many varieties of ornamental trees and shrubs. "The bare, unfinished red brick building without trees or vines, — approached by an ungraded road, guarded by a rough board fence, with the ground cut up with gullies, and strewn with lumber, bricks and sand" was gradually transformed and mellowed with time and labor.

SOUTHERN FUND

Before the Sisters could do any more than move in and get the building completed, however, they were caught in the aftermath of the Civil War. This catastrophe had brought extreme financial misery, even destitution, to the aristocratic families of the South. The boarders who flocked to the school, especially those from the South, were so poor that they could scarcely pay any tuition at all. The Mount was no longer easily accessible to Wheeling students, though the Sisters purchased an ambulance used in the war, and that vehicle brought a group of girls, undaunted by its past history, back and forth each day. As a result of these circumstances, the first few years in the new site were difficult ones financially, for the Sisters were confronted with a twofold problem — their inability to provide a free education to daughters of former Southern patrons who asked the favor, and their struggle to meet the just demands of creditors. On the one hand, it seemed unkind to turn down old friends and gifted students because circumstances made it impossible for them to pay tuition when the girls were at the proper age to receive an education, but on the other hand, in spite of Bishop Whelan's valiant efforts in behalf of the Sisters, there was still a heavy debt which they were in conscience bound to liquidate.

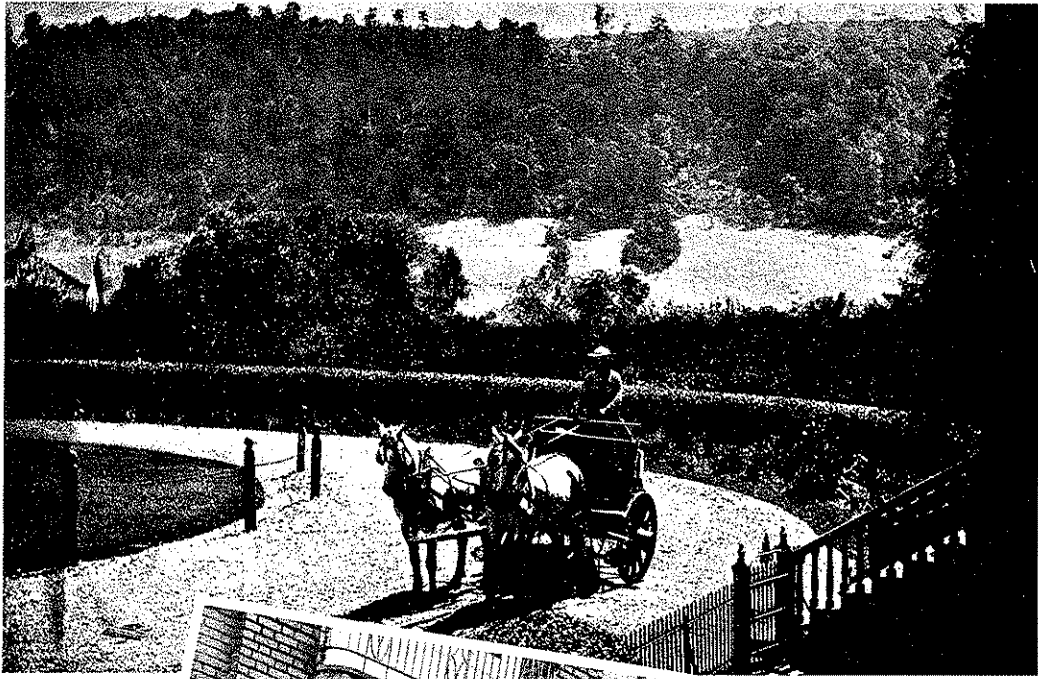
They inaugurated, therefore, in 1866, a subscription for what was called "The Southern Fund," designed to furnish sufficient money to keep the Mount going, while providing at the same time for worthy and needy pupils. In a circular letter which the Sisters sent to friends and published in Catholic papers in the northeastern states, they asked for help "in raising a Fund for the Education of the Daughters of reduced

Southern Families, who, though once in affluence, have lost their all by the late war, and who, consequently, are unable to do that for their children which the Sisters, with the cooperation of good Samaritans outside the Convent, propose to do, viz: to educate them, not only in a manner suitable to their birth and early associations, but also as Teachers, with the view of securing to them the means of independent support in the future." Applications for these endowed scholarships poured in daily from Southern girls, and, true to a principle that has ever been maintained at Mount de Chantal, the Sisters wrote in another letter that, "the candidates for our scholarships are received without regard to Creed." Any one contributing \$10 or more towards this charitable work of education was entitled to have his name registered for the weekly Mass that was offered between 1870 and 1880 for benefactors of the Academy.

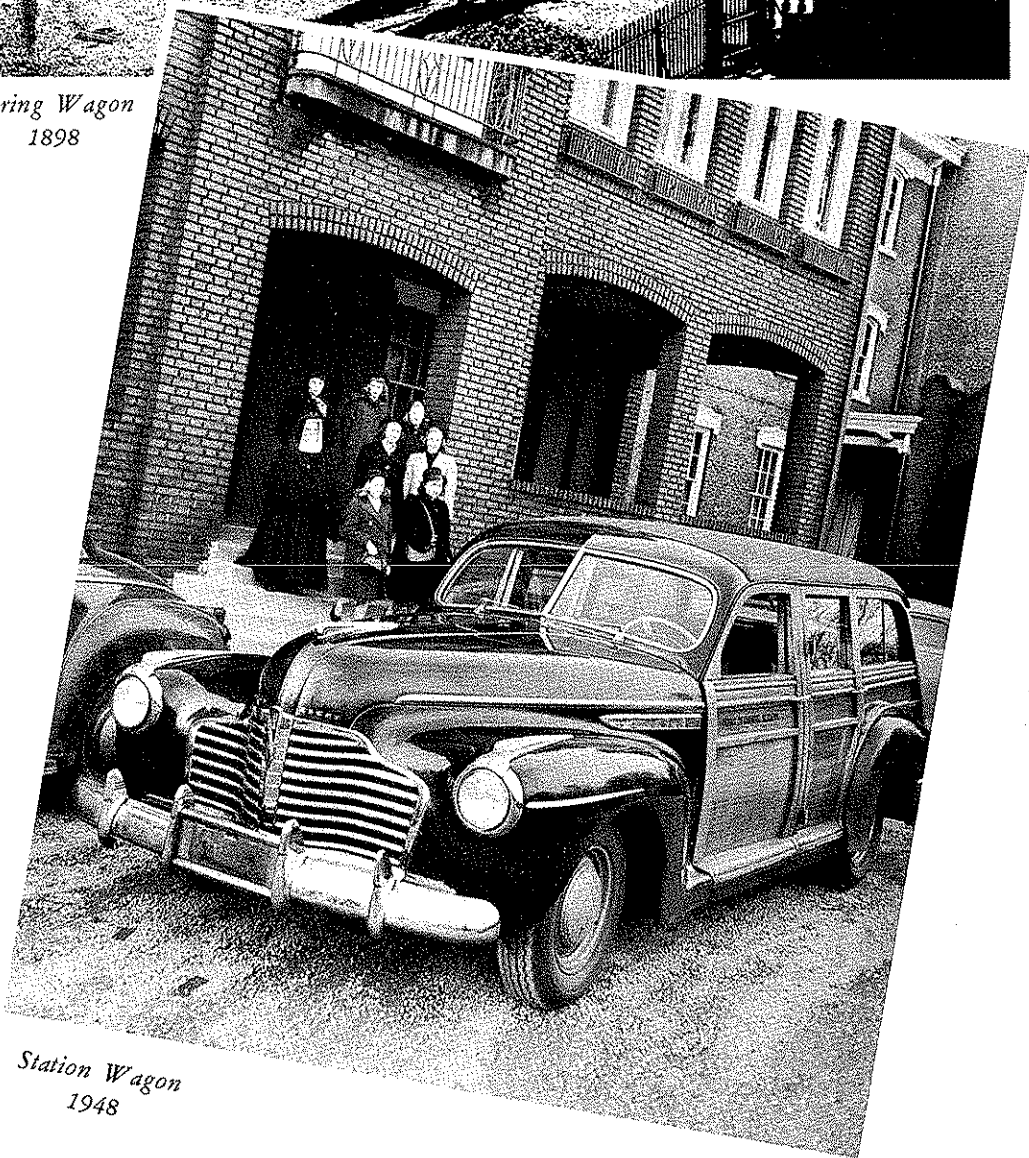
Bishop Whelan obtained permission from his Archbishop to send two Sisters to New York to appeal for funds for those short-term scholarships. The teachers sent from Georgetown, Sister Baptista Linton and Sister Eulalia Pearce, were selected for this difficult mission of charity, and were obviously blessed by God, for they returned to Wheeling, their beloved Visitation enclosure and regular monastic life, with their undertaking successfully accomplished.

ACADEMY GAINS RENOWN

After this period of trial and want, the Mount entered upon her second twenty-five years — years which were to see her become an excellent finishing school. By stage coach, river boat, wagon, carriage, train, auto, bus, and now by plane, girls have come to Mount de Chantal for a thorough Visitandine education. In 1875, when the Mount was still gradually trying to beautify the grounds and equip the new building, even then, there were students from Massachusetts to Florida, New York to Mississippi, Minnesota to Texas who had come, attracted by its nation wide reputation. On one of his visits, Cardinal Gibbons paid tribute to the school when he told the students, "To be in Wheeling without coming out to Mount de Chantal would be like visiting Rome without going to St. Peters, or like sight-seeing in America without going to Niagara." The Academy continued to draw its student body from a wide area until after the first World War. In time the development of numerous public and Catholic high schools in every city, and the tendency of girls to continue their education in college, caused many parents to select secondary schools nearer home for their daughters and to send



Spring Wagon
1898



Station Wagon
1948

them away for their higher studies. Even today, however, eight or nine states are usually represented on the Mount's enrollment list.

The growth of the Academy saw a corresponding growth in the Monastery. Vocations were numerous, and many souls dedicated themselves to serve God under the wise counsels of St. Francis de Sales. Numbered among the prominent graduates who later became outstanding teachers or superiors at their Alma Mater may be mentioned Mary Slater '73, (Mother Xavier), Agnes Reilly '81, (Sister Gertrude), and Mary Lodick '91, (Sister Antonia). They, with many many others, including those Sisters who died while the convent was in the city, now lie row on row in the little cemetery below the orchard awaiting the day when in heaven there will be a never-ending reunion of Mount girls and Mount Sisters.

THE TREE GROWS

The seed so prayerfully and laboriously planted by Bishop Whelan had taken root; pioneering days were over. The Mount was a growing organism full of the vitality and life that would enable it to withstand the economic and social changes of one of the most decisive eras in history. The zealous founder had planned the Academy not only to serve the needs of his time, but also those of future generations. Just how well he planned may be seen in the study hall, auditorium, library, art studio, infirmary — all seemingly modern innovations which this far-seeing Bishop had provided for, over eighty years ago. The large Monastery was designed, of course, according to the specifications laid down three centuries ago by St. Francis de Sales.

Spiritual and secular reading matter have always been an integral part of Mount life. The Sisters brought "a goodly number" of monastic and profane books with them from Baltimore, and additions have constantly been made. The present collection reveals that from the very beginning, every effort was made to provide the best type of cultural environment for the impressionable minds of young girls. For the last seventy years, moreover, from the days of Jenny Lind, Patti, McCullough, Booth, and Modjeska, Mount girls have patronized the outstanding concert and dramatic artists that have come to Wheeling. In addition, a regular lecture program has been sponsored by the Academy every year. Some things seem modern because they have recently been popularized, but guest speakers, honor systems, classroom libraries, assembly periods, guidance programs, visual aids are as old as the Mount.

STUDENT LIFE

Between 1873 and 1898, student life at the Mount was quite different from that of the half-century that has followed. The emancipation of women, with all the good and bad implications of the term, had not yet taken place; women looked on marriage as a career and prepared themselves to be good wives and mothers; the whole pace of living was less active than it has been since the first World War. Information about the customs, parties, and daily routine of the students at that period of the school's history is well preserved in the excellent literary magazine published between 1888 and 1902. When *The Mount* ceased publication there was no paper until 1915, when the alumnae and students united to publish for over a decade *The Year Book*; since 1929 a paper, first mimeographed, now printed, called *Tick-Talk* has been edited by the girls. The students' year book, *M de C* was first published in 1933.

A friendly rivalry developed between the girls of the '90's and those of the early years which resulted in publication in *The Mount*, of reminiscences and letters which reveal much about the school seventy years ago. In their exaltation over the new stained glass windows in Chapel and Music Hall, the lovely olive green walls in the latter room, the handsome wooden window shutters all over the house — to say nothing



The Tick-Talk Work Shop

of electricity which illuminated the cross on the top of the building, the glass chandelier in the Chapel, and the class rooms, "All without turning on a single gas jet" — the belles of the '90's occasionally belittled the staid and "un-improved" life of their predecessors in the '70's and '80's. Before long, another issue would carry a staunch defense from alumnæ of the latter period apropos of the fact that their generation had formed the traditions of the Mount as it then was, and revealed the pleasure they had in whist clubs, croquet, sleigh rides, horse-back riding, artificial flower making, etc. To this the girls of the "Gay '90's" — evidently quite sedate ones so far as Mount de Chantal was concerned — expatiated on their good fortune in having the B. & O. train stop at the Mount's entrance to pick them up when they went home at Christmas and in June, on the fun of lawn tennis on a court where the Music Building now stands, on basketball in one side of the partitioned playroom, but above all on the thrills of playing that new game of golf on the Mount's own links.

During this quarter century and even beyond it, traveling accommodations and roads were so poor that students came in September and stayed until June, though, of course, they had the regular holiday seasons as days of vacation. As transportation facilities increased in the United States, the change was reflected in the Mount. From year-round students, to those who stayed during both school terms, to those who went home to nearby cities once or twice a year, to girls who were monthly boarders, we come to the many "weeklies" of the present day. Day pupils have been accepted at various periods — some coming in the Civil War ambulance, some in the spring wagon of the '90's, others in the school bus, and those of today in the Mount de Chantal city bus which stops at the foot of the hill.

To the delight of the school girl, opinion on the all-important subject of candy has undergone quite a metamorphosis, too. In the '70's no candy or other delicacies whatsoever were allowed except at Christmas and Easter, when all used one of the classrooms as a "box-room." Later the girls were given candy twice a month, and after the turn of the century, they could spend the grand sum of 10 cents a week on confections. All this is a far cry from the present era when the store is opened daily to dispense candy, soft drinks, cookies, potato chips, ice cream and all the other "sweets" that please the adolescent and make her periodically resolve to go on a diet. All students, old or young, hate examinations, but the Mount girls of three and four generations ago had good reason to fear them. Oral examinations in the presence of the Bishop, the whole Community, and the remainder of the student body, were held

either in the Playroom or Music Hall. Gradually the ordeal was diminished by having them in the classroom with only the Superior, Directress, and some faculty members present, and within the last few years, written examinations twice a year have relegated the dreaded "orals" into past history. Girls of the '60's, '80's, '90's, 20's and 40's have three things in common — their interest in amateur theatricals of every description, their love of parties, and their preoccupation with boys.

The Hallowe'en party is the only social event, just as the St. Cecilia Musicale is the only musical event, that has continued throughout the century. Seventy years ago, when the majority of the girls were here for Christmas, the Epiphany Ball was the big dance of the year, with the May Party running a close second. Only on these occasions were the girls allowed to lay aside their somber brown or black uniforms (with aprons) and, dressed in dimity party frocks, to assemble in the Music Hall where the Bishop crowned the queens of their choice, and an orchestra from Wheeling provided the music. After 1890 the Epiphany Ball was discontinued because it was easier for girls to get home for the holidays, and after 1901, the May Party was no longer given as a yearly event until the modern elaborate outdoor pageant was inaugurated in 1932. Other dates were substituted for all-girl dances or "hops," however, but the one characteristic they had in common which is unusual today was the use of the Music Hall as a ballroom with an orchestra brought out from town. Now the Thanksgiving Dance, Sweetheart Ball, and Alumnae Dance in June are held away from the Academy, but the Welcome Party for new girls, Hallowe'en, Christmas, Valentine and May Parties are still the important social events of the year.

MOVING AND REMOVING

As the Music Building with its 36 practice rooms, art studio, and gymnasium, was not erected until 1908, the utilization of classroom space, and private rooms, varied considerably in the first sixty years from that of more recent decades. In 1865, classes were taught in one of the parlors, the present reception room, and in the library which was two classrooms. Around 1880 the girls raffled a painting to provide funds to take out the partition in the latter rooms in order to have a larger art studio. When the space behind the little dormitory was renovated in the early '90's and made into a regular art department, the library moved into its vacated room on the Study-Hall floor. The present "graduates room," which had been the library, then became the

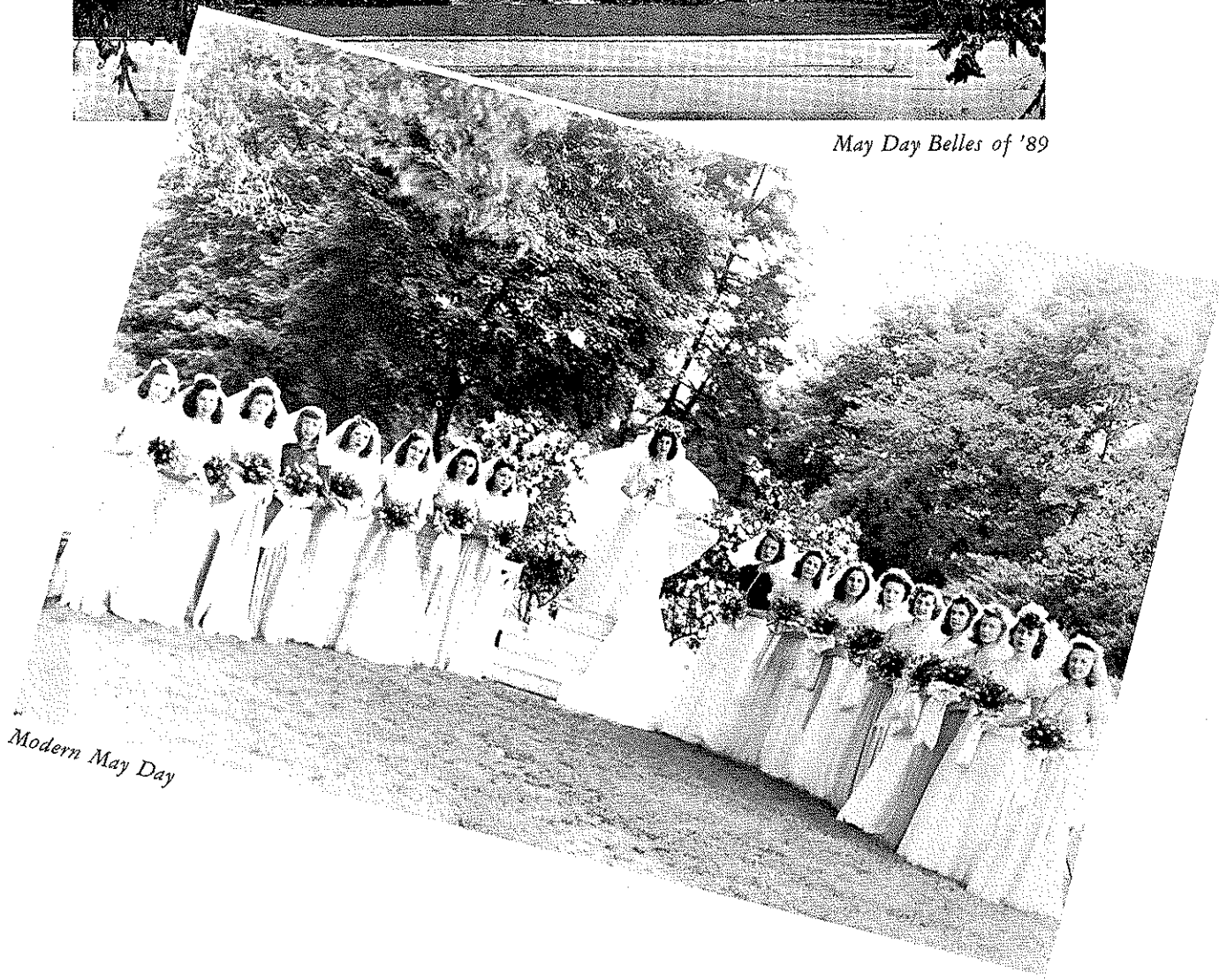
science laboratory. Pianos were everywhere — classrooms, Play Room, grade rooms, while the present row of bedrooms on the fourth floor constituted the main practice hall. Even the series of rooms around the corner from the Directress' Office, which at an earlier period had been used by the lay teachers as bedrooms, were pressed into service for practice. Once the pianos were installed in the Music Building, partitions were removed and the chemistry laboratory and a classroom were created, though the latter has recently been furnished as a recreation room for the graduates and christened "Senior Haven." Tinted walls and varnished floors, however, are innovations of the last twenty-five years, and the Monastery dormitories have but recently been changed from the white-washed walls, so reminiscent of an earlier day. No doubt, after a lifetime of devoted, yet incessant toil, the old domestic Sisters would never recognize the Monastery with its dark-stained pine floors, metallic wall covering, and the countless labor-saving devices.

THE MOUNT EVALUATED BY CATHOLIC WORLD

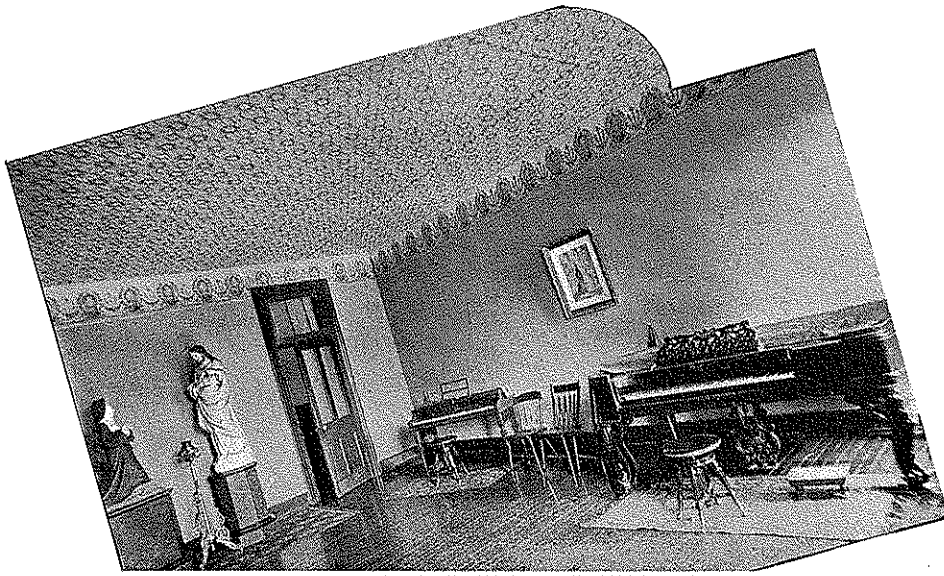
In 1893, the *Catholic World* featured Mount de Chantal as one of the most progressive convent schools of the day. In the precise language of the period, the writer declared: "It is not too much to claim that in methods of teaching and equipment Mount de Chantal has kept pace with the foremost ranks of modern innovations: and that in rule and discipline, in breadth of view and liberality of treatment, she stands well ahead in the progressive host." The friendly, cooperative system of discipline and government worked out between the teachers and pupils was singled out for special mention. "Autocratic command and constant supervision are here substituted by a mutual confidence and a high regard for integrity and truth. The brave and honorable will far more readily respond to this liberality, and others are shamed into compliance. This elevated code prevailing, has shown its benign influence in the moral atmosphere of the school which is marked by a candor and simplicity charming as it is rare." This spirit is carried over into the present day, as one may see by reading the Code for Mount Girls drawn up last year by the Student Senate, where the ideals call to the honorable and the brave with an insistence that carries in its train the weak and cowardly. Simplicity and candor are still characteristic of Mount de Chantal students.



May Day Belles of '89



Modern May Day



Practice Rooms — Old and New

CHAPEL

The heart of every Monastery and convent school is the Chapel, and it is there, in the presence of our Sacramental Lord, that the Visitandine and her pupils learn to draw closer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that of His Immaculate Mother. The regular spiritual exercises of Office, Meditation, Reading, etc., as formulated by St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane de Chantal, enable the nun to follow her ideal of religious perfection for the sake of her Beloved. The Sodality, founded in 1857, the League of the Sacred Heart, established in 1876, and the more recent organizations such as the Student Mission Crusade Unit and Legion of Mary Praesidium help the students to sanctify their daily lives so that they may carry Christ's message in the form of Catholic Action to a materialistic world.

It is interesting to know that the first Midnight Mass in West Virginia was celebrated at the Mount in 1865. The Chapel being unfinished, a temporary altar was placed in the Music Hall. Here, to the accompaniment of two pianos and a harp, Sister Mary Agnes Gubert's glorious voice rang out with the melodies of Haydn's *Mass No. 2*. Those who knelt before that altar were rapt in devotion, and many eyes brimmed with tears as the familiar and always soul-stirring strains of "Adeste Fideles" resounded through the hall.

When the Chapel was finished, the beautiful chandelier, which is now in the center of the Music Hall, hung in solitary splendor in the unadorned Sanctuary. In the late '60's, the daughters of George P. Healy, the famous nineteenth century American artist, were pupils at the Mount. Their father, grieved at the barrenness of God's house, volunteered to paint the altar piece for it in thanksgiving for his own return to the Faith, and in petition that the members of his family would follow in his footsteps. The painting of the "Christ Child" which is now in the front hall to the left as one enters the door, for over fifty years occupied the place of honor over the altar until the Chapel was redecorated by Rambusch.

Bishop Whelan, however, did not live to enjoy the halcyon days of his new school, but when he died in 1874, financially and academically, Mount de Chantal was on a flourishing basis — thanks to his untiring efforts! For the next nineteen years, Bishop Kain took the same fatherly interest in the Mount. It was he who officiated on January 29, 1877, at the first Pontifical High Mass sung in the Chapel, which was celebrated on the occasion of St. Francis de Sales' being proclaimed a Doctor of the Church. In the



Our Lady's Sodalists

midst of all the pomp and ceremony — with Bishop Tuigg of Pittsburgh, numerous priests, and acolytes in the Sanctuary — the altar caught on fire! The choir of girls and nuns assembled in the organ gallery (which has long since given place to a simple platform) gazed in horror as the beautiful evergreen decorations left from Christmas, blazed to the ceiling. It was only the presence of mind of Bishop Kain and Father Reynolds, the Chaplain, that saved from ruin, the beautiful, hand-carved altar that graces the Chapel to this day.

SCHOLASTIC STANDARDS

Mount de Chantal has ever tried to give individual, personalized teaching so that the students may leave its portals able to recognize true principles, to defend them, to become spiritually, intellectually and physically the worthy Christian women needed by every generation. As in every Catholic school, the chief endowment is the consecrated lives of the Sisters who devote their talents and energies to the work of education. From time to time, the Mount has accepted girls from the first grade through high school, but the usual enrollment embraces what is now called junior and senior high. Residence and tuition fees have ever been moderate. The Sisters have been able to offer an education to some girls who otherwise could not have attended the Mount, through a number of scholarships which have been given by generous donors as memorials. Included among these are two Alumnae Scholarships; two donated by Mr. and Mrs. John Slater of Washington, Pa.; the McBride Scholarship given by Mrs. William McBride of St. Louis, Mo.; the Sister M. Berchmans Scholarship awarded by Mr. William Brennen of Pittsburgh, Pa.; the Mount de Chantal Scholarship offered by a benefactor; the Cisneros-Potter Scholarship; and the Margaret Brennan Lawler Scholarship given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Brennan of New York City.

Records dating back to 1856 indicate that when a pupil had completed the required course she was awarded a gold medal and crowned with flowers on the day of "Distribution of Premiums and Awards," while the best of the underclassmen likewise received the crown of merit. Modern graduates date from 1880, for in that year the first group of girls left the school with diplomas as well as the gold medals. For the last sixty-five years, students ranking highest in other classes have received the coveted blue ribbon and silver cross on Distribution Day. The Jenkins Medal for excellence of deportment given by student-faculty vote is the highest honor that can be awarded to a graduate. In

addition, there are the McGraw Essay Medal, the Jewett History Medal, and, until recent years, the Ebbert Medal for mathematics. At various times cash prizes were given as memorials, but the only ones of long standing were those given by Bishop Donahue, and the English Prize donated by the Michael Brennen family, and continued in recent years by Bishop Swint.

Thorough training in literature, as well as history, mathematics, and foreign languages has ever been given in the curriculum termed the "English Course." Despite the cramped conditions of the Community while in the city, a secular French woman was engaged to teach her native language, and for almost fifty years it was compulsory, although German, Spanish, Italian and Latin were offered as additional languages. With a Sister presiding at the head of each table, practice in conversation was given by speaking French at meals several times a week. Students in the foreign languages were expected to give at least one entertainment every year, and this tradition is still maintained by the French department. With the passage of time, subject matter, texts, and teaching



Mr. Jones Gives a Lesson

aids have been brought up to date, but essentially the "English Course" remains the same. In recent years Mount de Chantal has become a college preparatory school, and the old curriculum, though modernized and adapted to current needs, has proved to be an excellent preparation for the College Board Entrance Examinations.

Development of mental culture and esthetic tastes is a natural outgrowth of the training in religion, logic, and philosophy which reveal God as the source of beauty, goodness and truth. Besides the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, daily rosary, opportunity for frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and the activities of the various religious organizations, the students have the privilege of making an annual retreat. This latter exercise had become so much a part of the Mount that, early in the '90's, long before the days of organized lay retreats, the Sisters, in response to the earnest requests of the *alumnæ*, and encouraged by their new prelate, Bishop Donahue, opened their doors each summer for a retreat for women.

MUSIC

Anyone who has ever visited Mount de Chantal in the course of the last hundred years, would need no explanation as to why the motto selected for the Academy is "Religion and Fine Arts." The high standard in music set by the gifted Sister Mary Agnes Gubert in the early '50's and carried on until her death in 1882, has constantly been maintained. Under her direction, younger members of the Community were trained, and this education was eventually supplemented by study with professors from Europe. In the course of the last forty years, secular teachers from renowned conservatories have been on the faculty of the music school. Outstanding among these was Miss Julia Moss, who, for several decades, was a devoted friend of Mount de Chantal. The reputation of the music school had already spread far beyond the confines of Wheeling, even in those first seventeen years while the Academy was still located on Eoff Street, for a testimonial given in 1867 by Carl Wolfsohn of Philadelphia could refer only to the students of the Visitation Sisters in the city. "It is with greatest pleasure that I most warmly recommend the Academy of the Visitation at Mount de Chantal, near Wheeling, West Virginia, to all who can appreciate a true and thorough musical education. I have no hesitation in making the above assertion, the truth of which has been repeatedly confirmed in my experience with pupils whose course commenced and continued there for years."



Graduates' Recital

Opportunity for gaining confidence and poise in performing before an audience is offered in the traditional musicales. These programs, consisting of musical selections rendered without the aid of notes, and recitations in various languages, are given in the presence of the faculty and student body. In the very early days, they were presented weekly and then every fortnight; for the last fifty years, however, they have been given once a month and are a characteristic feature of Mount education. Violin was added to the arts curriculum in 1887 and elocution, a few years later. Girls who complete the required course for graduation in piano, violin, vocal, or dramatic art must give a public recital before receiving the honors of the school.

An indication of the progress that musical education has made in the United States in the last hundred years is revealed by the fact that, whereas formerly the advanced musicians from the Mount traveled to Europe to continue their education, many of the graduates now go to well-established conservatories in our own country.

In 1867 Romaine Goddard, later Baroness Von Overbeck, the first graduate to complete the required course, received the coveted graduation honors in both piano and harp.

In the first fifty years of her existence, the Mount conferred only eleven such medals for excellence — eight in piano, two in harp, and one in vocal. This last was finally achieved in 1892 by Eugenia Schmidt who succeeded in reaching the goal for voice graduates, set up by Sister Mary Agnes. Her gift of the lovely stained glass windows in the Music Hall remains as a testimonial of her generosity and her interest in music.

Graduates in the fine art department must present a public exhibition of their work in water color, oil, charcoal, and other media. For over fifty years, efficient secular teachers have enabled students enrolled in the well-developed four-year art course to find an outlet for their creative abilities by means of work in the commercial, as well as the fine arts.



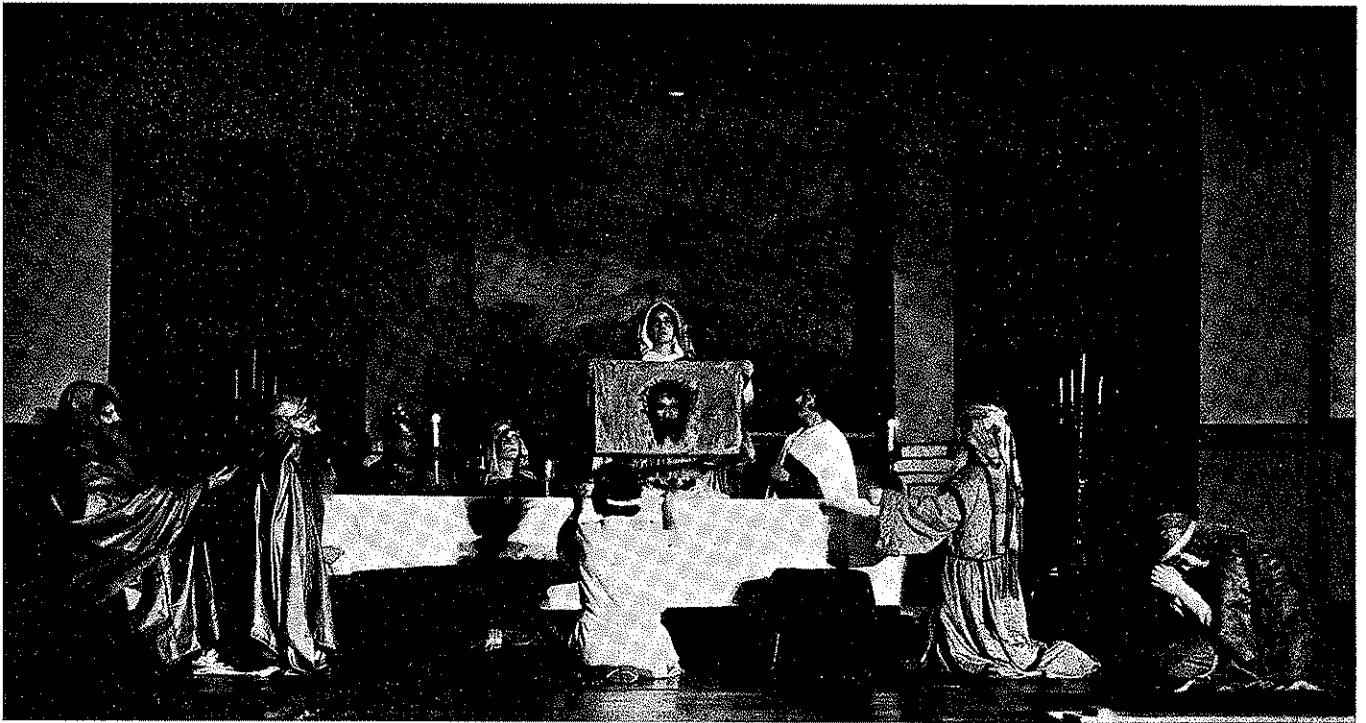
Mrs. Gatts teaching the Freshmen

Countless plays, skits and musical entertainments have been given in the course of the past century — many a feast day, holiday, or week-end provided an excuse to "put on a play" — and often no excuse was needed! Such theatricals provided an outlet for the urge of all adolescents to act. In the early days elaborate musical programs and operettas in English, French, or German were presented as the entertainment for important occasions. Among these may be mentioned "The Miracle of the Roses," an operetta sung in 1867, when the members of the West Virginia Legislature came to the Mount to visit the Academy and the Monastery in the new site. At two different periods, Wheeling was the capitol of the state, and Mount de Chantal frequently entertained the prominent men of the day. In 1870 a commemorative program was presented to the public in honor of Beethoven's hundredth anniversary, while "The Gypsy Girl," "The Heiress," "The Culprit Fay," and "The Mikado" — the latter presented on the occasion of the Mount's Golden Jubilee — were among the elaborate operettas given by students of the music department prior to 1900. Since that period, with the outstanding exception of "Tolbiac" an opera given in French in 1905, most of the major productions such as "The Life of St. Jane de Chantal" presented at the Tercentenary of the Order, "The Upper Room," "Sign of the Cross," "Nativity Play," "Midsummer Night's Dream" and the other Shakespearean plays have all been dramas with incidental music as a background. The cycle was completed in 1947, when both music and the spoken word were used in the choric drama "The Eternal Way — The Story of Our Lady of Fatima" which was given in honor of our bishop, Most Rev. John J. Swint at the celebration of the silver jubilee of his episcopal consecration.

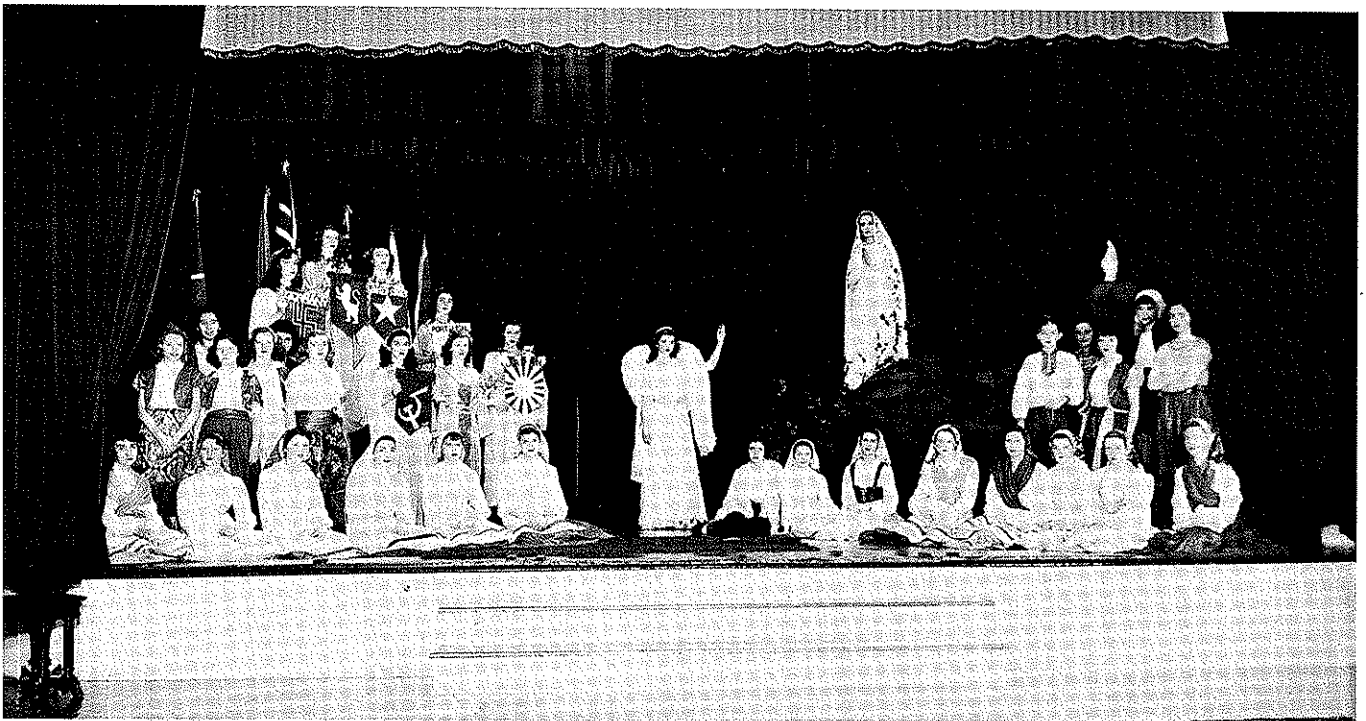
ANNIVERSARIES

Little did the girls of the '90's who wrote so eloquently in *The Mount* of the renovations in the Chapel, Music Hall, refectory, etc. realize that a half-century later all these improvements together with those of the '70's and '80's would be relegated to "the old days." No one remains from the earlier period, and the ranks of Sisters and alumnae who can still recall the Mount of fifty years ago are fast dwindling.

Exteriorly and interiorly, however, the Mount was resplendent for the three days of the gala golden jubilee celebration of 1898. In true convent-school fashion of the day, the pupils of Mount de Chantal appeared for the jubilee days in white dresses with wide yellow sashes. Bishop Donahue pontificated at the Solemn Mass of thanksgiving



"Upper Room"



"The Eternal Way"

in the presence of the Apostolic Delegate, Most Rev. Archbishop Martinelli, Bishop Phelan of Pittsburgh, and Bishop Watterson of Columbus. The sermon, preached by Archbishop Kain of St. Louis, was an eloquent tribute to the valiant, pioneering spirit of the early Sisters and Bishop Whelan. Even in 1898, the passage of fifty years had already caused their memories to grow dim. Archbishop Kain, who had known the foundation Community and his predecessor quite intimately, sounded a warning to the Sisters and pupils of fifty years ago which is just as applicable to the Centennial generation, namely, that no student who enters the portals of the Academy, or nun who consecrates her life to serve God in the Monastery should ever forget the debt she owes to Bishop Whelan. He went on to say, "Friends, indeed, the Sisters had, but they must acknowledge that, after the good God, their best and truest friend was Bishop Whelan, who richly deserves to be known, honored, and revered as the real founder of Mt. de Chantal. Therefore in 'sanctifying the fiftieth year' — in celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the Visitation Order in this Diocese — it would be unpardonable ingratitude to ignore him, who having brought these Sisters to Wheeling, watched over their welfare with untiring solicitude, spent himself in slavish labors to erect this house, and was mainly instrumental in providing the needed resources." In 1948, the Mount de Chantal Alumnae Association, with numerous chapters scattered over the country, will reach its half-century mark, for the formation of this organization highlighted the celebration of the Academy's golden jubilee.

A little more than a decade later, in June, 1910, the Tercentenary of the foundation of the Visitation Order was likewise observed with three days of festivities, and the Mount joyfully and lovingly entered into the world wide celebrations, which brought old students and friends by the score to thank God for all the graces and blessings that He had showered on the Visitation Order during the three centuries of its existence. On the feast of the Sacred Heart, which immediately preceded the anniversary, Father Fidelis Kent Stone, the saintly and famous Passionist priest, came to the Mount and spoke on devotion to the Sacred Heart in accents which burned into the hearts and minds of every hearer. On the day of the solemn festivities, Rev. Father Francis McCarthy, S.J., delivered a beautiful panegyric on the history of the Order, and late in the afternoon, Bishop Regis Canevin of Pittsburgh officiated at Solemn Benediction.

THE TREE SPREADS ITS BRANCHES

The dawn of the twentieth century found Mount de Chantal no longer isolated in what had been called "primeval wilderness." The city had imperceptibly edged closer; house upon house appeared in the distant valley where formerly there had been one or two large estates. The centenary finds the Sisters and students still secluded on their ample playgrounds and farm land, but they are surrounded by new homes nestling on the hills, and the bustling highway with its rush of commerce is but a ten minute drive from the school. As the Mount started towards her seventy-fifth milestone, she embarked on a period of expansion in the physical plant, necessitated by the continual growth of both Monastery and Academy. Already two generations of Sisters and pupils find it hard to visualize what the Mount was like forty years ago, for in 1908 a wing was added to the Monastery called the Laundry Building, and another added to the Academy called the Music Building, which was solemnly blessed on April 4, the sixtieth anniversary of the foundation of Mount de Chantal. Within the decade between 1910-1920, a new barn was built, a more modern residence for the Chaplain erected, greenhouses renewed, and garages constructed.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In the days of the late teens, many clubs and recreational activities were launched, for the new gymnasium provided facilities for bowling, volleyball, and basketball. Interest in these sports and keen competition between class teams have been maintained for the past thirty years. Tournaments played on the three tennis courts, the perennially popular American game of baseball, and, in recent years, badminton have likewise provided rivalry in outdoor sports. The air swings and miniature merry-go-round of an earlier era were replaced with a large slide, swings of every description, see-saws, giant strides, "miniature golf" links, etc. Most of these have disappeared, however, since young children are no longer accepted as students, and the more sophisticated girls of the present age prefer dancing to the music of the juke box, although they still do enjoy playing ping-pong, Chinese checkers, bridge — games of every kind and description. In fact, though clothes may have changed, a new Mount erected, and former undreamed-of luxuries like radios and victrolas have become necessities, yet fundamentally the girl of 1948 gets just as much fun out of knitting, playing checkers, and bingo as did the Mount girl of 1848 in knitting, playing "Steamboat's coming — Who's on it," and "Twenty Questions."

The girls of every generation, likewise, have enjoyed cooking. Although there is no course offered in this subject, the students of the last thirty years have probably



SPORTS
THROUGH
THE
YEARS

The Tennis Court 1900

*Preparatory Classes
at Physical Culture
Exercises 1917*

Basketball 1948

MRS. ANGELA
McKEAN
SCHNEIDER,
Coach

learned more practical knowledge about it, as well as dietetics and housekeeping, in preparing for their class parties, fixing their own suppers on Saturday nights, cooking meals on the outdoor stove, making fudge, and baking birthday cakes, than did the pupils of the '60's and '70's who took the course with the prosaic title of "Domestic Economy." In those early days, the Mount students were likewise initiated into the mysteries of bookkeeping, although women rarely went to work. Again it is probably safe to say that the girls who have been enrolled in the business course during the past thirty-five years have learned a great deal more from their practical experience in typing, mimeographing, and keeping the accounts of their publications, parties, etc., than did those who studied the theoretical course of the earlier period.

On one point, especially, did the girls of the Academy in Wheeling differ from every other generation of Mount students, namely, on the value to be found in walking. A spacious campus, gravelled paths, lawn swings, benches — have offered every inducement for the pupils at Mount de Chantal to stay outdoors, stroll around the grounds, visit the Grotto, St. Joseph's shrine, or, in former days, to cross the rustic bridge in the ravine. In town, however, houses surrounded the convent, and once the new additions were built, there was not even a yard. The students, therefore, got their daily quota of fresh air, under the watchful eye of an Out Sister, walking for an hour, two by two in decorous silence up and down the streets of Wheeling. Reminiscences from that pioneer day reveal the girls' loathing for those daily walks, which they compared to the parade of the prison chain gang that they sometimes passed when the men were on their way to break stone for the new roads.

In the first seventy years there were very few clubs, but the tradition started by the "New Athenians" of the '80's and '90's was revived when the Literary Club was organized in 1933. Musical groups of every description have had their day — orchestras, toy orchestras, bands, string ensembles — but the only one to weather the transitions in talent necessarily associated with the fluctuating population of a school is the Glee Club.

Strange as it may seem, five of the seven Sacraments have been administered in the private Chapel of a convent school. Though it is not too unusual to have one of the students receive Baptism, it *is* an event when a baby boy is baptized! When Bishop Kain succeeded the founder of the Community, Bishop Whelan, he in turn became a father and friend to all at the Mount. It seems that Colonel O'Brien, one of the pioneer Catholics of Wheeling and long on the Mount de Chantal board of directors, wished his new baby to be baptized by the new bishop. When the request was made, Bishop Kain jovially replied: "Of course — bring him over to the Mount on Sunday afternoon.



Dancing to the Juke Box



Making Candy



Quiet Recreation

I'll be there and will baptize the baby then." This was October 26, 1872, and that baby is now Judge J. J. P. O'Brien. Besides his sisters, three of his daughters were graduated from the Mount and currently, two nieces are members of the Community, thus continuing an affinity between the family and the Mount that was sealed forever in the regenerating waters of Baptism.

Though Thomas Downs, a faithful carriage driver for the Mount for over thirty years, had been married quietly in the Chapel in the late '90's, yet the first and last big wedding occurred in October, 1914 when Helen Hearne O'Brien, '10, of Pittsburgh, became the bride of Count Massimiliano Colacicchi of Rome. Bishop Donahue performed the simple and beautiful ceremony, and the Nuptial Mass was solemnized by the Vicar General, Father O. H. Moye. Count Colacicchi was on leave of absence from his post as a member of the Noble Guard of the Vatican, and, as the Papal Court was plunged into mourning by the death of the reigning Pontiff, Pius X, which had occurred while the Count was en route to America, the wedding was transferred from the pomp and splendor of the Cathedral in Pittsburgh to the Mount Chapel so beloved by the bride and her sisters who acted as bridesmaids.

BLOSSOMS AND FRUIT

The alumnae of Mount de Chantal have ever been exceptionally loyal and generous, and have taken an active part in all types of Catholic Action, whether sponsored by their Alma Mater, their parish, or the diocese. At the time of the organization of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae in 1915, the West Virginia Chapter became a charter member. The Mount alumnae were most zealous in forming this state chapter and still take prominent and justly proud interest in all the activities of the I. F. C. A.

Typical of the affairs which give Mount girls an occasion to practice Catholic Action while in school, so that they may carry it over into adult life, is the work for the missions. A Pontifical Field Mass on the Mount lawns on the occasion of the Catholic Student Mission Crusade Rally in 1927, for all the Catholic schools of the diocese, stimulated a zeal for the missions which is still flourishing. An annual Turkey Supper provides funds for the relief of the poor through preparing Christmas baskets, dressing First Communicants, supporting nationally organized charitable associations, and for the Mount's mission activities, the most notable of which in the past, was the education of a native African priest. At present the mission unit is building a burse for the training of American negro priests. Likewise the dessert-bridge tea given every spring is a modern counterpart of the Christmas bazaars of the '90's and "that great

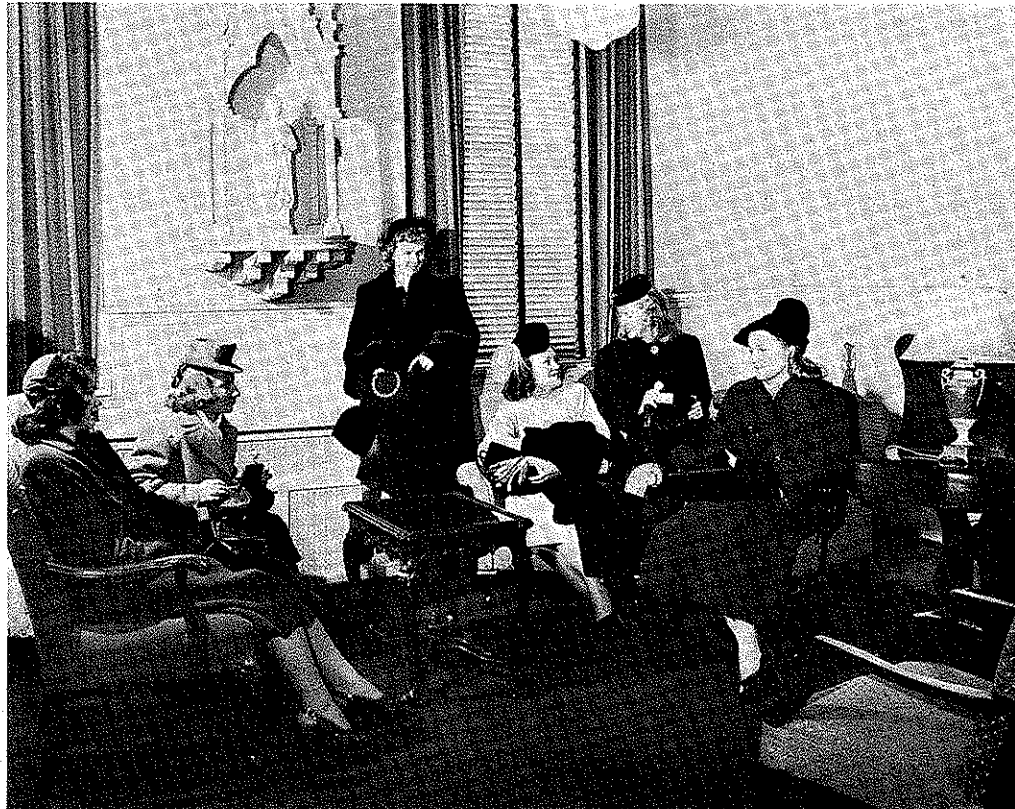
bazaar" of 1867 which was held in Wheeling's Washington Hall, now the site of the Wheeling Bank and Trust Building.

The Diamond Jubilee celebration was held in 1923. On this occasion the new bishop, Most Rev. John J. Swint, was celebrant of the Solemn Pontifical Mass of thanksgiving, and an eloquent sermon was preached by Rev. Father Paul J. Francis, S.A. Mount de Chantal entered upon this last quarter century with a major problem on her hands. The excellence of the education imparted by the Visitation Sisters has never been questioned even from the time when, as Bishop Kain reminded his hearers in his tribute to the founder on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee, "Bishop Whelan carried his paternal solicitude to such an extent as to spend hours and hours, month after month, in imparting to the younger members of the community valuable information on the best methods of rendering themselves proficient teachers, especially in the higher branches of education, such as belles-lettres, philosophy, mathematics, etc." Time marched on, however, and with the advent of state interest in education, the Mount was faced with the need of equipping her faculty with collegiate degrees. Year after year, week-ends in school time, all summer long, the Sisters toiled and labored and were rewarded, through the kindness of Dr. Michael Relihan, by the acquisition of B. A.'s which in turn won teachers' certificates from the State of West Virginia. Before very long university work was again taken up. The growth of tolerance and breadth of view in the past hundred years is indicated by the fact that, from the days when newspapers were reluctant to receive advertisements from a convent school and irate citizens threw eggs at the house in town, we came to a period when the State University so respected the rule of enclosure of the Sisters that, through the influence of Dr. Richard Aspinall, classes and lectures were arranged at the Mount so that the high school teachers could receive their Masters' degrees. Within a short time, the Catholic University of America numbered Mount de Chantal among its approved and affiliated schools. Graduates of the Mount are being admitted into colleges of high standing, such as Trinity, Saint Mary of Notre Dame, West Virginia University, Carnegie Tech., Saint Mary of the Springs, Maryville, Duquesne, Seton Hill, Stephens, Manhattanville, Rosemont, and many others.

Progress in education has brought inevitable changes in the library: the removal of the glass doors from the book cases never ceases to bring protests from former pupils who loved it the old way; now a modern and much used high school library has taken the place of the former library-reception room; and in the stack room, in the old graduates' quarters, is found the interesting and valuable collection of early Americana — bound volumes of *Harpers*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Catholic World*, etc., from their earliest issues, containing the names of America's literary giants as they first appeared in

the periodicals of their day. A film and record library is being collected, for through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Robert McCormack, (Anna Louise Keller, '16) of Albany, Georgia, the Mount has received a new sound movie projector besides a Magnavox radio-victrola, and a Hammond organ, which were also their gifts.

The old reading room yielded to the hands of the Alumnae and is now a reception room furnished in colonial style with exquisite simplicity. Two Madonnas are still there on the white walls, and the beautiful marble statue of Our Lady continues to look down benignly upon each new generation of Mount girls. The three parlors, too, were metamorphosed, but the large Healy portrait of Romaine Goddard still holds its place in the far parlor above the sofa. The Directress' office was the last to succumb to modernization, and now the mahogany book case, new desk, and floor-length drapes lend an air of quiet and progressive dignity to the school's office. A new and adequate laboratory is being equipped for both biology and chemistry classes. Plans have been made to remodel the children's dining room, and the Chapel and Music Hall have recently been renovated. In the latter room modern lighting equipment, a new cyclorama and front curtain for the stage have been installed.



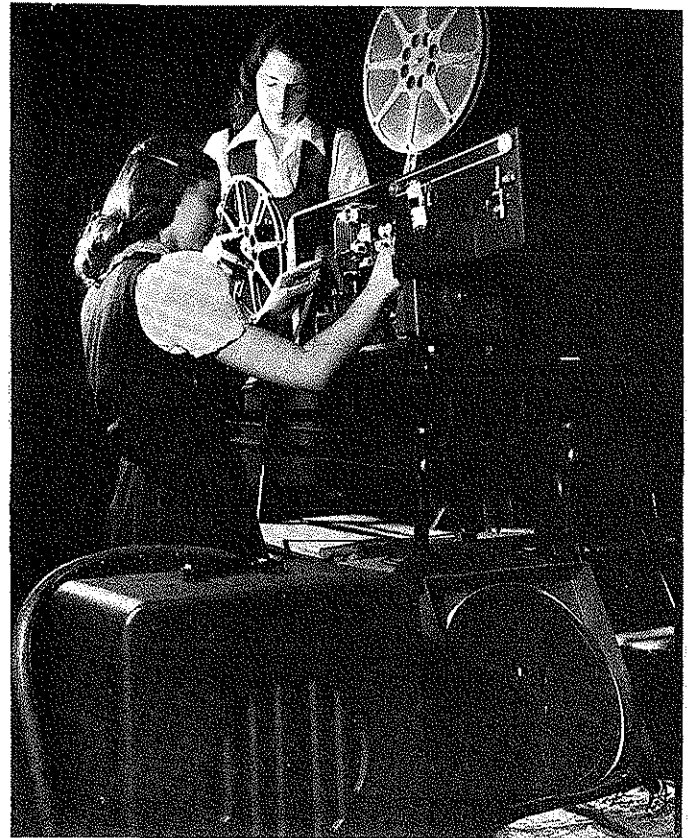
In the Reception Room awaiting Concert Bus



Library in 1888



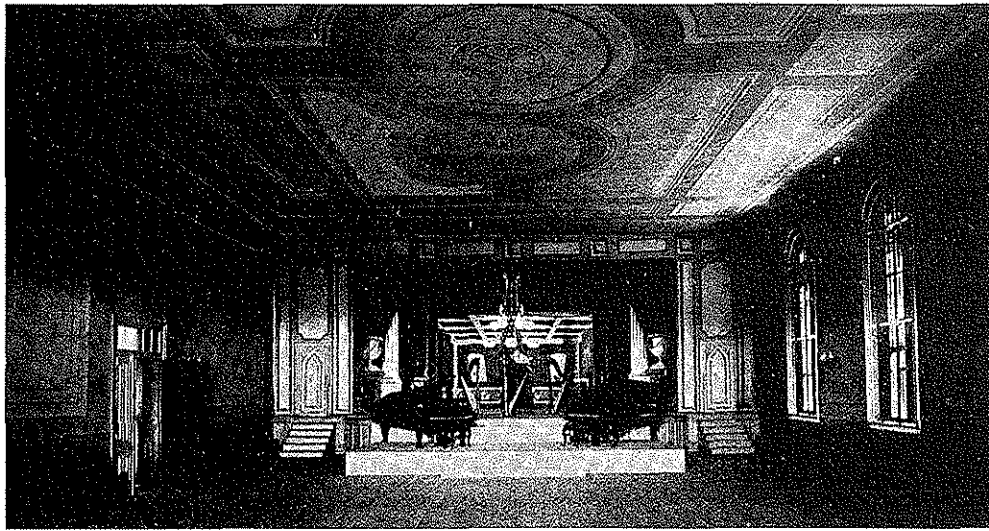
Miss Baker presides in the Library



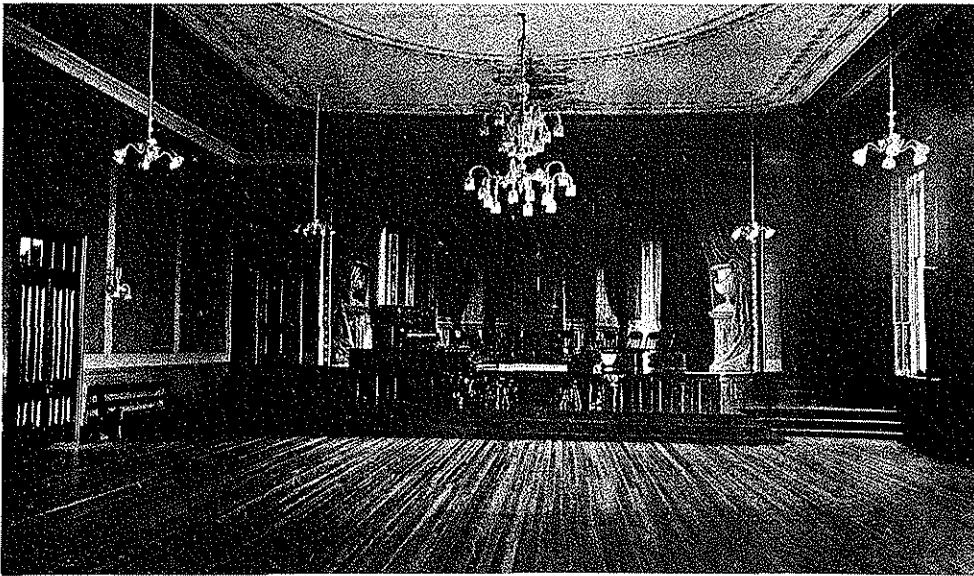
Movie Tonight

THE HARVEST LIES AHEAD

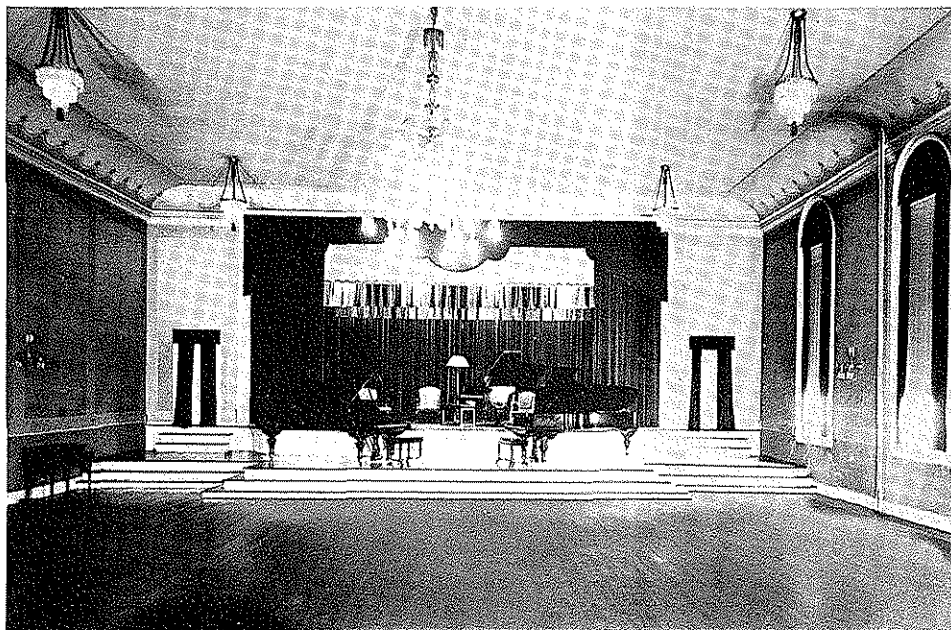
From the original eight Sisters has grown a community of forty-seven; from the remodeled dwelling house has sprung a large and spacious building; from the primitive arrangements of a century ago has come the well-equipped, comfortable school of today; from the few students sent reluctantly to be taught by "nuns" there is now an enrollment which well-nigh fills the school to capacity. Mount de Chantal has lived through the transition from kerosene lamps to electricity, hand-carried coal scuttles to steam heat, flat irons to electric mangles, stage coaches to airplanes, from hoop skirts to bobby socks, from war between states to war between continents. These aspects of America's social and historic development have influenced Mount de Chantal just as surely as has the advance in transportation, communication, invention, national economy, the standard of living, and the development of the American way of life. Mount de Chantal has kept pace with the changing facets of modern civilization, selecting with the wisdom garnered by a century of experience, the elements from this progressive age which are in keeping with the ideals of the Visitation Founders and the traditions of democratic America. Still do students come, from Massachusetts and Connecticut, from Virginia and South America — students of the second, third, fourth generation — to learn these ideals as fostered in the Visitation Academy in Wheeling. Because of the change in the modern tempo of living, the new generation of Mount girls, like the new generation of Mount nuns, differ from those of the past in temperament, physical endurance, educational opportunities, but the essentials of noble womanhood have not changed, and the newer generation hopes to develop into the devoted valiant women characteristic of the older generations at Mount de Chantal. The experience amassed during the past hundred years places the Monastery and Academy on a solid foundation enabling them to look into the future, trusting that, with God's help, they may have the privilege of serving Him and the cause of education for still another century. Once more, therefore, does Mount de Chantal pledge itself to the work of Christian education in the diocese of Wheeling, to the training of strong, noble women, unafraid to fight the cause of Catholic Action, and above all, to the service of God and His Immaculate Mother to whom the Daughters of Holy Mary, the Sisters of the Visitation, are consecrated.



Music Hall in 1890



Stage in 1910



Stage in 1947

OUR SPIRITUAL FATHERS

"The kindly Shepherds of our souls"

EVER since the Sisters of the Visitation came to Wheeling in 1848, the Bishop of the Diocese has been President of the Academy and the Spiritual Father of the nuns. The history of Mount de Chantal is closely connected with that of the Diocese.

In the early years when there were no other Catholic schools, the Mount served both the wealthy and the poor in its parochial school and its boarding academy. For a long period of time, it was the only institution in the state devoted to the higher education of women. In fact, it is only within the last twenty-five years that an extensive parochial high school system has been developed, whereas Mount de Chantal had already completed seventy-five years of long and able service in the cause of education in West Virginia. Her reputation as a convent boarding school, dedicated to the spiritual and cultural training of the finest type of women, remains unimpaired, and it is due in large part to the sympathetic guidance and aid of our Bishops that the Mount has been able to develop and maintain her high standards.

Mount de Chantal Academy owes its foundation in 1848 to the zeal, enthusiasm, and vision of the Most Rev. Richard Vincent Whelan, D.D., who was then the bishop of Richmond, Virginia, the see of Wheeling having not been formed at that time. He was born in Baltimore on January 28, 1809, and received his education at St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Md., and at the Seminary of St. Sulpice, Paris. After his ordination in 1832, he taught at the seminary for some time and labored for nine years as a priest in the Baltimore diocese before he was consecrated Bishop of Richmond in March, 1841. A few years later because of the scarcity of priests, he was obliged to reside in the western part of his see, which was to become the Diocese of Wheeling but which, at that period, was in a pioneer state and consisted of two churches, two priests, and no diocesan institutions whatsoever.

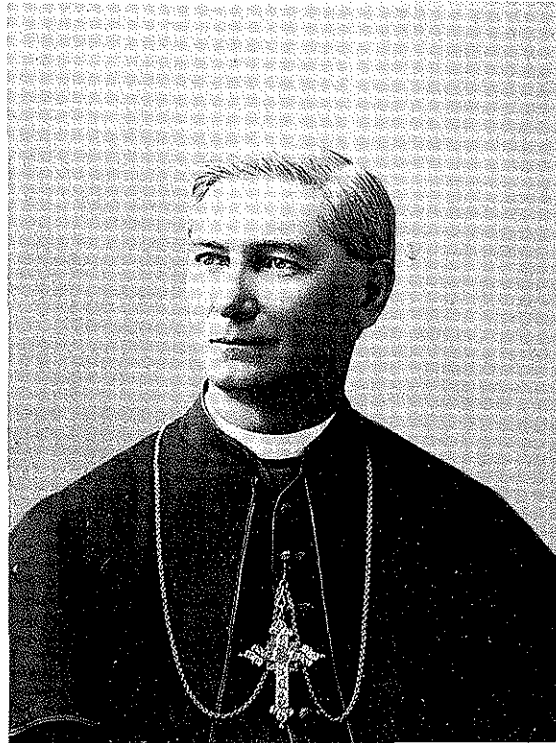
When Bishop Whelan first arrived to take up permanent residence in western Virginia in 1846, he organized a German parochial school taught by a layman. English speaking residents, however, had no educational facilities. Two years later he entreated the Visitation community which he had greatly admired in Baltimore, to send him some Sisters so that he might open a parish school at St. James Church, later the Cathedral,



MOST REV. RICHARD V. WHELAN, D.D.
Founder of the Visitation in Wheeling

and a boarding academy for the higher education of girls. His plea was heard, and with the arrival of eight Sisters (the first ones Wheeling residents had ever seen) in April, 1848, he became the founder of Mount de Chantal. At this time he fully realized the need for a division of his Virginia Diocese — foreshadowing the political separation of the state by some twenty years. Consequently, at his own request, he was transferred, in 1850, to the newly organized Diocese of Wheeling.

His interest and zeal were unflagging and enabled all to overcome the hardships associated with starting a new school in an environment so different from that of Baltimore. For many years he prepared the course of studies, taught the younger Sisters of the Community, and gave to the curriculum and to the faculty the benefit of his education abroad. From the very beginning, therefore, the standards of the Mount equalled, if not surpassed, those of the fashionable academies and seminaries so popular at that period of American history, for her syllabus was modeled on those of European schools Bishop Whelan had visited when he studied abroad.



MOST REV. JOHN J. KAIN, D.D.

Critics who labeled him "unpractical" because of large-scale plans for Wheeling's first Cathedral, which he designed himself, soon termed him a "visionary" when, in 1863, in the midst of the excitement of the Civil War, he bought a large tract of land outside the city on which to build an academy ample enough to care for present and future needs of his beloved and flourishing Mount de Chantal. He supervised every detail of the new building, from raising funds to pay the workmen to overseeing the making of bricks from clay on its own grounds. Moreover, since the architect departed when the building was but partially erected, Bishop Whelan proceeded to complete it according to plans he had drawn up himself to meet the emergency. Small reason then why some of the doors, windows, and floors are not exactly in line!

During his episcopate of thirty-three years, twenty-four of which were spent in Wheeling, the Wheeling Hospital, the orphans' home, six academies, and the parochial schools of the city of Wheeling were inaugurated. At the time of his death in Baltimore, July 7, 1874, his pioneer diocese had grown from two to forty-eight churches, with

forty additional stations for religious services, and twenty-nine priests to administer to the needs of the people.

Every student who has attended Mount de Chantal in these past one hundred years owes a debt of gratitude to the venerable founder of the school whose indomitable will, courage, and trust in Divine Providence — characteristic of the first bishop of Wheeling — made his dream of a progressive convent school in his see city a reality. The impractical visionary of yesterday is now regarded, in the annals of early American Catholicism, as one of the saintliest, most zealous, and far-seeing men of his age.

After the death of Bishop Whelan in 1874, the Most Rev. John Joseph Kain, D.D., was consecrated on May 23, 1875, as Bishop of the Diocese. He was born in Martinsburg, Va., in 1841, and attended the academy there, as well as St. Charles College, Ellicott City, Md., and St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore. For nine years he worked in the Wheeling diocese, especially in the mission section of Harper's Ferry and Martinsburg. At the early age of thirty-four he was elevated to the episcopacy. In this capacity he displayed the prudence, earnestness, and eloquence in the service of the Church which later merited for him the honor of being raised to the higher ranks of the hierarchy. For eighteen years after his consecration, he was a familiar figure at the musicales, parties, lectures, Distribution Exercises, and other affairs at Mount de Chantal. In 1893, however, he was appointed coadjutor to Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick of St. Louis, Missouri. Feelings of deep regret at his departure mingled with those of joy at the Papal recognition of Bishop Kain's worth as an administrator and prelate. Even though he was no longer officially connected with the Diocese, Archbishop Kain often stopped on his trips east for a visit in Wheeling, and on such occasions always came out to see his friends at Mount de Chantal.

One of Archbishop Kain's first visits "back east" was when he returned from St. Louis to Baltimore to preach at the consecration ceremonies of his successor, the Most Rev. Patrick J. Donahue as third Bishop of Wheeling. The new prelate born in Malvern, Worcestershire, England, April 15, 1849, was graduated from the University of London in 1869, and, four years later, came to the United States where he studied law at George Washington University, Washington, D. C. After practicing at the bar for several years, he decided to devote his life to the Church, and in 1882, he entered St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, where he was ordained in 1885, and the following year became chancellor of the archdiocese. Throughout his priestly career, he showed the



MOST REV. PATRICK J. DONAHUE, D.D.

results of his early legal training. It stood him in good stead, when, as a close friend of Cardinal Gibbons, he accompanied the latter on his trip to Rome to receive the Cardinal's hat. Less than ten years after Bishop Donahue's ordination, the same Cardinal, on April 8, 1894, consecrated him bishop of Wheeling.

For twenty-seven years he labored zealously in establishing or enlarging parishes, elementary schools, hospitals, convents, and orphans' homes. He was instrumental in introducing a number of religious orders into the diocese and in organizing various religious and social groups.

Throughout his episcopate, Bishop Donahue was especially beloved by the Sisters and pupils of the Mount. He was a frequent visitor and often occupied the "Bishop's suite" in the priest's cottage which was rebuilt while he was in office. His own broad cultural background made him keenly interested in this school which was endeavoring to give a well-rounded education to the young women of his diocese. This interest on the part of Bishop Donahue revealed itself in various ways. He gave a scholarship

which is awarded every four years to a deserving student; for some years he donated cash prizes for the highest averages in certain scholastic subjects; he contributed many books to the library; and he constantly promoted the study of music, art, and drama not only with words but also by means of his presence at musicales, exhibitions, and plays. He took a fatherly interest in the health of the students, and was instrumental in introducing the fine herd of registered Holstein cows to insure a plentiful supply of milk. Incidentally an amusing anecdote is related about Bishop Donahue's interest in the cows. A few days after sending out a young calf to the Sisters, he arrived at the front door and asked the Sister portress to see the new postulant he had sent. Much embarrassed, she said she didn't know there was one but she would ask the Superior. Within a few minutes all was cleared up, and the Bishop chuckled all the way to the barn. Ever afterwards he teased the portress about her oversight of new arrivals at the Mount.

During the twenty-seven years he presided over the diocese, his genial personality endeared him to the hierarchy, his clergy, his flock, his friends, all of whom respected and admired this fearless, honorable, educated prelate — a gentleman in every sense of the word. The many friends who greeted and fêted him on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of his consecration soon had to mourn his loss when he died on October 4, 1922.

Some months before his death Bishop Donahue was obliged, because of ill health, to ask for an auxiliary; therefore, Bishop John J. Swint, D.D., was consecrated on May 11, 1922, and before the close of that same year, he was installed as the fourth bishop of Wheeling. The state of West Virginia is justly proud of him, for His Excellency enjoys the distinction of being the first native-born son to be raised to the ranks of the hierarchy.

Bishop Swint was born in Pickens, West Virginia, on December 15, 1879. He took his preparatory work at St. Charles College, Ellicott City, Maryland, before entering St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, for ecclesiastical studies. He was ordained in June, 1904, and the following September he went to the Apostolic Mission House in Washington, D. C., to prepare for a missionary career in his native state. With the exception, shortly after his ordination, of a parish at Hinton, and immediately prior to his consecration, of the parish at Weston, all of Bishop Swint's priestly career was devoted to missionary activities.

The personal knowledge of the parishes gained in this manner was a great advantage when, shortly after his installation as bishop, he began the building and

improvement program which has characterized his administration during the past twenty-six years. Numerous schools, churches, mission chapels, and new parishes have been erected. In 1926, was consecrated the new Cathedral which replaced the edifice built by Bishop Whelan in 1847. Bishop Swint's interest in the needs of the sick is reflected in the hospitals and nurses' homes which have been built or improved; his concern for modern youth is seen in the many parochial high schools established throughout the state, his endorsement of the Scout movement, Legion of Mary, I. F. C. A., and other organizations which are trying to safeguard Catholics from the evils of the times. Included among his activities is the publication of a number of books on moral law and controversial subjects. In recognition of his contribution to the Church through his zealous labors and prudent administration of the diocese, Bishop Swint received a singular honor in 1929, when he was made Assistant at the Pontifical throne.

Even before his consecration Bishop Swint took a personal interest in the welfare of the community at Mount de Chantal, and for the past twenty-six years he has been a true father to both Sisters and children. On important feasts, on Distribution Day, on occasions when Mount de Chantal is hostess to various organizations, and on any day of special significance, Bishop Swint has graciously presided as president of the Academy.

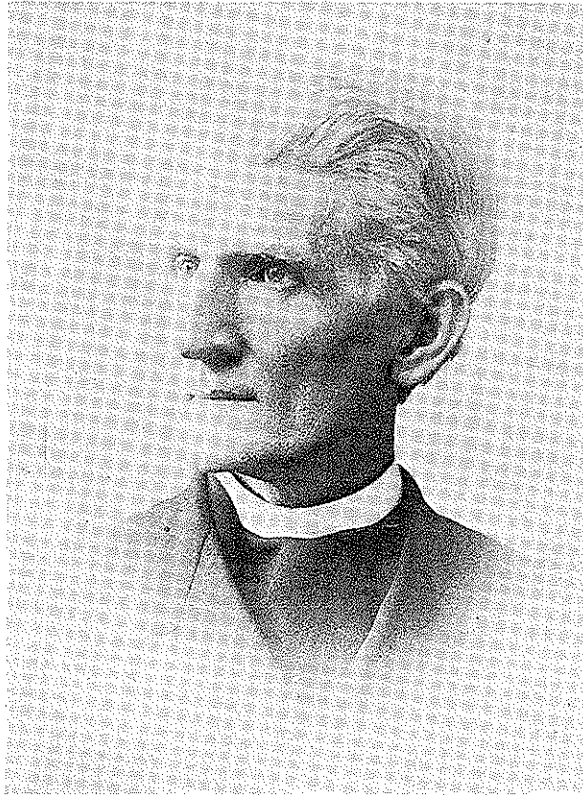
To Bishop Richard V. Whelan, our founder, who endured the hardships of the pioneer days and the labors involved in establishing our school in town and in erecting our present building: to Archbishop John J. Kain who aided us during the trying period of reconstruction after the Civil War: to Bishop Patrick J. Donahue who promoted the development of high standards in cultural activities as well as the expansion and erection of necessary buildings in the years prior to the first World War: and to Bishop Swint, the educator, who has ever encouraged the faculty to keep abreast with modern theories by selecting good from the new while retaining the best of the old — to each of these four prelates Mount de Chantal owes a debt of gratitude which it never can adequately repay. Their pictures are placed in prominent positions on our walls, their names are seen in our records, their memories are enshrined in our hearts, but their true memorials are found in the lives of the thousands in the past century who have passed through the portals of Mount de Chantal to emerge as better Christian wives, mothers, religious, or professional women because of their contact with this school which all four of them have unflinchingly supported and aided to the best of their ability. For each of them we pray that Christ, the Good Shepherd and the Divine Teacher, will Himself be their reward for the part they have played in the history of Mount de Chantal.

OUR CHAPLAINS

"Who break for us the Bread of Life"

EXPERIENCE has proved that a competent chaplain is essential for the good order and welfare of a community of nuns. Whether or not there was a regular chaplain for our Sisters during the seventeen-year period of their residence in Wheeling is hard to ascertain, and it is not certain that anyone was appointed for several years after our removal from the city, but the records show that the first resident chaplain, Rev. J. H. Walters was appointed in 1879. After a service of two years, he was succeeded by Rev. John A. Reynolds (1881), and Rev. William Silvain (1882-84), and then, for the following nine years, Rev. Henry F. Parke occupied the Chaplain's Cottage.

Father Parke was one of the first missionaries in what is now the Diocese of Wheeling. From his earliest years as an orphan boy to those of the beloved priest and dignitary of the Church, his life was one of self-sacrifice, zeal and service to his neighbor.



REV. FR. H. F. PARKE

His boundless charity, broad humanity, and catholicity of spirit won for him the esteem and friendship of not only those of our own creed, but of many non-Catholics as well. Sanctity, emphasized by the spirituality of his countenance and the slightness of his figure, radiated from his person.

Being Vicar General at the time of Bishop Whelan's death, July 7, 1874, he was appointed Administrator of the Wheeling Diocese, the duties of which office he ably fulfilled until the new Bishop, Most Rev. John J. Kain was installed in May, 1875.

For several months before his death, Father Parke had been working on the books and accounts of the Diocese. When finally the task had been completed, he remarked, "Well, I have finished my work on the books. I am feeling very weary. I think I shall take some rest." Little did he realize that the "rest" would be eternal. Two days later, April 9, 1895, as he was walking along the street, a huge brick building collapsed and buried him beneath its ruins.

His successor, Father Kleuser, resigned after two years to become pastor of Saint Michael's Church in Edgington Lane. The Chaplains who followed, likewise, served but a short period, and among them may be mentioned Rev. A. Boutlou, Rev. Joseph Isenring, O.S.F.S., Rev. W. G. Pendergast, Rev. H. J. Stokes, Rev. Robert Sullivan and Rt. Rev. J. T. Sullivan. The last mentioned was the Administrator of the Diocese until a new Bishop was appointed by Rome to succeed the Most Rev. J. J. Kain, who had been appointed Archbishop of St. Louis.

From 1902 to 1907, Rev. Michael Fitzpatrick resided in the cottage. Born in Ireland in 1837, Father Fitzpatrick came to this country at an early age to study for the priesthood. When he had completed his college and seminary courses, he was ordained in the Wheeling Cathedral by Most Rev. R. V. Whelan in 1869. The first three and a half years of his sacerdotal life were spent in the parishes of Wheeling and the surrounding towns where he has been remembered with gratitude by all, irrespective of creed. After his excellent work here, he was sent to take charge of the missions in three counties of West Virginia. In the early days of this work—a work which has characterized Father Fitzpatrick as a missionary of unusual caliber—the log cabin in which he boarded and lodged was fifty miles from the nearest railroad station. Often he rode horseback for thirty miles in zero weather to celebrate Mass for an expectant congregation. For twenty-eight years he continued in these arduous labors and when, because of failing health, he was no longer able to perform his duties, he resigned,

leaving behind him a thoroughly Catholic people, well-grounded in the truths of their religion. Such was the priest Mount de Chantal was privileged to have as Chaplain for six years. This was his last assignment, and he chose it in preference to an offer made to him by his Bishop of "the best room in the Cathedral residence." He said he thought he could still perform some slight work for God.

"I have been temporary Chaplain for twenty-five years at Mount de Chantal." Thus spoke Msgr. Weber at the celebration held here to commemorate his twenty-five years of chaplaincy, and he repeated this statement many times during the following nine years, always with a chuckle of amusement. In truth, he had never been assigned the duty of regular Chaplain of Mount de Chantal, but, as a young priest, he had been sent out here to fill a temporary vacancy because his Bishop thought the invigorating country air would restore the glow of health to the somewhat delicate newly-ordained priest. A protracted illness that proved fatal terminated the thirty-four years of service he so faithfully rendered to this institution.

Msgr. Edward E. Weber, a native of Wheeling, was born March 13, 1870. He received his early education in a Wheeling parochial school and, after completing his studies at St. Charles College and St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, he was ordained to the priesthood in St. Joseph's Cathedral by Most Rev. P. J. Donahue, Bishop of Wheeling. Immediately after his ordination, he was made Chancellor of the Wheeling Diocese which position he held until his death. In 1925, he was made a Domestic Prelate which gave him the title of Right Rev. Monsignor. Some years after this honor had been bestowed upon him, he was appointed Vicar General of the Diocese.

Much of his time and attention throughout his career as a priest was directed towards the orphans' homes where he spent every Sunday afternoon with his beloved children, and no other event could interfere with this weekly visit. One day every spring, about forty of those boys and girls were the guests of the Mount de Chantal students. On those occasions, he revealed himself a kind and indulgent father to the little ones for whom he considered nothing too good, and upon whom he lavished the warm love of his priestly heart. During the program they prepared for this annual event, he beamed upon them with all the proud satisfaction of a loving father. As a climax to those occasions, he always regaled us with the recitation of verses from



MSGR. E. E. WEBER

Father Tabb's beautiful poetry, with which Father Weber was thoroughly familiar, for his great admiration for the poet-priest, his former teacher at the Seminary, never waned.

Punctuality was one of Msgr. Weber's outstanding traits, for promptitude was almost synonymous with his name. Many said that when he made his appearance, they could tell the time of day. Except when urgent business of the Diocese called him elsewhere or serious illness deterred him, he never failed to be present here for the daily Mass. With a sense of everlasting gratitude, we recall a singular act of his devotedness. During the flood of 1936, when the bridge was covered with water and no cars could reach us, our faithful Chaplain walked through the tunnel and, much to the amazement and great joy of us all, he was here at the scheduled time to sing the High Mass in honor of St. Joseph's feast. We feel sure that dear Saint Joseph was not unmindful of this great act of devotion and loyalty.

In addition to his religious and civic activities, Msgr. Weber gave much of his

leisure time to the study of astronomy and, because he was widely known as an authority on that subject, he was frequently asked to lecture on it. His telescope was one of the largest in this part of the country. After the Observatory was set up, he participated in the studies at Oglebay Park.

In December, 1940, when Msgr. Weber became ill, and the news from day to day became more alarming, our hearts were heavy indeed for we felt that no one could ever take his place. His death occurred May 21, 1941.

The word that Very Rev. Frederick J. Schwertz was to be our next Chaplain gladdened our hearts, because we had always been impressed by his courteous manner and priestly bearing. In the seven years that he has been with us, this impression has not only been confirmed, but by his kind and fatherly interest in all that concerns the Mount, he has won the affectionate esteem of both Sisters and students. Ever obliging and gracious in complying with our every wish or suggestion, Father Schwertz is to us a perfect Chaplain.



VERY REV. F. J. SCHWERTZ

OUR SUPERIORS

"Whose guidance and example have ever been an inspiration"

WE, the Sisters of Mount de Chantal, owe a deep debt of gratitude to *all* our predecessors who, when the going was hardest, bore the burden and heat of the day, but we feel a greater and special indebtedness to the brave, strong women who were placed at the head of the Community, whose task was leadership, and whose example pointed the way for others. Theirs was the greatest responsibility; theirs, the heaviest burden. May we ever prove worthy of their solicitude, and carry high the standard which they have placed in our hands. The Superiors who have guided our Community for the past one hundred years have merited and won the loving gratitude and sincere esteem of every Visitandine at the Mount.

Mother M. Eleanora Walsh	1848
Mother M. Michaela Jenkins	1851
Mother M. Borgia Tubman	1857
Mother M. Placide Fitzgerald	1863
Mother M. Michaela Jenkins	1866
Mother Mary de Sales Grafton	1872
Mother M. Stanislaus Thayer	1875
Mother Mary Joseph Waring	1881
Mother M. Aimée Robertson	1887
Mother M. Stanislaus Thayer	1893
Mother M. Gertrude Reilly	1899
Mother M. Xavier Slater	1905
Mother M. Gertrude Reilly	1911
Mother M. Marguerite Corrigan	1917
Mother M. Gertrude Reilly	1920
Mother M. Marguerite Corrigan	1926
Mother M. Joseph Aloysius Bauer	1932
Mother M. Francis Joseph Thomson	1938
Mother M. Joseph Aloysius Bauer	1944

CONSECRATED LIVES

"Who sowed the seed and tilled the soil

That we might reap the harvest."

THE history of any institution over a period of one hundred years is filled with many human interest stories intermingled with the lives of its members, but the history of a religious community is unique in that, only in such an institution, are the continuity of membership and its contact with the past unbroken in its living members. The aged remember the aged of their own youth; those in turn have recounted personal experiences that touched the lives of still earlier members, and so on, reaching back to the original foundation group itself. To those early Sisters who bore the hardships, privations and almost insupportable burdens that new undertakings entail, we owe an eternal debt of gratitude. Whatever in the institute is good, whatever holy, whatever progressive, its very spirit is a heritage from the long line of Sisters who lived seemingly humdrum days, laughing, weeping, praying, working as duty required or occasion demanded. Each and every Sister on her way to God had something to contribute to succeeding generations. In an attempt to tell something of these Sisters, it is impossible to include everyone. As we treat of the more outstanding, the better known, we realize that, in God's sight, it may possibly be the Sisters, hidden like precious ore, who gave to the growing community its spiritual wealth and security.

As the first Superior of the Wheeling Visitandines, *Mother Eleanora Walsh* is entitled to first mention in the story of the Sisters who made the Wheeling foundation. Born in Philadelphia in 1806, she entered our Convent in Georgetown, D. C., in her late twenties. Not long after her Profession, she was sent on the foundation to Baltimore. Ten years later, when Bishop Whelan appealed to Archbishop Eccleston for a group of Visitandines to establish a school in that part of his diocese beyond the Alleghenies, Sister Eleanora was chosen "General" of the little band that was to make the arduous journey across the mountains. In accord with the custom of the time, when no religious appeared in public in her religious habit, the Sisters had to travel in secular dress. They drew on their small store of outmoded, cast-off postulants' clothes, and arranged as best they could their black forehead binder to resemble hair. It is related that Sister Eleanora fared better than the others, for someone provided her with a braid of hair, a mantilla and kid gloves! From this meager account, we can

guess the ridiculous appearance of the group. It was no doubt a source of merriment to them, and probably Sister Eleanora had to take much good-natured banter about her elegance from her less fortunate companions.

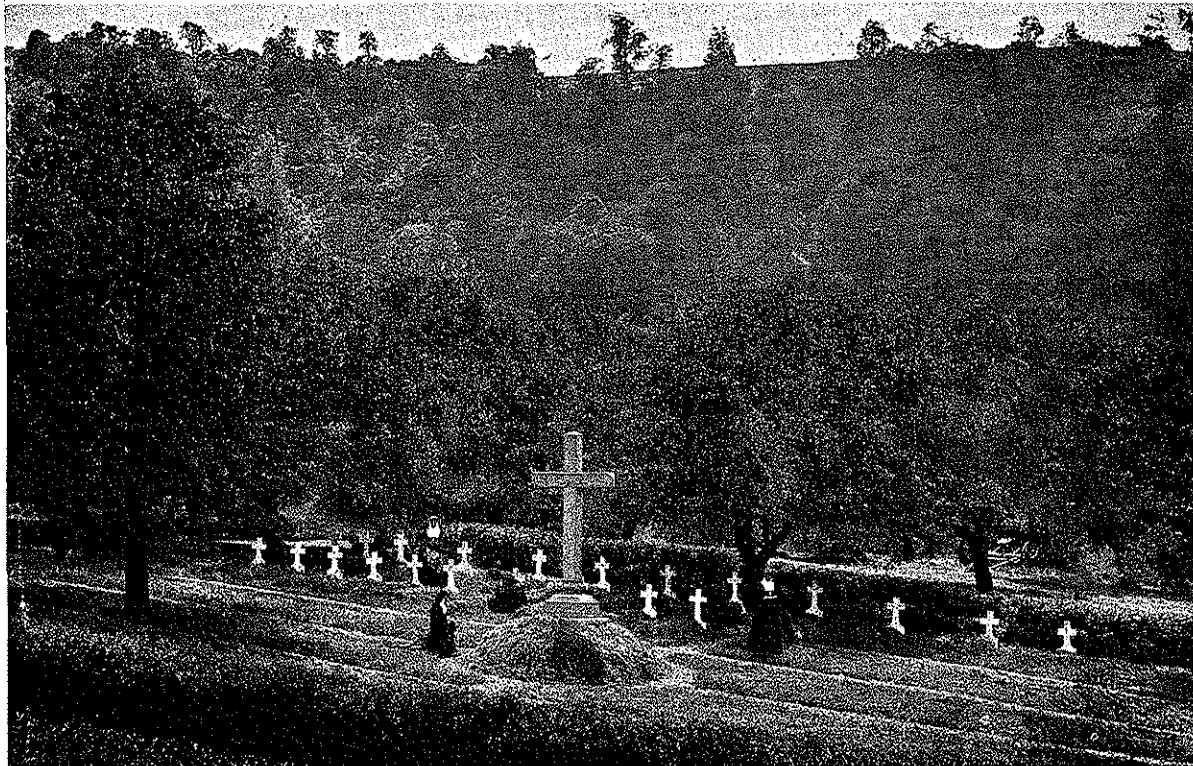
Though Superior, Mother Eleanora bore her share of laborious work in preparing the house for the opening of school. Scarcely were the Sisters settled when Bishop Whelan asked them to take charge of the parish school also. Mother Eleanora was placed at the head. For seventeen years she directed this school with all the zeal and love for souls that burned in her heart. Such was the influence of her example on the young girls that no fewer than thirty became religious. When the Community moved to its present site and it became necessary for others to take over the parish school, the Bishop said, "No one can ever supply Sister Eleanora's place in this school." All were impressed with her profound humility and sincere piety. She endured without complaint great suffering for over twenty years, and died calmly and peacefully at the age of eighty.

Sister Victoria Salmon, 1818-1900, a native of Baltimore, was destined to spend much of her long religious life helping to establish convents. She must have been cast in heroic mold, for the trials of her early life required superhuman endurance to persevere in her chosen vocation. A convert to the Catholic faith, she met such resolute opposition from her relatives when she proposed to join the Church, that she was forced to receive her First Holy Communion privately in the Confessional in order to avoid a scene. One can imagine how her parents would have received the news that she wished to be a religious had they been so informed. She left home secretly, therefore, at night, having had her extra clothing carried through a window and placed on a barrel outside. She was professed in Baltimore and shortly afterwards, came with the first group to Wheeling, where she was a most efficient teacher and an able Directress of the Academy. During the Civil War she, with the novices, was sent farther north, because the Sisters feared that our Convent might fall into the hands of the enemy. She went to the Visitation Convent of Villa de Sales, Brooklyn, New York, and there met the French Visitandines who had been sent to assist that foundation. Profiting by these new contacts, she took the fruit of her experiences to Abingdon, Va., where she went as assistant with Mother Borgia on a foundation made by Mount de Chantal. From Abingdon, Sister Victoria went to our Convent in Maysville, Ky., where she died at the age of eighty-two.

Sister Borgia Tubman, 1825-1910, was a close associate of Sister Victoria, for not only did they share the hardships of the Wheeling foundation, but also the extreme

poverty of Abingdon just after the Civil War. Sister Borgia, a cousin of Archbishop Eccleston, was graduated from the Visitation Academy in Baltimore in 1841 and entered the Community there the same day. When the relatives of one of those chosen for the Wheeling foundation opposed her going, Sister Borgia was asked to take her place. Though in her early twenties, she gave evidence of mature judgment and prudence beyond her years. She was Superior twenty-one years, in Wheeling, in Abingdon and Wytheville. With Bishop Whelan, she planned and supervised the building of the Mount de Chantal Monastery and Academy. Though during the seventy years of her life in Religion, she filled every office of importance, nothing delighted her more than gardening. She was a woman of strong mind and deep religious piety without a trace of sentimentality. By her death in 1910, was lost the last of our original group.

In contrast, *Sister Clare Agnes Jenkins*, 1828-1856, was not only the first Assistant Superior, but also was the first of the little group to reap the reward of her generous sacrifice. To the great sorrow of her Sisters, she died in 1856, when only twenty-eight years old.



The Sister's Cemetery 1892 . . . there are now five rows of crosses

Sister Mary Francis Sproal, 1824-1889, was very young when she entered the Baltimore Convent. One of our pioneers, she taught several hours a day in the parish school, although her principal duty was to provide for the table, which was a heavy responsibility because poverty, real and undisguised, was the Sisters' daily companion. She had a lively disposition and sorely missed the recreations when her work kept her away. One day when Bishop Whelan was with the Sisters at recreation, he said that the coming Distribution must be made very good. Sister Mary Francis remarked: "I hope every Tom, Dick and Harry will not be here." The Bishop replied with a twinkle in his eye, "Well, my name is Dick, the Confessor's is Tom and the Vicar General's is Harry so I suppose we must stay at home."

Out Sisters are indispensable members of a cloistered Community. Our Baltimore House supplied the new settlement with two young, fervent Irish postulants — truly unique characters: Sisters Mary Margaret Ward and Mary Magdalen Patterson.

Sister Mary Margaret, born in Ireland, came to the United States when quite young, and joined the Visitation Order in Baltimore. She was received as an Out Sister, and, in that capacity, came to Wheeling, but she always hoped to be permitted to become a cloistered nun. Sister Mary Margaret rarely went out; in fact, the greater part of her life was spent baking for the Sisters and students. When one of the latter fell ill of a contagious disease, Sister offered to take care of her, and showed heroic charity and devotion in her care of the sick child. At about this time, she transferred from the rank of Out Sister to that of Domestic Sister. Mary Dolan, a weak-minded servant girl, was Sister Mary Margaret's special charge. With gentle firmness, Sister prepared her for her First Communion and, periodically, for Confession; often she listened patiently to the outpourings of her troubled mind and heart and sent her away pacified and quiet. Sister died somewhat suddenly; Saturday she had prepared the flour for Monday's baking; but Sunday she was stricken fatally. Fearing the scene that would ensue, no one dared to tell Mary Dolan until after the funeral. When the news was broken to her, Mary threw herself on the grave bewailing her grief with the keen. In the winter she would sweep the snow off the grave of "My pretty Sister" as she loved to call Sister Mary Margaret.

Sister Mary Magdalen Patterson, like her companion, was born in Ireland in 1824. The story of her father and mother reads like an old romance. Her mother, the daughter of a wealthy landowner, loved the coachman. Knowing that they would never obtain

her father's consent to marry, the couple eloped, pursued by the irate father gun in hand. Fortunately, they escaped and were married privately. The bride was disinherited, though her mother forgave her and often came to her assistance. Ann Patterson came to the United States after the death of her parents and went into service in New York. Archbishop Hughes, her confessor, recognized the signs of a true vocation and made application for her to our Community in Baltimore. She was still a novice when she left Baltimore for the Wheeling foundation.

In addition to being the cook for the Community, it was her duty to take the pupils for a walk through the streets of Wheeling. Donning her old black shawl, she would say, "I would rather sit on the stove than take those girls through the city." Her aversion was well founded for, at that time, the Know Nothings were prevalent and their bigotry found outlet in scathing remarks that betrayed woeful ignorance of all things Catholic, and of nuns in particular. Sister Mary Magdalen longed for the cloister, and she and Sister Martha Cooke (who is remembered by many today, as she lived to be ninety-four years old) made their profession together. When the infirmities of old age no longer permitted Sister Magdalen to serve the Community in the kitchen, she was given lighter duty. She was a quaint, gentle old lady who loved all things living, and showed her love in a substantial way: she fed the stray cats and dogs, and placed food on the window sills for the birds. When a Sister remonstrated with her for taking choice bits from the table for the cats and dogs, she replied: "Our Confessor said it was no harm to feed the poor creatures." She was very fond of sweets, and when a pious companion told her that a saint said one should not eat much sugar, she answered with a twinkle in her brown eyes, "Sure, *he* didn't like it, and that's why."

In 1850, when Mother Michaela Jenkins' second term as Superior at Baltimore expired, the Wheeling foundation, made bold by overwhelming duties and exhausting labor, put in a plea with Archbishop Eccleston for Mother Michaela and a companion. Even though heavy demands had already been made on our Baltimore Community, it was equal to this new sacrifice.

Sister M. Michaela Jenkins, 1804-1881, was born in Baltimore of Catholic parents. Even in childhood she possessed the amiability and gentleness that were, in later life, so much a part of her personality. Educated at Emmitsburg under the supervision of Mother Seton, the venerated and saintly foundress of the Sisters of

Charity, Sister Michaella proved a worthy pupil of this holy woman. A religious vocation to her was a glorious call to the service of God, a light to follow with all the generosity and ardor of her young heart. She entered the novitiate of our Convent in Georgetown, D. C., and pronounced her vows on January twenty-eighth. She was only twenty-four years old when her Superior, aware of her unusually clear and sound judgment, appointed her to the responsible office of Mistress of Novices. Nearly ten years later, Sister Michaella was one of the band chosen to found our Convent in Baltimore where she was successively Mistress of Novices, Assistant Superior, and Superior. Many of the foundation Sisters in Baltimore and subsequently in Wheeling had received their religious training from Sister Michaella either as Mistress or Superior, so with glad hearts the little group in Wheeling welcomed her in July, 1850. Elected Superior in 1851 and again in 1854, Mother Michaella continued to give the young Community the benefit of her mild but firm government.

Bishop Whelan made his next appeal to Georgetown and was successful in obtaining for Wheeling a good teacher, Sister Emmanuel Loughborough, and a promising novice, Sister M. Placide Fitzgerald who was professed here and, in a few years, became the fourth Superior. During Mother Michaella's first two triennials as Superior, the Academy received some members who were great assets toward making it a school literally second to none. In 1853, Sister M. Stanislaus Thayer entered as a postulant, and in 1856, Bishop Whelan, on a visit to Georgetown, made one more effort to obtain Sister Baptista Linton whose administrative qualities and teaching ability he had long desired for Wheeling. Not only did Mother Perpetua Mitchell generously relinquish Sister Baptista but also Sister M. Eulalia Pearce, a gifted linguist and musician. With them came Louise Gubert, a friend of Sister Eulalia, with the intention of entering the Community. In 1857, Mother Michaella returned to the rank of an ordinary sister where she remained nine years instructing others by her example, and, as Novice Mistress, by her training. Later she was again chosen to govern for six more years, — years which, following the Civil War and its social and economic upheaval, were filled with anxiety and insecurity. The move from the city to Mount de Chantal had been accomplished, and with it, seemed to come all the troubles an institution could endure. Mother Michaella, with Bishop Whelan's strong support and initiative, saw the Academy through the storm and on its way to moderate prosperity. Near seventy years of age when her term of office ended, she spent the last years of her life in comparative

retirement, encouraging and counselling any who wished to profit by her long experience and keen intelligence.

Sister Stanislaus, 1835-1902, Harriet Thayer, the daughter of Charles and Margaret Thayer, was born in Petersburg, Va. Sister Baptista Linton, before her entrance into religion, was a frequent visitor among the sick, poor and destitute. Once while living in Petersburg, Va., and on such an errand, she met, at the bedside of a poor woman, a kindred spirit, Mrs. Charles Thayer. A friendship began which lasted all their lives, and was, no doubt, responsible for the conversion to Catholicity of the whole Thayer family. Miss Linton was god-mother to little Harriet who was destined to be our "Mother Stannie." When she came to Wheeling, she was just eighteen and had completed a post-graduate course in literature and science at the Visitation Academy in Georgetown, D. C. Her fine mind was appreciated by Bishop Whelan, who, himself, gave her the benefit of the comprehensive training that he had received in Europe. A brilliant student, she was well equipped in every way to maintain the high standards of the English course in our Academy. She was ever unassuming and unpretentious although employed, when still quite young, to mold the young Sisters into efficient teachers. She became so well known as an educator that Bishop Loughlin of Brooklyn, New York, asked Bishop Whelan to allow her to come to the Visitation Academy there to give a course of lectures, which she did in the summer of 1873. From Brooklyn, she brought back with her the devotion of the Guard of Honor of the Sacred Heart. The statue of the Sacred Heart that is in the center of the circle was purchased by Mother "Stannie." She was Superior when we celebrated our Golden Jubilee in 1898, and the gracious hostess to the dignitaries, and the many old pupils who returned in great numbers for the occasion. In spite of many duties, she delighted in helping wherever there was work to be done, — gathering vegetables, picking fruit, and canning. In 1901, she suffered a severe attack of the grippe and never fully recovered her health. The Sisters were deeply grieved when they realized she was soon to leave them. She met her approaching death with a smile, encouraging her sorrow-stricken Sisters to hope and faith and the peace that comes from accepting God's Holy Will. She died on the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, 1902.

Everyone who is familiar with Mount de Chantal's early history has heard of *Sister Baptista Linton*, (1822-1901). She did not belong to the Mount by Profession or adoption, for she both made her vows and died in Georgetown, yet she spent twenty

years in the Wheeling Community and played a very important part in its activities. At the behest of Bishop Whelan, she and Sister Eulalia Pearce went East soliciting funds to see the convent through a financial crisis, caused in part by the Civil War and in part by the dishonesty of the architect of the new school and monastery.

Mr. James Slevin, a wealthy man whose daughters were educated at Georgetown, obtained Bishop Whelan's permission for them to remain for a while with his family. In her memoirs Sister Baptista writes: "They were nobly generous and kind." Further on she relates an encounter with "Boss" Tweed. "Just before we left Mount de Chantal we had read a newspaper account of an entertainment given to a large number of poor children by a Mr. Tweed of New York. To that gentleman we addressed one of our circular letters soliciting a contribution to our "Southern Fund." By return mail he sent us a lovely letter enclosing his check for \$100.00.

"As we had not had time to acknowledge, in a suitable way, this great kindness we did so after we were installed in Mr. Slevin's magnificent mansion. Mr. Tweed,



The Chapel 1885

responding to our invitation, called upon us. Being struck by the elegance of our surroundings and realizing that we two poor nuns were hardly equal to the usual mode of begging from door to door, he suggested that we should write and request an interview with prominent men in New York, adding that an invitation emanating from such a princely mansion would be responded to. He himself made out a list of parties to whom we were to write, and daily sent his orderly to get our letters and deliver them himself.

"Mr Okey Hall, Mayor of New York, was among the first of our callers. Handing us a hundred dollar greenback, he apologized for the smallness of the amount. Mr. Tweed had suggested that if the Mayor called, we should ask him to deliver a lecture for our cause. 'He is a fine orator and will be flattered by your request,' said Mr. Tweed. You may be sure we followed up this suggestion. The lecture was given from which we realized \$1,000.

"Mr. Tweed also gave us a check for \$1,000 at the close of his first visit, and an order on a livery stable for the use of their best coach, horses and driver as long as they would be needed. The bill came to \$700, quite a sum for those days." She adds somewhat wistfully, "How many more interesting details I could give you had I eyesight and time to pen them." Their undertaking was entirely successful and it not only averted financial disaster but established a fund to educate Southern girls impoverished by the War.

Sister Baptista was Directress of our Academy for many years. She taught French so well that her pupils spoke and wrote it fluently. The study of history was like a vocation to her. She was the author of Linton's *Historical Charts* and text books, for which she received first prize at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1892. No worldly achievement or fame, however, could turn her mind from God Whom she endeavored to please in all things. To Him she directed all her labors, and from Him received with equanimity both joy and sorrow. She had a warm, affectionate heart for her Sisters and friends in Wheeling, but she was happy to return to her first convent home, Georgetown, where she had been educated and had received the gift of Faith.

Sister Eulalia Pearce, (1820-1891), known in the world as Julia Pearce, was born in Boston of old Puritan stock. What the circumstance was that led her to become a Catholic is not known, but that she had no Catholic friends at the time of her conversion, we can infer from her own account of the day she was received into the Church. Her

joy was so great she could not contain herself, but she knew no one who would understand except a good old Irish washer woman. To her, Julia sped with her glad tidings, threw her arms around her neck and danced up and down exclaiming, "We are Catholics! We are Catholics!" She had to suffer petty persecution from members of her family who had inherited all the old prejudices against Catholics. Later her sister entered the Church and joined the Visitation Sisters in Frederick, Md. Julia went to Georgetown where she became a member of the Community in 1844, taking the name, Eulalia. Singularly gifted in music, Sister Eulalia together with Sister Mary Agnes Gubert, whose musical talents were unsurpassed, made Mount de Chantal renowned for the training it gives in vocal and piano music. So firm was the foundation and superstructure they raised that through the years nothing more has been necessary than to keep what they gave and to adapt the course to the changes of time. Sister Eulalia also excelled as a teacher of literature and languages and she was a charming conversationalist. Her last years were filled with physical suffering; she died at the Mount in 1891.

Sister Mary Agnes, (1832-1882), Louise Gubert, daughter of Theophilus E. and Anna M. Gubert was born in Philadelphia, May 17, 1832. She was the eldest of 12 children, six of whom died in childhood. After her father's failure in business, Louise became the family's only means of livelihood. She was more than equal, however, to this emergency, for in a few years, she not only gave them ample support, but also was able to set aside a sum of money as a yearly income. How was this accomplished in the man's world of the 1850's? Louise was endowed with great musical gifts. She was a proficient artist on the piano and harp and possessed a magnificent soprano voice trained by Signor Perelli, the greatest voice coach then in the United States. To crowd a hall to overflowing, it was enough to announce that Miss Gubert would sing. She could command any price for lessons in voice and instrumental music, for parents were eager to give their daughters the advantages of her teaching. During these years, the desire to give herself to God was taking deep root in her heart. She determined to enter the Visitation Order in Wheeling as soon as her responsibilities to her family were discharged. A brilliant career was open to her had she chosen to follow it. Max Strackosch offered her \$50,000 if she would make a concert tour of one season; this offer and lesser ones she refused. As soon as possible after her father's death, having made arrangements for the education of the younger children, she entered our convent.

In religion, she received the name of Sister Mary Agnes. Like most greatly gifted persons, she was as humble and simple as a child, courteous and considerate at all times. She was in charge of the music department from the time of her entrance until her death, twenty-five years later. In that period she made Mount de Chantal renowned as a music school. One of the cherished memories of the students of the early 1860's was that of the day Adelina Patti came to the Convent, then in Wheeling, to give an impromptu concert for the Sisters, and to hear Sister Mary Agnes sing. After listening to several numbers, she admitted publicly that the phenomenal voice of the cloistered Visitandine was equal if not superior to her own or that of any other singer living at the time.

In the accounts just given, we have covered sixty-two years of the Mount's history, for the last of our early Sisters died in 1910. It is fitting that the lives of those who bore the agony of separations, the labors, poverty and anxieties of pioneer days should be told in some detail lest Time erase their remembrance from the minds of present and future generations of Mount Sisters and pupils. It is also fitting that we recall briefly some of the Sisters who have carried on the good work and who still live in the memories of today's Community and alumnae.

There is *Sister M. de Chantal Divin*, whose mere presence put the fear of authority into the most obstreperous pupils. She was a commanding figure, a fine teacher, an excellent business woman. Her independent nature was subdued in her last years by the great afflictions of deafness, blindness and paralysis which she bore with admirable submission to God's will, saying in reference to her infirmities, "God knows how to deal with me."

Mother M. Xavier Slater was so well qualified by nature and grace to direct souls and guide young people, that most of her religious life was spent as Mistress of Novices or Directress of the Academy. She was the perfect religious, who, by her charming personality, sympathy, and broadmindedness, won the confidence of all who met her.

Sister M. Gertrude Reilly was indeed the valiant woman of Scripture whose name is held in benediction by those who were fortunate enough to come under her influence. She was a born Superior, for she seemed always to possess the prudence, good judgment, decisiveness of action, and knowledge of human nature so necessary in a leader; these

qualities, combined with noble generosity, winning kindness, spiritual insight, a spirit of prayer, profound humility, and simplicity of manner made her the ideal Superior.

Sister M. Ursula Bradley was in charge of the financial affairs of the house for thirty-five years. By her business acumen she won the admiration of the business men with whom she had to deal; by her keen sense of humor and warm sympathies she won the esteem and love of all. She was self-effacing and exact in her religious life, bearing great physical weakness with supreme patience and self-forgetfulness.

Sister M. Benedicta Schuck made up for her small stature by her greatness of heart and the ardor of her temperament. In her loyalties there was no admixture of self; this selflessness was particularly noticeable in her endeavors to help the poor for whom, in her begging, she willingly endured humiliating refusals. These days of post war suffering recall the many packages she sent to our stricken Communities after World War I. Head of the music department for over thirty years, Sr. Benedicta kept to the high standard set by Sister Mary Agnes Gubert and her successors. Her love for the liturgy of the Church was her outstanding characteristic, and she was most zealous in her efforts to communicate her enthusiasm to others.

Every graduate from 1900-1925 has a warm affection for *Sr. M. Antonia Lodick*, for every one who received the graduation diploma during that time was taught history, philosophy, English composition and literature by her. Though devoted to her pupils, Sister Antonia showed no less affection for her Sisters, and took part in every community activity. She was a gentle, placid soul whose conversation was ever a delight.

Modern language students of the Mount call to mind *Sister M. Ysabel Cisneros*, who wrote and spoke English, French and Spanish fluently and was a particularly effective language teacher. To her generosity and that of her family, we owe the fine Music Building and many other improvements. Sr. Ysabel travelled widely before entering our convent, and consequently made her classes more interesting by her accounts of experiences in the countries she visited.

The names and faces of dearly loved Sisters continue to come before us: *Sister Beatrix Sheibelboot*, who administered wise counsel as well as doses and tender care to the sick; *Sister Berchmans Brennen*, twice loaned to Wytheville as Superior, Directress of our academy, always a soul of prayer and fervent piety; *Sister Jane Frances Curran*

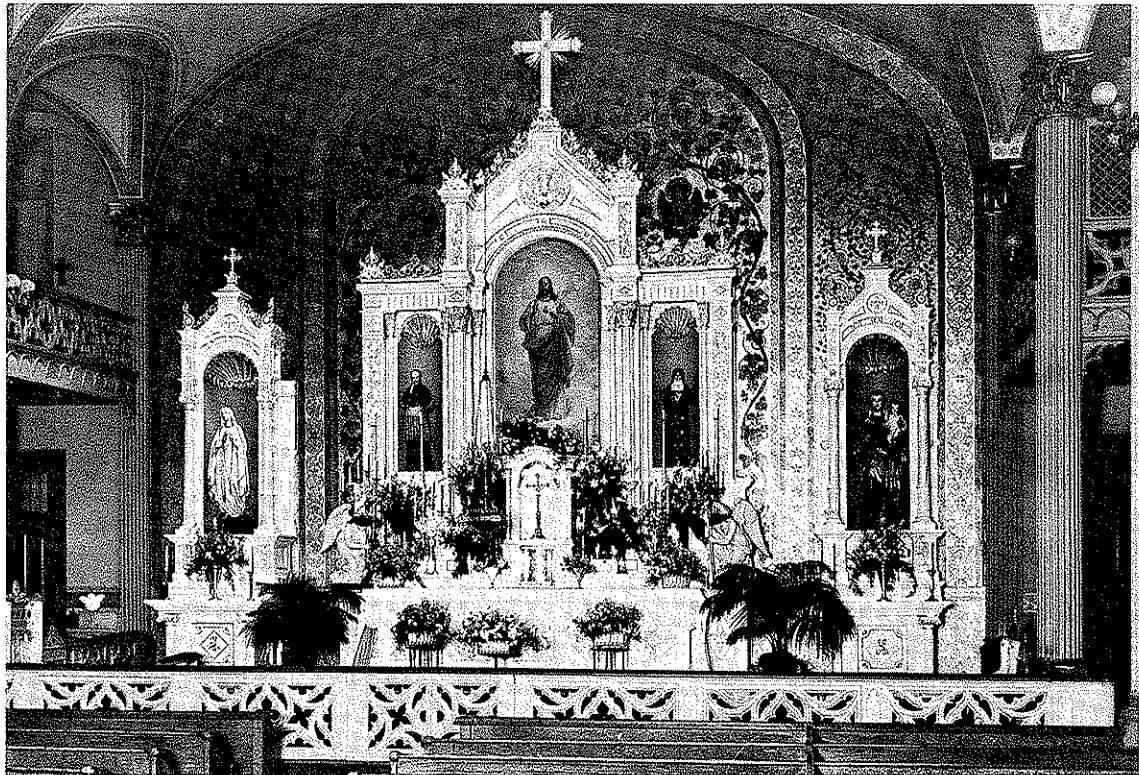
and *Sister Joanna Connolly*, who, in the days of strict chaperonage, saw the pupils safely to trains, the doctor, the dentist, the theater, etc.; *Sister Catherine Thornton*, who was refectorian for many years and used to slip little extras to an especially hungry or lean little girl; *Sister Aquin Shelley*, the perfect directress and brilliant teacher; *Sister Genevieve Brown*, whose thirty-odd years in the little dormitory, whose ability as a teacher of languages, and whose simple, child-like disposition endeared her to scores of Mount girls; *Sister Philomena Campbell*, the gentle Sister whose ardent zeal for the missions was the seed that bears fruit today in the extensive mission program of the Academy; *Sister Frances Raphael Barrett*, the strong woman, poised disciplinarian, efficient science teacher; *Sister Baptista Thomson*, the gentle, soft-voiced Sister who built up the business course, the sports department, and put life into the traditional parties; *Sister Clare Agnes Bauer*, with the merry, laughing eyes, who modernized the Art course and made the studio a pleasant place in which to work; *Sister Teresa Cunningham*, best remembered as an efficient disciplinarian — especially in the dormitory, where she presided for fifteen years — also as a teacher of science, grammar and religion; *Sister Scholastica Hamill* and *Sister Mary Rose Myles*, whose numerous kindnesses in the dormitories and refectory are recalled with gratitude and affection.

Reluctantly we end this article realizing that too many of our Sisters go unmentioned. To the readers who miss the names of loved ones, we apologize; with those who think this account inadequate, we agree. May we close with the slightly modified prayer of our Holy Founder, St. Francis de Sales: "May the names of all our Sisters, written and unwritten in these perishable pages, and the names of all our readers be forever written in the Book of the living with the just, who reign with Thee, O God, in the life of immortal happiness. Amen."

MOUNT GIRLS OF YESTERDAY

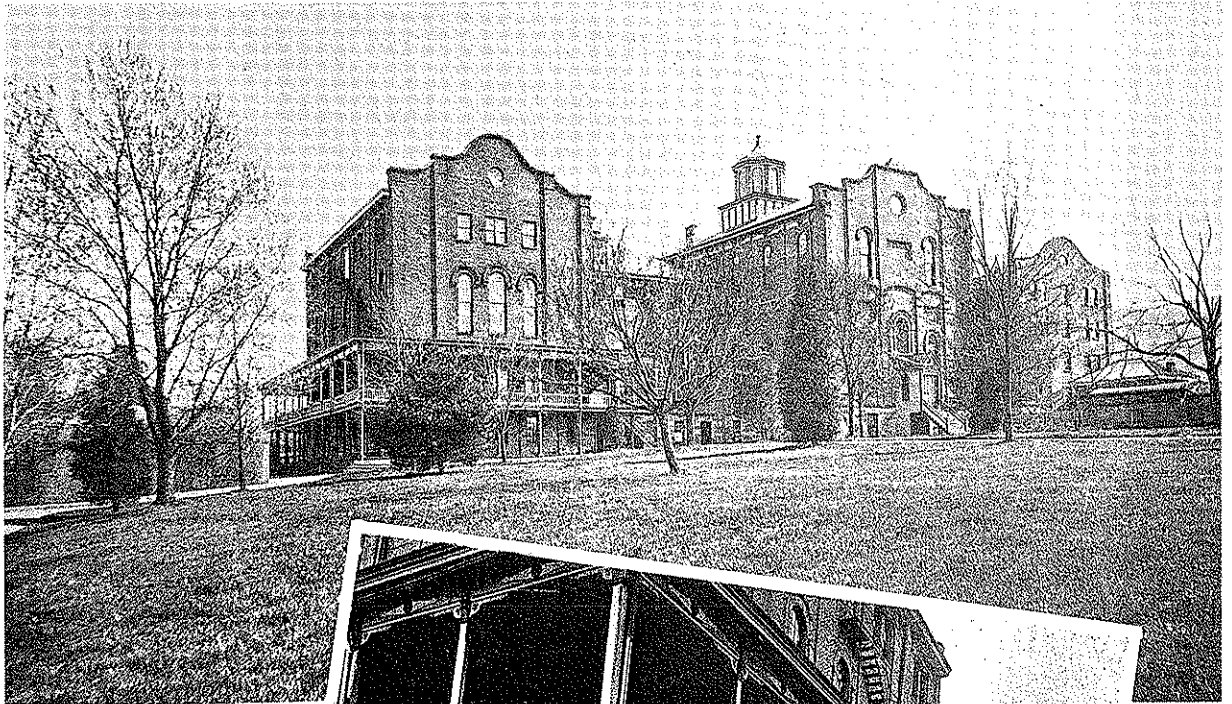
"'Tis virtue that makes them most admired"

THE graduates of 1948 are privileged to become members of the Mount de Chantal Alumnae Association on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation. They enter a well established organization that has been active on behalf of the Mount for many years. We see today the tangible results of a dream, long cherished, but not realized until 1898. At that time, with the guidance and strong support of Sister Gertrude Reilly, initial steps were taken for the formation of the Mount alumnae into an association. The year 1898, marked the Golden Jubilee of the Mount, and also the first meeting of Mount graduates as a collective unit. Each successive year, with few exceptions, has seen the alumnae gathered together on what is now traditionally called "Alumnae Day."

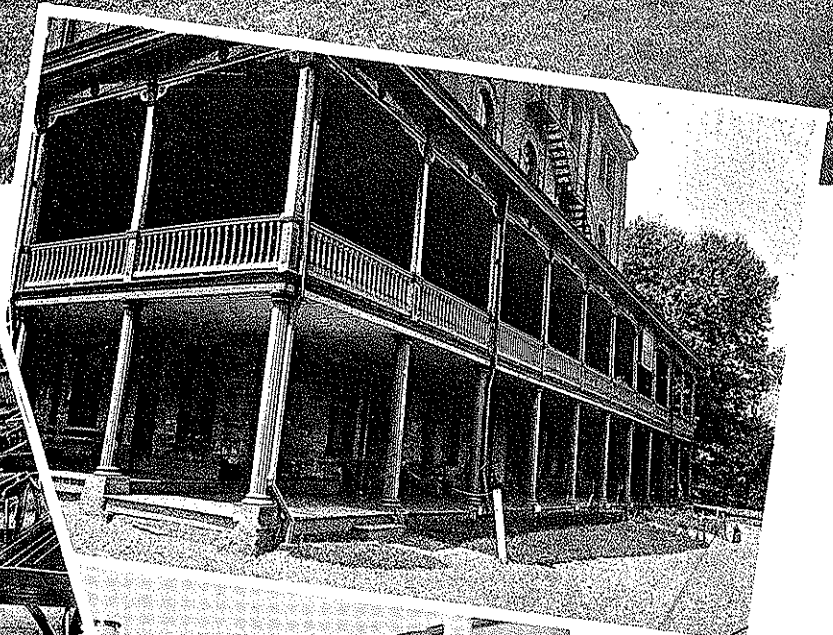


The Chapel 1948

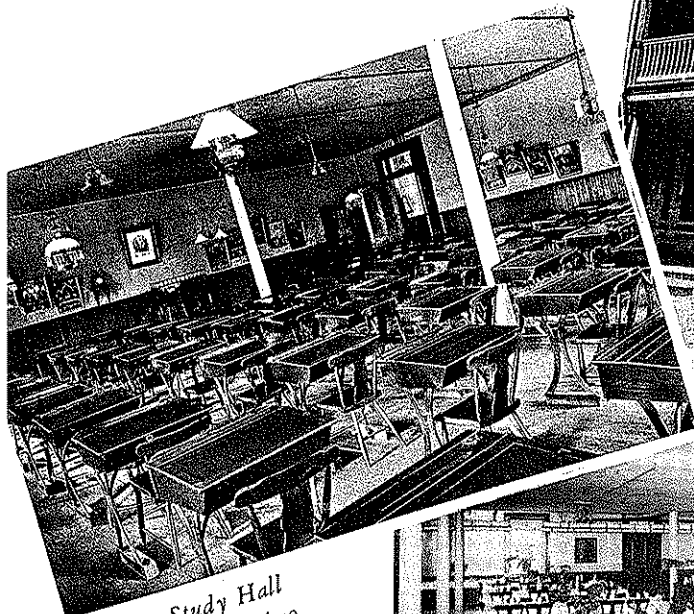
DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN?



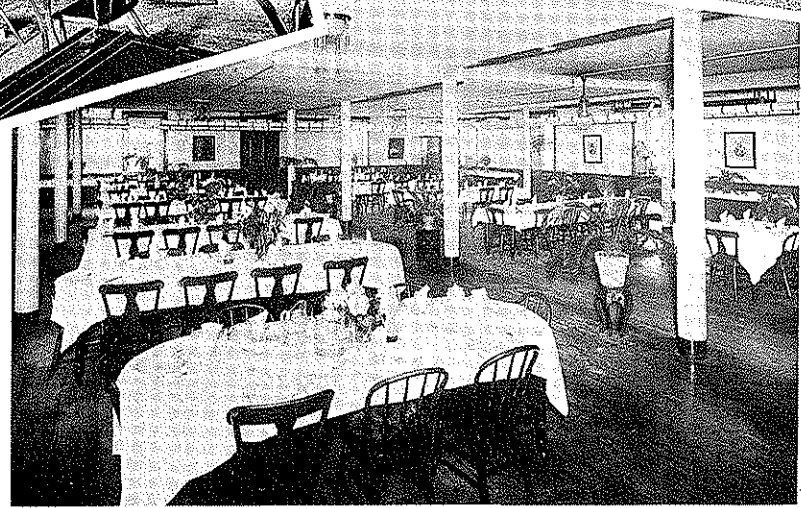
Western View 1880



*The Veranda
1880*



*The Study Hall
Fifty Years Ago*

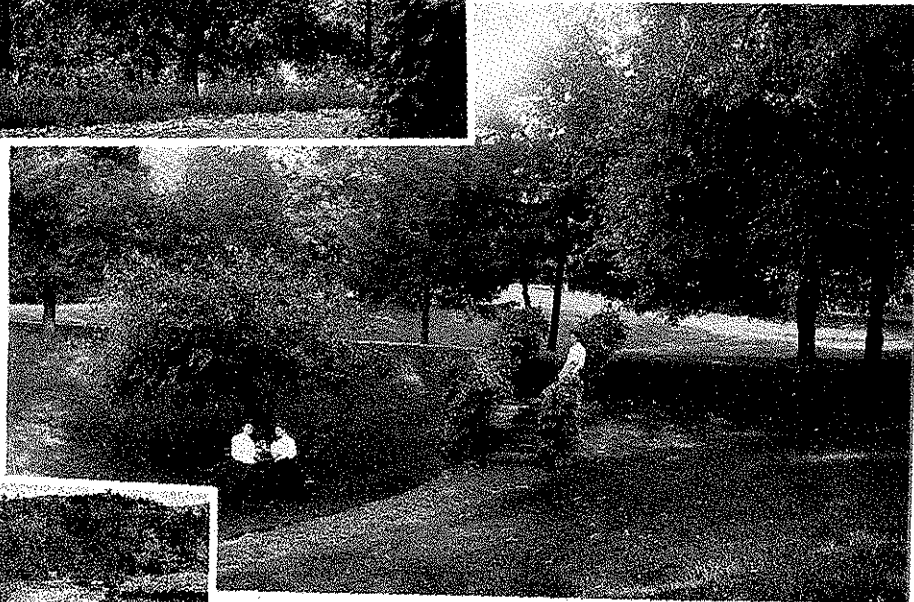


Children's Refectory Fifty Years Ago

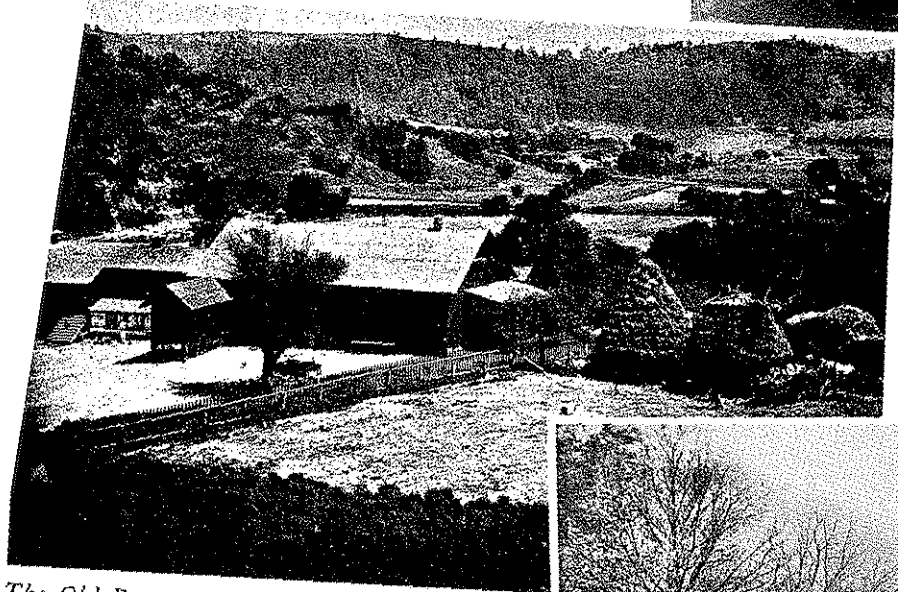


DO YOU REMEMBER W

*St. Joseph's Before Tennis Courts
Were Made 1906*



Rustic Steps



*The Old Barn Distant Hills and Fields
Now Covered With Homes*



Rustic Bridge Below the Grotto 1887

Alumnæ of any school are the living evidence of their education; the value of their training can be estimated only by the lives they live. Some may be called prominent as the world understands the term, but, as someone has recently written, we live today in a world of "loose unanchored thought." Speech and the right use of language should be the outward manifestation of thought, but words that should be used discriminatingly are now used arbitrarily for anything and everything: writers are prominent authors, and their books are prominent best sellers. Yet the real essential meaning — distinction — is practically lost sight of. To have achieved distinction means to have succeeded in some occupation or profession to the extent that one has become outstanding among a group, which achievement is attained by relatively few individuals proportionately to the group to which they belong.

Throughout the one hundred years of its existence, the Mount has always had its distinguished graduates who have striven for the highest development of mind and talents in various fields of music, art, teaching; of the modern professions of stage and radio; of higher education and social service; of participation in the projects of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, and in other Community activities.

In fact, there is scarcely a profession or occupation that was opened up to women during the one hundred years of the Mount's existence, in which they have not engaged, and to which they have not taken what is peculiarly and appropriately their own — the Mount spirit, so essentially Visitandine.

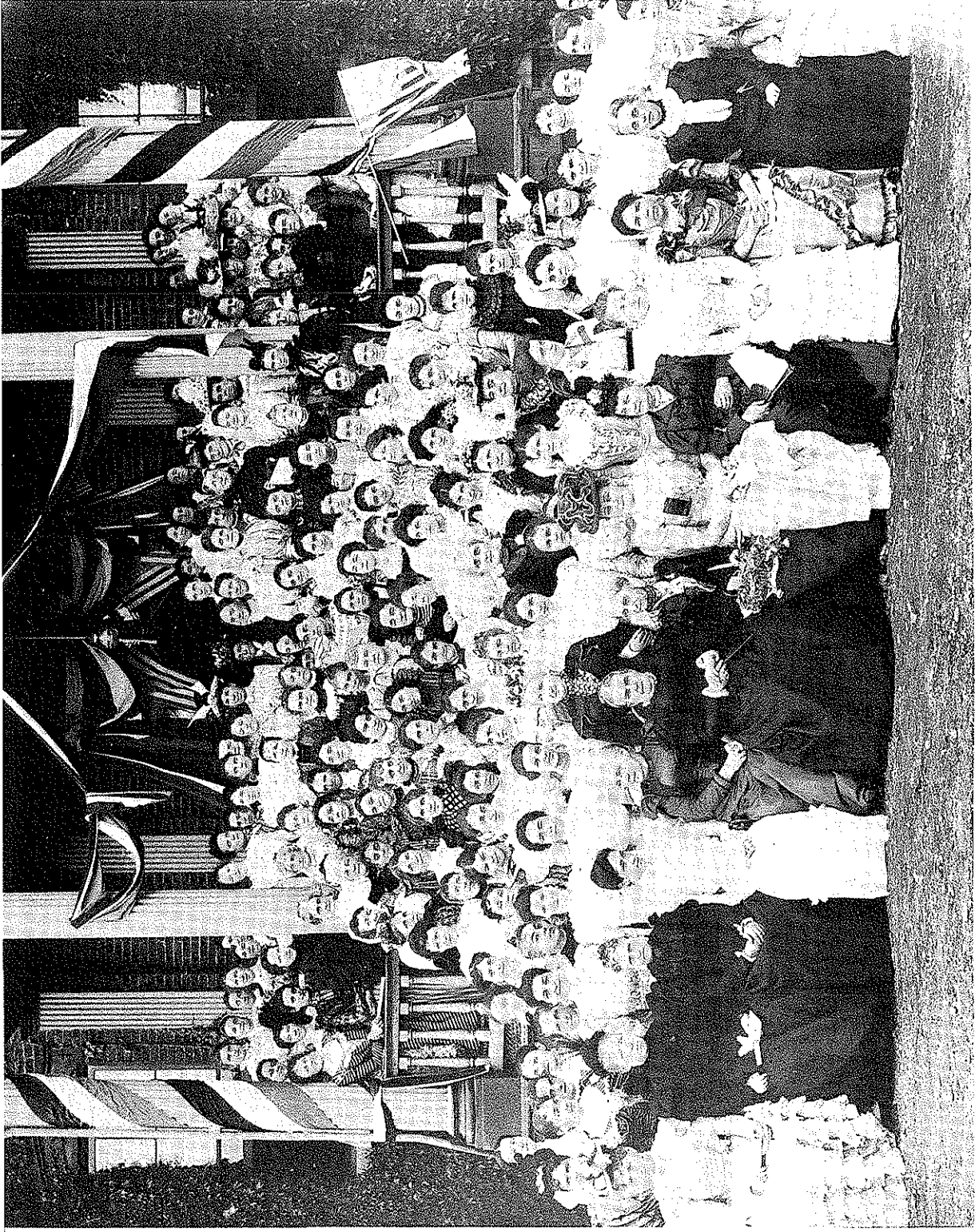
The young are seldom conscious of influence; it is only in later years when contrasts in philosophies of life and personalities are met, and when responsibilities and problems must be faced, that one realizes the influences that have moulded young girls into mature Christian women. Each Mount student has received and made her own that spirit which does not seek for distinction in the eyes of others, yet which accepts with generosity and whole-hearted willingness whatever responsibility she is called upon to assume. She has not sought public notice, yet when truth, charity, or the service of others demanded it, she has given herself, her mind, and her talents unstintingly. The Mount spirit is nothing less than the humble, cordial spirit of Saint Francis de Sales,

inherited by his spiritual daughters, and bequeathed by them to those who have come under their care. We may rejoice that so many have carried this Christ-like spirit into the varied professions and so-called "active" careers during the course of a century. It is this, more than anything else, that has given Mount students a right to distinction.

Yet we may ask, what of the hundreds of Mount girls who are, for the most part, unsung? They are living lives whose prominence may not extend beyond the bounds of home and community — but are they not persons of real distinction, and marked with the spirit of their Alma Mater in all its fullness?

To regard marriage as a career, one in which a woman may develop to fullest stature, is directly opposed to the idea of marriage as understood by the modern mind. To become someone of note in the eyes of others is today's criterion of success. Society has forgotten that the true greatness of a life lies not only in what one accomplishes, but also essentially in what one *is* in oneself. The hundreds of alumnae of the past and of today who have established homes and reared families in the ideals of Christ and Christian marriage have attained a high and rare distinction, — one which merits the praise and title of "the valiant woman . . . strength and beauty are her clothing . . . far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her . . . her children rose up and called her blessed; her husband and he praised her." If the world today does not look upon marriage as a sphere in which a woman may develop her potentialities, how much less is it able to grasp the significance and value of the religious life. Here indeed is "hidden prominence"; hidden from human eyes, but prominent in the eyes of God whose approbation alone is sought. Seventy-one alumnae have become religious in nine orders; forty-six have entered their beloved Visitation, and of these, thirty-three have chosen the Mount.

Seventeen presidents have headed the Alumnae Association since its formation in 1898, namely: Cecelia Brennen Bukey, '57; Sara McCullough O'Bryan, '57; Loretta Greene Kelly, '04; Grace Gloninger Watterson, '80; Regina Stillwagen Slater, '83; Rose McGraw, '86; Esther Heil, '02; Abigail Hawkins Bergen, '13; Frances Riggs Kuglen, '16; Irene Fallon Gillooly, '12; Margaret Jepson Buchanan, '98; Grace McCoy



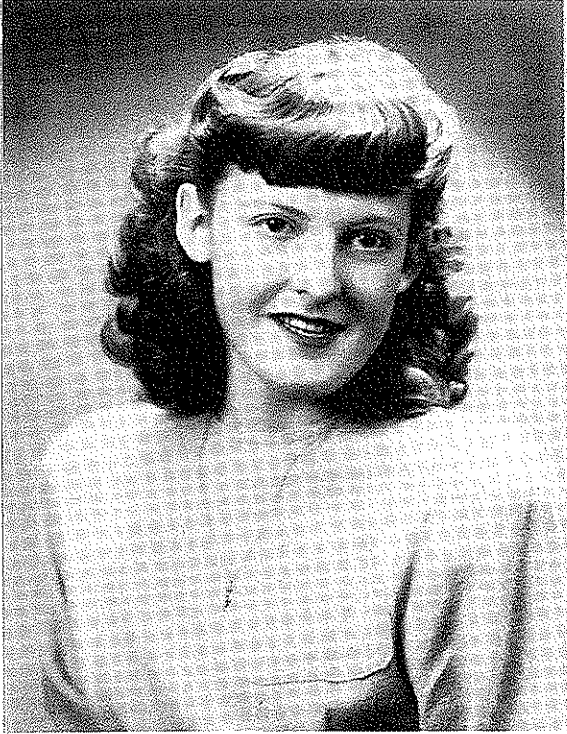
Foundation Stones of Alumnae Association Golden Jubilee in 1898

Hewitt, '14; Estelle O'Brien Whelan, '27; Angela Emig Hegner, '21; Mary Alexander Dunn, '17, and Cornelia Emig Zurbach, '27. Under their leadership, the alumnæ have worked for and with their Alma Mater, and the Mount extends its gratitude to all its students for what they have accomplished.

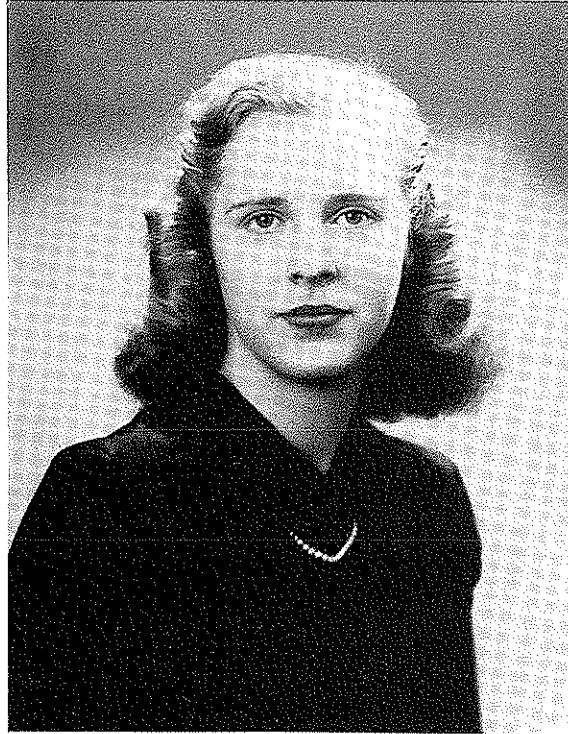
The *Mount de Chantal Alumnae* and the *Sister Gertrude* Scholarships provide full tuition for four years to students who desire a Mount education, but who otherwise would be unable to attend a private school. During the past quarter of a century, when day students were again admitted, the alumnæ presented a bus in order to provide transportation to and from school. In recent years the parlors, reception room, and the Directress' Office have been beautifully redecorated in rich, but simple taste; they add much to the attractiveness of the entrance and first floor. For these gifts of the Association, as well as those given by generous individuals through the course of the past century, the Sisters of the Visitation are sincerely grateful.

In November 1946, an annual Memorial Service was inaugurated in memory of the deceased Alumnae who had died within the year. The day is also one of cordial reception of "old girls" by the Sisters, who are as happy to see their former students-as the latter are to have the opportunity of spending a day at the Mount.

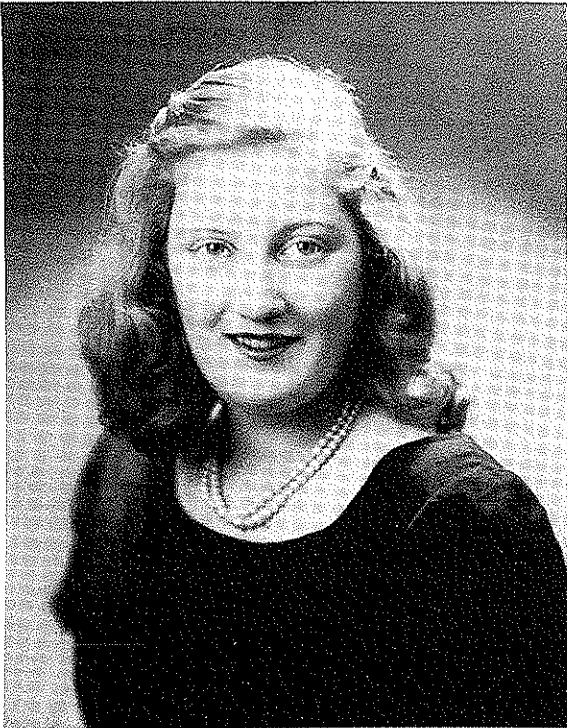
To all of her alumnæ, whether in professional fields, marriage, or the religious life, the Mount pays tribute, and expresses heartfelt appreciation for all that they as individuals and as an association, have accomplished. True love has often been said to defy the passage of time; so one may well say that the affection of the Mount for all her students of other days has deepened with the passing of the years. Each alumna may feel sure of that affection for, and interest in her as an individual, for they are bonds which exist not only during her life, but which will remain throughout the years, in memory and in prayer, as long as the Mount may stand.



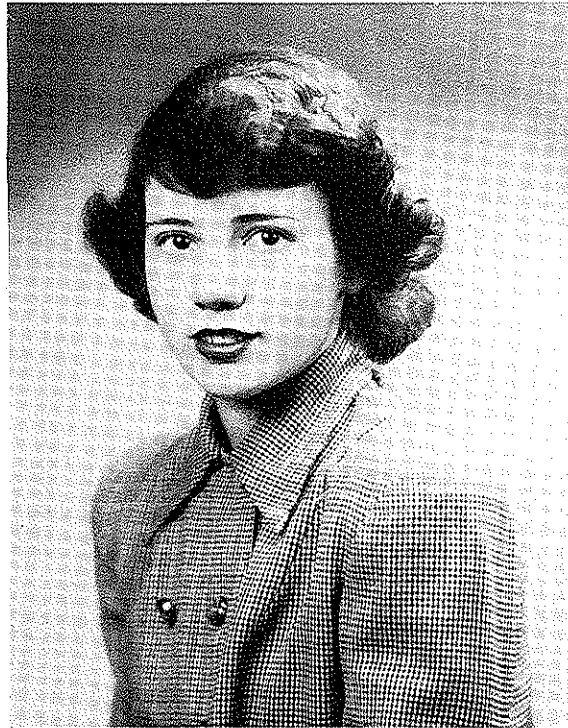
PATRICIA ANDERSON



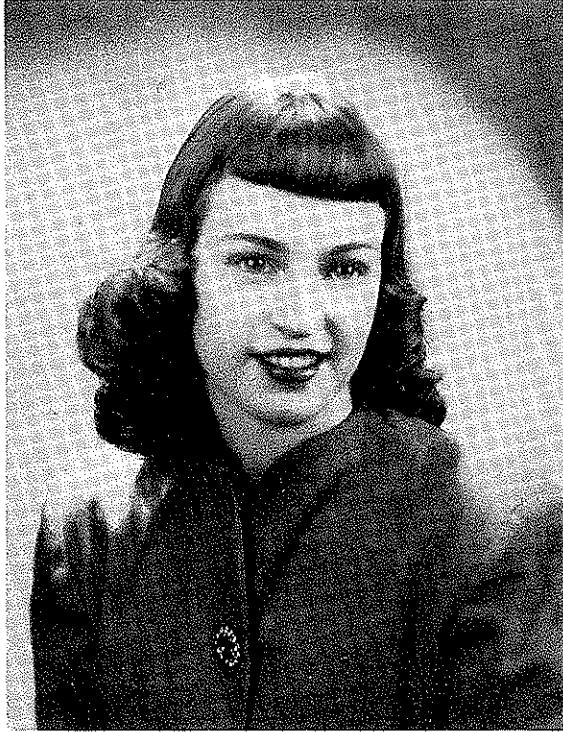
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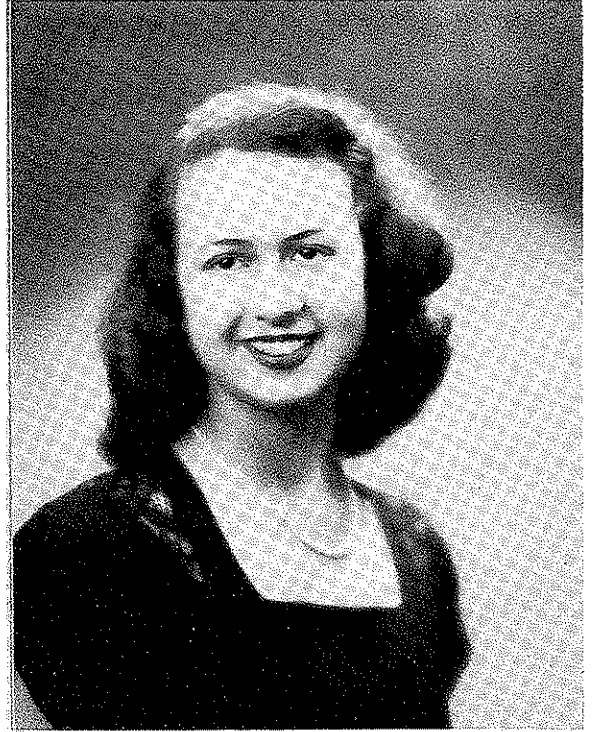
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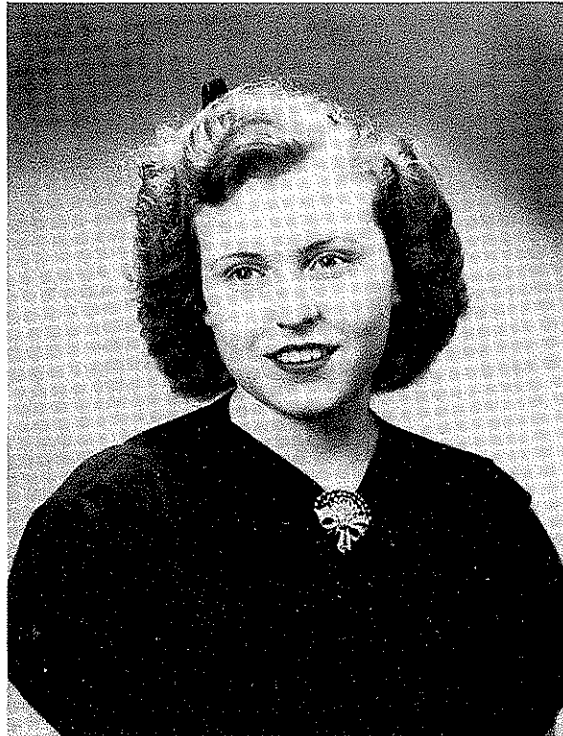
JANE BRANUM



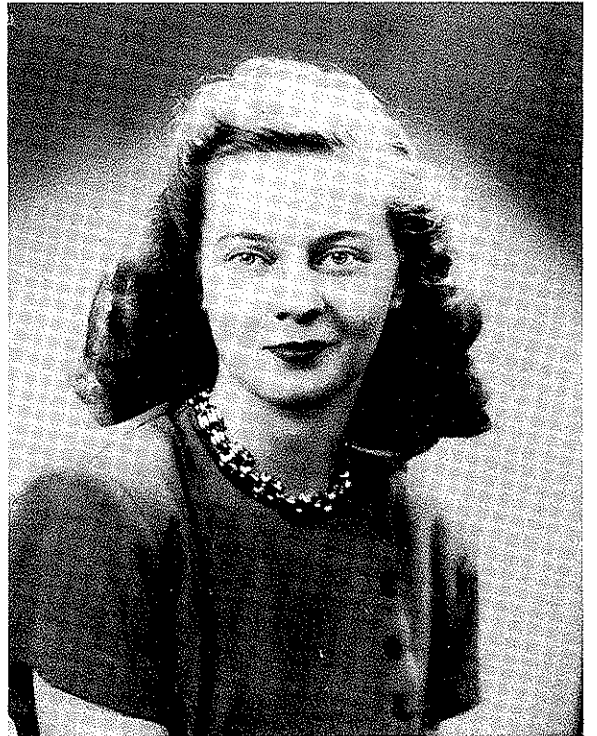
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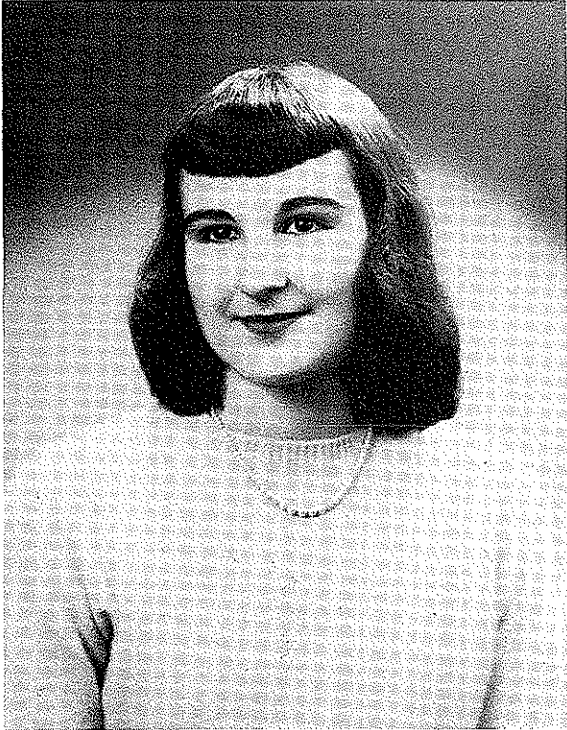
JERRIE COLEMAN



SALLY DUFFY



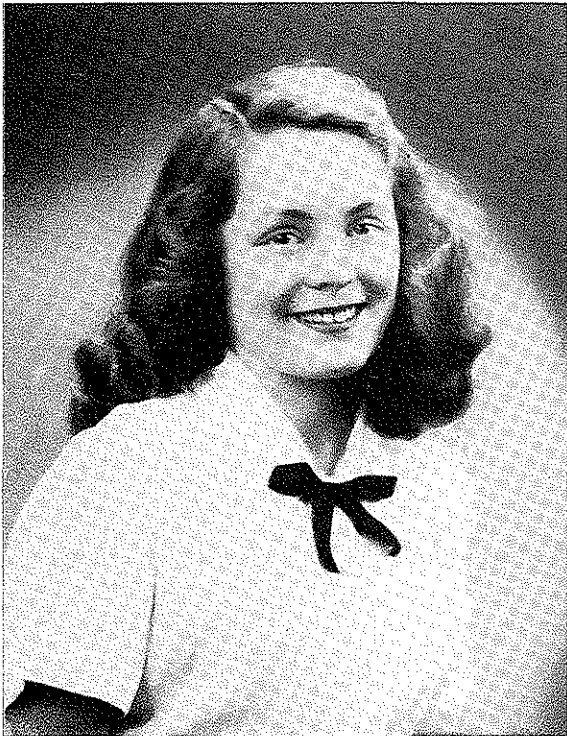
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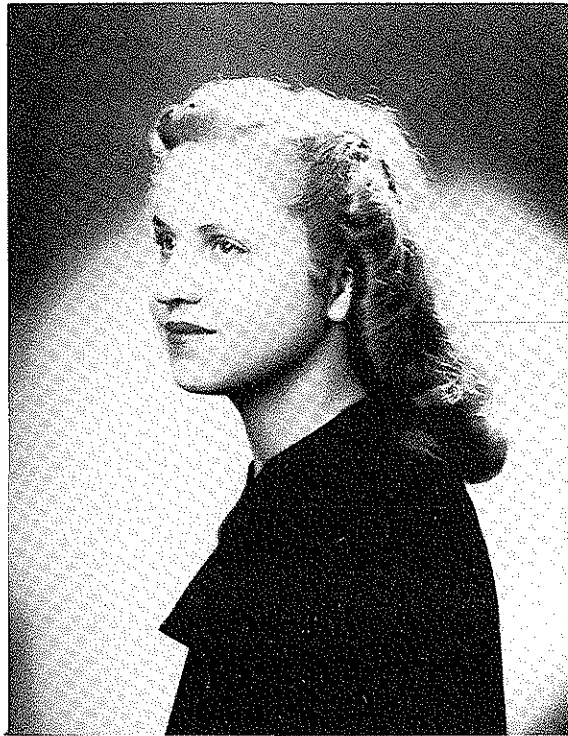
SUSIE KNAPP



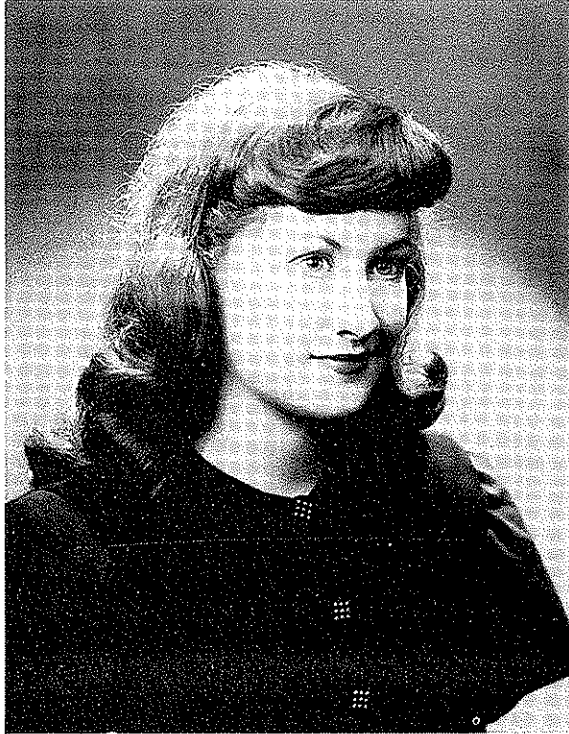
SHIRLEY LAING



FRANCES MC CARTHY



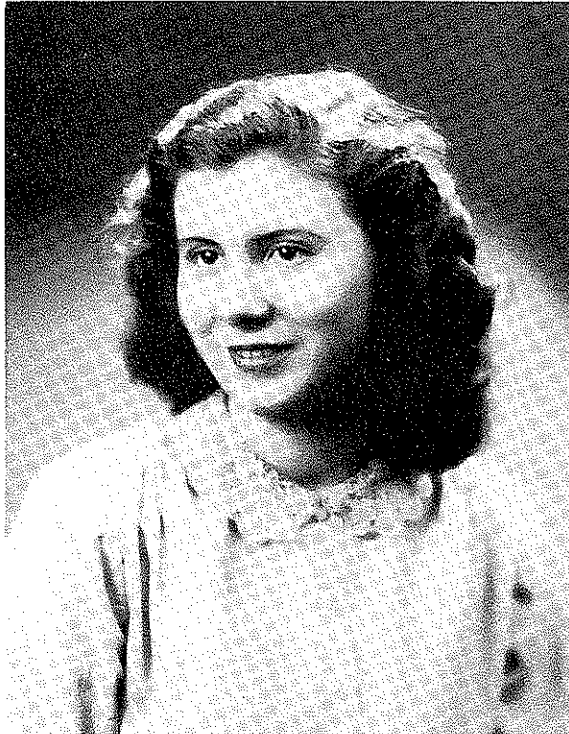
DORIS MARSH



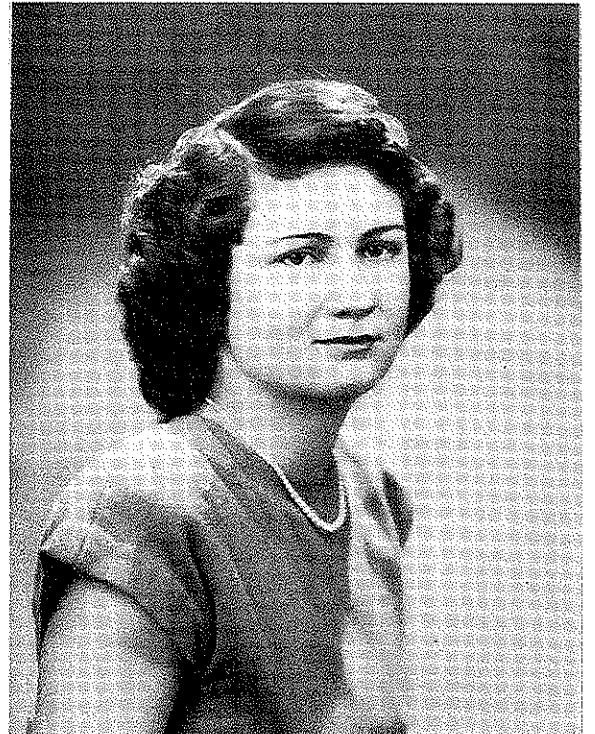
SARAH MAXWELL



SALLY SEELY



GWENDOLYN SWARTZ



DOROTHY WEIBEL

MOUNT GIRLS OF TODAY

"The lovely bloom and spring-time of womanhood"

THIS year Mount de Chantal completes her hundredth year of devoted service to her Divine Master and His work of Christian education. Although it is a century old, the heart of the Mount retains its youthful vigor, because of the continuous influx of young hearts who come to partake of the riches of her store. As a loving mother keenly interests herself with the spiritual and temporal progress of her children, so Alma Mater carefully guides the spiritual and temporal education of all girls entrusted to her maternal care.

She pauses now to observe the Mount girls of today. Do they measure up to the standards set by the girls of yesterday? Alma Mater acknowledges that her heart glows with a joyous pride because she does not find today's girls wanting in those virtues that indefinably stamp every true Mount girl. She is, therefore, happy to pay tribute to them and to praise their courageous loyalty, which never counts the cost, their indefatigable zeal which makes them accomplish what they set out to do, their lowly spirit which does not seek commendation.

This "Mount" spirit was exemplified a few years ago when a group of girls solemnly drew up a concrete form of virtues, later to be known and adopted as the "Mount Code." This act alone proved their earnest wish to pass on to future generations principles of Christian living whereby they might cultivate the virtues that tend to make a gentlewoman. Thus their watchword became: "To keep the Mount Code means to be a Mount Girl."

MOUNT CODE

- I "With the help of God, I pledge loyalty and sincerity to my Church, my Country, my School, the Faculty, my Schoolmates and myself.
- II "I shall endeavor, to the best of my ability, to keep my scholastic record above average.
- III "I shall practice consideration of others by being friendly, courteous and unselfish on all occasions, realizing that what I do to the least of Christ's brethren among my fellow students, faculty, parents, I do to Him.
- IV "I shall promote the democratic way of life by developing a spirit of cooperation now that later may enable me to fulfill my civic and social obligations."

It is gratifying to their teachers to see that the girls have accepted this noble challenge and, as a result, have given remarkable examples of the fulfillment of the four Articles of the Code.

Thus today's Mount girls go forth with their minds impressed with sound principles and a Christian philosophy of life which will aid them to solve the complex problems which await them. They leave Mount de Chantal's atmosphere of serenity with a spiritual balance that enables them as individuals to cope with the false principles which are rampant in the world today. This gives rise to the hope that the true Mount girls of today will be the valiant leaders of tomorrow!

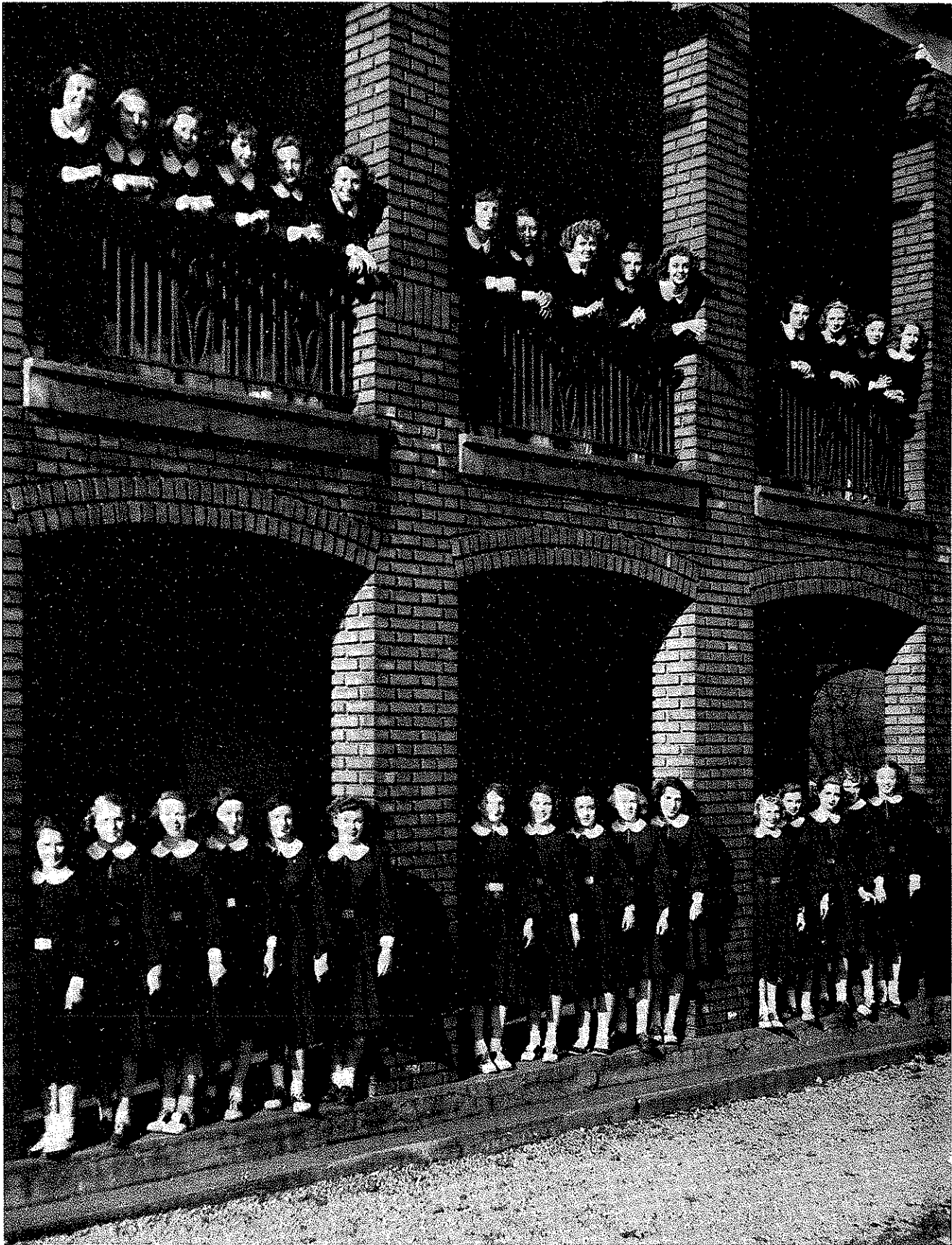
Alma Mater's loving prayer for them is that her education and training will be a beacon light of hope for time and pledge of happiness for eternity. God bless the Mount Girls of Today!



Student Assembly Study Hall



Senior Carolers



Juniors



Sophomores



Eighth Graders



Holy God we praise Thy Name

